



ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW 2009



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Introduction

The humanitarian and development sector is operating in a rapidly changing world. In the past year alone we have experienced the combined impacts of the global food crisis, the financial crisis and the increasingly urgent climate change crisis. It is critical that humanitarian and development agencies continually assess whether their programs are effective. This is a key component of our accountability to those we seek to benefit as well as to our donors and supporters.

Our view is that part of being effective is to undertake critical reflection of our work and doing this publicly forces us to be more accountable. To embrace this challenge, World Vision has developed a suite of reports. The Annual Program Review is now an integral part of our annual reporting which facilitates internal critique and learning about the effectiveness of our programs. This year World Vision Australia's reporting also includes the Annual Evaluation Review, an initiative which synthesises evaluation findings on outcomes achieved, challenges encountered and learnings relevant to future programs.

For World Vision Australia, effective development empowers poor, marginalised and vulnerable children and communities, firstly to change their circumstances and secondly to sustain and build upon that change. Our desire is to see just systems, self-reliant communities and healed relationships. Our approach is underpinned by a belief that people are created in the image of God and therefore have worth and purposes as humans. This means that we have a commitment to human rights, particularly children's rights as articulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and gender equality. It also aligns with international standards, including the emerging Global CSO (Civil Society Organisation) Effectiveness dialogue and the ACFID NGO Effectiveness Framework. Within this context, World Vision believes the effectiveness of our programs will be enhanced by continuing to focus our efforts on:

- design quality, including systematic inquiry into local context as a precursor to design;
- strengthening participation of children, women and men, especially the most vulnerable, in all stages of the program cycle;
- effective partnerships with other agencies and local stakeholders in delivering sustainable program outcomes in both local programming and broader field-based policy change advocacy;
- empowering and enabling so that there is local ownership of initiatives; and
- facilitating ongoing learning and reflection through participatory research and evaluations to help us and our programming partners find solutions, continually improve our practice and act on important issues.

Through this publication we seek to convey the reality that seeking to change people's lives sustainably, and addressing entrenched power dynamics and cultural constraints, are complex endeavours that require time, trust, analysis, responsiveness, creativity, collaborative partnerships as well as continual reflection and learning. Addressing the underlying causes of poverty and injustice is not a simple linear process, based on technical expertise and program management disciplines. Rather, complexity and uncertainty characterise efforts to address causes of poverty. These are simultaneously global and uniquely local, the outcome of particular histories, values, fragile physical environments and power relationships. Practitioners experienced in international development must draw on their technical skills, past experience and responsiveness to local communities. As recently articulated by David Bonbright, Director of KeyStone Accountability in the UK:

"We need to study and learn proactively from failure and success... to focus on... the means by which we can plan, implement, monitor, assess and learn how to solve our most important problems – such as poverty, disease, war and violent conflict and the consequences of global warming and environmental degradation."

This edition of the Annual Program Review presents 14 case studies which reflect on World Vision Australia's approach to programming and explore specific development challenges.

1. FROM AWARENESS TOWARDS CONSISTENT BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

The first five articles explore the challenge of changing behaviours that are deeply ingrained in belief, culture, religion, historical and/or political circumstance. The case of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Somalia demonstrates that, despite success in raising awareness of human rights and the harmful effects of FGM, program efforts have not been successful in entirely eradicating the practice. In contrast, the Senegal case demonstrates that it is possible to shift even deeply held attitudes about the capabilities of people with disabilities towards a model of disability action that is neither charitable nor medical. However, this case also highlights how a gender perspective is critical to ensure that women's particular challenges are not overlooked and their disadvantages further entrenched. A perplexing issue identified in the Niger food security case was that despite the needs, and people's recognition of acacia seeds as a viable and appropriate alternative staple grain in times of drought, widespread adoption took time and an element of serendipity. The challenges of changing entrenched patterns of violence, particularly among young men, are explored in the Timor-Leste case. Finally, the case from Uzbekistan focuses on how essential it is to address institutional barriers and cultural prejudices towards drug users in ensuring that effective HIV and AIDS harm reduction programming is available to vulnerable groups.

2. BALANCING RESPONSE TO IMMEDIATE NEEDS WITH THE RISK OF CREATING DEPENDENCY

The next group of articles considers various programming challenges in contexts of extreme need, in particular the balance to be found between immediate provision of services and approaches that focus on reducing dependence and empowering communities to address their own needs in the longer term. In the context of chronic political instability and regular natural emergencies, the Haiti case illustrates both the challenges and potential for moving beyond a direct benefits model even when there is desperate need. Similarly, World Vision's response to the needs of street children in one of the world's poorest countries, Myanmar, raises important questions about where charity ends and sustainable development begins. Ensuring that the most vulnerable in humanitarian emergencies have access to food and other basic needs is always a key concern of responding agencies. The Lesotho case study considers the use of cash transfers, rather than provision of food aid, and explores whether this innovative response carries an inherent risk of resources not being directed towards the basic survival needs of women and children.

3. INNOVATION AND THE CHALLENGES OF DEVELOPING NEW APPROACHES

One of World Vision's unique strengths is holistic, long-term engagement with children and communities afforded by child sponsorship through Area Development Programs (ADPs). Three articles in this publication consider various challenges which the ADP model poses for innovative approaches. The case study on a business facilitation pilot project in Kenya demonstrates how ADP program management practices can undermine more flexible approaches required to encourage community initiatives. Similarly, in Zambia, an ADP's primary focus on rural development has hindered efforts to respond to new opportunities and vulnerabilities associated with the establishment of a large copper mine in the area and the accompanying urban encroachment. The study on education quality initiatives in Indonesia highlights how an opportunity, almost stumbled upon, was created through our long-term engagement with government. That opportunity has led to the realisation that a greater focus on advocacy in the program could yield opportunities in many more places. It also highlights how a focus on education quality can increase access, whereas simply focusing on access ignores the importance of quality in changing educational outcomes for children. The Don't Trade Lives advocacy campaign case study illustrates how advocacy can create substantial improvements in quality of life for vulnerable children in developing countries by mobilising consumer choice in developed countries. It also outlines the significant challenges involved in marrying local program responses with global advocacy initiatives.





4. ORGANISATIONAL DYNAMICS AND MANAGING RISK

The final two case studies focus on the impact of addressing both organisational needs and ensuring appropriate responses to program priorities. The research into Australian NGO effectiveness which underpinned the ACFID NGO Effectiveness Framework identified the critical influence that organisational culture and practice have on program effectiveness. These final case studies consider points of intersection between organisational and program needs. The case study on microfinance in the Philippines highlights how a focus on the financial management and health of a microfinance institution can detract from the organisation's primary purpose of providing financial services to the poorest people.

Reducing transaction costs by adopting common systems is another key imperative for effectiveness. To this end, World Vision has adopted a global standard for Design, Monitoring and Evaluation (DM&E). The final case study explores the challenge of establishing clear and common standards for DM&E without crushing creativity.

CONCLUSION

We hope that you will find the experiences, learnings and insights in these case studies useful for reflection and that they will increase your understanding of the achievements and challenges involved in addressing the causes as well as the symptoms of poverty and marginalisation.

Conny Lenneberg

Director, Policy and Programs
World Vision Australia

FROM AWARENESS TO BEHAVIOUR CHANGE



It is estimated that every year, three million girls in Africa alone are subjected to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), despite significant efforts on the part of the international community over the past decade to eradicate the practice. World Vision Australia has been supporting efforts to promote the abandonment of FGM in South Central Somalia since 2004. But despite significant success in moving people away from the more harmful forms of FGM, the project has had relatively little success in promoting the complete abandonment of the practice. A mid-term evaluation of this project conducted in 2006 suggested it might have a greater chance of success if more attention was paid to addressing FGM not just as a public health issue, but as a violation of human rights. But three years later, a second evaluation of the project showed that even with a substantially increased focus on human rights – resulting in 75 percent of those interviewed stating that they were aware that FGM was a violation of human rights – less than half of the interviewees thought that FGM should be abandoned. The findings suggest that addressing FGM as both a public health issue and as a violation of human rights still fails to recognise the strength of the underlying social, cultural and religious beliefs that have sustained the practice for generations. The findings confirm that promoting awareness regarding international human rights standards is likely to be of limited effect unless communities themselves determine that those standards are consistent with their own cultural and religious norms.

Shifting the cultural norms

Working to eradicate Female Genital Mutilation in Somalia

► REBECCA BARBER

FGM ERADICATION PROJECT IN SOMALIA: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

World Vision Australia has been funding an FGM eradication project in South Central Somalia since 2004. The project strives to eradicate FGM by raising awareness regarding its harmful effects, by supporting alternative income generating activities for men and women who practise circumcision for their livelihoods, and by empowering men, women, boys and girls to advocate for change. An evaluation of the project conducted in 2009 found that the project had resulted in some significant achievements, including the following:

- Overall reduction in the prevalence of FGM. Some 86.4 percent of girls surveyed in 2009 said that they had been circumcised in the past two-and-a-half years, as compared to the findings in a 2003 survey that "all girls undergo FGM".
- Significant change in attitudes towards FGM. Some 38 percent of community members interviewed in 2009 said they thought FGM should be abandoned. 32.8 percent of boys said they would prefer to marry an uncircumcised girl, while 16 percent of respondents with daughters aged between four and 14 said they had chosen not to circumcise their daughters. While there is still a long way to go, these figures represent a significant shift from 2006, when 81 percent of respondents said they "strongly believed FGM should continue to be practised".
- Increased awareness of FGM. Some 63 percent of community members surveyed in 2009 said they were aware of the harmful effects of FGM (compared to 37 percent in 2006), while 75 percent said they were aware that FGM was a violation of the rights of the child (in 2006, only 25 percent of respondents said they had received information on human rights).
- Significant shift in the type of circumcision

► SNAP-SHOT

WHAT IS FGM?

Female Genital Mutilation refers to any procedure involving the partial or total removal of, or other injury to, the external female genitalia, performed for non-medical reasons.

Types of FGM include the removal of the clitoral prepuce (referred to in Somalia as sunna, or "traditional"); the partial or total removal of the clitoris; the partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora; and – the most extreme form – the removal of all or part of the external genitalia and the stitching up of the vagina (known as pharaonic circumcision or infibulations).

FGM can result in a lifetime of physical suffering for the victim, with symptoms including blood loss, chronic bladder and vaginal infections, urine retention, post delivery complications and infertility.

being practised. In 2003, 92 percent of women and girls surveyed had undergone infibulations [See snap-shot: What is FGM?]. In stark contrast, the 2009 evaluation reported that just 6 percent of all girls circumcised (or just over 5 percent of all girls in the targeted areas) had undergone infibulations.

Despite some progress towards the eradication of FGM, significant challenges remain. What the 2006 and 2009 evaluations both made clear is that while progress has been made in discouraging the more invasive forms of FGM, progress towards promoting the complete abandonment of the practice has been slow. In fact, the project has resulted in a substantial increase in the number of people adopting milder forms of FGM.

The 2006 evaluation suggested that this was because FGM had been presented by project staff primarily as a practice detrimental to the physical and mental health of women and girls, rather than as a human rights violation. The evaluation noted that only 25 percent of people surveyed had received training on human rights. It also suggested that by presenting FGM as one of the most pervasive and enduring human rights violations practised in the world today, the project might have had more success in advocating for the complete eradication of FGM rather than merely for the mitigation of its harmful effects.

This recommendation is consistent with the evaluations of a number of other FGM abandonment programs around the world. A 1999 assessment conducted by the World Health Organization of projects throughout Africa and the Middle East found a key weakness was the tendency to focus solely on the harmful effects of FGM, without fully addressing the community values underlying the practice. The evaluation noted that as FGM is a manifestation of gender inequality, a critical component in promoting the abandonment of the practice is the empowerment of women and girls. The evaluation suggested that this be addressed through education focusing on human rights, and on the differential treatment of boys and girls.¹

An analysis conducted by UNICEF in 2005 made similar findings. The analysis considered the successes and limitations of the UNICEF-funded Program for Accelerated Social Transformation in Sudan, which in its first phase focused on providing information about the health consequences of FGM and on dissociating the practice from Islam. A review of the program demonstrated that the approach had been insufficient to promote the abandonment of FGM, and that the intervention had led not to the abandonment of FGM, but to community members adopting milder and more hygienic forms of FGM. The program subsequently shifted its focus to the empowerment of women and the protection and promotion of human rights, with positive results.²

Similar observations were made about a UNICEF-funded FGM Abandonment Program in Egypt. An evaluation showed that the sole focus on the physical harms of FGM had led to the “medicalisation” of the process – with many people turning to doctors rather than midwives to perform the procedure rather than abandoning the practice altogether. The evaluation concluded that “a narrow focus on the potential physical harms of FGM has serious unintended implications”, and that “the lesson learned ... is that the message against FGM needs to be embedded in a framework that seeks to increase the awareness of women and men on human rights, gender based violence and reproductive health”.³

TOWARDS AN INCREASED FOCUS ON RIGHTS

Following the 2006 evaluation, World Vision staff adopted a more holistic approach to promoting the abandonment of FGM. In workshops and awareness-raising sessions, staff increased their focus on human rights. The 2009 evaluation found that “it is apparent that the communities targeted by this project are indeed obtaining comprehensive information”, and that World Vision had “continued to support the communities to pass (on) appropriate messages on anti-FGM and other harmful practices such as gender based violence and early marriage”. The increasing focus on rights was evidenced by the fact that 75 percent of respondents interviewed in 2009 said they were aware that FGM was a violation of the rights of the child. However, the evaluation found that “unfortunately, the apparent increase in knowledge on FGM as a violation of human rights did not have much influence on individuals’ attitudes towards female circumcision”.

In 2003, the reasons cited for the practice of FGM were the belief that it is a religious requirement; the belief that an uncircumcised girl is dirty; the myth that a midwife who assists an uncircumcised girl during delivery will go blind; and the belief that circumcision preserves virginity. In 2006, 39 percent of respondents thought that uncircumcised women could not pray, while 40 percent thought that FGM was necessary in order for girls to be clean and fit for marriage. The 2006 evaluation noted that FGM was “a practice rooted in many layers of Somalia culture”, carrying with it “meaning and symbolism”, and that “many women continue to support it, even though they realize it harms them. Similarly, many more men support it even though they suffer some of its consequences through the women they marry”. In light of the reasons cited for the practice of FGM in 2003 and again in 2006, it is perhaps not surprising that neither a focus on the harmful effects of FGM, nor the presentation of FGM as a human rights violation, have proved sufficient to promote the abandonment of the practice.

FGM IN ISLAM: PROMOTING MORE PROGRESSIVE INTERPRETATIONS

The 2009 evaluation made it clear that attitudes regarding the social, cultural and religious importance of FGM had remained largely unchanged since 2003. Some 56.2 percent of those surveyed in 2009 believed that FGM was required by Islam; 48.5 percent believed that it controlled a woman’s libido; 58.8 percent believed that an uncircumcised woman was unable to pray; and 53.5 percent believed that an uncircumcised woman was dirty. Even though 75 percent of respondents knew that FGM

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Somalia has been characterised as the most dangerous and complex place to work in the world. The country has been without a functional national government since the fall of Siad Barre’s dictatorship in 1991 when a large proportion of the population either became internally displaced or fled the country. The situation disrupted food supplies and led to mass starvation as well as loss of traditional livelihoods and indigenous forms of government (councils of elders).

Civil strife increased in 2006, with the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) enforcing its authority throughout the country and arguing for the imposition of Islamic rule. In December 2006, the Ethiopian National Defense Force intervened, overthrew the UIC in parts of south central Somalia, and left a leadership vacuum.

In addition to these complexities, clan dynamics must be considered by INGOs in all aspects of human resources management, such as the hiring and firing of staff, as well as in developing partnerships with local organisations. Under-estimating the importance of clan dynamics can have serious security implications for INGOs.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

World Vision’s humanitarian interventions in central and southern Somalia began in 1992 launching relief operations from the city of Baidoa (south central Somalia). Programming then expanded to other regions, primarily through integrated rehabilitation projects, with activities in health, nutrition, food security and education. The Somalia national office is based in Nairobi, Kenya due to the total collapse of social and economic structures within Somalia.

World Vision Somalia currently works in south central Somalia and in the semi-autonomous region of Somaliland.

Project name: Gender promotion and FGM eradication

Project start date: 1 October 2004

Project end date: 31 December 2009

Funding source: Child Rescue

Total budget: US\$439,637



▲ **Project staff stand in front of the FGM Resources Centre in Wajid, Bakool region, South Central Somalia. At the left is Evelyn Mafeni, Gender Coordinator, and at the far right, a local religious leader with whom the project staff have been working to raise awareness against FGM¹.**

was a violation of human rights, a significant number nevertheless believed that, because of deep-seated cultural and religious reasons, the practice should continue.

This is confirmed by statements made by community and religious leaders. The 2009 evaluation found that "all people interviewed said that the sunna type [See Snap-shot: What is FGM?] is supported by Islam and the Holy Book and must be adhered to". One sheikh (community leader) when asked whether he was still promoting female circumcision said, "I tell my people that Islam religion is against pharaonic type of circumcision, but recommends sunna..." The head of one of the villages surveyed said, "I personally think it is a crime for a Moslem girl not to be circumcised and every girl must be circumcised using the sunna type". Another sheikh said, "I wish to take my ... daughters for sunna type of circumcision because it is allowed by Islamic religion". The reference to Islam as "allowing" sunna is interesting, in that it is suggestive of an earlier belief that Islam required a more invasive form of FGM, followed by a more recent belief that sunna is all that is required. This highlights the crux of the problem. World Vision has been successful in persuading communities that infibulations is not required by Islam, but the belief that circumcision of some sort is required by Islam remains unchanged.

In fact, FGM is not required by Islam. There is no reference to female circumcision in the Qur'an, nor is there anything in the hadith literature (oral translations representing the words and deeds of the Prophet) that requires female circumcision. The most that can be cited in favour of FGM in Islam is

one hadith – often cited – which describes circumcision as "an honourable thing for women". But the pervasiveness of the belief amongst communities surveyed that FGM is an Islamic requirement is clear. This suggests that discussions with communities may need to pay greater attention to exploring – and challenging – those beliefs that make it so difficult for many people to accept the idea of abandoning the practice. As has been noted by a well-known scholar of Islamic law, "people are more likely to comply with standards of human rights when they accept norms and values underlying those standards as valid or legitimate from the point of view of their own culture... The greater the cultural legitimacy of human rights standards, the more those standards will be voluntarily complied with by the population at large".⁴

But encouraging communities to reconsider traditional interpretations of Islam is not an easy task. It is hindered by the commonly understood principle of Islamic law that in general a cultural practice – whether or not strictly required by the Qur'an – is better adhered to than given up. It is hindered further by the low level of literacy amongst religious leaders in South Central Somalia, which makes it difficult for staff to use printed religious texts in promoting more progressive interpretations of Islam. But it is something that may be achieved by working alongside religious leaders to promote the view that Islam does not require FGM of any form, and by working with communities to challenge the view that uncircumcised women are unclean, promiscuous, unmarriedable and not allowed to pray.

CONCLUSION

World Vision's 2006 evaluation, together with the evaluations of other FGM eradication projects throughout Africa, have found that focusing on health consequences alone cannot bring about the eradication of FGM. The 2009 evaluation made it clear that bringing in an increased focus on human rights, while producing some positive results, has still been insufficient to turn communities away from this deeply entrenched practice. For as long as recognised legal rights are curtailed by cultural and religious beliefs – and in this case, traditional interpretations of Islam – an increased awareness of rights is unlikely in itself to be sufficient to bring about changes in community attitudes and practices. It is possible to successfully promote the abandonment of FGM, but World Vision's experience suggests that this may only be the case if messaging is sensitively but directly targeted to address the specific issues preventing people from turning away from the practice. ■

¹ Department of Women's Health Systems and Community Health, 'Female Genital Mutilation, Programs to Date: What Works and What Doesn't', World Health Organisation, 1999.

² Alexia Lewnes (ed.), 'Changing a Harmful Social Convention: Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting', UNICEF, 2005, p.24.

³ Population Council, 'Female Genital Mutilation Abandonment Program: Evaluation Summary Report', 2008, p.53.

⁴ Abullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, 'The application of Shari'a (Islamic Law) and Human Rights Violations in the Sudan' in Tore Lindholm and Kari Vogt (eds), 'Islamic Law Reform and Human Rights' (1992)

A part not apart

Redefining responses to disability in rural Senegal

► PETER WESTON / THURZA SULLIVAN

A project working with Senegalese people with a disability is helping World Vision redefine its understanding and approach to disability and development. The project demonstrates that barriers preventing people with a disability from being active citizens can be overcome. Disabled people, government authorities and civil society can achieve social change together. And for people with a disability, acceptance can bring greater liberty than wheelchairs or other disability supports can offer.

Nowadays, concepts of disability are being redefined in relation to the nature of impairment to a person's physical, sensory or intellectual state. The current definition of disability considers the key role societies play in enabling or disabling citizens with impairment. Where previously a person's disability may have been defined by their need for a wheelchair, for example, it can now be defined by the discrimination a person faces as a result of their particular impairment.

"Imagine this big plate represents your society," says disability specialist Sue Coe as she holds up two plates to those assembled in the meeting hall. "This small plate represents disabled people in your community. Where we perceive this smaller plate defines how we will try to support disabled people."

She distances the plates from each other. "We might see disabled people as a group that is incapable, and therefore incapable of being part of society. They have a problem and society's role is to provide them basics to survive. That's a charity model of disability." She touches the rims of the plates together. "Or maybe disabled people are viewed as somehow 'broken'. Society's role, therefore, is to fix them to be as close as possible to 'normal' in order for them to interact with society. A solution of doctors and therapists is a medical model."

Sue overlaps the plates. "But disabled people aren't a group outside of society. They are people in society: part of its richness and diversity. The charity model and medical model both imply that disabled people are deficient and need society's help. But with a social model, we say that, as ordinary citizens, the problems

that people encounter are barriers in society itself. Those barriers can be physical, like poorly designed building access; or institutional, where laws allow employers to discriminate based on appearance, for example; or attitudinal. We overcome that by changing the way society organises itself, to be inclusive of all citizens. With sustained advocacy and widespread cooperation, services become accessible, rights guaranteed and negative attitudes overcome."

In April 2008, this description by Sue opened a review of the first year of activity in World Vision's Kolda Equal Ability Project.

A TIME OF RAPID RENEWAL

The Kolda Equal Ability Project began in early 2007 as a collaborative effort between World Vision offices in Senegal, Australia and the United Kingdom. The project promotes awareness of people with a disability as active and equal citizens in the community, and it aims to build the advocacy capacity of disabled people's organisations (DPOs). In addition, the project recognises and addresses barriers that prevent people with a disability from accessing basic social services, and it is working to improve their economic status.

The achievements of the first half of this project have revolved around two themes: renewed self-perception of disabled people, and positive change in wider public perception of people with a disability.

The confidence, mobilisation and assertiveness of DPO members have grown significantly. "The project touches the human dimension," one man from Dioulacolong village explained. "It changes the social life of all of us. Now I'm proud to be disabled. We are capable of solving our issues together, and we don't have to beg."

Another shared, "We are no longer embarrassed or afraid to go out. We take part in meetings without even thinking about our disability". With increased confidence and self-esteem, people with a disability testified that they feel freer to seek basic services like education and healthcare.

Empowering DPOs has converted these organisations and their members from being

"Many fear a disabled child is a sign of a curse and it is necessary to kill the child to be rid of the curse." – Fall Abdourahman, Regional Director of Action Sociale, Kolda regional government

Kolda region is stunning. With more sustained rainfall and deeper top soils than Senegal's semi-arid northern climes, the landscape is lush with agriculture and scrubby forests. Yet, for the people, Kolda is a difficult place to thrive. Geographically and economically isolated, and under-developed in terms of government infrastructure, it is ranked as the poorest region of Senegal. Kolda records the country's highest incidences of maternal and child mortality, infant malnutrition, disability, and child marriage.

For people with a disability, the statistics paint an even grimmer picture in an environment where taboos and negative attitudes have thrived. In many communities, disability has been commonly considered as a supernatural curse on families. In the recent past, infanticide of mentally or physically impaired babies was reported to be prevalent. Poor transportation networks and the rugged landscape meant that communities in the region were isolated, enabling abuses such as infanticide to go unreported and without detection or redress by authorities.

Project name: Kolda Equal Ability Project

Project start date: 1 October 2006

Project end date: 30 September 2010

Project partners: Federation Regional des Associations des Personnes Handicapées

Funding source: World Vision Australia Bounceback Appeal, World Vision UK – DFID grant

Total budget: US\$596,977

Total funds remitted from Australia as at June 2009: US\$211,800

► **Members of the Dioulacolong Disabled People's Association reflect on the recent change in their dynamics. One member said "We used to have a policy of putting women aside. Now we know we need everyone's point of view to make the right decisions".**

passive recipients to active contributors. As a result, the whole community is observing and learning that impairment does not need to be a barrier to participation. The more people with a disability act, the more they realise their own potential.

The president of one DPO estimates that more than two-thirds of people in the community now have a positive attitude toward disability; a significant change in a community that previously believed disability to be a curse.

Reflecting on project achievements to date has also revealed new challenges to be addressed in the remaining two years of implementation.

LESSONS LEARNED

The mere engagement of a high-profile NGO can catalyse changes in perception and confidence of a marginalised group.

DPO members revealed that regular meetings and visits between people with a disability and World Vision staff brought a certain status for them, in the eyes of the broader community. A woman in Kounkané DPO explained it this way: "They (the wider community) understand World Vision is there and work with us and discuss with us. They see we are valued and capable. Before, we never had a development partner. Now we have a partner among us, so

others see that partnership and see us as having an even higher status."¹

DIVERSIFYING COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES ACCELERATES CHANGE

The project has shown that commonly held prejudices towards people with a disability are not necessarily deeply ingrained in Senegalese culture or belief. The project challenged negative attitudes by mobilising many diverse and sustained positive messages about people with a disability. Negative attitudes and isolating practices fell away quicker than expected when people were presented with positive alternatives.

Now, local print and radio media actively promote the abilities and inclusion of people with a disability. Disability awareness has been incorporated into civic education programs in state schools, and collaboration has increased between mainstream and specialist schools. Teachers from the state schools and a school for the deaf routinely share innovative ideas; state school teachers are learning sign language and pupils from the schools regularly participate together in cultural activities.² These partnerships make a vital contribution to ensuring that the broader community hears informed and consistent messages about disability. And this is critical to a positive view of disability being nurtured and maintained in the community long after the project ends.



GENDER BARRIERS

In the project's design, gender difference was not anticipated to present any barrier to people's participation or benefit. Yet the review found that gender had a significant impact. The positive change in perception of disability has not benefited men and women equally. With fewer financial resources to pay for public transport, and lack of access to "family bicycles" used only by men, women with a disability typically experience greater social isolation than their male counterparts. Lack of transport equity has resulted in DPOs having fewer female members, and this has contributed to disabled women having inferior access to information available in the wider community. Women with a disability also report ongoing discrimination in accessing credit compared to disabled men, difficulty accessing antenatal care, and claim to experience greater ongoing rejection as potential marriage partners, either by prospective suitors or from prospective parents-in-law. More responsibilities at household level can also limit women's availability to participate in project activities.³

TYPE OF IMPAIRMENT AFFECTS BENEFIT GAINED

The review showed that people with certain types of impairment were benefiting more from project activities than others. Examination of DPO membership revealed that the vast majority were people with physical impairments. Few representatives had vision or hearing impairments, and an even smaller number of DPO members had intellectual impairments. People's ability to participate in DPO activities was influenced by the extent of their support needs. Those who needed a carer to accompany them were limited in their participation by the availability of their carer. Membership diversity was greater in small village DPOs where everyone lived in close proximity, and attending DPO meetings was easier.

LEGALLY GUARANTEED RIGHTS NEED TO BE PURSUED

The attainment of people's rights is reliant on the understanding and cooperation of people in the wider society as well as legislation to protect and enforce those rights. To date, change has been driven by the good will of the authorities and wider community. This is an appropriate way to commence the project. However, goodwill alone will not eliminate discrimination and other barriers. This goal will require the project stakeholders to institutionalise change via the creation or enforcement of appropriate legislation, or by partnering with other groups who can lead this work.

Already, there is some hope for the near future in this regard. The Kolda town planning department is revising planning requirements so all new buildings will include access ramps.⁴

Other government service providers now intend to revise their operating procedures to ensure disabled people's access to their services. The Government of Senegal recently ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,⁵ and tabled a draft bill on the promotion and protection of rights of people with a disability.⁶ Development and implementation of such improved legislation will assist efforts to uphold disability rights at the local level.

CONCEPTUAL DIFFICULTIES FOR DPOS

The project's greatest challenge, shared by community partners and World Vision staff alike, has been discerning how to move away from purely charitable solutions and how to actively change society to facilitate "inclusion" of people with a disability.

The project experience affirmed that DPOs are the most qualified to articulate barriers that prevent participation of people with a disability. Yet they are not confident in their ability to address barriers through social model analysis. Actions proposed by the DPOs tended to revolve around how to assist their members to better "fit in" with society, rather than also advocating for changes needed in society to remove identified barriers.

Projects that seek to apply the social model of disability must invest heavily, at the beginning, in gaining shared understanding that greater inclusion of people with a disability is achieved through creating change in society. Regularly checking understanding of the social model during project implementation has become important, as without this base it is easy to revert to addressing people's rehabilitation needs only. From the outset it is also critical to establish how change in the wider society will be defined and measured.

MOVING FORWARD

The Kolda Equal Ability Project has contributed significantly to greater inclusion and empowerment of people with a disability in the region. The most important lessons highlighted by the mid-term review that need attention are: the impact of gender on people's experience of disability; and the need for further education on disability rights among people with a disability, their organisations and the broader community. The project has shown that discriminatory attitudes can be shallow and reversed through promotion of alternative views. For these gains to be sustained and extended, DPO members need further capacity building and training in advocacy skills. In reinforcing a rights-based, social model approach to disability it is hoped that issues of gender and type of impairment will have less influence over participation in project activities, and that inclusion of people with a disability becomes part of Kolda culture. ■

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Senegal is ranked 157 (out of 177 countries) on the UNDP Human Development Index, making it one of the poorest countries in the world. Senegal is a republic under multi-party democratic rule and its population is predominantly Muslim.

Although Senegal still relies heavily on outside donor assistance, currently growth in GDP is averaging 5 percent annually (1995-2003) and inflation has been reduced to low single digits. As a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, Senegal is working toward greater regional integration, with a unified external tariff and a more stable monetary policy. Whilst the majority of the country is peaceful, separatist rebels operate in the Casamance region in southern Senegal and this causes sporadic violence and population displacement. Senegal suffers from periodic droughts and lowland seasonal flooding. Wildlife populations are also threatened by poaching, deforestation, overgrazing, soil erosion, desertification and over-fishing.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

The Kolda region has a population of 600,000 representing an average population density of 28 per square kilometre. Encompassing 10.68 percent of the national surface area, the region hosts less than 5.9 percent of the total national population. Assessments and baseline studies conducted in World Vision program areas in Kolda revealed that the region contains the highest percentage of people with disabilities of the five Senegalese regions where World Vision operates.

¹ Focus group discussion, Kounkané Town, 2 April 2008

² Mid-term review, page 8

³ Mid-term review, page 12

⁴ Mid-term review, page 9

⁵ <http://www.un.org/disabilities/countries.asp?id=166>

⁶ Official Communiqué of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Senegal, 22 January 2009, accessed at URL: http://www.gouv.sn/communiqués/ci_detail.cfm?numero=486

August 1984, Niger Republic, West Africa: The rains had failed. Millet crops, which should have been two metres tall and piercing the sky with grain-filled heads, were brown and prostrate. The year 1984 was a turning point. It was my first experience of engaging with suffering people on a large scale; my awakening from a privileged life. This was not the 7pm news viewed from a comfortable couch. These were my friends. Real people really starve! In 1984, I also realised that in any year, not just a drought year, there was a high likelihood of famine in Niger. People were hungry to one degree or other, every year. The same precarious situation occurs in many African countries where there is high population pressure on degraded landscapes and where people rely on a small number of crop varieties or animal species growing under low and unreliable rainfall conditions.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

This case study is representative of project activity across West African countries since 1984. In the past few years, World Vision Australia has been contributing to efforts to address the slow onset emergency that was eventually labelled the Global Food Crisis. World Vision Australia has contributed to global World Vision initiatives by providing specific funding for the following projects:

- the West Africa Natural Resource Management Project in Niger, Mali and Senegal, which started in 2006 with a budget of A\$880,000 over four years;

Wattle we eat for dinner?

Edible seeded Australian acacias and World Vision's response to hunger

► TONY RINAUDO

In seeking to solve problems of chronic hunger in developing countries, and with the heightened sense of urgency emanating from the 2008 Global Food Crisis, governments and non-government organisations are looking for solutions to solve malnutrition problems once and for all. In reality, reasons for malnutrition vary from place to place and at different times, and they are constantly changing. Simply introducing a new technology will not result in a lasting impact on food security.

In Niger's case, edible seeded acacia trees seem to be an obvious answer to hunger. Acacias are a neglected plant family, largely unrecognised for their nutritional value yet with a very high potential to address hunger [See Snap-shot: Edible seeded acacias]. Growing acacias is not a "silver bullet"; the reality is more complex. Despite the obvious need for nutritious food, and despite enthusiasm for the taste, convincing villages to adopt a new food source is a long-term process. There are complex reasons for this reluctance, and such cases are not without precedent. It took over 250 years for suspicious Europeans to accept what is today the world's fourth most important food crop, the humble potato.¹

PROCESS VERSUS ONE-OFF SOLUTIONS

The goal of an agricultural program should not be to develop the people's agriculture, but to teach them a process by which they can develop their own agriculture. This is because very few practices will ever succeed in producing a permanent increase in production. Conditions, markets and people's needs are always changing.²

As with any agricultural innovation, the promotion of edible seeded acacias needs to be seen as part of a process, in which learning how to adapt to changing situations is a prime objective. Participatory learning, experimentation and peer training, facilitation of community organisations, building strong collaborative linkages with research and teaching institutions, and incorporating lessons

learnt into behaviour change are key elements of this process.

It is relatively easy to provide a package such as "seeds and tools" to solve food security problems. However, lasting change requires a deeper level of engagement with farmers that effectively acknowledges and brings into play their unique insights and skills for solving their own problems. Thus, the challenge for change agents such as World Vision is to be less "service provider" oriented and to play more of a "facilitator" role, walking alongside communities and enabling them to own and take responsibility for solving their own problems.

SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO HUNGER

World Vision Australia's work on acacias had its genesis in the work of the Serving in Mission (SIM)³ organisation following the 1984 famine. SIM made concerted efforts to promote acacia cultivation and seed consumption in the Maradi region of southern, central Niger Republic. Their motivation was to help communities become self sufficient in food and to lessen the threat of famine. They conducted farmer field days, cooking demonstrations, follow-up visits and tree planting campaigns. During this period, there were clear signs that acacias could, in time, become an accepted part of the diet. For example, children in some villages harvested, ground and roasted the seeds themselves, with neither adult permission nor encouragement. A small number of enterprising individuals made and sold acacia products, such as acacia coffee and pancakes and also an imitation dry-ration, nutritional supplement for weaning and for malnourished children. However, despite the foods being much liked, there was no widespread adoption of acacias into the regular diet at that time.

IMPORTANCE OF MARKETS

SIM, which had focused on increasing food production to alleviate hunger, began to recognise that there was not enough emphasis given to developing acacia markets. The farmers needed adequate and accessible markets and price incentives in order to have

any reason to even try to produce a surplus. In the absence of any market outlet, interest in growing and even in eating acacias waned.

The major ethnic group exposed to acacia interventions, the Hausa, are renowned for their trading skills. Markets had played a significant role in widespread adoption of commercial peanut, cow pea and tigernut production in past decades. It seemed logical that farmers would grow acacias as a cash crop if grain prices justified the investment. However, these crops were traditional foods, whereas acacias were new and market demand was simply not there. SIM staff tried to facilitate the marketing of acacia products, especially acacia coffee and to some degree acacia flour. But at the time staff had neither the marketing expertise nor the time to commit to this and there was little or no lasting impact.

A further intervention was tried. In 2004, Peter Yates of Outback Bush Foods, Australia, began buying acacia seed from Niger farmers. His aim was to find overseas outlets and create a fair trade product which would invest profits into community development initiatives. However, an overseas outlet for Yates' acacia seed never eventuated and the purchased seed remains in storage.

What should have been fairly straightforward has proven to be fraught with difficulties. Having an obvious need (hunger) and a good solution (acacias) does not guarantee immediate success. Adoption of innovation takes time.

Why continue for so long with so little success? In semi-arid regions of Africa, hunger persists and grows each year while there is a dearth of appropriate solutions. Meanwhile, the case for acacias only gets stronger as ongoing research unlocks more secrets and as acacia-based farming systems are being refined and adopted.

CONSUMPTION OF ACACIAS STIMULATED

Ironically, interest in eating acacias actually increased during the period that Yates was buying seed. Initially, farmers sold over 80 percent of their seed to Yates and kept only about 20 percent for home consumption. Over time this has changed. By 2007-08, many farmers were selling only about 50 percent of the seed and consuming 50 percent. While men tended to sell most of their seed, the women were keeping most of their acacia seed for home consumption. One woman told how she valued the acacia as food so much that she hid her acacia harvest under the bed to prevent her husband from selling it. This was despite their poverty and despite a generous price being offered by Yates; a clear indication of genuine adoption of the seed into regular diets and perhaps a call to refocus project activities on working with women.

Yates' activities overlapped with renewed intervention by SIM and the introduction of acacias into World Vision's Niger projects. Cooking methods were demonstrated and acacias were integrated into farming practices through promotion of the Farmer Managed Agroforestry Farming system.⁴ Between 2006 and 2009, over 50,000 acacia trees were planted on 480 farms in 33 villages and more trees are being planted each year. Regular FM radio messages, which reinforced information received in the field, were given by a popular presenter.

Today, enthusiasm for acacia foods in project villages is so strong that they have entered local mythology. Consumers state that eating acacia increases strength, improves eyesight, cures night blindness, stimulates milk let down in new mothers, improves livestock production and even improves sexual performance. When people were asked why they were eating acacia foods even in non-famine times, their responses included: it is delicious, it is good for you, it has a wonderful aroma and it is very filling thus reducing consumption of other grains. Women have created songs and dances to extol the virtues of acacia foods, equating it with their most valued traditional grains. Some even proposed a name change from "Dan Tahoua" ("son of Tahoua", the district where Australian acacias were first grown in Niger), to "Dan Taimako" ("the helper").

It is not clear why adoption of acacias occurred when it did. Promotional activities in combination with provision of market outlets may be key factors:

- Even though there was little apparent uptake of acacia as a food between 1985 and 1999, the impact of concerted project activities at the time should not be discounted. Children who were treated to the foods during that period would now be in their mid-teens to young adulthood with children of their own. Their early exposure may have predisposed them to being more receptive than their parents' generation to adopting this new food.
- Given the trading skills of the Hausa people, the opening up of an acacia market, albeit an artificial one, along with regular community messaging and individual follow-up, seems to have played a pivotal role in stimulating increased planting of acacias. Repeated messaging from trusted sources, including a popular radio presenter, and prior exposure and experience with acacias, may have tipped the balance, freeing people to adopt acacias into their diet, even in the absence of famine as an incentive and in preference to selling the seed for a good price.

DEVELOPING AN ACACIA INDUSTRY

Despite the increased interest in acacias, there is no guarantee that it will be sustained to the

- the West Africa Acacia Market Scoping Study conducted in February and March 2009 to contribute to the West Africa Natural Resource Management Project, at a cost of US\$55,000;
- the Sahel Regreening Initiative, with seed funding of US\$78,000; and
- the Acacia Emergency Food Research project, a specialist nutrition project conducted as part of World Vision's Global Food Security Initiative, with a budget of US\$80,499. Project partners included—World Vision Niger; SIM International and Charles Darwin University.

These projects have been funded through child sponsorship.

► SNAP-SHOT:

EDIBLE SEEDED ACACIAS

The seeds of certain Australian acacias, commonly called wattles, have historically formed a part of the traditional diets of Australian Aborigines in different parts of the country. The sub-tropical, arid and semi-arid climate of Australia corresponds with many parts of the world that are subject to periodic or chronic famine, such as the Sahelian zone of Sub-Saharan Africa. Accordingly, certain acacia species from Australia's hot, dry regions are considered to have high potential to provide food and other products and services. A number of these acacia species thrive under adverse conditions which annual plants barely survive. The seeds are tasty, safe to consume and nutritious, being high in protein (25 percent), carbohydrates (40 percent) and fats (6 percent). Acacia seed flour is amenable to incorporation in a diverse range of food products, including over 40 local dishes in Niger.



▲ **Maryama Tsaibou gives training in cooking a range of acacia based foods to village women (Peter Cunningham).**

¹ Resistance to adopting the potato in Europe was due to ingrained eating habits, the tuber's reputation as a food for the under-privileged, and its relationship to poisonous plants. In the case of acacias, there is evidence to suggest that ingrained eating habits, and a culture which resists change and discourages innovators are major reasons for slow adoption.

² Roland Bunch, 1982, *Two Ears of Corn*, pp 10-11, Oklahoma City: World Neighbors

³ SIM or Serving in Mission is an international, inter-denominational mission organisation.

⁴ The Farmer Managed Agroforestry Farming System (FMAFS) is an alley cropping agro-pastoral-forestry system which incorporates a wide range of annual and perennial, indigenous and exotic plant species and livestock. FMAFS provides a diversity of income sources and farm labour and income is spread throughout most of the year instead of being concentrated within a four-month period. With FMAFS, farm income is increased five to tenfold, compared to traditional millet farming.

point of averting hunger again unless other measures are put into place.

World Vision is therefore helping to create an enabling environment for participatory learning and experimentation and is working to link farmers with researchers, markets and service providers.

Australia's peak research body, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, has invested resources into acacia development in West Africa in the past and continues to be involved on an informal basis. World Vision Australia has been a strong supporter since 2006 through the West Africa Natural Resource Management Project. This project promotes the cultivation of acacias and the consumption and sale of acacia seed and seed products. World Vision national offices are also promoting edible seeded acacias in Senegal, Mali and Chad, and collaborative acacia research is commencing in Ethiopia.

Looking to the future, World Vision Australia recently conducted acacia market research and is funding a PhD student who is developing recipes for nutritional food supplements, based on acacia flour. Acacia market research will provide the necessary detailed information required to make decisions on whether to support further market development initiatives. The nutritional food

supplement will have application at the village and urban level and it is hoped that it will have wide application in emergency relief settings.

KEY LESSONS

The key lessons gained from the acacia experience include:

- Adoption of new ideas can take time and it calls for consistent and persistent messaging and appropriate follow-up and support.
- Markets can play a very important role in stimulating interest in new ideas. Introduction of new farming methods or species should be preceded by thorough market analysis and accompanied by market facilitation.
- As important as acacias may become in responding to hunger, the process by which change is adopted is of even greater importance. Because conditions are continuously changing, the cultivation of a culture of experimentation and adaptation is extremely important if the communities World Vision works with are going to maintain development gains and continue to enjoy food security into the future.

Some years ago, community members in Niger were asked what project activities had the most significant impact. I thought they might mention such things as the reforestation activities which had transformed a windblown, desert-like landscape into productive farmland, or the introduction of a new composting method which doubled crop yields, or the famine relief activities which had saved many lives, or even the introduction of acacias which provided food during the hunger months. Alas, none of these were mentioned!

They said: "Before, when the district chief came through our village all we saw was the dust from his vehicle; when forestry agents came, it was to fine us. We were unknown and insignificant in the world. Today, the chief seeks us out for our counsel. The forestry agents use us as an example for others to follow and we receive international visitors from America, Australia ... and places we have never heard of before. Before, we were nothing and nobody. Today we are people and we are known."

In their eyes, it wasn't food, but the empowerment that came from people respecting their humanity that was the most important gift they had received. We may never know what triggers change. Training, follow-up and market development certainly play a role. Even the flow on effect of simple acts of kindness, of giving people respect and dignity, cannot be discounted.

Answering the question "wattle we eat for dinner?" may well depend more on empowering communities to decide for themselves than on providing them with solutions. ■

Together We Are One

Young people stopping the violence in Timor-Leste

► JULIE SMITH

The 2006 violence in Timor-Leste's capital Dili was initially sparked by government disagreements with the army over downsizing and compensation. This, combined with a worsening economic situation and increased cost of basic essentials, triggered the breakdown of civil order. The regional differences between "easterners" (Loromunu) and "westerners" (Lorosa'e) were also a pretext for deeper dissatisfactions and the crisis, in some ways, was an accumulation of small payback events. Neighbour turned on neighbour over harboured jealousies or family disputes and ethnic-driven gang violence and inter-gang warfare terrorised individual suburbs. The result was that 10 percent of the country's population left their homes in fear, taking shelter initially in churches and convents and later in camps set up by UNHCR and associated agencies. In total, 155,000 people remained in these camps for the next 12 months.

Ten months after the violence, Plan International released the report "Like Stepping Stones in the River: Youth Perspectives on the crisis in Timor Leste". The report noted that most youth do want security, justice and a resolution to the crisis. The instigators and perpetrators of much of the violence around Dili and Baucau were members of martial arts gangs. While 20 percent of young men and 25 percent of young women are involved in some way in church groups, the pull towards gang membership is strong, particularly for young men. In addition to the martial arts gangs, there are a range of quasi political militant groups in Timor-Leste, many with a long history and strong structures, who are feared for their violent reputation.

TOGETHER WE ARE ONE

The three-year Hamatuk Ita Ida Deit (Together We are One) project began after the April 2006 crisis to engage young people in being actors for positive social change in their communities. The aim of this AusAID-funded project was to develop leadership amongst young people living in the communities most affected by the 2006 violence, so that they could be agents of peace. It also sought to help develop a network of young people with the capacity to become a united and credible voice advocating for peace at all

levels of society. The project was based on the idea that once youth were able to understand positive conflict resolution, the importance of peace building and unity, they would be better equipped to help mobilise their communities to promote peace and reduce violence. This goal was promoted in the project largely through the establishment and capacity building of youth peace clubs. The peace clubs provided social outlets and encouraged young people to develop skills in conflict resolution, networking, public interaction and peace building. Boredom is a big factor for young people and outside of school and church there are not many avenues for more organised social interaction, apart from football or joining a gang. So the clubs were popular and the music, drama and sports events they organised were well attended.

Over the three years of the project, seven peace clubs were established in notoriously rough areas of Dili (Taibessi, Becora, Beto and Fatuhada) and Baucau (Venilale, Caibada and Caisido). In addition, an umbrella body, the Youth Forum, is now in the process of being registered as an NGO. At last count, there were 640 members with average club membership of around 90, with young men and women in almost equal number. The World Vision Timor-Leste project team worked with individual clubs to plan a six-monthly set of activities and show club leaders how to manage a small budget and how to fundraise. Young people have helped build clubhouses in four locations, and funds contributed by World Vision have been matched by money raised in the local community.

THE CHALLENGE OF REACHING INTO "GANGLAND"

It would have been a more cutting edge project if World Vision had set out to engage directly with rougher sections of Dili's youth community, particularly the martial arts groups. It was hoped that these young people would get involved in the project as it progressed, given that the focus localities of the project were certainly "hot spots" around town. However, engaging with these gangs would have required staff with more experience in social work than possessed by the World Vision team as the gangs have complex structures, mixed

Since regaining independence in 2000, hopes and expectations for Timor-Leste have been high. So it was with alarm and disappointment that the world watched Dili disintegrate into mob violence and chaos in April 2006. Young men, disaffected by unmet expectations of a future under a free Timor-Leste, rampaged through the city, burning and looting. While only a small portion of Dili's youth were involved, most have grown up in a culture of violence instilled during the years of Indonesian occupation. Establishing peace clubs was an appropriate intervention to address this culture of violence, but addressing the deeper issues of militant gangs and leadership sustainability are significant challenges.



▲ **Peace club members campaigning on International Day of Peace at Dili Peace Park.**

allegiances, and strong hierarchies for decision making. And in mid-2006, when the project began, many gang members were still being sought by the authorities for their criminal involvement.

Initially it made sense to focus on young people who had past or current connections with some of the World Vision vocational training courses as the entry point into communities, and it was hoped to involve gang members as the project progressed. However, even when the crisis period had subsided, World Vision still struggled to find ways to effectively engage in an ongoing way with these groups. In hindsight, there could have been a more intentional focus on ways to link in with the established gangs and more time spent at the outset trying to bring on side some gang members as project team members. It's unsure whether this approach would have worked, given the gangs' reputation for violence. The approach chosen was appropriate to the available resources, the need to respond quickly in the wake of the crisis and, in particular, to the skills of the young project staff who had no "street credibility" or links to work effectively with gang members and who, like much of the community, were quite fearful of them.

This is not to say that there was no involvement of martial arts gangs in the project. In 2007, the project co-funded, along with Plan, a large three-day dialogue on peace building that was attended by a range of groups and gangs, alongside government and other players. This resulted in the development of some positive action plans on ways to make communities safer and generate ideas for things to do for bored young men. Throughout the project, gang members were involved in other dialogues and events, particularly

sporting events, although care had to be taken initially to ensure the sports events weren't used to settle grievances between groups.

USING TEAMWORK, MEDIATION AND SELF AWARENESS TO DIFFUSE VIOLENCE

Peace club members, youth club facilitators, World Vision staff and local leaders all testify to the fact that the project resulted in a better understanding of peace. Young people have started to use dialogue rather than strong arm tactics to solve problems in the villages. Police, local leaders and community members attest that the level of, and the potential for, further violence has reduced since the peace clubs were established. Most peace club members indicated that they are more self aware and thus more inclined to walk away from situations that may get out of hand. Even though only nine percent of peace club members admit to being involved in the 2006 violence,¹ there is now a strong articulation by members that violence is not the solution in problem solving.

Certainly the peace club approach has been one contribution among many to reducing levels of violence in Dili and Baucau, with examples of peace club members acting as mediators. Police in Venilale speak of the role that peace club members have played in helping to defuse situations that could have got out of hand involving disagreements between community youth. A number of clubs also worked with families who were reluctantly leaving the camps where they had lived for 18 months after the crisis, and helped in practical ways with their reintegration into local suburbs. World Vision and the youth leadership have been quite successful in promoting the idea that youth affairs and conflict mitigation initiatives should be a focus in government policy making.

Club members feel they have acquired new skills – particularly around organisation, facilitation and communication. However, of all the focus areas of the project, this has probably been the least successful. Most of the peace club members are teenagers, and while the formal and informal training opportunities provided by the project have been beneficial in challenging points of view and behaviour, the ability of members to plan and organise resources and activities beyond the project life is still not strong. Members have responded positively to training on peace building, conflict resolution and character building. There has been less enthusiasm and engagement on training provided in leadership, finance and administration and this is a challenge for the future. Once World Vision support phases out, the peace clubs will be responsible for sourcing funding from other organisations and the government. There are many small grant schemes in Timor-Leste and the project's intention was to provide peace club leaders with the skills to source funds for sports events, club maintenance, language and computer skills training, and so on.

Project name: Together We Are One

Project start date: July 2007

Project end date: June 2009

Funding source: AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

Total budget: US\$230,000

This is happening to varying degrees, depending on the motivation of individual club leaders.

The lack of ongoing project-specific funding is often a frustration in situations like these. Once the project funding period ends, staff are often allocated to other funded work and struggle to justify spending time supporting a “closed” project, even in an informal manner. In this instance, World Vision Timor-Leste is continuing to provide support in an informal manner, allowing the clubs to use the Youth Centres on World Vision’s Dili and Baucau premises to meet informally with World Vision staff who can help them troubleshoot problems and review grant applications.

One way in which World Vision can continue to provide ongoing support for the peace clubs will be through the umbrella National Peace Club Network which is being registered as an association with FONGTIL (Timor-Leste’s NGO umbrella body). This will give the peace clubs the credibility they need to start sourcing funds from other organisations and local government. Already some peace clubs have received small grants from the government to run events, as this is seen by authorities as a way of keeping a lid on potential violence in the rough parts of town. Local community leaders and the police are also discussing ways in which the peace club initiative could be expanded to pull in other villages – either through creating new clubs, or widening the existing clubs’ membership base.

LEARNING

This project certainly was a learning curve for the project staff, particularly the younger staff members who took on facilitation roles. All NGOs in Timor-Leste experience the challenge of having to recruit staff with low levels of education and work experience because those with higher level skills are usually employed by the UN or the government. NGOs often lose skilled staff that they have trained to higher paying jobs. In implementing a project such as this, staff are often focused on completing set activities without a view to some of the higher-level project goals. Initially, staff seemed focused on organising events or ensuring club house renovations were completed to set timelines. Later in the life of the project, it was encouraging to see staff step back and delegate the process of organisation to the youth leaders and focus more on facilitating the development of trust, use of skills learned, and helping the peace clubs develop group policies and guidelines. The initial focus on set activities and completing training modules is possibly another reason why there was never a concerted push to more actively engage the martial arts groups.

Additional project goals were to increase the capacity of World Vision’s Timor-Leste staff to use the Local Capacities for Peace (LCP) tool and for them to undertake Conflict Transformation

training. All our Timor-Leste staff have grown up knowing violence and trauma and this training exposed them to more formal concepts around peace building, and particularly the role of “connectors” and “dividers” within a community. A range of other agencies also participated in these training sessions. But follow-up is now required as there is little evidence to date of staff using the LCP tools in their everyday work or that they have the skills to train others.

THE WAY FORWARD

Apart from the five World Vision Timor-Leste staff assigned to youth and peace building work, there is still a limited understanding of peace building in the organisation. As World Vision Timor-Leste develops its strategy for the next five years, which will focus more on maternal and child health and rural poverty, it will be crucial that staff have the skills to use peace building tools to identify potential areas of conflict in the communities they are working with. Integrating peace building into project activities is often seen as a soft add-on until violence breaks out and then it becomes a focus. It is a challenge for staff in all organisations to continue to be aware of this.

As has been demonstrated many times in Timor-Leste, it is on-the-job support that will encourage changes in approach amongst young development workers acquiring new skills. Training by outsiders who come in for short periods to deliver modules on set topics has little impact on day-to-day work practices or on how “cross-cutting” issues like peace building are rolled into project approaches. This is an ongoing dilemma for World Vision Timor-Leste as it struggles to attract project funding to cover the costs of in-house expertise and to ensure that issues such as peace building are still given some priority in projects where it may not be the main focus.

While there was nothing too complex or groundbreaking about this project, it was reasonably successful and a significant achievement for the young staff of World Vision Timor-Leste. As it was not too ambitious in scope, the project was able to achieve some solid positive changes in local communities. Some other projects, particularly in agriculture and health, have been much more wide-reaching and ambitious, and as a consequence have fallen short of achieving project goals.

Continuing peace building efforts in a modest but consistent way at a local level, and promoting positive alternatives to violence, reinforce the broader goals of the Timor-Leste Government. Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao constantly reinforces that peace will only result from strong democratic processes, a trustworthy judicial system, and a sounder economic base for this young country. ■

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Timor-Leste is the poorest country in the Asia Pacific region, with a per capita income of only US\$370 per year. And it’s getting poorer, despite large government revenues from oil. The people fought a long struggle for independence, which was gained 10 years ago. Many communities are still impacted by the trauma of the Indonesian occupation and withdrawal, and the government is still in the process of developing workable systems and processes for governing. A majority of the population is under 25 years and this, along with a poor education system, high youth unemployment and under-employment, has many social impacts.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

World Vision has been working in Timor-Leste since 1995. It provided significant emergency support during the pre- and post-independence period and is now focused on longer term development work in the areas of agriculture, health, and water and sanitation, as well as a youth program. World Vision Timor-Leste is one of the larger NGOs operating in the country and it works directly with communities in the districts of Dili, Bobanaro, Aileu and Baucau. World Vision Australia is the largest provider of funds to World Vision Timor-Leste, mainly through grant funding and corporate donations

¹ Another 13 percent declined to answer the question. Project Baseline survey, 2007

Sharing contaminated injecting equipment among Intravenous Drug Users (IDU) and unprotected sex are common channels for the transmission of HIV and AIDS. The social nature of drug-injecting and the political and legal impediments imposed by many governments around the world present a considerable challenge for the design and implementation of effective responses.

▼ **Literacy rates in Uzbekistan remain high. This enables staff to transmit informational and educational messages on HIV/AIDS, and Trust Point services to the High Risk Population. Centre right, the business card size brochure provides contact details, location and a description of services provided in Trust Point #6, Sergeli district, Tashkent City.**

Harm reduction

Meeting the challenge of HIV prevention in Uzbekistan

► DAVID VIVIAN / HANS BEDERSKI

Profound political, social and economic change in Central Asia has created conditions that make the countries of this region particularly vulnerable to drug use and the spread of HIV. The region has been confronted with several simultaneous epidemics and trends, namely drug use, HIV, prostitution and sexually transmitted disease. While risk-taking behaviour certainly existed before the break-up of the former Soviet Union, there has been a rapid increase in the number of people practising high-risk drug and sexual behaviour, creating conditions for the rapid spread of HIV.

In many countries in Central Asia "harm reduction", which aims to reduce the health and social consequences of drug abuse, has generated significant controversy and debate among medical practitioners, policy makers and reformers. At the centre of the debate is the determination to preserve national identity, based on respective cultural and traditional norms, while having to face the challenges of social change in the 21st century.

Nevertheless, in an effort to tackle the increasing HIV and AIDS epidemic in the country, the Government of Uzbekistan launched a national program for the period of 2004 to 2009, "Scaling up the Response to HIV/AIDS: A Focus on Vulnerable Populations". This was then replaced by the "Strategic HIV/AIDS Programme of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2007-2011". These strategies for HIV and AIDS responses are based on the principle of provision of total access to prevention, treatment, care and support while inviting participation and coordination from the state health authorities, ministries, religious authorities, the private sector, civil society, as well as international and national NGOs. From a policy point of view, these strategies present a favourable framework to address the HIV and AIDS situation in Uzbekistan. In reality however, a number of cultural, political and legal barriers challenge the implementation of these strategies. For example, many people across all sectors of public office and society share the view that HIV and AIDS is the consequence of foreign influences which degrade Uzbek culture, traditions and values. This view creates mistrust and undermines cooperation between the government and the international community.

HIV AND AIDS PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROJECT

In the midst of this tension, World Vision began piloting an HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Project among High Risk Groups and Youth in Tashkent, the Uzbek capital. The project began in 2004 and initially provided HIV prevention services to key populations including IDUs, sex workers and other marginalised population



groups. The project has since expanded and evolved into a comprehensive approach to harm reduction that meets World Health Organisation standards in HIV and AIDS prevention and care. It involves community outreach and peer support, HIV testing and counselling, and easy access to sterile needles and syringes as well as free distribution of male condoms. These interventions have led to increased client coverage and better coordination of referrals for detoxification and rehabilitation, antiretroviral therapy and drug substitution services.

Throughout this period, World Vision has demonstrated that HIV transmission among IDUs can be prevented and the spread of the epidemic among IDUs in the City of Tashkent has been slowed, with indications of reversing trends. Nevertheless, meeting the challenges of dealing with drug abuse and HIV and AIDS requires institutional commitment at the national and local levels and the involvement of the wider community in planning and implementation. World Vision's experience to date in Uzbekistan has demonstrated:

- The importance of a supportive political and legal environment for successful partnering;
- The protection of human rights is a critical element for the successful prevention of HIV and AIDS; and
- Community-based outreach is an essential component of HIV prevention and must be provided to drug users in their own neighbourhoods.

In general, the health systems in Central Asia, inherited from the Soviet Union, required substantial reform to meet the emerging needs of people who are vulnerable to drug addiction and HIV. The economic changes in the countries were not favourable to fully reform the health systems in a manner that would adequately address the emerging situations and needs. Traditionally, the focus has been on inpatient care and hospital-based services rather than primary care and community outreach. However, the shift from hospital care to prevention and outreach services in recent times has led to a more flexible and responsive health system which is in a better position to meet the needs of populations most at risk. The role of civil society and NGOs like World Vision is extremely important in shaping the transformation of health systems in Uzbekistan, given their ability to identify root problems, work with affected people to find lasting solutions, and then translate learning into effective strategies for decision makers in government.

Nevertheless citizen empowerment, a cornerstone of the harm reduction approach, has been difficult to achieve for NGOs operating in parts of Central Asia which are still in their infancy. The idea of civil society groups emerging out of grassroots mobilisation with

the purpose of collective action around shared interests, purposes and values is still met with scepticism by many senior government officials across Central Asia. The work of international aid agencies with local communities is often regarded with suspicion and mistrust.

Recognising this situation, World Vision entered into formal agreements with the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Uzbekistan and other public health institutions as a means to engage the government in a transparent manner from the beginning. Furthermore, World Vision facilitated various platforms to encourage frequent and open communications with health authorities, which over the years has contributed to the development of a successful partnership. Nonetheless, depending on the government's political position at any given time, World Vision's partners can very suddenly become apprehensive about working with us. Such situations affect the implementation of activities and take time to repair.

At the national level, there is a lack of understanding within the government about HIV and harm reduction. In many cases people in government do not understand why "drug users" should be assisted free of charge when "genuinely" ill people have to pay for medicine and hospital stays. It is difficult for the MoH to convince conservative minds in government that harm reduction does not encourage drug abuse and prostitution through free distribution of needles and syringes and condoms. And it is also difficult for World Vision and other agencies to demonstrate how much money the provision of two free syringes a day to drug users could save the government through prevention.

World Vision and its partners are continually challenging conservative attitudes towards harm reduction. At times conservative minds have been swayed by progressive thinkers and given harm reduction the benefit of the doubt. The ongoing debate and controversy on harm reduction in government circles makes it difficult to predict the government's commitments into the future and to plan activities accordingly. When planning harm reduction interventions, World Vision has learned to set ambitious goals, be transparent in its work, build on alliances and relationships, speak through partners for advocacy, and continuously revise its intervention strategy as circumstances change.

Most government offices branch down to the local Mahalla level [See Snap-shot: What is a Mahalla?], including the police force. Mahalla leaders and their advisers know every family in their community, as well as the police officers who patrol the streets of their neighbourhood. Building on these strong community relationships, World Vision invited Mahalla leaders, police and polyclinic personnel around the table to discuss ways to reduce

Project name: Trust Point Project

Project start date: 1 October 2006

Project end date: Original completion date of 30 June 2009; project extended until 31 December 2009

Project partners: Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan, City AIDS Centre

Target population: 7,000 drug users, sex workers and people in same sex relationships; 100 service providers; 500 community members

Funding source: Grant provided by the Central Asia Regional HIV/AIDS Programme funded by DFID and implemented by GRM International Ltd

Total budget: (October 2006 to June 2009) US\$470,895

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

In Central Asia, where injecting drug use is the main mode for the transmission of HIV, the epidemic has been growing rapidly since the fall of the Soviet Union. Since 2001, HIV prevalence has roughly doubled, making Central Asia, along with Eastern Europe and Russia, home to the world's most rapidly expanding epidemic. In contrast, over the same period, prevalence rates in sub-Saharan Africa and South and Southeast Asia fell from 5.7 percent to 5 percent, and 0.4 percent to 0.3 percent respectively.

Uzbekistan's geographical location unavoidably sets it at the doorsteps of the opium/heroin trade route between Afghanistan in the south and the destination markets of Russia and Europe in the north-west. Despite Uzbekistan's efforts to control illicit drug trafficking in cooperation with the international community and its neighbours, it is generally accepted that the borders remain porous. Families with insufficient income are particularly vulnerable to the hazards of the opium/heroin trade including crime, drug abuse, prostitution and ultimately a high risk of HIV infection.

Uzbekistan itself is a low income, low HIV prevalence country and in a situation generally compared to the beginning of the African HIV epidemic

20 years ago. The epidemic remains concentrated among intravenous drug users, sex workers and people in same sex relationships. It was under relative control in the 1990s, but has begun to rise dramatically in the new millennium. The number of newly registered cases increased from 230 in 2000 to more than 3,500 in 2003. By the end of 2008, the Republican AIDS Centre reported the total number of HIV infections had risen to 12,816. Many experts estimate real infection rates are far higher than this. With indicators pointing to future sharp increases in the rate of infection, Uzbekistan and the world could be facing a humanitarian disaster affecting the economic and social wellbeing of millions.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

Uzbekistan's response to HIV aims to contain the epidemic at a concentrated stage by targeting the Most at Risk Population (intravenous drug users, sex workers and people in same sex relationships) and by ensuring universal access to HIV services. To contribute towards this response, World Vision launched its HIV/AIDS Prevention Program in 2003, which has at its centre the installation of Trust Points which enable the Most at Risk Population to have access to HIV/AIDS prevention services. Trust Points are anonymous rooms in polyclinics staffed with trained personnel to facilitate services such as counselling, legal advice, referrals for specialised treatment and rehabilitation, blood and STI testing, syringe and needle exchange, condom distribution, and peer-to-peer education for the promotion of safe behaviour.

► SNAP-SHOT:

TRUST POINTS

Trust Points (TPs) are called Drop in Centres (DICs) in other parts of the world. But in addition to providing HIV prevention services, DICs provide a place where people can take a bath, eat, sleep, watch television and seek general medical advice. TPs, on the other hand, are restricted to offering only consultation, voluntary counselling and testing, as well as distribution of needles and syringes and condoms.

► SNAP-SHOT:

WHAT IS A MAHALLA?

Mahalla (which means "citizens assembly") is the smallest unit of local community representation across Uzbekistan. Mahallas are led by respected members of local neighbourhoods and they have an important role in supporting vulnerable families and overall community wellbeing. The Mahalla's organisational structure includes a Kengash (committee) which is made up of the Oksokol (leader/ chairman) and advisers (on issues relating to culture, religion, women, etc.), all of whom are elected by community members.

stigma and discrimination against IDUs and sex workers. This was critical because breaking down prejudice and discrimination against IDUs and sex workers within the community is a slow process. Because concepts about criminalisation, punishment and medical treatment are ingrained among law enforcement officers and narcotics personnel, the idea of offering "services" to drug users will still need time to catch on.

Obtaining agreement from law enforcement agencies that they will not interfere with HIV prevention services is essential. In Uzbekistan, World Vision lobbied the City AIDS Centre to agree with the Ministry of Internal Affairs on a number of "hot spots" in Tashkent which are known to be frequented by IDUs and sex workers. These "hot spots" are clearly defined areas where outreach workers and a mobile clinic can provide unhindered services and consultations to IDUs and sex workers on the streets. Outreach workers carry ID cards bearing the signature of the City AIDS Centre, which is recognised by law enforcement officers. Nonetheless, as long as the law demands apprehension of drug users and sex workers, community-based outreach work will remain risky. If outreach workers are caught with syringes and condoms they are at risk of being jailed – a situation that World Vision has already confronted. Although identification cards have been a step forward in reducing the risk, not all law enforcement agents on the streets are aware of the agreement between the City AIDS Centre and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

TRUST POINTS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

For harm reduction to be effective, a comprehensive range of well coordinated and flexible services are needed. The Trust Point

(TP) and community outreach program which World Vision has funded since 2003 has been central to its HIV prevention activities. TPs are small anonymous rooms located within the premises of district polyclinics where IDUs, sex workers and other marginalised groups can go for assistance with various problems affecting them. [See Snap-shot: Trust Points]

In 2003, the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan ordered the establishment of TPs nationwide. World Vision first partnered with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the MoH in 2003 to trial a selection of services in three TPs, located in district polyclinics in Tashkent City. In 2004, this initiative was expanded to 10 TPs in Tashkent and included the provision of harm reduction and drug demand reduction services. The project also provided capacity building, medical and management training to Trust Point Assistants (TPAs) who are responsible for managing TP activities. Despite the uncertain policy environment and the government's desire to limit TP services so as not to encourage drug use, World Vision has had success with this model. It remains a model that the government is relatively comfortable with, mainly because TPs have remained under the control of medical institutions where clients also receive medical services, rather than social services alone. However, it has been difficult for World Vision to replicate TP services at the national level because it has not been able to obtain registration as a branch office which is required to be operational outside of Tashkent City.

In discussions with TPAs, outreach workers, volunteers and IDU clients, it became very clear that the term "Trust Point" appropriately describes the confidential, non-judgmental and trusting nature of the interactions and services delivered. IDU clients have said that they were initially suspicious of the motives and concerned about their safety at the TPs. However, over time they became full of praise for the professionalism, concern and caring displayed by the staff. Clients indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the TP services in a 2008 survey conducted by World Vision.

"The Trust Points are the only place we can go to get information, needles and syringes and talk to someone. We feel really welcomed and can hang around there, have a cup of tea and get out of the cold in winter."

"The TPs have given me hope."

"Even if I was suffering, I would never go to the hospital or polyclinic as they do not consider us as human beings and treat us very badly. This is not the case with the TPs where I am treated just like anyone else."

"We have stopped sharing needles. We do not borrow or lend injecting equipment since we have been on the program."

Despite being perceived by clients as welcoming, non-judgmental and user-friendly, many potential clients are still hesitant to visit the TPs for fear of arrest by local authorities or simply because of shame. In order to reach such potential clients, community-based outreach for drug users has become an integral component of HIV prevention for World Vision. Clients who are unable or do not want to come to TPs for needles and syringes are met in their homes or at specified meeting places by an outreach worker or volunteer. Since the volunteers are also current drug users or sex workers, they have regular access to valuable personal networks that involve needle exchange and retrieval services. Besides providing syringes, the regular meetings that take place at the homes of clients or outreach workers are occasions where subjects such as overdose prevention, safe injecting and various legal and social issues can be discussed.

World Vision's experience in harm reduction in Uzbekistan has demonstrated that the TP model is effective in slowing and even reversing HIV transmission among IDUs. When World Vision first began its HIV and AIDS prevention and control program in 2004, much of its immediate focus was on transforming TPs into free, anonymous and confidential rooms where at-risk populations felt safe and could obtain quality services. With the backing of a formal agreement with the MoH, in addition to the government order for the establishment of TPs, World Vision faced few political and legal challenges during the program's first two years. A challenge emerged, however, once TPs were functional and the program focus shifted to increasing coverage, which required much more proactive outreach work and the creation of an enabling environment in the communities. Both of these things required higher levels of advocacy in a political and legal environment that regarded harm reduction with scepticism and NGOs with mistrust. Although World Vision analysed the situation thoroughly and designed interventions accordingly, the full extent of the challenge only became apparent as World Vision began implementing program actions.

No specific "harm reduction formula" has emerged over the past five years to suggest an approach that can be replicated in countries with similar contexts. However, it is clear that alertness, flexibility, networking and building alliances with progressive thinkers in government has been necessary to seize opportunities as they have developed. The existence of a national strategy for HIV and AIDS prevention has provided a significant foundation off which World Vision could implement harm reduction activities. Without this underlying strategy, outreach work in the communities would have been nearly impossible.

Despite Uzbekistan's political and socio-cultural context, World Vision, together with its partners, has been successful in implementing a comprehensive model to address HIV prevention and harm reduction, consistent with World Health Organization guidelines. World Vision has been particularly successful in developing services, such as community outreach and HIV testing and counselling, which are attractive to clients. This was even the case when needle exchange and condoms were not available for distribution (these are typically considered as main means of attracting clients into services). Also, TPs have been situated in polyclinics, which are government operated facilities, which would suggest a higher level of distrust from clients given the general discriminatory nature of this environment for these groups. Nevertheless, World Vision succeeded in developing services that were attractive and that provided clients with a level and feeling of anonymity necessary for the provision of effective services. This, along with the coordination of services with the government and other public institutions and authorities, represents good success and a model that might potentially work in the future in Uzbekistan. ■

TP clients are registered and issued with personal numbers which identify them as clients of the TP services. A system of unique identifier codes is used to ensure the anonymity of clients. Between January 2007 and January 2008, a total of 3,198 IDUs and 1,268 sex workers were issued with unique identifier codes through the TPs.

TPs transmit informational and educational messages on HIV and AIDS to the high risk population through a peer-to-peer approach. A business card size brochure provides contact details, location and description of services, which clients of the TP further disseminate through the peer-to-peer approach.

▼ **Trust Point 6, attached to the Sergeli District Polyclinic, is discretely located in a side wing, with its own, separate entrance. This assures discretion and anonymity which is the underlying principle when providing prevention, treatment and care to the high risk individuals.**



BALANCING NEEDS AND DEPENDENCY



Overcoming dependency

The slow train gathering momentum in La Gonave

► RUTH MLAY

Haiti is the least developed country in the Americas. It's ranked 146 out of 177 countries in the UN list of least developed countries and eighth on World Vision's Fragility Index. About 66 percent of all Haitians work in the agricultural sector, which consists mainly of small-scale subsistence farming, but which makes up 30 percent of the country's GDP. Foreign aid makes up approximately 30-40 percent of the national government budget, with the majority of contributions coming from the USA and Canada.

Haiti has a population of 9.3 million people, with approximately 100,000 living on the island of La Gonave, located to the west of the mainland. Here, government representation and support is largely non-existent, leaving World Vision Haiti as the main provider of social services. The fact that Haiti is a country prone to natural disasters and food shortages also means that World Vision expends much of its budget and effort responding to crises or emergency situations. This complex context makes sustainable development difficult to achieve. There are no existing systems and structures that World Vision can tap into or partner with to ensure sustainable programming. Community-based organisations (CBOs) that have emerged as a result of international NGO (INGO) presence on the island are largely untrained and at times uncertain of their role or purpose. The CBOs (known as federations) also need to exist for a certain time and develop a business plan before they can be registered with the Haitian Government. This process takes years.

The political, geographical, social and cultural context has presented an enormous challenge to World Vision and other organisations in developing programs on La Gonave. Its isolated location, limited services, poor communication technology, extreme climate and topography, high cost of living and lack of resources make it almost impossible for islanders to attract business activity or commercial investment. There are few island people with the skills and experience needed to run development programs and outsiders are generally reluctant

to move from the relative comfort of the mainland to live and work there. World Vision is one of the largest employers on La Gonave and if staff can be recruited they live in basic conditions and return regularly to the mainland for supplies, family contact, support and training.

Taking all this into account, it is very difficult to describe this program in terms of sustainable development. Despite a history of engagement of over 18 years, World Vision programs have not moved far from the social welfare model and regularly operate in emergency response mode.

EVOLVING THE EXISTING MODEL

Fifteen years ago, development work was mostly seen as providing charity to poor communities. An assessment of needs was carried out by charity organisations and goods and services were provided to communities to fill the gaps that governments in those countries could or would not provide. Thus, World Vision in Haiti did things like dig wells and build schools and health clinics.

When World Vision first commenced its programs on La Gonave, the services at clinics were free. But over time a token fee has been introduced, mainly for those who are not direct beneficiaries of the World Vision program. The communities that use the services see the clinics as World Vision buildings. As the older ADPs draw to a close, the staff are struggling to identify ways to sustain services currently subsidised by World Vision. Any suggestion of charging people a consultation fee has been met with great opposition from both clinic staff and community members who are used to a culture of free service provision and see it as their right.

Clinic staff have also not stopped to consider how these services will keep running once the funding comes to an end. Attempts to engage in discussions around sustainability have led, in some cases, to heated exchanges revolving around the economic capacity of the community members to maintain activities set in place by the World Vision programs.

Despite these constant struggles, the communities on La Gonave still talk about how

Crippling conditions of poverty almost invariably generate a welfare approach to development practice. This is exacerbated in Haiti where there is a strong culture of individualism and mistrust amongst citizens and towards outsiders, and where almost everything comes through aid. For NGOs like World Vision, child sponsorship provides a guarantee of long-term funding, but it is often maligned as affirming a culture of dependency. Moreover, some communities in Haiti that have been involved in World Vision's programs from the early 90s are now furious to learn that World Vision's funding will come to an end. Sometimes change takes a long time but there are signs in Haiti that communities are developing the capacity to take more responsibility and accept a more participatory approach.

Project name: This case study relates to activities in two World Vision Area Development Programs (ADPs)* on La Gonave and World Vision's Natural Resource Management (NRM) project.

Project start date: The two ADPs started in 1991 and 2001 respectively, while the NRM project started in 2004

Project end date: The ADPs will end in September 2010 and September 2017 respectively, while the Natural Resource Management project ends in June 2010

Project partners: AusAID

Target population: 30,000

Funding source: Child Sponsorship and AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

Total budget: ANCP funding US\$942,731; ADP funding US\$6,249,539

Total funds remitted from Australia as at June 2009: ANCP funding US\$211,476; ADP funding US\$779,940

* The names of the ADPs have been withheld for child protection and security purposes.

positive change has brought them hope, and they mostly attribute this change to their long-term partnership with World Vision. Over time, World Vision Haiti has shifted program planning towards enhancing the capacity of partners, along with greater community engagement and participation. However, in communities where programs commenced before this shift, practices and ways of thinking remain largely unchanged. These communities have thus maintained a strong dependency on aid and this has created a sense of confusion in neighbouring communities.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

A new component of World Vision's programs on La Gonave addresses environmental degradation. Deforestation in Haiti is deeply entrenched and dates back to the 19th century when logwood was used to pay the official debt incurred to secure independence from France. Currently, Haiti's main source of fuel is wood and charcoal. On La Gonave, charcoal production and subsistence agriculture are the main sources of income.

World Vision has partnered with the communities to develop a Natural Resource Management (NRM) strategy which has also had a focus on changing people's attitudes towards the environment. As part of this initiative, World Vision started several nurseries that have allowed the communities to be actively involved in their own environmental protection initiatives. There is

evidence that the NRM work is having a positive effect on communities. A 30 percent increase in community participation and ownership of development initiatives and activities has been attributed to the changing nature of World Vision's program approaches. The NRM work is affecting areas of life that go beyond the physical environment. Previously, community members said the mangoes they produced were only fit for animal consumption. But following the introduction of techniques like tree grafting and provision of improved quality seedlings, they are now able to sell their fruit to supplement the income they make from charcoal production.

While there is great community buy-in for the positive changes brought about by this work, there is a need for more engagement from the Haitian Government to ensure that land protection laws are better enforced. The communities have developed a set of rules to complement existing government laws on land protection that include the imposition of fines. The fines received could generate income that can be used to improve the island's infrastructure and technology which might open market access from La Gonave to the mainland and beyond. However, to date participation from law enforcers in developing this idea further has been poor. Gaining traction may require a more innovative approach to demand-led governance.

SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

At the NRM project's inception, about 30 percent of men in the target communities participated in project activities; now roughly 60 percent of community members are participating (Nan Kafe Watershed evaluation report, 2009). The NRM initiatives also seem to have elevated the role of women. The women speak of less cases of domestic violence, they seem to be more respected in the community, and are expected to turn up to project planning meetings and contribute on behalf of other women.

While changing the role of women in society was an unintended outcome of the project, it does not seem to have brought about any resentment or conflict within the household. In fact, there seems to be a push from men for the women to have a stronger role in the changes that are happening in communities. World Vision is being careful to ensure that a good balance is maintained so that men will not feel left out of project initiatives. The men are now challenging World Vision to support them to start their own nurseries to cater for smaller communities within the ADPs so as to reach more people across the island.

In the past, men tended to be responsible for farming and the women would sell the produce in the marketplace, but all the proceeds would go to the men. Now, the women are generating income for themselves, which has

▼ **Bails of charcoal awaiting transportation to the capital, Port au Prince; charcoal is the primary source of fuel in Haiti.**



greatly increased confidence levels, and also given women more power to make decisions within the home around family planning and family income expenditure; the priorities have changed to children's education and health.

Historically, World Vision has subsidised up to 70 percent of school fees for all sponsored children in the three ADPs on La Gonave. World Vision has chosen to continue providing this direct assistance, acknowledging the danger of entrenching a deeper sense of dependency in communities. The long-term hope is that when the government begins providing appropriate services and support, the communities will be in a better position to advocate for quality services, and run and maintain the facilities made available to them because they have been made aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. A slow change is already being seen, with women focusing on ensuring they have sufficient funds to send non-sponsored children in their community to school. This is having a positive effect on the number of children attending and remaining at school. Mothers are encouraging their children to do better in school, recognising that this is an opportunity for them to gain skills that will give them an edge in the highly competitive job market in the capital Port au Prince.

There is a higher expectation that children will perform well in primary school and move on to secondary school and university. In order for this to happen, parents are becoming more aware of the need for schools to have qualified principals and trained teachers who can provide quality education. They are also demanding that World Vision only partner with schools that can demonstrate quality over quantity. Various communities are working in partnership with World Vision to support deserving children to go to university on the understanding that they will gain skills, come back to the island and give back to their communities.

While women are focusing more on issues at the local community level, men see the need to expand the NRM initiative across the entire island in the belief that by doing this, behaviour change will be longer lasting. They now see the correlation between sustainable environmental protection and improved quality of life and want to share this with others. It is interesting to see the men's self esteem improve as a result of the skills they have learnt. They believe that it is their role to share their knowledge with others on the island, instead of World Vision starting from scratch, setting up new systems and structures in other communities. And as World Vision staff are not local Gonavians, the men feel it would be better for other communities to hear and see change from the people who understand and experience their reality. This is a very encouraging sign for all involved.

With the realisation that funding will come to an

end in the near future, communities have started to express mixed feelings about incentive-based activities. While acknowledging the dire need created by poverty, there is clear resentment from those not receiving World Vision support, and even criticism from those who are receiving it about what they see as excessive levels of support for direct beneficiaries.

The communities cannot be blamed entirely for putting all their hope in World Vision or any other organisation that provides them with a means to better living. After many years of being neglected by their government, these communities have found someone who will provide for them. It is not surprising to see that the ADP staff become accustomed to being needed and derive satisfaction from providing for the needs of the communities.

World Vision is currently working with civil society and government representatives on La Gonave to offer training on citizen rights and responsibilities. Although advocacy and government involvement is key to any real change on the island and in the country as a whole, it is a difficult task for World Vision and other INGOs to tackle without upsetting the fragile political stability or seeming to support one political faction over another. The challenge is to find a way to empower communities to showcase their successes and convince the government to adopt similar initiatives in other parts of the country.

MOVING FORWARD

The dilemmas on La Gonave are profound, even if some of them are of World Vision's own making. At one level, there is resignation about the current situation; a lack of trust in the communities' ability to manage their own development; a need for staff to maintain the old model of service delivery; and a lack of confidence that the government will take up their responsibilities. To leave the communities at this point, it would appear that they would be destined to remain without adequate services. At another level, there has been a perceptible increase in community participation and ownership of development initiatives. There is a drive to improve quality of life, not just within the individual communities, but in other communities not reached by the ADP programs.

There is a glimmer of hope with the newer ADPs and the orientation to participatory methods. The older style programs have seen an increase in social capital; in both styles of program there are representative community associations and in the newer programs the local government is being challenged to establish and maintain infrastructure. Burgeoning women's groups are engaging in small enterprises that are helping to create jobs and develop business skills. These are the signs that despite the constraints of an overwhelming culture of dependency, communities are moving forward. ■

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

All World Vision Australia-funded programs in Haiti have been based on La Gonave. There are three ADPs on the west of the island: Integrated 2, Integrated 5 and Pacodes. Two new ADPs, based in Gran Lagon and Port de Bonhuer, are currently in the design phase and are due to commence in October 2010. World Vision is also implementing two AusAID-funded programs: one focusing on natural resource management and the other on governance. Both are due to end in June 2011.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

La Gonave is an island to the west of mainland Haiti which includes the communes of Anse-à-Galets and Pointe-à-Raquette. It is 60 kilometres long and 15 kilometres wide and covers an area of 743km². Approximately 100,000 residents on the island compete for its scarce resources and jobs.

Most of La Gonave is mountainous with light vegetation cover in most areas, except for the most severely eroded "karst" areas, in which the terrain is very rocky, rugged and inaccessible. Karst landscapes are not conducive to agriculture because of poor soil and a lack of water supply. This also adversely affects travel around the island with the main modes of transportation being donkeys and by foot. The distance between many of the largest communities is at least 12 to 15 kilometres and it takes hours by foot in hot and hazardous conditions to move between them. The land is overgrazed and suffers from deforestation and erosion, and scarce water resources have been over-exploited or poorly managed. The annual rainfall is 800-1400mm, mostly falling during the hurricane season (August-November) when damaging winds and storms cause extensive damage. Residents on the western side of the island have to walk several kilometres to collect their water and in the dry season it is not uncommon for people in some areas to make 3-5 hour round trips to collect water to drink.

Many NGOs do not work in Myanmar because of the difficulties of working with the government or in protest against the style of governance exercised. World Vision believes that engagement in the country's development cannot wait for political reconciliation. In addition, difficult working circumstances do not excuse development agencies from taking "safer" welfare options, nor preclude them from needing to take advocacy options. World Vision's work with street and working children in the cities of Yangon and Mandalay is a case study on the need to provide more solid solutions for street children that are sustainable in the long term.

▼ **Learning to repair bicycles at a temporary centre, Yangon.**

Hidden Lives, Hidden Voices

Sustainable care and protection for vulnerable children

► **PHEARAK SVAY**

"*Lan Pyaw Kale*" is the traditional term in Myanmar for "children who are happy on the street". Many children, however, roam the streets, markets and train stations, hanging out with friends but with no supervision, assistance or direction. Street children are particularly vulnerable. They do not have access to basic services, especially proper shelter, education and healthcare. They are at risk of being trafficked, sexual exploitation, substance abuse, harassment, arrest and imprisonment.

In Myanmar, official data on the number of street children is hard to come by. An estimate has put the figure between 10,000 and 30,000, although actual figures are likely to be much higher. According to surveys conducted with street children, the main factors for ending up on the street are poverty, the hardship and uncertainties of subsistence farming, abuse, domestic violence, family break-up and parental death.

The Government of Myanmar has taken some steps to address the issue. In 1991, it ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and introduced its own Myanmar Child Law in 1993. Nevertheless, the full implementation of the convention is hindered by financial constraints, political isolation, and the lack of country-wide capacity to respond to child protection needs. Such services are provided by the Ministry of Health and the Department of Social Welfare but their own research in 2004 confirmed that there were continuing unmet needs for the protection and promotion of children's rights. Therefore, there are limited opportunities for children to grow up within the framework of the CRC.

HIDDEN LIVES, HIDDEN VOICES

World Vision began work with street and working children in 1997 and currently does this work in Yangon and Mandalay through the Hidden Lives, Hidden Voices project, reaching more than 6,000 children. During the last two-and-half years, 372 children have gone through World Vision's temporary shelters, receiving meals, healthcare, formal and non-formal education, and most of all protection from potential abuse. During the same period, 92 children have completed vocational training, with 21 of these now old enough to gain jobs and provide income for themselves. Another 34 children are taking part in an apprenticeship program.





The project's family reconciliation intervention has reunited 130 children with their parents. Ten children have entered into group home programs that will prepare them to stand on their own and live independently. Many parents and guardians have expressed gratitude for the behaviour change in their children. Over 160 parents have attended education on child rights and domestic violence. Among them are families who are now able to fully support their children's education without outside assistance. This will help keep children in school, keep them away from drifting to the street, and most of all keep them free from abuse and human trafficking.

Despite these apparent successes, the project has to a large extent adopted a welfare approach, providing direct support with meals, medical care, school needs, etc. World Vision recognises that the nature of this problem requires a significant degree of welfare intervention before children can go back to their families or stand on their own, or before families are able to adequately provide for their children's needs. Evaluation reports have shown that the project has made little progress in its effort to build the capacity of local organisations to play an increasing role. Moreover, it has not promoted the participation of parents and communities as much as it could.

World Vision faces a dilemma in determining sustainability and exit strategies in that there are differing views on what sustainability or success for programs in this sector means. Children and other stakeholders have defined project success as "when children are able to stand on their own", "children having an education", "able to run my own businesses", or "reconciled with family". World Vision staff realise that to support these aspirations they are invariably obliged to keep providing direct services to street children. But they also realise that continuing to do so will create dependency in the long term, hence disempowering parents, communities and local organisations. While the successes as defined by children and communities are important, it is much more important for World Vision to see that those successes are sustainable in the long term, particularly when the organisation phases out of the area or this type of work completely.

PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

While World Vision will need to focus more strongly on sustainability, the next phase of this project will require continuing interventions such as direct welfare services for street and working children, support for family

Project start date: 1 July 2003

Project end date: 30 September 2013

Project location: Yangon and Mandalay

Target population: The direct target population includes 750 children per year aged 5 to 18 years (70-80% boys and 20-30% girls); 130 caregivers from 30 local childcare organisations; 600 Department of Social Welfare staff; and 1,000 parents and guardians. The indirect target population includes 1,000 children in target communities and 1,050 children under the care of local childcare organisations.

Funding source: AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), Child Rescue

Total funds remitted from Australia as at June 2009: US\$550,016

◀ **Children attending a non-formal education class at a temporary centre, Yangon.**

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Formerly the richest country in Southeast Asia and once believed to be on the development fast track, Myanmar is now one of the poorest countries in the world. Since the military takeover in 1962 and further political disturbances in 1988, Myanmar has experienced ongoing economic stagnation and reversal in economic and development indicators. Myanmar is now recognised by the UN as a Least Developed Country. It is also classed as a Heavily Indebted Poor Country by the World Bank. Lack of basic health services, economic stagnation, ongoing conflict (particularly in border areas) and the current political situation are regarded as the main factors contributing to poverty in Myanmar.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

World Vision Australia first worked with World Vision Myanmar in the mid 1990s on a HIV/health program, partnering with World Vision Thailand. Involvement increased with an AusAID-funded umbrella program for vulnerable children, additional HIV/AIDS projects and support from The Charitable Foundation. World Vision Australia-supported street children work dates back to early 2000 when World Vision Myanmar began to expand its street and working children program activities. World Vision Australia currently supports five Area Development Programs in Myanmar, one of which is in the design phase. In addition, World Vision Australia funds a number of sectoral projects focusing on emergency response, livelihoods, street children, disaster management, vocational training, human trafficking and capacity building of local staff. World Vision Australia's financial contribution to Myanmar programs during the 2009 financial year was US\$5,365,867 or 12 percent of the total country budget.

reconciliation, support for independent living programs, emergency care, and referral for ongoing care until some of these services can be provided in a sustainable way by local organisations and communities.

There are opportunities for encouraging community participation in this work. These include the establishment of community-based Child Protection Committees to be responsible for protection work in their community; handover of responsibilities for managing community-based, child-focused activities to parents and the community in Mandalay; and greater involvement of parents in cost-sharing for education support.

Further, children's participation in improving the governance of the centres in both Yangon and Mandalay could be enhanced. If they take responsibility for setting ground rules and regulations for the centres, this could help avoid issues such as bullying and unsupervised movement in and out of the centres. Their participation in this area will greatly enhance their ownership of and commitment to abiding by the rules and regulations, hence improving the quality of care and psychological support for all children.

It is clear that for the past six years or so, World Vision has been slow to capitalise on the potential of partnerships established for advocacy work. However, there have been opportunities for increasing linkages with larger networks and agencies. There is real evidence of success when such partnerships are taken up. For example, World Vision, as a member of the Child Rights Working Group (which includes UNICEF, international and local NGOs), has contributed to the development of a national strategic agenda for advocacy on child rights and child protection issues. Due to joint efforts with UNICEF, and other local and international NGOs, the government began to ease processes for National Registration Cards for street children residing in temporary shelters, and for those that do not have family registration. This is a fundamental step by the government towards fulfilling child rights.

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND ADVOCACY

Perhaps the largest challenges involved in addressing the needs of street children and ensuring the long-term viability of this work are the approaches held by different stakeholders and the operating environment.

For example, in 2005 the government closed down activities for street children due to negative publicity about child abuse globally and high sensitivity among local authorities about work with children at that time. As a result, the government requested that World Vision close all of its street children facilities in Mandalay.

The organisation was forced to look for alternative ways to work with street and working children. This resulted in the project having to shift its focus from round-the-clock care to capacity building for vulnerable children and local partners. It therefore adopted a community-based day care model. In addition, World Vision reached out to partner with local community and religious groups. This process resulted in the handover of the management of an affiliated school hostel to a local monastery, while the project continued to provide advice and monitoring support. Ironically, this forced World Vision to adopt a better development approach.

In Yangon, the government advised World Vision to re-orient its project focus from curative/rehabilitative work towards "preventive measures", the meaning of which was ambiguous. Although the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) issued the new directive, it also acknowledged that World Vision was the only agency directly targeting the ongoing needs of street children. This acknowledgement was helpful, but the frustration arising from the ambiguity of policy directives remained. Ultimately, activities in Yangon were not greatly affected and the only change was to rename the drop-in centre as a "temporary emergency shelter". The credibility of World Vision's project remained and the trust of the DSW enabled World Vision to obtain approval to continue its activities.

In another example, while World Vision has been working with small local organisations and groups, it is obvious that more could be done to enable these organisations to play an increasing role in street children work. Yet obtaining registration for small organisations is difficult. In Myanmar, an increasing number of both small and large community and religious groups is springing up around the country in an effort to address the needs of street children. But their services are limited in scope. Due to a lack of resources, the DSW cannot provide adequate support for national registration so many existing organisations and groups remain unregistered. In this context, unregistered local partners are reluctant to take over the long-term care of street children.

The pressure on World Vision to continue to respond to the needs of street children has therefore been immense. This left staff unclear about an exit strategy. Despite policy moves and a program direction that was moving towards the provision of short-term, temporary care, once a child was admitted to a World Vision centre, in most cases staff would have to offer long-term support.

SEEKING IMPROVEMENTS

There are two areas in which World Vision can do better in addressing these issues.

Firstly, while the project made advances in advocacy work, it could capitalise more on the strength of its existing relationships with the government, UNICEF, international and local NGOs, particularly by attending regular meetings facilitated by UNICEF. Given that there are only two local agencies formally registered with the government, there is an opportunity for World Vision to use these regular meetings to advocate for relaxation of government regulations around obtaining registration. Official recognition would allow more organisations to be engaged in and expand the scope of their services for the care and protection of street children.

Whilst the relaxation of government regulations enabling more local organisations and groups to obtain registration will assist matters, it is not enough. In addition to improving its advocacy work, World Vision also needs to help build the capacity of these local organisations and groups to meet minimum standards for the care and protection of street children. The skills and knowledge of local partners have improved in the last few years, but the quality of their services and care for street children remains questionable. For example, a recent evaluation identified the challenges they face in caring

for children with a disability. In addition, they face difficulties working with children with anti-social behaviours. Such difficulties have made these organisations reluctant to receive some children that World Vision refers to their centres for long-term care.

THE WAY FORWARD

There is an obvious tension between World Vision's preferred approach of empowerment and the need to provide welfare interventions. And the complex nature of the issues surrounding street children demands both short-term and long-term solutions. Notwithstanding, World Vision is grappling with what sustainability of its work with street children looks like. Perhaps for World Vision, a stronger emphasis on capacity building for local organisations appears to be the most effective option for long-term viability. However, the organisation should not abandon children that need immediate basic care and support while focusing on that task of building long-term sustainability. Direct welfare services will remain crucial while staff work to strengthen local institutions. World Vision needs to seize the opportunity that the Hidden Lives, Hidden Voices project offers to start empowering children, their families and communities through their direct involvement in project activities. ■



► SNAP-SHOT:

SAI SAI RETURNS HOME

Sai Sai's mother and his eight-year-old younger sister were arrested in China for carrying drugs. His mother was sentenced to death and there was no news of his younger sister. Sai Sai's father became a drunkard and Sai Sai had to leave school in fifth grade and start struggling for food by fishing. One day his father woke him up and told him to cook rice and while cooking he fell asleep and a candle fell and burned the house and parts of his body.

Sai Sai's father gave away his younger brother to a merchant and he was taken almost 1,000 miles from his family. After this, Sai Sai took some money and left home. He arrived in Mandalay and became friends with other street children. One day in 2006 he accompanied them to the World Vision centre, which provides non-formal education and vocational training for vulnerable children.

Initially he would bully other children when out of the sight of staff, like the way he was bullied by his father. He refused to return home. Knowing his situation, the staff provided Sai Sai with more attention and psychosocial support. Over time the bullying decreased; he saw hope for his future and he took part in training to become a barber.

One day, Sai Sai agreed to visit his home with his case manager. When he arrived, he found that his father had remarried. His youngest sister was six years old by that time, and was delighted to discover her brother again. Sai Sai decided to stay home to look after his sister even though he resented his father's remarriage. Project staff helped him set up a barber shop and after a week he rang the World Vision centre to say he was okay and had a lot of customers.

Neighbours were also delighted to see Sai Sai come home. They feared he might have been trafficked to a neighbouring country and were thankful for the care World Vision had provided him.

◀ **Children experience an excursion trip to improve their social skills.**

Increases in food and oil prices have pushed aid agencies to rethink their humanitarian assistance approaches in disaster-affected communities. Cash transfers have been increasingly cited as an alternative to the traditional in-kind approach of mainly food aid. However, many humanitarian agencies are still not sure about this approach as some fear it has the potential to do more harm than good to a community. One of the major concerns comes from the assumption that poor people are irresponsible, and so cash transfer could contribute to antisocial behaviour.

World Vision had the opportunity to test this assumption in a drought response project carried out in Lesotho between December 2007 and May 2008. This project revealed some of the social dimensions not normally encountered in traditional food aid programming.

“Show me the money!”

Can cash transfers cause behaviour change?

► JUNUS DAVID / THABANI MAPHOSA

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a landlocked nation of 2.1 million people, surrounded by South Africa. Its stability and economic growth is highly dependent on South Africa's political stability and economic growth. As just 12 percent of the country is arable land, Lesotho has traditionally been forced to generate income by exporting its human capital to the farms and especially the gold mines of South Africa. Many women have become “gold-widows” – male mortality is relatively high due to the hazards of the mines and the associated lifestyle. But in the mid-1990s, the number of Lesotho miners dropped by half when South Africa changed its immigration policy. Many retrenched Basotho (people of Lesotho) men stayed at home whilst their wives worked in the textile industries in the capital Maseru and in the city of Leribe.

CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMMING IN LESOTHO

A combination of extremely high temperatures and low rainfall in Lesotho from January 2007 led to one of the worst droughts in 30 years. This prompted the Government of Lesotho to declare a food security emergency on 9 July 2007 and to request international assistance. Many farmers lost a significant portion of their maize crop, with yields down by some 60-70 percent. But even in a good year, crop production normally only covers around 20-40 percent of household food needs, with the balance coming largely from the market. This set the scene for World Vision to test the use of cash transfers to respond to the emergency as markets were accessible throughout the country and people were accustomed to using cash to get their basic needs.

According to a definition from the International Committee of the Red Cross,¹ cash transfers are a mechanism for providing resources for all sectors. If essential goods are available in the market but affected populations do not have enough money to purchase them, then providing cash allows people to cover their short and/or long-term essential food and non-food needs.

The use of cash transfers has been contentious in humanitarian circles. In general, there are two groups of opinion. One common perception about cash programs is that poor people are not capable of managing cash and therefore are likely to misuse it on irresponsible purchases. Further, cash transfers are often deemed to have a direct link to antisocial behaviour.

But supporters of cash transfer programs argue that the poor can be responsible for managing cash when the agency involved provides “a meaningful” amount for them. In fact, the pro-cash group advocates for this approach as it allows recipients to decide what they should spend their money on. Indeed, greater choice may help to foster a sense of dignity in those receiving assistance. For example, they say that by using banks as a cash delivery mechanism, dignity is enhanced by removing the need for people to queue at distribution sites.² In addition, when people spend their money in the local market, it promotes a multiplier effect in the local economy.

To date, only a few humanitarian actors (donors and implementing agencies) have utilised cash programs and in most instances they have been of relatively small scale. The majority are still not sure about this approach and not willing to embark on a large-scale cash program. However, the two current schools of opinion about cash transfers are based on limited evidence and assumptions often derived from sociological literature rather than actual experience. Ongoing debate has not convinced either side to change their perceptions.

CAN WE TRUST THE POOR?

Antisocial behaviour is a common term used in discussions around the “advantages and disadvantages” of cash transfer programming. The term often refers to the inappropriate use of cash, such as spending it on alcohol or cigarettes. So in this sense the term “antisocial” relates mostly to a lack of trust in poor people's ability to manage their household incomes. Studies to date have produced limited or no evidence to support this idea, yet it has become a common stereotype discouraging the use of cash transfers to assist the poor. The concept of antisocial behaviour is not limited to debate

about cash transfers. In 2005, Andre Renzaho and Gabrielle Mahony conducted an evaluation that found some community members used food aid staples for brewing alcohol.³

Another aspect to consider is that cash transfer as a form of social protection has not only been applied in developing countries. Developed countries like the United States and Australia have been using cash transfers in the past 18 months to respond to the current global economic crisis. The so-called "stimulus package" is fundamentally a cash transfer program. If the developed countries believe this strategy can be an effective tool to improve the economy, many argue that the same principle should be applied in developing countries. The Australian Centre for Retail Studies predicted many recipients of the Australian Government's stimulus package would use the money to pay for household needs and pay off debt.⁴ Interestingly, similar spending patterns were identified amongst cash transfer recipients in Lesotho.

There is no denying that irresponsible spending among beneficiaries does take place. In Lesotho, the end-of-project-evaluation found approximately 6 percent of beneficiaries spent their money on cigarettes and alcohol. But in several cases where cash transfers were

wasted on alcohol, action was taken to rectify this, either by relatives or by local leaders – or even by the cash recipients themselves.

USING A COMPLAINT AND RESPONSE MECHANISM

In Lesotho, a Complaint and Response Mechanism (CRM) was established at each cash pay point. A CRM officer with a bright green vest would walk around the pay point to talk with the community and record their feedback. The initial idea was to create a channel through which community members could raise their concerns or complaints in regard to the quality of service or of the program. However, the community also used this channel to report domestic issues such as the misuse of cash by one of their family members.

The following comments, recorded through the CRM, indicate elements of antisocial behaviour:

"I have been very ill and am in the process of recovering. The problem is my husband who is a chief uses all the money for his own private affairs." (Maseru, 5 March 2008).

"My daughter passed away and I take care of her children who stay with me. The problem is my son-in-law receives the money on behalf of

Project name: Cash and Food Transfer Pilot Project

Project start date: 1 October 2007

Project end date: 31 July 2008

Project partners: UN World Food Programme

Target population: 6,500 households

Funding source: World Vision and the World Food Programme

Total budget: US\$3,380,128 (including the food value)



◀ This child, the head of a household, displays her ration card and cash grant. The project banner, displayed at every pay-point, provides messages in the local language. It informs recipients of their entitlement, project length and donors. It also encourages the community to voice concerns and report issues encountered in their community during the course of the project.

► **Cash distribution in Maseru.** A local security company was contracted to pack and deliver the cash to the pay-point. Recipients were encouraged to count the money onsite and provide immediate feedback if there were discrepancies.

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

World Vision began engaging with Lesotho as far back as 1976 when World Vision South Africa commenced child sponsorship in two Lesotho primary schools. A small coordination office was established there in 1987 and it became a fully fledged World Vision national office in 1995. ADPs commenced in the same year, with operations growing to encompass seven of Lesotho's 10 districts. Over the last five years there has been significant growth in child sponsorship and grant-funded projects. Whilst the number of ADPs has remained at nine since inception, the number of children registered for sponsorship increased from 21,900 in 2003 to 29,000 in 2007.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

In Lesotho, drought conditions in 2006-07 were the country's most severe in 30 years, with rainfall well below average and long-term higher than average temperatures. Under normal weather conditions, Lesotho produces 30 percent of its staple food requirements, estimated at 328,000 tonnes. Normally the food deficit is met by commercial imports and food donations. However, food assessments for the 2006-07 cropping season indicated that the country would produce only 72,000 tonnes. This increased food deficit of 356,000 tonnes was met through emergency assistance.



my grandchildren and he uses it all by himself and does not buy children the food.” (Maseru, 5 March 2008)

“My siblings and I are a family of orphaned children. The cardholder, who is the youngest, receives the money on our behalf. After every distribution our brother beats us and disappears for days with all the money.” (Mohale's Hoek, 15 April 2008)

“My son as a household head does not buy food with the money. The only thing he buys is 50kg maize meal; from there he buys beer and clothes for himself.” (Mohale's Hoek, 13 May 2008)

To solve some of these domestic issues, the CRM staff engaged the local village chief as a mediator. The issues were resolved on the spot and in some rare cases, when an amicable solution was not reached, World Vision split the cash entitlement to ensure all parties received their fair share.

The CRM played a significant role in reducing tension between community members as it provided a channel to solve grievances before they escalated. This was a new concept in

Lesotho to allow community members to voice their concerns, provide feedback on the program and at the same time provide a mechanism for problem solving.

Interestingly, the cash transfer program also brought out another social dynamic not found in the food aid program. When family members, especially the younger generation, felt ill-treated due to misuse of cash by the head of household, they would demand their portion of cash at the next cash distribution. World Vision had never heard of children demanding their portion of food from their parents/guardians following food aid distribution. This could be attributed to public awareness about how World Vision calculated the “transfer value” and the entitlement for each person in a family.

“We are orphans and the household head (our sister) does not help us with the money. She does not buy food for us and I am now staying with my grandfather. So I want my share.” (Mohale's Hoek, 14 May 2008)

In other anecdotes, community members spoke of their children wanting a share of the cash to finance a trip to the city to look

for employment. This emergence of inter-generational conflict was also new.

Another behaviour identified during the feasibility study and confirmed in the final evaluation was that cash recipients were less likely to share their cash compared to food aid. If they were to share resources with a neighbour, they preferred to share the food they purchased with the cash instead of giving/loaning the cash directly.

POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS

The evaluation included encouraging feedback from the community that the project had generated many positive social impacts, including reduced begging and crime.

*"Although the cash and food transfers were targeted at a minority of households, they took the pressure off other community members, who would otherwise be expected to provide informal social protection to their most food insecure neighbours. In fact, some of the people who would otherwise have been asking for help were empowered by receiving cash and food transfers to offer help to others. Sharing of transfers diluted their direct impact on beneficiary households but spread the benefits among a wider group. Incidents of stealing due to hunger – from homes, farms and animal kraals – allegedly declined in many communities."*⁵

This view was confirmed in separate research by Rachel Slater who found that cash transfers do not significantly increase antisocial expenditures (alcohol and cigarettes), but do reduce gender conflicts and tensions within households.⁶

She found that food shortages in households created significant conflicts and that usually following this conflict there was an increase in drinking, particularly as men sought to escape from the problems of meeting household needs and avoid further conflict with their wives at home.

The Slater research also showed that cash transfers enabled women to complete their rites of mourning after they had lost husbands or children. Lesotho custom demands that women wear black for a certain period when they are widowed and during this period they are not permitted certain behaviours, including seeking work. Before removing their mourning clothes they must slaughter a goat and buy a new dress. Many women are unable to pay for these expenses and until they do their livelihood/income-generating potential is undermined. Cash transfers have enabled women to break out of this trap.⁷

In evaluating the Lesotho cash transfer project, several focus group participants reported that the project had improved social relations because cash transfers had reduced hunger and the stress that hunger creates between community members.

"Hunger can lead to poor relationships within families and with neighbours."

(Female focus group participant, Mohale's Hoek)

"No one has to hide her groceries! Before, we had to buy our groceries at night because there was a high tendency of begging." *(Female focus group participant, Mekaling)*

LESSONS LEARNED

Obviously cash transfer is not a one-size-fits-all tool in emergency response. Using cash transfers requires that certain favourable conditions are in place, such as:

- the availability of a functioning market;
- favourable security conditions allowing the agency and community to engage;
- the availability of payment/cash transfer mechanisms; and
- stable market prices.

If these conditions are not present, then it is more appropriate to use in-kind assistance, such as food aid.

For any cash transfer programming, it is mandatory to have post distribution monitoring and market assessments. The transfer value needs to be "meaningful" to enable community members to purchase their basic needs. As indicated above, insufficient funds to purchase food led to household conflict. Regular market monitoring during the project cycle plays a critical role in verifying whether or not the set transfer value still enables community members to meet retail prices. If not, the amount of cash has to be adjusted to ensure the community can continue to access the same basic needs regardless of market price fluctuations.

The other prerequisite in cash transfer programming is to have a functioning CRM. This has proven to reduce conflicts in the household and in the community. This mechanism also allows the implementing agency to detect potential antisocial behaviour either at the household level or within the community. CRM allows project staff to detect problems early enough to be able to manage them effectively.

If World Vision is serious about the use of cash transfers, then it needs to increase its investment in researching cash transfer programming and to engage in forums and debate on this subject. It is important for World Vision to continue being an advocate for the use of cash transfers when it is appropriate. But to be a champion in promoting this programming tool, we have to intentionally challenge our own thinking and behaviour in relation to the poor. We need to not only trust the poor more but, more importantly, we need to influence donors to do the same. This is part of our accountability to both aid recipients and donors. ■

According to the Disaster Management Authority, many households in rural Lesotho had exhausted their coping strategies by mid-2007. Figures released by the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee predicted that 553,000 people, or about 25 percent of the population, would need food assistance in the critical months between October 2007 and April 2008. Of particular concern were poor households that could neither plant food crops nor afford to buy food from the markets. These included female-headed households, those affected by HIV and AIDS, child-headed households, and households where there were orphans and people with disabilities. In June 2007, the Lesotho Government declared a food crisis in the country and called for urgent assistance from development partners to fight hunger and poverty.

¹ Guidelines for cash transfer programming, ICRC and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, 2007

² Cash-based responses in emergencies, Paul Harvey, HPG Report 24, January 2007

³ Evaluation Report, Impact Evaluation of the World Food Program / World Vision Food Aid Programs in Lesotho, Dr Andre Renzaho PhD, MPH, Gabrielle Mahony, 2005

⁴ <http://www.marketingmag.com.au/news/view/how-consumers-will-spend-the-stimulus-package-1127>

⁵ Cash Transfers in Lesotho: An evaluation of World Vision's Cash and Food Transfers Pilot Project, Stephen Devereux and Michael Mhlanga, July 2008, P45

⁶ Cash transfers, gender and generational relations: evidence from a pilot project in Lesotho, Rachel Slater and Matseliso Mphale, Humanitarian Policy Group, May 2008

⁷ Cash transfers, gender and generational relations: evidence from a pilot project in Lesotho, Rachel Slater and Matseliso Mphale, Humanitarian Policy Group, May 2008, page 14

DEVELOPING NEW APPROACHES



Watering hope

Economic Empowerment @ work

► JOCK NOBLE

BUSINESS FACILITATION

The Business Facilitation initiative in the Ndabibi community began in August 2006 when World Vision staff invited around 60 community leaders to a meeting and issued a challenge: If the community wished to take greater control over their own local economic development, then World Vision would provide capacity building. If they decided to establish an Economic Empowerment Committee (similar to a local chamber of commerce) comprised of local business-oriented people elected by the community, then World Vision would lend them a Business Facilitator to provide business expertise to individuals and support business group development.

A committee of 15 community members was elected through the local chiefs' "barazas" and gave itself the name "Ndamamo Economic Empowerment Group". The group registered as a Community Based Organisation and was then given access to the services of a trained Business Facilitator.

Ndamamo has 154 members who contribute to the committee's activities. Ndamamo is now self-sufficient and currently rents its own office and training rooms. Over the last 18 months the activities of the committee have gained momentum and the entrepreneurial spirit has thrived. They have been following a three-year plan which established goals to increase access to finance and more lucrative markets for producers, and to improve the community's access to new technologies.

The Ndamamo Committee organised a microfinance field day with 11 banks and microfinance institutions which was attended by 300 community members. For most, this was their first encounter with a financial institution of any kind and 11 community members opened accounts for the first time. Since then, new groups have been forming each month and there are currently 16 microfinance loan groups representing over 200 community members who are now borrowing in excess of 3 million Kenyan shillings (A\$43,000). This is in addition to numerous personal loans from mainstream banks who give Ndamamo members preferential treatment. Ndamamo is now

lobbying local banks to provide mobile banking services in the area.

In 2008, Ndamamo entered into formal partnerships with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology and the Ministry of Agriculture to promote and develop nature-based enterprises. This has led to the beginning of sericulture, integrated with honey production, which employs local farmers and young adults.

Ndamamo Committee also partnered with the Kenya Farmers Association and ZionChem (a local agro-veterinary store) to make much needed agricultural inputs locally available so community members no longer have to travel 120km to Nairobi. In recognition of the work undertaken by the group, the government is in the process of allocating land so they can establish a community business centre with an office, store and processing facilities. To build the business centre Ndamamo has secured a grant of over 700,000 Kenyan shillings (A\$10,000) from KenGen, the local power generating company, as part of the company's corporate social responsibility activities.

The collective motivation and expertise of the community has surprised development workers and exceeded expectations. When Ndamamo brought local agronomists to the area to talk with community members about the potential to grow watermelons as a cash crop, the idea was seized upon by the Chemi Chemi Women's Group. These women bought land jointly, cultivated and planted it with watermelons, all within the two-month period immediately after Kenya's 2008 post-election violence. The women have partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Catholic Diocese of Nakuru, WWF, local fruit vendors and supermarkets to transform their watermelon initiative from subsistence production to agribusiness. The chairlady of the group is from the Kikuyu tribe, the secretary is a Muslim from the Boran tribe and the treasurer is a Maasai. These women are the mothers and wives of men who, during the post-election violence, were fighting and killing each other. During this period the women worked with World Vision

Over the past 30 years, poverty has been on the rise in Kenya. More than half of the country's 31.3 million people are poor, 7.5 million live in extreme poverty and about 80 percent of the population live in rural areas. Yet in this environment there are people with motivation and aspirations, there are resources that can be tapped and partnerships created. Economic development is a standard feature of many poverty alleviation programs. How it is done is another matter. World Vision is testing a Business Facilitation model based on work by Ernesto Sirolli amongst communities in Kenya's Rift Valley. It is gaining momentum and some local entrepreneurs are achieving more than they imagined. The question for World Vision is whether or not the existing programming environment, which is characterised by planning and risk aversion, can co-exist with this innovative, uncertain, opportunistic approach.

Project name: Business Facilitation Pilot Ndabibi ADP

Project start date: The initial pilot ran for two years, from 2007 until September 2009. A 12-month funding extension was granted from 1 October 2009.

Project end date: 30 September 2010 and ongoing

Target population: 31,000 people, including 19,500 adults and 11,500 children

Funding source: World Vision Australia

Total budget: US\$104,000 (approx.)

Funds remitted as at June 2009: US\$50,000 (approx.)

▼ **Microfinance field day - community members reviewing the offerings of one of the stands.**

and the local government to minimise conflict and build peace in the community.

REFLECTING ON LESSONS

What has become increasingly clear is that the community has the capacity to be opportunistic and that planning processes which are too detailed can undermine the drive, initiative and agility needed to create and capitalise on opportunities. This process is best served if World Vision can focus primarily on creating an enabling environment for economic activity rather than on detailed program initiatives.

The community's independence and agility have provided opportunities not normally available under traditional development approaches which tend to be more process oriented and risk averse, where plans are often made more than a year in advance, dollars are allocated towards projected activities and resources committed. The Business Facilitation concept expects participants to capitalise on a range of resources mostly unknown in advance: in the beginning we don't know the clients, the opportunities or the outcomes. The model relies on the simple truth that failure is always an option and that those who have most to gain from success are the people

themselves. This is part of the risk, but also key to its strength.

Wrestling with this dilemma has led to the development of the Economic Empowerment @ work (EE@W) design, which focuses on channelling the influence of World Vision's Area Development Programs (ADPs) into what is going to empower the community most, rather than what will limit risk the most. This approach is now being trialled in five pilot projects in Kenya and four in Indonesia. To understand the difference between the EE@W approach and World Vision's traditional development model for focus areas such as economic development, it is important to understand the "broad brush" fundamentals that characterise the way we often work.

The traditional World Vision approach involves developing relationships with communities at individual, household and institutional levels. Assessments and plans are formulated over time and baselines are conducted to provide the foundation for program indicators. The presence of an external entity, like an international NGO, invariably distorts people's attitudes. It is a huge challenge to both counter the perception that handouts will provide answers and to promote community ownership.

The capacities of program staff inevitably vary and their ability and inclination to introduce external and expert perspectives can be limited. Therefore, plans will often be influenced by what these staff believe is within their capacity to achieve. For them, this is important because our processes are bound to accountability objectives which dictate that budget is allocated to specific activities aligned with their objectives. If these specific activities are not delivered, then the ADP staff will be seen as under-performing on their plans. This process tends to undermine the possibility of opportunism and organic enterprise development.

There is an inherent tension between the conduct of a standardised development approach that necessarily requires time, systems and processes, and an approach that throws community members into "the deep end" of responsibility and uncertainty. At the same time, there are trade-offs that allow the two approaches to co-exist:

- The more traditional approach creates an enabling environment where the initial comprehensive research and work in other key areas such as health, education and water give the EE@W Committee the opportunity to focus on a clear local economic development agenda.
- World Vision's capacity to fund a Business Facilitator quickly has proved to be the key incentive that has helped the committee to focus. It has also provided them with quick



wins, helped them maintain momentum, bridge gaps in expertise from the “inside” and gain early credibility within the community.

- World Vision's size has enabled it to accept the risk of failure and take a long-term view in standing by and being willing to build capacity in the committee at the committee's own pace.

It is within the processes, however, that the tensions are more manifest:

- The Business Facilitator needs to be a person with a range of business experience and skills which are more likely to be aligned with senior and experienced technical staff. Within a hierarchical recruitment process and salary parity system, this significantly limits who we can attract and retain. This remains a challenge which we have not yet found a way to overcome.
- The development of an Annual Operating Plan in economic development actually undermines the model. To overcome this challenge we have introduced a template which seeks to allow an ADP to receive credit for unintended consequences and results and potentially allocate budget towards economic enabling activities that have not been designated.
- EE@W is a new concept within entrenched and complex traditional frameworks and so far has not been well understood, even though pilot support staff have spared no effort in working with staff and aligning it to the ADP design. The presence of a Business Facilitator, who is paid by the ADP but expected to take instructions from the EE@W community committee, has been particularly challenging. This has sometimes created resentment and jealousy among staff which is exacerbated when the Business Facilitator is better resourced than most ADP staff, with higher allowances and better equipment for personal use. As a result it has been challenging for the Business Facilitator to stay focused on their specialisation and not to become enmeshed in general ADP activities.
- World Vision's funding/support for various activities can endanger a committee's self reliance. The Ndamamo Committee's struggle to secure its own office is a case in point. Initially it might appear reasonable to support the committee with an office, as there are expectations of NGO support. But when the Ndamamo Committee approached its members for funds for an office, it was accused of being flush with resources from World Vision. The committee board had to engage in robust debate and demonstrate that there was no World Vision support, that they were on their own, and that to survive they needed to find their own resources.

This helped the committee members to realise that they needed to build trust within the community through good governance, increased communication and transparency. The committee's commitments and openness have in turn led to greater trust and significant membership growth, enabling it to rent an office of greater substance than what would have been possible under its own management.

REPLICATING THE MODEL

If it appears that the results in Ndabibi may be just good luck, World Vision Kenya has begun to replicate the process in a second remote rural ADP at Wema, also in Kenya's Rift Valley. A committee has formed but they are yet to secure a Business Facilitator. Already their achievements are impressive. They have managed to dig 72 dams, begin three nurseries with over 10,000 seedlings for distribution within the community, lobby local government to get 60km of road graded and marshal over 100 local unemployed youth volunteers to clear bush from nearly 100km of overgrown tracks.

The possibilities continue to grow. One of the pilot committees recently hosted a community meeting and 500 local women attended. The group realised that if these women can volunteer one day per month, this is equal to the labour of 25 full-time staff.

WATERING THE SEEDS OF HOPE

EE@W and Business Facilitation are in their early days and increasingly positive results are now beginning to emerge. While EE@W is strongly rooted in traditional community development and Appreciative Inquiry theory, the Business Facilitation component effectively marshals all opportunities available to a community for business growth, quickly harnessing strengths and opportunities that are already present. These two approaches are held in tension within our ADP system capitalising on its strengths and challenging its shortcomings. It is clear that this combined approach holds potential for producing a scale of results rarely seen in local economic development. But it also risks being undermined if we are not able to recruit appropriately or develop structures to support communities without taking control. It requires that we have the will, the flexibility and the internal incentives to walk with local community members, for as long as it takes. We have seen that each EE@W committee typically undergoes several crises. It takes courage as an organisation to care, but not to try to fix. It takes a particular flexibility and a particular type of development intelligence to accommodate an uncertain process and to communicate this effectively to donors. By nature this model is compatible with other community empowerment approaches and this makes it a particularly attractive and flexible option for watering the economic development seeds of hope in poor communities. ■

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Kenya is regarded as one of the more politically stable countries in Africa. While the government has taken steps to activate economic growth, build on its relations with development partners, improve governance and tackle corruption, it is yet to meet expectations. Kenya has experienced a decline in productivity and there is low economic and employment growth. The contested elections in late 2007 played on old tribal tensions as well as across socio-economic levels. The development context of Kenya will inevitably be more unpredictable in the coming years.

There is generally poor access to health services and malaria is a leading cause of mortality and morbidity. On the other hand, Kenya's primary school enrolment rate has increased significantly following the government's decision to make primary education free and compulsory.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

World Vision opened its first office in Kenya in 1974. Child sponsorship programs focused on education, vocational training, immunisation and nutrition. Today they include economic development and microfinance, as well as pilots such as the Business Facilitation approach.

World Vision Kenya also has a history of providing relief after droughts and floods. This includes work with refugees from Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and a number of other war-torn African countries. One of World Vision Kenya's recent successful projects has helped to dispel some of the long-standing inter-ethnic conflict between pastoralist groups.

¹ Monthly meetings held by chiefs to work out community issues

The face of poverty is changing, as the world urbanises at a rapid rate. It is now widely recognised that any notion of areas being distinctly “rural” or “urban” fails to acknowledge the increasing links and mobility between rural and urban communities. This means the effects of urbanisation and its associated vulnerabilities reach well beyond the periphery of urban centres. Working in any development setting requires acknowledgement of its location somewhere in this rural-urban continuum, where “people, capital, goods, information and diseases” move “from cities to the countryside and back again”.¹

The Musele Area Development Program (ADP), located in western Zambia, is grappling with the implications of this increasing interconnectedness between rural and urban settings. It is primarily rural and quite remote. However, one of the largest copper mines in Africa, the Lumwana mine, has been established about 30 kilometres away and this is leading to a significant influx of people into the area.

The ADP is developing activities that specifically target the changing vulnerabilities that result from the influx of people into the area, such as insecurity of land tenure, HIV and AIDS, and exposure to changes in labour and financial markets. But overall, ADP staff see the mine's arrival as an opportunity for the community to become food producers for the mining community.² While this emphasis on agricultural development is not necessarily misplaced, it needs to be matched by a focus on building community capacity to maximise alternative livelihood opportunities and to mitigate the vulnerabilities associated with the arrival of the mine.

When rural meets urban

Lessons from Zambia

► LUCIA BOXELAAR / JOEP VAN BINSBERGEN

Outlined here are the findings of a 2008 case study³ of the Musele ADP that was conducted as part of a larger study into development practices in Africa. The findings highlight the fact that Musele ADP is a prime example of the way in which urbanisation is increasingly affecting the development process in what may on the surface seem like primarily rural communities.

MUSELE ADP

World Vision has been in the Musele area of Zambia since 1988. The current ADP commenced nine years ago and will be phased out in 2013. Musele spans a relatively large area of 3,200 km², with a total population of 45,000 people and a population density of 14 people per square kilometre. Despite some important achievements, the Musele ADP faces some significant challenges in achieving its development goals, including its size and remoteness, and a history of providing direct benefits that has created some dependency in the community. However, a new ADP manager with a strong vision for the program has come on board and he has already made initial steps to change the development approach. It remains to be seen whether or not this approach is appropriate and timely enough to secure significant outcomes before the program is phased out.

The Musele region is currently undergoing rapid change, primarily as a result of the recent commissioning of the nearby Lumwana copper mine which has led to a significant influx of people. The mine's presence is altering the social landscape in Musele. For example, government officers report that the mine has employed many of Musele's young men, creating labour shortages in farming areas:

“...the mines have employed so many young men. This means there is labour reduction in the household. So if the household was doing two limas (local measure of land area), they reduce it to one lima.” – notes from an interview with a government officer

Land tenure has emerged as an important issue for the community. A local

government officer suggests that the land tenure system in the ADP is already quite fragile. And with population increases, competing demands on land are likely to increase, leading to further fragility.

Furthermore, municipal boundaries are changing. For the ADP, this means that partnerships and networks that have been developed may become redundant and significant effort will be required to develop new ones. This is but one manifestation of what is likely to be great change in the number and nature of organisations, stakeholders and potential partners in the area.

It's also anticipated that the community itself will become more mobile and increasingly diverse, which will create new challenges for programming, including the sponsorship model that underpins the ADP.

In response, the ADP is developing activities to address the specific emerging vulnerabilities, such as the potential surge in cases of HIV and AIDS, as well as overcrowding in the local Jiwindu High School.

SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

With these new challenges also come opportunities. The new ADP manager is an agricultural specialist with extensive experience in agricultural development and research. He has a strong vision for the Musele community that is firmly based in optimising agricultural development:

“Historically this part of the country has been underdeveloped for a long time. The coming of the mines has changed the picture; they are strategically located since the biggest mine in Africa is going to open here... So we believe that in the near future there will be vast markets for these farmers through which they will sell their goods.”

This vision is also reflected in the Zambian Government's five-year plan for the region:

“...the province has an excellent climate with favourable rainfall making it a huge agricultural potential for a broad variety of crops... The

establishment of agro-processing industries in the province would help small-scale farmers and increase production tremendously. The pineapple factory, for instance, would make use of the natural fruits that are in abundance in the province..."

– Government documentation, 5th National Development Plan

The ADP manager has a vision of empowering farmers with skills that will help them achieve sustainability. He criticises the "deficit" view of communities that has underpinned World Vision's approach in this area so far:

"...poverty was looked at as a deficit; the people lack these things. Let's give them fertiliser, let's give them seed, let's give them land and so forth. I would like to focus on empowerment."

He recognises the assets of this community, and believes it can become self-sustaining through a focus on agricultural production:

"The ADP has great rivers; it is a watershed. The biggest strength is the community itself; they have labour within the community. The coming of the mines will provide a ready market for the farmers of Musele ADP. The Solwezi-Mwinilunga road is under construction; this will create easy access to the market... a big population to provide ready labour; unity that exists among the people of Musele... I think we have positive political factors from the politicians whether local or even provincial or district."

To achieve this vision of community empowerment, a holistic, integrated approach to development has been planned in collaboration with the government. This approach includes a focus on changing community attitudes, provision of technical support for farmers, exposure to markets, and capacity building to improve business skills. In addition, efforts are being made to lobby the government to build the required infrastructure, and plans are in place to build farmers' capacity to advocate on their own behalf. The ADP also plans to help the community strengthen its local institutions to assist with these activities.

The ADP's focus on agriculture is not misplaced. Farming is an intrinsic part of livelihood strategies in the community and it is critical to the development of diverse livelihood sources that can sustain the community long after the mine has left.⁴ However, this focus on agriculture needs to be matched by sufficient emphasis on emerging livelihood alternatives. It is important for the ADP to pay due attention to the fact that many local people see their future as being linked with the mine. For example, several schoolgirls told researchers that they look forward to

working in the mine after leaving school, at least in the short term. They further suggested that many recent high school graduates have found work there. It is critical for the ADP to recognise that the future of the community is also inevitably tied to the mine, and this is not something the community can be "shielded" from, as was suggested by some ADP staff.

The ADP's approach is not uncommon. Development programs across the World Vision Partnership, as well as those of other NGOs, often struggle to shift from their historical focus on rural development to acknowledge the implications of the rural-urban interface that increasingly characterises most development settings. World Vision International's Keys to the City document states:

"Linkages between urban and rural environments are pervasive and strong. Development policy and programming must therefore now catch up to these linked rural/urban systems – stand alone urban or rural policies and programs deny the new 'urbanised rural' reality."

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

In 1950, there were 86 cities in the world with a population of over one million. In 2004, there were 400 and by 2015 there will be at least 550. 2008 marked the first year in history that a majority of the world's population lived in cities. By 2017, the world's urban population will top four billion people. The key contributing factors to this astonishing growth in urbanisation are natural population growth in cities, forced or opportunistic migration and the reclassification of rural areas into urban locations. Almost one in three urban dwellers already live in a slum and UN-HABITAT reports that 95 percent of the world's urban population growth over the next four decades will be absorbed by developing countries. The locus of poverty is fast shifting from rural to urban areas.

▼ **Pineapples, in abundance in the region, provide potential for small scale farmers to supply agro-processing business.**



PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

Programming in urban areas is not new to World Vision – about 10 percent of program funding was allocated to urban projects over the last year. In recognition of the fact that the face of poverty is increasingly urban, World Vision Australia has initiated the Urban Programs Initiative, a research project designed to understand the rural urban continuum and its diverse contexts. Six national offices are participating in pilot projects in India, Bolivia, Indonesia, Cambodia, South Africa and Lebanon. The Urban Programs Initiative aims to develop specific and sustainable urban development programs that address urban vulnerabilities and contribute towards liveable cities and towns where children can thrive.

Project name: Seeking the Best – Research in 12 case studies of Area Development Programs in six African countries

Project start date: November 2007

Project end date: March 2009

Project location: This research was conducted in 12 ADPs, two in each of six countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Niger and Zambia. This case study focuses on Musele ADP in Zambia.

Project partners: World Vision Africa Regional Office

Funding source: World Vision Australia

Total budget: US\$48,260

^{1&2} World Vision International (2007). The keys to the city: Finding new doorways into urban transformation: A report and recommendations by the Urban Working Group. Draft report.

³ World Vision Africa Regional Office & World Vision Australia (forthcoming) Seeking the Best – Zambia Country Report. Report on research in 12 case studies of Area Development Programs in six African countries.

⁴ Times of Zambia (2009) "Zambia: Solwezi Farmers Urged to Work Hard". 30 June 2009.

⁵ Boxelaar, L, Sharma, M. and Paine, M. (2006). Sustaining our social and natural capital: Enhancing the resilience of dairy farmers. Proceedings of the 12th ANZSYS conference – Sustaining our social and natural capital. December, 2006.

⁶ Walker, B.H. & Salt, D. (2006) Resilience Thinking. Sustaining ecosystems and people in a changing world. Washington DC: Island Press.

Overall the resilience of the Musele community is dependent on its ability to:⁵

- face the reality of its situation, in this case the changing social landscape that is likely to fundamentally change the livelihood strategies within the community and the vulnerabilities they face;
- develop a diversity of pathways to adapt to emerging challenges. This should reflect their position in the rural-urban continuum and will invariably include both urban and rural livelihood opportunities;
- focus on more than just the local scale within which they are operating⁶ and understand how broader social, political and economic forces may impact on their development – in this case the changing social, political, economic and institutional profile of the wider area with the coming of the mine.

FACING THE NEW RURAL-URBAN REALITY

The Musele ADP experience serves as an important example of the way in which

programs – that seem on the surface to be in primarily rural communities – are linked into urban realities. It highlights the importance of ensuring that development challenges are appropriately framed, not just in terms of the local, rural context, but in terms of a wider scale within the rural-urban continuum. In recognition of the fact that the face of poverty is increasingly urban, World Vision Australia has initiated the Urban Programs Initiative, a project designed to understand the rural-urban continuum and its diverse contexts, and to develop programming models that specifically address urban vulnerabilities. This project will go some way to ensuring that World Vision programs address both rural and urban manifestations of poverty. ■

▼ **Home vegetable gardens provide both food and income. However the future of the Musele ADP may lie in scaled up commercial food production.**



Creating learning communities

Putting quality back on the education agenda

► CATHERINE JOHNSTON / ANNABEL HART

EDUCATION FOR ALL

"Education allows us to reach our full potential as human beings," declares UNESCO. "A world of peace, dignity, justice and equality depends on many factors – education is central among them." Education is seen not only as a goal in itself, but the "foundation for achieving all other goals such as better health and living standards and environmental sustainability".¹

The Education for All (EFA) agenda sought to enshrine children's right to education.² In 2000, the world's governments (164 countries) signed on to this agenda under the Dakar Framework for Action. Governments agreed upon six EFA goals, focused on ensuring access to education, increasing adult literacy by 50 percent and improving the quality of education. The goals emphasise the importance of education access for girls, ethnic minorities and the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. The Millennium Development Goals also enshrined the target of universal primary education.³

Subsequent education reforms in developing countries have overwhelmingly focused on the issue of "access" to schooling, with an often exclusive emphasis on ensuring primary level enrolment and completion rates. As a result, more children are attending and completing primary school than ever before. Yet to what end?

According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report released in 2009, "too many children are receiving an education of such poor quality that they leave school without basic literacy and numeracy skills".

Today the agenda for education reform has shifted toward improving the quality of education in order to reach better outcomes. Many countries in the developing world are grappling with what this means for

them, when their schools are overcrowded and in disrepair, when governments do not have capacity to invigorate education, when teachers are poorly paid and receive little incentive to attend, and when school-age children struggle to concentrate in class because they are hungry. The requirements for adopting a quality focus seem overwhelming for most.

THE SITUATION IN INDONESIA

With a population of 237 million representing over 300 different ethnic groups and spanning an archipelago of 17,508 islands, Indonesia faces fundamental challenges in ensuring equitable access to education. The Indonesian Government has, however, shown a strong commitment to EFA. The country has seen great gains in access to primary and secondary education thanks to strong political will, significant growth in public spending on education over the 1990s, and determined efforts to ensure access after the 1997 economic crisis. By 2003, Indonesia boasted a 91 percent completion rate in primary school education.⁴

But this figure conceals significant gaps. Over the same period, Indonesian children consistently ranked at the bottom for education outcomes when compared to other countries in the region.⁵ While relatively high net enrolment and completion rates were achieved for primary school level, the national average enrolment rate at the junior secondary level has reached only 62 percent (2006), and is significantly lower in some areas: in Papua only 35 percent of children attend school.⁶ Of the 3.7 million children who completed primary school in 2008, more than one fifth did not continue their education any further.⁷

According to a report released by UNICEF in 2006, obstacles to providing quality

Governments and civil society have placed huge emphasis on ensuring access to education for all children as a basic human right and the foundation for achieving development goals. Over the last decade school enrolment rates have improved considerably in some countries, yet overcrowded and ill-equipped schools, poorly trained teachers and unmotivated students all diminish the quality of children's education and reduce its effectiveness.

Creative Learning Communities for Children (CLCC) is a non-conventional approach designed to invigorate classroom teaching and learning and help communities manage education. World Vision is learning to refine this method in marginalised communities often neglected by education reform. In Surabaya, Indonesia, this program has become a vehicle for change, showing how education transformation is possible in disadvantaged, diverse communities. It also provides a good example of how NGOs can leverage policy change to bring reform to marginalised contexts.

Project start date: 1 October 2006

Project end date: 1 November 2008

Funding source: Child sponsorship and sponsorship reserve

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

The Republic of Indonesia is an archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, stretching over 5,000 kilometres along the equator in Southeast Asia. With a population of an estimated 234 million people, Indonesia is the fourth largest country in the world and home to around 78 million vulnerable children. Poverty, hunger and malnutrition, education barriers, discrimination and abuse, HIV and AIDS, and natural and man-made disasters affect both urban and rural populations. In these circumstances, children often pay the highest price.

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

World Vision Australia's Indonesian operational areas are in Java, NTT (Rote, Sumba and East Flores), North Maluku, Papua and Aceh. Most of our development programs are child sponsorship-based with some grant funding, including AusAID NGO Cooperation (ANCP) grants.

World Vision Australia funds six Area Development Programs and more than 10 special projects in Indonesia focusing on:

- health (TB, HIV and AIDS, malaria, nutrition, maternal and child health, water and sanitation);
- education (basic education, early childhood education);
- livelihoods (economic development, food security);
- community resilience (peace building, community-based disaster mitigation).

In many areas, World Vision is increasingly working with local governments in the context of decentralisation, acting as a facilitator to improve local services.

► **An active learning classroom promoting table group work and visual learning aids.**

basic education services include unfriendly learning environments, weak school management systems (which includes organisational capacities at local level), low quality teaching and learning methods, and limited community participation. As a comprehensive tool for improving education, Creating Learning Communities for Children (CLCC) was launched in Indonesia with both methodological and political legitimacy. In 1999, the Indonesian Ministry of Education, UNESCO and UNICEF jointly developed CLCC in order to improve the quality of primary education. The Ministry of Education agreed to implement CLCC as part of their 10-year plan, and set the ambitious goal of introducing the new methods in all elementary (primary) schools.

CLCC addresses key obstacles to quality primary education. The approach comprises three main, interlinked components: Active, Joyful and Effective Learning; School Based Management; and Community Participation. The program promotes improved learning through creative teaching techniques and invigorating classroom settings. Working at local level, it is focused on helping schools and communities to manage their own

resources effectively and fostering local government implementation of reform. As such it responded not only to the need for quality improvements, but to the rapid decentralisation taking place in the country from 2001, where autonomous district governments were made accountable for education.

CLCC was part of a suite of new policies adopted by the Indonesian Government to regulate quality issues in education. Yet the lack of capacity in the government bureaucracy to execute decentralisation regulations has hindered the implementation of the education policies. While CLCC has been successfully implemented in some provinces with support from donors, including UNICEF and AusAID, it has not reached all areas – particularly the disadvantaged communities where World Vision works.

World Vision has been operating in Indonesia since 1960. Education has always been a priority, but improving the quality of education is a more recent preoccupation. Previously the focus was on service delivery and responding to gaps: helping the poor to access education, equipping schools with



basic resources and providing remedial education or vocational training. When these programs were evaluated, the findings were similar to the conclusions drawn by UNICEF: education outcomes were not reaching the standard expected.

Since 2000, World Vision has been piloting innovative methods such as CLCC to address education quality across its programs in Indonesia. Rather than working parallel to government, World Vision now partners with government to ensure work is fully integrated into the broader strategies of the nation. The experience has allowed World Vision to help adapt and define approaches suitable for marginalised groups or specific local contexts within Indonesia.

As the example of Surabaya city demonstrates, these pilots not only illustrated the potential of CLCC for improving education outcomes, they also helped World Vision develop a new role: as a facilitator of, and advocate for, quality education reform in locations where government lacks the will or capacity to respond, and where World Vision cannot bring about change alone.

BUILDING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Being familiar with CLCC through UNICEF and World Vision pilots in North Maluku and West Kalimantan, World Vision's Surabaya team saw it as an appropriate tool to address problems of governance, teaching quality and social inclusion. They found, however, that in the few schools in Surabaya where the government had introduced it, CLCC was not well understood and subsequently poorly implemented. Teachers received little training and no follow up. The district government lacked the resources and training to understand and implement CLCC, and was confused by the variety of different methodologies being mandated by the central government.

When World Vision approached the government to form a strategic partnership to support CLCC implementation, the proposal faced resistance. The schools World Vision wished to support were in highly urbanised, multicultural areas with high levels of prostitution and drug abuse and where schools lacked resources. The government had considered the overcrowded schools and diverse, multi-lingual community to not be conducive to education quality improvement or community mobilisation around education. Support of CLCC implementation across Indonesia had largely concentrated on schools located far from cities in sub-districts or rural villages.

World Vision staff knew that this perception may well be the greatest obstacle. They persisted in discussions and worked hard to demonstrate the possibilities. A field trip taking officials to visit schools in other areas that were effectively using CLCC with UNICEF assistance was a turning point. Impressed by the results, the sub-district chief was eventually convinced that the methodology could be successful in Surabaya.

Through the Surabaya Education Enhancement Project (SEEP), World Vision supported the implementation of CLCC methodology in 12 elementary schools in the sub-district of Sawahan between 2006 and 2008. The schools included 10 government schools and two private Muslim schools, primarily in disadvantaged areas. The methodology was very new for the schools, communities and government. Previously, education was seen as limited to books and education; through the SEEP project it became far more comprehensive and community inclusive.

Project assistance focused on providing intensive follow-up to build the capacity of teachers, school principals and school committee members until they were able to apply the CLCC approach properly, with a special focus on school supervisors. Supervisors are part of the Ministry of Education at sub-district and district levels, and were therefore able to disseminate CLCC implementation to other schools after the project ended. The project also worked to mobilise parents, leveraging its existing community development work within the area, particularly the local Crisis Centre which is attended by many parents from the schools.

IMPROVING OUTCOMES

The project was extremely successful in enhancing the quality of schooling and improving education outcomes. The results from assisted schools were significantly better than in schools that had sought to implement CLCC but had not received any assistance. One of the assisted schools went on to become a "model school", helping to disseminate the methodology to other areas of the city – and country, an impact that will long outlast the project itself.

Teachers in World Vision-assisted schools had a better understanding of Active Joyful Effective Learning and developed appropriate learning and teaching models. They were more qualified in implementing the new techniques and more motivated to attend trainings.

Students in assisted schools were found to have higher learning achievements, significantly

► SNAP-SHOT:

ACTIVE, JOYFUL, EFFECTIVE

National Elementary school BU 8 in Surabaya's Sawahan sub-district greets visitors with a cheerful courtyard decorated with murals, flowering plants and colourful banners. School supervisor Moenisha proudly shows a once bare classroom now adorned in decorations and posters. Brightly painted chairs and desks are arranged into learning clusters and a small improvised "library" occupies a corner. Sitting a stone's throw from "Gang Dolly" area, ill-reputed as a centre for prostitution and drug use, few people considered that BU 8 had the potential to become a benchmark for education quality.

Yet today headlines in local newspapers have begun to read: "Quality school emerges in prostitute area" and officials from the sub-district Education Department can be heard discussing the project enthusiastically as a proud collective achievement. BU 8 is now a model school for the implementation of School Based Management and Active Joyful Effective Learning, core elements of CLCC. Teachers visit the school from as far away as Kalimantan and Bali to participate in training and the school has represented East Java in a budget management seminar. BU 8 students have gone on to represent the school in national education competitions; one student was ranked 31st in the entire country in science. Moenisha – who supervises eight schools – now regularly trains teachers in other districts and provinces and presents her work to the Ministry of Education. She declares herself proud to be a voice, not simply for schooling but for "good education".

When asked about the secrets of this success, she says she needs to be innovative; World Vision brought her the tools and methodology, but she had the creativity and drive to see it through. Moenisha concedes that in schools where teachers lacked these qualities, the model was not as successful. But she remains hopeful that a new generation of Indonesian teachers will be more creative and open minded, so that more schools can create change.



▲ **Visual signs and posters to promote a culture of respect for others and the school environment.**

¹ UNESCO EFA website, <http://www.unesco.org/en/efa-international-coordination/the-efa-movement/>

² 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that "everyone has the right to education" (Article 26).

³ Adopted in the Millennium Development Goals: Target 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. The indicators for UPE are: 2.1 Net enrolment ratio in primary education 2.2 Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary 2.3 Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds, women and men. <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Indicators/About.htm>

⁴ World Bank, "EFA in Indonesia: Hard Lessons About Quality", May 2003

⁵ World Bank, "EFA in Indonesia: Hard Lessons About Quality", May 2003

⁶ UNICEF, 2006 [EFA forum, Sulawesi]

⁷ World Bank, "EFA in Indonesia: Hard Lessons About Quality", May 2003

better motivation and less "fail" percentages than those in schools not assisted by World Vision. Interestingly, the project did not seem to impact attendance levels.

Parents in World Vision-assisted schools participated more in activities to support the school than those in schools not receiving World Vision support. Parents became caretakers of school committees and other groups. The project also increased collaboration between the different personnel: principals, teachers, students, parents, school committees and the community.

This type of government-NGO partnership was largely unprecedented for World Vision as well as for the education sector in Surabaya. It proved to be highly successful. The project encouraged the education office at the sub-district level to accept CLCC as a viable method to increase education quality in their area. The government benefited from World Vision's understanding of the local community and its targeted support in putting the methodology into practice. And it used the project as an effective tool for policy implementation and for forging closer

engagement with school supervisors and civil society.

According to staff from World Vision's Surabaya 2 Area Development Program, strong support from the Ministry of Education was crucial to project success. World Vision was able to leverage the influence and approval of government to ensure the participation of schools and relevant officials and to send the message to the community that this approach was legitimate. The government provided letters of endorsement and introduction that allowed World Vision to "export" the project to other areas. It also allowed the schools themselves to form a closer and more trusting relationship with government that carried on after the project ended. A local university involved in the evaluation plans to replicate the assistance provided in other schools. The project also attributed its success to the intensive facilitating and monitoring that World Vision carried out.

A CONFLUENCE OF INFLUENCE

The Surabaya example illustrates the need for a focus on quality education. It shows that quality enhancement, with the right methodology, can be used in challenging schools in urban areas and should not be preserved for stable environments.

The project's success also shows an opportune confluence of relationships and roles. World Vision was able to forge a role as a mentor and facilitator, using its field presence and community understanding to dispel myths about marginalisation, and to provide practical implementation of policy change. Capitalising on its good relationships with the government and its leverage at the provincial, district and village level, World Vision is now working to produce similar outcomes across its Indonesian programs, adapted to the local context. It is having success in demonstrating the benefits of CLCC and advocating to local governments to have better resource allocation for education quality. This success was made possible because World Vision harnessed both the UN's best practice methodology and the commitment from the government to improving education outcomes.

World Vision therefore found that implementing CLCC was an appropriate approach, not only to ensure both quality and access, but to promote this convergence of stakeholder roles, so that all parties – schools, government, students, parents, community and civil society – work together to fulfil children's right to quality education. ■

Big lessons from “Big Chocolate”

World Vision Australia’s first solo advocacy campaign – 18 months on

► SUSAN MIZRAHI

DON'T TRADE LIVES CAMPAIGN

Human trafficking is now ranked as the world's second largest transnational organised crime. To raise awareness of this situation, the Don't Trade Lives campaign (DTL) was launched in March 2008. With a vision to unite Australians to combat human trafficking and slavery, DTL examines the issue of labour exploitation and looks at how our purchasing behaviour relates to these issues. Consequently, DTL calls for renewed effort to adequately address and reduce unsafe migration practices and labour exploitation. The campaign asserts that governments, businesses and individuals worldwide have a role to play in combating this crime.

DTL was intended as a response to the increased visibility of incidences of trafficking and slavery being witnessed on the ground, especially trafficking for forced labour purposes (as opposed to sex trafficking). The campaign had planned to embrace and complement World Vision's existing community-based interventions in migrant and vulnerable border communities in Asia. However, shortly before the campaign's launch, other NGOs and allies overseas encouraged World Vision to address the issue of labour exploitation in the cocoa industry in Africa through the DTL campaign.

The decision to highlight labour exploitation in the cocoa industry made good strategic sense. As the abolitionist William Wilberforce discovered over 200 years ago, issues of slavery are more easily understood by individuals when they are made personal. Chocolate – like sugar 200 years earlier – would enable DTL to educate comparatively wealthy, western consumers that they can be either directly or indirectly responsible for perpetuating situations of slavery.

This decision, however, was to have ripple effects across the World Vision Partnership and implications for the direction of the campaign.

THE CHOCOLATE ISSUE

Chocolate is big business. It is estimated to be a \$71 billion industry and approximately 70 percent of the cocoa beans used to make the world's chocolate comes from West Africa, mainly the Ivory Coast and Ghana.

With an absence of internal expertise on the issue of labour exploitation in the cocoa industry, we needed to quickly undertake some preliminary research. This incorporated a research trip by World Vision Australia's Chief Executive, Tim Costello, to the Ivory Coast and Ghana. This research revealed that criminal networks were trafficking children across regions and international borders to work on cocoa farms in West Africa. World Vision Australia learned of one trafficker who smuggled children into the Ivory Coast by faking a convoy of ambulances containing healthy children who were bandaged to fool authorities.

Trafficked children are forced to work endless, backbreaking days on cocoa farms carrying heavy loads, working with fire, chemicals and knives, with little or no protection. They receive little or no pay and most have no hope of ever going to school. A more widespread problem is that the farm door price for harvested cocoa has been so undervalued that, to curb costs, farmers traditionally use their children to help.

Major chocolate manufacturers have known about the problem of exploitative child labour in cocoa production for at least 10 years and have repeatedly missed deadlines that they committed themselves to in order to address the problem. World Vision Australia, along with a number of other NGOs, concluded that the issue was one that needed to be resolved internationally, nationally and locally. Internationally, manufacturers and exporters were understood to bear much responsibility in tackling the issue and, moreover, were financially in a position to pay the farmers more for their commodity.

Advocacy campaigning has become an integral part of the way that World Vision Australia undertakes its work. Campaigning provides new opportunities to engage Australian decision makers and the public and to challenge unjust policies and practices that affect the world's poor. While successful in harnessing support and spurring change, the first World Vision Australia-branded advocacy campaign, Don't Trade Lives, encountered a number of teething problems from which the organisation – and the World Vision International Partnership more broadly – can learn useful lessons.



▲ **World Vision's youth movement, Vision Generation, gathered at Parliament House in Canberra to speak out against modern day slavery (November 2008).**

Nationally (in Australia), public pressure was required for "Big Chocolate" companies to stop using exploited labour in their supply chains. Locally, some governments and NGOs (including World Vision Ghana) were working with cocoa growing communities to address some issues, but the root cause of the exploitative labour problem – the need for a fair and stable price for farmers – was not being overtly addressed.

"BIG CHOCOLATE" CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

During 2007, World Vision Australia commemorated the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade achieved by William Wilberforce and other abolitionists by committing to roll out the Stop the Traffik campaign in Australia. This initial coalition-based campaign was targeted primarily at a church audience over an agreed one-year period. Upon taking the decision to launch its own long-term and mainstream campaign, World Vision Australia sought to build on the momentum it had helped to create around chocolate within churches through Stop the Traffik and to intensify pressure on the chocolate industry through DTL. Consequently, rather than maintaining a focus on trafficking and slavery in Asia, the first phase of DTL targeted the exploitation of child labour

and trafficking in the cocoa industry – otherwise referred to as the "Big Chocolate" campaign. The goal was to ensure the global chocolate industry eliminates child trafficking and exploited labour from cocoa production by 2018. The objectives of the "Big Chocolate" campaign have been:

- Objective 1: To see the Australian chocolate industry commit to a detailed and fully-funded plan of action by 1 December 2008 that will stop labour exploitation in cocoa production within 10 years;
- Objective 2: To mobilise pressure on the chocolate industry from the Australian public, other NGOs, media, Members of Parliament and others.

To achieve these objectives, DTL set out a list of development recommendations which called on the Australian chocolate industry, through the Confectionary Manufacturers of Australasia (CMA), to:

1. Address the issue of fair pricing for cocoa farmers;
2. Support community management of local development to promote community wellbeing;
3. Invest in improved community services;
4. Ensure sustainable cocoa production and farming practices;
5. Ensure that all Australian chocolate manufacturers who are CMA members participate in independently verified ethical certification schemes.

DTL called for the CMA to play its part and make a genuine attempt to tackle the root causes of child labour and exploitation in cocoa production by outlining a detailed, fully-funded Action Plan by 1 December 2008 that:

- Undertook initiatives in these five categories that are imperative to addressing the problem of exploitative labour in cocoa farming, providing reportable milestones on each;
- Was developed as part of a global industry effort and in consultation with relevant organisations, such as labour unions, the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance, cocoa cooperatives, the International Labour Organisation (including the International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour) and governments.
- Was underscored by adequate funding – US\$14 million per year for the next 10 years or one percent of industry revenue.

From early 2008, DTL took a multipronged approach to drive change in the chocolate industry, targeting:

- Big Chocolate manufacturers and exporters,

by calling on them to reassess their supply chains so the products Australians buy are child labour- and human trafficking-free and guarantee farmers a fair price for their cocoa;

- Retailers, by urging them to stock “ethical chocolate” (i.e. chocolate that is made from cocoa picked without the involvement of human trafficking or the worst forms of child labour);
- Consumers, by educating them not to boycott their favourite chocolates (since this only hurts farming families more) but to use their voices and purchasing power to demand ethical chocolate from manufacturers.

MOBILISING PUBLIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT

This approach was driven by key World Vision Australia constituents and allies: young Australians and the World Vision Australia youth movement, Vision Generation, churches of all denominations, World Vision supporters, Australian parliamentarians, World Vision staff, and allied NGOs including Fairtrade Labelling Australia and New Zealand.

Over 17 months, more than 25,000 Australians supported DTL actions targeting the chocolate industry. Existing World Vision supporters and other Australians new to the organisation visited chocolate manufacturers and retailers, signed petitions, utilised social networking sites, held protests and visited Members of Parliament (MPs) to demand change in industry practice. Consequently, MPs made statements in support of the campaign in Parliament and/or wrote letters of concern to chocolate companies. At least 26 Federal MPs committed their workplaces to stock only Fairtrade goods where available and over 12 local councils committed themselves to become Fairtrade communities as a direct response to the campaign.

The CMA responded to the 1 December 2008 campaign “deadline”, although its response was inadequate as it failed to deliver a detailed and costed Plan of Action. Consequently, the campaign strategy was refocused to target manufacturers directly – specifically, the “Big Four” companies in Australia: Cadbury, Nestle, Mars and Ferrero. With Cadbury already working with World Vision offices in the United Kingdom and Ghana on the Cadbury Cocoa Partnership, the opportunity existed for DTL to lobby Cadbury Global to produce Fairtrade-certified products and for World Vision Australia to work with Cadbury Australia in particular.

CAMPAIGN OUTCOMES

Since March 2009, key manufacturers have broken ranks with their competitors and made public commitments about their supply chains. Most notably, the Cadbury company, including Cadbury

Australia – the nation’s largest manufacturer of chocolate – announced it will use Fairtrade cocoa in the production of its most popular product, Cadbury Dairy Milk chocolate. Cadbury Australia’s decision will triple the amount of Fairtrade cocoa available in Australia and impact approximately 7,800 cocoa farming households. This equates to a direct impact on 39,000 people (23,400 of which would be children) in the first year.

World Vision Australia has been repeatedly advised by Cadbury Australia and Fairtrade that pressure exerted through the DTL campaign created the conditions for Cadbury management to investigate Fairtrade as an option and that economic modelling put forward by the campaign helped influence their corporate decision. Despite its infancy, the campaign has achieved the following additional outcomes:

- There is an increase in the demand for and availability of Fairtrade chocolate and Fairtrade products more generally.
- Australia’s largest supermarket chain, Coles, is stocking more Fairtrade chocolate as a result of demand generated through the DTL campaign.
- Other industry commitments which may be indirectly due to the campaign include Mars’ April announcement that it will certify its entire cocoa supply through the Rainforest Alliance scheme by 2020.
- Coles’ major competitor, Woolworths, is now stocking more Fairtrade chocolate in all its stores.

Consequently, the campaign has been successful both in terms of mobilising public awareness and support, and in contributing to change in the chocolate industry, retail practice and consumer demand.

KEY CHALLENGES

Through an Australian lens, DTL has been clearly successful in harnessing public and political support in an effort to change corporate behaviour and help eradicate labour exploitation and trafficking in the cocoa industry. Yet while successful in mobilising support and spurring change, the DTL campaign encountered significant teething problems from which World Vision can draw a number of lessons:

- There was inadequate lead-in time. Enthusiasm to build on the momentum achieved through World Vision Australia’s involvement in the Stop the Traffik campaign led World Vision to launch the DTL campaign prematurely. The organisation’s various channels into the Australian community, strong credibility and high profile CEO saw the campaign take off quickly in the media and through a cross-section of society. The campaign was therefore in the public domain

¹ World Vision uses the definition of Trafficking in Persons as internationally agreed in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, United Nations (2000). The definition (and thereby, application of the Protocol) covers all aspects of the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation is defined to include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth above. World Vision believes that there has been insufficient focus on the “harbouring” and “receipt” aspects of the definition, which has led to some misunderstanding that only the “movement” or “action” is the crime. The references to harbouring and receipt operate to bring not just the process but also the end-situation of trafficking to the international legal definition.



▲ **The harvesting of cocoa is very labour intensive. Both adults and children use machetes to crack open the thick pods and access the large seeds inside – these are the cocoa beans.**

well before campaign strategies and tactics, and most significantly policy recommendations on cocoa or on Asia, were finalised.

- The campaign was under-resourced. As this was World Vision's first solo advocacy campaign, the amount of staff resources and time required to establish and launch it were underestimated. Staff were overstretched. In addition, it became apparent that a significant amount of time and energy needed to be placed into managing and educating internal stakeholders about advocacy campaigns and how campaign themes could be integrated into their respective areas of work.
- The campaign's facts and messages were based largely on desk research and not sufficiently linked to World Vision Ghana's field experience. There was a lack of relevant technical expertise on the cocoa issue and an inability to share case studies of individuals in cocoa fields that World Vision had worked with and supported.
- The "Big Chocolate" campaign could not be used to leverage World Vision Australia's Child Rescue fundraising program as, at the time, this program did not fund any projects targeting labour exploitation in cocoa farming communities in West Africa.
- Advocacy campaigns, by their nature, intend to challenge the status quo. They often confront strongly-held views and the distribution of power that disadvantages certain people or groups. But this is a new addition to World Vision's toolbox and given the diverse social and political contexts within which World Vision offices work, a common understanding and appreciation of the role of advocacy campaigns is yet to be reached.
- While World Vision Ghana had been informed by World Vision Australia about the campaign

in advance of its launch, they were not given adequate opportunity to contribute to or endorse the campaign strategy. Consequently, the field office felt compromised when the Ghanaian Government took objection to some of the campaign messages. This caused some division within the World Vision International Partnership.

- Sensitivities around the use of key campaign terminology came into play. For example, the word "slave" evokes a particular meaning and history for people of African descent.

CREATING EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

World Vision Australia is well placed to undertake advocacy campaigns for a number of reasons. These include its strong brand recognition, credibility in the field, engagement with diverse segments of the community (such as churches, corporations and young people through our youth movement Vision Generation), internal expertise, and an active and high profile CEO.

However, appropriate technical expertise and adequate resources must be made available from the outset in order to properly analyse an issue before a campaign is launched. Furthermore, without adequate lead-in time to allow for field research, policy development, identification of stakeholders and targets, and articulation of the campaign strategy, the organisation runs increased risks. These risks could include – but are not limited to – external scrutiny and criticism, tensions within the World Vision Partnership, overwhelming human resources, and a failure to achieve the campaign's goals and objectives.

The strengths and challenges that have emerged from the DTL campaign in the past 18 months have given us pause to reflect on best practice in designing and implementing advocacy campaigns. Future advocacy campaigns undertaken by the World Vision Partnership, for example, would benefit from having adequate lead-in time and clarity around the different roles that various World Vision offices can play in addressing an issue.

By adapting existing, widely-used strategy models, World Vision Australia has outlined a process for the development and implementation of future advocacy campaigns. This incorporates the following stages and includes organisational considerations unique to World Vision: – see diagram.

It should be noted that aspects of this process can (and often should) occur in tandem.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The DTL campaign's victories and organisational learning over the past 18 months have laid the foundations for it to make a stronger impact in the coming years in combating the crimes of human trafficking and slavery, especially in Asia.

The recent “wins” have united the organisation internally and clearly demonstrated that social change is within our reach. With a recently completed suite of policy recommendations on how governments can address the problem in the region, and increased and better-prepared staff resources in the Advocacy department and across the organisation, DTL is now actively pursuing a two track strategy:

Track 1 – Ethical Consumerism: By highlighting exploitative labour practices in key industries, DTL is seeking to reduce the market in Australia for products produced through slavery and trafficked labour. DTL’s “Track 1” will continue to target the use of child labour in the cocoa industry whilst broadening this focus to raise awareness of other products that are made through trafficked labour (especially involving children), and to educate consumers about the benefits of Fairtrade.

Track 2 – Not in our Neighbourhood: Asia is considered the epicentre of child bonded and trafficked labour. For this reason, DTL holds that the Australian Government has a moral obligation to actively support neighbouring countries in addressing this issue. Our recently completed suite of policy recommendations will provide a platform from which we can advance the campaign. These recommendations are aimed at Australian and other governments, and regional entities.

DTL continues to assert that governments, businesses and individuals worldwide have a role to play in combating the crime of human trafficking. A third track, which seeks to advise the private sector on ways it can combat trafficking and slavery, is therefore being considered. ■

Process for Development & Implementation of WVA Advocacy Campaigns

1. IDENTIFY ISSUE

- Preliminary data collection to define the problem and priorities
- Is the problem observed by World Vision in the field?
- What is the World Vision national office perspective?

2. CONDUCT RESEARCH

- Undertake in-depth research (desk-based)
- Gather case studies and evidence from the field
- Establish policy recommendations

3. ARTICULATE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Based on research, opportunities and perspectives
- Establish “SMART” objectives
- Develop understanding within World Vision Australia

8. EVALUATE

- Obtain feedback from internal stakeholders
- Assess impact and effectiveness: has the campaign brought about the desired change?

4. IDENTIFY TARGETS AND STAKEHOLDERS

- Identify internal allies
- Develop relationships with external contacts and agents of change
- Identify and commence engaging targets

7. MONITOR

- Monitor effectiveness of strategies and tactics
- Observe media attention to issue (where appropriate)
- Modify approaches and tactics accordingly

6. IMPLEMENT

- Identify which indicators will mark “success”
- Implement campaign strategies and tactics as planned

5. DEVELOP STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

- Work with internal stakeholders and external allies to develop effective, audience-appropriate and timely strategies and tactics

ORGANISATIONAL DYNAMICS AND RISK



Whose bottom line?

Learning from social performance management

► RONI ORACION

WORLD VISION AND MICROFINANCE

World Vision set up microfinance institutions (MFIs) in the late 1990s to offer financial services to poor communities in program areas. Initially, World Vision offered only microcredit, or small collateral-free loans, to help existing businesses grow and diversify. This was purely a business decision – offering just one product keeps costs down, simplifies management systems, reduces risks and is easy to replicate.

As the global microfinance industry started evolving into more market-led and client-focused services, World Vision had no choice but to start offering other financial services to remain competitive and relevant. As a result, the organisation now offers a wide range of financial services, including credit, savings, insurance and funds transfer. In addition, World Vision's wholly-owned microfinance subsidiary, VisionFund, has grown quickly thanks to increasing debt financing and equity investment. As of September 2009, World Vision was managing 43 MFIs in 43 countries, lending US\$380.8 million to over 624,000 clients (68 percent of whom were women).

VisionFund inherited a mixed bag of MFIs. There were no standard operational processes and many of the MFIs were operating with sub-optimal or erroneous processes. In response, VisionFund standardised processes, imposed strict adherence to financial performance outcomes (loan portfolio quality, cost recovery and profitability), and tightened risk management strategies.

The pressure to deliver on financial performance measures and control risks led many MFIs to deal mainly with non-poor clients operating established businesses in easy-to-reach, mostly urban areas. This was due to the perceived high costs and risks associated with providing financial services to the poor in remote areas. VisionFund's strong emphasis on financial performance unfortunately reinforced the belief that an institution's financial performance alone is the key to long-term viability, instead of managing financial and social performance

side-by-side. Under this scenario the poor are treated as mere statistics, referred to only in terms such as "default rates", "average loan size" and "percentage of women clients".

The poor, if considered at all, were only viewed in the limited definition of social performance measures, which VisionFund tended to equate with impact assessments. These impact assessments had high costs and complex requirements and were largely controlled by donors and researchers – MFIs and their clients rarely owned the results. Thus, many MFIs used these negatives as an excuse to shy away from social performance, concentrating all their efforts on financial performance. And this lack of focus on the poor resulted in mission drift.

The following case study demonstrates that financial performance alone is not sufficient to guarantee long-term viability. In fact, the incorporation of social performance measures has been critical to the institution's financial recovery and viability. Although social performance measures are still to be standardised, the case study shows that the challenge of finding or adapting the right framework and tools for learning from the poor, understanding their needs, and using their voices to influence change is not insurmountable.

The process of bringing the poor back to the forefront of the microfinance agenda through social performance management can be simplified and the costs can be managed. The key is a pro-poor and mission-driven organisational culture focused on enabling the poor to be active participants in the market economy as a pathway out of poverty.

THE CEVI EXPERIENCE

Community Economic Ventures Inc. (CEVI) had phenomenal growth in its first seven years of operation, lending US\$1.01 million to 15,235 clients (89 percent women) by 2004. The 2004 Microfinance Information eXchange¹ report on CEVI's operations stated that "despite its youth, CEVI demonstrated many characteristics of a mature MFI, achieving fully operational

Offering the poor a pathway out of poverty is at the heart of microfinance. Learning from the poor and using their voices to influence the microfinance agenda is the key to attracting and keeping clients, and thus financial viability. Social performance management allows microfinance providers to institutionalise this process, bringing the poor back to the forefront of the microfinance agenda.

Many institutions tend to focus solely on financial performance measures due to ease of use and cost effectiveness – standardisation has resulted in one term, one indicator, and one definition. The poor are mere adjuncts. Microfinance institutions are often hesitant to set up social performance management for many reasons including the perceived costs and complexities. But one institution's evolving social performance management shows that it is neither costly nor complex; and that it brings benefits that can improve the financial bottom line – by increasing outreach and market share, generating higher levels of client satisfaction and retention, and lowering operational costs. However, care needs to be taken to balance the introduction of additional social measures that might overload what is essentially a business operation.

Funding source: (FY2008-09)

Private non-sponsorship funding,
child sponsorship

Total funds remitted from

Australia: (FY2008-09): US\$1,158,677

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Microfinance is widely recognised as playing an important role in reaching and integrating the economically active poor into the formal financial system. Although microcredit has traditionally been seen as a financial tool to increase the productive capacity of the poor, “micro (finance) programs can become powerful vehicles for other desirable social benefits”. (Daley-Harris, 2005: 6) Microfinance can assist in limiting vulnerability to economic shock and contribute towards achieving social empowerment through entrepreneurship. (Khandker, 2005)

The microfinance industry has seen fundamental transformations in recent years and the industry is moving away, albeit slowly, from “one size fits all” modes of service delivery towards models which are more targeted towards meeting the varied demands of the poor. Nevertheless, most microfinance products and services are still highly standardised and are, in the main, not flexible enough to meet the variable cash flows of clients.

The Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest, a consortium of over 30 development agencies and private foundations, has been actively promoting the adoption of client protection principles – avoidance of over-indebtedness, transparent pricing, appropriate collection practices, ethical staff behaviour, mechanisms for redress of grievances, and privacy of client data. However, the challenge remains to turn abstract principles into concrete policies and processes that truly help clients stay financially healthy.

► **SNAP-SHOT:****WHAT IS SOCIAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT?**

Social performance management is defined as “the effective translation of an institution's social mission into practice in line with accepted social values that relate to serving larger numbers of poor and excluded people; improving the quality and appropriateness of financial services; creating benefits for clients and communities; and improving social responsibility of a microfinance institution.” (Social Performance Taskforce) It ensures that MFIs successfully translate their social mission of serving the poor into practice.

and financial sustainability while maintaining its commitment to lower income clients and posting positive average return on assets”.

CEVI, however, experienced a decrease in the number of clients in 2005 and 2006. This was concerning for two reasons: firstly, this downturn eroded the gains achieved in the first seven years and secondly, CEVI did not know why clients were leaving. As a result, CEVI began to review its strategy, and learn more about and try to better understand its clients.

TARGETING THE POOR

At the time, the common tool used for targeting the poor was a house index. The house index, however, did not provide CEVI with critical information. Neither did it offer a systematic approach to poverty targeting, measuring poverty rates or for tracking movements out of poverty.

CEVI needed a more effective tool and, through its membership of the Microfinance Council of the Philippines (MCPI), became increasingly aware of the Progress out of Poverty (“poverty”) scorecard. This tool claimed to provide a systematic approach to poverty targeting. As a result, CEVI discarded the house index and, with training and support from MCPI, started using the poverty scorecard.

The poverty scorecard includes easily observable, verifiable and objective indicators derived from a statistical analysis of national household expenditure surveys. These comparable client-level indicators form the basis for estimating the “poverty likelihood” of a person or group of people, based on the probability that they fall under an identified poverty line.

Initially, CEVI only used the scorecard for poverty targeting but found this limited application produced unsatisfactory reports. CEVI therefore began to measure the poverty rates of new clients, setting a performance target of 50 percent of new clients below the poverty line. This was because initial reports confirmed that CEVI was drifting away from its target client group.

When CEVI management looked into the causes for this drift, they found that the key reasons were a lack of consistency in the use of the poverty scorecard and human resource-related issues. To bridge the gap, CEVI conducted training on the proper use of the scorecard for all frontline staff.

PRO-POOR AND MISSION-FOCUSED ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

CEVI soon realised that it had gone into poverty targeting without first setting clear goals, performance objectives and targets. The absence of a coherent framework resulted in confusion for staff using the poverty scorecard: there was no consistency around defining the “economically active poor”.

Recognising this shortcoming, CEVI conducted a social performance management workshop which laid the groundwork for defining, clarifying and institutionalising CEVI's social goals, social performance objectives and targets. CEVI also trained its frontline staff how to use the scorecard correctly and how to set up systems to improve information quality and use.

But even that wasn't enough. Looking more closely at the misuse of the poverty scorecard, CEVI saw the need to promote a pro-poor and client-focused organisational culture. The organisation found flaws in its staff recruitment and development processes; proper use of the tool required the right people with the right attitude. CEVI, in its haste to fill the gaps created by high staff turnover, recruited a number of staff who lacked client sensitivity and relationship-building skills. These inadequacies were further compounded by limitations in CEVI's staff development and training program.

Given the extent of the changes required, it is not hard to understand why CEVI was in decline. Indeed, any organisation that does not have clear goals, well-defined client targets and a good organisational culture would struggle to be profitable, let alone sustainable. CEVI's performance did improve but more was needed if they were to fulfil their mission of creating real change in the lives of the poor.

CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF THE POOR

At the same time as CEVI was looking to improve its measurement of impact on



poverty, a major government donor imposed impact assessments using the AIMS/SEEP² and MicroSave-Africa tool kits. These tools were being promoted by the donor and came with training and technical support from one of the leading MFIs in the Philippines. However, the reports these tools produced fell short of providing credible evidence of changed lives.

There were a number of reasons for this. First, the donor-driven terms of reference for the impact assessment studies were not clear. Second, the AIMS/SEEP tool was too complex, designed to test multiple hypotheses through quantitative and qualitative analysis. Third, the cost of conducting these complex studies was too high. There wasn't just a financial cost to conducting the surveys, but also a cost to clients – they were required to spend valuable time participating in interviews and focus group discussions, and for the poor, this was a cost they could not bear.

CEVI therefore went back to the poverty scorecard. A component of the scorecard enabled agencies to track changes in poverty over time. CEVI set a target to track the changes in the clients' status every odd loan cycle (first, third, fifth, etc.). This translated into twice-yearly assessments of

the poverty situation of clients and it was expected to provide credible evidence of changed lives.

Although reports tracking changes in poverty status are still to come, CEVI management is positive about the use of the poverty scorecard. It is designed to track changes, and it is easy and inexpensive to use, thus having a negligible impact on the financial bottom line.

LISTENING TO THE POOR

High drop-out rates had raised operational costs and this forced CEVI to look more closely at client satisfaction and retention. When CEVI began listening to the clients and measuring client satisfaction, they found a high percentage left in the early stages of the loan cycle because of a mismatch between products and delivery mechanisms and the unique and changing needs of clients. With little influence over the design of products and delivery mechanisms, clients were using loans supposedly intended for microenterprises to meet a multiplicity of other needs. This apparent disconnect between what the clients needed and what was on offer could only survive for so long.

CEVI needed a radical paradigm shift. Listening to clients, understanding their unique and

◀ **CEVI at work: listening to clients, understanding their different and changing financial needs and using their voices to implement product design and delivery mechanisms.**

PROGRAMMING CONTEXT

Microfinance, the provision of appropriate financial services to the poor; such as credit, savings, insurance and fund transfers, is a key pillar of World Vision's economic development strategies. Starting in the late 1990s, World Vision began to implement microfinance programming to benefit the economically active poor. In 2003, in recognition of the complexity and importance of microfinance, World Vision established VisionFund to lead and manage the growing microfinance program. By September 2009, World Vision's microfinance program had become a network of 43 microfinance institutions and microfinance programs in 43 countries, with US\$380.8 million in loans provided to 624,000 clients (68% women).

► SNAP-SHOT:

CEVI AT A GLANCE

CEVI is an MFI established in 1998 by the World Vision Development Foundation in the Philippines as a separate and specialised institution to lead and manage its growing microfinance ministry. CEVI's mission is "to help small business grow by providing credit, training, consultancy and savings services to the economically active poor".

CEVI started its microfinance operations in Bohol in central Philippines. With access to longer-term grant funding, CEVI gradually expanded to other provinces in central, southern and northern Philippines.

By September 2009, CEVI was lending US\$2.5 million to over 25,000 clients (86 percent women) from 20 branches – six in Mindanao (southern Philippines), 10 in the Visayas (central Philippines) and four in Luzon (northern Philippines). CEVI's headquarters is based on the island of Bohol in the Visayas.



▲ **The scene of a typical small business, operating in rural villages across the Philippines.**

¹ The Microfinance Information eXchange aims to promote information exchange in the microfinance industry. It intends to address one of the key challenges of the microfinance industry: the lack of reliable, comparable and publicly available information on the financial strength and performance of MFIs, which underpins the development of the market for microfinance services. See <http://www.mixmarket.org/en/what.is.mix.asp>.

² Assessing the Impact of Microfinance Services or AIMS is a USAID project focusing on the development and testing of cost-effective practical tools that can be used to track and assess the impact of practitioners' microenterprise programs. The Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (SEEP) Network is an international network and promoter of best practices in enterprise development and financial services. It is a global organisation committed to reducing poverty through the power of enterprise and has 67 active members in over 140 countries, reaching over 23 million microentrepreneurs and their families. See <http://seepnetwork.org/>

changing financial needs, and using their voices to influence product design and delivery mechanisms brought positive results. Products, repayment amounts and cycles, and loan sizes were matched to clients' needs. The poor became the focus and active participants in the institution's functioning.

By learning from the clients, CEVI now offers more flexible and more diverse services – savings, individual and group lending, insurance and business skills training – that are responsive to clients' needs. This has already brought about a significant increase in the number of clients staying in the program as the services now fit their varied and changing needs more effectively. In addition, the new product offerings attracted others to join the program. By the end of June 2009, CEVI had recovered and was once more operationally sustainable.

CHALLENGES AHEAD FOR SOCIAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

CEVI's success in reviving its business by refocusing on its mission of putting the poor at the forefront is an example of how an MFI can provide credible evidence to international donors and investors that really serving the

poor is viable. Many MFIs, nevertheless, remain sceptical and persist in the view that financial performance alone is the only key to the long-term viability of MFIs and the microfinance industry. It stems from the questionable reasoning that financial sustainability is essential to reach significant numbers of poor people and to realise long-term social returns. But it loses sight of what microfinance is all about. The heart of microfinance is really about serving the poor and financial sustainability is more about ensuring ongoing delivery mechanisms, or the means rather than the ends.

Comparable social performance standards, indicators and benchmarks are yet to be developed in World Vision, in particular, and in the microfinance industry in general. Many different frameworks and tools exist for evaluating social performance, with varying degrees of complexity and cost-effectiveness. As revealed in the case study, however, the challenge of finding or adapting the right framework and tools for targeting the poor, listening to them, understanding their different and changing financial needs, and using their voices to influence the functions of an institution, is not insurmountable. It can be done and in a cost-effective way.

World Vision obviously has broad social objectives and conducts interventions across many sectors. However, there are overarching themes, one of these being a focus on children. The organisation has recently developed requirements for measuring child wellbeing outcomes, but for many in the microfinance arena this is adding another layer of complexity to the task of developing comparable social performance measures. Child wellbeing outcomes are the result of multi-sectoral rather than single sector approaches and it is really not possible to demonstrate that a particular microfinance service has led to a specific child wellbeing outcome. This raises more questions about the clarity of the role and place of microfinance within World Vision.

The success of the widespread adoption of financial performance measures lies in their ease of use, cost-effectiveness and standardisation. Standardisation still has to occur for social performance measures. But, as the CEVI case study shows, the key to finding the right framework and the right tool is having a pro-poor and mission-driven organisational culture that places the poor at the core of the microfinance agenda and that simplifies the process of learning from the poor. Being able to demonstrate that adopting a social performance framework is viable does not warrant overloading the intervention with other organisational interests. Doing this will damage both our ability to serve the poor and the viability of our microfinance activities. ■

Re-tooling the cookie cutter

Constructing a global standard DME system

► **ANDREW NEWMARCH**

A design, monitoring and evaluation (DME) steering committee was formed in 2002 with a mandate to develop a common framework for the global World Vision partnership and in February 2005 the first edition of LEAP was published. This article looks at the beginnings of this framework, the imperative for introducing it, and the implications of change on this scale for World Vision.

World Vision underwent a major shift in the mid-1990s when it introduced the Area Development Program (ADP) as the main vehicle for child sponsorship funding. Previously, development programming had been based at the village level, but it was serviced by a collective decision-making process of major funding offices that used very limited design and reporting systems. Change was needed in response to several factors, including:

- Increased access to government funding meant that projects needed to be aligned to specific donors;
- Increased interest in strategic decision making as to where projects should be located rather than reacting to opportunities;
- Concerns about the quality of project activity and how to record useful information about it;
- Interest in having more impact at structural levels by operating at a higher governance level than the village.

ADPs were designed to last for 10-15 years and provide more organised, longer term possibilities for development interventions, including important relationship-building with communities. As the ADP model was implemented there was a plethora of activity on trying to design with more care and insight, much of it driven by the experience of working with government funds. A key word in programming was “quality” and how to ensure it was present. In addition, in international development circles there were tools and approaches being developed and LEAP was an attempt to align with best practice. At that time, each World Vision funding office brought with it a range of ideas and approaches

expecting the field offices to design, monitor, report on and evaluate according to systems that they (the funding offices) had developed or adapted. It was apparent that if nothing else, there was a need to bring consistency to all our programming so that common terms, approaches and tools could ease the frustration and burden on field staff as well as provide ways for the organisation to improve quality.

MORE THAN JUST MANAGING PROGRAMS

The DME system was thus an attempt to bring clarity, consistency and organisation to the way we programmed our interventions; it was more than just good project management. If we work our way backwards through the LEAP acronym this becomes more apparent. Planning equates to the Assessment and Design phases of the project cycle (see diagram). The way in which information is collected and what kind of information is collected is critical. It requires skill to bring together appropriate expertise and to leverage resources. It also requires relationship building as a fundamental component before any action is taken. It demands that the context for activity be understood – and that is why the LEAP cycle diagram sits on a mat labelled “Context” and is linked to strategy at national, regional and global levels.

Accountability is a key driver for having systems in place. It is not just a function of documenting activities so others can check on them. It is not just having sound financial systems in place so that both donors and communities know where the money is going. It's also about judgment calls that carefully consider organisational ethos and principles together with the risks of taking a course of action, and assessment of whether the impact justifies the level of investment. Monitoring and Evaluation are critical to this accountability.

In community development, the desired result is not just a change in status on specified indicators, but it incorporates development of capacity, that is, the ability of communities to replicate or work from some new understanding. Indeed, this is a desirable

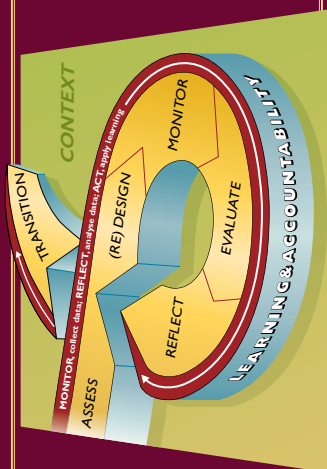
A key challenge for any organisation is to find ways in which it can establish uniform systems and manage their introduction. For World Vision, an international development agency of over 90 offices around the world, establishing a framework that raises the level of rigour and consistency and brings equal focus to the competing claims of accountability and learning has been such a task. In 2005, World Vision International produced a global standard system for design, monitoring and evaluation and called it LEAP – Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning. Recent research has revealed concerns about the workload implications of this system as well as the capacity of staff to meet the quality requirements. In addition, there will always be challenges to the system's relevance in time and context.

▼ **Representative global village – the front cover design for the first edition of LEAP.**



World Vision's approach
to **Design, Monitoring
and Evaluation**

www.transformational-development.org



LEAP
Learning through
Evaluation with
Accountability and
Planning

▲ The bookmark, designed to promote LEAP in World Vision Australia at the launch of LEAP Edition 2.0, features the core program cycle diagram and the related website for all LEAP materials.

capacity for all stakeholders. The Learning in LEAP and the Reflection components of the project cycle signify the importance of this.

The first principle of LEAP is systematic inquiry. The proposition is that, "Successfully managed programs are action research, characterised by planned cycles of action and reflection... One outcome of doing research is learning to learn. This is the very essence of facilitating change and is the essence of LEAP." Anecdotal evidence would tend to indicate that this is working at individual levels, but at a systematic level there are mixed results. Anecdotal evidence suggests a consistency in reporting standards is emerging with the presentation of more concise information and greater understanding of what type of information matches report categories. However, the reports are still quite compliance-oriented, focusing more on outputs than outcomes, and they don't really tell the story of change in the community. A second issue that emerges is that this systematic, analytical, reflective approach to learning is often quite unusual in developing countries. Their educational systems are usually far more didactic with the emphasis on learning what the teacher has to say rather than the exploration of ideas. However liberating it might be to be investigative, this requires a significant cultural shift.

A further core principle of LEAP is competence and the LEAP framework has exposed gaps in our systems. Firstly, our attempt to professionalise exposed many people as unable to meet the standards of formal evaluative systems. It was not as if community workers didn't know how to work alongside communities or to discern if activities were working or not. It was just that now they were required to articulate those things using particular approaches and formats and to provide justification for the way they had gone about their activity. Secondly, the introduction or reference to a range of evaluation techniques, particularly survey techniques, found many of the program staff in fundraising offices lacking in skills and unable to effectively assist their counterparts in the field.

The shift to a "program" approach as opposed to a "project" approach was also a conceptual leap that many found challenging. Despite the rhetoric of LEAP urging staff to build projects that are time bound to periods appropriate to deliver a desired outcome, many projects have five-year time spans, the same time span as the cycle of review for ADPs. This raises the question of whether the hoped-for shift from a "program of activities" to "projects with outcomes that contribute to a program" has been a change in name only.

KEY CHALLENGES

There are two issues which are becoming increasingly challenging: the use of the logframe² and the priority of LEAP over DME. The issue with the logframe is the extent to which its use should be mandatory. World Vision was initially concerned to position itself with common DME practice, if not best practice. For example, logical cause-effect models "dominate most agencies' approach to DME" and "there does not appear to be any effective alternative..."³ However, it was also noted that "there is widespread discussion of the limitations of these models and recognition of the complex nature of human change". The argument around the limitations of logframe was that "social development, rights and justice cannot be planned for, managed and delivered in a linear fashion".⁴ In the Australian environment at least, there is increasing pressure amongst international NGOs to move away from logical models and to encourage the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) to follow suit for civil society programming.⁵ However, even amongst the critics there is acknowledgement that a central problem with the use of logframe is that the approach is used poorly and that mitigates its effectiveness.

The second challenge is that our emphasis on LEAP as a way of doing things may have overtaken our original intention to do good DME. The drive to have a global DME system and to brand it for internal recognition has meant that the language of LEAP has become paramount rather than the language of DME. For example, capacity training is labelled "LEAP" training. When this happens, alternative approaches of implementing DME are not recognised and/or discarded as they do not fit with what are understood to be LEAP requirements. LEAP may have thus led us into another level of compliance mentality. Consideration may need to be given to restating and rebranding LEAP by focusing more on DME principles; staff could then be trained in DME principles and then consideration given to the adaptation of LEAP formats and processes, if necessary.

The underlying assumptions of LEAP implicitly placed more strategic responsibility in the hands of ADP managers than most countries were ready for. This is because in most countries ADP managers are expected to be operational, rather than strategic. The workload of an ADP manager invariably precludes them from integrating reflection within their work program and there could be great value in placing a dedicated DME person within each ADP to foster the

collection, analysis and reporting on data and possible change. Despite the merit of this argument it has not always been a success in practice because of the lack of competent DME staff. Given that most projects are in remote and/or marginalised locations, it is hard to fulfil the competency principle. Where staff with “potential” have been appointed, this has often exacerbated the workload of managers who have to spend more time checking and correcting. A further reason for the lack of success in appointing dedicated DME staff is that far more responsibility has been “dumped” on them than should have been, as other implementing staff have determined that they no longer have to monitor project activities.

There are also structural reasons why managers struggled with LEAP’s implicit strategic responsibilities. It requires strong leadership to not only allow but foster flexibility in operational arrangements. There is still a cultural cringe whereby some senior managers want to appease funding offices on the one hand and exert their authority on the other. This means that the opportunity to proactively pass information down the line is not always taken and that innovation coming up the line is not always accepted because it does not conform to the strict rules of project documentation.

The structural implications are not confined to the field. One of the ironic implications for funding offices has been a significant increase in paperwork. This is because more comprehensive documentation is required for all phases of the program cycle. This in itself is not a bad thing, but now funding offices are finding that their feedback turnaround promises are being compromised. There are two challenges: firstly, the sheer volume of paper has increased, and secondly, there are higher expectations regarding the standard of comments. When large reports have multiple areas of concern this is problematic, especially if the concerns relate to fundamental issues. This may require repeated changes and/or a chain of changes. The challenge here is for stakeholders to invest more heavily at earlier stages of planning. This may mean that funding office staff have to spend more time in the field or commit to more extensive electronic communication with field staff. In this way, thinking and designing can be shaped more collaboratively; and when final design documents are submitted less time will be required for review and feedback.

Despite the many challenges, there is a broad consensus that DME has improved as a result of LEAP. In a recent survey,⁶ 90 percent of field office respondents reported

that LEAP had made a positive impact on the assessment and design phase, and 85 percent reported a positive impact on program management. There was also strong indication that the common programming framework, shared language and greater clarity about roles and expectations allowed the different World Vision offices to work together more effectively.

When discussing change, it is perhaps most pertinent to ask: what are we trying to change and why? To what extent are our systems contributing to lasting change for people, structures and communities? Working for lasting change is often unpredictable, labour intensive and humbling, requiring skill, patience, flexibility and time. It needs to be far more analytical of causes and world views. These are not easy issues, nor is it easy to discern the right questions or discover the right solutions. It will require openness to robust discussion, at least internally.⁷

In addition, we face the inherent dilemma of trying to establish a standardised process when in many ways we are interested in reducing standardisation and enabling innovation. If we go back to the discussion of DME and LEAP, the way through this dilemma may be to re-emphasise the importance of LEAP as a framework rather than as a system, and to say that it is a DME framework incorporating the critical elements of Learning, Evaluation, Accountability and Planning. At the same time there is a recognition that innovation needs to come off a standard and that the standard is necessary to reinforce the capacity base.

CREATING A LIVING FRAMEWORK

LEAP’s ratification statement in 2004 claimed that it is “a living framework for systematic learning that promotes quality, accountability and professionalism in programming with communities. Its implementation builds competence and confidence and models prospective learning”. There is no doubt that this statement was promoted with a sense of enthusiasm but also of relief that finally we had a system. There are signs of success but we still need time to bed the system down and to enhance our understandings of what the system is meant to do. At the same time, revisions are being regularly introduced to improve the system. However, as has been pointed out, it’s not just the internal mechanisms of the system that will make LEAP work. It’s also the external factors: how management responds, how capacity is built and how culture is changed that will make the framework live. ■

¹ World Vision, LEAP, Second Edition, 2007, p.9

² Logframes are a method of organising planning information. They have been used by development agencies since the late 1960s and NGOs started to use them as they gained access to government funds.

³ World Vision International Development Resources Team, Unpublished paper, Towards a common DME framework for World Vision – discussion paper from a DME literature review, June 2003

⁴ Rosalind David and Antonella Mancini, 2005 ‘Going against the flow: the struggle to make organisational systems part of the solution rather than part of the problem – the case of Action Aid’s Accountability, Learning and Planning System’, Lessons for Change, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, pp 1-28

⁵ See Kelly L, David R and Roche C, December 2008, ‘Guidance on M&E for Civil Society Managers – Prepared for AusAID Program Managers’, Demand for Better Governance Unit, AusAID

⁶ World Vision International, Unpublished report, LEAP Implementation – Review of the first 3 years, October 2008

⁷ Much of this paragraph has been liberally taken from an internal discussion paper: John Steward, April 1992, ‘It’s not just what we do but how we do it’

CONTRIBUTORS'
BIOGRAPHIES



Contributors' biographies

Section 1:

From awareness towards consistent behaviour change

SHIFTING THE CULTURAL NORMS

Working to eradicate Female Genital Mutilation in Somalia

Rebecca Barber is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia and South Sudan. Prior to joining World Vision, Rebecca worked with a number of different NGOs in the field of protection/rule of law in Pakistan, Darfur, Aceh and Timor-Leste. Rebecca has degrees in Law and International Development and is currently studying towards a Masters in International Law.

A PART NOT APART

Redefining responses to disability in rural Senegal

Peter Weston is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Senegal, Chad and West Africa regional initiatives. Previously he managed World Vision Australia programs in Ethiopia, Burundi and Rwanda. Peter joined the Africa team in 2000 after roles in World Vision Australia's advocacy, media and supporter service teams. He holds degrees in Economics and International Health and is pursuing a Masters in Environment and Sustainability.

Thurza Sullivan is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Uganda and an active member of the organisation's Disability Working Group. Since joining World Vision in 2007, Thurza has managed country-specific projects in Uganda and Somalia. Prior to this she worked for the Department of Human Services (Victoria) in Disability Partnerships and Service Planning. She is currently completing her Masters in International Development.

WATTLE WE EAT FOR DINNER?

Edible seeded Australian acacias and World Vision's response to hunger

Tony Rinaudo is World Vision Australia's Natural Resource Management Advisor. He is currently leading the Agricultural Task Force which is evaluating World Vision's agricultural programs with a view to improving performance. Tony joined World Vision Australia in 1999 as a Program Officer for Kenya and Ethiopia. Prior to this he worked in Niger Republic on agricultural projects where he introduced agro-forestry farming systems and spearheaded acacia work as a member of SIM (Serving in Mission) from 1981-1999. He has qualifications and experience in agricultural science and has contributed to and co-authored articles in scientific journals and books.

TOGETHER WE ARE ONE

Young people stopping the violence in Timor-Leste

Julie Smith is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Cambodia. Since joining World Vision Australia in 2004 she has managed portfolios in Timor-Leste, Nepal, Haiti and Cambodia. Prior to this, Julie was the Communications Manager for ACFID and she has worked with Australian Volunteers International, Amnesty International, as well as a local Cambodian NGO. Julie is well known in the sector for her cartoons which appear in many international development publications, including World Vision International's LEAP Manual.





HARM REDUCTION

Meeting the challenge of HIV prevention in Uzbekistan

David Vivian is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for the Middle East and Eastern Europe. He has specific interest in programs supporting both psychosocial interventions and prevention of HIV and AIDS. David is currently completing an MBA at the University of New England. He joined World Vision Australia in 2001 as Program Officer for several countries in East, Southern and West Africa. David began working in development in 1994, first with Community Aid Abroad (Oxfam). This was followed by work in Cambodia to help establish a rural microcredit project, and for a local NGO based in South Korea.

Hans Bederski is the National Program Director for World Vision Uzbekistan. Hans joined World Vision in 2006. Prior to this he held senior management positions with various international NGOs in Kyrgyzstan, Haiti, Azerbaijan and West Africa. Hans has a Masters Degree from the University of Arizona.

Section 2:

Balancing needs and dependency

OVERCOMING DEPENDENCY

The slow train gathering momentum in La Gonave

Ruth Mlay is World Vision Australia's Program Officer for Haiti and Brazil. She has worked with World Vision for six years in various capacities. Prior to this, Ruth completed a Masters in Communications and worked in journalism and public relations in Tanzania. She is also a Master of Social Science in International Development.

HIDDEN LIVES, HIDDEN VOICES

Sustainable care and protection for vulnerable children

Phearak Svay is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Mongolia and Myanmar. Phearak joined World Vision in 2003 and has since managed programs in several Asian countries. Prior to this, Phearak worked for World Vision Cambodia. Phearak has a Bachelor of Education. He is currently completing his Masters in International and Community Development at Deakin University. He also recently won a scholarship from the International Water Centre to complete a Masters in Integrated Water Management at the University of Queensland.

“SHOW ME THE MONEY!”

Can cash transfers cause behaviour change?

Junus David is World Vision Australia's Food Programming Advisor and Cash Transfer Specialist, Asia Pacific region. At the time of writing he was the Country Program Coordinator for East Asia in emergency responses and the focal point for Community Resilience projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In 2007, he was seconded to Lesotho to manage the Cash and Food Transfer Pilot Project. Prior to joining World Vision Australia, Junus managed humanitarian projects in Azerbaijan, East Timor and Indonesia. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science and an International Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance.

Thabani Maphosa is Senior Director for Operations and Strategy in World Vision International's Food Programming Management Group. He joined World Vision International in February 2003 as a monitoring and evaluation specialist and has served in a number of African and Asian countries in this technical area. Thabani and his team have been credited with providing visionary leadership in piloting and scaling-up cash transfers in World Vision programs.

Section 3: *Developing new approaches*

WATERING HOPE

Economic Empowerment @ work

Jock Noble is Manager of World Vision Australia's Social Entrepreneurship Unit. Jock has been engaged in social enterprises development for over 25 years in Australia, the United Kingdom, India and America. Jock was the founder and CEO of Diversity@work Australia Inc, a social enterprise developing innovative models, strategies and educational programs to strengthen companies through diversity and inclusion. Under Jock's leadership it became one of the largest diversity consultancies in the world. He holds a Masters in Entrepreneurship and Innovation from Swinburne University's Centre for Innovation and Enterprise and received the Carey Medal in 2007 for exceptional services to the community.

WHEN RURAL MEETS URBAN

Lessons from Zambia

Lucia Boxelaar is World Vision Australia's Program Effectiveness Manager, facilitating organisational learning around program effectiveness through design, monitoring and evaluation initiatives. She joined World Vision Australia in 2007. Prior to this she was a Research Fellow with the University of Melbourne, specialising in community-based approaches to land and natural resource management. Her experience is in social research and the evaluation of community development initiatives.

Joep van Binsbergen is Operations Coordinator for World Vision International's Africa Regional Office. At the time of this research he was the Development Specialist in the Africa Regional Office's Ministry Quality Team. Joep joined World Vision in 2007 with a background in research for the International Livestock Research Institute in Nigeria and Kenya. He previously worked in Zimbabwe for GOAL Ireland.

CREATING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Putting quality back on the education agenda

Catherine Johnston is Manager of World Vision Australia's Asia Team. She joined World Vision in 2003 and during this time she has supported programs in Mongolia and India, and specific projects in Laos, Cambodia and Indonesia. Prior to joining World Vision Australia, Catherine worked as a Language Coordinator for a secondary school in Melbourne, teaching Bahasa Indonesia and Social Sciences. This followed five years working for an NGO in Sulawesi, Indonesia. Catherine has degrees in Education and Geography and is close to completing a Masters in Development Studies.





Annabel Hart is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Indonesia and regional human trafficking projects. She joined World Vision in 2009. Immediately prior to this Annabel worked for the International Organisation for Migration in Cambodia and she has also worked for a variety of NGOs and UN programs in Cambodia and Thailand. Annabel has a Masters in International Affairs/Development Studies and she has worked as a research analyst and travel writer.

BIG LESSONS FROM “BIG CHOCOLATE”

World Vision Australia's first solo advocacy campaign – 18 months on

Susan Mizrahi is World Vision Australia's Campaign Leader for Human Trafficking. She joined World Vision in early 2008, with a background in human rights advocacy. Susan has expertise in campaigning, political lobbying, project development and communications and she holds a Masters in International Relations and Asian Politics. She has worked in India, Washington DC and Europe on the Sino-Tibet issue, as well as throughout Southeast Asia. Susan has received awards for her service to the Tibetan people.

Section 4:

Organisational dynamics and risk

WHOSE BOTTOM LINE?

Learning from social performance management

Roni Oracion is World Vision Australia's Microenterprise Development Specialist. Roni joined World Vision in 1994 and she has been involved in socioeconomic development for over 25 years. She provides specialist technical advice and training on microfinance and microenterprise development. Roni has built strong relationships with microfinance institutions and organisations including the Australian Microfinance Network, the Small Enterprise Education and Promotion Network, the Social Performance Management Network and the VisionFund Network. She holds an Economics Degree and a Masters in Development Management.

RE-TOOLING THE COOKIE CUTTER

Constructing a global standard DME system

Andrew Newmarch is a World Vision Australia Senior Quality Advisor. He has worked with World Vision for 19 years, firstly as a Program Officer with a portfolio of countries in Asia, and then as the Manager of the Program Effectiveness Unit. Andrew was a member of the committee that built LEAP and he has been part of subsequent working groups formed to update the LEAP manual and templates.

Credits

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