

World Vision



ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW 2008

RESPONSES TO POVERTY



DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF **JONATHAN TREAGUST**
AN AVID CONTRIBUTOR TO THE ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW AND ITS IDEALS.



Table of Contents

FOREWORD

01

Paul Ronalds

INTRODUCTION

02

Conny Lenneberg

SECTION 1: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESILIENCE**THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN FOR RURAL POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN CHINA**

06

The Gansu Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project

Dennis Ingemann

FOOD SECURITY AND MALNUTRITION IN KENYA

09

Rethinking the role of community-based organisations

Dr Francois Tsafack / Anueja Gopalakrishnan

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: A SOLID FOUNDATION

12

Girl Child Reading and Rescue Project

Dr John Donnelly

POST-CONFLICT RECOVERY: MAXIMISING RETURNEE KNOWLEDGE

15

Yambio Rice Revitalisation Project – Southern Sudan

Alison Schafer

TURNING SPONSORSHIP ACTIVITY INTO DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

18

Use of 'Most Significant Change' in child sponsorship programs

Brett Pierce

SECTION 2: PARTNERING**MAKING RESEARCH WORK**

23

Bridging the gap between communities and academic research in the developing world

Jonathan Treagust

PARTNERS AGAINST TRAFFICKING

26

From people to policy

Jonathan Treagust

HARNESSING MULTI-AGENCY COLLABORATION FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

31

Putting sanitation on the aid agenda

John McKenzie / Catherine Boomer

A STITCH IN TIME CHANGES LIVES

36

Valuing corporate partnerships

Victoria Thom

VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT FOR CHILEAN WOMEN

39

Learning from CECADEM

Sem Mabuwa / Natalie Armstrong / Patricia Ruiz Delga

SECTION 3: NEW DOMAINS FOR INTERNATIONAL NGO INTERVENTION

THE MASAKA-RAKAI PSYCHOSOCIAL PROJECT

44

Treating depression in communities affected by HIV and AIDS

Thurza Sullivan

CARBON TRADING, COMMUNITY FORESTRY AND DEVELOPMENT

49

Potential, challenges and the way forward in Ethiopia

Tony Rinaudo / Paul Dettman / Assefa Tofu

HEALING, PEACE-BUILDING AND RECONCILIATION IN RWANDA

54

Rebuilding resilience and social networks

Clare Seddon

A NEW SYSTEM FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

58

Developing juvenile justice in Mongolia

Mariam Hii / Ian Dawes / Catherine Johnston

TARGETING THE POOREST OF THE POOR

62

Results from a Cambodia study

Suzi Chinnery / Anthea Dallimore

CONTRIBUTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

65

CREDITS

70





Foreword

This Annual Program Review is part of World Vision Australia's efforts to increase our accountability to stakeholders. It complements other initiatives such as our Annual Report and our public reporting on sustainability performance. Both of these documents are available on our website.

Accountability has been described as a means of "civilising power". Looked at in this way, it is not surprising that as the size and influence of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) like World Vision have grown, so too have demands for greater accountability.

However, if we see accountability as something imposed from the outside, as a means of seeking to increase our control over the activities we undertake, or as a way to report only on the achievement of quantitative targets, we will have missed the point. Improving our accountability has enormous potential to increase the likelihood of us achieving our organisation's mission: the alleviation of poverty.

One of the key ways this report helps us improve our work is by encouraging us all to reflect more transparently on our successes and failures. Organisational effectiveness is strongly correlated with an ability to learn from experience. Learning requires performance assessment. One of our weaknesses in the past is that we have allowed ongoing operational pressure to crowd out time for reflection and learning. This report is one of the ways we are seeking to address this limitation.

We also recognise that we need to bring our donors and supporters along on this journey with us – to be more open about the challenges we face in bringing transformation to some of the most complex and unstable environments in the world. Finally, we hope that this report will be of benefit to our colleagues in government and in other INGOs who are also striving with us to eliminate poverty.

We received a very positive reaction to our first Annual Program Review, published last year. We look forward to receiving your comments and feedback on our second review even more.

Paul Ronalds

Deputy CEO and Director of Strategy
World Vision Australia

Introduction

Development effectiveness is a major issue preoccupying governments, think tanks and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in international development across the globe. Stakeholders are becoming more discerning and demanding of international development and humanitarian organisations to demonstrate their effectiveness and accountability to the poor, to supporters and to donors. Over the past few years, this has required World Vision Australia to invest more in our capacity to ensure consistent program effectiveness, to demonstrate impact and show how our learning is incorporated into continually improving development practice. This annual publication, sharing case studies from the field, is one of a range of measures we have instituted to enable us to both improve and demonstrate the effectiveness of our work and be accountable. Our view is that part of being effective is to undertake critical reflection and to do this publicly forces us to be more accountable.

Our work on effectiveness is guided by international standards, the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) NGO Effectiveness Framework, as well as our own and partners' field experience. For World Vision Australia, effective development empowers poor, marginalised and vulnerable communities firstly to change their circumstances and secondly to sustain and build upon that change. These changes will not just alleviate suffering but also address the underlying causes of poverty and injustice so that all people can enjoy their basic human rights. World Vision seeks to be a catalyst for these changes at the individual, community, civil society and government levels.

Over the past four years, we have invested heavily in program effectiveness, by reviewing our overall approach to program management with our partners, and establishing a team of technical specialists and quality advisors. We believe our program effectiveness will be enhanced by focusing our efforts on the key areas of:

- 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 in delivering sustainable program outcomes in both local programming and broader field-based policy change advocacy;
- partnering approach to capacity building with the field partners; and
- facilitating ongoing learning and reflection through participatory research and evaluations, to help us and our programming partners find solutions and act on important issues.

In an increasingly complex global economy, development programs need to be based on sophisticated research and analysis, requiring the capability of bringing together macro level analysis with local responses. At the same time we know that the strongest contributing factor to effectiveness is the quality of relationship with local communities. Local ownership is critical to achieving sustainable outcomes, and ensuring responsiveness to community measures of value is critical to genuine accountability.

We believe that the alleviation of global poverty involves three inter-related processes: the transformation of communities in developing countries, the transformation of communities in developed countries, and the transformation of global systems and structures. Our approach to programming therefore integrates community development and relief programs, with advocacy and educational initiatives both in the field and in Australia. This integrated approach ensures our programs have positive effects both on communities in developing countries, as well as on Australian communities. It also allows for scaling





up of our programs to address the structural and political causes of poverty. This is our second Annual Program Review. Again we have presented a series of case studies from our work. Through case studies we avoid some of the methodological limitations around measuring effectiveness while at the same time promote organisational learning. In future years World Vision will be able to demonstrate more aggregate levels of effectiveness through the Child Wellbeing Outcomes, which will measure the effectiveness of all our programs against standard indicators based on the Child Rights Framework. In these 15 case studies, we have sought to provide an honest insight into the complex realities of our programming and advocacy activities. It is our hope that you will find the experiences, learnings and insights in the case studies useful for your reflection and that they will stimulate you to go even further in the fight against the obscenity of poverty. There are three general themes into which the case studies fall:

1. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESILIENCE

Case studies like the Gansu Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project and the Makuyu Food Security Project provide a nuanced understanding of community development – one which cuts through the rhetoric of multi-faceted and integrated projects to demonstrate what works and what doesn't in different socio-political and economic contexts. In fact, one of the lessons of the Makuyu experience is that the project's approach to community engagement and participation, through existing community-based organisations, was misplaced.

More broadly, case studies such as the Yambio Rice Revitalisation Project in Southern Sudan, the Girl Child Reading and Rescue Project in the Solomon Islands, and Turning sponsorship activity into development process can be clustered together as examples of how different communities respond to and handle change – and what builds their capacity to take control of that process. In some situations all that is required is the right tool, such as the use of the 'Most Significant Change' technique in ADPs, or an idea, such as kindys in the Solomons which are now contributing to higher literacy and retention rates. The case study from Southern Sudan exposes an entirely new dimension of how communities handle changes and, ironically, how greater adversity led to greater resilience and vision.

2. PARTNERING

World Vision has entered into a number of partnerships that have led to different learnings.

There is the link into the corporate world with the Stitch in Time campaign, engagement with an academic research institution on the Sweet Potato Project, multi-agency collaboration to influence water and sanitation policy, and local agency partnering to support marginalised women in Chile.

These cases have a strong link back to the issue of community engagement but they also draw out the need to think through and evolve these partnerships beyond transactional relationships. The impact changes when the initial relationship is developed and even more so when advocacy capacity is built in. In the case of the marginalised women, the project was only able to address gender biases in the employment sector in Chile when it incorporated an advocacy component in the project.

Overall, there is a strong sense of agreement between the case study authors that multi-agency partnerships – however ambitious and challenging to get off the ground – achieve much more in terms of sustainable development outcomes than individual agency initiatives can alone.

3. NEW DOMAINS FOR INTERNATIONAL NGO (INGO) INTERVENTION

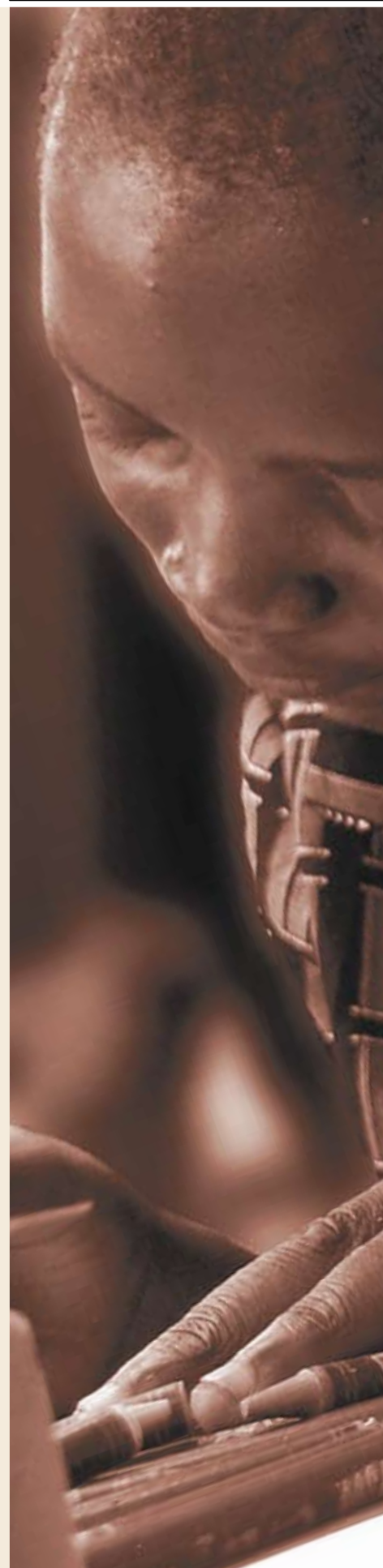
World Vision has entered into some new and challenging program areas. In response to climate change and interest in carbon footprints, we have developed our very first carbon trading, community forestry project with World Bank funding. This case study tracks the potential, pitfalls and challenges of linking carbon trading to poverty reduction and development. Another challenging domain is the “psychosocial” aspects of individual and community development. In a case study from Rwanda, there is an attempt to find a sustainable approach to healing and reconciliation following genocide; in another from Uganda, the project looks at resolving the links between depression and HIV and AIDS. Another project focuses on legal reform and juvenile justice in Mongolia and the role that an NGO has played in influencing change at the highest levels. The last project tests the approach of microfinance institutions to reach the poorest members of a community. All these cases pose extremely challenging questions around INGO roles, identities and what is needed to function effectively in this space.

CONCLUSION

World Vision has been a strong supporter of the ACFID NGO Effectiveness Framework. The framework defines effectiveness as the promotion of “sustainable change that addresses the causes as well as the symptoms of poverty and marginalisation”. This requires that World Vision Australia not only works to reduce poverty but also to build capacity within communities, civil society and government to address their own development priorities. However, the challenge to be an effective development and humanitarian organisation is not just about what we “do”, it is as much about who we are. As the framework also makes clear, effectiveness is “more than the result of implementation of designs and plans or other areas of program engagement. It is also a product of the organisational principles, policies and strategies of development”. The case studies contained in this publication demonstrate the difficulty that the multi-faceted nature of effectiveness demands of World Vision. Not only must we have well designed projects with rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems that build local capacity and ensure community-level ownership and participation, as an organisation we must remain flexible, highly innovative and adaptable to both the global environment and the local context. The case studies also reveal the critical place that advocacy can play in bringing about change and the leveraging of that capacity through effective partnership with other entities. Finally, they illustrate situations where “being effective” in the sense of achieving sustainability is hard – near impossible. This is the reality that many INGOs must face.

Conny Lenneberg

Director, Policy and Programs
World Vision Australia



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & RESILIENCE



The empowerment of women for rural poverty alleviation in China

The Gansu Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project

► DENNIS INGEMANN

A LIVELIHOODS APPROACH TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION

In Gansu Province in China's northwest, rural poverty is compounded by harsh conditions. Villages in the arid Loess plateau region suffer from rugged terrain, an unforgiving climate with very limited rainfall, a shortage of arable land, serious soil erosion and poor water supply.

In 2003, World Vision Australia's Consulting Services Unit, supported by World Vision New Zealand and World Vision China, started implementing the Gansu Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project for the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID). World Vision worked with project management offices set up by the county governments to implement the project. The project ran for five years in 11 villages.

The Gansu Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project had three principal objectives:

- to develop and demonstrate sustainable rural livelihoods and food security based on efficient use of water resources, improved agriculture production technologies, training and access to community-based credit;
- to improve education, public health and community infrastructure in the project villages through better access to resources and training; and
- most importantly, to apply participatory and gender sensitive approaches to project delivery that integrated institutional strengthening and capacity building for all those involved in the project.

VILLAGERS' PARTICIPATION

In the beginning, understanding of how the project design could be achieved was poor. In particular, there was limited knowledge of participatory

approaches or "bottom up" development which was an important project objective and a measure of success. For centuries the Chinese approach to governance has been "top down" with decisions made at high levels and transmitted down the chain. This meant that the villagers, who are in the best position to judge their own needs, sometimes received inappropriate government assistance. Power at the village level was concentrated in the hands of township and village leaders, usually male.

Because the project was being implemented mainly by officers from the county government, it was essential to begin with training for senior officials, including the county governors and party secretaries, and project management staff. This training focussed on what community development is and why it would be beneficial for project implementation. These are new concepts for much of China but they were supported by the county officials, who broke into spontaneous applause during a workshop on how they could involve the villagers in the project. This indicated that the mood for change in China and a willingness to try new ideas extends beyond Shanghai and Beijing to the poorest and most isolated northwest region of the People's Republic.

The project team also visited the villages to re-confirm the project concepts which had been introduced five years earlier during a participatory rural appraisal (PRA) conducted during project design. Village Project Management Groups were established in each township and village to provide feedback on project activities.

MICROFINANCE – THE KEY TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

NZAID expected that the township and villages would play an active role in implementing the project and that they would not remain passive recipients or beneficiaries

China's economy has developed rapidly over the last 20 years but there are still at least 150 million people living in poverty, primarily in the western provinces of China. The Chinese Government has been supporting a national rural poverty alleviation program since 1978 but the disparity between isolated rural areas and the increasingly affluent east coast of China has grown as China's economic development has gathered pace.

► SNAP-SHOT

Liu Yongrui, a woman farmer in Liangjiao village, has a family of four and used to live a tough life until the microcredit circle started. Her entire family lived on the small income that her husband earned as a migrant worker. Meanwhile, she was responsible for holding the household together during her husband's absence. This meant providing food for her family, completing the household chores and farming. In August 2006, she joined the Liangjiao Microcredit Fund and obtained her first loan of A\$230. She leveraged the fund to buy several baby pigs and some fodder. In addition, she became actively involved in an animal husbandry breeding technology training class organised by the County Project Office. In that year, the first five mature pigs earned her A\$615, or an equivalent of A\$385 in cost-adjusted net income. She also became an instant role model in her village. Other villagers were keen to learn from her experiences. Currently, 10 households in her village have started raising pigs and she has been going from one family to another giving free advice on pig raising, disease prevention and pig-fattening techniques. By July 2008, she was building an extension on her pig sty and the price of pigs had doubled since she purchased her latest piglets earlier in the year.

of training or equipment. The project team saw microfinance as a way to "put legs" on the participatory intent of the project.

A microfinance component was included in the original project design, but NZAID were not keen to implement this, given the failure of some microfinance schemes in China and other countries. Microcredit had been supported in China for about 10 years, principally by the United Nations Development Programme, but also other agencies including the Ford Foundation and World Bank. The rural banking sector, including the Agricultural Bank of China (ABC) and Rural Credit Cooperatives (RCC) offered microcredit at county and township level, but not at village level. They avoided loans to low income or poor households as they were perceived to be a low credit risk, who offered a poor potential for profit. The NZAID project sought to offer loans to poor families who could not get finance from the ABC or RCC.

Microcredit was provided in six of the project villages, to nearly 1,000 households. A distinguishing feature of the design was that

funds were made available only to women, who were also to manage the microcredit fund disbursements and repayments.

Microfinance was seen as a way of involving most village people in project activities and, more importantly, of enabling them to manage such activities by themselves. Because local committees were established to manage the funds, women lenders were able to discuss common issues together and learn farming skills from each other. At the same time and for the first time, women were able to increase their knowledge by participating in training sessions on agricultural extension, as well as life skills and health. The training broadened their outlook and they began to participate in key decision making about loan management and agricultural production. Efforts to improve livelihoods in the villages are now more influenced by women than ever before.

Being responsible for funds management has greatly improved the capacity of women to be involved in decision making and influence the male dominated village social structure. Since the microcredit initiative only targets women,



their status in the family has been recognised – perhaps for the first time. This is especially true in times of harvest and seed planting, and it is something that the women recognise themselves and are very proud of. Some men have been involved in their families' new enterprises and during the project's closing workshops many men spoke of their support for the women's new role in economic activity.

The microfinance scheme was designed to accommodate the financial conditions and special needs of the poorer families in the community. Microfinance in China, in contrast to services offered by banks, is characterised by smaller loans, higher interest rates, shorter durations, instalment repayment schedules and no collateral guarantees. This approach means that the poor can get access to and repay loans on time. Most of the borrowers in this project have been households in abject poverty or at least low-income families. Well-off families were reluctant to apply for funds from the revolving fund and may well have had other means of procuring finance. However, for 80 percent of all borrowers in the project the only other means of finance were the Rural Credit Cooperatives.

Many men in the villages are migrant workers who leave for employment in local urban areas or elsewhere in China. This means that women tend to take care of their families, agricultural production and small enterprises including village shops. Microcredit enables these women to expand livestock breeding (sheep, pigs or chickens) or start small businesses to supplement the income brought home by their husbands. In the words of one participant the project had awakened them "to be more self-conscious and bold. From now on, we can make money on our own efforts. It really feels good to stop asking money from our husbands".

SOME REFLECTIONS

It is sometimes difficult during project implementation, over a period of some years, to see the wood for the trees. Progress can seem slow and improvements in the capacity of government officials, project staff and beneficiaries take time to emerge. In rural China, traditional attitudes to the role of women and power structures are also slow to change. However, just as in the more developed eastern seaboard of China, change is under way in the poor western regions and it has been embraced by villagers. In this context, the Gansu project is demonstrating new ways of helping people move out of poverty and respond to their harsh living conditions.

There have been many positive outcomes. With microcredit funds located in the villages and managed by village women, they should be sustainable. The benefits of this approach have already been recognised by government and

multilateral agencies and it is recognised as one that can be replicated elsewhere.

In terms of strengthening institutions, the project has exposed county officials to new ways of working, improving their ability to work in a participatory manner with poor families at the village level. Their project and financial management skills have improved along with the skills required to work on poverty alleviation projects funded through other national and international sources. Early in the project, one of the counties was not fully engaged in project activities and the project team was not supported from the top and not given resources to fully participate. Over time, this attitude faded as relationships improved with World Vision and counterparts at provincial level. The county officers involved in the project have now become the core staff for other rural poverty alleviation projects in their counties.

Villages have seen livelihood improvements following the introduction of improved crop production and livestock raising techniques, and funds for agricultural production and other business enterprises, such as block making and machinery workshops.

The project's livelihood activities, including the establishment of microcredit funds and training at all levels, have demonstrated the importance of ensuring that villagers are involved in improving their own lives and incomes.

Most important of all, the lives of the women in the six villages that received microcredit funds have been transformed. Their role in the family and in village life has changed forever. Women now play a much more active role in the economic development of their villages. Men are not excluded from this process, but the partnership is now much more equal. Both men and women involved in the project acknowledged that women's roles have changed, that they have gained valuable experience by managing credit funds and successfully starting new economic activities.

Participatory processes and involving women in project activities are not new concepts in international development. However, they are often difficult to achieve in traditional societies where men and women have very defined roles in their communities.

Chinese village life has changed little over many centuries and many dynasties. Now, during the first decade of the 21st century, a window of opportunity has opened up for change in rural China. It may be difficult to discern for the outside observer. But these socio-economic changes are gathering pace even in the remote mountain villages of Gansu. Centuries of poverty may be coming to an end and with this comes increasing democratisation and opportunity for all. ■

► PROJECT DETAILS

Project partners:

New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID)

World Vision Australia (World Vision Australia managed the Gansu project implementation under contract to NZAID)

Gansu Provincial Department of Commerce

People's Governments of Jingyuan County and Jingtai County

Project start date:

October 2003

Project end date:

September 2008

Funding source:

NZAID and the Government of the People's Republic of China

Target population:

The average number of households in each village was 372 with an average of 1,810 people in each village.

Total project budget:

A\$4 million

In 2000, World Vision began to address the complex linkages between food security and malnutrition in Makuyu, Kenya. In terms of design, the activity had all the makings of an integrated, participatory and sustainable intervention. However, the strategy of working through both new and established community-based organisations led to numerous challenges and limited the impact of a specific project that started in 2003. An evaluation conducted towards the end of the project revealed that community-based organisations are not always representative of broader community interests and in fact, some can subvert a sustainable development process.

Food security and malnutrition in Kenya

Rethinking the role of community-based organisations

► DR FRANCOIS TSAFACK / ANUEJA GOPALAKRISHNAN

THE CONTEXT

Food insecurity is a major obstacle to effective community development and previous studies have shown that food security is particularly difficult to achieve in some African contexts. For some communities food security, or the lack of it, reflects complex interconnections between ecology, sustainable agricultural practice and economic and social wellbeing.

World Vision implements an Area Development Program (ADP) in the Makuyu and Kakuzi Divisions of Thika District, in Kenya's Central Province – an area known for its harsh climatic and topographic conditions. Rainfall patterns are erratic and intermittent flooding leads to soil degradation. The poor soil quality, coupled with a history of unsustainable farming practices, has had adverse effects on the range and quality of produce. The local communities tend to cultivate low-yielding maize and bean crops. Livestock production is also low. Moreover, as farmers do not have direct access to metropolitan markets, they are forced to sell their produce to exploitative middlemen.

In this way, Makuyu ADP residents survive on an average monthly income of 3,000 Kenyan Shillings – the equivalent of US\$35, which is barely enough to cover subsistence needs. Many families have only one meal a day and as a result, malnutrition is chronic. It is a key factor in rising mortality and morbidity rates of pre-school children. School attendance rates are low and adults generally have low work performance due to hunger.

THE APPROACH

The Makuyu Food Security Project grew out of a series of community-level consultations. Basically, and ironically, the participation of local people in development activities was limited because they were hungry. Community members came forward with proposals for fruit tree planting and the construction of small-scale dams. World Vision Kenya linked these communities to relevant government bodies to ensure their proposals were supported.

In this way, the project evolved an integrated and participatory approach to addressing food insecurity and malnutrition, encompassing three main components. These were:

- **Community-based sustainable agriculture and child nutrition practices**, such as promoting a return to organic farming; the construction of micro dams; production of drought resistant food and cash crops; improving livestock production; and agro-forestry;
- **Capacity building initiatives** to increase the community's ability to adapt and change, including a community-based training of trainers program and agricultural demonstrations; and
- **Facilitating linkages between community and national institutions** such as the Kenya Institute of Organic Farming, Kenyan Organic Farming Association, the Ministry of Agriculture and the African Beekeepers.

These distinct yet inter-related components were implemented in partnership with new and existing community-based organisations (CBOs). The idea was for the CBOs to function as a link between the project staff and the direct beneficiaries. Each year, planning sessions were held and community members could contact these CBOs with ideas for the project. The CBO chairpersons would report these to "cluster committees" who would liaise directly with the project coordinator.

In this way, World Vision hoped to initiate and influence a broad-based movement in favour of sustainable agricultural practice. It was thought that this would ultimately result in improved food security.

THE OUTCOMES

The Makuyu Food Security Project has produced some positive outcomes in terms of agriculture and wellbeing. Crop farming and livestock husbandry practices have improved

leading to increased food production. Some 58 percent of the project beneficiaries now enjoy three meals a day. As described in one community: *"We now produce more food, have many offsprings from dairy goats and sell the surplus. We can now afford school fees and medical bills, and have hope for the future."*

The project is also an excellent example of NGO intervention contributing to capacity building both at the community and local government level. Prior to the intervention, government extension workers lacked the motivation to fulfil their train-the-trainer duties. Through the project they received training allowances as well as transportation and organisational support. Little incentives such as lunch, snacks or even a cup of tea made a difference to both government extension agents and the members of the community participating in the training. As one extension agent put it: *"Extension agents have been very reluctant to train community groups and community members themselves show low enthusiasm in participating because they have to provide their own transport and lunches or snacks. But for a World Vision event, they are all enthusiastic and event attendance is always 100 percent."*

A limitation of the project was that this enthusiasm and enhanced knowledge and skills have not been enough to help the community develop a food stock beyond five to six months – two months short of the project's original goal. Moreover, while the farmers have adopted several new practices, they did not discard other unsustainable ones. The reluctance of many farmers to fully embrace approaches could have been the result of either the farmers' perception of possible disadvantages, or the failure on the part of the project to effectively mobilise and engage the community.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

The findings from an end-of-project evaluation indicate that despite best intentions to deliver an integrated and participatory intervention, ultimately the success of the project was compromised by an over-dependence on existing CBOs.

For example, in one community, the farmers were frustrated over the lack of artificial insemination services (AIS) and many blamed the CBOs for monopolising project inputs. The local CBOs had recommended that farmers use the services of two privately owned veterinary clinics. These clinics were too costly for most of the farmers and so they continued employing traditional methods, which the project was trying to discourage.

One AIS provider put it this way: *"Before the project started, there was a lack of AIS training and a lack of inseminators. The project has enhanced AIS services. However, the majority of the people are not enlightened on what or when to present their animals for insemination. The AIS is so much commercialised that when used by private practitioners, the ordinary farmer cannot make it. The project should have first involved all parties: farmer, inseminators, and start training at grass root level within the community itself."*

In effect, the project-CBO linkage did not succeed in mobilising the main participants. A few lessons on well-intentioned yet inappropriate practice, stood out in the evaluation:

- **The project did not set out clear criteria for identifying and selecting participants.** The CBOs and cluster committees that were the interface between the project and the community



► SNAP SHOT

WHAT IS FOOD SECURITY?

Food security is defined using various indicators and criteria by different organisations. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), for example, identifies food security as situations where:

All people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. (World Food Summit, 1996)

The USAID-supported Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project has established three components of food security that inform technical assistance: food **availability**, food **access** and food **utilisation**. The FAO's food security policy identifies an additional fourth component - **stability**. World Vision also views stability as fundamental to creating an environment for food security but the FAO operates a "food aid" framework in emergency settings, whereas World Vision's "food security" programs operate in more stable development settings. Thus World Vision would substitute "stability" with "**asset creation**". This differentiation allows for greater specificity in programming.

The concept of asset creation emphasises community access to, and information on, the most appropriate ways to use and build on (scarce) resources. It is fundamental to designing food security interventions that are sustainable over time.

World Vision Australia currently supports food security projects in seven countries: Lesotho, Northern Sudan, Mozambique, Southern Sudan, Laos, Solomon Islands and Nepal.

◀ **A good example of integrated gardening, with at least six different crop varieties shown here.**

► PROGRAM DETAILS

Development context:

This part of Kenya is classified as arid and semi-arid due to its harsh climatic and topographic conditions. It is characterised by erratic and unreliable rainfall patterns, and intermittent flooding that causes water run-off and soil degradation in otherwise dry valleys. This poses a serious problem for subsistence farmers who have historically relied on rain-fed farming. The Government of Kenya has attempted to address food insecurity through the adoption in June 2001 of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which is at the centre of the 15-year National Poverty Eradication Plan. Makuyu residents have known hunger for many years and have been dependent on food aid distributed by the government and various NGOs including World Vision.

Programming context:

World Vision has been in the Makuyu area since 1991, working with the Kenyan Government and local CBOs. At the time of original assessment, there were very high levels of illiteracy, infant mortality, HIV and AIDS prevalence, and low levels of medical coverage. Some 40.5 percent of people in the area lived in absolute poverty. World Vision Kenya's work in the area has included promoting and supporting the production of drought-resistant crops; creating alliances with church and other community leaders to assist with HIV and AIDS awareness and child abuse prevention initiatives; and providing training in nutrition and technical skills.

Project start date:

October 2003

Project end date:

September 2006

Funding source:

AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

Total funds remitted from Australia:

US\$222,353

had their own membership rules and criteria. Households that were not fee-paying members of the CBOs were not allowed to access project inputs. In most cases these were the poorest households and so the most deserving.

- **There was not enough monitoring of patterns of usage.** CBOs and CBO leaders were accustomed to working through kinship and social networks. Hence, the underlying logic of promoting a broad-based movement for social change was lost. Some CBO leaders tended to channel project inputs to relatives and friends.
- Finally, the **project monitoring and design process did not pick up on these trends** until late into implementation. The project had neither a policy on CBOs nor one on roles governing the partnership. The CBOs and community coordinators applied their own rules as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria that were unknown to project staff.

LEARNING FROM MAKUYU

The Makuyu experience demonstrates that although working with existing CBO structures has proved to be very successful in many community interventions, it is not a panacea for sustainable development. CBOs are not necessarily the best interface between project staff and local communities. Sound knowledge of local dynamics is essential to project design. The parameters for NGO-CBO partnerships need to be developed carefully. In some situations, the funders should operate at the CBO and community level.

World Vision Australia is currently working with World Vision Burundi on the design of another community development initiative to address food security. All the lessons learnt from the Makuyu experience are being used in the design of this new project. In particular, the design process is assessing the traditional role and scope of existing CBOs and their relevance in the context of sustainable food security interventions. ■

► SNAP SHOT

THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

In April 2008, the world's attention was drawn to the dramatic rise in global food commodity prices over preceding months, and the imminent threat posed by high prices to the food security and nutrition of vulnerable populations: the so-called Global Food Crisis.

Soaring food prices fuelled by income growth and changing consumption patterns, climate change, high fuel/energy prices, globalisation, urbanisation and the production of biofuels, are transforming the entire structure of food consumption, food production, markets, and global food distribution, possibly for the long term. According to the World Bank, the price of oilseeds and grains, such as wheat and maize, has doubled since January 2006; the price of rice more than tripled between January and March this year. While food and energy prices have eased a little from their recent peaks (owing to the more recent Global Financial Crisis), they remain very high. Moreover, price movements have been volatile, adding to the uncertainty facing farmers and consumers in poor countries. Increased food price volatility is expected to continue, with prices predicted to remain high to at least 2015¹.

High fuel and food prices are impacting the world's ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Recent developmental gains in reducing malnutrition are at risk of being reversed. The FAO estimates that in the past year alone, rising food prices have pushed the number of malnourished people around the world up to 923 million – an increase of 75 million plus people to the ranks of those living in extreme poverty. The recent crisis has highlighted the vulnerability of households, communities and governments in achieving food security, particularly amongst poorer populations already affected by undernourishment, instability, HIV and AIDS, conflict and drought.

The speed, scale and complexity with which global events such as the food crisis and the financial crisis are occurring now demand that we respond urgently with new and carefully considered interventions.

World Vision International has established a Global Food Crisis Taskforce, mandated to understand the short and long-term implications of the crisis, and respond with a multi-faceted, multi-sectoral response in partnership with other key international humanitarian and development organisations and with communities. A two-pronged approach is imperative: a focus on the immediate and urgent needs of those children and communities experiencing hunger and malnutrition; and on addressing long-term food security through sustainable nutritional, agricultural, and economic development programs, and a concerted effort to build resilient communities.

¹ World Bank (2008). *Double Jeopardy: Responding to High Food and Fuel Prices*. Report for the G8 Hokkaido-Toyako Summit, July 2.

Early childhood education: A solid foundation

Girl Child Reading and Rescue Project

► DR JOHN DONNELLY

EXPANDING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Fifty percent of all five-to-nine year olds in Solomon Islands do not attend school (1999 Census)¹. In rural areas it is common that children start school at an older age – often at eight or nine years. The lack of early educational opportunities, often combined with poor nutrition, leaves children ill prepared for formal education. Many students are unable to cope in the disciplined environment of the classroom. Consequently, drop-out rates in the early years are high. Most girls are actively engaged in household duties by the time they are eight or nine and so many girls are not enrolled at all.

The Nguzunguzu System is essentially the government's response to lagging enrolment and retention rates. It replaces the previously used Papua New Guinean primary school curriculum with one that is locally-developed

and more culturally appropriate. The system also includes an Early Childhood Education (ECE) Policy requiring children to have three years of ECE or "kindy" before enrolling in primary school. The policy emphasises six areas of early childhood development: physical, social, cognitive, language, emotional and moral.

WORLD VISION'S RESPONSE

The Girl Child Reading and Rescue Project (GCRRP), implemented by World Vision Solomon Islands with support from World Vision Australia, operates in some of the most remote communities of the Makira-Ulawa Province. The project aims to equip children with skills in the aforementioned six areas and to give them an appropriate foundation for primary schooling in a formal educational environment.

Villagers on Makira Island belong to fishing and gardening communities. Most live at least a long canoe ride or several hours walk from

The Nguzunguzu approach to early childhood education in Solomon Islands is a new policy approach and curriculum adopted by the Government of the Solomon Islands and it has expanded the space for early childhood education initiatives. Nguzunguzu is the name of a mythical spirit from the islands of the Western Province of Solomon Islands. The image of this spirit was carved on the front of war canoes – it led the warriors into battle.

The Nguzunguzu approach to the early years of education aims to prepare children for the formal education system. While the government's implementation of the new system is constrained by a lack of resources, this project is creating a groundswell of local support for effective, formal and structured pre-school education. In a short period of time it has demonstrated what is seemingly obvious, yet often overlooked – that early childhood education is vital to driving school enrolments and ultimately, school retention rates, both of which lead to greater success at higher levels.



¹ Solomon Islands National Statistics Office, 1999 Census

► SNAP-SHOT:

A FOCUS ON GIRLS?

The project title, Girl Child Reading and Rescue, often prompts the question: why girl child rescue? The GCRRP never intended to target only girls. All children aged between three and five years (the target age group of the ECE policy) are included. It would be counter-productive to only focus on girls because of entrenched gender stereotyping and clearly demarcated gender roles. Male community members may not have been supportive of a project which focused exclusively on girls.

The project title is powerful however, because it reflects the importance of including girls in the education system. It suggests that girls can be “rescued” from the traditional hierarchy of gender roles where child-bearing and domestic work limit their opportunities for educational advancement. In fact, the girls who are currently enrolled in kindys continue to contribute to household tasks.

It is testament to the success of the project that within beneficiary communities both men and women refer to the GCRRP without any mention of the absence of boys from the project title. The strong impact of the project on these communities has to a large degree “mainstreamed” gender, at least within the kindy environment.

existing health and education services. Access to coastal communities on the eastern side of the island, where the project operates, is only by boat and often involves crossing rough seas. Illiteracy is particularly high here, as are drop-out rates during primary school years.

According to Henry Ratah, Chief Education Officer for the Provincial Ministry of Education, literacy rates in Makira-Ulawa are the lowest in Solomon Islands. Girls perform better than boys; however there are fewer girls at school than boys. While commitment to implement the ECE Policy exists, the Provincial Government lacks the resources required for this. Moreover, there is a dearth of adult educators and literacy workers in Solomon Islands.

Recognising these barriers, the project has operated on a few different levels. These have included:

- Working with government staff and communities to explain and discuss the ECE policy;
- Setting up three model kindys stocked with appropriate educational tools in strategic locations to provide communities with a guide for construction and provisioning of their own local kindys. The model kindys also provide a location for ongoing training for the ECE trainers;
- Forming “kindy committees” composed of community members who are interested

in the ECE process (there are no barriers to involvement in the kindy committee) to ensure that the kindys are relevant to the community and that they are operational;

- Facilitating a Field Based Training Program, run by the provincial ECE Coordinator and attended by local ECE trainees.

PROGRESS

By the second year of project implementation, results were evident. Primary school enrolments increased. After 18 months, 183 five-year-olds (92 boys and 91 girls) from the kindys were enrolled in primary school. A total of 88 local trainers are conducting kindy classes in 28 community kindys in East Makira. Without this intervention, many of these children may not have enrolled in primary school until the age of eight or nine – many to drop out later. Moreover, many girls would not have enrolled at all.

The project has also had several unintended effects on the overall wellbeing of the children and their communities. Improved nutrition and personal hygiene have been key, unintended effects of the project. Kindy committees have established rules for attendance at kindy that ensure children are clean, fed, bring a snack and are neatly attired before attending classes. One mother, Evelyne Anseto, notes: “My child is demanding a good breakfast every morning before she goes to school and this had made us, the parents, get up early each morning





to prepare her breakfast. Because they are eating well every day our children's health has improved tremendously."

Changes in some gender-determined roles are also evident. Some 26 of the 88 local ECE trainers are male, which is significant for Solomon Islands because the care and instruction of young children is regarded as women's work. At the household level, there is evidence that fathers are becoming more involved with the all-round care and development of their children. A poster in one kindy states, "Dadi hemi save wasim kaleko blong Pikinini" ("Daddy can wash children's clothes").

AN OVERWHELMING COMMUNITY RESPONSE

East Makira's support for the GCRRP has been overwhelmingly positive. Trainers are reimbursed by local communities, either in-kind or with a combination of money and in-kind support.

In communities where cash is limited and people rely on their gardens and fishing for livelihoods, time is a scarce resource. Yet, the frequency of kindy sessions has grown from two or three occasional classes to five weekday sessions of four hours each.

The trainers have learnt to develop resources using locally available materials, ensuring that their interventions are culturally appropriate and relevant. In fact, kindys have become a central meeting point for different generations. Fathers and older boys have built playground equipment such as swings, climbing frames and see-saws. Older people are enthusiastically engaged in passing on local traditions and practices. Community members regularly comment on the return of story-telling and local rhymes to community life. Overall, this interaction is vital to maintain continuity in the face of widespread economic modernisation and social change.

THE FUTURE: IMPROVING LITERACY IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

For visitors returning after some time to communities within the project area, the difference in the physical health and wellbeing of young children is startling. Where common colds, infections and skin diseases were once common, they are now noticeably rare.

Encouraged by these early achievements, World Vision Solomon Islands is planning to extend the project across the rest of Makira Island. Plans are also underway to provide additional professional development for the local ECE trainers. It is intended that in the near future, World Vision will partner with the Provincial Government to facilitate the delivery of a Certificate of Early Childhood Education through the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education. It is intended that this course will be delivered in Kirakira (a local language) on Makira Island in a part-time mode in blocks during school holidays. This delivery mode for a course outside of Honiara would be a first for higher education in Solomon Islands.

The GCRRP has provided a model for other provinces that have not been able to implement the Nguzunguzu System effectively and the Makira-Ulawa Provincial Government has gained recognition from this process. From an even wider perspective, GCRRP has demonstrated how far-reaching the impact of early childhood education can be. The GCRRP manager, Margaret Ngauha'a, would like literacy to be a focus of all World Vision projects. *"Practical literacy helps to make any project more effective, simply because when participants are literate they can better understand the project objectives and how beneficial they can be for their life. Literacy helps to bind together different aspects of life. With the building blocks of words, which translate into ideas, people and communities can build a 'bigger picture' for their future."* ■

► PROGRAM DETAILS

Development context:

Communities in Solomon Islands suffered as a result of political unrest and tensions between 1999 and 2003. With the arrival of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) in June 2003, the security situation in Guadalcanal and Malaita provinces improved, displaced families started returning home, and government services are being re-established. With a total population of 538,032 (July 2005), Solomon Islands ranks among the poorest of the Least Developed Nations, according to United Nations statistics. Over 100 indigenous languages are spoken by the mostly Melanesian and Polynesian populations. Some 85 percent of Solomon Islanders are subsistence or cash cropping farmers who reside in small villages with a traditional lifestyle.

Programming context:

World Vision has been active in Solomon Islands for over 20 years. Established in 1981 via a relief program, the Country Program Office was directly assisted by World Vision Australia. In 1983, the first Community Development Projects began. Today, World Vision Solomon Islands is part of the World Vision Pacific Development Group whose goal is for Pacific communities to be transformed and empowered to maximise their true potential and live in peace, prosperity and harmony.

Project partners:

World Vision Australia and World Vision Solomon Islands

Project start date:

1 July, 2005

Project end date:

30 June, 2008

Funding source:

Child Rescue

Total Australian funds remitted overseas at June 2008:

US\$180,043

On 9 January 2005, the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army signed a peace agreement that officially ended 22 years of civil war. As the nation shifts from relief to rehabilitation, new opportunities have been identified by communities and returnees to re-establish their families and develop sustainable livelihoods for the future.

The people of Yambio County in Western Equatoria engaged in a program that aimed to improve household food security, increase incomes and boost local rice production. Significantly, it is a group of predominantly returnee women who have demonstrated the most potential for capitalising on post-war opportunities. Knowledge gained during years of asylum, new prospects for cultural change and a resolve for a better life have helped them achieve their goals for long-term sustainability through rice production, market access and cooperative action.

Post-conflict recovery: maximising returnee knowledge

Yambio Rice Revitalisation Project – Southern Sudan

► ALISON SCHAFER

The Northern-Southern Sudan conflict is commonly referred to as Africa's longest civil war, spanning nearly 22 years. The war is reported to have killed up to two million Southern Sudanese people of various tribes, either directly in conflict, or indirectly from war-related causes like hunger and disease. At the same time, the war forced approximately four million people from their homes into other regions of Sudan (including Khartoum) and to countries like Kenya, Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Central African Republic (CAR). Typically, those most affected by displacement were women and children.

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in January 2005 holds a promise of peace. For many women and children who are returning to their former homes, this prospect is a fragile one. Whilst vast areas of Southern Sudan need ongoing support for survival, many aid organisations are charting the shift from programs that focus on relief to ones that support recovery and sustainable community development. The challenges, on either score, are monumental.

The peace agreement has caused radical change for Southern Sudan's governing bodies. The 10 states which now form Southern Sudan are working closely with a range of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on programs that support the recovery of the nation and its people. World Vision South Sudan (WVSS) is one of the NGOs supporting this intentional move. Hence, this shift from relief to recovery is a focus for the nation as well. For WVSS, this post-conflict recovery process is an immense learning opportunity and has demonstrated how recovery can bring new prospects for previously marginalised

groups like women.

WESTERN EQUATORIA – A POTENTIAL FOOD BOWL OF SOUTHERN SUDAN

WVSS began operations in 1983 and worked through to 1988, resuming after short break in 1989. WVSS expanded its relief work in Western Equatoria, and its capital Yambio in 1993. Existing community relationships along with regional stability made it an appropriate location for WVSS to begin implementing a three-year program and test medium-term recovery operations.

In Yambio, 76 percent of residents depend on farming for their livelihoods, and 23 percent of these rely on trade for the majority of their income. Traditional crops include cassava, sweet potato, sesame, groundnut, rice, sorghum, maize and specialist crops such as palm oil. The conflict and its aftermath significantly disrupted local trade with neighbouring countries, creating unemployment as many families were unable to market their produce. There are two distinct farming ecologies in the region: the mountainous "upland" and the rich valley "lowlands".

RICE – A NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITY

Of all the traditional crops grown in the Yambio region, rice is considered the most important by traders and shows the greatest potential for expansion. It is the staple crop of the region and it is also eaten in neighbouring countries. Traditionally, rice crops were grown on a very small scale and profitability was minimal. Local communities lacked sophisticated resources to refine and enhance the quality of their product and so they were unable to exploit the financial potential of this important crop.

The AusAID-funded Yambio Rice Revitalisation

Project aimed to improve household food security and incomes amongst 8,198 households (approximately 55,750 people) over a three-year period. To achieve this, training on improved rice production techniques was provided and five rice production and marketing groups were formed to encourage increased market access for this specific product. The five groups included one lowland rice group and four other groups in upland payams¹ of the Yambio region.

In practical terms, the project involved the distribution of seeds and tools, support for the provision of rice grinding mills to production groups, and workshops to encourage improved market access. These workshops helped teach the groups how to refine their products to make them more marketable to local consumers.

RICE – A SURPRISING OUTCOME

By the third year of the program, several trends became evident. Firstly, the target of working with more than 8,000 households proved too ambitious. Only 6,500 households had been reached by February 2008. Secondly, the formation of rice production groups was difficult in the more mountainous areas where payams were widely dispersed. The most significant and positive trend however, was the emergence of an extremely vibrant lowland group – the Ikpiro group.

The upland groups spent the three-year period forming their marketing strategies, determining group by-laws and setting up rice mill procedures. They were highly dependent on World Vision for advice and inputs. The Ikpiro group, on the other hand, field tested a range of rice varieties, appointed group leaders and treasurers, and established rules for their cooperatives. After 30 months, they had initiated their own savings plan through a local bank to purchase inputs and a second grinding mill. Their combined profit had reached the equivalent of US\$1,000 and it was growing. As Catelina, group leader, explained: "I can now feed my family, send my children to school and have an income for other items in my home. World Vision needs to help others now."

LEARNING FROM THE RICE GROWERS

As the project draws to a close, World Vision is working with each rice group to achieve long-term viability. At the same time, World Vision is encouraging a more focused approach amongst the upland rice groups to help them achieve the same success that has been experienced by the lowland Ikpiro group. This outcome has led WVSS to explore a range of interesting questions: Was Ikpiro more successful because it was the only lowland group? Or, was it because it was made up of

women? Alternatively, was Ikpiro successful because it included mostly returnees, whereas the upland groups were mostly formed in communities that never left Southern Sudan during the war?

Initial analysis suggests that many factors played a role in the success of the Ikpiro group members, but that their gender and returnee status were foremost amongst these. They were returning to their homeland with cultural changes, increased knowledge and expectant attitudes about their futures.

In the first instance, as female-headed household returnees, the women of the Ikpiro group were allotted a share of common land, which they utilised to work their rice crops cooperatively. In contrast, the women of the upland groups remained largely under the laws and traditions that favoured patriarchal land ownership. The upland groups were larger, mixed-gender groups that lacked social cohesiveness. In effect, by working together, the Ikpiro group produced more rice, more quickly than the upland groups.

Another observable difference was the groups' attitudes to working in partnership with an NGO like World Vision. The upland communities had survived the oppressions of the civil war, receiving hand-outs for over two decades. They were accustomed to aid dependency. The Ikpiro group, on the other hand, had witnessed NGO-community

¹ A payam is an area of land defined by community and government leaders.



► PROGRAM DETAILS

Development context

Sudan's 22-year war, fuelled mainly by political and economic struggle between independence fighters and the government, claimed over two million lives and displaced more than four million people. With a peace agreement in place and, for the most part holding, the people of Southern Sudan and those returning to their homeland are maximising opportunities for independence.

Programming context

World Vision has been working in Southern Sudan since 1983, during the war years and in more recent times when peace has prevailed. Today, World Vision's work in Southern Sudan includes a range of development programs in areas such as health, education, and water and sanitation in Warrap State, Northern Bahr El Gazal, Upper Nile and Unity State, as well as Western Equatoria.

Project start date:

1 July 2005

Project end date:

30 June 2008

Funding source:

AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) (with matched funding from World Vision's corporate and major donors and the Seeds, Tools and Training Appeal)

Total Australian funds remitted at June 2008:

US\$367,760

Target population:

8,198 households through the establishment of five agricultural groups

collaboration in action in the displacement and refugee camps. The strong sense of ambition and solidarity between the women in the group enabled them to take risks, solve problems, negotiate and share profits. They viewed World Vision as a partner in this process.

Lastly, the Ikpiro group members, by virtue of their returnee status, had brought home new skills and knowledge – both practical and philosophical. Many benefited from adult education, livelihoods training, hygiene promotion and rights education whilst in exile. This "returnee knowledge" gave them an advantage over the upland groups who were tied to a narrower world view and more limited vision of an alternative future.

LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Yambio Rice Revitalisation Project highlights a number of lessons. It is evident that the activities that refugees participate in during asylum can be fundamental in facilitating a positive experience when they return to their homelands. While it may appear inappropriate in some refugee camp scenarios to be teaching people about agriculture, financial savings and literacy, the benefits may actually be realised when families transfer knowledge to a new context. Such work with refugees can ensure they are adequately equipped and empowered to maximise new opportunities during resettlement.

As WVSS continues with post-conflict recovery and community development work in Southern Sudan, other learnings from the Yambio rice project emphasise the importance of:

- Support for attitudinal and behavioural change in ways that enable conflict-affected groups to "move on" in philosophical and practical ways;
- Strengthening interaction between existing and returnee groups with a view to sustaining peace and also maximising the transfer of returnee knowledge;
- Incorporating gender analysis in all aspects of post-conflict recovery;
- Promoting macro linkages to emerging (women's) community-based organisations that enable them to spiral out into economic prosperity and social stability for the nation as a whole.

For all of the rice groups formed in Yambio, success and economic prospects will remain limited if they continue to only pursue local markets. The next step for World Vision is to work with communities in furthering market opportunities. The aim will be to maximise the opportunities that returning families offer the local community; and support communities in the nearby mountain regions to achieve levels of profit similar to those achieved by the Ikpiro group over the past few years.

Southern Sudan is opening up its major towns and Yambio is expected to have improved infrastructure and road access to neighbouring states and towns like Yei, Wau, Juba and Rumbek. Producers in Western Equatoria might also be able to consider marketplaces in Uganda, CAR and DRC because the peace accord now allows freedom of travel to and from these countries. The Western Equatoria region is fertile and it is possible that host and returnee groups can position themselves as central food suppliers and access points for much of Southern Sudan and the broader region. ■



Turning sponsorship activity into development process

Use of 'Most Significant Change' in child sponsorship programs

► BRETT PIERCE

AN IMPORTANT REPORT.... FOR CHILD SPONSORS

Every year, World Vision child sponsors receive an Annual Progress Report (APR), which details the child's developmental progress, and which is set within the broader context of the development program in the child's community. The APR provides an opportunity to engage sponsors more deeply in development issues that affect children's lives. And it is widely read. Research confirms that APRs are amongst the most important and highly valued communications received by sponsors¹.

Our own candid assessments have shown that the quality of APRs can vary. Some struggle to articulate the link between children and community development outcomes. Overall, they have not adequately explained how sponsorship programs work: that sponsored children benefit as community members work together to address the root causes of poverty.

There is also a logistical challenge. The production and collection of data for APRs in large Area Development Programs (ADPs) of 3,000 or more children can take program staff and community volunteers up to several weeks. Whilst vital for sponsors, this process can take staff and community volunteers away from core program activities and the children and community don't particularly benefit from the activity.

In 2007, World Vision initiated a pilot in four sponsorship-funded ADPs in Malawi, not only to improve the quality of APRs for sponsors, but to find creative ways of involving the community more meaningfully. The pilot tested the integration of Most Significant Change (MSC), a community-based monitoring and evaluation approach, with the APR-gathering process.

The four programs, Senzani, Mlonyeni, Kafulu and Mkhumba ADPs, were not chosen for any

unique characteristics. They are all rural, long-term ADPs at various stages in their program life-cycle. Levels of adult literacy within all of these communities are low, but this is something for which MSC is well-suited.

WHAT IS MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE?

Most Significant Change is a community-based, participatory monitoring and evaluation tool. It engages community groups in a story-based reflection process on the most significant changes they have experienced. Stories make the MSC tool very powerful. Story-telling is intrinsic to all cultures. Everyone has a story to tell: the young and the old; the educated and the non-literate too. This contributes to a process that is accessible to all.

The MSC process as a whole is about distilling "significant" program impacts from the "ordinary" ones, starting with the experiences of individuals. As individual's stories generate discussion, whole groups can debate the issues raised and which stories represent changes that are "most significant". This allows people to interact and reflect on what is important and what is working for them within the program.

MSC is not a stand-alone monitoring and evaluation tool, but it does provide communities with an opportunity to reflect on their own progress, and it helps to paint a nuanced picture to supplement other monitoring data.

THE CHALLENGE: A MEANINGFUL REPORT FROM A MEANINGFUL PROCESS

It seemed promising then, to integrate the APR-gathering process with MSC. As part of the pilot, the APR process would become a community-based reflection on

Child sponsorship is a very effective means of raising funds for development programs, but World Vision has tried to explore its potential beyond this. Over time, World Vision has evolved its sponsorship model considerably, seeking to integrate it into the fabric of community development. At the same time there have been efforts to engage child sponsors more deeply in complex development issues with the ultimate goal of helping communities become self-sufficient.

Annual Progress Reports (APRs) on sponsored children are important to sponsors, but the collection of these reports can be time consuming and often doesn't add significant value to the program itself. Whilst vital for accountability to sponsors, the quality of APRs varies greatly and the process is often not meaningful for the community.

A recent pilot in Malawi demonstrated that the integration of APR collection with Most Significant Change (MSC) methodology can significantly enrich the process. The pilot produced many benefits: for the program, the community and the staff. It resulted in better communication to sponsors and stronger participation of children. It also raised the broader question: are there other "routine" program activities that can be reinvented by focusing on outcomes for the community?

¹ Quantum Market Research, World Vision APR Review Quantitative Findings, September 2005.

► MSC AT A GLANCE

Essentially, the process involves the collection of significant change stories emanating from the field level, and the systematic selection of the most significant of these stories by panels of designated stakeholders and/or staff. The designated stakeholders and staff are initially involved by “searching” for project impact. Once changes have been captured, various people sit down together, read the stories aloud and have regular and often in-depth discussions about the value of these reported changes. When the technique is implemented successfully, whole teams of people begin to focus their attention on program impact.

Source: Davies, Rick & Dart, Jess, The ‘Most Significant Change’ MSC Technique, A guide to its use, Version 1.00 April 2005, Online: www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf



the development activities undertaken. Also, because it is story-based, MSC methodology would enable children to participate in a meaningful way. Finally, it would enable each child and family to tell the sponsor, in their own way, how the program had affected their lives.

Obviously, the process evolved differently in different communities. During one of the early trials, program staff were expecting a representative group, but the whole village of several hundred people unexpectedly turned up. The collection of APRs usually only involved sponsored children, but MSC created the space for everyone to participate, including non-sponsored children. People sat in dozens of enthusiastic small groups and shared their own stories of how the program had led to changes in their lives. There were so many reflections about the impact of the program it was not feasible to capture them all in writing. It was decided that each group could select one story that they considered best represented their view. This allowed each group to confirm shared values and reflections about the impact and direction of the program. This improvisation became the pattern for the process. During such reflection, details for the APRs were also collected from the sponsored children. Sponsored children and families communicated their “significant change” to their sponsor, either through a story or drawing. Non-sponsored children were also able to share their own stories and express them through writing or drawing. There was no discrimination.

The communities often accompanied their reflections with celebration, expressed in music and dance. And why not? It was, after all, a celebration of their own work.

A SIMPLE APPROACH

From World Vision's perspective, the success of the MSC pilot in Malawi is worth celebrating, not only because it strengthened communication with sponsors, but more importantly it turned the process into a valuable program activity.

All that was required was training for program staff in MSC methodology and some adaptation of the existing APR gathering process. Although the MSC process takes time, program staff quickly concluded that the reflections of the community were very rich and concluded that this was a valuable investment. They also learnt to integrate the MSC process with existing community meetings and day-to-day work within the community.

All along, facilitators reported that certain key skills were essential, like story collection, writing, clarity of purpose and probing skills to distinguish between general “stories” and most significant changes. They also noted that working with younger children requires more sensitive probing skills. Very young children were better able to participate through a team effort where the parents articulated a story and then helped the child to draw.

More importantly, the time required for community reflection was directly comparable to the time formerly required for APR gathering, which had only involved the sponsored children. The major difference was that this was now for the community – the whole community – and not just for sponsors.

INCREASED COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

The World Vision Malawi Quality Manager described this process as a “must for all World Vision offices”. During the pilot assessment, interviewees reported that the community “owned the process and were delighted to have participated”.

According to Asaph Muula, an ADP Manager, *“MSC achieved greater cooperative ownership of ADP activities amongst program staff, community and other stakeholders like teachers. ...there has been notably wider participation of stakeholders, such as government teachers and disadvantaged families, because it is there where powerful stories are emanating”*.

CLARIFYING DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Previously, ADP staff saw APR gathering as down-time for the program. As a result of the pilot, this is no longer the case as they consider that integrating MSC now adds significant value. “The usefulness of MSC cannot be overemphasised as it is a powerful development tool,” reported one program manager. The reflections gathered from this process, “assisted in revisiting the development approaches of those interventions that hadn’t seemed significant at all”. For this reason, program staff were also greatly encouraged in their work.

The rich data contained within the stories describes the impact of the program from the beneficiaries’ perspective. Program staff found that this unearthed information that conventional monitoring data does not capture adequately. For one staff member, this was confirmation of the popular monitoring maxim that “not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that can be counted counts”.

PROMOTING A CHILD’S RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE

Involving children, with their parents, in the context of sharing stories of change proved to be very powerful in addressing the issue of participation. Over the years, World Vision Child Sponsorship has moved away from providing handout packages to validate sponsors’ contributions and families’ participation. It is important for families to participate so that all involved in the program share the vision of working together for the wellbeing of children. But as the intervening agency we do have to demonstrate to them that the program will really make a difference.

This is where the strength of integrating the collection of APRs with an MSC process was evident. Children, families and communities shared stories that illustrated the impact of the program on their lives. This helped children and communities reflect on and understand how child sponsorship works, without exclusive focus

on sponsored children. Importantly, children also participated in program monitoring through MSC.

The end result gave the community much greater control over the information about them that is communicated to sponsors. One community in Kafulu ADP indicated that the report “recognises our role in development”. It also meant that, for the first time, individual children and families were able to directly tell the sponsors their own story of the impact of the program on their lives.

THE SPONSOR’S PERSPECTIVE

Market research was conducted in several countries to investigate whether sponsors recognise the difference in APRs. Specifically, World Vision Germany conducted market research with sponsors on comparisons between 2006 and 2007 APRs². Sponsors were able to identify significant differences. The 2007 APR was significantly preferred over the 2006 APR, and had much higher satisfaction levels. Survey participants were able to identify some specific reasons for higher satisfaction that point to results of the MSC/APR approach.

REFLECTIONS AND LEARNING

The Malawi pilot demonstrates the potential of combining a sponsorship process with a community-based and child-friendly monitoring and evaluation tool.

The table on page 21 captures some of this potential.

RETHINKING THE “ROUTINE”

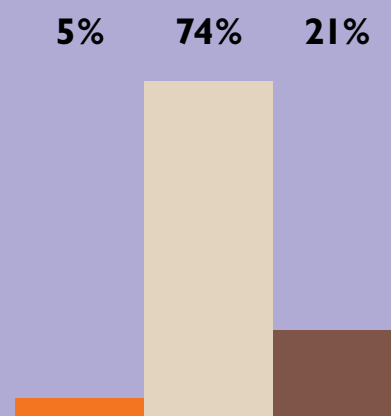
A key challenge for the future as World Vision continues to link children and sponsors in meaningful ways, is to ensure that communities also benefit from this process. The Malawi pilot suggests that the placement of the APR process within MSC is a significant start. Steps are already being taken to mainstream learnings from this pilot across all World Vision ADPs.

The pilot demonstrated that it is possible to add value to tasks that may seem purely administrative and to share this value with the community. This new way of gathering a report that was once meant only for sponsors has resulted in communities feeling encouraged and proud about their own progress.

When community members in the Kafulu ADP were asked what they thought was the most significant change that had occurred in the community since adopting the MSC/APR approach, they concluded: *“Peoples’ confidence in what they do and own. Initially many people in the program suffered from latent inferiority complex. They thought what they do and have is not worthy [of] sharing and news for celebration but there is now realisation that the opposite is true.”*

And that becomes a story worth telling.

► WHICH ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT DO YOU PREFER?



A

2006 Annual Progress Report

B

2007 Annual Progress Report

C

Not Specified; Don't Know

² Michel, Volkhard, Results of Survey Regarding Changes in Annual Progress Reports, World Vision Germany, 2007. Context – MSC was introduced within the context of an APR design review, so results reflect the impact of the total approach. The market research does not attempt to isolate MSC as a factor, but does demonstrate enriched content from or about children as a factor, which is part of the overall approach to linking MSC/APRs.

► SNAP-SHOT:

World Vision now has over 3.5 million children registered in its sponsorship program in 57 countries. This is nearly half of all children registered by child sponsorship agencies worldwide. These children are sponsored through World Vision fundraising offices in 21 different countries. "Transformational development programs impact all children, including sponsored children, in identifiable ways, and treat children as active participants and agents of change." (World Vision International Board Policy on Sponsorship)

STAKEHOLDER	COMMONLY REPORTED ISSUES	POTENTIAL FROM APR/MSC PROCESS
Sponsored children	APR process extractive, not meaningful for children.	Children are active participants in reflection on community development.
Non-sponsored children	Previously not included in APR process. May not understand how sponsorship also helps them.	Active participants in the process who are able to relate stories of change in their own lives to the partnership with sponsors.
Families	Often look for tangible inputs to validate their participation in sponsorship.	Sponsorship is "validated" through the narrative of the stories. Reinforces central message that the impact of sponsorship is through the development program.
Community	Sponsorship and APR process are often seen as separate from rest of program.	APR process forms part of the program. It's possible for all to participate and this reinforces the connection between sponsorship and program. "Stronger ownership" is reported in Malawi.
Program staff	APR is process time-consuming, taking all staff between 2-4 weeks away from core development work. Staff can lack time for grassroots contact and dialogue at community level. Rarely see impact of program from day to day.	APR process forms part of a broader Design, Monitoring and Evaluation process. Engages staff in grassroots dialogue where they hear stories of impact, and report significant encouragement and motivation.
Sponsors	Often expect inputs/handouts to validate sponsorship. May have difficulty understanding how the development program relates to sponsored children. APRs rarely communicate impact and lack clear connection with development.	Stories communicate links between development and impact on children. MSC stories within printed components of APRs reinforce the impact on children and families through the program. In many APRs, children share impact stories from MSC discussions.
Communicators	Spend time locating stories, which can interrupt program activities. Stories are not always representative or validated by the community. Some stories can reinforce stereotypes, whilst the stories with most potential to transform the perspective of supporters remain untold.	Stories emerge from community initiative and can be directed to communicators. Democratisation of communications process allows the community to determine how their story is told, and to receive feedback. Potential for the courage, tenacity, initiative and beauty of the community to be communicated in unexpected (and perhaps transformative) ways. ■

PARTNERING



In Madang Province, Papua New Guinea, an ambitious inter-sectoral partnership is evaluating diverse cultivated varieties (cultivars) of sweet potato – Papua New Guinea's most important food crop. The Sweet Potato Project is the largest agricultural research trial to take place in the country. It is also the first time that technician and farmer trials have been run together on locally owned land. The entire project cycle, including the trials, evaluation and dissemination of appropriate varieties, has remained in the hands of local farmers. What is even more fascinating is that the project is challenging pre-conceived notions of how success can be measured. It was assumed that the "best" varieties would be the highest yielding ones. But in fact, local people have different ideas and preferences. Agencies working on food security and sustainable livelihood programs will find these lessons extremely valuable.

Making research work

Bridging the gap between communities and academic research in the developing world

► JONATHAN TREAGUST

THE BIG ISSUE

Rapidly increasing population and limited agricultural land are issues facing many South Pacific nations, particularly Papua New Guinea (PNG), where approximately 54 percent of the population live in poverty – preferably termed 'hardship' by most in PNG¹. According to estimates, 93 percent of the poor live in rural areas and rely on agriculture for survival. Locally grown staples provide almost 70 percent of people's food intake and sweet potato accounts for 66 percent of the calories provided by these staples. In fact, sweet potato has become PNG's most important crop over the last 40 years. It is especially important for the rural poor who lack the basic income needed to purchase food when domestic yields fall short of consumption levels².

In 2003, World Vision turned its attention to evaluating different varieties of sweet potato in Madang Province, where the organisation has been present for over 20 years. The problem wasn't the lack of cultivars, but an overabundance of them. In Australia, for example, five varieties of sweet potato are commercially grown, with one variety accounting for 90 percent of production. In PNG, there are an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 cultivars. A typical farmer's garden may contain 30 different varieties of sweet potato, making an assessment of their comparative benefits both difficult and time consuming.

The original project aim appeared simple: to partner with Australia's leading international agricultural research institute, the Australia Council for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and PNG's National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), to increase food security in Madang communities. This would be achieved by identifying "pre-selected" varieties of sweet potato, capable of much higher yields than those typically farmed by local communities.

For World Vision, this presented significant challenges. Australian Government funding for non-governmental organisations in PNG is focused on HIV and AIDS, health, education and child rights programs. Stand alone agricultural projects are unusual, especially those dealing with staple crops. Moreover, partnerships

between non-governmental organisations like World Vision and mainstream research institutes such as ACIAR are rare. Mainstream agricultural research tends to be characterised by top-down, institutional priorities, inflexible by nature. This is quite different from process-oriented, community-based research in the non-governmental sector. Thus, such partnerships have to contend with significant questions such as: Who sets the research objectives? Who assumes the leadership role? And how will success be measured?

THE PROJECT RESPONSE

Situated on the north coast of PNG, Madang is the nation's most diverse province. Land elevations range from sea level to the highest mountain peak in PNG at 4,500 metres. With more than 110 language groups scattered across the province, Madang is one of the most culturally diverse locations on earth. Economic disparities are also evident. Madang has some of the poorest districts in PNG, including Middle Ramu District where families survive on less than \$40 a year. Contrast this with the Karkar Islands where annual family income could be \$1,000.

The initial challenge for the Sweet Potato Project was to focus the broad objective of "evaluating and disseminating sweet potato varieties along the north coast of PNG" on a specific number of varieties, trials and sites. NARI selected 14 varieties of sweet potato cultivars from 79 varieties regarded as having the most potential for Madang. These 79 were considered to be the most promising from about 1,200 varieties evaluated previously during an extensive EU-funded NARI project³. Existing agronomic databases were used to carefully select six sites for farm trials. Then, community discussions began to identify farmers who were willing to participate in the trials.

The first stage of the project was the "Technician Controlled on Farm Trial". World Vision field technicians trialled 14 pre-selected varieties, along with two local varieties, in over 60 locations. This trial was run once in the wet season and once in the dry season.

After demonstrating how a trial could be run, the second trial or “Farmer Controlled on Farm Trial” was held. A total of 50 farmers repeated the trials in wet and dry seasons in each of the six test sites. By project end, there were well over 300 trial sites, ranging from the most remote island locations all the way through to the inland Ramu valley plains.

Through both stages, World Vision’s role was to demonstrate the process to the farmers, then observe and record farmers’ data and feedback. Tens of thousands of data sets were collected by the technicians. NARI is responsible for analysing the results, with assistance from the Queensland Department of Primary Industry.

SEEDING SUCCESS

While community cooperation and understanding were central to the research, they were not the sole drivers. A large project of this nature needed strong leadership and the full support of NARI, expert consultants (provided by the Australian National University), and the donor – ACIAR. The project manager also had a key role to play in consultation and consensus-building across the diverse stakeholder group. Many of the farmers had limited education and understanding of the project components varied considerably. Looking back, you can see just how much the project’s success or failure hinged on selecting the right communities, the right lead farmers and the right facilitators.

This was powerfully illustrated when test sites were being identified. World Vision field technicians learnt early on in the implementation process that the farmers were not the only ones that needed to be consulted. Although major decisions about land use were made by male community members, it was women who tended the plots and were equally knowledgeable about the land. The technicians pushed for their active involvement in the trials and other stakeholders like ACIAR were flexible and supportive of this approach. With NARI’s assistance, World Vision was able to employ a female project manager with exceptional knowledge of the technical components, as well as the gender sensitivities that exist within PNG farming communities.

HARVESTING DISAPPOINTMENT

By the end of the first technician controlled trial, it was apparent that several varieties were yielding well below expected levels. Although accurate yield information is hard to come by, a typical farmer’s garden in Madang may yield 7-10 tonnes of sweet potatoes per hectare. The research station trials predicted that the pre-selected varieties were capable of yields as high as 30 tonnes per hectare. In actual fact, only a few of the trial varieties yielded between 10 and 15 tonnes. The majority provided fairly low yields, even down to one tonne.

Madang’s diverse elevations, topography and variation in annual rainfall impacted on the

► SNAP-SHOT

The importance of the human element can be seen in the differing responses of men and women to the highest yielding variety, SI85. While male farmers were proud of the fact that SI85 gave huge tubers, many of the women thought this was a disadvantage. In terms of food preparation, large tubers are difficult to manage. Tubers need to be cut before cooking and where there is no storage for remaining portions, they can easily be wasted. In this case what farmers actually wanted were varieties that gave a high number of consistently sized tubers.

There were also other interesting gender-based observations. Smooth skin was a more important consideration for females than males, closely linked to the fact that women prepare food for cooking. For the women, being able to easily wash or peel the potato was an important reason for selecting varieties. Over time, the priority of such criteria may change, but once again, what is important is the ability of farmers themselves to make this choice.



¹ World Bank 2004. Papua New Guinea: Poverty Assessment, World Bank, Washington

² Bourke et al 2004. “Sweet Potato in PNG”

³ NARI Evaluation of Sweet Potato Varieties in eight Pacific Island Countries and the Philippines: Results and Recommendations as of April 1993. NARI Technical Bulletin No. 6, November 2002.

► PROGRAM DETAILS

Development context

PNG has made little development progress since independence in 1975. The country is rich in natural resources and can produce a large number of agricultural products both for domestic consumption and export. However, it has been plagued by weak governance and efforts to enable PNG to work towards the Millennium Development Goals have been slow. Poor health indicators, low literacy rates and an increase in HIV and AIDS are among the major development challenges.

Programming context

World Vision has worked in PNG since 1974. Since 1995, the office has functioned as an independent National Office – with headquarters firstly in Madang, then moving to Port Moresby in 1998. The office in Port Moresby also coordinates the work of World Vision Vanuatu and World Vision Solomon Islands. Across these three Pacific countries, World Vision's programs include child protection, agriculture, education, water and sanitation, health and good governance.

Project start date:

August 2004

Project end date:

November 2008

Funding source:

Australia Council for International Agricultural Research

Total funds remitted from Australia as at June 2008:

A\$821,674 (main), plus A\$122,226 (extension)

sweet potato's "genotype by environment" behaviour. While individual varieties yielded well at the research station, Madang's environment was too diverse and this resulted in decreased yields.

Another factor affecting yields was the project team's decision not to clean planting equipment. The technicians felt this would make it hard to compare the trials with local practice and make ongoing implementation unrealistic and unsustainable. But this contributed to the spread of plant viruses.

LESSONS LEARNT

While understanding the reasons for low yields was important for ACIAR, NARI and World Vision, the farmers were not that concerned. Half the varieties were yielding lower than the farmer control and half were yielding much better – yet farmers wanted access to all of them.

The low yield actually had no impact on the participation or enthusiasm of the communities. In fact, by the end of the third set of trials, the project had generated considerable interest across the province. Other farmers were coming forward, eager to participate. If it wasn't the expectation of high yields that was driving the eagerness, what was it?

The most significant lesson learnt from this project was that local communities value choice. Farmers select and cultivate food

crops based on a range of criteria. For some, taste is important. For others, it is the speed at which the plant matures. And for others, it is the yield. The pre-selection process narrowed down the range of sweet potato varieties from 1,200 to 16. Now the choice was manageable for local communities. Some varieties may be given preference over others, but it is likely that the farmers will continue to experiment with the full range, even if yields are not very high.

In addition, many farmers have talked about "a sense of belonging". They are glad to be part of a large-scale trial that understands and appreciates their contributions.

For ACIAR, NARI and World Vision, the Sweet Potato Project has been an eye-opener on the challenging and often unforeseeable nature of development outcomes. It has clearly demonstrated that agricultural research and extension needs to put farmers first. Research objectives need to be anchored in the need and expectations of local people.

The challenge that remains is to balance the quality of the intervention (participatory elements, community feedback, beneficiary expectations, etc.) with broader socio-economic objectives of increasing yields and establishing food security. The World Vision project team is working closely with ACIAR and NARI on future projects to address these challenges. ■



Partners against trafficking

Responding to human trafficking across South-East Asia

► JONATHAN TREAGUST



The human trafficking industry has been described by the United Nations as “the largest slave trade in history”¹. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), human trafficking has become the second largest source of profit from organised crime, following drug trafficking. The sheer size of the problem, its illicit genre and transnational nature, make it difficult to accurately measure or describe. According to the United Nations, more than 30 million men, women and children have been trafficked over the last 30 years in the Asia Pacific region alone.

A further complication is that significant migration occurs between and within countries, as people seek better lives. These migrants often use irregular means to cross borders and in doing so, become difficult to monitor, protect or even identify. Most have limited skills, limited education and a poor understanding of the living conditions at their final destination. Thus, what starts out as a survival mechanism or a brave attempt to find

a better life often ends disastrously. With limited survival options and limited understanding of their rights, men, women and children in this situation are vulnerable to exploitation.

By developing a greater understanding of the nature of migration and trafficking – the complexities, causes and consequences – interventions can be made more effective. But an effective response also requires self examination by the implementing organisation to acknowledge its own constraints. In fact, trafficking needs to be recognised as a complex, multi-faceted issue that requires an intelligent, collaborative and coordinated international approach. In the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), World Vision has come to recognise that the problem of trafficking cannot be addressed by a single agency or by a single program or just within a single country. Multi-sector regional-level partnership interventions are being designed to respond to trafficking on every level.

In May 2007, six World Vision national offices embarked on a regional advocacy initiative to put an end to trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region. The Regional Advocacy anti-Child Trafficking Project (RACTP) was designed to take advantage of World Vision’s permanent presence and extensive experience in these countries – including Myanmar, Thailand, Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR), Cambodia, Vietnam and China. It builds on and complements World Vision’s existing community-based interventions in migrant and vulnerable border communities. Over time and through advocacy and extensive partnership work, RACTP has been able to cut across prevention, protection and prosecution strategies to create a more comprehensive and integrated policy response to human trafficking.

◀ **Children being put to work in a brick factory, in Buntheay Meanchhey Province, Cambodia. The RACTP aims to combat the worst forms of child labour.**

¹ UN Wire: UNICEF report 2003

► SNAP-SHOT:

WHAT IS TRAFFICKING?

The process of trafficking involves luring, moving and then exploiting another human being². There needs to be a connection between recruiting a person, transporting or transferring them and abusing their vulnerability in the end situation, to prove the existence of trafficking. Often, the traffickers or brokers who lure, deceive or force victims into trafficking take advantage of existing vulnerabilities in home communities. Those who are the poorest, are displaced by conflict or disaster, have limited livelihood opportunities or belong to ethnic minorities are most at risk. Socio-cultural practices, such as unfair pressure on children and girls to provide for the household, make women and children even more vulnerable. Out of all those trafficked, it is estimated that 80 percent are women and girls, and up to 50 percent are minors. Trafficked persons end up in situations of domestic servitude, forced labour, sexual exploitation or even forced military service. Trafficked children end up being forced to beg, or are sold for sex or domestic work.

► ***It's nearly four years since Zar came back from Thailand where she had been sold. She now works with young people across the country, alerting them to the dangers of working in an unknown country or place. Zar is volunteering at World Vision Thailand to document data in the trafficking-in-persons department.***

TRAFFICKING IN ASIA: WORLD VISION'S RESPONSE

The GMS countries of Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and China are particularly susceptible to all forms of trafficking and migrant exploitation because of the economic disparity between countries in this region and the number of shared borders. Myanmar's GDP is US\$258 per person per year and Thailand's is US\$2,440. Not surprisingly, Thailand has become a major attraction for migrants. Conservative estimates suggest nearly two million migrants live in Thailand, with the majority originating from Myanmar. With the status of the vast majority of these migrants remaining undocumented, many are permanently vulnerable to all forms of exploitation.

Since the 1990s, World Vision has implemented a number of community-based anti-trafficking programs across the GMS. In 2004, World Vision Australia supported a Research into Child Trafficking project, which gathered data from Myanmar and Thailand to inform the design of World Vision Australia's first comprehensive trafficking program. In January 2005, the Assistance Support and Protection to Migrant Women and Children (ASAP) project started in four key Thailand border towns: Ranong, Mae Sot, Mae Sai and Mukdahan. Funded by the Australian Government, ASAP established a

range of protection and trafficking prevention mechanisms including the formation of "community watch groups" and joint Thai/Burmese youth groups to strengthen community cohesion.

Alongside this, the Mekong Delta Regional Trafficking Strategy (MDRTS) Project was initiated by World Vision United States and became the first program to establish a coordinated response to trafficking between four World Vision national offices within the Asia region. Both MDRTS and ASAP have made progress, through communities, to strengthen protection mechanisms and assist with the re-integration of returned trafficking victims. However, the focus of both projects was on changing the behaviour of migrants, rather than changing the environment to make it harder for traffickers to exploit people. As World Vision's understanding of migration and trafficking grew, it became obvious that a complementary regional approach was required – one that focused on policy change at national levels – to put an end to trafficking.

NEW FOCUS: POLICY CHANGE

To support its GMS trafficking projects, World Vision developed a regional project in early 2007 that focused on changing the human trafficking policy environment. The Regional Advocacy anti-Child Trafficking Project (RACTP) was designed to take



² UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (2000)

advantage of World Vision's permanent presence and extensive experience in every GMS country. With a clear focus on advocacy and partnership, RACTP has been able to cut across prevention, protection and prosecution strategies to create a more comprehensive and integrated policy response to human trafficking.

RACTP works through building the capacity of the six World Vision national offices (Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and China) to strengthen the policy response and governmental action on trafficking and migration. The project has advocated for rights-based, child-friendly and gender-sensitive policies on trafficking and migration, comprehensive national plans of action, and stronger cross border collaboration. It has also sought to hold GMS governments to account over anti-trafficking promises, at the same time as advocating for strict enforcement of laws that criminalise trafficking.

The strategies involved include capacity building and development of internal country policies, networking, lobbying, coalition building, and the establishment and strengthening of government partnerships. The project also seeks to promote the voice of those affected by trafficking, empower communities and create more links between these communities and local government.

PARTNERING FOR ANTI-TRAFFICKING

The first partnerships that needed to be formed to support the RACTP process were internal. With its regional focus, RACTP faced the challenge of having to create working relationships across six different and highly independent World Vision national offices. Each national office had its own programs, strategies and priorities. Finding common ground and alignment was necessary, but challenging. For World Vision Myanmar, migration may be accepted as a common coping mechanism, whilst World Vision Thailand will struggle with the ever increasing numbers of migrants from Myanmar coming into Thailand and their vulnerability to trafficking.

These internal partnerships have since helped ensure RACTP remained community-focused and grounded in the realities of migrant and vulnerable communities. Through an established working presence in each of the six countries, RACTP was able to draw on evidence-based research and case studies to better inform and support its policy work.

The second form of partnership that was needed was with other non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In order to advocate with a stronger, unified voice – RACTP has been collaborating with a range of NGOs and UN agencies. These include the International

Labour Organization, Save the Children UK, the United National Inter-Agency Project against Human Trafficking (UNIAP), ECPAT and UNICEF. One specific example of an NGO partnership in action is World Vision's collaboration with Child Wise Australia. Child Wise has an exclusive focus on the protection and rights of all children, and has supported the advocacy work by developing child protection policies and material for individual projects.

Thirdly, as World Vision views trafficking as a human rights crime, RACTP's priority has been to engage national governments at the highest policy level. National governments are the primary actors responsible for the protection, promotion and realisation of human rights and their involvement is essential to effectively address the problem of human trafficking. Fortunately, in the GMS, the Coordinated Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT) process already exists between the six governments. Coordinated by UNIAP, COMMIT allows the various governments to take a consistent approach to bilateral and regional initiatives on trafficking and unsafe migration. COMMIT has proved a highly valuable entrance point for World Vision to align its trafficking responses with those of the national governments, while also assisting World Vision to fulfil its goals and international obligations.

THE CHALLENGES OF PARTNERING

There have been several challenges to tackling trafficking in a holistic and integrated manner. For World Vision Australia, the problems of operating locally are not always obvious or apparent when projects are supported, coordinated and monitored predominantly from its Melbourne headquarters. For implementing partners on the ground, the situation is very different. National offices, through which World Vision Australia funds projects, have a permanent presence in-country and operate at the invitation of host governments. Challenging the authority of the voice that allows you to operate in a country can be both difficult and unwise. At the same time, emerging national offices such as World Vision Foundation of Thailand have a growing local supporter base which currently provides more than 30 percent of its programming revenue. Changing public opinion on sensitive migrant issues isn't easy when it has to be balanced with positive public engagement to maintain or increase local funding. An immediate concern for many is that strengthening the rights of existing migrants could have the effect of attracting more "illegals" into the country.

Whilst juggling local complexities, each national office also has a varying degree of experience and familiarity with trafficking issues – making it difficult to formulate a consistent approach across the region. World Vision Myanmar has been implementing safe migration projects for nearly a decade and has built up a specialist

► SNAP-SHOT:

ASSISTANCE SUPPORT AND PROTECTION TO MIGRANTS PROJECT

In Thailand, the Assistance Support and Protection to Migrants (ASAP) project has built strong links to communities where trafficking is most likely to occur. The project has a focus on youth and women and has also created Community Based Organisations (CBOs) as entrance points into migrant communities and as conduits for project activities. CBOs have also proved valuable in terms of changing attitudes and responses to trafficking within these communities.

In Mae Sot, the ASAP project has established a number of CBOs called community watch groups. The Mae Sot Islamic Community Watch Group specifically identifies trafficking risks and formulates mechanisms and actions required to prevent them; such as creating a Coordination Centre. In addition to finding migrant law and legal resources to place in its centre, the group has built a "missing child reporting network" that provides information to World Vision and to local police authorities.

RACTP is now able to promote this intervention as an example that could be adopted or adapted by the other countries in the GMS region.

► SNAP-SHOT:

MEKONG YOUTH FORUM

RACTP has partnered with the ILO, Save the Children UK and the UNIAP in a collaborative effort to raise the voice of youth through the Mekong Youth Forum on Human Trafficking. The forum brought together children from Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam to find common ground on ideas and strategies for their governments to combat human trafficking, from a child's perspective. This format followed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that supports the involvement of children in the decision making process, particularly when those decisions will have an impact on matters that affect them.

World Vision actively contributed to the six country-level forums involving more than 200 children from which five youth delegates from each country were selected as national delegates. In September 2007, the Mekong Youth Forum (Regional) was held in Bangkok to allow 30 youth participants from all six countries to better understand the situation of children's vulnerabilities across the GMS and how they relate to trafficking. The week-long forum concluded with a statement of recommendations from the youth delegates across six key themes: migration, victim protection, prevention, education, participation and nationality. These recommendations were then presented by the youths themselves at the 5th Senior Officials Meeting of COMMIT in Beijing in December 2007.

The governments accepted the Mekong Youth Forum's recommendations. A Joint Declaration signed by ministers of the six GMS countries pledged to have sustained and meaningful engagement with young people.

anti-trafficking team. However World Vision China has recently joined the program. It does not have the same exposure to anti-trafficking projects and is slowly building resources and partnerships to address the problem.

Along with varying degrees of experience also comes diversity in addressing the situation. Some agencies and even World Vision national offices see trafficking purely as a poverty issue that can be addressed through welfare and provision of essential services. But for many migrants who were permanently displaced decades before, long-term solutions need to be much more transformational. Meeting physical need, without changing the status of migrants, has little long-term impact. While short-term need is met, the children of these migrants grow up with no legal status, no formal recognition and are most susceptible to falling through the cracks and being exploited in more extreme ways than their families before them.

As well as the large disparity between World Vision's own national offices, there are also major differences between countries. While it is easy to acknowledge that regional level initiatives are required, making projects operate across international borders and different legal frameworks is complicated. Bilateral Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between countries do exist, but their actual implementation is still limited³. With trafficking being difficult to separate from migration and smuggling, MOUs are required to provide clear understanding for all.

WHAT HAS WORKED

With its comprehensive network of internal and external regional partnerships, World Vision has been able to form a number of strong alliances that are creating positive change in the fight against trafficking. In Cambodia, World Vision is working with UNICEF and IOM to implement the Law Enforcement Against Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children (LEASECT) project, providing support and capacity building for the Ministry of Interior's Department of Anti Human Trafficking and Juvenile Protection. This collaboration includes assisting with the establishment of a hotline telephone number for reporting cases of exploitation at national and provincial levels, training of police on migrant and trafficking law, establishing standards for medical examinations of victims, and assisting with the set-up of a database system for child sex offenders.

In Thailand, World Vision has been working with the Thai Royal Government and other partner organisations, amending laws to improve protection for trafficked persons, with harsher penalties for perpetrators. This partnership was successful in reaching a

broader definition of trafficking to include boys and men – previously not protected by the law. The new Anti-Human Trafficking in Persons Act was passed on 5 June 2008.

Through a partnership with IOM, World Vision has been better able to seek direct assistance for trafficked persons returning home. Specifically, World Vision has been involved in repatriations from Thailand to Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia, and from Cambodia to Vietnam. World Vision has also acted between Laos and Thailand to allow for better information sharing on migrants held in the Thai Government Shelter Kredtrakarn, and has assisted on tracing missing migrants between the two countries. Through this work and its links to IOM, World Vision is now able to assist the UN's wider Collaboration on Tracing Missing Trafficked Victims program in Thailand and Laos.

Perhaps the slowest, but most promising area of partnership to develop has been World Vision's links to the COMMIT process. This has occurred not only through the formal mechanisms of the RACTP process, but also through the personal commitment of key World Vision staff in both Australia and Thailand. COMMIT has chosen eight key areas to focus on:

- capacity building
- development of national plans
- multilateral and bilateral partnerships
- legal frameworks, law enforcement and justice
- victim identification, protection, recovery and reintegration
- prevention measures
- cooperation with the tourism sector
- management – coordination, monitoring and evaluation

The Sub-Regional Plan of Action (SPA) has been approved by the governments to create a common understanding about the principles and methods of working within the COMMIT process.

While major achievements have taken time to fully materialise, COMMIT has provided a uniform platform of commitment and a common language for NGOs to launch their own trafficking responses. Under the plan of action on Cooperation with the Tourism Sector, each government is required to collaborate with the private sector and the international community to stop underage sex tourism. By developing new proposals in line with these commitments, World Vision has been able to create processes with partner agencies that work with the government to address the problem.

To address some of World Vision's internal challenges, the trafficking response has had to adhere to a common World Vision design

framework that has been slowly introduced over the last four years. While the change in development thinking will take longer to apply than the new formats and approach, World Vision's LEAP (Learning through Evaluation Accountability and Planning) framework ensures all national offices embark on a comprehensive analysis and assessment of the problem before formulating project designs. The assessment has to include partner and stakeholder analysis but it also ensures that issues are addressed according to five common principles. One of these principles is that children's wellbeing is considered at the same time as including children in their own development. Additionally, projects should be designed to empower communities and transform relationships to address inequalities of power and unjust laws. Projects also need to transform systems and structures so that permanent change within communities is possible.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

As World Vision Australia expands its trafficking response, both within the Greater Mekong sub-Region and beyond, it's important to remember the lessons that have clearly come through from the success and challenges of RACTP. The importance of understanding the history, culture and context of migration and trafficking cannot

be overstated. What often appears as a simple problem requiring a straightforward response is sadly never so. Involving the right people, at all levels, is necessary from the very beginning. While it is obvious that poverty pushes people into situations of trafficking and exploitation, what is less obvious is that it's changes in legislation and attitude that will have the biggest impact in sustainably addressing the issue.

Human trafficking requires a complex, multi-sectoral, regional solution. World Vision recognises the multi-faceted nature of the crime and sees an integrated, partnership-based approach as essential. To combat trafficking in the GMS region, World Vision's work will continue to use a transformational framework to build partnerships that span activities, sectors and countries. Closer links are required not only to vulnerable communities, but also to governments who have the power to set policies and legal frameworks. At the same time, continued effort is required to change public opinion in key countries about the status of informal, but often necessary migration. Through integration and collaboration, World Vision will continue to create a credible platform to support higher level change to combat human trafficking throughout South-East Asia. ■



► PROJECT DETAILS

RACTP

Project start date:

May 2007

Expected completion date:

May 2010

Target countries:

Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam

Funding source:

Child Sponsorship Reserve

Total project budget:

US\$1,692,044 over three years

MDRTS

World Vision Australia became involved in this project in Phase 2

Project start date:

January 2008

Expected completion date:

June 2011

Target countries:

Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia

Funding source:

AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

World Vision Australia funds project activities in Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam

Total Australian funds remitted:

\$A2,064,532.

³ Further information regarding bilateral MOUs can be accessed on UNIAIP's website: http://www.no-trafficking.org/content/Laws_Agreement/bilateral.htm

Over the past few years, a small group of development practitioners from a number of international development NGOs, academic institutions and industry bodies has been collaborating to raise the profile of water and sanitation development needs in the Asia Pacific region. This group has established networks, built relationships, carried out original research, published reports and held workshops and conferences to draw attention to this issue. Importantly, the group successfully opened communications with AusAID and the Australian Government to advocate for increased engagement on water and sanitation (watsan) through the Australian aid program.

The collaborative efforts of this group have made a substantial contribution towards raising NGO and government awareness in Australia on shortfalls in watsan development. The collaboration has also prompted many agencies to increase programming in, and capacity to scale up, watsan responses in the region. The group has established a strong reciprocal relationship with AusAID and the government and at the end of 2007 was invited to formalise its existence as a reference group for AusAID on water and sanitation issues.

Most significantly, policy and advocacy activity of the group has led the government to adopt many of the group's recommendations in their announcement of a three-year \$300 million AusAID program of water and sanitation initiatives in the Asia Pacific region.

Harnessing multi-agency collaboration for development results

Putting sanitation on the aid agenda

► JOHN MCKENZIE / CATHERINE BOOMER

HOW IT ALL BEGAN – GETTING PEOPLE ON BOARD

The group started following professional collaboration and sharing of ideas between a member of World Vision Australia's Advocacy Team and a program manager with WaterAid, a small water and sanitation development specialist agency. Both organisations were seriously concerned about the lack of action being taken to address critical development needs in watsan in the Asia Pacific region and in particular, the implications such a failure to act would have on the potential achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for our region.

As they began to work together, initially informally and later in a partnership centred on a joint research project, other interested individuals and agencies became involved. They were interested in contributing information and resources or motivated by a desire to participate in the growing network. This organic growth drew in a wide range of institutions and agencies: NGOs, universities and industry groups. Amongst the first to engage were the Institute for Sustainable Development at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), the School of Community and International Development at Deakin University and Oxfam. By the end of 2007, the group included the Nossal Institute for Global Health, the Australian Water Association, the International Water Centre, Uniting Church Overseas Aid and Engineers Without Borders.

A SHARED CONCERN – WHY WATSAN MATTERS

The primary motivation for the group was a shared understanding of the urgent need to address serious shortfalls in water and sanitation development in the Asia Pacific region.

In South-East Asia and the Pacific in 2004, 100 million people were estimated to be living without safe water and 185 million without adequate sanitation. Widespread indisputable

evidence exists on the causal links between lack of safe water and sanitation and increased water-related disease. In fact, diseases or infections associated with inadequate water supply and sanitation affect almost half the people in the developing world. Unclean water is the world's second biggest killer of children. Diarrhoea alone kills 1.8 million people each year; 90 percent of whom are children under five years of age.

Watsan issues contribute to the additional burden women shoulder of travelling long distances to collect water. They undermine education and contribute to high infant mortality.

The water and sanitation crisis across the developing world has serious ramifications for poverty alleviation. Water and sanitation are basic services essential for human health, economic development and poverty reduction. In effect, because of the link to virtually all other development objectives, clean water and adequate sanitation will be crucial to the achievement of the MDGs.

What is encouraging is that simple and inexpensive interventions such as providing access to clean water and building pit latrines can make dramatic improvements in community health and wellbeing. Simple techniques like hand washing can deliver significant results. Innovations in field practice – including Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) and Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) – when well implemented, are shifting the emphasis towards community ownership and community development aspects and delivering excellent outcomes.

The original members of the watsan group came from NGOs – organisations that work at the grassroots level in communities and who are acutely aware of the potential benefits provided by effective watsan programming. NGOs have first-hand knowledge of what works and what doesn't and what the particular challenges are

(including the need for extreme sensitivity to cultural practices). They also have a wealth of evidence and expertise to share.

The members recognised that they had a responsibility to share this information and if possible to galvanise action – both at the political level, but also within the wider NGO community. To this end, the group agreed to work towards some shared objectives:

- to build capacity for effective watsan programming in the aid sector through the delivery of workshops, conferences, training events and distribution of published materials;
- to advocate for increased watsan programming through the Australian aid program;
- to build a body of original research and reference materials to support advocacy and best practice programming;
- to build a working relationship with AusAID.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE SECTOR

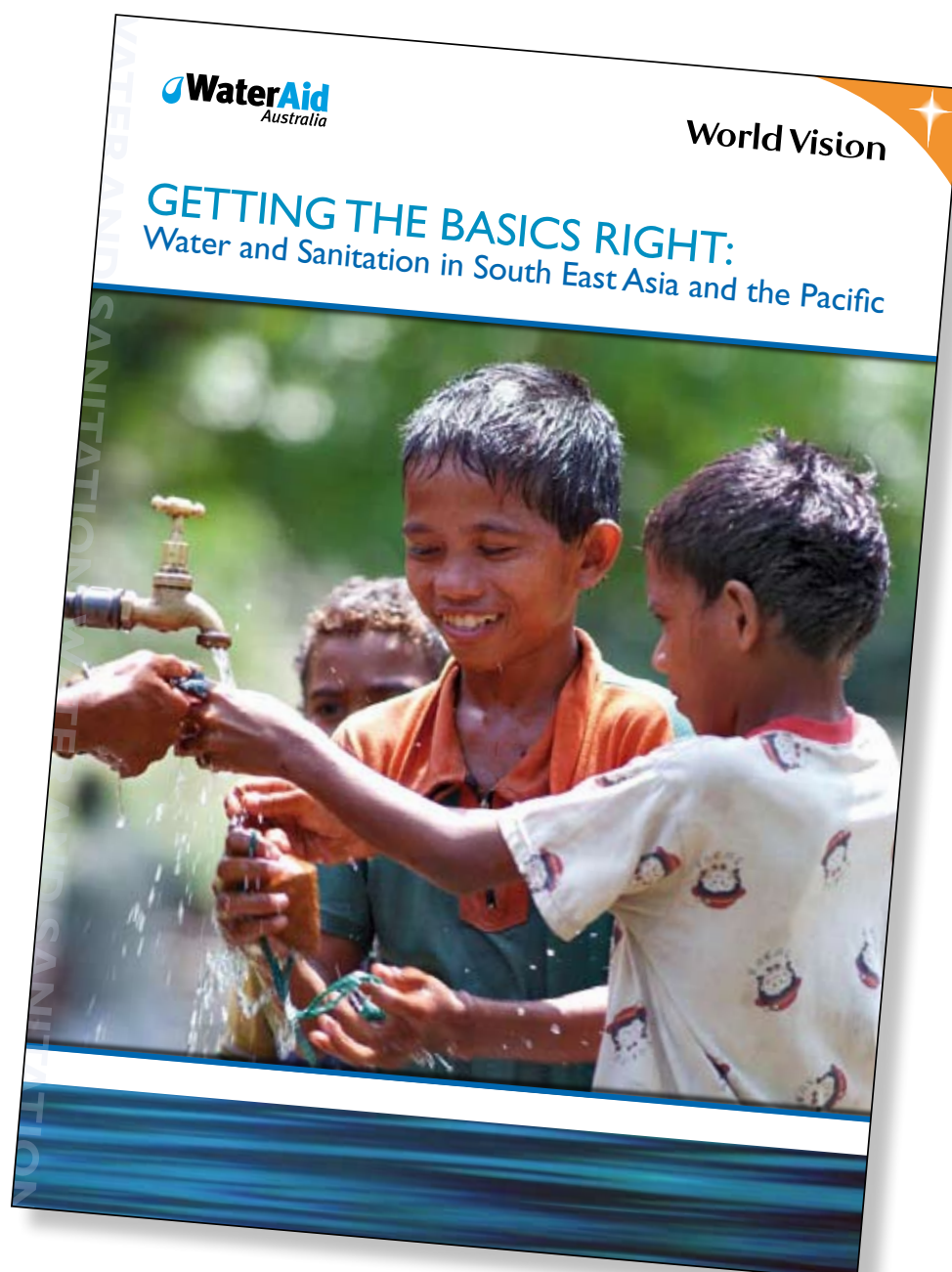
Capacity building was identified as an early priority for the group. Apart from some concentrated expertise in a few specialist agencies such as WaterAid, most watsan practitioners in the NGO sector are either from small agencies, or are lone watsan specialists working in mixed sector or general program teams. Few have watsan peers in their day-to-day work.

The group hoped to network these practitioners, support the sharing of best-practice experience, disseminate research and literature on leading edge watsan methodologies, and assist the specialists to expand watsan programming within their agencies.

An early initiative in this area was a series of workshops on Safe Water Plans (Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, 2006). AusAID has recently released a new Safe Water Plans Manual

► KEY LESSONS

- The collaboration worked because of the strong shared interests between parties – in this case a particular sectoral focus on water and sanitation in development.
- Many voices joined together created practical and political leverage – demonstrating wide support for action was essential in shifting policy.
- All players brought unique strengths and capabilities to the joint enterprise.
- Effective communication was central to working collaboratively – a central coordinating body (the reference group) with clearly identified leadership committed to achieving progress on the agenda was critical.
- All partners invested resources (both time and money) to build capacity for action – many collaborations fail when the hard work is left to one or two organisations or agencies while others tag along for the ride. The members of the watsan group all made substantive commitments.
- NGO partners were flexible with strategy in order to take advantage of a rapidly changing political context in a pre-election period.



► **SNAP-SHOT:****Joint action:**

Conferences, events, publications

2005

Workshop on arsenic mitigation, Melbourne (World Vision Australia, AusAID)

2006

Workshops on Safe Water Plans, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne (World Vision Australia, WaterAid, AusAID)

2007

Publication, *Getting the Basics Right - Water and Sanitation in South East Asia and the Pacific* (World Vision Australia, WaterAid and UTS)

Conference, "Let's Come Clean", focus on sanitation, CLTS & PHAST, Melbourne (World Vision Australia, WaterAid, Deakin University.)

Training, CLTS, East Timor (WaterAid)

Training, PHAST, Vanuatu (World Vision Australia)

Master class, Sandy Cairncross on Hygiene and Research, in Melbourne, Perth, Darwin (WaterAid, Nossal Institute for Global Health)

2008

Publication, *Sharing Experiences – Sustainable sanitation in South East Asia and the Pacific* (WaterAid, IWC)

Publication, *Global Futures*, special sanitation feature, with articles by Desmond Tutu, Lester Brown et al. (World Vision International)

and safe water plans are now a requirement in all AusAID-funded water programs. The workshops aimed to promote dialogue on the development of water quality management plans (WQMP) in agencies' water supply projects.

Through discussion it became clear that most water supply systems that agencies were involved with were in rural areas isolated from government authorities and reliant on local volunteer community groups for management and maintenance. Field experts emphasised that these under-resourced, untrained (or poorly trained), local community-based maintenance committees often found it difficult to fulfil all the tasks needed to keep the systems operational and safe.

The workshops provided strong feedback to AusAID that while adding a requirement for WQMP in the management process of water supplies made good technical sense, in practical terms it was severely flawed by its dependence on local volunteer committees. Workshop participants recommended that the implementation of WQMP be supported by local capacity building for community management groups and that the methodology should be revised to make it more user-friendly for these groups. AusAID accepted these suggestions and used them in the development of a smaller more user-friendly field-guide version of the Safe Water Guide.

In 2007, the group staged a conference and master class in Melbourne, "Let's Come Clean", with the purpose of raising awareness of the role of sanitation in achieving the MDGs and to galvanise improved sanitation programming in the NGO sector and the Australian aid program.

The Sanitation MDG ("halve by 2015 the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation") had been languishing and research by the group had shown that the timeline for achievement looked like passing mid-century for many developing countries.

The conference's main focus was on community-based methodologies, in particular CLTS and PHAST. As well as sharing new results from field implementation, the conference considered the potential for replicating such successful pilots in other regional and cultural settings.

Feedback from the conference showed that it had been an effective learning event for attending agencies and that it had garnered enough support to warrant the subsequent staging of major training events on CLTS (undertaken in East Timor by WaterAid) and PHAST (delivered in Vanuatu by World Vision).

With dissemination of best practice information as a key goal of the group, members sourced and shared publications designed to support local capacity building. At each of the group's events a range of these specialist technical

and field publications, many of which were not previously accessible in Australia, were made available through an international book stall. Sales totalling many thousands of dollars attested to the unmet demand for practical, up-to-date technical resources in the Australian watsan development sector.

MAKING THE CASE FOR CHANGE

A catalyst for much of the action in 2007 was the scoping, research and production of a piece of original research which underpinned all of the subsequent advocacy work of the group.

The paper, *Getting the Basics Right: Water and Sanitation in South East Asia and the Pacific*, was an initiative of World Vision Australia and WaterAid, and was intended to clearly demonstrate the urgent need for watsan programming in the region and, in particular, to advocate for action from the Australian Government.

Recognising that the impact of the publication would be enhanced by independent, academic input, the Institute of Sustainable Futures at UTS was commissioned to carry out comprehensive desk research to support the case. As well as drawing on the technical capabilities of the UTS team, the report sourced a range of best-practice case studies from members of the watsan group to illustrate practical examples of effective program delivery.

The report established the development case for watsan generally, analysed the gaps in watsan progress in the region on a country-by-country basis, and made a series of targeted and carefully considered recommendations to the Australian Government for action that could be taken through the Australian aid program.

This publication, like several others produced by individual agencies, was very well received by the sector and rapidly sold out.

ADVOCACY AND ENGAGING THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND AusAID

The group has always acknowledged that initiating action in watsan programming on the scale necessary to achieve the MDGs was beyond the ability of any individual agency or even of the NGO sector as a whole. The greatest opportunity for increased and rapid action would be through new large volume programming via the Australian aid program.

To this end, the group developed an advocacy strategy to engage with and influence the Australian Government, and AusAID in particular.

Initially through ad hoc meetings, a relationship of trust was established between AusAID and group members. This began to result in requests

for the group to provide input into government policy discussions and several commissions to undertake training and conference organising tasks on behalf of AusAID.

The relationship achieved a more formal footing following the successful 2007 conference "Let's Come Clean" and the release of the Getting the Basics Right report. Engagement escalated rapidly when the then Opposition, in the lead up to the November 2007 Federal Election, adopted many of the recommendations from the Getting the Basics Right report as Labor policy and announced a commitment to allocate \$300 million to watsan initiatives if elected. This signalled a strong endorsement for the expertise that NGOs had on the subject and a preparedness to respond substantively to their submissions.

The previous government followed suit with a new commitment to watsan and the group was invited to be a Watsan Reference Group for AusAID, with an official seat at the table and a role in watsan policy and program framework development.

Since the change of government, the Watsan Reference Group has worked closely with AusAID in developing proposals for implementation of the new \$300 million watsan initiative, in particular offering their input on how the government can work most effectively with NGOs to address watsan needs in our region.

The reference group has worked flexibly to adapt to this new policy environment. What was originally set up as a network to advocate for policy change at the political level is now in active programmatic negotiations with the bureaucracy.

BEHIND THE SCENES – MAKING COLLABORATION WORK

In the early stages the group evolved organically as a loose and informal network of interested parties held together by a shared objective. Group participants were spread across many offices and a number of states and initial engagement relied on frequent phone hook-ups and more regular email exchanges. Opportunities for face-to-face meetings were rare.

As the group grew, the effort to stay coordinated emerged as the greatest challenge to success. When shared initiatives began to be undertaken (conferences, joint research etc.), effective communication and reporting back of significant developments became vital. Over time, there have been difficult issues that have tested the communication skills, cohesiveness and strength of the group.

Primarily, these issues centred on elements of competitiveness and disparity in capacity between member agencies; conditions that are frequently

near the surface in inter-agency relationships and that have a long history. The group was able to surmount these occasional moments of tension by giving them clear acknowledgement, by negotiating compromise positions, by developing a culture of continuous reporting-back to the group, through clarity in communications and by regularly affirming that success required a collaborative approach.

The group's productivity has depended to a large extent on the significant investment of time and effort by the core founding group, goodwill and trust between participants and a willingness to engage in consensus decision-making – never a simple task. Achieving consensus decisions always takes much longer than a command and control process but has been essential in this instance to maintain the commitment and support of all members for the process.

Challenges have been met most effectively when all members have contributed from their



Media Release

BOB McMULLAN MP

SHADOW MINISTER FOR FEDERAL/STATE RELATIONS
SHADOW MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR FRASER

01 November 2007

LABOR TAKES THE LEAD ON WATER AND SANITATION TO SAVE CHILDREN

A Rudd Labor government will take the lead on water and sanitation for developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Unclean water and poor sanitation are the world's second biggest killers of children, needlessly killing 1.8 million children every year.

An incoming Rudd Labor government will allocate an additional \$100 million from Australia's international aid budget in 2009/10 and an additional \$200 million in 2010/11 to assist our neighbours meet a basic human need – access to clean water and sanitation.

These funds will be drawn from the Government's already announced forward estimates in Australia's overseas aid program budget.

Working in close cooperation with the world leader in this area, the UK Government, Labor will join the "Global Call to Action on Water and Sanitation", focusing on:

- investing more in water and sanitation;
- ensuring that money is spent effectively and fairly; and
- putting the right structures in place to make progress.

Preliminary discussions between Federal Labor and the UK Secretary of State for International Development have already laid the groundwork for high level co-operation to take this proposal forward.

The world is facing a global water crisis in which over 1.1 billion people lack access to safe water and 2.6 billion people lack access to sanitation.

Lack of access to clean water and sanitation is of particular concern in our region of South East Asia and the Pacific:

- Some 100 million people in our region do not have access to clean water and around 190 million do not have access to adequate sanitation
- Approximately 75,000 children will die this year in South East Asia and the Pacific from diarrhoea.
- 10,000 people die each day from avoidable water-borne diseases and of these, 5,000 are children.
- Every 7 minutes a child in our region dies through lack of clean water and sanitation.

Access to clean water and sanitation are the cornerstones of health and poverty reduction. Poor health resulting from lack of clean water and sanitation infrastructure undermines productivity, economic growth and stability.

► **CURRENT WATSAN REFERENCE GROUP:**

Peter Dwan, WaterAid Australia

Grant Hill, Oxfam Australia

Rod Jackson, World Vision Australia

Juliet Willets, Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney

Jim Black, Nossal Institute for Global Health, University of Melbourne

Mark Pascoe, International Water Centre

Tom Mollenkopf, Australian Water Association

Danny Almagor, Engineers Without Borders

Jeff Kite, Uniting Church Overseas Aid

Jan Parry, PLAN International Australia

strengths – either in committing staff resources, financial support or technical expertise – and put aside individual organisational aims in the pursuit of the higher shared objective.

While originally operating informally without membership criteria or formal structures, the Watsan Reference Group members have since developed and endorsed formal Terms of Reference, documented the aims of the group and established lines of leadership and a program of regular face-to-face meetings.

OUTCOMES

The Watsan Reference Group (as it is now formally known), has achieved some significant wins in a short period of time.

- Over 300 active watsan practitioners (both from Australia and across the region) have attended events, workshops, conferences and master classes. Many have attended on multiple occasions. Participants have warmly welcomed the opportunity to rub shoulders in a peer group and report that the events have strongly supported their professional development.
- Practical skills have been enhanced through the delivery of training in specific methodologies (CLTS and PHAST, arsenic remediation, WQMPs).
- The body of knowledge on watsan in the region has grown and spread with the publication of original research papers and forums for the exchange of best practice work.
- Advocacy outcomes have exceeded expectations, with programming about to begin under the government's new \$300 million watsan program.
- Reference group members have been commissioned to research the potential role of NGOs in delivery of the new watsan programming.

- The Watsan Reference Group is formally recognised as a development partner by AusAID.

- In October 2008, the reference group held a major international conference on sanitation and water funded by a \$180,000 grant from AusAID.

Perhaps most importantly, the sum of all of this work has been to create a vibrant and active network of practitioners, policy makers, academics, industry specialists and government officials who are engaging regularly in a dialogue on how to address this pressing development issue and who are working together to deliver solutions. The group is well placed to contribute to the growing community of practice that will support and increase the effectiveness of the government's upcoming investment in water and sanitation development.

What began as a loose association based on collegiate friendship between group participants evolved into a virtual network bound by a shared vision and a willingness to work on joint initiatives. The Watsan Reference Group has grown into an influential and productive resource for the watsan sector.

Flexibility and willingness to collaborate have meant that a diverse group of participants with little or no substantive budget from their agencies has been able to take advantage of emerging opportunities and leverage individual resources, skills and networks. This has delivered far more than any of them would have been able to achieve from within their own individual agencies.

Across the NGO sector, there is a growing trend towards strategic collaboration to increase leverage and achieve shared objectives. The experience of the Watsan Reference Group demonstrates just how effective such collaborations can be. ■



Sanitation Water Hygiene

Let's Come Clean



A stitch in time changes lives

Valuing corporate partnerships

► VICTORIA THOM

CONNECTING BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT

During 2007 and 2008, over 5,000 sewing machines donated by Spotlight customers were sent to communities in 14 developing countries through a partnership program called Stitch in Time. These machines were used to support vocational training programs and provide tools for income generation in communities in which World Vision operates. Spotlight is one of many companies that World Vision is working with to create mutually beneficial partnerships. For many corporations, finding a way to “live” out their corporate social responsibility (CSR) agenda can be difficult. As the practice of CSR evolves, many are looking for ways to engage that are more meaningful than simply giving money.

MATCHING NEEDS

Organisations like World Vision recognise the huge potential that small business start-ups have to boost local economies and reduce poverty. Often, access to equipment, information or know-how can be a trigger for poor communities or individuals to start profitable businesses and enhance their quality of life. A needs analysis of over 60 World Vision national offices in 2006 showed that there was significant demand for tools to support vocational training. Sewing equipment and sewing materials were frequently requested items. World Vision Australia's Goods and Services in Kind (G&SIK) team scanned the Australian market for potential partners to provide the tools needed to start tailoring businesses.

Through experiences like developing Stitch in Time, World Vision has learned that when exploring corporate partnerships, it pays to identify strategic synergies between the potential partner organisations. Initially, it may be difficult to see how the business of a mining company, financial institution or retailer might align with that of an international NGO. Understanding underlying organisational drivers, particularly around social, economic and environmental factors, is a good place to start. Ensuring that both individual and joint objectives are shared, and assumptions challenged, are key steps to the exploration

phase. Similarly, defining the investment, resources required and the expected return (both financial and non-financial) are critical for success. Upon reflection, these are some of the areas that World Vision might have focused more intently on when embarking on this partnership.

In discussions with Spotlight, it became apparent that the company's passion for engaging staff and customers in community development initiatives signalled alignment with World Vision's purpose. Spotlight has over 100 stores in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore and it was looking for a partner through which it could fulfil its CSR and community engagement objectives. For Spotlight, this partnership was a natural fit. World Vision required sewing machines to support vocational training and tailoring programs in many of its Area Development Programs (ADPs). And Spotlight is the largest retailer of sewing machines and has Australia's largest active customer database to engage for support. Supporting tailoring and vocational training through World Vision also provided Spotlight with a platform from which it could launch its broader CSR program to staff and customers. In addition, the demographic profile of the Spotlight customer base was remarkably similar to that of World Vision supporters, boding well for their engagement in this worthwhile cause.

A campaign was developed that encouraged Spotlight customers to donate their used sewing machines by dropping them off at a Spotlight store from where they were packed and shipped to World Vision. On reviewing the first phase of the campaign, Stephen Carter, Chief Executive Officer of Spotlight, explained: “Spotlight is immensely proud of the success of the Stitch in Time program and the way our customers and staff have supported this initiative. At Spotlight we believe social investment is one of the cornerstones of good business, and Stitch in Time is part of our continuing commitment to contribute to improving the lives of individuals, their families and society at large.” The apparently simple match between collecting donated sewing machines and providing tools to meet vocational training needs generated great excitement amongst both parties and momentum for the initiative.

Stitch in Time – a partnership between World Vision Australia and Spotlight, Australia's largest retailer of fabric, craft and home interiors, is providing tools and incentives for poor communities across the globe to start their own tailoring businesses. This partnership reflects a trend towards informed and engaged NGO-corporate relationships, which augurs well for creating innovative development solutions. Through Stitch in Time, both World Vision and Spotlight have learned a great deal, moving beyond a transactional relationship to one that brings significant opportunity to initiate change – within both organisations, the Australian public and disadvantaged communities overseas.

DEVELOPING A CAMPAIGN

After some scoping discussions that outlined the objectives and responsibilities of both parties, the Stitch in Time campaign was launched - with an agreement between World Vision and Spotlight to target the acquisition of 1,000 donated sewing machines and overlockers each year over a five-year period. This target was based on an analysis of World Vision national office needs and the rate at which Spotlight believed their customers would donate.

Through their VIP membership database and communication material, Spotlight was able to reach 6.5 million customers, some of whom presented their pre-loved sewing machines at a Spotlight store and were issued with a voucher they could put toward the purchase of a new machine. Meanwhile, World Vision Australia's G&SIK team followed up with World Vision national offices that had expressed a need for sewing machines to identify how many they required and document how the sewing

machines would be integrated into their programs. Simultaneously the team established a supply chain to move goods from Spotlight stores to a World Vision warehouse for processing and packing, while also overseeing the smooth passage of the goods from Australia to each requesting country.

ENGAGING AUSTRALIA

Spotlight and World Vision were overwhelmed with the speed of the response. Over 2,500 machines were donated in the first year alone. Many Spotlight customers were so highly motivated by the program that they began pooling their vouchers to purchase new machines to donate, as well as donating additional items such as cotton, needles and fabrics. Spotlight's suppliers also became engaged and donated materials, cottons and other supplies to support the program. The Stitch in Time campaign, in fact, became an integral part of Spotlight's brand identity.

The flood of interest in Stitch in Time led the partners to agree to follow and document the journey made by donated machines. Spotlight awarded three staff members the opportunity to travel with World Vision to Uganda to visit some of the communities that were using the sewing machines for skills training and income generation. The trip was filmed and a documentary style DVD was created for use in Spotlight stores and to be given away to customers who had donated machines, as well as interested customers and staff.

The reach of the Stitch in Time program was significant, with one machine providing some communities the opportunity to train up to 20 community members at any given time. In Kitgum in Uganda, 399 women were trained in tailoring on electric sewing machines through four training institutions. One of the institutions has since been contracted to make 600 school uniforms for local primary students and they believe a market for their work is growing. The sewers are mostly young mothers and teenage girls who have very little schooling but who are now empowered to use their skills to earn an income and support their families with food and basic needs.

THE COST OF BUSINESS

Despite the success of the Stitch in Time campaign, some unforeseen factors soon came into play, particularly around allocation of campaign costs.

- It became clear that one in every 25 machines collected was not suitable for repair or unusable and had to be disposed.
- When approached to confirm the number of sewing machines required, many national offices reviewed their



initial interest or declined altogether, either because second-hand goods attracted customs duty or they realised there was no electricity in some remote communities to operate the machines.

- The success of the program and sheer volume and speed of the response was challenging and placed a strain on storage and logistics.
- Machines started piling up in warehouses causing frustration and space shortages.
- The number of World Vision volunteers available to process and pack the machines could not keep up with the incoming donations.
- The time spent organising the transport of machines and the associated cost was much higher than estimated for both Spotlight and World Vision.
- The cost of purchasing additional packing materials to ensure the machines would not be damaged in transit was also significant.

Given the momentum and profile of the campaign, it was critical that World Vision and Spotlight worked together to overcome these challenges. There was considerable frustration on both sides as individual budgets, staff time and resources were placed under pressure. It was during this time that both partners recognised that in their excitement to get started they had failed to truly explore the initiative in detail and plan accordingly. There was no in-depth “market” research carried out with national offices to understand their contexts. No-one asked questions such as: What are the customs restrictions on such goods? Will electricity be readily available? If electricity is not available what are the cost impacts to convert the machines prior to shipping? What will the impact be on the local economy? Policies for excluding unworkable machines from the process were not put in place and coordination between stores and central warehouses was fragmented. Finally, there was not a realistic forecast of the true costs of implementing Stitch in Time before the decision was made to continue. It was an important lesson in the need to focus on detailed planning and risk management when embarking on such a partnership.

The principles and communication channels established early on helped both partners focus on their shared objective of supporting poor communities, and to work through issues to achieve workable solutions. Considerable learnings on planning, logistics and feasibility were gleaned from the experience. As a result, a more solid foundation has been established for World Vision and Spotlight to explore future opportunities together. It is hoped that leveraging lessons learned from past experience will help to ensure success in future phases of the program.

CREATING VALUABLE PARTNERSHIPS

NGO-corporate partnerships are distinctive in nature and must be forged around mutual interests. The primary mode of engagement can vary and may include aspects of philanthropy, advocacy, joint marketing, donation of goods, and activities linked to the core business of each partner.

There is a growing belief that collaborations between business, government and civil society are an effective mechanism for creating sustainable development solutions and progressing toward the Millennium Development Goals. For World Vision, this provides an opportunity to facilitate a deeper, more strategic relationship with Australian corporations. However, an initial barrier to entry may be the lack of awareness among Australian corporations that CSR involves more than just their employee value proposition. A holistic CSR strategy considers the financial and non-financial impacts of doing business on customers, suppliers, employees, shareholders, communities and other stakeholders, as well as the environment. Ultimately, it drives businesses to be responsible for the social and environmental impacts of their economic actions.

Traditionally, NGO-corporate partnerships have been tactical or transactional relationships over a finite period and unlikely to create new business models. Exploring long-term relationships that combine the appropriate skills, experience, social capital and resources of each partner brings significant opportunities to create change, but with it, significant challenges.

Successfully brokering and managing a partnership of this nature is complex and requires a broad skills set. The ability to quickly understand the unique objectives of each partner, then facilitate a shared agenda that meets the needs of each party can prove challenging. Despite the best intentions, partners will often appear to have conflicting or opposing objectives, emphasising the importance of a thorough exploration process before proceeding. Persistence, clear communication, knowledge sharing and a focus on mutual objectives can enable new solutions to be explored when initially there seemed to be none.

Programs like Stitch in Time represent a new model of partnership. The program goes beyond a transactional relationship and harnesses the capabilities of both organisations to deliver greater value than that created by one partner working alone. This is where the opportunity lies to create truly innovative partnerships that mobilise the corporate sector – their employees and customers – to play a role in alleviating poverty. ■

► PROGRAM DETAILS

Campaign start date:

November 2006

Receiving countries:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Laos, Lesotho, Malawi, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia

Target population:

World Vision Area Development Programs

Internally displaced person's camps

Local tertiary and vocational institutions

Number of sewing machines shipped through the campaign (as of October 2008): 5,626

“I have no beautiful memories from my childhood.” Celia Quiroga introduces her life story with this heartbreaking statement. “We were very poor, and our home was a tiny room in my grandmother’s house. We lived as *allegados* – a family that shares the house of another family. My father was so old fashioned and he did not allow my mum to work. My grandmother used to receive all sorts of people, drunken men that spent all night long drinking and dancing. There, I was abused.

“My mother, my brother and I left my grandmother’s when I was 10 years old. My mother took work as a home aid and I looked after my brother at home. He was very weak and he almost died. Our home situation was even worse when my father was around. He blamed my mother for my brother’s health, even though his beating of her during the pregnancy was the real reason.”

Vocational training and employment for Chilean women

Learning from CECADEM

► SEM MABUWA / NATALIE ARMSTRONG / PATRICIA RUIZ DELGA

Celia’s story is just one among many shared by women in Chile who suffer from abuse and are bound by tradition and unequal gender roles. In fact, a World Bank report identifies Chile, generally seen to be a prosperous country, as having one of the highest levels of gender inequality in Latin America. Chile registers one of the lowest rates of female labour force participation in the region at nearly 39 percent, and a high gender earnings gap, with the average woman earning 67 percent of a man’s wages. The report also states that gender inequality, specifically women’s unequal access to labour markets, has impacted economic growth and poverty reduction in Chile¹.

Nine years ago, when World Vision Chile first addressed the gender dimensions of development in Chile, an estimated 30 percent of the Chilean population lived in poverty and severe gender imbalances existed in the labour force. Unemployment amongst women was 56 percent and an alarming 78 percent of Chile’s working women were underemployed or unpaid. Moreover, there were and still are significant salary differences between men and women.

In Chilean households, women are subjected to physical and sexual violence. An all pervasive “machismo” has severely impeded women’s ability to actively seek out paid employment. Additional factors such as poverty and lack of access to work continue to limit their opportunities.

WORLD VISION CHILE’S RESPONSE

In 1995, in response to situations faced by women like Celia, World Vision Chile created the *Centro de Capacitacion y Desarrollo para la Mujer* or CECADEM – Women’s Development and Training Centre, for the women of Santiago and later the Temuco areas of Chile. CECADEM’s mission is to contribute to the integral development of women living in poverty so that they may achieve social and economic autonomy and improve living conditions for

themselves and their families. It provides training and opportunities for low-income female heads of households, indigenous women and other marginalised women to enter the job market and improve their economic status.

A DECADE OF EXPERIENCE

Initially, CECADEM focused on the design and delivery of personal development workshops and vocational training for female heads of households in the marginalised urban communities of Santiago. World Vision Chile and CECADEM worked with these women to identify the main barriers to their development. The issues identified were many and varied, including: unemployment, low education levels, poor self esteem, domestic violence, social and cultural discrimination, and the traditional preference for male employees.

CECADEM started courses in three key areas: **personal development** (including psychological support, self esteem and occupational health); **vocational training** (in areas such as pre-school child care, aged care, food preparation, household plumbing, maintenance and hotel room servicing); and **small business skills**.

Five years into the implementation process, CECADEM had the opportunity to reflect on progress. A baseline survey and review contributed to the adoption of a more consolidated approach and improvement of the curriculum and content of training courses. This review and market analysis saw courses like aged care, household plumbing and maintenance discontinued and new courses developed that focused on skills that were in demand such as telemarketing and digital cashier operation.

In terms of the overall approach, the focus changed from training and getting women into jobs to addressing their participation in civil society and the workplace. The review also

¹ Chile Country Gender Assessment: Expanding Women’s Work Choices to Enhance Chile’s Economic Potential. World Bank 2007

indicated that there were poorer communities in Temuco that were not being reached and so CECADEM expanded its training to include this area, targeting indigenous women who were identified as most at risk. CECADEM also encouraged business networks to respond to the challenge of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by offering employment to women from the marginalised areas of Santiago and Temuco.

The new approach led to the development of strategies to prepare women on a personal and professional level for transition to the workplace. The new curriculum included "soft" training (people skills, communication, problem-solving, negotiation and conflict resolution skills) in addition to "hard" training (technical know-how required to perform a job). Workshops on the prevention of violence and sexually transmitted diseases were also introduced as part of CECADEM's ongoing empowerment process to strengthen and build the self esteem of these women.

IMPORTANT CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

This consolidated approach was ambitious and involved challenges at different levels. For the women themselves there was a need to

re-write traditional gender role descriptions. For example, some women found themselves having to make decisions and solve problems that would previously have been addressed by their partners or families. This prompted changes to their own sense of personal identity, as well as the perceptions of their families. Many of these women effectively shifted from the role of mother and housewife to that of student, and ultimately, to the role of an independent breadwinner. This process naturally caused some difficulties and tensions.

The women faced significant logistical challenges in participating in the training courses, looking for employment, and then entering the workforce. Many required additional support to manage child care and balance home and work responsibilities. This required adaptive thinking on the part of the women, their partners and families. For those women living in remote areas, transportation also needed to be considered.

At strategic and implementation levels, it was imperative to both strengthen CECADEM's training programs and to differentiate it from other training centres in the region. Additionally, CECADEM had to survive the uncertainty created by economic change.

► REFERENCES:

Patricio Cuevas; (2003). A stony road to equality: Women's rights in Chile. Global Future, a World Vision Journal of Human Development, Edition Two, 2003.

World Bank; (2007). Chile Country Gender Assessment: Expanding Women's Work Choices to Enhance Chile's Economic Potential.

CECADEM design documents, 2002-2003.



◀ **Mr Patricio Silva (right), Manager of People's Development, BCI Bank, signs the Strategic Alliance in September 2006. Estella Lepe (left), World Vision Chile's Finance Manager looks on. This alliance allows CECADEM to send their graduates to BCI Bank.**

▼ **Taking part in the National Day of Action for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Chile has the highest levels of gender inequality in Latin America. In the household, women are subjected to physical and sexual violence which severely impedes their ability to actively seek out employment.**

The fragile expansion of Chile's export market was affected by signs of recession in the United States, a major investor in Chile.

CECADEM's new approach required a communication strategy to re-orient both the community and the business sector. This included re-designing the project, key publicity messages and promotional materials. Effective communication was important to ensure that potential participants understood the rationale of the new approach and would therefore continue to participate in the training courses. Businesses also needed to understand that CECADEM was now even more able to provide appropriately skilled employees. The desired result was that the satisfaction level of both businesses and participants would increase, alongside an increase in CECADEM's credibility as an institution of excellence.

One of the main challenges was to develop a deep and meaningful understanding of the women and the barriers to their participation in social and economic life. It was imperative for CECADEM to provide a preventative, protective and rehabilitative environment for course participants. This involved adopting a socially relevant curriculum, while at the same time remaining competitive in the training provider market.

Through an economic and market analysis, CECADEM was able to tailor its training program to specifically suit the needs of the local market. Strategies were implemented

to reduce the number of drop outs during courses and at work site placements. For example, the selection criteria for applicants were changed to consider an applicant's ability to complete the course and hold down a job. A placement officer was also employed to accompany and visit the students during the first few weeks of their job placement.

PROMOTING SOCIAL CHANGE

The principal element of CECADEM's success was its approach to market analysis, networking and advocacy. For the first time, CECADEM advocated for change in the corporate sector and in local communities, challenging entrenched gender biases. CECADEM held seminars with different businesses to get them involved and talking about the issues of addressing violence and social change. In particular, this involved promotion of the concept of CSR. Strategies such as the use of presentation material with the slogan: "Poverty has a woman's face", encouraged businesses to consider the broader social issues that impact on labour and women workers in particular.

CECADEM targeted large organisations in order to maximise the chances of women obtaining better jobs and working conditions. It also used results from a government survey reporting the economic and wellbeing effects for families and communities that flow from an increase in the financial status of women.



"I know now that there are strengths of having these workers. First there is a reaction of satisfaction and thankfulness from the people since they feel you are giving them an opportunity. The personal and social impact of these women is also significant. This has generated reactions in their environment, in their children, their family and their friends. I fully recommend this experience to other enterprises. I am very pleased to see this combination of productivity with this opening up to society." – Raul Zuniga, Chief of the Tele-service Unit of the Bank of Credit and Investments (Banco BCI) in Santiago.

ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2006, CECADEM conducted a study to review the status of graduates from previous years. This review found a 100 percent work placement success rate for graduates of the telemarketing courses and an overall 80 percent work placement success rate for participants in all other courses. At this time, CECADEM began documenting impact by noting graduates' average monthly household income before and after course completion and employment placement. Average incomes increased from US\$279 to US\$485 per month, bringing household incomes well above the Chilean minimum wage of US\$288.

CECADEM's innovative approach to training means it can provide high calibre and well rounded graduates. The effectiveness of training is evident in the graduates' satisfaction, job placement retention levels and the positive impact on business. Soft and hard training produces graduates who have motivation, self respect and determination to strive for themselves and their children.

Despite the many challenges faced over the past 12 years, the shift from skills training for semi-informal or self employment to a more holistic advocacy approach that includes leveraging partnerships (e.g. the television channels) has contributed to CECADEM's credibility. Recognition and support from the national and local government, and long-term partnerships with large institutions such as Banco BCI, show that CECADEM has been able to continually produce graduates who are in high demand.

Although CECADEM does not target men, its advocacy approach to gender inequality has seen a shift in the perception of gender roles. In particular, some men have become supportive of women's involvement and participation in the workforce. "Through CECADEM's work, we are seeing a new kind of citizenship in families," reflected Paula Saez, World Vision Chile's Communications Corporations Coordinator. "Families (both men and women and children) want to be involved in these courses because they

can see positive change. Before, children were not very interested in going to school or looking for work, but now that they have changed because they can see that their mothers are empowered and are contributing to the family income and are setting an example for their children. This is breaking the cycle of poverty and violence. CECADEM would like to find a way to make sure that the violence courses and empowerment courses these women are receiving have a lasting impact on the gender dynamics in the whole community."

THE FUTURE FOR CECADEM

Overall, CECADEM's experience demonstrates the importance of continuous improvement in business practice, capacity building and integrating advocacy in working towards transformational change.

For any training project like CECADEM, incorporating life skills components into technical training courses creates a competitive advantage, which is especially important in a fluid economic environment. This has helped to empower participants, promote quality training and reduce poverty. A holistic and flexible approach to designing and implementing this type of project is clearly essential.

In June 2007, CECADEM developed a business plan for implementation from 2008 to 2010, in partnership with Word Vision Australia and World Vision Chile. The plan aims to achieve financial sustainability by generating support from private and public partners, and to continue improving market analysis so that students are equipped with skill sets that are in demand. The project will continue to position CECADEM as a specialist organisation responding to the needs of, and advocating for, women in poverty.

Further development of the business plan is required to identify possible future support services to be provided by partners. It is hoped that businesses may be able to provide student subsidies and that this could lead to CECADEM's autonomy in the long term.

On the other hand, the broader societal issues of violence and male dominance will still need to be addressed. As part of the business plan CECADEM will continue to look at ways in which it can promote the broader violence prevention agenda in the general community.

With the election of Chile's first female president Michelle Bachelet in 2006, there is hope that CECADEM and the women of Chile can break through the cultural barriers and ensure that women achieve access to employment and greater income for themselves and their families, as well as improved status and autonomy in the community. ■

► PROGRAM DETAILS

Project start date:

1995

Project end date:

2010

Funding source:

Private non-sponsorship funds, child sponsorship and AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

Total Australian funds remitted since 1998:

US\$362,794

NEW DOMAINS FOR INTERNATIONAL NGO INTERVENTION



The Masaka-Rakai Psychosocial Project

Treating depression in communities affected by HIV and AIDS

► THURZA SULLIVAN

INTRODUCTION

Globally, by the end of 2007, an estimated 33.2 million people were living with HIV. Worldwide, government and non-government responses to HIV and AIDS commonly focus on prevention, treatment, care and support for people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. Yet, limited attention has been given to the mental health implications of HIV and AIDS, reflecting the lower priority generally given to mental health in the face of broader health needs and services.

In Uganda, the first cases of HIV were diagnosed in Masaka and Rakai districts in the early 1980s. Since then, the Uganda AIDS Commission reports that cumulatively, an estimated 2.6 million Ugandans have been infected and 1.6 million have lost their lives to HIV and AIDS-related illnesses. Aid organisations and the Ugandan Government have invested significant funding in HIV prevention and treatment programs in these two districts over the past 20 years, successfully reducing the HIV infection rate (from approximately 23 percent during the 1990s to around 12 percent currently) and prolonging life among many people living with AIDS.

PRELIMINARY RESEARCH – DEPRESSION AND HIV AND AIDS

A groundbreaking ethnographic study conducted in part by World Vision in 2001 found that 21 percent of all adults surveyed in selected HIV and AIDS-affected communities in south-western Uganda were clinically depressed¹. The causal link between HIV and AIDS and high levels of depression was supported by studies, which showed the level of depression in AIDS-affected communities was three times more than the level of depression usually found in communities without the visible impact of HIV.

Despite the prevalence of HIV and AIDS-related depression, there were few targeted government or non-government interventions.

A situational analysis of the mental health system in Uganda suggested that mental health is a low priority because the dominant concerns are diseases that contribute to high mortality rates in the country. Mental health interventions are believed to be expensive and their results not as observable and quantifiable as other conditions. In fact, the very concept of mental health is not well understood².

In addition to revealing the extent of depression in HIV and AIDS-affected communities in Masaka and Rakai districts, the 2001 study also revealed how depression was understood within the Ugandan context and the approaches that would be most appropriate to treat depression. The effects of depression on communities are devastating: affected people experience heightened difficulties in performing work and caring for themselves, their children and family members. Feelings of isolation and worthlessness combined with low energy impact on people's capacity and motivation to engage in community development activities which benefit their lives. Feelings of loneliness and desperation can also lead people to engage in high risk behaviour that may increase their risk of contracting HIV; a common example is people choosing to have unsafe sex.

The incidence of HIV in Masaka and Rakai districts is 12 percent, compared with the national average of 6.4 percent. The research showed that the extent of depression in Masaka and Rakai was also significant and traditional healers interviewed as part of the study indicated they were unable to treat depression-like symptoms effectively. As an alternative, prescribing anti-depressants would prove impractical due to the high cost of drugs and the lack of infrastructure to ensure supply and monitor usage.

THE MASAKA-RAKAI PSYCHOSOCIAL PROJECT PILOT

At the time the study was conducted, the feasibility and efficacy of any form of

We sit on woven mats, close to a small collection of mud huts with thatched roofs. The group of 15 women range in age from early 20s to late 60s. They have been widowed, separated or divorced because of HIV and AIDS; and have also lost children, siblings, parents and friends to the disease. A number of the women are HIV positive themselves; all of the women have suffered from depression.

The group was originally formed as a result of the women's participation in a World Vision project to support community-based treatment of depression. These women are from the Masaka District in south-western Uganda, believed to be where the first cases of HIV were diagnosed – and where communities have been confronting the devastating impact of HIV and AIDS since the early 1980s.

This group of women participated in a 16-week course on inter-personal psychotherapy, during which a trained facilitator helped them to identify the causes of their depression and support one another by sharing problems and tackling challenges together.

Four years on from their participation in this course, the women still meet at least once a month. Where previously they felt the burden of facing insurmountable problems on their own (with children and other family members relying on them), now they are in a position to seek assistance from one another.

¹ World Psychiatry, Volume 2, Number 2, June 2003

² Mental Health and Poverty Project: Phase I Country Report – A Situational Analysis of the Mental Health System in Uganda http://www.who.int/mental_health/policy/development/Uganda%20Country%20Report.pdf



psychotherapy for depression had never been tested in Uganda. Recognising that African society has thrived for thousands of years on group discussions as a way of conducting community life, World Vision initiated a pilot project using **Interpersonal Psychotherapy for Groups** (IPT-G).

During this pilot project IPT-G was trialled with a small number of participants from Masaka and Rakai. The involvement of these communities in the ethnographic study conducted previously laid the basis for this work. The pilot also drew on World Vision's previous experience in psychosocial interventions in Rwanda following the genocide in 1994.

It is very difficult to find an agreed definition of the term "psychosocial", but broadly speaking it is the dynamic relationship that exists between the psychological processes of an individual and the social processes surrounding the individual. World Vision sees psychosocial interventions as holistic support provided by or to a child/adult to enable that person to resolve problems, or cope better with identified challenges. This support may be psychological, social, economic,

spiritual or a combination of all or some of these domains.

The IPT-G approach is aimed at reducing symptoms of moderate to severe depression, to help the affected individual better manage difficulties in their relationships and life situations. It is time bound, task-oriented and builds from key life events or "triggers" for the onset of depression. The facilitator focuses on:

- the "here and now" – people who are important in the affected person's life;
- the link between the person's depression and current problems; and
- finding new ways to deal with problems.

The intervention helps individuals to recognise that their interpersonal relationships are affected by the trigger event/s that took place. So if the event changes, then the action also changes.

Results of the pilot project showed that those who participated in IPT-G had significantly reduced depression symptoms and improved "functional ability" over those who did not participate³. The IPT-G approach was well accepted by the target population,

³ Masaka-Rakai Psychosocial Project Evaluation Report 2007

demonstrated by high attendance rates and low leaving rates – only 7.8 percent in the case of the IPT group, compared to 18 percent in the control group where IPT was not offered. The sustainability of the IPT-G intervention also appeared favourable, with reports from the pilot project showing that group members continued to support each other in coping with their depression and finding ways to make changes in their life circumstances beyond the 16-week life cycle of the group.

FIRST PHASE

Backed by ethnographic research and a successful pilot, the first phase of the Masaka-Rakai Psychosocial Project (2004–2007) was designed to extend the reach of IPT-G treatment to a larger section of the community. With the goals of improving the functional ability of people suffering from depression and increasing community awareness of psychosocial issues, the project had three components:

- training volunteer facilitators and community groups to deliver IPT-G;
- addressing low household incomes by supporting income generating activities (IGAs); and
- forming coalitions between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government to promote awareness of and advocacy for treatment of depression.

The design estimated that the project would directly benefit a total of 6,052 people over a three-year period. The beneficiaries included male and female adults, single parents, widows, and grandparents, many of whom came from HIV and AIDS-infected and -affected households.

The measures of success for the project were: increased functional ability and reduced risk-taking behaviour among group members; active participation in development activities by the community; and policies and practices of government on psychosocial/development issues being influenced by coalition groups (formed through the project).

OUTCOMES 2004 – 2007

An evaluation held in March 2007 found that the Masaka-Rakai Psychosocial Project presented a relevant and appropriate local-level response to reducing depression and increasing functional behaviour within the target communities.





⁴ Diagnosis of depression used is as categorised by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition (better known as DSM-IV) – a manual published by the American Psychiatric Association that covers all mental health disorders for both children and adults. The DSM-IV lists known causes of these disorders, statistics in terms of gender, age at onset, and prognosis as well as some research concerning the optimal treatment approaches.

⁵ Defined as a decrease in and better management of symptoms of depression, increased personal and social functioning and the ability to engage in the tasks of daily living.

⁶ Indicated by a better ability to utilise emotional, social, informational and material support to improve family income and well-being.

⁷ The project M&E report for 2004-2007 defines risk-taking behaviour as “suicidal tendencies among group members”. Taken from, Bolton, P., Bass, H., Verdelli, H., Clogherty, K., Ndogoni, L. and Speelman, L. Treating depressive illness among an HIV affected population: A report of a scientific trial in rural Uganda. 2002 and Bolton, P. and Ndogoni, L. Cross-cultural assessment of trauma-related mental illness, Phase II: A report of research conducted by World Vision Uganda and the Johns Hopkins University. Baltimore MD, April 2000.

In particular, the evaluation research showed that participants' involvement in the IPT-G intervention was highly successful, with an **87.9 percent reduction in depression rates** amongst group members from the pre-assessment stage diagnosis to diagnosis at the time of the evaluation⁴. Participants' involvement in the project led to a stated increase in personal empowerment⁵ and improved household resilience⁶. Where previously 56 percent of group members had reported being unable to complete a task or having a lot of difficulty completing a task related to everyday activities, only 3 percent of respondents reported this same level of difficulty following their participation in IPT groups. There was a reduction in risk-taking (suicidal) behaviour⁷ among group members – from 25.7 percent down to 4.5 percent.

THE EVALUATION ALSO SHOWED THAT:

- **IPT-G participants were able to contribute effectively to community development activities** and social responsibilities – a positive change from a time when depression was contributing to people's withdrawal from these roles.

The ongoing activities of the peer-led IPT groups were a strong indicator of active participation in both self-development and community activities. At the individual level, IPT-G participants were able to improve their household income and general wellbeing. At the community level, IPT-G participants contributed by counselling depressed people who were not members of the IPT-G and providing material support to destitute community members.

- **All of the groups formed to participate in the 16-week IPT-G course continued as community-led, self-help groups.** This is a further sign of the effectiveness of the project – both in terms of achieving immediate and longer term benefits for the target communities. Of these self-help groups, more than half registered as community-based organisations (eligible for government funding), and more than one third of groups had accessed grants to support income-generating activities such as production of crafts, raising small livestock, and small-scale crop production.

The success of this project, according to the women, was that the psychosocial support enabled them to gain deeper insights into the causes of their depression and helped them

identify ways of tackling their problems. With greater confidence in their ability to meet difficulties in their own lives, the women were then able to reach out and support one another.

When asked why they hadn't reached out to one another prior to their involvement in the project, the women's response was simple – *"we felt too isolated and our own problems seemed too big. We were too depressed to help ourselves or to help each."*

CHALLENGES AND LEARNING

The project has achieved significant success, but an effective and sustainable response to psychosocial aspects of HIV and AIDS also presents a number of challenges.

Firstly, the project sought to influence the government's response to depression, but success in this area was limited. Coalition Groups involving government and NGO members were established to raise awareness of depression and its treatment. However, these groups lacked the expertise and resources needed to undertake their task.

Secondly, not enough consideration had been given to ensuring the longer term success of the IPT-G treatment. Surveys carried out two weeks after the conclusion of the 16-week intervention indicated that IPT-G participants were showing virtually no depression signs and symptoms, but this figure had increased to around 12 percent by the time the project evaluation was undertaken (March 2007). The likelihood of IPT-G participants experiencing a relapse had not been considered, despite available research indicating that people who have had one moderate episode of depression are vulnerable to becoming depressed again⁸. The project had not incorporated any measures for following up IPT-G participants after completion of the course; nor put in place any referral mechanism to assist people who had experienced relapse.

The problem of monitoring IPT-G participants beyond the 16-week course may have been lessened had community members been trained to facilitate IPT groups as the project intended. Unfortunately this goal was never realised. The IPT groups were facilitated by World Vision staff for the duration of the project phase. As a consequence, the level of understanding of depression within the community was limited to what the IPT-G participants had learned. If community members had been trained to facilitate IPT groups, their enhanced knowledge of depression could have helped group members to watch out for relapse and to support people appropriately.

Finally, the project impact on participants, their families and immediate communities

was very positive but the overall benefit was somewhat limited. The first phase of the project benefited over 6,000 community members – the 864 depressed people who participated directly, and the positive effect their improved health and wellbeing then contributed to family and community life. While this outcome was very encouraging, it is a relatively small gain in a total population of approximately 1.3 million people and in a context where 21 percent of adults suffer from depression. With this issue in mind, a second phase of the project was developed.

MOVING FORWARD

The successful treatment of depression in more than 82 percent of cases, the longevity of the self-help groups (some have now been meeting for four years), and the positive impact treatment of depression has had on people's capacity to be actively involved in community life and development activities all demonstrate that IPT-G has been an appropriate and very successful intervention. The lessons from Phase One of the project formed the foundation for a second 3-year phase, which commenced in July 2007.

The focus of this second phase is to increase the reach of IPT-G within the target communities of Masaka and Rakai, to trial community delivered IPT-G using volunteer facilitators, and to establish Psychosocial Working Groups in each district to ensure community-based supervision and technical support is available. The advocacy work of the Coalition Groups established in Phase One is recognised as being vital to increasing awareness of psychosocial issues generally and specifically the use of IPT-G to treat depression. Acknowledging that the expectations placed on these groups was too high in Phase One, the Coalition Groups will be given increased training and resources in this next phase.

A participant in Phase One of the Masaka-Rakai Psychosocial Project, who is now a volunteer facilitator in Phase Two, was proud to describe his involvement and what he has gained from the project. *"I can now facilitate a group and share with them my experience since I'm now a role model. I'm now very active in leadership, I'm a member of the Coalition Group, I was elected to the World Vision Parish Council Development Committee as a psychosocial contact person, and I'm playing a very significant role in my church."* This second phase of the project will no doubt also face challenges, but the successes of the first phase and the commitment of a number of beneficiaries to becoming volunteer facilitators gives this further phase of the project a strong start. ■

► PROGRAM DETAILS

Programming context:

World Vision Australia began partnering with World Vision Uganda in 1990. Initial projects were primarily relief focused. Our current collaboration focuses on Area Development Programs (ADPs) which encompass a range of development activities to improve the lives of children and their families.

At the end of 2007, World Vision Uganda was managing a total of 56 ADPs across Uganda. World Vision Australia supports 14 of these ADPs and 10 shorter term projects (1-3 years duration) covering activities including water and sanitation, peace-building, governance, disability and emergency relief.

Project start and end dates:

Phase One:

1 July 2004 – 30 June 2007

Phase Two:

1 July 2007 – 30 June 2010

Funding source:

AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

Total funds remitted from Australia since 2004:

US\$447,740

⁸ Some research has shown that 60 percent of people who have experienced one major episode of depression will experience a further episode, and that 70 percent of people who have experienced two major episodes will have further incidents.

The emergence of global markets for carbon potentially offers developing countries direct environmental, financial and social benefits while reducing atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations. Theoretically, the current international push to mitigate climate change should offer grassroots communities in some of the world's poorest countries, many of whom have been significantly affected by environmental degradation, a chance to leverage global market interest in their favour. The Humbo project has provided World Vision with some significant learning opportunities. On the one hand it represents a landmark approach which required detailed and complex consultation at community, district, regional, national and international levels, and a skill set beyond most NGOs. On the other hand, the need to comply with technical modalities presents challenges for aid agencies and communities in replicating this approach.

► *Three year old stands of trees regenerated from stumps.*

Carbon trading, community forestry and development

Potential, challenges and the way forward in Ethiopia

► TONY RINAUDO / PAUL DETTMANN / ASSEFA TOFU

INTRODUCTION

In 2005, World Vision Australia, in partnership with World Vision Ethiopia, identified forestry-based carbon trading as a means to stimulate ongoing community development and to test new funding streams such as the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). [See Snapshot: What is carbon trading?] After two years of consultation, planning and negotiations, the Humbo Community-based Natural Regeneration Project was born, becoming World Vision's (and Ethiopia's) first carbon trading initiative.

The Humbo Community-Based Natural Regeneration Project is located 420 kilometres south-east of the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. World Vision's operations in the area were established following the severe famine of 1984. High population density, variable rainfall, environmental degradation and an over-reliance on maize has meant that the area still experiences food shortages. Of the 48,893 people living in the Humbo area, an estimated 85 percent live in poverty.

Poverty, hunger and increasing demand for agricultural land have driven local communities to over exploit forest resources. In fact, forests surrounding Humbo were largely destroyed by the late 1960s and across Ethiopia less than 3 percent of native forests remain today. The absence of user rights and appropriate legislative frameworks exacerbated forest loss. Despite government protection of forests and the issuing of fines to those caught cutting down trees, severe poverty resulted in the total failure of this authoritarian approach.

RESPONDING TO THE LINK BETWEEN ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

World Vision has a long history of community development work in Ethiopia, particularly in the areas of education, health and agriculture. There is a clear but often overlooked link between environment and poverty. So it should not be surprising that many of World



Vision Ethiopia's greatest gains in agricultural development and hence poverty alleviation have been in association with restoration of the environment. The best known example is the conversion of parts of the Antsokia Valley from what was effectively a dust bowl in 1984 to a productive mix of forests and farmland today.

Since the 1984 famine, World Vision Ethiopia has had a strong focus on reforestation within its development interventions, enabling staff to approach this project with a legacy of making forestry and community development projects successful. Between 1975 and 2002, over 66 million forest trees and over 300,000 fruit trees were planted in World Vision Ethiopia operating areas. Emergence of the carbon market offered not only a new income stream to fund this work but a practical means of demonstrating how the environment and poverty are linked.

► SNAP-SHOT:

WHAT IS CARBON TRADING?

Carbon trading is a market mechanism allowing those most efficient at reducing emissions to do so and trade their "carbon credits" with those who cannot reduce emissions as cost effectively.

The Kyoto Protocol, which came into force in February 2005, requires industrialised countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5.2 percent compared with 1990 levels between the years 2008-2012. This has created an active market for carbon credits, worth approximately US\$120 billion in 2007.

One of the interesting features of the Kyoto Protocol is that developed countries can undertake projects in developing countries through a program called the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). This is designed to foster economic growth in developing countries (which are also most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change), but following a lower than "business as usual" carbon emissions pathway. Projects facilitating renewable energy production, energy efficiency and reforestation can earn credits under the CDM. World Vision's Humbo project is an example of a CDM forestry project. The amount of carbon "sequestered" or absorbed by the forest is assessed and credits are issued for each tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e).

In addition to the Kyoto framework, there is a thriving voluntary market. This is fuelled by demand from customers who are not

The Humbo project helps provide communities that have been significantly affected by environmental degradation with an opportunity to benefit from the global market in carbon. In practice, the project involves the regeneration of 2,728 hectares of degraded native forests. Forest regeneration has direct flow-on social, economic and environmental benefits for local communities, and it can generate certified emissions reductions (carbon credits) under the CDM. The intent is to channel the additional income generated from the sale of carbon back into the local community, funding community designated development initiatives.

PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

The Humbo project is World Vision's first carbon project and as such, has required considerable negotiation at national, state, local government and community levels.

obliged to purchase credits, but who can see benefit in doing so voluntarily. An example of this is "carbon offsetting", promoted by many companies including car hire companies and airlines as a way to "offset" or compensate for their carbon emissions, often by planting trees. The principles which underpin the voluntary market are the same as those applied under the Kyoto Protocol, but they take place outside of the CDM operating and monitoring framework.

In order for projects to generate carbon revenue, they must satisfy both the additionality and leakage requirement of the CDM. These are defined below:

Additionality: The project must demonstrate that it can realise emissions reductions that are additional to those which would have happened without the project. For example, if a wind farm was both financially and technically viable, it is unlikely to be considered additional, as there are no barriers to its implementation which carbon revenue can help to overcome.

Leakage: Leakage refers to emissions outside the boundary of a project caused as a result of the project. For example, a forestry project may be established on pastured lands, and as a result the farmers who were using them to graze their stock need to find other grazing areas. They in turn may go ahead and clear additional areas of forest for use as grazing land. The emissions related to the forest clearing would be considered leakage.

Resources: World Vision Australia's Policy Position on Climate Change. Second Edition, 3. December, 2007. Authoritative articles on climate change can be found on the website for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

► SNAP-SHOT:

FARMER MANAGED NATURAL REGENERATION

For many years, conventional Western forestry methods have been applied and exotic tree species promoted in the countries of the Sahel region in east Africa in order to combat desertification. Large and small projects were commissioned to curtail the assumed southward movement of the Sahara desert, but few made any lasting impression.

Little thought was given to the appropriateness of these methods. Indigenous species were generally dismissed as "useless" scrub. In the name of afforestation, many projects even cleared this useless scrub to make way for exotic species. Often exotic species were simply planted in fields containing living and sprouting stumps of indigenous vegetation, the presence of which was barely acknowledged, let alone seen as important.

This was an enormous oversight. In fact, these living stumps constitute a vast "underground forest", just waiting for a little encouragement to grow and provide multiple benefits at little or no cost. These live stumps may produce between 10 and 50 stems each. During the process of traditional land preparation, farmers treated these stems as weeds, slashing and burning them before sowing their food crops. Under this management system, the stems rarely grow beyond 1.5 meters tall before being slashed again. The net result is a barren landscape for much of the year with few mature trees remaining. To the casual observer, the land appears to be turning to desert and most would conclude that tree planting is required to restore it. Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) is the systematic regeneration of this "underground forest".

Experience in Niger in the 1980s showed that farmers practicing FMNR realised increases in crop yields, increased fodder production, fuel wood availability from pruning and thinning, as well as the potential to sell firewood in drought years.

The genius of FMNR, the reason why it has spread to over five million hectares in Niger Republic alone within just 24 years in the absence of significant government or NGO intervention, is its ease of adoption and because it uses resources at hand.

► EXTRA READING:

World Resources; (2008). *Roots of Resilience. Growing the Wealth of the Poor. Turning Back the Desert. How Farmers Have Transformed Niger's Landscapes and Livelihoods.* Chapter 3.

Rinaudo, T; (2001). Utilizing the underground forest. Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration of trees. In D. Pasternak, & A. Schlissel (Eds.), *Combating Desertification with Plants.* (pp. 325-336) Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, New York.

Rinaudo, T; (2007). The Development of Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration. *LEISA Magazine* 23.2. June, 2007. pp 32-34.

Partnership arrangements were made between World Vision Australia, World Vision Ethiopia, the World Bank, the Ethiopian Environment Protection Agency, as well as local and regional governments and the community. This process, while time consuming and requiring skills beyond the capacity of poor communities, laid a strong foundation for the project and for establishing future carbon projects in a more timely and cost effective manner.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Currently, the project is being implemented by World Vision Ethiopia in collaboration with the local government forestry department. A project coordinator, forestry extension agents and a social scientist work closely with the community. To date, staff have been focused on technical training and follow-up, and strengthening and building capacity of cooperative members. Due to the unusual nature of the project, much effort has been invested in community consultation, education and awareness building on what it can and, more importantly, cannot deliver.

World Vision has identified several critical features of this project which contributed to smooth implementation and which have wider application.

- **Promotion of Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR).** This technique which is being used to regenerate degraded native forests is cheap, replicable and provides early benefits. For example, communities have already commenced harvesting hay and firewood in a sustainable way. Realising these early and substantial benefits has increased community enthusiasm and commitment for the work. Many of those who previously opposed or were ambivalent to the project are now eagerly joining the cooperatives. [See Snapshot: Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration]
- **Creation of an enabling environment.** The design process should focus on creating a favourable or enabling environment in which communities can readily embrace new techniques and take responsibility for large-scale change. In Humbo, the establishment of user rights and local cooperatives laid a foundation for community ownership for this project. Communities not only need to manage the forest, but to benefit from forest products including carbon. Today, two years after project commencement as communities begin to reap firewood, fodder and wild fruits, a deeper level of confidence and trust in the user rights agreement is emerging. Since the forest is now effectively "theirs" and not "the government's", there is a very high incentive for protecting it and managing it in a sustainable manner.

- **Collaboration.** Early collaboration with government at all levels is essential. This makes project development simpler and more transparent. In the Humbo case, World Vision's good reputation within the community facilitated local and regional buy-in, and so established a foundation for state and federal government endorsement.
- **Formation of cooperatives.** Establishment of village-level cooperatives provides an appropriate foundation for community forest management. With legal assistance, the cooperatives created by-laws which laid out how and by whom the forest would be managed and how benefits would be shared. Cooperatives are responsible for protection of the forest and its sustainable management. Forest guards are selected from amongst the poorest members of the community and commissioned to protect designated sections of the forest boundary; working bees are organised for pruning of tree re-growth, tree planting and weeding; schedules for fuel wood and fodder harvest are implemented; membership fees are collected and managed; and infringements are dealt with according to the by-laws. While formation of cooperatives is not a new or innovative tool for community development, in the context of Humbo specifically and Ethiopia generally, this is a relatively new approach to forest management.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

- **Sustainable forest management:** To date, 2,728 hectares of degraded forest that were being continually exploited for wood, charcoal and fodder extraction have been protected, and are now being restored and sustainably managed.
- **FMNR successfully introduced to Ethiopia:** The enormous potential of natural forest regeneration is being realised for the first time in Ethiopia. Where conventional approaches require the costly replanting of trees, over 90 percent of this area does not need replanting from nursery stock. Forest regeneration in Humbo is taking place almost entirely through the selection and pruning of existing tree stumps. Tree planting is only occurring where no living tree stumps remain within the forest and on designated woodlot areas outside of the forest boundary. It is hoped that exposure visits by foresters and representatives from other communities will result in the widespread adoption of FMNR.
- **Contribution to increased understanding of and changed attitudes towards the environment:** This project has made a significant contribution to growing awareness amongst local communities, local government and



World Vision staff about climate change, environmental degradation and sustainable forest management.

- **Contract signed with the World Bank:**

A major milestone, which required significant legal and technical input, was the signing of the Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement (ERPA) with the World Bank.

DESPITE THESE ACHIEVEMENTS, THE PROJECT HAS CERTAINLY NOT BEEN FREE OF CHALLENGES.

- **CDM compliance issues:** The CDM compliance requirements made project establishment both expensive and time consuming. Demonstrating the additionality of the project, quantifying project leakage, and writing the 100-page project design according to the approved methodology required a significant amount of work. [See Snap-shot: What is carbon trading?]
- **Initial slow adoption of innovation:** Just because a new technology is simple doesn't guarantee that it will be easily or rapidly adopted. Initially, many key stakeholders, including some World Vision staff, did not fully grasp either the approach or the benefits of FMNR. Significant effort is required to educate staff, partner organisations and the community, and in implementation and follow-up, when introducing innovative activities.

- **Tension over differences in philosophical approach to development:** Project management struggled over the issue of paying guards. Good development practice would recommend that guarding the forest should be classed as a community contribution. Some stakeholders however, strongly favoured the payment of guards. In the end, a compromise was reached. Only poorer communities and individuals experiencing food shortages would receive token compensation for guarding the forest. As revenue generation from the forest increases, payment of guards by World Vision will be phased out.
- **Difficulties in managing community expectations:** The community struggled to understand the concept of emissions trading. The most significant outcome for the community will be greater resilience to environmental shocks (reduced flooding, reduced impact of drought, recharge of underground water, etc.), as well as creation of a stable income stream from access to and sale of forest products. But most community members had unrealistic expectations of the level of income that would be generated through carbon sales. Future projects should be prepared to invest extensive amounts of time with community groups for education and regular follow up.



▲ **Before project implementation the Humbo mountain range was very degraded with a low level of vegetation cover and high degree of soil erosion.**

The main photo shows that only one year into the program, rapid re-vegetation is occurring on the Humbo Mountain.

► PROGRAM DETAILS

Project start date:

October 2006

Project end date:

September 2036, since the crediting period is 30 years

Project partners:

World Bank, World Vision Australia and World Vision Ethiopia

Funding source:

World Vision Australia and World Vision Ethiopia

Total funds remitted from Australia as at June 2008:

US\$ 282,537 from Twice As Green

(also US\$50,000 for capacity building from the World Bank).

MOVING FORWARD

In a June 2008 preliminary review of the forestry activities, a very common sentiment expressed by community members was *"we are too much happy. We never expected to see so much grass growing from these rocky, barren slopes, to see trees growing so quickly or to harvest firewood so early in the program"*.

These are encouraging signs. However, any further exploration in engaging the carbon market to secure development and environmental outcomes could benefit from lessons learnt in Humbo. These include:

- There is a need to lay a sound legal and contractual foundation to secure and protect the rights of communities and to ensure sound business processes are followed.
- Streamlined and simplified compliance requirements more suited to a developing country context need to be developed. This may be easier to achieve in the voluntary carbon market.
- A higher price for carbon is required in order to cover both project costs and provide adequate remuneration to participating communities.

Finally, it is also important for World Vision to help communities critically analyse the

issues and options arising from carbon-funded projects. It is too easy to create false expectations that may not be realised and to encourage an unhealthy dependency on NGOs. It is also important to keep firmly in mind why particular interventions are being undertaken. If the emphasis is on the "carbon income generating" aspect of a project, the true value of the activity (environmental restoration, agro-forestry, forestry, soil protection, agricultural sustainability and hence sustainable livelihoods) may not be appreciated by participating communities. In an extreme case, communities may even desist from protecting forests or tree planting (activities which bring benefits in their own right) unless there is a possibility of earning extra income from carbon sales. It is important that communities do not delay activities in the hope that carbon credits will pay them to do so in the future.

Humbo has provided many valuable lessons in the difficulties and potential rewards involved in combining carbon trading and community forestry. Many questions remain unanswered and further simplification of processes is called for. However, World Vision should continue to explore appropriate means of using the carbon market to bring about sustainable development outcomes. ■



► **Newly pruned stems will now grow very rapidly.**

Healing, peace-building and reconciliation in Rwanda

Rebuilding resilience and social networks

► CLARE SEDDON

CONTEXT

No individual or community was immune from the devastation of the genocide. A community like Byumba in the north of the country had already endured four years of civil war between rival political groups before the 100 days of genocidal mania, raping, looting and killing. People lost mothers, fathers, grandparents, children and entire extended families. Neighbours turned on each other. The genocide devastated traditional family structures. Community values of respect and tolerance were replaced with mistrust and fear, undermining social cohesion and traditional social structures. More broadly, the state and the Church failed to provide support and sanctuary for individuals during this crisis.

Post-genocide, health surveys identified high levels of post-traumatic shock¹ within the country; with many Rwandans existing in a state of social withdrawal and shock. The wide-scale level of trauma reinforced World Vision Rwanda's conviction that emergency recovery and emerging community development must include an individual and psychosocial dimension. World Vision became one of the first non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to actively engage in and respond to the psychosocial dimensions of national recovery. This recognition of the centrality of trauma recovery to community development led to the foundation of World Vision's healing, peace-building and reconciliation work among individuals and communities in Rwanda.

Given the severity of the genocide, the recovery process in Rwanda and subsequent judicial and reconciliation processes have been slow and have compounded the trauma of survivors. Since 1994, fear and trauma among genocide survivors have continued; fuelled by the continued presence of the Interahamwe (the Hutu para-militia group responsible for much of the genocidal violence) on the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo, the release of genocide prisoners

back into communities, and isolated reprisal killings of those testifying at Gacaca events [see Snap-shot].

WORLD VISION'S RESPONSE

World Vision Rwanda began responding to the genocide with the distribution of relief items and then shifted to resettlement and rehabilitation programs with a focus on caring for children and on agricultural recovery. In 1994, a trauma recovery program was also initiated, with an emphasis on training teachers to identify the causes, signs and symptoms of trauma as well as ways of helping traumatised people. In 2000, World Vision commenced longer term development programming through Area Development Programs (ADPs)³. By 2008, there were 16 ADPs, located in the north, central and southern parts of Rwanda.

Community development assumes that there is a certain level of cohesion, connectedness and a shared vision within the community, which can be mobilised to improve the lives of community members. Post-genocide, World Vision recognised that the mistrust and brokenness of individuals and communities needed to be addressed before development could occur. With assistance from psychologists, World Vision developed a number of different counselling methodologies and workshops to address the immense psychosocial impact of the genocide.

With the need for peace-building in Rwanda, a semi-autonomous National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) was created by the Rwandan Government in 1998. NURC's mandate is to address issues related to unity and reconciliation, a culture of peace, tolerance, justice, democracy and development⁴. While the NURC has focused on civic education and mobilisation, conflict mediation and providing support to local reconciliation associations⁵, these interventions were aimed at the community level. World Vision's interventions aim for personal transformation and focus on the psychological

Rwanda is known throughout the world for the 1994 genocide when hundreds of thousands of people died in an organised campaign of brutal violence. For the 600,000 children orphaned and the families of up to one million killed during the 100-day conflict, the recovery process has presented great national and personal challenges. For 14 years, the nation has struggled to rebuild physical infrastructure, institutions and government services, while individual Rwandans have attempted to reconstruct their homes and lives and even more challenging, to recover from trauma and personal pain.

¹ Harvard Study Reports Major Mental Health Crisis in Rwanda. Press Release, Harvard School of Public Health, 16 December 1996.

² From December 1996 to December 2006, the courts managed to try about 10,000 suspects. At that rate it would take another 110 years to prosecute all the prisoners. *Struggling to Survive: Barriers to Justice for Rape Victims in Rwanda*, New York, Human Rights Watch. Available: <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/11975/section/1>

³ Area Development Programs are large-scale community development programs which tend to focus on 3-5 sectoral areas and one geographical location for a period of up to 15 years. Funding for these programs is generated from child sponsorship.

⁴ http://www.nurc.gov.rw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=58

⁵ http://www.nurc.gov.rw/documents/researches/Impact_assessment_of_NURC_Sammary.pdf

► SNAP-SHOT:

GACACA

After the genocide, approximately 120,000 suspects were rounded up and imprisoned, some without sentencing or prosecution². In tandem with the International Criminal Court's prosecution of the genocide's major instigators, a national process for justice and reconciliation was initiated in Rwanda in 2001.

Gacaca courts (pronounced "gachacha") were developed as a community-based truth, justice and reconciliation initiative and were founded on principles of a traditional Rwandan justice and dispute system. During Gacaca, community members gather evidence, try and convict criminals living within their community and sentencing is pronounced by specially trained judges or elders. To facilitate this process, prisoners who initially confessed their crimes, who were minors at the time of the genocide or who were held without trial were released back into the community after a brief stay in re-education camps. The 2003 and 2004 release of approximately 58,000 prisoners back into the community and alleged violence against Gacaca court witnesses re-ignited the trauma of survivors and emphasised that investment in the resiliency of individuals was still a pertinent issue.

dimension of individuals. The intentionality of focusing on an individual's emotional understanding and transformation within a group therapy setting distinguishes World Vision's work from the work of other NGOs involved in reconciliation.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Since 1994, World Vision has been actively involved in supporting psychological interventions in Rwanda, generally referred to in the Rwandan context as the Healing, Peace-building and Reconciliation (HPR) program. These projects have involved outreach to different segments of the Rwandan population – orphans and child-headed households, widows, genocide survivors, World Vision staff members and those imprisoned for crimes committed during the genocide. HPR interventions have included counselling workshops and skills training, radio shows, public drama and sporting events promoting reconciliation, and training of school counsellors. World Vision has run workshops in 14 of its ADPs. Over 2,000 Rwandans have benefited from this support. After eight years of managing these projects from a separate operational department within World Vision Rwanda, they were mainstreamed into ADP programs. The HPR program has included various projects with the latest called Twiyubake, focused specifically on developing the sustainability of community-based counselling and HPR processes. World Vision Australia has funded successive HPR projects with a program budget from 2001 of approximately US\$510,000.

One of the key components of the HPR program is an innovative group therapy methodology called the Personal Development Workshop

(PDW). These workshops aim to strengthen an individual's capacity to identify, understand and process their emotions and feelings, and to help individuals make the connection between emotions and "moving forward". The structure of the workshops provides the framework and skills needed by participants to rebuild key relationships with family members and their broader community. They also provide opportunities for individuals to make small steps in their journey of forgiveness.

Over the years, the HPR program has moved from direct delivery of psychosocial services to forming and training a cadre of counsellors and HPR facilitators. This was to ensure that skills were built within the community and that there was capacity for workshops and counselling to continue irrespective of World Vision's presence or funding.

OUTCOMES

Implementation of the Healing, Peace-building and Reconciliation Program has highlighted both positive outcomes and challenges. Whilst the HPR program has provided support to individual Rwandans, the challenge to sustain the benefits and resources remains.

The projects' popularity has been demonstrated by increased demand from government and community groups for World Vision's services. The Personal Development Workshops methodology provides a safe forum for communal sharing and processing of experiences, allowing participants to articulate and share their life and trauma stories within a small group setting. Often these workshops are the first place where individuals can share their story without fear. Sharing stories with people from a cross-section of Rwandan society connects and personalises the suffering

► *The sign outside the Nyamata church, the site of numerous attacks and massacres. The words read "If you knew yourself, and if you knew me, you would never have killed me".*



of various groups within Rwanda, and helps to build connections and improved relationships between the “survivors” and “perpetrators”.

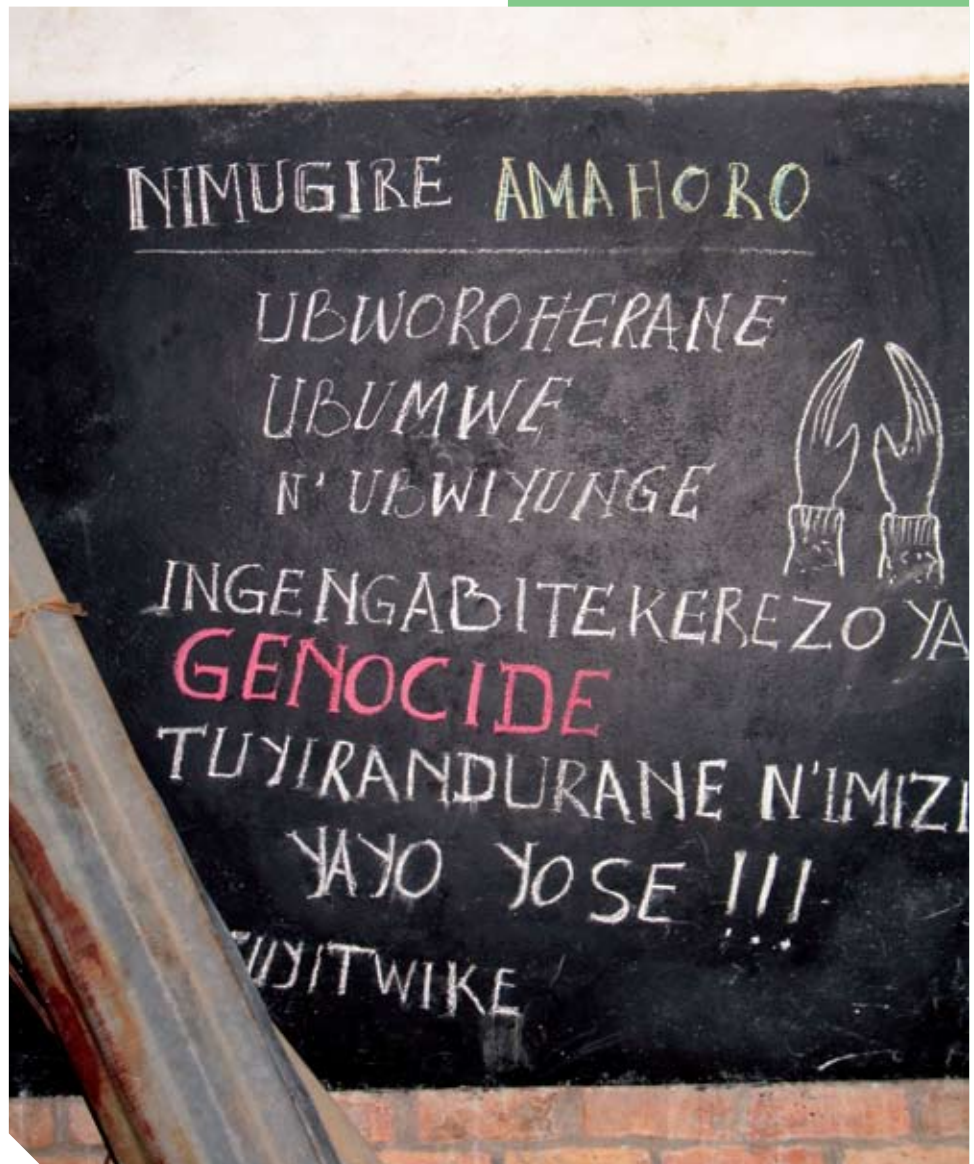
Whilst the genocide was 14 years ago, there is still a high level of demand, interest and participation in HPR activities, outstripping World Vision's ability to assist all those in ADP communities. Attempts have been made to address this and foster greater community ownership by forming a network of community counsellors and facilitators who can lead subsequent therapy sessions and be available to provide follow-up support for community members. World Vision has struggled with this, particularly due to the intensive nature of group therapy, internal competition for scarce resources between differing development demands, and the need for regular, ongoing external supervision of community counsellors.

However, by 2007 there were approximately 10 trained HPR community facilitators in each ADP. Additionally, Avega Agahozo, a non-profit organisation for survivors of the genocide and the disadvantaged, is now running PDW workshops for its members without World Vision's technical or financial involvement. Other successes have included the formation of an association of community facilitators in Nyamata, in central Rwanda, where trauma counselling is conducted for community members and group therapy sessions held for vulnerable children.

PROJECT CHALLENGES

Intensive technical methodology – In part, the success of and continuing demand for workshops stems from the cultural appropriateness of the group therapy methodology. This means that the workshops are resource intense, requiring trained counsellors, debriefing for counsellors, and appropriate workshop facilities. Thus, this current methodology is difficult to replicate. Twiyubake, the latest HPR project, attempts to address this by encouraging organisations or individuals interested in running HPR programs to contribute towards the cost of the workshops. Promoting the use of the services for a fee acknowledges both the cost and the value of these specialised services.

Monitoring and evaluation – Working in the area of psychosocial or mental health presents some monitoring and evaluation challenges. Questions need to be asked about what is an appropriate way to measure and monitor changes in an individual's psychological state, particularly when those managing programs are not psychologists. Indeed, the HPR program, as a whole, struggled to develop an appropriate method to measure change at an individual level and in the mental health status of a community. With previous projects lacking baseline surveys at their



commencement, it has been difficult to assess the “impact” of the program on community participants and the broader community. However, using various evaluative tools, the 2007 evaluation of this program established that those attending workshops and courses had a higher level of psychological functioning⁶ after attending the workshops. A key requirement for the Twiyubake project is the development of a simple, community-owned monitoring and evaluation system. It is hoped that this system can be modified and adapted for future psychosocial programs.

SECTORAL CHALLENGES

Technical supervision and support – Given the high level of trauma experienced by Rwandans and those attending the counselling, project staff have reported vicarious traumatisation⁷ as a result of their work⁸. This is a human resources concern that has implications for ensuring the sustainability of such interventions. Health-focused projects

▲ “Have Peace

**Unity
Reconciliation
Tolerance**

Let's uproot genocide ideology everywhere”

⁶ Functionality scale based on scale used by the Australian Health Service.

⁷ “Vicarious Trauma is described as a transformation in a therapist (or other worker) as a result of a client's traumatic experience.” This can result in a short or long-term reaction and can cause those affected to mirror the behaviour of their traumatised clients including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, disruptions in personal relationships, substance abuse, and sleep disorders. More information is available at http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/wrap/acssa_wrap4.pdf

⁸ Results of 1997 evaluation of the Healing, Peace-building and Reconciliation Program

► PROGRAM DETAILS

Country context:

Rwanda, situated in East Africa, is well known for the 1994 genocide which was the brutal culmination of 40 years of civil unrest and violence. With 60 percent of its 10.1 million people living under the poverty line, Rwanda has set an ambitious target to meet the Millennium Development Goals, develop its economy and further peace and reconciliation among its people.

Program start date:

October 2002

Program end date:

September 2005

Funding source:

Child sponsorship

Total funds remitted from Australia:

US\$230,000

in other countries are often well integrated within government services reinforcing sustainability. However, given the limited scope of government mental health services in Rwanda, the problem remains of providing appropriate debriefing services for volunteers. The Twiyubake project seeks to build appropriate referral systems for patients with severe depression as well as linkages between community volunteers and government services. The sustainability of psychosocial interventions is paramount, particularly when the level of government expertise is minimal but the issues of trauma and depression persist.

Networking – While the HPR program focuses on psychosocial domains, the intention is for participants to be active members of the community and participate in the journey of reconciliation in Rwanda. Given the immensity of this challenge, links between NGOs active in the reconciliation arena are critical for this vision to succeed. Despite best intentions, the link with the national reconciliation council has been hard to manage due to differing approaches to reconciliation and the limited availability and capacity of government staff. New project interventions, in particular the Twiyubake project, will attempt to increase linkages and partnerships between World Vision, other NGOs and the reconciliation council on specific reconciliation advocacy initiatives, participation in key project events and sharing of critical project learnings and recommendations.

THE NEXT STEPS

Fourteen years have passed since the genocide. There are no easy answers as to how long an agency should prioritise funding for separate psychosocial programs. In 2004, World Vision embarked on an ambitious but necessary change to mainstream HPR interventions into all development projects. This mainstreaming has been accompanied by separate funding arrangements for the Twiyubake project, which attempts to strengthen the capacity of individuals and communities to “own” interventions that improve their own resiliency and mental health. In a country with limited government psychological or counselling services and massive generational trauma, this is a challenging yet vital strategy.

Partnerships and intentional engagement with other groups who work in the area of healing and reconciliation are critical for the success of interventions. While different counselling models are in use, opportunities exist for all agencies to pilot composite models which reinforce the principles of simplicity, depth, impact and applicability to the Rwandan context. The greater challenge is to ensure that in post-conflict contexts, all projects acknowledge the importance of psychosocial issues and actively integrate activities to improve the psychosocial status of communities and provide opportunities for individuals to actively engage in practical reconciliation. ■



► *Mass crosses tell the story of the slaughter.*

A new system for young offenders

Developing juvenile justice in Mongolia

► MARIAM HII / IAN DAWES / CATHERINE JOHNSTON

Mongolia is a country of incredible vulnerability. Despite many positive consequences arising from the fall of communism some 12 years ago, the country faces many obstacles in developing a stable democracy and a free market economy. Poverty, unemployment, domestic violence and juvenile crime present fresh challenges to this emerging modern nation state. Young offenders are particularly at risk because current legislation is designed primarily for adults. Without a separate judicial system, young offenders enter an adult system typified by incarceration.

CHILDREN AND POVERTY

Since 1990, Mongolia's rapid political and economic transition from a centrally controlled socialist state to a capitalist one has been accompanied by painful social consequences for many marginalised communities. Real incomes have fallen, unemployment is on the rise and there is a widening gap between the rich and the poor. Two decades ago, poverty was virtually non-existent in Mongolia; today, the majority of the population live in poverty with up to 33 percent of the population classified as extremely poor.

Children, by virtue of their sheer numbers, are amongst the worst affected by these alarming trends. According to official estimates, 42 percent of the Mongolian population is below the age of 18, amounting to a population of over one million children. It is disturbing to note that 47.9 percent of these children are members of unemployed, vulnerable, poor and very poor families.

CHILDREN AND THE LAW

Increased poverty levels combined with a weakening in traditional institutions is pushing an increasing number of children into crime. According to Mongolia's Police Department, the number of crimes committed by children has more than doubled in the last decade, while the court system saw a 32 percent rise in juvenile cases from 2006 (727) to 2007 (963).

Although Mongolia has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), of which the protection of basic

rights of children in conflict with the law is a major component, it has not yet developed a comprehensive juvenile justice system to deal with young offenders. There are insufficient provisions within the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code to deal with juveniles. Instead, children who come into contact with the Mongolian legal system are treated as adults and are subject to the same legal procedures, processes and sentencing outcomes as adults.

Under the Mongolian Criminal Code, even non-violent crimes committed by children are punished harshly. For example, petty theft regularly leads to a prison sentence of several years. Diversion mechanisms that deal with children in conflict with the law without resorting to judicial procedures do not exist in practice. As a result, there are large numbers of imprisoned children facing considerable prison terms. The negative impact this has on children is further exacerbated given the poor state of juvenile prisons. Despite World Vision Mongolia's success in developing Children and Family Information Centres and "open zones" at the Juvenile Prison in Khan-Uul District, many juvenile prisons fail to meet basic needs.

Police interrogation of juveniles is also unacceptable with about 60 percent of all juvenile suspects not fully informed about their rights. It has been reported that police have kept children longer than the permitted 72 hours and pressured them for confessions, using violence and threat of exposure on television. Furthermore, legal representation for children, although mandatory, is not guaranteed due to lack of effective criminal defence, particularly for clients without sufficient financial means.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

World Vision Mongolia became involved in advocacy on this issue in 2003 after consultations with the Ministry of Children and the call on NGOs to respond to the UNICEF report on children. World Vision was well positioned at the time to respond, given staff capacity in this area and the close relationship it had developed with the Ministry of Children and the Centre of Violence against Children. World Vision had

Rarely does World Vision have the opportunity to contribute significantly to law reform. World Vision Mongolia has been a leading organisation in the fields of advocacy and child-focused development for many years and has participated in attempts to bring about reform to laws governing child crime. The Juvenile Justice Project in Mongolia, supported by World Vision Australia, is one example of an NGO trying to work in this space in an innovative way.

► SNAP-SHOT:

CHILDREN IN POVERTY IN MONGOLIA

A UNICEF Situational Analysis of Children and Women in Mongolia outlines two types of poverty affecting the lives of children: poverty of income and poverty of opportunity. Income poverty has isolated many children from the benefits of national development. Thousands of children struggle to survive by begging on the streets, engaging in hard labour, becoming sex workers, or getting involved in crime. These forms of child poverty inhibit the normal physical growth and psychosocial development processes of childhood.

During their prime years, poor children encounter discrimination which can prevent them from fully using their ingenuity and talents and limit the development of their capabilities. Both income poverty and opportunity poverty are worse among children who are orphans, children of single or disabled parents, and children of parents who lack labour skills.

As a result, in Mongolia:

- 2 out of 100 children aged 10-17 have never studied in school
- 1 out of 3 children lives in poverty
- 1 out of 5 children aged 7-19 is unable to attend school
- 1 out of 10 children aged 5-17 years is working

The Mongolian Government is committed to improving the living standards of the population within the constraints of the current economic climate. A National Poverty Alleviation Program and National Human Development Plan have been rolled out and the interests of children have received special attention through the enactment of a National Program of Action for Children, which is aligned with the UN's A World Fit for Children Initiative. Still, the challenges are immense.

Source: Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour; (2001) Main Results of National Poverty Inspection, Ulaanbaatar; and UNICEF (2007) Situational Analysis of Children and Women in Mongolia

[http://www.unicef.org/mongolia/ENG\(2\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/mongolia/ENG(2).pdf)



been working in the child rescue space prior to this time, funding small scale refuges for children who had been abused or abandoned and were living on the streets. The advocacy project was developed at the same time as an initiative to work in the domestic violence area.

The Juvenile Justice Project began in 2004 in urban, peri-urban and rural settings. The project aimed to support fundamental and comprehensive reform of the legal framework and to advocate for lower minimum sentences, alternatives to imprisonment, diversion and crime prevention measures. It also aimed to raise public awareness and develop professional skills on juvenile justice in addition to piloting alternative pre-trial detention and imprisonment. Underpinning this effort was World Vision's strong child-focused principles

and commitment to strengthening community resilience. To date, over 2,000 young offenders and their families have benefited from the work undertaken by World Vision.

THESES ARE SOME OF THE IMPORTANT INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN AS PART OF THE PROJECT

Equipping and informing a professional juvenile justice community

In order to establish the foundations of a professional juvenile justice community the following actions were taken:

- A criminal defence team on juvenile justice was formed within the Mongolian Bar Association.

- World Vision Mongolia became a founding member of an NGO Juvenile Justice Group and the Parliamentary Child Advocacy Commission.
- Capacities of police, lawyers and judges were developed and special proceedings for juveniles, such as mediation and child-friendly rooms in court and police detention, were proposed.
- World Vision Mongolia took the lead in compiling a compendium of juvenile justice legislation.

Creating community awareness through media coverage

Media outlets highlighted child rights and cases of children in conflict with the law, producing a series of articles and programs on juvenile justice. Regular radio talk shows were used to reach out to nomadic herders and rural communities. This media approach resulted in widespread public interest. A high profile case on the release of a convicted girl became a symbol for unjust criminal law.

Establishing a Ger camp as an alternative to pre-trial detention

In collaboration with other organisations World Vision helped establish a Ger camp (traditional Mongolian housing) as an alternative to juvenile pre-trial detention. The camp provided more conducive living conditions and offered services such as free legal aid, vocational training, informal education and training in traditional Mongolian life-skills in order to facilitate reintegration of children into society. It is anticipated that this pioneer effort will be institutionalised.

Promoting prevention and reintegration

The project aimed to help children in conflict with the law to reform behaviours and actions that led to their criminal offences. Vocational and life-skills training, sporting and leisure activities, and counselling were provided to strengthen resilience in young offenders and help them overcome difficulties in their family situations. World Vision Mongolia sought to find and engage parents, which has proven to be very successful in generating awareness on the vulnerability of their children and reducing the incidences of re-offending.

MAKING PROGRESS IN DIFFICULT TERRAIN

The project team faced many obstacles in taking these initiatives. A popular belief in Mongolian society is that harsh punishment prevents crime. This mindset also pervades the Mongolian legal fraternity. The project needed to challenge the underlying philosophy and mindset of Mongolia's legal profession, which has proved particularly difficult when advocating for amendments to laws. The innovative Ger camp intervention,

with its rehabilitation and reintegration approach, struggled to gain acceptance amidst this traditional punitive mindset.

Some strategies, such as the creation of a coalition between government and NGOs, had mixed results. On the one hand, the coalition provided a forum to learn about international efforts on juvenile justice and consider how these could apply to the Mongolian context. The coalition was initially driven by individuals who were committed and able to conceptualise a community-driven strategy to network and campaign for law reform. However, the coalition proved ineffectual and folded after a year due to personnel changes in coalition membership and government partners.

Coalition in the non-government sector also had mixed results. There were initially only two organisations active in juvenile justice in Mongolia that had an advocacy or legal approach. The level of cooperation between these organisations varied, from harmonious (eg. on training) to difficult (eg. law reform). The groups' divergent approaches to legal reform were a point of tension. One sought to take a far less "radical" approach and showed little interest in changing strategy. In essence the question was about which group would set the pace; one didn't want to follow and the other didn't want to stand still.

Although legal representation in trial is mandatory under Mongolian law, funds provided by the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs for legal aid representation are too low, resulting in misrepresentation or no representation for alleged juvenile offenders. To fill this gap, World Vision Mongolia hired lawyers to represent juvenile offenders. Ultimately, this is not a sustainable solution. Rather, more effort needs to be put into advocating for increased government budget allocation for legal aid. This continues to be a struggle especially since the government recently terminated its contributions to the legal aid fund.

While substantial progress has been made, there are few mechanisms to monitor compliance on the ground. The project successfully influenced a recent legal amendment resulting in shorter pre-trial detention periods for juveniles. But a May 2008 survey revealed the number of children who were detained before trial for less severe charges increased from 38 percent in 2007 to 52 percent in 2008 and the chances of them being detained for longer than the permitted duration is high. Additionally, detaining children for more than 72 hours after arrest is still common, and the existence and use of the project's child friendly interrogation rooms have no influence on the way interrogations are conducted.

SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES

Having traversed this difficult journey, the project is now in a position to celebrate several tangible and highly significant outcomes including:

► SNAP-SHOT:

ARIUNTSETSEG

Ariuntsetseg grew up in a provincial capital and lived with her parents, husband, and five siblings. Her brother, a watchman, was the only breadwinner bringing home US\$34 per month. When she was 16, Ariuntsetseg stole some cosmetics, worth less than US\$5. She received a prison sentence for this deed that was suspended. When she committed petty theft a year later, she was convicted and spent a year in prison.

Ariuntsetseg became pregnant. Without money and with little chance to find a job, she wanted to receive the child allowance of US\$2.50 per month. In order to get an ID card to qualify for the allowance, she saw no other way than stealing once again. She was caught soon afterwards and the court sentenced her to five days more than the mandatory minimum sentence. The decision was appealed but upheld by the court in the same month in which she gave birth to her daughter.

For the first year, her baby daughter was with her in prison. Since a third theft was considered a very severe crime, Ariuntsetseg had no chance for parole until she had served eight years and four days.

The Juvenile Justice Project decided to pursue her release from prison. They compiled a file and secured facts but no legal action was possible, as the deadline for appeals had passed.

A workshop for journalists on the background and problems associated with Mongolian criminal law was then arranged, using Ariuntsetseg's case as an example. World Vision Mongolia also offered an award for the best media reports on child rights and children at risk.

The project facilitated the chance for several journalists to interview Ariuntsetseg in prison. As a result, a number of stories about her and the shortfalls of Mongolian criminal law were published in major Mongolian newspapers. Her case was presented on national TV and radio shows with hosts calling for law reform. It was also published on a website and project staff spoke at legal seminars and conferences.

The next step was to file a plea for pardon to the Mongolian President. Finally on 3 April 2007, Ariuntsetseg was pardoned by decree of the President of Mongolia and released on the same day.

► PROGRAM DETAILS

Development context

Mongolia is a landlocked country between the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. With a population of 2.4 million, it is sparsely populated with a density of only 1.5 persons per square kilometre. The collapse of the Soviet Union left this former satellite nation in crisis. As massive agricultural subsidies and industrial leadership were withdrawn, thousands of families became trapped in a cycle of unemployment, poverty, poor health and low self-esteem. Over a third of the population remains poor, living on less than US\$0.68 per day and the country remains aid dependent, with a narrow and vulnerable economic base. Mongolia's extreme climate can make things even more difficult for people, with temperatures that range from minus 50 degrees Celsius in winter to 40 degrees Celsius in summer.

Programming context

World Vision started working in Mongolia in 1991, when the organisation provided a container of medical supplies to help clinics and hospitals that were facing a serious shortage of drugs and medicines. For the first three years, World Vision focussed on short-term health and child development projects in Ulaanbaatar and Bulgan. Emergency relief work began following severe snowstorms in 1993. In May 1995, World Vision Mongolia opened an office in the capital, Ulaanbaatar. Its strategic direction focuses on child and family wellbeing, economic resilience, healthy living, environmental degradation, transforming engagements, emergency relief and advocacy.

Project start date:

1 October 2004

Project end date:

30 September 2008

Funding Source:

Bounceback (Child Sponsorship)

Total funds remitted from Australia for FY 2008:

A\$108,690

Total funds remitted overseas:

A\$333,659

- A presidential pardon for all imprisoned children under an Amnesty Act drafted by the project team. This was only the second amnesty granted in Mongolia since 1990.
- The release of Ariuntsetseg, a 19-year-old single mother who was sentenced to 10 years prison for petty theft. [see Snap-shot]
- Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code limiting the total time juveniles may be held in detention for severe crimes to eight months and for less severe crimes to two months.
- The signing of a memorandum of understanding overseeing the operation of the Ger camp between World Vision Mongolia, police, the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Justice and the National Authority for Children.
- A dramatic reduction in violence in Gants Khudag Pre-trial Detention Centre.
- An agreement between UNICEF and the National Authority for Children to establish a website to monitor the CRC and report on juvenile justice issues in Mongolia.
- A successful reintegration program offering vocational and life-skills training has resulted in most juveniles securing meaningful livelihoods.
- Over 120 juveniles have been provided with defence lawyers in court and free legal assistance.
- The media is now generating increased coverage of juvenile justice and the shortcomings of the criminal justice system.

FORGING AHEAD

In Mongolia, crime rates are likely to increase as the gap between the rich and poor widens. The insufficient provision of social services and lack of livelihood security for the poor pose a significant threat to the future of young people in Mongolia. This trend will be exacerbated by the sudden rise in food and fuel prices. Threats to the nation's fragile democracy appear likely following recent political riots in the capital, Ulaanbaatar: Mongolia is a country of extreme vulnerability and one that World Vision Australia will be watching closely to consider how best to respond in an increasingly challenging development context.

Through this project and other related initiatives, World Vision Mongolia will continue to strive for a reduction in the number of children imprisoned and the time young offenders spend incarcerated. While there are no easy solutions to reforming the juvenile justice legal framework, it is clear from this intervention that a multi-faceted flexible approach is the key to creating sustained change.

Another key ingredient is a strong relationship with the government. In an emerging democracy like Mongolia, there is a window of opportunity to influence social development. Although the government is willing to accept advice and funds from international NGOs, in principle, the Mongolian Government should finance its own justice sector.

Success in the area of juvenile justice advocacy has encouraged World Vision Mongolia to move into other areas of advocacy. It is likely that there will be a move into other areas of child rights, but there is recognition that again this will be a long, slow process. ■



Lined up for the prison roll call.

Targeting the poorest of the poor

Results from a Cambodia study

► SUZI CHINNERY / ANTHEA DALLIMORE

Microfinance approaches have evolved considerably since the 1970s when they first received attention as tools to boost entrepreneurial activity and income generation in poor communities. The favourable returns from microcredit have since attracted the commercial banking sector and as a result, microfinance institutions (MFIs) currently operate in a highly competitive environment. In fact, in some countries MFIs are regulated institutions, expected to offer a range of innovative products including credit, savings, insurance and training. This transformation of a uni-dimensional approach to providing credit, to a multi-faceted one involving building complex financial systems, is creating new pressures and challenges for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) involved in microfinance.

Most importantly, in the current microfinance environment there is a tension between maintaining a sustainable financial institution and reaching the poorest of the poor. MFIs operating within a poverty reduction and social inclusion framework can struggle to balance aims of reaching the poorest entrepreneurs with demands for profit and growth. For World Vision this has prompted critical analysis of key microfinance initiatives to ensure that they are in line with the organisation's overall vision and mission.

VISIONFUND – HISTORY AND GOALS

World Vision Cambodia commenced credit activities with the rural poor through its Area Development Programs (ADPs) during the 1990s. In 2002, the Royal Government of Cambodia passed a law¹ mandating NGOs with large-scale credit projects to create subsidiary companies for microfinance. In response, World Vision Cambodia set up VisionFund Cambodia (VFC) as a separate commercial entity. In 2004, VFC obtained a formal banking licence from the National Bank of Cambodia and in 2005 separated from World Vision to become a limited liability microfinance institution.

At present, VFC works in partnership with World Vision, Plan International Cambodia, International Labour Organisation Cambodia and Khmer HIV/AIDS NGO Alliance. In 2007,

VFC provided loans to over 54,000 clients with a loan portfolio size of US\$11 million and a growth rate for new clients of 53 percent. VFC aims to help the poorest families in Cambodia and particularly targets women (84 percent of clients in 2007) and people affected by HIV and AIDS. VFC has quickly become sustainable, with a financial self-sufficiency of 113 percent² reported in 2007. It has a very low number of clients who are in arrears or at risk of defaulting, at less than one percent.

POVERTY CONTEXT

Cambodia has one of Asia's highest percentages of people living on less than US\$1 per day (approximately 35 percent), with higher percentages only found in India and Bangladesh. Pervasive poverty is accompanied by substantial income inequality. There is a large disparity between urban and rural areas, with urban poverty at around 90 percent.

It is estimated that 70 percent of Cambodians have no access to formal or semi-formal sources of credit. As a result, most people rely on informal credit from money lenders who charge interest rates that are typically four or five times higher than microfinance institutions. VisionFund Cambodia is responding to these issues by:

- providing loans with reasonable interest rates;
- simple repayment systems; and
- collateral free terms.

THREE LOAN METHODOLOGIES ARE UTILISED:

- **Community banks** provide small loans of US\$20–\$250 to individual members of groups of four or more people living in poor villages.
- **Solidarity groups** provide larger loans of US\$125–\$1,000 to individuals in groups who possess some equity.
- **Individual loans** are provided to small- and medium-size enterprises (including for housing for the poor). These loans range from US\$250–\$5,000.

In 2003, VisionFund Cambodia was established out of the microfinance program of World Vision Cambodia. VisionFund Cambodia is an independent, limited liability microfinance institution operating with the objective of providing loans to poor communities. Over the past four years, VisionFund has achieved financial self-sufficiency and has a very low number of clients who are in arrears or at risk of defaulting. Achieving financial self-sufficiency is one of the critical milestones in the development of a sustainable microfinance institution. Once this is on track, World Vision Australia seeks to see development of social performance which includes success in poverty alleviation. A recent analysis of VisionFund's performance has identified opportunities for improvement in the approach used to target the poorest members of the community. This analysis provides numerous lessons for microfinance institutions and non-governmental organisations involved in the microfinance sector.

¹ Prakas B 7-02-49

² This shows profitability of the MFI within an unsubsidised environment. It shows the ability of the MFI to be fully sustainable in the long run by covering all financial and operation costs while also maintaining the value of capital against inflation and borrowing funds at market interest rates.

► SNAP-SHOT:

A VFC SUCCESS STORY

Heang Han and her children live in a village in Kampong Thom Province. She was just 33 years old and pregnant when her husband committed suicide, leaving her with three pre-schoolers. With her first loan from VisionFund Cambodia, Heang Han bought one pig and a bike to help her get to the market. With hard work and effort, Heang Han was able to increase her income by selling groceries outside her home and buying more pigs. With the income from her business, she was able to put a proper roof on her home. Since then she has planted cashew trees, expanded her grocery business and has just finished building a new home for her children. Her success is an inspiration to the people in her community. Her four children are now teenagers and they are in school, Heang Han says happily, "Pig raising has really helped my family. We have more money for food and my children can go to school. VisionFund has helped my family and also our village."

ASSESSING INFLUENCE ON POVERTY

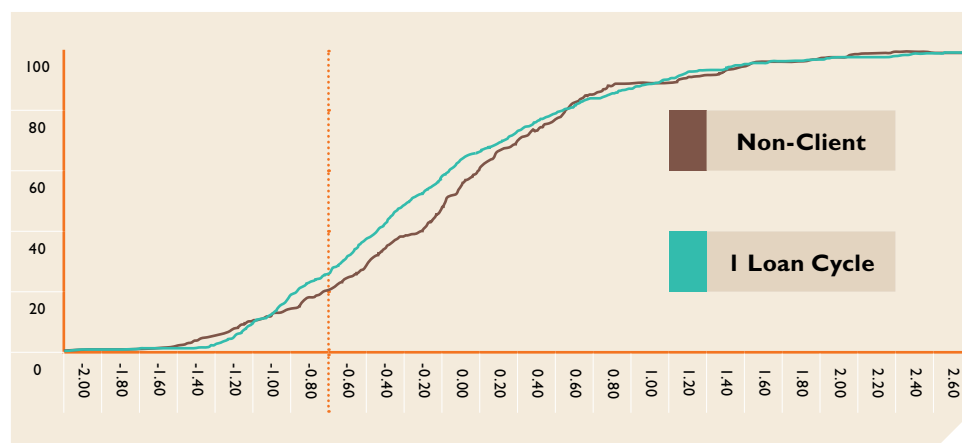
Late in 2007, World Vision Australia carried out an assessment of the performance of VFC's Battambang branch, which has received the largest investment from World Vision Australia. In the 1998 population census and poverty line rankings, Battambang ranked 11th out of the 24 provinces in Cambodia. The World Vision Australia study had two components: a quantitative Poverty Assessment and a qualitative Poverty Audit. Both components followed the guidelines and methodology of the respected industry group Consultative Group to Assist the Poor.

The Poverty Assessment did two main things. First, it looked at how well VisionFund targeted poor clients. This was done using a household level analysis, covering a sample of over 500 households across 60 villages and 10 districts. As a result, comparative "poverty scores" for new clients and non-clients were developed, and these provided

- families can afford to send children to kindergarten and school, and in some cases bicycles have been purchased for travel to school;
- clearing trees for planting crops has reduced the prevalence of mosquitoes and mosquito-related diseases;
- fresh vegetables, fish and local foods can be purchased or are now available from household rice fields and vegetable gardens;
- quality of life has improved because clients can now purchase household items, better food and electricity, and they are experiencing increased status in their village.

THE TARGETING CHALLENGE

The assessment found that there is room for improvement in VFC's targeting. In a context where VisionFund was targeting the poorest entrepreneurs, it would be expected that new clients were poorer than the average sample of non-clients. The graph below demonstrates however that the poverty score of new clients



an indication of the success of VFC in targeting poorer segments of the population. The assumption was that we should be able to see a distinction between new clients and non-clients, with new clients having a lower poverty score than non-clients.

The second part of the study was a qualitative Poverty Audit, conducted through focus group discussion with clients and VFC staff and leadership. The audit distinguished organisational practice from claims that the focus of activities was pro-poor.

POSITIVE IMPACTS

The study revealed that independent microfinance can produce benefits. Clients reported that:

- paying less interest reduced expenses and enabled greater profits and expansion of capital, such as livestock numbers;

compared to the general population is almost identical. This means that the targeting could be improved to increase the outreach to poorer segments of the population. But it also indicates that VFC's targeting is not biased towards the wealthier portion of the population, which is often a much easier group to reach.

Targeting can be affected by a range of organisational factors. One of these is the way in which VFC measures its client poverty levels and outreach. Clients are ranked according to a VisionFund specific Family Information Sheet (FISH) which provides a basic scoring of livelihood activities and assets, and then categorises clients as poorest, poor, not so poor and non-poor. Comparison of data from this source to data from the Poverty Assessment appeared to indicate that the FISH scoring methodology had a bias towards scoring households as "poor" when they actually were not.

A further problem with the FISH score is that these categories are not used for measuring VFC's outreach to the poorest segments of the population. Instead, it uses the number of community bank clients as a proxy indicator of outreach to the poor. Although this instrument is aimed at the poorest members of the community, the extent to which it does improve ability to reach the poorest households is uncertain. More sensitive targets and tools could be implemented by VFC in order to improve its outreach to the poorest entrepreneurs. This could include addressing the question of sustainability more broadly so that staff are encouraged to interpret information not just in financial terms, but in terms of a model for social development.

INTO THE FUTURE

Overall, this experience has raised a series of important questions for World Vision around the role of independent, sustainable MFIs. In particular, we are looking to implement models and approaches that:

- **Utilise comparable poverty measures.** VFC divides clients into four groups on the basis of their own criteria. This is not an uncommon scenario among microfinance institutes and reflects responsiveness to local contexts. However, the lack of industry-defined client groups makes comparisons between microfinance institutions or against national poverty data difficult. The current FISH scoring methodology requires "recalibration" to remove its current biases.
- **Develop strategic approaches to design, monitoring and evaluation.** In VisionFund's case, the overall strategic

objective of targeting the poorest of poor may have varying importance at different points in the course of implementation. While independently functioning microfinance institutions are the trend for the future, collaborating NGOs have a role to play in ensure initiatives are designed, monitored and evaluated from a poverty perspective.

- **Balance risk taking with growth.** In practice, this means that MFIs need to calculate the percentage of high-risk clients that they can afford to support while still balancing profit and loss ratios. A strategic and calculated approach is preferable to simply turning away high-risk clients. Such a balance can be achieved because access to the majority of VFC's products is only granted to the members of microfinance groups. This has proved to be a particularly successful mode of operation, as group peer pressure acts to reduce risk.
 - **Evolve appropriate staff incentive structures.** In the VisionFund case, wage penalties were applied to staff if the clients defaulted. This was somewhat balanced with staff incentives for maintaining clients in the group methodology discussed above. But penalties of this nature may provide a disincentive to seek out and engage extremely poor households.
- MFIs exist to provide financial services for the poor. The tension is to ensure outreach to the poorest entrepreneurs with a reasonable balance of products, while still ensuring financial sustainability. The challenge for VFC is to use this assessment report to ensure it continues to focus on the poorest entrepreneurs as the institution develops. ■

► PROGRAM DETAILS

World Vision Australia has been a donor to micro enterprise development and VFC activities in Cambodia since 2000. The total support provided over this time is estimated at US\$2.2 million, half of which consists of AusAID funding. Since its establishment as a separate entity in 2005, Vision Fund Cambodia has been allocated at least US\$1,277,223 by World Vision Australia.

Target population:

VisionFund Cambodia is now serving nearly 55,000 clients with loans to the value of US\$11,564,267



CONTRIBUTORS' BIOGRAPHIES



Contributors' biographies

Section 1:

Community engagement and resilience

THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN FOR RURAL POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN CHINA

The Gansu Sustainable Livelihoods Project

Dennis Ingemann was Team Leader for the Gansu Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project and worked as a Principal Consultant for World Vision Australia's Consulting Services Unit from 2003. Dennis is now undertaking PhD research in self help housing and also lectures at RMIT University. He has worked on international development projects for NZAID, AusAID, ADB, World Bank and UNDP in the Asia Pacific region, Africa, the Middle East and South America.

FOOD SECURITY AND MALNUTRITION IN KENYA

Rethinking the role of community-based organisations

Dr Francois Tsafack is a Quality Advisor in World Vision Australia's Program Effectiveness Unit. He has been with World Vision since February 2006. Francois has a Doctorate in Public Health and is a member of the Australasian Evaluation Society. His professional interests include human ecosystems modelling, anthropology and community development, and health impact assessment.

Anueja Gopalakrishnan is the Public Health Analyst in World Vision Australia's Policy and Programs Integration Team. Anueja joined World Vision's Public Policy Team in 2006, moving into the Government Relations Team prior to joining the Integration Team in April 2008. She has a Masters in Public Health, a Masters in International Law, and an Honours Degree in Biomedical Science.

This article could not have been written without the contribution of Rachel Coghlan, Special Projects Advisor to the Deputy CEO and Director of Strategy of World Vision Australia.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: A SOLID FOUNDATION

Girl Child Reading and Rescue Project

Dr John Donnelly is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and China. He joined World Vision in 2001. Prior to this he worked with Caritas in PNG on the 1998 tsunami rehabilitation program. He has qualifications and experience in agricultural science and education. He recently completed his PhD at RMIT in the area of gender and development.

POST-CONFLICT RECOVERY: MAXIMISING RETURNEE KNOWLEDGE

Yambio Rice Revitalisation Project – Southern Sudan

Alison Schafer is a World Vision Australia Country Program Coordinator with the Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs Team. Her current portfolio focuses on countries in the Horn of Africa region, including Sudan. Alison's other interests are in the psychosocial sector and she is currently completing a PhD in Clinical Psychology at Swinburne University, focusing on cross-cultural issues in developing countries.

This article could not have been written without the contribution of the following people:

Paul Odhiambo, Area Regional Manager, Western Equatoria, World Vision South Sudan;
Louis Bagare, Jackson Kamari, Charles Mboringba, Community Development Workers,
Western Equatoria, World Vision South Sudan.





TURNING SPONSORSHIP ACTIVITY INTO DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Use of 'Most Significant Change' in child sponsorship programs

Brett Pierce is the Senior Sponsorship Programming Specialist with World Vision International. He has worked with World Vision for more than 15 years in various roles. His educational background is in vocational education, training and communications and he is currently completing a Masters in International Community Development.

Section 2: Partnering

MAKING RESEARCH WORK

Bridging the gap between communities and academic research in the developing world

PARTNERS AGAINST TRAFFICKING

From people to policy

Jonathan Treagust worked as World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Thailand, PNG and DPRK. Joining World Vision in 2004, he covered country specific projects in Myanmar, Thailand and PNG. Jonathan's background includes rural resource management and food security work. With World Vision he also oversaw ACIAR-funded projects and supported regional trafficking work.

HARNESSING MULTI-AGENCY COLLABORATION FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

Putting sanitation on the aid agenda

John McKenzie is World Vision Australia's Learning Coordinator within the Policy and Programs Group. He joined World Vision in 2000. Prior to this he worked with a number of other NGOs in a variety of roles. He has worked in Cambodia, India, Haiti and Cuba. John has an enduring interest in the design of productive landscapes for sustainable livelihoods.

Catherine Boomer is World Vision Australia's Head of Government Relations, based in Canberra. She is a member of ACFID's Advocacy and Public Policy Committee and Make Poverty History's Policy and Lobbying Committee. Prior to joining World Vision, Catherine worked in a range of strategic policy and communications roles within AusAID following a career in media, politics and public affairs.

This article could not have been written without input from:

Peter Dwan, Head of International Programs, WaterAid Australia; Grant Hill, National Campaigns Coordinator, Oxfam Australia, formerly in the Advocacy and Public Influence Team at World Vision Australia; and Dr Juliet Willets, Research Director, Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney.

A STITCH IN TIME CHANGES LIVES

Valuing corporate partnerships

Victoria Thom joined World Vision Australia in early 2008 as Manager of the Goods and Services in Kind team following a career in business consulting in Australia, the

UK and Europe. Her experience is in strategic planning, facilitation and collaborative innovation within the corporate, government and health sectors. Victoria and her team partner with organisations to build mutually beneficial relationships that support poverty alleviation.

This article could not have been written without input from: Jules Frost, Head of Innovative Partnerships, World Vision Australia; and Steve Carey, Head of Public Affairs, Spotlight Pty Ltd.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT FOR CHILEAN WOMEN

Learning from CECADEM

Sem Mabuwa joined World Vision Australia in 2003 and is a Human Rights Research Associate in the Policy and Programs Integration Team. Born in Zimbabwe, she has firsthand experience of lack of voice and poverty for marginalised communities in developing countries. She has degrees in International Development and Applied Anthropology.

Natalie Armstrong is a Country Program Coordinator for Guatemala and Honduras and previously for Chile. She joined World Vision Australia in 2005. Prior to this Natalie managed and supported community development and emergency response programs with Oxfam Australia and the Australian Red Cross. She has lived and worked in Guatemala for five-and-a-half years.

Patricia Ruiz Delga has been the Director of CECADEM in Chile for seven years. She has a Degree in Aquaculture Management and has 13 years experience in social work, with a particular interest in gender equality and the social development of women. She previously worked as an independent Arts and Crafts consultant and has a Diploma in Gender Studies.

Section 3:

New domains for international NGO interventions

THE MASAKA-RAKAI PSYCHOSOCIAL PROJECT

Treating depression in communities affected by HIV and AIDS

Thurza Sullivan is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Uganda. Joining World Vision in 2007, she has covered country specific projects in Uganda and Somalia. Prior to working with World Vision she worked with Australian Volunteers International managing technical assistance programs in Malawi, Zambia and Namibia. She is currently completing her Masters in International Development.

CARBON TRADING, COMMUNITY FORESTRY AND DEVELOPMENT

Potential challenges and the way forward in Ethiopia

Tony Rinaudo is World Vision Australia's Natural Resource Management Advisor. He joined World Vision in 1999 as a Program Officer for Kenya and Ethiopia. Prior to this he worked in Niger Republic on agricultural projects for 17 years where he introduced agro-forestry farming systems. He has qualifications and experience in agricultural science and has contributed to and co-authored articles in scientific journals and books.

Paul Dettmann is World Vision Australia's Carbon Market Specialist. Paul has worked with World Vision Australia and World Vision International in a consultancy capacity since 2004, and has been on staff since February 2008. Paul has a Masters in Applied Science and has worked in the climate change field since 2001.





Assefa Tofu is World Vision Ethiopia's Environment Programs Coordinator. He joined World Vision in 2005. Prior to this he worked for the Ethiopian Government's Institute of Agricultural Research as Director and Researcher and for various government departments. He has published articles in books and scientific journals and has qualifications and experience in natural resource management and agricultural sciences.

This article could not have been written without input from Tamara Thomas and Rebecca Lees from World Vision Australia.

HEALING, PEACE-BUILDING AND RECONCILIATION IN RWANDA

Rebuilding resilience and social networks

Clare Seddon joined World Vision Australia in 2002 and is now Manager of the East and West Africa Team. Prior to joining World Vision, Clare worked in Kiribati for PALMS Australia. She is passionate about gender equality and the situation of women and girls. She holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Masters in International Development and is currently completing a Graduate Diploma in Gender Mainstreaming.

This article could not have been written without the input of the following people:

Josephine Munyeli, National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Specialist, World Vision Rwanda; and Joanne Langkamp, Program Assistant, World Vision Rwanda.

A NEW SYSTEM FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

Developing juvenile justice in Mongolia

Mariam Hii worked as World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Mongolia and Indonesia, having joined World Vision in 2006. Prior to this, Mariam worked with a reproductive health NGO in Malaysia, managing programs on women's empowerment and youth development. She has a passion for community development and a background in management and human resource development.

Ian Dawes is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for India. Joining World Vision in 2005, he has covered projects in Mongolia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. Prior to working with World Vision, Ian worked with Australian Volunteers International, managing technical assistance programs in Asia. Ian has qualifications in Asian Studies and information management and has a special interest in urban and child labour issues.

Catherine Johnston is Manager of World Vision Australia's Asia Team, having joined World Vision in 2003. Prior to this, Catherine worked as a Language Coordinator for a secondary school in Melbourne following five years working in the development sector in Indonesia. She has a Bachelor of Education and is completing a Masters in Development Studies.

This article relied heavily on input from World Vision Mongolia staff.

TARGETING THE POOREST OF THE POOR

Results from a Cambodia study

Suzi Chinnery is Country Program Coordinator in the Asia Team managing the Indonesia, Afghanistan and Pakistan portfolios. She joined World Vision Australia in 2006, and has a Bachelor of Business, a Masters in International Relations and is undertaking a Graduate Diploma in Human Rights Law. Suzi has previously worked in value chain analysis in Vietnam and microfinance in Afghanistan.

Anthea Dallimore is a Development Economist and has been with World Vision Australia since 2006. Prior to this she lived and worked in South Africa, Mozambique and the United Kingdom for eight years. She is currently completing her PhD at the London School of Economics where she is researching the impact of microfinance on poverty.

Credits

Copyright, 2008 World Vision Australia

All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced in any form, except for brief excerpts in reviews, without prior permission of the publisher.

Published December 2008 by World Vision Australia's Program Effectiveness Unit.

Edited and prepared by Andrew Newmarch and Melissa Cadwell

Specialist editorial services: Maya Cordeiro

Editorial Committee members:

Paul Ronalds – Deputy CEO and Director Strategy

Conny Lenneberg – Director of Policy and Programs

Melanie Gow – Head of Advocacy, Program Effectiveness and Learning

Kerin Ord – Head of International Programs

Martin Thiele – Commissioning Editor Digital Content

Andrew Newmarch – Effectiveness Advisor, Program Effectiveness

World Vision Australia

1 Vision Drive

Burwood East VIC 3151

Australia

Graphic design and layout: Adrian Soriano

Communications liaison: Ivy Lee

Proof reader: Margaret Spencer

Resource manager: Suzy Sainovski

Front cover photo: Courtesy of Brett Pierce





© 2008 World Vision Australia

ABN 28 004 778 081

ISBN 978-1-875-140-80-0

ISBN 978-1-875-140-81-7 (Electronic)

World Vision Australia is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice.

As a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct we are required to meet high standards of corporate governance, public accountability and financial management. For more information on the Code, visit the ACFID website on www.acfid.asn.au or email code@acfid.asn.au

© 2008 All material contained in this Annual Program Review is subject to copyright owned by or licensed to World Vision Australia. All rights reserved.

Re-Art meets the ISO 14001 environmental standard, is Eco Mark accredited and is sourced from a Forestry Stewardship Council Accredited Mill (FSC).



The FSC logo identifies products which contain wood from well managed forests in accordance with the rules of the Forest Stewardship Council.