World Vision

Responses to Poverty 2007

The Annual Program Review of World Vision Australia

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Foreword

For many years World Vision has excelled at highlighting success stories from the field to demonstrate change. But more recently we have started to embrace the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of how our programs work. And whether the solutions we support or implement to address poverty are delivering the best results for children and communities.

This publication, *Responses To Poverty,* our inaugural Annual Program Review, highlights the breadth and diversity of World Vision Australia's programming through 15 case studies. As you read through these studies, you will be both confronted and enlightened by the complexity and array of issues that unfold in our programs day-in, day-out. But you will also discover recurring themes and shared observations about simple truths.

Truths that tell us that real transformation involves stumbling, taking unexpected detours; that it requires imagination and generous thinking; that it involves listening, dialogue and debate; that it demands the constant testing, measuring and adjustment of theories and practice.

My hope is that this publication will serve as a window through which our work can be better understood. That it will enable you, the reader, to reflect and respond in light of your own knowledge and experiences. And while there is much here to celebrate in terms of positive outcomes and project milestones, there is also much to learn, particularly from the frustrations, the failures and the things that didn't go to plan.

If we are really serious about transformational outcomes, not just for the communities with whom we work, but for our supporters and friends as well, we need to keep asking questions and challenging assumptions about poverty at the very deepest level.

At World Vision, we believe that by pausing and taking a good, hard look at our work in the field, at the very least we can acknowledge the approaches and attitudes we need to discard. At the very best, we can identify conditions for innovation and unearth significant new understandings and opportunities.

I am confident that this Annual Program Review will make an important contribution to our ongoing process of discovery.

Tim Costello
Chief Executive Officer
World Vision Australia

Responses to Poverty
An introduction

In 2005, at the Make Poverty History rally in London, Nelson Mandela roused the crowd with this statement:

"Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings."

Many people in the World Vision Australia office include this quote as an email tag. It gets replicated and reinforced thousands of times a day as emails fly around the world.

It's a powerful statement. It reminds us that while extreme wealth and extreme poverty are entrenched in the world as we know it, it doesn't have to be this way. Like African slavery, like colonialism, like civil rights in America and apartheid in South Africa, we can do something about it.

However, our good intentions will not be enough. Effecting change, either in communities in the least developed countries or in the hearts and minds of people in the most developed countries, is not easy. From a policy perspective, it requires a complex mixture of economics, social insights and politics. From a practical perspective, it requires sophisticated development professionals from many disciplines working with empowered people who are all committed to the long, hard transformation journey.

The need for non government organisations (NGOs) to support and implement innovative programs with integrity is not new. What is new is a growing urgency for them to demonstrate their effectiveness in more tangible ways.

Advances in communication technology mean that ordinary Australians come face to face with extreme poverty in their living rooms, if not on their computer screens, often in real time. Thus, both awareness and understanding of the disparity in wealth between nations and

the vulnerability of those living in extreme poverty has never been more immediate than it is today.

In the recent *Island Nation or Global Citizen 2007 Report,* World Vision identified that more Australians than ever now believe they have a responsibility to do what they can to alleviate poverty. Combined with strong growth in national, corporate and individual wealth, Australians are increasingly able and willing to offer assistance to the poor, especially in the Asia Pacific region.

World Vision and other NGOs are recognised as having unique practical knowledge, active on-the-ground relationships, economies of scale and global networks. It is the NGO sector that most Australians turn to when states of emergency are announced. The public expects that we will play a critical role in facilitating this growing interest in, and commitment to, the alleviation of poverty.

However, this growth in desire to support poverty alleviation initiatives is being accompanied by rising expectations. Supporters are expecting that the programs they invest in will be effective. They expect that the agencies they entrust with their resources will be professional, accountable and will endeavour to provide the best possible return on

investment. Furthermore, they expect that this effectiveness, professionalism, accountability and return on investment can be demonstrated.

World Vision embraces these rising expectations. Through a range of publications, systems and tools that are currently being developed by World Vision's Policy and Programs Group, we are working to improve the effectiveness and quality of all our programs. We believe that part of the process of improving program effectiveness is to acknowledge, reflect upon and learn from our mistakes. It is all part of the same continuum.

In the spirit of improving our effectiveness, World Vision has decided to pull back the 'orange curtain' and provide an honest insight into the complex realities of our programming and advocacy activities. While it is never easy to admit your approaches or solutions aren't delivering the best possible outcomes, to not do so significantly increases the risk of repeating mistakes.

For this reason *Responses to Poverty,* our inaugural Annual Program Review, includes 15 case studies written by our program staff across the various teams. They are not 'best practice' examples of World Vision work – rather they are a mix of the good, and the not so great. But what they have in common is that they demonstrate experiences, learnings and insights that we feel are unique, useful and important to share. They are also presented in a way we hope others, who are as concerned with extreme poverty as we are, will find constructive and helpful.

Our hope is that by sharing this information we might encourage our colleagues, both within World Vision and the humanitarian and development sector more broadly, to find more, more effective and more sustainable solutions to poverty alleviation.

As you'll see when you start reading, very little in the development sector is clear cut, or straight forward. For this reason it has

been difficult to categorise or streamline the presentation of our results or learnings. But for the purposes of providing a general overview, it seems that the case studies have fallen into three rough, but clearly overlapping categories. These are:

1. Reflections on program effectiveness

These case studies consider the quality, impact and effectiveness of programs based on comprehensive evaluations. *Refocusing the sponsorship model – Pilahuin and Lamay, Food in crisis* and *The Machinga HIV and AIDS Project* are examples of these. And though the program outcomes bear very little resemblance to those intended in the beginning, *Defining success – Begasin Bugati* provides an insight into both development challenges, and the realities of working in Papua New Guinea.

2. Sectoral or multi-country interventions

As a child-focused agency, protection and child rights are critical issues for World Vision. *Closing the cycle to human trafficking and Child friendly responses* focus on the links between human rights, child rights in particular, and protection issues in quite complex, potentially volatile situations. The *Children of Romania* case study outlines a program's evolution based on 15 years of work with abandoned children in post-communist Romania. *Reconstructing responses* gives an intimate, insider's view on the program realities of constructing houses post-tsunami. Finally, *Fair trade, the Brazilian experience* – while not quite a rags-to-riches tale from Brazil – provides some key learnings on market access initiatives for poor South American producers.

3. Reviewing new approaches to our work

As you would expect, World Vision is constantly seeking new approaches to our work. *Health sector development in Aceh* reflects on the use of a 'facility' mechanism to increase our responsiveness to community health needs. *People power* and *Governance the Wetenngerr way* both review different ways that communities can take more control over government-provided services. *People power* considers the strengths and weaknesses of Community Based Performance Monitoring (CBPM) – a demand-side good governance tool World Vision Australia has been 'road testing' in Uganda, Brazil and India. *Governance the Wetenngerr way* examines a similar issue in Indigenous communities here in Australia.

Growing strong is a case study that explores how investing in a community's capacity to direct its own future can be a powerful force. The *Greening West Africa* case study outlines some of the challenges associated with introducing a new development approach to natural resource management in five West African countries. Finally, the *Why campaign?* case study reflects on World Vision's experience of the Make Poverty History campaign since it began in Australia in 2005. It chronicles how, by working together, ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary outcomes.

There is much to celebrate in the following case studies. However, as the case studies also demonstrate, there are many lessons for us to learn and incorporate into future planning and program design. I commend them to you.

Paul Ronalds
Director, Policy & Programs
World Vision Australia

Funding for projects – by funding stream
(Financial Year ending 2006)

Funding stream	('000)	Total funds ('000)	No of projects
Sponsorship		126,580	260
Government		9,659	158
AusAID	2,793		
ANCP	6,559		
Other	307		
Other private funding		79,586	260
Tsunami	49,083		
Emergency appeals	6,462		
Bounceback	5,802		
Multiplying Gift Appeal	3,798		
40 Hour famine	2,036		
Major donors	3,176		
Corporates	1,854		
Pledge programs	1,637		
Harvest Pack	1,296		
Catalogue	691		
Other	3,751		
Other institutional funding		13,301	
Multilateral cash	9,163		
Relief - bilaterals	2,483		
Gifts in Kind	1,506		
Development - bilaterals	149		
Total		**229,126**	**678**

Funding by region
(Financial Year ending 2006)

Region	Funds disbursed ('000)
Africa	113,127
Asia	97,666
Latin America/ Caribbean	24,173
Middle East/ Eastern Europe	65,088
Overseas sub-total	300,055
Australia	895
Total	**300,950**
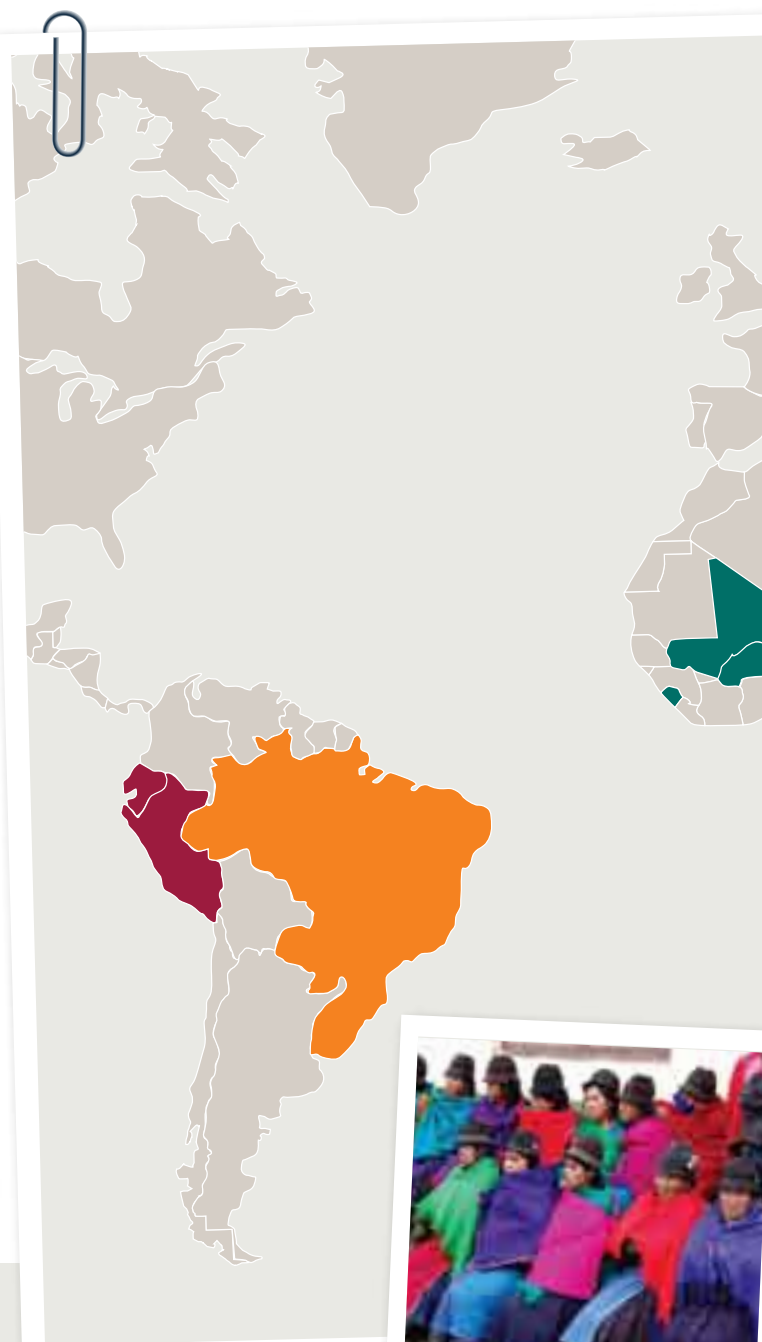
Section 1

Reflections on program effectivness

The Machinga HIV & AIDS Project 2003–2006

Community coalitions for combating HIV and AIDS in Malawi

Volunteer HIV testing, Machinga area.

Dr Paul Woods

In 2003, World Vision Australia launched a new project in the Machinga District of southern Malawi to address rapidly rising rates of HIV infection. This project used an extremely cost-effective, advocacy-based approach, and was on many levels enormously successful. It promoted voluntary testing, helped reduce stigma towards people living with HIV and AIDS, and it resulted in remarkably positive behavioural changes among religious and other opinion leaders and within the district more broadly.

But ironically, it was at evaluation stage that the real nature of the challenge became apparent. That is, underlying cultural practices or beliefs that influence sexual behaviour in the first place can be difficult to identify or address in the short term.

The Machinga District has an HIV prevalence rate of 16.4 percent, compared to the Malawi national rate of 14.4 percent. The district is thought to have a higher than average HIV prevalence rate because of the ready movement of people along the nearby Nacala Rail Corridor, a transport route from Malawi to the seaport of Nacala in Mozambique.

In terms of healthcare, Machinga District is served by a district hospital and three health centres offering primary healthcare. Hospital staff estimate that 70 percent of inpatients at the district hospital have AIDS-related illnesses. The district hospital started providing free access to anti-retroviral therapy (ART) in 2005, but communities who live up to 70 kilometres from the district hospital have difficulty accessing the vital drugs.

Project approach

At the time the project was designed, people with AIDS were generally referred to as chronically ill. Due to high social stigma, the community was unable or unwilling to accept the concept of people living with HIV and AIDS. Exacerbating the problem was the lack of access to voluntary testing, so people were also unable to confirm their status.

It is generally agreed that knowing one's own HIV status through HIV testing, followed by counselling and support, is a critical influencer in supporting behavioural change and reducing the likelihood of the virus being passed on.

Multiple concurrent sexual relationships by men and women with low condom use is one of the key drivers of the HIV epidemic in southern Africa and sexual intercourse is responsible for 85 percent of HIV infections in Malawi. However, lessons learned from previous HIV and AIDS projects suggested that achieving significant personal and voluntary behavioural change relies on a strong enabling environment, as well as good awareness. It also requires an understanding of the role of cultural beliefs and norms that strongly influence sexual practice.

Improving access to care and support is also seen as a way of breaking down social exclusion and provides an incentive for people affected by HIV to seek assistance. Other activities, such as training youth in positive living, that build awareness and self-determination to delay sexual debut and boost knowledge of HIV prevention measures, are also important.

The Machinga HIV and AIDS Project aimed to bring about sexual behaviour change that would contribute to a reduction in the spread of HIV and AIDS and minimise its impact on individuals, families and communities. The project had three components, summarised below:

- *Advocacy and networking* – working with traditional leaders and opinion leaders, nurturing partnerships between district government and community organisations and ensuring more condoms were available;

- *Community education* – improving understanding about the way the virus is transmitted, training health workers in HIV education campaigns and enabling community leaders to visit other successful projects in other districts, and;

- *Institutional strengthening* – strengthening community-based committees and organisations, strengthening government health services and supporting home-based care committees.

Outcomes 2003 – 2006

A major strength in the project's approach was the use of advocacy and networking between community, community-based organisations, World Vision Malawi and district level government agencies. Through these networks, outcomes were achieved that went far beyond what could be achieved using a direct service provision approach for what had been, in truth, a reasonably modest investment by World Vision.

The Machinga District has a population split of roughly 50/50 - Muslim/Christian. As part of this project, both Muslim and Christian leaders were invited to reflect together on their stances towards HIV and the epidemic and then reflect on the values and behaviours expounded in their scriptures. Following this, both sets of leaders requested, and were provided with, training on basic facts. They acknowledged that their stance on AIDS to date had been misleading.

Today, religious leaders have a faith-based approach to the disease, have created their own manual, and are at the forefront of the HIV and AIDS response. Following the scripture reflections, they committed to joining the community in the fight against AIDS and agreed to work together in a multi-faith coalition to strengthen existing secular committees. They also provide guidance to youth clubs and community activities.

The project's initial support for government came through using existing structures such as the District AIDS Coordinating Committees (DACC). These were supported through sponsorship of joint meetings to discuss challenges, lessons learnt and gaps in HIV and AIDS responses. Having supported the existing structure, the project was well positioned

MALAWI

**Snap-shot:
Machinga District
of Malawi**

Machinga District has a population of 366,000 people and it shares a border with Mozambique. The Shire River, which is the only outlet of Lake Malawi, is the district's main river. Sixty percent of the community is involved in subsistence farming of crops like tobacco, rice, groundnuts, cassava, maize, sorghum and millet, while fishing in the lakes is an important source of income for some households. The literacy level in the district is estimated at 33.5 percent for females and 43 percent for males. The low socio-economic status of women and girls and recurring food shortages makes them vulnerable to men who offer rewards in the form of money for sexual favours.

Reflections on program effectiveness

Above: Malawian AIDS patient.

Main image: HIV and AIDS awareness gathering of Christian and Muslim women.

Polaroid: Community AIDS Coordinating Committee meeting, Machinga District.

to support a change in government policy that revolved around community-based organisations (CBOs) rather than committees. The project thus facilitated the establishment of several CBOs, the consequence of which was two-fold: increased community participation and self-reliance; and increased access to treatment, care and support.

The project also cultivated a growing willingness by some HIV-positive community members to disclose their status and engage in increasingly open discussions on previously taboo subjects such as sex and sexuality and cultural practices. This is an indicator of lessening stigma around HIV in the community. The actions of the group of people who openly declared their HIV-positive status greatly challenged public perceptions of HIV-positive people. These people became role models for living positively with HIV. This change was a revelation for the community as a whole and the project was able to assist this pioneering group to access ART at the district hospital.

Both existing formal and informal structures were also bolstered by the project. Seven CBOs received funding from government bodies to provide HIV care and support services to the community in an extremely cost effective way. The strengthening of relationships with the DACC members has, in turn, helped improve the delivery standards of HIV-related services, such as HIV testing, free condom supply and access to treatment for people living with HIV.

The project's impact has been felt both at Nayuchi community and Machinga District level, and also nationally, through the sharing of its impact stories through national radio and Malawi National Television. It was also identified as a model project by the National AIDS Commission (NAC) for its role in developing user-friendly community-based HIV and AIDS prevention structures.

Reflections and learnings 2003 – 2006

Increased awareness and openness around HIV and AIDS created strong demand for testing services, condoms, counselling, knowledge of HIV treatment options, anti-retroviral treatments and information about living positively with HIV. While clearly a successful exercise in community empowerment, the skyrocketing demand created by the project was often in excess of what the government was able to meet at the time and caused significant disillusionment within the community.

Although the proportion of the community who had undertaken voluntary testing went from less than 5 percent before the project to 33 percent by project end, there was still unfulfilled demand for the service. A lesson learnt from this project is that development agencies should anticipate and plan for potential increases in demand that their projects might create, and build partnerships with service delivery organisations at an early stage to meet rising demands.

Achieving significant 'buy-in' for HIV and AIDS advocacy from traditional and religious leaders is necessary for behavioural change. This has been particularly important in the area of HIV testing where the involvement of community leaders and youth clubs in mobilising the community to undertake HIV tests has been immeasurable. Chiefs and youth club leaders have been persuaded to lead by example, encouraging others to go for testing when mobile testing clinics have come to their area. This has not only encouraged others to attend testing but has also gone a long way to underpin social support and counselling approaches advocated by the project.

Traditional leaders (village heads and chiefs) are now actively involved in advocating for behavioural change to reduce the risk of HIV transmission in the community and devising community-based action plans. However, the reality is

that we are unlikely to see the impact of this through reduced new infection rates for a number of years.

On the other hand, the evaluation revealed that some cultural practices which lie at the heart of HIV vulnerability are deeply rooted. Through interviews and consultations it was clear that the level of personal behavioural change one would hope to see, especially in sexual practices, had been disappointing in light of the improved enabling environment put in place by the project. The research revealed that incest, child rape, witchcraft-related sexual exploitation, sex for favours, and mothers turning a blind eye to their daughters' sexual exploitation still continue, and continue to be tolerated to a certain extent in the community.

Additionally, some key groups were hard to reach and the project did not meaningfully engage with them. Fishermen were one such group. Focus groups with fishermen during the final evaluation were extremely insightful and clearly indicated a refusal by these men to acknowledge that they have any responsibility for HIV prevention. What this confirms is that sexual behaviour is indeed strongly determined by cultural norms and beliefs which are not amenable to change in the short term; and that

particular social and occupational groups may have strong social norms specific to their own peer group.

Moving forward

The Machinga HIV and AIDS Project suggests that, in order to be effective, projects should take a broad and long-term approach. Creating or promoting an enabling environment for behavioural change that involves education, addressing stigma, and advocacy for prevention, care and treatment is also crucial. It's clear that governments need to, and often need assistance to, improve the quality of delivery of HIV-related services. In the context of Malawi, the absence of a legal framework aimed at mitigating HIV and AIDS and protecting girls and women from sexual exploitation needs to be addressed with some urgency.

The Machinga HIV and AIDS Project also demonstrates that when esteem, confidence and ownership of the activities are developed within the community, community-led approaches to HIV and AIDS activities can be extremely effective in reducing stigma, and increasing proactive community management of HIV and AIDS prevention and support services.

Snap-shot:
HIV and AIDS in Africa

HIV and AIDS is a profound human catastrophe that eclipses all previous known human epidemics. More than 20 million people around the world have died from AIDS and another 41 million are living with HIV. There is no prophylaxis and no cure for AIDS. With infection rates still rising, the world is facing a catastrophic increase in illness and death that could undermine economic and social development for years to come.

HIV can be transmitted through unprotected sexual intercourse with an infected partner, from an infected mother to her baby in utero, during birth, through breast milk or from infected blood shared through a transfusion or intravenous drug use. However, in most parts of Africa the most prevalent source of new infections in the community is through unprotected heterosexual intercourse.

Therefore, a major focus for HIV-prevention strategies in countries like Malawi is to work with communities to bring down the risk of transmission of HIV through personal and voluntary sexual behavioural change. Changes in sexual behaviour patterns known to have been effective in halting the spread of HIV and AIDS in Africa include: increasing the age of sexual debut, especially for girls; reducing the number of concurrent sexual partners; increasing the use of condoms; and minimising skin excisions during traditional initiation ceremonies and circumcision.

Reflections on program effectiveness

Program Details

Project partners:
World Vision Australia, World Vision Malawi, various local NGOs, CBOs, health services and government agencies.

Project start date:
July 2003

Project end date:
Phase II due for completion June 2009

Funding source:
75% AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) with match funding from

15% Corporate and Major Donors

10% Innovative Quality Initiatives (Child Sponsorship)

Funds remitted from Australia by Financial Year (FY):

FY 2003 US$55,000
FY 2004 US$62,551
FY 2005 US$67,663
FY 2006 US$95,483
FY 2007 US$105,000

Total funds remitted from Australia to FY 2007:
US$285,797

Expectations that HIV transmission risk could be reduced through sexual behavioural change may have been unrealistic in the timeframe, especially given that HIV transmission risk is a community-wide issue. Complacency and uncaring attitudes amongst some people were identified through World Vision's evaluation as a major reason why some people don't change sexual behaviour in response to HIV and AIDS. Research is needed to understand the root cause of despair and malicious sexual practices aimed at the deliberate transmission of HIV. Legal and human rights frameworks to protect people against deliberate or negligent HIV infection by others should also be strengthened.

Findings such as those described above were presented to traditional leaders and community representatives at the end of the evaluation process. Outcomes were used to design Phase II of the project, which started in July 2006. Hopefully, the words of one traditional leader in response to the evaluation will ring true: "Our community is not there yet; but when you come back you will find a difference in our behaviour."

Food in crisis

Evaluating the effectiveness of food aid operations in southern Africa

Junus David, Viv Mancusi

In response to a state of emergency in 2002, World Vision partnered with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to provide food aid assistance to people affected by food shortages in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Lesotho and Swaziland. Food insecurity in these countries was caused by many factors, including drought, high levels of poverty, political instability, poor governance and poor economic and social policy. Southern Africa experiences the highest levels of HIV and AIDS in the world and the impact of this epidemic exacerbates food insecurity. It also sets this crisis apart from previous states of emergency since family heads and other traditional 'bread winners' are sick and often dying, making communities, households and children in particular even more vulnerable.

Recent evaluations of the food aid programs delivered by World Vision suggest nutritional levels amongst disaster-affected populations were maintained. This undoubtedly resulted in many lives being saved. However, the evaluations also revealed a number of key areas where approaches to food aid programming, both by World Vision and the WFP, could be significantly improved.

Nature of the response

In mid 2002, the national governments of Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho all declared a state of emergency and requested food assistance from the international community. In response to the crisis, the United Nations, through the WFP, launched a regional emergency operation. The initial plan in July 2002 was to provide 992,450 tonnes of food for 10.3 million people at a cost to the WFP of US$507 million.

When formal assessments were conducted in 2004, significant improvements in agricultural production in some countries were reported. However, they also noted that critical household food shortages still existed. In response, the WFP launched a protracted relief and recovery operation offering more comprehensive programming support for households and individuals

Food aid beneficiaries, Mozambique.

World Vision International (WVI) represents the global partnership of World Vision offices across almost 100 countries, of which World Vision Australia is a part. WVI is the World Food Programme's largest International NGO collaborator as measured against a range of indicators, whichinclude:

- WVI collaborates with the WFP in 29 different countries, in contrast the Catholic Relief Services, which works with WFP in 22 countries.

- WVI handles almost 300,000 tons of food compared with CARE International's 250,000 tons.

- WVI partners with the WFP on health programs in 18 countries compared with Catholic Relief Services, which partners with the WFP in 12 countries.

- WVI partners with the WFP on education programs in 18 countries compared with German Agro Action, which partners with the WFP in 7 countries.

- WVI is the largest WFP partner in general food distribution, working in 15 countries in contrast with Catholic Relief Services, which works with the WFP in 12 countries; and f

- WVI is the largest WFP partner in the Food–for-Work program, working in 14 countries in contrast with German Agro Action, which works with the WFP in 11 countries.

Above: Food distribution preparations, Mozambique.

experiencing ongoing food insecurity due to extreme poverty and HIV and AIDS.

World Vision partnered with the WFP from the outset to provide assistance to people affected by food shortages. In Zambia, support was provided to local communities affected by the drought, but also to refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo residing in camps in the north.

Programs began with general food distribution. As the situation improved for the majority of beneficiaries, World Vision and the WFP were able to review the caseload and change focus to concentrate on key vulnerable groups including orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHAs), pregnant and lactating mothers, and children under the age of five. They also introduced Food-for-Work and Food-for-Assets programs for those more able to do physical work. Various other health, education and agricultural initiatives were also eventually added to the project lists. Take-home rations for school children in Lesotho improved school attendance. Similarly, food assistance provided to PLWHAs under anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment proved to be tremendously beneficial, as reflected in this statement by a respondent to the WV evaluation in Tete Province, Mozambique in 2004:

"Before receiving food, people were dying of AIDS, but now they have something to eat. We couldn't even walk… there was no point asking us about how life is, but now you can ask. We were not treated as people. Now we are. We could not visit the market, but now we can. We have been receiving medication from WV for two years, but we need to eat before taking them or they cause problems and at times there is insufficient food, so we feel unwell after taking them."

Effectiveness

From 2004 to 2005, World Vision Australia conducted evaluations in Mozambique, Lesotho and Zambia to determine the impact and effectiveness of the food aid programs on the target communities. These evaluations brought a new paradigm to the way WV evaluations were conducted. In the past, evaluations would focus on whether activities were implemented and the quantities of supplies successfully delivered against targets. They were less concerned with how the program impacted beneficiaries or resulted in other consequential outcomes. One of the key components in the evaluations conducted in 2004 to 2005 was to measure the nutritional status of the vulnerable groups and the mortality rate among children under five years of age. Food security at the household level was also measured.

Whilst it was generally found that lives had been saved and nutritional levels amongst the disaster-affected populations had been maintained, anthropometric data collected and analysed for the evaluations revealed that the activities didn't necessarily result in adequate access, utilisation, and availability of food (or 'food security') at all social levels.

All three evaluations identified a similar set of problems:

- The programs lacked adequate mechanisms for the appropriate selection and verification of beneficiaries. While these programs were operating in challenging, often confronting working environments, there is evidence to suggest that some people who were not entitled to receive food aid received it and others, particularly the extremely vulnerable within communities, missed out – often as a result of their vulnerability and isolation.

- The WFP food pipeline was erratic, seriously impacting both the quality and pace of recovery from malnutrition within the beneficiary communities. These regular pipeline disruptions impacted World Vision's capacity to deliver enough food adequately. This was a problem faced by all stakeholders, according to the WFP's own evaluations. The WFP reported that pipeline shortages, logistics challenges and lack of capable implementing partners in some contexts resulted in almost 55 percent of food pledges remaining undistributed as of July 2003.

- In general, the programs had not considered how to effectively transition from emergency relief to development programming and thus did not integrate with World Vision's broader national food security strategies. This was despite World Vision International encouraging the various World Vision national offices to integrate the relief program with their development programming.

Further analysis of these issues follows.

1. Beneficiary selection and cultural challenges

Food aid projects did not always improve the nutrition levels of all the beneficiaries in communities because food was not always received by those most in need. In the past, projects have often relied on village heads collecting lists of beneficiaries' names. However, the evaluation team found that some village heads had misused this trust and included people on lists who did not meet the relevant criteria. This misdirection was exacerbated by lack of transportation for staff to verify beneficiary selection and attend actual distributions. WV national offices have responded to this and improved their beneficiary assessment and review criteria to ensure the right people are now included in programs.

The evaluation team also observed wasting among children in the programs. Wasting is a form of malnutrition and weight loss that results from a recent period of starvation or disease. With a wasting prevalence rate of 7.7 percent, the study revealed that wasting was still higher in Tete Province (where food aid was delivered) than in the general population of Mozambique, which has a wasting prevalence rate of 4.3 percent. The measurement of nutritional status also suggests that food was not always being delivered to the most vulnerable groups.

It is interesting to note that in Lesotho, while the project had marginal impact in terms of improving the nutritional status of children (especially in indicators such as wasting and underweight), one in three adults were categorised as overweight/obese regardless of their eligibility to receive food aid. Observations such as these raise concerns about access to, and utilisation of, food at the household level. On the assumption that some children's rights may have been abused by their guardians, World Vision outreach teams were encouraged to monitor this more

Snap-shot:
Food Aid

Each day an estimated 25,000 people die of hunger and poverty in different parts of the world. Millions more are in dire need of sustenance. The World Food Programme (WFP) estimates that 850 million people are chronically malnourished worldwide; over 300 million of these are children.

Food aid is a lifeline to many and can benefit people suffering from shortages of food in times of conflict and natural disasters sustaining immediate survival requirements. Conversely, poorly designed and implemented food aid interventions have the potential to disrupt local markets and discourage local food production. In some instances, a cycle of food aid dependence sets in.

WFP is the main multilateral channel for food aid, supporting in excess of 30 million beneficiaries across the globe. WFP is highly dependent on donor governments that can sometimes be unreliable, so efforts to make WFP food aid more assured are not always successful.

Reflections on program effectiveness

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closely and implement whatever measures they could to improve the nutritional status of children. The evaluation team also recommended that research be commissioned to determine underlying socio-cultural determinants of feeding practices – for example, men or guests being fed first, or food sharing behaviours, that could illuminate ways to address this issue in the future.

2. Erratic food pipeline

The erratic food pipeline from the WFP created significant challenges in the field. This included: inconsistent provision of food to beneficiaries, especially vulnerable groups; irregular payment of food to the Food-for-Work/Asset participants; and inconsistent tenure of staff. The management of food was tied to the cash income that WV needed to manage the operation. So, when there was no food for distribution, there was also no payment from the WFP to fund the operation/ overhead cost in between distribution periods.

The shortfalls in tonnage and cash were borne entirely by WV and the communities, thus creating inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in food aid programming. In many situations food distribution had to be cancelled when no food was made available or what was made available was significantly less than anticipated. Many beneficiaries travelled long distances only to arrive at distribution centres and face heartbreaking disappointment.

For people living with HIV and AIDS, food is an important adjunct to their medication. The Government of Mozambique even issued a policy that beneficiaries of HIV and AIDS projects should also be the beneficiaries of the food aid projects. The inconsistency of food supply for the PLWHAs compromised the full benefit of the drugs they were taking.

3. Under funding

Budgets for food aid distribution are negotiated with the WFP, sometimes over a protracted period. Ultimately the WFP is a multilateral agency operating under a restricted charter, their core mandate being food programming. Contract negotiations with the WFP are challenging because there is often disagreement over the cost of operations, particularly costs related to project quality. This often creates a dilemma for WV as internal funding must be juggled to meet essential costs, such as supporting the infrastructure of warehousing, transport, staffing and post-distribution monitoring.

In many respects a relationship with the WFP potentially limits the options WV can bring to bear to address complex food security issues. The issues of erratic pipelines, inadequate budgeting and poor reimbursement have all been taken up with the WFP at the local mission level and at its headquarters in Rome. WV and WFP dialogue suggests that a key challenge for the WFP is its limited resources, combined with its predicament, as a UN agency, in dealing with its own broad and often unreliable donor base.

One outcome of these meetings has been an improvement in contractual arrangements between WV and the WFP, as noted in one World Vision national office. Other field offices, however, do not report substantial improvements.

4. Integration

Many food aid operations consist of short-term contracts with the WFP (sometimes these are less than three months). This is in stark contrast to World Vision's child sponsorship-funded Area Development Programs (ADPs), which operate according to a 15-year development cycle. WV southern Africa field staff were often faced with the dilemma of how to integrate an extremely short-term operation within a longer-term program, or include it within a broader national food security strategy.

Approaches used in relief operations are often quite different to those used in development programs, and this can create tension in the field. Relief operations by their nature involve fast responses and expect staff to make quick, top-down decisions and hand out aid items. This approach is viewed by development people as unsustainable, destroying trust and creating dependency.

In Mozambique, the evaluation team identified that the health team and the food aid team actually worked with the same beneficiaries on the Home Based Care (HBC) project. However, far from integrating their working approaches, neither team even understood the other's roles and responsibilities.

There is no doubt that poorly programmed relief activities – food aid in particular – can actually create dependency rather than cultivate self-determination and resilience within communities.

Therefore, to improve integration between program responses, the evaluation team recommended that World Vision offices in each of the target countries include food aid programs within their national food security and nutrition strategies. The national Food Security Manager should also supervise both food aid programs and ADP food security initiatives within their country. It was suggested that ADP staff should be involved in the design of exit strategies from food aid programs, since many food aid programs lack exit strategies that prepare communities to be self-reliant when the projects phase out.

In Lesotho, integration of food aid into ADPs is now in place. ADP managers are responsible for the implementation of all food aid project activities. In addition, training in the construction of home gardens (especially designed for people with chronic illness) for food aid recipients has been introduced successfully. This pilot is being considered for replication in other emergency areas in an expanded form that may include livestock.

Moving forward

World Vision Australia has circulated the evaluation reports to all stakeholders. Presentations have also been made at WV's annual Commodity Managers workshops to ensure lessons have been broadly shared. The knowledge about program effectiveness generated through these evaluations has also proved timely, given a broader enthusiasm within the World Vision partnership to apply learnings in improving program efficacy. These evaluations also have the potential to more broadly impact programming within the wider NGO sector.

The World Vision Regional Office for Southern Africa, based in Johannesburg, has started promoting more integration between relief and development departments within the various World Vision offices in that region.

World Vision Australia continues to follow up on recommendations and issues highlighted in the evaluations with field-based staff. It is committed to providing support wherever possible. Early reports suggest that progress is being made regarding improvements in beneficiary selection. In addition, World Vision staff continue to work with representatives at the WFP headquarters in Rome and the respective WFP local missions to address the erratic food pipeline issues, the slow reimbursement issues and to advocate for longer-term contracts.

Program Details

Programming context:
In total World Vision Australia worked across World Food Programme funded programs in five southern African countries.

Programming start dates:
Lesotho, October 2003
Malawi, July 2004
Mozambique, April 2003
Zambia, August 2002
Zimbabwe, September 2003

Programming end dates:
Lesotho, September 2006
Malawi, June 2007
Mozambique, June 2007
Zambia, December 2007
Zimbabwe, June 2006

Funding source:
World Food Programme (WFP)
Gifts in Kind (GIK)
Multiplying Gift Appeal
(WVA Match)

Total value of Australian remittances by country to date:
Lesotho
WFP US$622,259
GIK US$9,574,542
WVA Match US$833,322

Malawi
WFP US$296,679
GIK US$2,808,742
WVA Match US$195,723

Mozambique
WFP US$633,546
GIK US$6,774,960
WVA Match US$1,048,724

Zambia
WFP US$2,643,728
GIK US$18,423,967
WVA Match US$2,734,000

Zimbabwe

WFP US$730,460
GIK US$1,053,399
WVA Match US$252,328

Total remittances across all 5 countries:
US$48,626,379

Re-focusing the sponsorship model

Pilahuin & Lamay:
Reflections on effectiveness from Peru and Ecuador

Belinda Pratten
Janet Cruz Granada
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At World Vision Ecuador's request, World Vision Australia recently conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the child sponsorship-funded Pilahuin Area Development Program. While the findings suggest there are programming areas in need of significant attention, they also provide some excellent insights on ways to improve program efficacy for both World Vision Australia as the funding office and World Vision Ecuador as the delivery agency.

Craft lessons, Pilahuin.

It was during the Korean War that an American war correspondent, moved by the plight of orphaned and abandoned Korean children, encouraged ordinary Americans to fund Korean orphanages to care for these children. This program, which began in 1953, was both the birth of World Vision and the birth of the child sponsorship model.

Child sponsorship is World Vision's signature fundraising program and what World Vision is best known for among supporters and field beneficiaries. However, it is true to say that since the 1950s, the nature of programs supported through the sponsorship mechanism have evolved and transformed. This in response to increased understanding of what constitutes effective poverty alleviation. Prior to the 1970s, the majority of programming was welfare-oriented and based on a direct handout model. Since the 1980s, programs have increasingly encouraged dignified self-reliance rather than hand-outs. The Area Development Program (ADP) became World Vision's new and most standardised approach to child sponsorship in the late 1980s. Under this new model, support to entire communities, rather than just specific children and families, was emphasised through community development.

How we understand transformational development, community empowerment, community leadership and sustainability from a practice perspective – like the evolution of the child sponsorship model itself – can often vary enormously. The context is key, as projects are very much works in progress. Over the past few years World Vision Australia, and the World Vision partnership more broadly, has become increasingly committed to the idea

of objectively and accurately monitoring effectiveness in child sponsorship programs in order to determine whether World Vision development approaches are achieving optimal transformational development impacts.

Australian sponsors currently support around 200 World Vision child sponsorship programs in 57 different countries, across southern, western and eastern Africa, in the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent, in north and south-east Asia, in the Pacific, the Caribbean and Latin America.

Considering effectiveness

Quality advisors within World Vision Australia's Program Effectiveness Team have been working on a more intentional framework for surveying the impact of ADPs on target communities. At the beginning of 2005, World Vision Ecuador sought to identify key factors (if any) that might be inhibiting their programs from achieving full potential. The National Director of World Vision Ecuador invited World Vision Australia's Quality Advisors to evaluate the Australian-funded Pilahuin ADP. While insightful and constructive, the results revealed that this program was achieving only limited community impacts.

Around the same time that the Pilahuin ADP evaluation was being conducted in Ecuador, emerging research and monitoring reports from Lamay ADP - in neighbouring Peru - suggested that it was influencing more substantial outcomes for its target community. From a development perspective, it is actually the variability in impacts in these two similar communities that signals potential for learnings and future program improvements.

Two approaches: Pilahuin ADP and Lamay ADP

Lamay ADP and Pilahuin ADP are based in the Andean highlands of South America. Lamay ADP lies in Calca province near Cusco in Peru; Pilahuin lies

in Tungurahua province in Ecuador. The Indigenous communities in both Lamay and Pilahuin struggle to sustain themselves in an extremely harsh climate that lacks a consistent water supply and experiences high levels of poverty. In both Lamay and Pilahuin, the economy is based on farming of crops such as corn and potato, and the sale of farming and livestock products. In both communities, health and education services are poor, the environment is deteriorating due to bad environmental and farming practices, and the area is highly susceptible to natural disasters, including droughts, frost and floods.

World Vision began working in Lamay in 1997, when the current ADP was established. The Pilahuin ADP began in 1998, however World Vision had already operated in the Pilahuin community for several decades prior to establishing the current ADP. These earlier projects aimed to satisfy basic community needs such as water systems, latrines, irrigation systems and school infrastructure. They were characterised by a more paternalistic welfare-based approach and weren't substantively designed as community improvement initiatives.

The Lamay ADP began its engagement cycle with a clean slate, focusing on child health and development, agricultural production, community capacity-building and economic improvement programming. The Pilahuin ADP, with a desire to introduce a more sustainable development focus, grappled with an existing community perception of World Vision's prior paternalist practices, and initially sought to address rights and food security.

Positive outcomes

The recent evaluation for Pilahuin revealed a number of positive outcomes:

- Access to water points has led to time savings, increased productivity and greater community and family cohesion.

- Increased access to education has made a difference for many young people,

PERU & ECUADOR

References:

World Bank

Reflections on program effectiveness

Top: Lamay town, Peru.
Bottom: Health check-up, Pilahuin.

and changed parental attitudes to primary school, high school and college attendance.

- A change in the cultural attitudes of Indigenous people has resulted in an increased understanding of education as an important factor in improving the living conditions of their children.

- Diversified access to services provided by the ADP has helped community members save money, which they may now invest in other activities.

- Agricultural outputs have increased and the establishment of kindergartens has enabled parents to engage in other activities.

- Community members have an increased awareness of the importance of a clean environment, with a resulting decline in skin infections and transmission of parasites from animals to humans.

- Community members are reassessing their values and considering other life opportunities, which demonstrates an increase in hope and a sense of possibility.

- Despite the high migration rates occurring in the district and most rural areas throughout Ecuador, the local school is maintaining enrolments, suggesting that school-age children are not leaving the district.

It is important to remember that at the end of the 1990s, Ecuador suffered the worst economic, social and political crisis in its history. This crisis resulted in a major demographic shift, as the increased level of impoverishment among Ecuador's poorest rural communities triggered a growing and continuous migration flow to several foreign countries.

In this context, indications of positive programming achievements should not be underestimated. However, while the evaluations revealed some indicators of success, across a range of key transformational development indicators, the evaluation team also discovered

that Pilahuin ADP had the following performance challenges:

- Quality of life has not improved as expected, despite the substantial investment in physical infrastructure included as part of the initial poverty alleviation strategy.

- The amount of work available within the community has not changed, and some young people are still unable to find work after school and on weekends.

- The clearest indicators of livelihood demonstrate that purchasing power and socio-economic status have remained static.

- Reflecting the lack of growth in work opportunities and lack of improvement in livelihoods, there remains an alarming trend for migration away from the district. This is a major concern within the community.

- What also became extremely clear to the evaluation team was that some Pilahuin community members who did not have children in sponsorship programs expressed a particularly negative view of World Vision and its work. Responses suggested that the benefits of World Vision operating within the community did not extend beyond the sponsored community. This was in spite of the reality that both sponsored and non-sponsored children were both directly or indirectly benefiting from the ADP's various initiatives.

Clearly, at the core of this perception was a deeper issue. That is, both the process of introducing sponsorship and World Vision's current community development approach and philosophy, were still not well understood within the broader Pilahuin community.

Two ways of introducing sponsorship

When World Vision began working with the Pilahuin community in the 1980s,

the staff informed people about the sponsorship system through workshops, talks and community meetings. This was reinforced in the 1990s, using videos produced in the local language (Kichwa) to explain the way the system operates.

However, through consultations with non-sponsored families in Pilahuin, it was clear that a majority felt that the selection process of children for sponsorship was not fair.

This suggests that the information sharing process about sponsorship was neither sustained nor understood by the community. The way a community is first introduced to child sponsorship and the development framework from the outset can fundamentally shape their view of the program, the agency and its integrity. In reality, when World Vision initiates a new program it rarely does this in a vacuum; the World Vision brand is often already associated with particular preset understandings about what it is and how it works.

At the time the ADP was being introduced to the community in Lamay, field staff visited each of the target communities with posters and other visual aids, systematically describing the vision of the ADP and what child sponsorship would involve. The posters reinforced the program's philosophy that children are the future of society. Lamay's approach, which is clearly understood by the community, is that while sponsored children benefit directly from the program, World Vision would take a 'shared direct benefit' approach. That is, all children (both sponsored and non-sponsored) and their families would benefit through programming.

True to this, Lamay field staff consistently reinforce a strong child focus at every stage and in every interaction, such that the target community is consistently encouraged to think of its future as being directly linked to the wellbeing of its children.

In Pilahuin, the community perception is that the project plan favours direct benefits

for sponsored children to the exclusion of others. One community member recently commented that "it's always the same program no matter what the name is." This suggests that, even before the ADP started, the community already had preconceived ideas of what would be on offer, based on their experience of World Vision's approach through previous programming.

What is clear then is that while some community members self-selected themselves into the ADP program, other community members appear to have self-selected themselves out of the ADP program, based on assumptions about what its philosophy would be. According to recent surveys, some non-sponsored families believe that there are intrinsic factors in the community which cause a bad perception of the sponsorship practice. Therefore, in moving forward, it would be essential for field staff to clarify the program's purpose, aims and values and address any residual suspicion and jealousy issues festering within the community.

Two approaches to community empowerment

Program planning documents for Pilahuin and Lamay describe the community empowerment objectives of both programs using the same, or similar terms. However in the field, the actual activities being implemented to meet these objectives are quite different.

In Lamay, the ADP committee is well respected. The community feels able to participate in the identification of problems and the prioritisation of needs. Community capacity-building is an important component in each element of each part of the program. Virtually all outputs contain an activity that addresses training, or empowerment of community members through a workshop – for example, to help families improve their household design in ways that will enhance hygiene and health outcomes.

In Pilahuin, the evaluators found that the

Top: Pilahuin ADP board members.
Bottom: Community vision, Lamay.

School students, Pilahuin.

ADP committee actually lacked a clear understanding of the program's plan and intentions. While, like Lamay, there has been significant and consistent investment in leadership development, the committee members selected for leadership training were invariably young people unlikely to command respect from more senior community members. In addition to this, their leadership engagement was based on a short tenure of two years, and the time and investment spent in developing their skills was not generally being realised, or benefiting the program in any substantive way. The evaluators were also surprised to find that even the leaders felt their position enabled them to control the information flow for their own interest, so the tendency was for them to keep information about the ADP to themselves.

Two ways of engaging government

Development agencies today are increasingly emphasising and encouraging the building of relationships between communities and governments if at all possible. Increasingly, World Vision Australia is interested in how ADPs can improve the links between community and government to ensure that basic services, often initiated through ADPs, can eventually be transitioned to government agencies. This will ensure that impacts achieved through the program can be sustained beyond the program's lifecycle.

At the time of the evaluation, it was clear that the Pilahuin ADP lacked evidence of a permanent dialogue with the government. This was despite making specific agreements with the municipal hospital to obtain health attention and with civil defence to coordinate actions on disaster preparedness. In general, the ADP had actually taken on the responsibility of providing some health and education services that were not provided by the government. This is a major concern in that, at its core, the ADP was not appropriately equipped or resourced to provide these services at an optimal level of quality – in either the short or the longer term.

By providing these services without aiming for eventual transition to government, the ADP has generated the expectation that the provision of these services is the responsibility of World Vision and not the government.

In contrast, Lamay ADP has taken a complementary approach to working with the government. Instead of providing services, the ADP works with the government to support service provision, through resources such as the children's health monitoring tool. This tool has now been integrated into local government monitoring and is also being considered by the provincial government for their monitoring system. World Vision Peru is supporting the government in a way that is

mutually beneficial, but with the potential to ensure sustainable outcomes in the longer term. Furthermore, the Lamay ADP has also sought to engage and empower Indigenous knowledge and culture, reinstating particular traditional laws that address issues of violence against children in a way that complements community knowledge.

Some reflections

The key reflections and learnings for World Vision, both in Australia and Ecuador, are substantial and extensive. For the purposes of this paper, there are some key considerations:

i. Clearly the history of World Vision's relationship with a community will have impacts on any new program, particularly if it involves a substantial shift in methodology as compared with previous operational approaches. In communities where World Vision's approach and brand is historically associated with direct-benefit service delivery, refreshing community expectations and transitioning to a new model or holistic approach is not an overnight proposition. It will need to be empathetic, thorough, gentle and require a substantial investment in time.

ii. Although World Vision might occasionally need to directly provide some services at the start of new programs, wherever possible these need to be provided in dialogue with government, to ensure eventual transfer of responsibility, and ensure communities will optimally benefit in the longer term.

iii. Though its intentions might have been otherwise at the start, the Pilahuin ADP has positioned itself as selectively delivering essential, though somewhat under-resourced services to the community. Having not genuinely engaged the hearts and minds of the community, the program is not realising any sustainable or substantial

long-term poverty alleviation for the target communities.

In many respects, World Vision Australia and World Vision Ecuador must share equal responsibility for the outcomes that have been achieved to date.

The challenges and the legacies of prior sponsorship programs were underestimated by World Vision Australia, the funding office. Additional support might have been offered to Ecuador to assist field staff in refreshing community perceptions about who World Vision is and how it works. Funding offices should allow time for field offices to consult the community during the assessment and design phase, to ensure that communities have a sound understanding of the sponsorship program.

Of course, transformational development indicator (TDI) evaluations and sound program monitoring should be conducted during the course of programs to maintain community engagement and avoid dependency programming. In doing this, World Vision must ensure that it is measuring the appropriate things, both in the baseline and throughout the program. Currently, indicators such as malnutrition and literacy are measured, which could be seen as the 'symptoms' of poverty. However, it's important to also consider and capture key domains of change that contribute to poverty reduction in the longer term, such as community empowerment. Although challenging to measure, capturing this kind of change and how it came about will almost certainly assist in designing more effective interventions in future.

An opportunity exists for field offices (World Vision Ecuador in particular) to more comprehensively engage with communities, in terms of their understandings and perceptions. Reflecting on good practice experiences, such as Lamay and other successful projects in Ecuador, where the development focus is participative and empowering from the beginning, will assist greatly. This is especially relevant in situations where good

Irrigation training, Pilahuin.

Reflections on program effectiveness

Program Details

Project partners:
World Vision Australia / World Vision Ecuador (Pilahuin ADP)
World Vision Australia / World Vision Peru (Lamay ADP)

Project start date:
Pilahuin ADP – March 1996
Lamay ADP – October 1996

Project end date:
Pilahuin ADP – September 2013
Lamay ADP – September 2011

Funding source:
Pilahuin ADP – Child Sponsorship
Lamay ADP – Child Sponsorship

Funds remitted from Australia to date by Financial Year (FY)
FY 1998 (P) US$62,330
FY 1998 (L)US$14,550
FY 1999 (P) US$149,323
FY 1999 (L) US$129,892
FY 2000 (P) US$174,668
FY 2000 (L) US$155,193
FY 2001 (P) US$163,880
FY 2001 (L) US$141,072
FY 2002 (P) US$152,891
FY 2002 (L) US$130,786
FY 2003 (P) US$209,365
FY 2003 (L) US$186,415
FY 2004 (P) US$358,340
FY 2004 (L) US$293,758
FY 2005 (P) US$470,444
FY 2005 (L) US$386,168
FY 2006 (P) US$517,110
FY 2006 (L) US$412,500
FY 2007 (P) US$526,512
FY 2007 (L) US$420,000

Total funds remitted from Australia to date:
Pilahuin: US$2,784,863
Lamay: US$2,270,334

performance is based on commitment to strong community dialogue and constant internal and external reflection regarding impact and the allocation of resources.

Moving forward

In December 2006, the World Vision partnership began a two-year process of reviewing the current child sponsorship model more broadly. Increasingly, as reflected within the interim guideline document, it is being acknowledged that not all World Vision child sponsorship programming has contributed towards the transformational development of children, families and communities. Child sponsorship-funded programs can be implemented in ways that are empowering, or paternalistic; promoting sustainable development, or dependency through welfare handouts; in ways that promote equity and peace, or that are discriminatory, leading to jealousy and division in the community. In some respects the Pilahuin ADP and the Lamay ADP illustrate this analysis.

For World Vision Australia, undertaking comprehensive evaluations of the impact of ADPs on their target communities will become increasingly commonplace, with several more community impact assessments already planned. This process is imperative in assuring the success of future programs.

Following the evaluation, Pilahuin ADP staff are now reflecting and learning how to face these challenges. While there are no simple solutions, it is clear that the current path will not lead to sustainable outcomes.

Since 2005, World Vision Ecuador has taken several steps to re-focus its intervention approaches and improve program impacts more broadly. These include:

- Improving reflection, evaluation and self-criticism processes within the organisation and re-defining the development strategy. This includes

local and national development plans and working more comprehensively towards Millennium Development Goal targets.

- Developing and defining a new model for relating to target communities. This aims to strengthen community participation, involving key stakeholders in all stages of the implementation cycle from assessment, design, monitoring and evaluation to reflection.

- Reconsidering strategies for integrating and contextualising the World Vision sponsorship approach within target communities. It is important to acknowledge the world view and culture of each community. More recently, pedagogic mediation techniques have been employed to ensure communities better contextualise their own hopes and aspirations and how they can align this with what World Vision offers.

- Strengthening the monitoring and evaluation processes and systems which assist and allow improved reflection, knowledge management and continuous improvement capabilities across all programs.

Finally, one of the most important lessons learnt by World Vision Ecuador is the need to work more closely with funding offices, ensuring that all partners – including supporters – fully understand the social, political, cultural and economic contexts of each community. The development path of each community is unique and requires the ability to be respectful of, and engage meaningfully with, the world view of the target communities. It is sometimes possible for these realities to be oversimplified, underestimated or misunderstood when expectations are set according to inappropriate criteria.

Defining success – Begasin Bugati

Understanding 'effective' development in Papua New Guinea

David Sweeting
Jonathan Treagust

What defines 'effective' development? Should it be the donor's criteria, a non-government organisation's (NGO) preferred way of working, or is it simply whether communities at the centre of the response are satisfied? Agreement on effective development should enable development organisations, communities and donors to align expectations and set clear goals to which they can aspire. Exactly how these expectations align is a key challenge for NGO work in the diverse and often difficult contexts of Papua New Guinea (PNG).

From 2003 to 2006, World Vision undertook an ambitious and multi-faceted development project in the Transgogol, Usino and Astrolabe Bay Local Level Government areas of Madang Province. While the expectations of the donor, project staff and the community were rarely aligned – the Begasin Bugati project provided World Vision with some key insights into what 'effective' poverty reduction might look like in PNG.

Working in Papua New Guinea

Divided by language, customs and tradition, PNG is one of the most culturally disparate nations in the world, with several thousand separate communities, most comprising only a few hundred people. This fragmentation tests not only the political and social unity of the country, but also the ability of government, churches and NGOs to provide essential services and development interventions. For World Vision (WV), defining success in this context is essential to the development of effective programs.

A 2003 peer review of Australian NGOs acknowledged that given the magnitude of the obstacles that agencies contend with, undertaking effective development in PNG is often extremely difficult (Nichols 2003). Success is hampered by isolation, poor infrastructure, government incapacity, lack of effective law and order, and the lack of resources to ensure sustainable impacts. Against this backdrop, WV implemented

Ante-natal check-up, PNG.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

its largest PNG program to date in Madang Province, the multi-sectorial Begasin Bugati Rural Development Program (BBRDP).

Madang Province is on the northern coast of the main island. It has been described as 'PNG in miniature'. The population of Madang is around 40,000 people and predominantly rural, comprising a mixture of coastal people, islanders, mountain people and river dwellers. Sixty percent of the population is under the age of 25. Most people remain small-scale, traditional subsistence gardeners with little or no disposable income.

The Begasin-Bugati Rural Development Program

BBRDP was an ambitious poverty-reduction initiative. It sought to influence a range of quality of life improvements for target communities across a number of sectors, including community health, water supply, sanitation, food security and economic livelihoods.

BBRDP was supported by AusAID through the Incentive Fund. It was the first time WV accessed funding through this fund and donor involvement from the outset was both intense and challenging. In line with donor expectations, a rigid and comprehensive monitoring framework was established to measure project performance at regular intervals. This proved to be both

a strength and a weakness. It provided a focused framework to guide the project manager and field staff month by month, but there were difficulties. The imposition of meeting discrete and specific targets imposed limitations on the budget, on the nature of activities, on the duration of the project and in terms of how we perceive and validate 'positive outcomes'.

In essence, the BBRDP tried to strike balance, providing much needed services and infrastructure on the one hand, alongside a program of community strengthening and empowerment activities on the other. In addition to providing physical health services and improved water/sanitation systems, BBRDP also established a network of traditional birth attendants and sought to increase access to health facilities. Farmer to farmer networks were encouraged to share new ideas, and community-nominated 'lead' farmers were trained to extend general community knowledge. The project also improved food security, through both increased crop yields and better management of cash crops.

Two key project partners exited the project at an early stage and it became difficult to ensure that both local communities and local NGOs could align their objectives following this. BBRDP staff faced a multitude of programmatic challenges over the three years. But, in many ways, these challenges and impediments speak of innovations and new community solutions as much as they do of unfulfilled targets.

Outcomes and performance

The successes of Begasin Bugati are easily noted. Forty out of a target of 41 water systems were commissioned. A program of traditional birth attendant training was developed with the Department of Health. Partnership links to both provincial departments and field extension agencies were formalised. More than 90 lead farmers, trained in advanced cocoa management, formally trained a further 1,800 cash crop farmers. Where a

gender-specific approach was a conscious and concerted effort, women benefited from the program through improved health services. The Water Users Group educated the community on conservation practices. Consequently it has provided a tested and suitable operational model that has since been replicated by local clinics. The premature departure of two local partner NGOs could have been a potential disaster, but actually enabled field staff to refocus the governance strategy. Community capacity-development was emphasised by empowering the existing, legislated, but underutilised mechanism of the Ward Development Committees. In turn, this has enabled the committees to manage their own development process and set their own priorities for project implementation.

However, given the three-year timeframe, and a strong orientation towards meeting targets, the program's effectiveness – considered against its original 'target' objectives – suggests that it underperformed. Only a fifth of the latrines originally planned could be built, due to poor interest. Quotes for rebuilding a road far exceeded the budget ceiling, and according to donor criteria, funds allocated to this activity could not be reassigned

to other activities. It became increasingly difficult to integrate the separate health project initiatives and improvements into a comprehensive and cohesive health program as the program progressed. The food security program failed to actively engage women, in spite of this being a clear, well-defined need (see below). Indeed, the program's failure to engage female participation more broadly meant that community uptake of education and behavioural change initiatives (such as improved hygiene habits) achieved fewer gains than the income generation, economic development and water/ sanitation sectors which are traditionally dominated by men.

The PNG context itself also threw up a range of unexpected delays and challenges: unanticipated inflation wrought havoc on project budgets, while a major flood and subsequent landslide did the same with work in the Astrolabe Bay communities. In addition to this, the sheer geographic dispersement of the target communities, combined with the poor road infrastructure made it difficult to service the community more effectively. Yet in spite of some degree of economic and geographic chaos, the community interest and ownership of the program did not waiver.

Compost making at a demonstration farm.

Reflections on program effectiveness

New water supply, Mena village.

Program Details

Project partners:
World Vision Australia, World Vision PNG, Copra and Cocoa Extension Agency, PNG National Department of Health, Provincial Department of Health (Madang), Provincial Department of Agriculture & Livestock (Madang), Astrolabe Local Government Council, Usino Rural Local Government Council, Lutheran Health Services

Project start date:
January 2002

Project end date:
June 2006

Target population:
42,000

Funding source:
AusAID Incentive Fund Sponsorship Reserve

Total Australian funds remitted overseas:
US$1,825,015

Key learnings

WV has learnt a great deal from BBRDP about 'effective' approaches to poverty alleviation in PNG. From the outset, gender engagement activities that meaningfully and constructively focused on quality of life improvements for women were poorly defined and lacked an overall and cohesive plan. In the PNG context, women are predominantly occupied in meeting daily needs of the family in terms of food, water and health. Women are not able to easily change their roles to participate in project activities or meetings. BBRDP needed a plan that had been produced by women, for women – to capture their involvement in every activity. Clearly, the BBRDP needed to address these realities and consciously plan and promote women's involvement from the beginning.

Also, while the Incentive Fund monitoring format established very clear and generally positive lines of dialogue between field staff and the donor, these reports were ineffective when it came to communicating variations in the programming realities. The format very quickly became too rigid, allowing no flexibility for change or innovation. Reconciling donor demands

with community needs and priorities proved exceedingly difficult as the project progressed. Often donor priorities were emphasised even though field staff felt it was both counter-intuitive and counter-productive to do so.

Any effective development project should allow for changes and variations. There will always be unforeseen difficulties impacting on a program: communities are dynamic and geographic environments and are often prone to environmental shocks, especially in PNG. For donors, unpredictable challenges can sometimes be characterised as poor planning, but it is both a mistake and unhelpful to equate difficulties with failure. With BBRDP for example, relying on local NGOs to address governance issues was problematic. However, this presented an opportunity to partner more closely with Ward Development Committees, and improve community management capacity and cohesion in unexpected ways.

For World Vision, it was the link to both government agencies and the Ward Development Committees that was the ultimate success for the BBRDP. Sustainable outcomes occurred when a chain of key events, which were unplanned

and unanticipated, aligned to the project's advantage. Building on the existing Ward Development Committee structure was an important progression. But at the same time, it was through the resourcing and equipping of government staff to carry out capacity building programs – by accessing provincially developed training materials and ensuring that every activity had an element of teaching, training or capacity building – that the program had the most effect. It is the reinforcing of the government's role, rather than underestimating its potential or undermining it, that provides a positive and sustainable way forward.

Reflections

As the program progressed, WV learnt the importance of planning for success with the communities directly. Projects should start with the community, and BBRDP could have invested more time at the beginning, planning and communicating what a successful and effective project would look like from the community's perspective. This would have been the ideal time to convey a greater understanding of the 'knowledge-based' elements of the project, such as the importance of toilets because of the importance of good sanitation. It should have been communicated that these aims would require longer than the project's timeframe to achieve. The project could only start the process of change, rather than complete the work needed to deliver the final impact, and World Vision needed to ensure government counterparts were able to follow up, after the project's completion.

Clearly 'effective' development programming, especially when it is a large, multi-faceted and ambitious program such as BBRDP, relies heavily on good relationships, good planning and flexible designs. Building relationships, reputation, trust and integrity is critical to the success of any project. But for an NGO such as WV, this needs to be planned for, taking into account the context in which the project work is being undertaken.

Strengthening civil society is part of the sustainability chain, but this can only occur with focused programs of capacity building which build on tangible outcomes. For BBRDP, success finally came through solutions that built on existing structures, leadership and participation. With this in mind, 'effective' development should be defined by the community, encouraged by the NGO and allowed to happen by the donor.

For PNG, a certain level of understanding and flexibility from donors is required to allow effective development to take place. Funding needs to act more as a framework which allows flexibility and accommodates new opportunities. It has to allow the community to drive the program and NGOs to respond to emerging needs.

Section 2
Sectoral or multi-country interventions

Child friendly responses

Child rights and child protection issues following the Pakistan Earthquake

Claire Beck

Pakistan's socio-political context is strongly influenced by the Islamic faith. The provinces most effected by the recent Pakistan Earthquake are remote and have been relatively inaccessible to outsiders for a number of years. For international non-government organisations (NGOs), especially Christian ones like World Vision, undertaking effective relief program responses in contexts such as these are not easy.

It is crucial to deliver quality programming in ways that are respectful and demonstrate integrity. It is also crucial to commit to effective relationship-building, with communities, with other NGOs and officials, in order to ensure that effective, beneficial outcomes for target communities can be sustained over the longer term.

The earthquake

At 8.52 am on 8 October 2005, when most children were attending school, an earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale devastated northern Pakistan. The conservative mountainous areas of Pakistan-administered Kashmir and the Northwest Frontier Province were most severely affected.

Within the 30,000 square kilometre area of severe impact, 3.5 million people were estimated to be affected, including half a million families. Some 2.8 million were left homeless. An estimated 70 percent of homes in the impacted area were completely destroyed and the remaining 30 percent were damaged. By 15 November 2005, in addition to 73,000 dead, another 70,000 people were reported injured.

In response to the Pakistan Earthquake, World Vision Pakistan (WVP) focused on non-food and food distribution, emergency shelter, child protection and emergency education. This is because 17,000 of the 73,000 people who died were children, and the children that survived were extremely traumatised by the experience. Many had to live with the memories of seeing family and friends trapped or killed in the rubble; others expressed fear of entering permanent buildings or being separated from family and friends.

Child friendly space, North West Frontier Province.

Children in Pakistan

While children in Pakistan are loved and valued as members of a family and the community, they are not considered to be the bearers of human rights. At the time of the earthquake, there was little understanding of their need to express emotional and psychological concerns, or share their experiences in order to deal with the trauma they had faced. It was generally understood that as members of families and communities, their needs would be met by adults and parents.

World Vision's child protection response to the Pakistan Earthquake recognised a child's need to work through their experiences and sought to proactively enable children to express their grief. It also encouraged children to take a more active role in rebuilding their own lives and assisted them in discovering a renewed sense of the future. In doing so, World Vision educated the community about the rights of children, in both a social and legal sense, through the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which the Pakistani Government had ratified in 1990.

Some key child protection outcomes

In response to the earthquake:

Together with Save the Children, World Vision encouraged and supported community leaders, religious leaders, teachers, police, the military and other NGOs to become more aware of child rights, both in the national capital of Islamabad and in the earthquake-affected area of Mansehra and Balakot districts;

World Vision established child friendly spaces (CFS) to respond to the physical and psycho-social needs of primary and secondary children in camps. Within the context of the camp communities, it provided culturally acceptable alternatives for all children, especially girls, to meet together in safety, even if they were not able to attend school.

Children were encouraged to participate as equals in activities that were focused on their needs and the specific issues impacting their lives – such as discussing parent and teacher attitudes;

World Vision and a local NGO, BeFARE, worked with children and their families to ensure school-age children were enrolled in school. They achieved 100 percent re-enrolment of primary-age children among the target population;

Programs were set up to support 12–17 year old adolescents who were dropping out, or at risk of dropping out, of school. Students were given catch-up classes and tuition in subjects they were having difficulties with, and 140 children who had dropped out of school re-enrolled the following school year;

Another 40 adolescents who did not wish to return to school were trained in recognised building trades and provided with tool kits to assist their communities in the rebuilding process;

Some 480 older girls learned a range of new skills, including sewing, knitting, embroidery, weaving and basic literacy – as well as life skills through the CFS;

Children's rights were promoted to the broader community through links with local media groups and radio. Around 30,000 people listened to radio programs about children's issues through the local BBC station in Mansehra and Balakot districts.

In essence, the response actively considered and emphasised that both boys and girls have needs that should be met.

Background to the emergency response

During the emergency phase that follows any major disaster, a variety of different actors respond to the situation. Initially, the local community responds in trying to save lives and meet immediate needs. Due to the size of this disaster, the initial coping mechanisms were quickly exhausted.

Within 48 hours, the Government of Pakistan declared a state of emergency and called for outside assistance. Local and national government services, the military and outside aid began to pour in. Local and international NGOs and various United Nations (UN) agencies arrived, with support and supplies. In addition to recognised organisations, local communities from all over the country made collections and sent food, clothing and other urgently needed goods.

World Vision Pakistan (WVP), even with an extremely limited number of staff on the ground, was able to participate in, and lead one of the initial interagency assessments of the affected area. In the past they had implemented projects through local partners, but due to the extent of the disaster and the workload of their partners, WVP began building their own relationships with the affected communities. Arrangements were made with local suppliers for emergency supplies and within the first few days, distribution of crucial non-food items began. Due to the size of the disaster, the World Vision International partnership deployed experienced relief specialists though the Global Rapid Response Team (GRRT), which included Australian staff. Within seven days there were over 12 relief specialists assisting and strengthening the local response capacity, and this number continued for the first three months, until local staff could be employed and trained.

The Pakistan Earthquake response was the first to use the fledgling UN cluster approach which, while generally positive, had its own teething problems as it was rolled out. Some of the criticisms included:

- Lack of buy-in by the UN agencies that were to take the lead;

- Limited understanding by those appointed of the role of a cluster lead;

- Rapid turnover of the cluster leads at the field level;

- Too many meetings, and delayed communication of policy and implementation decisions between Islamabad and the field;

- Lack of involvement of local NGOs and government officials in the cluster meetings and decision making (Strand et al 2006).

WVP actively participated in clusters that related to their sectors of intervention (such as food and nutrition, logistics, shelter, livelihoods and protection and education), both at the national level and in the local area of operation in Mansehra. Though staff were torn between attending meetings, liaising with other agencies and being in the field with the affected communities, attendance and participation in the clusters was crucial. It enabled WVP to maintain high standards and share, as well as keep abreast of, innovative ideas. It also enabled WVP to influence decision making in all areas of response, especially protection.

World Vision's initial response was in three key areas: child protection and emergency education, non-food and food distribution and emergency shelter. The decision to work in these sectors (rather than health, water and sanitation or camp management) was based on World Vision's international expertise in the areas of child protection, commodities management, as well as expertise available on the ground at the time.

Within the first 10 days of the response, WVP chose to work in the more remote location of the Siran Valley, specifically Jabori and Sacha Kalan, rather than the internally displaced camps where many other agencies preferred to work. Though there were logistical difficulties accessing the more remote communities, WVP was concerned to meet the needs of the most vulnerable who were not being assisted by other agencies. At the same time, the child protection sector in Islamabad (which included agencies such as Save the Children, Oxfam, UNICEF, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Islamic Relief as well as World Vision) allocated WVP child

Top: Quake survivors in a remote Pakistani village.

Bottom: Earthquake relief distribution.

Sectoral or multi-country interventions

Child friendly space, North West Frontier Province.
(Photo courtesy ADH/Florian Kopp)

protection activities in the large formal camps around Balakot, which was in the opposite direction to the Siran Valley. In the initial stages this was less than ideal for WVP, as it led to division of already limited resources, such as transport and staffing. As the response matured and the program expanded, child protection activities were extended to the settled communities in the Siran Valley, and the approaching winter led to the provision of warm safe locations for children in the higher altitudes.

Child protection activities

World Vision International child protection specialists were some of the first response staff to arrive in Pakistan. Within a very short period of time, these specialists were able to focus government and other agencies' attention on the importance of addressing children's needs. Within 10 days of the earthquake, staff from both World Vision and Save the Children offered training to any agency that was interested in working in the area of child rights and protection, according to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. From a base in Islamabad, they

worked at a policy and advocacy level, with government, the UN and NGOs, to raise awareness of child rights issues. At a field level in Balakot and Mansehra, they provided training and raised awareness among community leaders, religious leaders, teachers, police and the military, and trained local staff to meet the psychological and social needs of children and people with disabilities.

The awareness training specifically focused on appreciating, understanding and prioritising the needs of children in camps and communities, from building latrines and washing areas, to ways to speak and interact with children. Local staff based in Islamabad became a crucial link with national level activities. They nurtured partnerships with local agencies to work with government and human rights groups. This in turn ensured that advocacy on child protection and disability issues could be taken up at both the local and national levels. As a consequence of this excellent work, WVP continues to be engaged in some key advocacy networks on a range of issues around children, orphans and people living with disabilities.

Child friendly spaces

The main component of the response, which also provided the foundation for all training and advocacy activities, was the development of child friendly spaces (CFS) to respond to the physical and psycho-social needs of children in the camps. These spaces provided social support, outlets for creativity and a chance for children to meet together, play and express their feelings. They also provided a place for parents (especially the mothers) and community leaders to come and reflect on the needs of the children in their community.

During the early stages of the response, the community saw the CFS as safe play areas. But, as time passed, and schools resumed, the CFS were seen by some parents as alternative schools, and there was some concern expressed by parents and teachers that there was too much 'play' and not enough 'education' going on, especially in areas where schools had not resumed. In other areas, parents saw the level of the CFS staff's care and wanted the CFS to provide all levels of education in preference to enrolling their children in the local school.

In areas where there was no functioning school, WVP encouraged the community to use the CFS as schools during school hours, and as CFS outside school time, so the children could benefit from both educational and social activities. In these areas WVP partnered with BeFARE, a local NGO with experience in emergency education activities with Afghan refugees, to set up emergency schools in the spaces. BeFARE used their experience and training program to assist teachers to deal with their own trauma and to better understand the reasons for changes in children's behaviour as a result of the trauma. They also trained them in how to adapt the government curriculum to meet the needs of the children.

WVP and BeFARE also worked with the Department of Education, community leaders, the children and their families to ensure that all school-age children enrolled in the CFS were also enrolled in school. In some cases, this involved visiting schools and the education department to get approval for children who may have been displaced from other districts, or who were not already enrolled in a school, to gain a place and access educational services. The program successfully enabled 100 percent of primary school-age children in the target areas to attend school.

However, there remained some ongoing concerns about the participation rates of older youths, particularly older girls, in attending school. A key challenge was, and remains, in encouraging and enabling more girls to participate in education generally. One strategy for improving the participation rates of girls is advocacy, aimed at increasing the number of female teachers.

As a general comment, the engagement of local female staff has consistently posed a challenge for child protection programming in Pakistan. While many communities were enthusiastic about having a CFS located within their area and supporting the needs of their children, due to the strict purdah, more conservative communities would not allow local women to be trained as facilitators. These communities were happy to have women from other communities participate as facilitators and would send their girls. This cultural expectation meant that activities for girls were both subject to the availability of facilitators from other communities and subject to culturally restricted operational hours for girls. This consequently means that activities for girls may not continue beyond the life of the project, unless the community is able to fund the transport of female staff from other areas.

Adolescent program

Being both actively involved in the community and regularly visiting homes and teachers, CFS staff discovered that there was little support for adolescents

Sectoral or multi-country interventions

Winter clothing distribution.

within communities. Considered too old to be children but without the status of adults, often their role within a community was not clear or well defined. They were feeling disenfranchised and had no purpose; parents were concerned that boys especially were becoming discipline problems.

This was confirmed when the child protection team was invited to attend a prize-giving ceremony at the local high school in Balakot. They discovered that many teenagers were not coping with school, either failing or dropping out. Girls, reported to have been harassed on their way to and from school, did not want to continue to attend.

In response, an adolescents' program was developed for 12- to 17-year olds. The program targeted both those that had dropped out and those at risk of dropping out of school. It included catch-up classes for subjects they'd missed, provided tuition in subjects they were having difficulties with, and provided creative and recreational activities to help them re-assimilate into school life. The program successfully reached 140 adolescents who had dropped out of school and enabled them to rejoin their classes in the new school year. Follow-up comments from teachers suggested that behavioural

problems previously displayed had been significantly reduced.

Naturally, not all young people wanted to attend school. To meet the needs of this particular group, project staff, with support from the Pakistan Department of Education secured assistance for 40 boys to access vocational training in building trades.

The participants gained a government-recognised trade certificate. World Vision provided life skills training in areas of disaster mitigation, community participation, child rights, health and hygiene. The provision of an appropriate trade tool kit enabled many of these young people to return to their communities and proactively assist with the rebuilding process.

Girls who were not able to attend school or trade classes were organised into home schools and the CFS became a place where 480 girls could meet freely and learn new skills, with local craftswomen and a trainer. Skills taught included sewing, knitting, embroidery, weaving and basic literacy, as well as the life skills taught to the boys.

Media and teacher training in children's rights

Another challenge for WVP was promoting the importance of children's rights to the wider community. An initial strategy involved producing a simple reader in English and Urdu, which was distributed to teachers and community leaders. However, some of the Islamic leaders did not appreciate or want to see cartoon pictures of people in the book, so it was presented in oral form within communities. The cartoon books were used in schools and were enjoyed by both children and their teachers and made available on a local website in Urdu.

The project staff also developed links with local media groups, who were able to produce and disseminate child rights and child protection messages relevant to the local situation. As a result, some print media devoted a weekly space for children's issues and one radio station offered airspace for child-focused messages. The radio programs were produced by young people, covering issues that were impacting, and relevant to, their lives. Through the local BBC station, six programs in total were broadcast to approximately 30,000 listeners in the Mansehra and Balakot regions. They were later broadcast a second time on a local FM station that covered the whole province.

Reflections

While WVP is a Christian organisation, the activities offered in the CFS were sensitive to, and respectful of the Islamic faith. All CFS staff were Muslim and children were taught their religious songs and stories as part of the activities. However, some local religious leaders, who did not live in the affected area, were still suspicious of WVP's intentions as a Christian NGO. This tension escalated to the point where this group burned down a CFS one evening.

In response, WVP worked with nationally respected Islamic leaders, lawyers and teachers to alleviate the fears of these religious groups. Along with the local community, they were able to explain the purpose of the CFS and the activities carried out in the space. This reduced fear and concern from the religious groups and highlighted the support that communities had for the CFS. There is a strong indication that the CFS in some areas will be able to continue after the end of the project and ensure that child-focused activities will be ongoing, under the supervision of local teachers and parents.

Accepting female workers in the CFS and allowing children to talk about child rights on radio suggests that the attitudes of community leaders are slowly changing. However, assisting communities to understand the rights of children, particularly girls, and the need to respect them, continues to take both time and patience. The lack of community trust in outside authorities, particularly around confidentiality issues, can often mean that violations, particularly against girls and teenage women, are not reported for fear that they might bring shame on the families of victims.

WVP plays an active part as a member of the Human Rights Working Group (Islamabad) and the Disability Working Group (Islamabad), and is able to advise on policy issues around children and other vulnerable groups affected by the earthquake. Given its strong community relationships, built through the earthquake response, field staff often learnt first-hand of fears and concerns within communities. As a consequence of these relationships, they were able to assist in the development and dissemination of information and guidelines to assist government agencies in facilitating the safe return of families to their places of origin. They continue working with local advocacy groups to lobby the government to monitor institutions that house children, and encourage and support children's repatriation to their original communities. This has resulted in some institutions being closed, and others improving their conditions.

Earthquake survivors receive relief supplies.

References:

Strand, A.& Borchgrevink, K. 2006, Review of Norwegian earthquake assistance to Pakistan, CMI, Norway

Sectoral or multi-country interventions

Relief distribution, North West Province.

Program Details

Project start date:
October 2005

Project end date:
March 2006, with transitioning of some programs

Funding source:
AusAID HES Co-Operation Agreement

Australian funds remitted overseas:
US$507,150

WVP is committed to long-term support of the affected communities, helping to rebuild their lives and livelihoods by accessing larger grants and increasing the scale of its work in Pakistan. Between 2001 and 2005, WVP was a small office that implemented projects through local partners, but with the upsizing of the office after the earthquake response, it is now in the position to implement a program in its own right.

Moving forward

The earthquake-affected area is poor and with the increased NGO presence in the area, communities are requesting ongoing development activities, especially for improved livelihoods, education and health services, and reconstruction of destroyed infrastructure. In some of these areas the government simply does not have the capacity to lead this reconstruction; opportunities exist for World Vision to support these communities through piloting programs and strengthening government capacity.

In this context, WVP has a strategy to upscale its operations and transition from emergency relief to longer-term rehabilitation and development projects. The gains in child protection that WVP has made after the earthquake have become the basis on which all other activities will be based.

Reconstructing responses

The trials and tribulations of World Vision's tsunami shelter program

Joyati Das

The 2004 Boxing Day tsunami was an extraordinary event, directly affecting millions of people in 12 countries across the Indian Ocean : Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Maldives, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Somalia, Tanzania, Seychelles, Bangladesh and Kenya. The United Nations estimated that more than 300,000 people perished, one million were displaced and five million people were deprived of basic services. On every level the disaster and the tragedy that followed tested everyone involved, as various actors tried to coordinate both relief and reconstruction phases in areas where poverty and inequalities were deeply and historically entrenched.

The damage to structure and spirit alone led to chaos, bringing unparalleled challenges for governments and non-government organisations (NGOs) alike. At the heart of World Vision's response to all tsunami programming was a commitment to ensure the beneficiaries' right to be heard. This commitment occasionally caused complications especially when media "on behalf of donors" pressured the organisation to demonstrate quick results.

Addressing post-tsunami homelessness

Following the tsunami, hundreds of thousands of people were left homeless.

Many local and international organisations worked alongside governments to bring relief to the worst affected families.

Due to the large number of donors already active in transitional shelter programs, World Vision (WV) did not focus for any serious length of time on building transitional shelter. Instead, WV focused on building permanent housing, engaging in, what was to become, an extraordinarily massive reconstruction and rebuilding process. Some 11,900 houses were constructed through World Vision programming across India (5,861), Indonesia (3,566), Thailand (402) and Sri Lanka (2,066).

Governments of tsunami-affected countries responded differently to the housing reconstruction challenges. The governments of Thailand and India supported the reconstruction activities in an organised manner, setting standards and guidelines to enable NGOs and agencies to commence work, while the

TSUNAMI REGION

Tsunami destruction, Sri Lanka.

About 60 kilometres southwest of Aceh's provincial capital of Banda Aceh lies the coastal village of Saney. Most of this village today is submerged several metres under the sea as a result of the 2004 Asian tsunami, which was unleashed by an earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale off the coast of northern Sumatra. Only eight children in the village of Saney survived its wrath.

The official number of people listed as dead in Aceh is 260,000 people with one third of all, or 1,000 villages and towns, totally destroyed or washed away. Approximately 280,000 houses were destroyed leaving 547,509 people homeless. Twenty-five percent of Aceh's entire workforce died in the tsunami. It is reported that 10,000 kilometres of roads, seven bus terminals, 28,000 hectares of irrigation and 100 kilometres of canals were destroyed as well as innumerable public buildings. The scale of housing reconstruction required was massive, larger even than the annual housing program for the whole of Indonesia.

Indonesian Government announced a blueprint for Aceh reconstruction within weeks of the disaster. This plan included a two-kilometre buffer zone along the coast, which meant all communities within that zone were to be relocated.

However, the two-kilometre buffer zone policy was abandoned when communities and development agencies protested and lobbied for stakeholder consultation with affected communities before drawing up a mutually agreeable plan. A people-driven rehabilitation process commenced in April 2005 with the overall coordination of tsunami reconstruction activities in Aceh facilitated by the government.

In Sri Lanka, the government initially imposed a setback or buffer zone from 100 metres up to 500 metres along the coast to restrict people from returning to their land. A reconstruction body was established to coordinate the rebuilding process. The Urban Development Authority (UDA) of Sri Lanka eventually agreed that this policy was unsuitable. However, its reversal then affected the housing plans for those who were relocated to sites other than their original land (refer to the Sri Lankan shelter response).

NGO response

The uniqueness and depth of the tsunami's impact generated unprecedented donor generosity, which saw many new NGOs mushroom to respond to the disaster. Unusually buoyed with funds, large NGOs as well as new smaller ones were often competing with each other to stake a claim on beneficiary communities. At the same time, governments of tsunami-affected nations struggled to coordinate the relief response, incapacitated, at times, by the destruction of infrastructure and loss of staff. They looked to external agencies for support, often demanding immediate relief responses.

Amid the outpouring of funds and resources, NGO leaders, under intense media scrutiny and demand for accountability to donors, often 'played-to-the-crowd', making public commitments during the early emergency phase about the services that could or would be delivered in the long term. These commitments were mostly made well before concrete assessments had been conducted regarding beneficiary needs and delivery within realistic timeframes. This naturally resulted in untenable, unwarranted pressure on NGO field staff, already under immense, unforeseen pressure to provide quality assistance to those most acutely affected.

Key challenges

The reconstruction exercise was undertaken amidst many entangled and often competing interests. These included extraordinary political complexities; often

imprecise government policies concerning land tenure/land ownership and buffer zones; incorrect beneficiary lists that demanded scrutiny to ensure integrity so that the right people were prioritised for housing; the often inappropriate selection of relocation sites by officials; and the need to ensure provision of essential services to newly built houses. It thus demanded in-depth community consultation, negotiation with local governments and high-level lobbying of national and regional governments in partnership with other NGOs to expedite the process of reconstruction.

At the heart of World Vision's response to all tsunami programming was a commitment to ensure the beneficiary's right to be heard and to be a driver of the decision-making process. To achieve this, World Vision drew on the Code of Conduct for the ICRC and NGOs in Disaster Relief as well as the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster. While these generic guidelines and procedures assisted in developing the overall response, World Vision lacked a succinct policy position on shelter and land tenure issues to inform a shelter strategy. This created several substantial challenges for field staff, who could not operate according to a pre-agreed organisational standard.

World Vision was often in direct competition with other agencies to secure projects and under pressure from the media to demonstrate commencement of rebuilding activities. This pressure resulted in WV building transitional housing for some communities and then moving on to build permanent housing for others. This inconsistency created tensions between field staff and communities at the beginning, with neither able to establish relationships with the other for long enough to ensure the commencement of sound, longer-term or more holistic development.

In Aceh, where some integrated programs were possible initially, a delay in housing

allocation to WV meant that activities and commitments in other sectors had reached their capacity by the time the shelter program was finalised. This resulted in other agencies making commitments to provide complementary infrastructure in areas where WV agreed to provide shelter and other public buildings.

Though the Sri Lanka response was smaller than the Aceh response, it was just as complex and provides real insight into the challenges faced by programming staff.

The Sri Lanka shelter response

An evolving and changing socio-political context in Sri Lanka offered several challenges for World Vision field staff during post-tsunami reconstruction. The decades-old civil conflict, which had defused after the signing of the 2002 peace agreement between the Tamil Tigers and the Government of Sri Lanka, threatened to erupt again. The north and the eastern Sri Lankan states with large Tamil populations and other ethnic minorities accused the Sinhalese-dominated government of discrimination with the claim that little or no assistance was offered to the Tamil communities affected by the tsunami. Communities, originally divided and embittered by past differences, resorted to blaming each other and NGOs for neglecting certain ethnic groups.

The destruction of documentation caused by the tsunami also fuelled delays and provided a major challenge for rebuilding. With an absence of accurate records, the government struggled to process beneficiary registrations quickly, so the allocation of land to appropriate beneficiaries took longer than anticipated.

Fluid government policies also affected the program severely and impacted delivery timeframes. For example, the government introduced a coastal buffer zone after the tsunami, which created a land shortage in many areas. Land allocations and the appropriation of relocated sites, as well as livelihood issues created by the buffer zones

Snap-shot:
The Hambantota apartment building, Sri Lanka

To accelerate the rebuilding process, World Vision Sri Lanka signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Government of Sri Lanka to construct a 416 unit high-density apartment building in a complex in the district of Hambantota. However, due to the absence of a beneficiary list, no assessments or beneficiary consultations regarding this project were commissioned before this MOU was signed.

After much lobbying with national and local governments, WV was finally given the list of beneficiaries to occupy these flats with the promise that all community issues that had been highlighted by WV would be addressed. World Vision conducted community consultations through forums and household surveys and received some quality feedback on the impact of this program. Those who were allocated to move into the new units clearly indicated that they would not move into a multi-storey building; and fishermen particularly said this move into an apartment would have serious consequences for their livelihoods.

In addition to the lack of consultation with the families, the absence of a long-term plan for maintenance of the building and the special needs of the vulnerable had clearly not been thought through.

After more lobbying, the local government relented. It agreed to hold in-depth consultation with the beneficiaries with the intention of obtaining written consent from those who were prepared to move into the apartments upon completion. In July 2005, after a six-month advocacy process, the Sri Lankan Government sent a letter requesting World Vision build 40 flats as opposed to 416, as agreed in the MOU. These flats have been built and beneficiaries have now moved in.

Above: Hambantota apartment building.

Opposite: Rebuilt homes, Sri Lanka.

(for fishermen, for example) became a major issue of contention and required lengthy negotiations with the local governments.

Controversy about the intentions of the buffer zone policy drew international attention. The Sri Lankan Government later revised this policy, reducing the buffer zone substantially. When the buffer zones were reopened to dwellings, the prior inhabitants of sites within those zones could once again claim their original sites and many naturally preferred to do this. This resulted in chaos for field staff, as the previously verified beneficiary lists became redundant overnight.

World Vision Sri Lanka established a stakeholder liaison group, later renamed Human Accountability Team (HAT), to ensure beneficiary participation in all phases of construction. Trained community mobilisers facilitated ongoing outreach to communities, undertaking beneficiary surveys and in-depth consultation to gather feedback and redesign the shelter approaches if required.

A step-by-step guidelines and training plan was prepared for community members, and the development of a beneficiary database (that managed beneficiary-specific information) was established to reduce confusion and corruption. The household surveys of shelter beneficiaries were the foundation of this database, where household needs were documented and used to provide beneficiary-identified services.

Due to the large number of housing units to be constructed, WV opted to engage contractors for rebuilding, rather than use the alternative community-driven model. Under the contractor-driven model, centralised from the capital, Colombo, the contractor was responsible for the procurement and supply of all construction materials, implementation of the project in accordance with technical specifications and design prepared and issued by World Vision (or its agent), and to meet nominated standards of quality. Local communities and beneficiaries had the opportunity to gain employment with the contractor if they were keen to contribute labour to build their own houses.

As conflict in north and east Sri Lanka escalated, there was criticism that the contracting model, managed from Colombo, was becoming less effective. The construction industry also became overloaded under the massive tsunami workload. Building materials became increasingly difficult to procure, resulting in rapid cost increases as demand far outstripped supply. The movement of materials through various parts of Sri Lanka also required various security checks, which added additional constraints and contributed to increased costs. It also resulted in reluctance by contractors to venture outside their 'comfort' zones.

In response to these growing complications, an alternative approach was devised. This involved breaking down the construction process into a number of defined sub-contract packages, eg. masonry, roofing, windows, electrical, etc. for a nominated group of houses. Then, based on a community or sub-community, a construction committee was appointed with the task of identifying a group of sub-contractors. World Vision staff supervised construction to completion, and signed off on work quality before payment was made. This model worked well and overcame some of the problems associated with the general shortage of commercial contractors.

Reflections

A strength in World Vision's programming was its rights-based approach to shelter, and its commitment from the beginning of the program to sort out complex land tenure and entitlement issues.

Another strength was the way field staff maintained professionalism and adhered to minimum standards. The project successfully engaged the community and ensured that participation took place through a mutual aid approach of self-help groups and construction committees, modelled around the principles of appreciative inquiry.

Another key element in the program's success was the use of local skills and materials, creating livelihoods for beneficiaries through cash-for-work programs and revival of small businesses during the reconstruction period.

These positives sit in contrast with the obvious lack of organisational skills and competency in the shelter sector and an absence of an agreed shelter framework for World Vision. Some people argue that the scale of this permanent shelter rebuilding initiative is a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence, and typically the territory of government planners rather than international NGOs like World Vision. In many respects, this is true, however it is still crucial that World Vision's comprehensive shelter and housing policy includes our position on temporary shelter and permanent housing. Even if it is to say we will do one, but not the other.

Lessons from the tsunami experience are already being adopted. Plans are in place to build shelter expertise within the World Vision Global Rapid Response Team. Upgrading World Vision's financial systems and business processes is on the agenda. Tighter human resource policies relevant to emergencies and appropriate communication plans are areas that have been highlighted as priorities for revision. World Vision has also revised its emergency response categories.

The Asian tsunami highlighted various gaps in the current implementation plans of all NGOs. Ultimately it was institutional standards and the commitment of World Vision staff, local and international, in the field – negotiating with governments and working with communities to implement a holistic program within a reasonable timeframe – that achieved results. This commitment enabled around 11,900 houses (different stages of completion at present) to be built across four tsunami-affected countries, each with their own set of unique circumstances and building models.

Program Details

Children of Romania

Reflecting on 15 years of child protection work in Romania

Valentin Sabau
Maria Muzur
Corina Popescu
Roxana Trupina

A key to the Children of Romania (CoR) project's success has been its consistent and constructive engagement with, and support of, government agencies, such as the Child Protection Department. This NGO/government relationship has ensured that service models, originally developed and piloted through the CoR project, have been regularly integrated into government policies and practices over the years.

World Vision Romania started the Children of Romania (CoR) project in 1992, with support from World Vision Australia and World Vision US, as a response to the bleak institutionalisation of more than 100,000 children under the previous communist regime. Born of a silent tragedy, the CoR project has evolved over the past 15 years from a welfare response into an adaptive and innovative program, piloting models of care in response to the protection needs of poor and abandoned Romanian children.

For decades preceding 1989, millions of Romanians suffered under an oppressive and notoriously brutal communist regime. When the Romanian economy took a downturn during the communist period, the quality of social services available to children and families fell, along with other quality of life indicators. As poor families and single parents struggled to meet the most basic of needs, tens of thousands of babies and children were abandoned to institutions under the guise of 'child protection'. As institutions struggled to find adequate levels of financial and human resources, these children experienced significant levels of neglect. Romania's shame was hidden from the public eye until the fall of the communist regime, when television crews released shocking footage of children in overcrowded dormitories to the world. Global attention was drawn to the plight of these children and their overworked and under-resourced carers.

World Vision Romania's primary objective at the time was to support caregivers from institutions through training, explicitly intended to improve the levels of individual and professional care given to these children. Food, medicines and educational

materials were also provided through the project, which focused its work in Timisoara, Cluj, Alexandria, Bucharest and Craiova.

An evolving response

During the mid 1990s the program's focus evolved, as World Vision partnered with institutions to develop more holistic 'care' frameworks and services. Early Education, for example, was a new service framework whereby care for institutionalised children was individually focused and sought to blend the provision of basic needs with emotional and social support, using volunteer networks. This enabled the children to have far more comprehensive developmental and socialising experiences as they grew up. This model was eventually mainstreamed by the Preschool State Child Institutions across Romania, and became the standard approach to child protection in the years that followed.

By 1997, the Romanian Government signalled its intent to begin the process of de-institutionalising care by promoting, through a new policy strategy, community- and family-based solutions to child abandonment. In response and in close dialogue with policy makers, World Vision piloted a number of alternative child care models and methodologies, including foster care, mother and child shelters and day care centres.

World Vision's foster care models aimed to keep children in safe, secure and loving family environments while, when possible, encouraging and enabling relationships with natural parents. A foster care network for children with disabilities and one for children in emergency situations which included abused children, were also developed and piloted. Since 2000, the Child Protection Department has gradually assumed responsibility for funding and running various foster care models initiated by World Vision.

In the late 1990s, World Vision provided social support services, through mother and child shelters, to women facing family crises, or with no financial or family support. Several of these services have since been taken over by local governments in Cluj and Valcea. In Bucharest, this service continues to be financially supported by World Vision. However, the CoR project is focused on transferring responsibility for the District One shelter to the Child Protection Department and ensuring the service is replicated in District Five where there is clear need, but currently no shelter.

A number of day care centres were also established by World Vision. These aimed to provide care and education opportunities for children aged six months to five years old, considered to be 'at risk' of abandonment. In addition to support for the children, opportunities were created for parents to receive job counselling and support for social reintegration.

Between 1992 and 2006, more than 40,000 Romanian children and adults were supported through CoR project initiatives. Improved partnerships with institutions, families and government agencies also resulted in a significant decrease in the rate of child abandonment in maternity and paediatric hospitals. Parents were supported to increase their understanding of their rights and obligations, and also assisted in accessing services aimed at addressing crisis conditions which typically resulted in child abandonment.

Project breakthroughs

Over the 15-year period there have been several significant breakthroughs. A watershed moment occurred in 1996 when World Vision commissioned the very first child abuse research in Romania. Conducted by World Vision social workers in Cluj County, written in partnership with Babes-Boylai, the University of Cluj and the Department of Sociology and Social Services, the study examined and reviewed the types and causes of child abuse and neglect occurring in that region. This knowledge was then used to directly inform advocacy responses such as

ROMANIA

Snap-shot:
Romania

Romania is a middle income country with a GNI per capita of $3,830 in 2005. With a population of 21.6 million, it is the second largest country in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Despite robust economic growth over the past five years and its recent European Community (EU) integration, over 30 percent of Romanians continue to live in poverty.

Program Details

Project partners:
World Vision Australia, World Vision Romania, various local NGOs and other agencies

Program start date:
November 1992

Project end date:
Ongoing

Target population:
165,928 people

Funding source:
Children of Romania appeal

Funds remitted from Australia by Financial Year (FY) since 1998:
FY1998 US$303,702
FY1999 US$277,540
FY2000 US$230,000
FY2001 US$184,477
FY2002 US$90,000
FY2003 US$101,000
FY2004 US$139,968
FY2005 US$200,000
FY2006 US$150,000
FY2007 US$100,000

Total funds remitted from Australia since 1998:
US$1,776,687

awareness campaigns, and to improve the tailoring of services for abused children.

Another notable moment occurred in October 2002 when, in response to the serious and increasing need for emergency child placement assistance, the CoR project developed the emergency foster care pilot model.

This proved to be a particularly challenging initiative for a number of reasons. World Vision found it difficult to identify foster parents for children requiring emergency assistance. Existing foster parents were uncomfortable about accepting children into their homes when the 'matching' process they were accustomed to didn't take place prior to the arrival of a child. Also, under existing legislation, since emergency placements were invariably for periods of less than one month, emergency care foster parents were not initially eligible to receive financial support from the state. At the time, foster care needed to be provided for at least two months in order for the child's file to be processed by local authorities and for payments to be made available to carers.

In addition to piloting the model itself, World Vision engaged in considerable lobbying to ensure that the child protection legislation was modified appropriately. The emergency foster care pilot was mainstreamed in 2004, when

the Child Protection Department assumed responsibility for service delivery. In that same year, a new regulation covering foster care for emergency situations was included in child protection law.

Reflections

Clearly a key strength of the CoR project has been its relationship with, and support of the Child Protection departments of Valcea, Cluj County and Bucharest. While they were the primary government departments providing child protection services in these regions, at key moments they clearly lacked the capacity and resources to provide the necessary services required.

While new care models were introduced and piloted by World Vision, various government representatives were trained and supported to take them over. Through working groups, CoR project staff assisted with the development of program documents and standards including methodology, instruments and regulatory compliance requirements (such as number of staff required) which were to be observed by all child protection service providers.

Another key success factor was the CoR project's capacity to evolve strategically, and remain responsive to a changing context. Though initially a welfare service, the real need emerged over time. It was to model support strategies for local communities and government to develop, integrate and sustain a continuum of services appropriate to the reality of Romanian child abandonment and protection.

The CoR project deliberately targeted capacity building for individuals, governments and NGOs , based on quality standard social service delivery. Crucially, World Vision worked with a breadth of partners (hospitals, government departments, local governments and other NGOs) at all stages in the cycle of project management – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – in order to ensure sustainable ownership of the initiatives. By maintaining constructive

and collaborative relationships at the program level, World Vision became recognised as a trusted and committed partner and was able to advocate for, influence and agitate legislative and systemic changes around child protection policies more broadly.

New era, new opportunities

Romania's accession to the European Union largely coincided with the CoR project timeframe. In response to a reform agenda being imposed as part of accession to the EU, the government has almost certainly been more open to dialogue, and willing to engage with key child protection issues. This unique situation enabled World Vision's advocacy expectations, across many key issues, to be exceeded. However, without doubt, the CoR project's work in the field enabled World Vision to advocate with authority for quality standards in child protection.

Over the past four years, CoR has focused its work on preventing child abandonment through prevention, care and advocacy. As Romania enters the EU, many expect its lack of market competitiveness, particularly in agriculture, to result in a significant drop in the standard of living for rural Romanians. Moving forward then, World Vision Romania will focus on the following:

- advocacy, ensuring that appropriate child protection services are replicated and made available in regions where community assessments have identified needs;

- creating Community Information Centres to ensure child rights information, and programs about family and child welfare and protection services are more accessible to parents, families and carers;

- commissioning research that explores and investigates the link between pre-natal and post-natal depression and the incidence of child abandonment.

Moving forward

For various reasons, the Australian Government has not allowed donations to Romanian programs to be tax-deductible. In spite of this, thanks to a group of dedicated Australian donors, World Vision Australia has been able to maintain ongoing support for Children of Romania over a 15-year period. As a consequence, CoR offers some interesting insights into the relationship between development practice and responsive, but proactive advocacy initiatives, where NGOs might empower new or under-resourced governments to engage in quality care-focused structural reform on key sector issues.

Certainly the learnings from this program can be applied to other World Vision child rescue programs that deal with a range of complex child rights and protection issues. For example, World Vision Australia is currently involved in addressing child labour practices in India and juvenile justice responses in Mongolia.

With little doubt, the agility and re-sponsiveness of the CoR project staff to identify opportunities at key moments was a strength. Their ability to review the project's focus, while nurturing and em-powering strategic partners in the process, ensured that advancements and learnings were shared and built on. And clearly, the recognition that they were committed to long-term sustainability of support pro-grams for the target communities made the world of difference in achieving substantial outcomes.
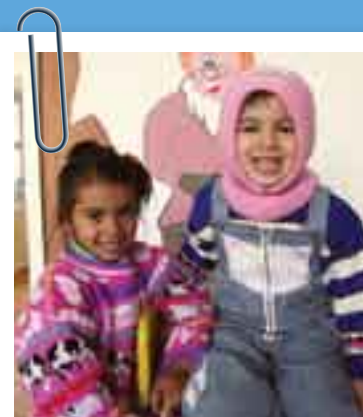
Fair trade, the Brazilian experience

Making markets work for small producers as a pathway out of poverty

Roni Oracion

World Vision Brazil's Fair Trade and Access to Markets (FTAM) program has certainly grown up. From humble beginnings exporting melons to European markets, through innovation, ambition, willingness to take risks and learn from its (not insignificant) mistakes, the project has successfully scaled up. It now provides business development services to over 6,000 small producers in northeast Brazil. As the program enters a new scaling-up phase in the second half of 2007, involving coordinated World Vision trade programs across six South American countries, a whole new set of learning experiences is emerging.

World Vision Australia began supporting World Vision Brazil's FTAM in 2000, when funds were initially used to enhance the food security of local farmers, mainly melon growers. The program was then 'graduated' to enhance community development linkages and establish the Northeast Brazil Fair Trade Program. Currently, World Vision Australia is working with World Vision national offices in Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Columbia, as well as Brazil, to build on the success of this and other micro-enterprise development and trade access programs.

Fair trade

The European-centred Fair Trade Labelling Organisation estimates that its sales in Europe, which represent 60 – 70 percent of the fair trade market, have been growing at an average of 20 percent per year since 2000. The annual net retail value of fair trade products sold in Europe now exceeds EUR660 million (Hulm 2006). Although just over 0.01 percent of all global trade, fair trade is setting standards to enable inclusion of small producers in the market economy. Fair trade is a concept that challenges the growing inequities and environmental degradation that has accompanied the growth in world trade more broadly.

In general, small agricultural producers in Brazil live in areas where there is little or no infrastructure to support the productive process. They have very limited access to communication services. As a result, they are kept at the fringes of, or excluded from, the market economy. In many respects this is one of the root causes of the massive inequality that exists between South America's rich and poor populations.

- There are three key constraints that perpetuate the market isolation of small producers in Brazil, and other Latin American countries more broadly:

- Small producers are resource-poor, lack market information and are poorly organised for collective marketing;

- Appropriate technology that would allow a regular supply of quality produce, that meets the standards of specialised local and international markets and skills, is lacking; and

- Relations between small producers and traders are usually exploitative, such that small producers receive an inequitable share of the proceeds from the final sale to the consumer.

How the FTAM works

World Vision Brazil has assisted small producers' access to markets as one approach to fight poverty and its causes in a way that promises to deliver long-term benefits. This approach is characterised by promoting an alternative system of trade, and ensuring that when new markets are accessed, small producers maximise their profit share from sales to consumers. The FTAM operates according to a three-pronged approach:

- offering support to small producers and micro-entrepreneurs;

- facilitating the development of a commercial market; and

- advocating for a consistent, fair and ethical market.

Support services provided to small producers include technical assistance and consultancy services, capacity building, microcredit, marketing linkages and advocacy.

To provide market linkages and strengthen FTAM in 2005, the program established Ética: Comercio Solidario, a joint venture partnership between World Vision and small producers associations that operates as a trading agent. Recently Ética:

Comercio Solidario forged an alliance with Boticario, an ethical corporation with over 2,500 shops in Brazil and market relationships in 25 other countries. While Boticario has excellent market reach, it is equally well known for promoting quality, innovation, environmental protection, consumer's rights and social responsibility.

Through FTAM, World Vision Brazil has been active in campaigns to promote fair trade, in setting up producers' networks in the northeast in partnership with the Brazilian Fair Trade Forum (Forum de Articulacao de Comercio Ético e Solidario do Brasil, or FACES), and in negotiating with the Brazilian Government for support to small producers.

The program has influenced the Brazilian Government's decision to allocate US$18 million to projects supporting access to markets for small producers. More recently, World Vision Brazil has been involved in the formulation of a national fair trade public policy. Brazil is expected to be the first developing country to adopt such a specific policy, enabling small producers to access markets.

Lessons learned

As outlined above, World Vision Australia is currently working with World Vision national offices in Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia to expand this initiative. As part of this process, it is timely to reflect on some of the challenges and lessons learned from the FTAM over the past seven years.

Lesson 1

It is crucial to understand the relationship between livelihoods, value chains, profitability and sustainability. The global trade environment is complex. Given the need to improve quality (in terms of produce and packaging for example) and the time taken for small producers to revise their work practices accordingly, it is actually a lot less risky and more sustainable for commercial trading

BRAZIL

Snap-shot:
About Brazil

Despite significant economic development in recent years, the poorest one-fifth of Brazil's 182 million people share 2.4 percent of its national income according to the World Bank. Brazil is second only to South Africa in a world ranking of income inequality. According to 2003 data, about one-fifth of the population live on less than US$2 a day and 8 percent live on less than US$1 a day. Brazil's northeast contains the single largest concentration of rural poverty in Latin America. While education indicators show primary school attendance nearing 100 percent, pre-primary and secondary school attendance remains low compared with other middle-income countries. Infant and maternal mortality rates are improving; however, the national indicators mask significant regional differences, with the northeast and north lagging behind other regions.

Program Details

Support outline:
World Vision Australia's most recent support for the FTAM project ended in 2005. World Vision Brazil then successfully engaged a range of other donors and partners in order to graduate the project.

In the second half of 2007, World Vision Australia will support a fair trade and access to market initiative for small South American producers across six South American countries.

Funding sources 2002 - 2005:
AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)
Corporate and Major Donors

Funds remitted from Australia by Financial Year (FY) since 2002:
FY2002 US$90,652
FY2003 US$90,000
FY2004 US$112,500
FY2005 US$67,500

activities to develop gradually. Programs benefit from improving produce quality and diversity, building links with local and regional markets, then moving on to national and finally, international markets. Aiming prematurely for export sales can prove costly, particularly if expectations are not aligned to the sometimes harsh realities of the export environment. This is the case even more so if small producers do not have diverse outlets for their products to balance out the boom and bust nature of the global market context, especially for primary products.

Lesson 2

Large trading companies can count on insurance, hedging mechanisms and easy access to cheap credit to strengthen their competitive advantages. Small producers are, without protection of a buffer fund, vulnerable to seasonal price fluctuations, currency variations and swings in global trade. When pro-poor trade programs are ready to go global, it is important to set up a buffer fund to provide small producers with protection against occasional trade swings. When it came to setting up a trade program, FTAM aimed ambitiously high and went straight into the export market. Without the protection of Fair Trade certification and labelling processes, it was immediately vulnerable. This was a costly lesson for the program when, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, a big drop in the price of melons in Europe required World Vision and small producers to cover the losses. Naturally losses of this nature run the risk of creating considerable devastation amongst poor farmers and their families if expectations go unmet and alternative buffer or response mechanisms are not already in place.

Lesson 3

Proactive advocacy and promotional assistance is crucial to create space for small producers to confidently access new markets. Advocacy at regional and national

government level is also important, as is advocacy in end markets, both in country and abroad. Little or no infrastructure support to the production and marketing process in rural areas already contributes to higher costs and the erosion of whatever competitive advantages small producers might have over big businesses. In addition, global trade is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a small number of large-scale corporations, capable of edging small businesses out of the market through cost cutting measures. And while trade agreements, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), offer considerable protection for intellectual and property rights, small producers will always lack reasonable access and capacity to assert their interests against global corporations.

Lesson 4

Although the FTAM was successful in forging strategic alliances between small producers, NGOs and the Brazilian government at local and national levels, it was weak in developing alliances with the private sector. As the private sector is a key actor in local, national and international trade, this is an area that needs to be strengthened for the program to develop its global competitiveness. The importance of large-scale collective bargaining by groups of small producers, and the importance of quality product development to enable small producers to negotiate better prices for their goods, are also key factors that will influence success.

Moving forward

Fair trade in international markets has grown exponentially over the last three decades. Expansion into mainstream distribution channels means it is increasingly being recognised by consumers, public authorities and even private companies as an efficient tool for poverty eradication and sustainable development. Certainly, World Vision Brazil's FTAM

suggests that fair trade has significant potential for bringing the benefits of trade into the hands of communities that need it most. However, it is a strategy not without risks for NGOs such as World Vision.

Incorporating lessons from the Brazil and other South American trade programming experiences, the expanded six country FTAM project, which is scheduled for roll out in the second half of 2007, will develop a coordinated Latin America 'market access advocacy strategy'. This will be implemented at local, national, regional and international levels and also carry out a regional fair trade and market access capacity building program in the five new countries.

Another priority is to establish and maintain a market information system, initially in Chile. This system aims to link producers and buyers, providing information on prices, price movements, producers and quantities produced and other market-related information. Ética: Comercio Solidario will be scaled up as a regional trade facility with a market access capacity building centre that will utilise face-to-face and virtual educational methods.

The FTAM rollout process is already uncovering its own set of new challenges. For example, each participating country is at a different stage, and has a different level of understanding about its development regarding access to market projects. So, for example, the concept of fair trade is both well known and understood in Chile where a solidarity trading program has already been developed, but it is not well known in Bolivia.

The viability of using a Brazil-based Ética: Commercio Solidario as a trading facility in other countries is also in question, in spite of much success having been achieved in the Brazilian domestic market. These challenges have led to ongoing and robust debates between the respective World Vision national offices during the design and redesign phase. Perhaps unsurprisingly due to the variety in understandings and experiences, it has already taken a year to ensure that all six countries are able to fully participate in the design process. Nevertheless, the stakes are high and the opportunities are considerable, so each country is keen to face these challenges and reach the goal of small producers generating high quality goods, gaining access to markets and receiving a fair price.

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Closing the cycle to human trafficking

Frameworks for effective law enforcement collaborations in the Mekong sub-region

MEKONG SUB-REGION

Susu Thatun

Recent World Vision partnerships in the Greater Mekong sub-region challenge a cynical, and often held misconception that strengthening law enforcement while also improving human rights is contradictory.

The Greater Mekong sub-region (GMS) covers about 2.3 million square kilometres, has a combined population of 240 million people and comprises six countries that share the Mekong River, running through Yunan Province in China, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.

**Productive and unique collaborations between World Vision (WV) and police in a**

number of these countries is actively improving prosecutorial conditions for victims of human trafficking. These improvements are enabling and empowering victims to come forward and testify against their abusers, thereby also improving the rate of effective prosecutions.

The rise of human trafficking in the GMS

In the early 1990s, a shift from socialist to more open-market economies, combined with the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) program for greater economic integration, created a major enhancement in connectivity amongst the various countries of the GMS. This has resulted in a much greater flow of goods, trade, commerce and communication between the countries. However, this economic progress has not as yet dramatically eased the economic disparity experienced between and within the various countries. Thailand's GDP per capita, for example, is eight times more than the neighbouring countries of Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia (UNDP 2005).

Legal opportunities to work and migrate within the region have been limited by the various governments' slow development of labour agreements. But the demand to capitalise on new business opportunities has resulted in extreme impatience with formal and legal migration procedures for workers.

A consequence of this market impatience has been the growth in what we call human trafficking, the modern form of slavery. Opportunists have moved into this labour policy void and brought the supply and demand sides of the labour market together
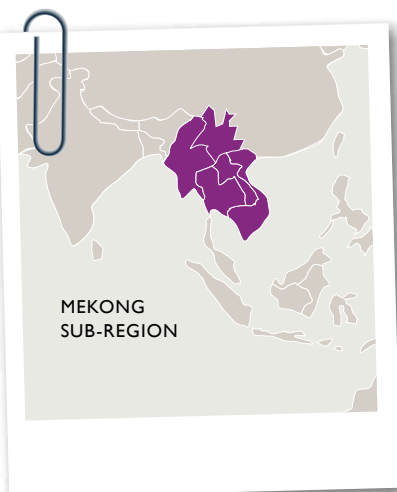
illegally. The recent US State Department Report suggests that of the 600,000 to 800,000 people trafficked globally, some 250,000 of them are from South-East Asia.

World Vision – an integrated strategy

Many initial attempts by non-government organisations (NGOs) including World Vision to address the consequences of this growing phenomenon, were predominantly welfare oriented. Interventions largely focused on prevention and protection of trafficked persons. World Vision's anti-trafficking initiatives also focused on prevention through intensive community engagement in education, health and micro-enterprise development. These initiatives are primarily aimed at district level and align with community development programming.

However, World Vision's significant presence in all countries in the GMS gives it solid community-level relationships and presence on both sides of borders. Within the anti-trafficking field this is an extremely useful comparative advantage since the same agency can work in places of origin and in a cross-border or point-to-point manner. It also provides working links with some of the poorest and most isolated areas where communities may have few options other than to embark on unsafe migration.
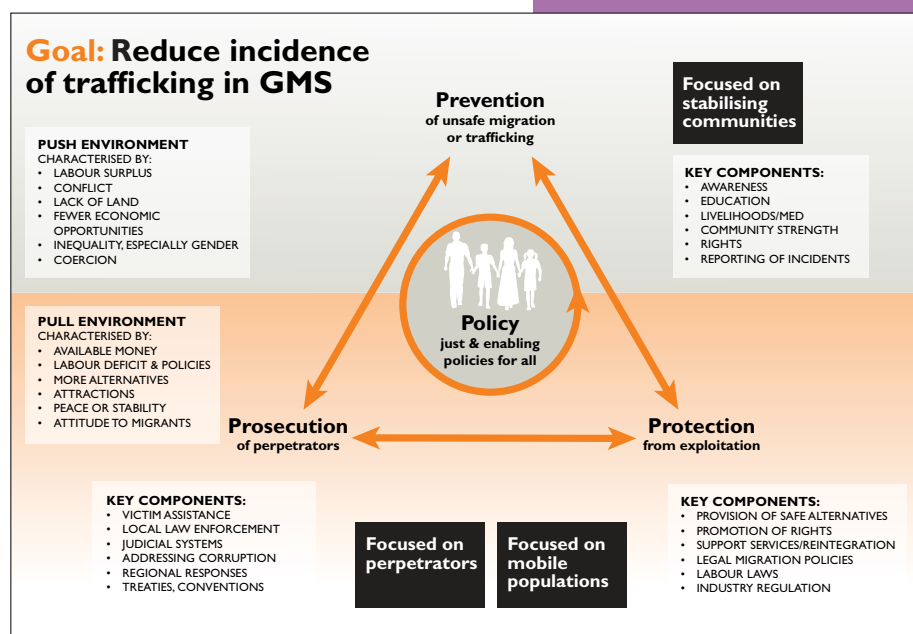
Since 2002, WV has leveraged its relationships and presence to develop initiatives aimed at strengthening the prosecutorial mechanisms of anti-trafficking. A 'prosecution' approach operates predominately in the 'pull environment', the environment where money and markets combine to con, coerce or convince migrants to take risks. By assisting local authorities to build their capacity to address the rising crime of human trafficking, World Vision has worked directly with and alongside the law enforcement authorities at the community level. These efforts work to preserve the dignity and rights of migrants by providing victim care and case management allowing police to gather evidence for successful prosecutions.

These efforts, in part, help reduce the potency of the pull environment but more needs to be done to shift the focus from victim care and case management to working proactively with police on prosecutions.

Until recently, direct partnerships between international NGOs and law enforcement authorities were often marked with tension. The notable exception has been Thailand, and to a lesser degree Cambodia, where government-NGO partnerships collaborating on criminal justice issues and processes have been relatively stronger compared to other countries in the region. For World Vision, Thailand has provided opportunities where projects operate at the community level to connect and empower authorities, rather than isolate them, in a bid to ensure a better protective environment for migrant workers as well as victims of trafficking, thereby reducing incidences of trafficking.

The diagram below highlights the dynamics of an integrated approach in a push and pull environment. It should be noted that the elements stated under these environments as well as key components stated under each category of intervention – prevention, protection and prosecution – are meant to be indicative and not comprehensive.

An integrated approach to trafficking:

Top: Police training session, Cambodia.

Bottom: Children's centre, Cambodia.

Goal: Reduce incidence of trafficking in GMS

Prevention of unsafe migration or trafficking

Focused on stabilising communities

KEY COMPONENTS:
- AWARENESS
- EDUCATION
- LIVELIHOODS/MED
- COMMUNITY STRENGTH
- RIGHTS
- REPORTING OF INCIDENTS

PUSH ENVIRONMENT CHARACTERISED BY:
- LABOUR SURPLUS
- CONFLICT
- LACK OF LAND
- FEWER ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES
- INEQUALITY, ESPECIALLY GENDER
- COERCION

PULL ENVIRONMENT CHARACTERISED BY:
- AVAILABLE MONEY
- LABOUR DEFICIT & POLICIES
- MORE ALTERNATIVES
- ATTRACTIONS
- PEACE OR STABILITY
- ATTITUDE TO MIGRANTS

Policy just & enabling policies for all

Prosecution of perpetrators

Protection from exploitation

KEY COMPONENTS:
- VICTIM ASSISTANCE
- LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
- JUDICIAL SYSTEMS
- ADDRESSING CORRUPTION
- REGIONAL RESPONSES
- TREATIES, CONVENTIONS

Focused on perpetrators

Focused on mobile populations

KEY COMPONENTS:
- PROVISION OF SAFE ALTERNATIVES
- PROMOTION OF RIGHTS
- SUPPORT SERVICES/REINTEGRATION
- LEGAL MIGRATION POLICIES
- LABOUR LAWS
- INDUSTRY REGULATION

Sectoral or multi-country interventions

Program Details

Programming overview:
Since 2003, World Vision Australia has supported 16 different programs aimed at addressing child and human trafficking within, but not limited to Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Project start date:
World Vision Australia's first child trafficking initiatives started in Thailand and Myanmar in July 2003.

Current project portfolio:
As of June 2007 World Vision Australia was supporting eight separate child trafficking programs in the Greater Mekong sub-region.

Since 2003 funding for GMS programming has come from the following sources:
AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)
Child Sponsorship
UNICEF
Child Rescue
Bounceback
Corporate and Major Donors
Wills and Bequests

Funds remitted to GMS programs from Australia by Financial Years (FY):
FY 2003 US$24,477
FY 2004 US$211,941
FY 2005 US$528,260
FY 2006 US$790,845
FY 2007 US$566,305

Total funds remitted from Australia to GMS programs over 5 years:
US$2,121,828

Other information:
In addition to field program support, an essential part of World Vision Australia's response to child and human trafficking has been through high level advocacy and campaigning over several years.

World Vision's approach to prosecution

World Vision's initial collaboration with law enforcement, and in particular the police, took place in Cambodia in 2000, with the implementation of a project called the Law Enforcement Against Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children (LEASECT). World Vision strategically partnered with UNICEF and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to build the capacity of the Ministry of Interior's Anti-Human Trafficking and Juvenile Protection Department to undertake better investigation and more effective prosecutions. Other key components of this initiative included:

- *community peer educators* – which include police officers and cadets.

- *support to set up a hotline* – now annually reporting over 800 cases of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

- *counselling training* – for those in authority including police and local authorities.

- *police training* – specialised police units, at both national and provincial levels, trained in the legal and technical issues concerning law enforcement and the sexual exploitation of women and children.

- a national Sex Crimes Database - established to record all information on child sexual exploitation and trafficking cases.

Provincial databases were also established in four Cambodian provinces: Siem Reap, Banteay Meanchey, Battambang and Sihanoukville. The database is proving to be extremely useful in monitoring cases of child sexual exploitation and human trafficking, following trends and illustrating the project's impact on police capacity.

In recent years, World Vision has continued to expand its partnerships with law enforcement authorities in other countries.

It has played a significant role in developing trust among vulnerable communities (such as undocumented migrants in Thailand, ethnic Vietnamese in Cambodia, etc). Staff have assisted community members to seek assistance and redress when relatives, friends or associates go missing and/or are believed to have been trafficked. Case management approaches such as these, that try to minimise gaps and create links between police and the community, invariably only work when there is complete trust in the agency working on the case.

By developing a close working partnership, WV Vietnam has been able to increase the skills and confidence of the police – while also increasing their understanding of trafficking and its impacts. Furthermore, World Vision's extensive experience in repatriation work and its close collaboration with the police has also helped in linking trafficked victims with the judicial system. Police have reported improved understanding and capacity to identify early problems as a consequence of this collaborative work.

In its Mekong Delta Regional Trafficking Strategy project, World Vision is also developing its capacity to collect and manage data on missing persons, particularly in Laos. WV Laos has been sharing information with the Lao specialist police unit to assist in tracing missing persons and in providing crucial information in high risk cases. With its multinational community networks, World Vision is not only developing the potential to track individuals at risk of trafficking, but has also started mapping patterns of movement and behaviour for use in future responses.

Key reflections

There are some insights to be gained from World Vision's experience in working with law enforcement and contribution to a more effective criminal justice response to human trafficking.

i.   Collaborating with authorities while

keeping the best interests of the victims and the communities in mind is proving indispensable in World Vision's work to fight trafficking in all spheres, from prevention and protection to prosecution.

ii. As an agency with a strong community presence in the region, World Vision's local, regional and cross-national networks and relationships with authorities are resulting in proactive victim identification as well as carefully assessed rescue strategies.

iii. The nature of collaborations between World Vision and the police to date have demonstrated significant potential for expansion, both within the organisation and by other NGOs. For example, by addressing the challenges and protection requirements of trafficked people seeking to take action through the criminal justice system. It is extremely important that more enabling conditions are created, to encourage and allow more victims to come forward as survivors and testify against their abusers. This would lead to more effective prosecutions and act as a deterrent to other traffickers.

iv. There are still constraints to working further up the judicial ladder. World Vision's short timeframes for trafficking projects, usually two to three years, don't facilitate a greater depth of work beyond local and district level policing. Prosecution also remains a 'specialised' area of work, requiring a high capacity and calibre of staff. Sufficient numbers of skilled prosecutors are also needed to oversee the cases which can be quite complex in nature.

Moving forward

In many respects, World Vision's partnership approach to law enforcement agencies disproves the common misconception that strengthening law enforcement and protecting human rights are contradictory.

The expansion of World Vision's activities to assist with law enforcement moves the agency's efforts to combat trafficking onto a new arena. Increasingly, all aspects of the crime are now being addressed as part of a single package, which includes prevention, protection and prosecution across several regions and several countries. The rising rate of prosecution and witness cooperation attests to these achievements.

World Vision's support through the LEASECT for the first specialist law enforcement response to trafficking has been the precursor to the establishment of similar units under the auspices of the Asia Regional Trafficking in Persons Project (ARTIP) in four of the six GMS countries. Such units are now recommended by ASEAN as a regional standard. It is outcomes such as these that highlight the important role NGOs can take in creating a more effective law enforcement response to trafficking while undertaking their primary responsibilities to serve those that have been victimised by various forms of exploitation.

Case study
Mekong sub-region

Top: Family reunion, Cambodia.

Bottom: Rescued from exploitation, Cambodia.

Section 3

Reviewing new approaches to our work

Why campaign?

World Vision's experience of Make Poverty History in Australia

Andrew Hassett
Anueja Gopalakrishnan
Sue Cant

There's little doubt that a strong, vocal constituency can influence policy change. Clearly, public attitudes, behaviour and opinion matter to decision makers in government and, increasingly, in the business community.

Campaigns are generally only one component of a broader advocacy strategy, and they are usually only launched when other forms of more direct lobbying fail to get any traction. As all but a few developed world governments have failed to meet targets for reducing global inequalities, the past few decades has seen a rapid growth in both the number and sophistication of international development campaigns.

With 60 coalition members, the Make Poverty History campaign in Australia is unprecedented in scale and organisation. It has gained prominence with the public through widespread exposure in the media and achieved considerable recognition and influence within the political, policy and business communities. The following review of its role and achievements provides insights into the benefits and challenges of advocacy campaigns.

Campaigns can deliver results

There are several clear examples of what can be achieved when international policies are challenged. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines resulted in an entire class of weapons being banned for the first time in history. Jubilee 2000 mobilised over 24 million people from 166 countries to ask leaders of the richest countries to cancel the debts of the world's poorest countries. To date this has resulted in at least US$35 billion of debt service relief for highly indebted countries (Alonso-Gamo, 2007).

The investment in advocacy by the non-government sector is tiny by contrast to the potential impact that can flow to the world's poor from increased funding and pro-poor international and national policy change.

If effective lobbying by NGOs was to result in an increase in the Australian Government's Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) of more than A$2

AUSTRALIA

billion annually, the outcomes for poor people in developing countries would easily be more than the output of at least seven new World Visions.

For these reasons, World Vision Australia (WVA) has played a key role in numerous social justice campaigns formed around national and international coalitions.

Make Poverty History

The Make Poverty History campaign name originated in Britain as part of the international Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) movement which was founded in 2003 and operates in more than 100 countries. The principal aim of the coalition is a call on world leaders to take urgent action to address global poverty through achievement of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. These key targets for poverty reduction, include greater aid funding and the provision of better health and education.

One of the main goals of the UK campaign was to mobilise non-government organisations around key events including the G8 meeting in Gleneagles and the UN World Summit held in 2005. Within 10 months of its founding, the coalition grew from 40 members to more than 500 and included a broad cross-section of development organisations, trade unions and faith groups. The founding UK movement continues under the auspices of the GCAP but has continued in Australia under the Make Poverty History brand. Since 2004, WVA has played a key role in Make Poverty History (MPH). The Australian coalition is made up of more than 60 aid agencies, community groups and churches. Tim Costello, Chief Executive of WVA, is co-chair of MPH together with Andrew Hewitt, Executive Director of Oxfam Australia.

The high priority given to poverty in Africa at the 2005 G8 summit by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon

Brown, showed the early impact of the campaign. The G8 was attended by 250,000 MPH demonstrators and there was a host of other events in 80 countries over the course of 2005.

MPH Australia used the momentum provided by the Gleneagles summit to organise a number of campaign initiatives at local, regional and national level. The most high profile event was a major concert with U2 lead singer and anti-poverty campaigner Bono to coincide with the G20 meeting in Melbourne in 2006. The concert was attended by 15,000 Australians.

In 2007, more than 35,000 Australians participated in the FACE UP to poverty campaign by providing their photographs which were projected onto the Sydney Opera House.

Has the campaign worked?

While it has been three years since the MPH campaign was launched in Australia, there has been no written review of the campaign's achievements. Nor has an independent evaluation of the campaign's impact in Australia been conducted.

Nevertheless, internal WVA research, the growth of an MPH supporter base, increased media references to the campaign and anecdotal feedback suggest that Make Poverty History has resonated in the community, policy circles, media and government.

There were two objectives when the campaign began:

- To mobilise Australian civil society and the public in support of the MDGs and the Make Poverty History campaign; and

- To influence policy change to achieve more and better aid, based on the MDG framework, fair trade and debt relief.

In terms of the first goal, hundreds of thousands of Australians have participated in MPH events across the country and there is a strong network of several hundred

MPH volunteers nationwide. More than 45,000 Australians have formally joined the campaign, receiving regular campaign updates, and more than 800,000 white bands (the campaign symbol) have been distributed. There were 1.5 million Australians reached through various concert-related activities during the G20 last year.

One request by MPH for supporters to email the Federal Leader of the Opposition, Kevin Rudd, led to more than 1,000 emails being sent to Mr Rudd in the space of just 24 hours.

While in general these surveys and supporter numbers suggest that the campaign's objective of mobilising civil society and the public has been successful, there is still a need to reach a broader cross-section of Australians.

The second goal of MPH is about influencing policy change to increase aid volumes, ensure fair trade and provide debt relief. These are summarised briefly below.

Fair Trade

Effectively, there has been no progress on fair trade since the Australian campaign began in 2004. That said, it is important to acknowledge both the limitations in impacting complex international trade negotiations and also the progressive approach of the Australian Government, particularly through the Cairns Group, and the abolition of tariffs on goods imported from developing countries.

Debt Relief

There has been a significant policy announcement on debt relief that can be directly attributed to the impact of the campaign and the concerted private lobbying efforts of MPH member, Jubilee. The ALP has committed in government to seek negotiations with the Indonesian Government on a debt swap agreement which would allow existing payments made to service debt to be used for mutually agreed poverty reduction activities like

health and education. In addition, more than A$600 million has been provided to Iraq in debt relief although this has been driven by political, rather than poverty-reduction imperatives.

Aid quantity and quality

The aid increase sought by the MPH campaign is based on an international commitment made in 1975 that countries should give 0.7 percent of their Gross National Income (GNI) in foreign aid. Various Australian governments have reiterated their intentions to meet this target, but an explicit funding timetable has never been outlined.

In fact in Australia, ODA has actually suffered a continued decline as a percentage of our GNI over the past 30 years. Since the campaign began the following announcements to increase the aid budget have been made:

- The announcement in September 2005 that the government would increase the aid budget to around A$4 billion per year (up to 0.34 percent of GNI) by 2010 and the subsequent release in 2006 of the Federal Government's White Paper on Australia's Overseas Aid Program which provides the framework for this increased spending; and

- The 2007/08 Budget confirmed the government is on track to meet this commitment, with the announcement of a A$3.15 billion aid budget in 2006/07 and timetabled commitments to achieve A$4.3 billion by 2010.

It is difficult to measure the impact of the campaign on these announcements given the complexity of the policy environment and without a proper evaluation that includes interviews with the key policy makers involved. Broader feedback provided by senior Australian politicians across parties indicates that MPH campaigning has created an environment where development aid is seen to have 'arrived' on the mainstream political agenda, which is consistent with interviews
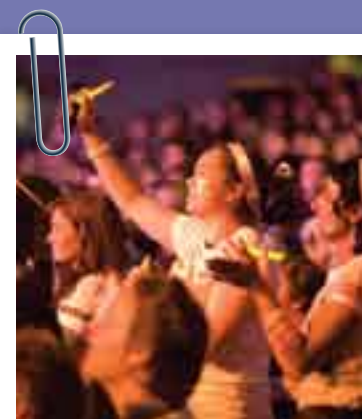
Reviewing new approaches to our work

conducted during the UK evaluation.

The most significant policy change which can be directly attributed to the impact of the MPH campaign in Australia was the July 2007 announcement by the Australian Labor Party that it would increase aid funding to 0.5 percent of GNI by 2015. Anecdotal feedback from the ALP and public comments made by ALP leaders at the time of the announcement suggest that the combination of public MPH events, in particular the G20 concert, and private lobbying has directly influenced the ALP decision (Rudd, 2007).

If a Labor Government were to enact this promise it would be the greatest achievement of the Australian campaign thus far and would go a substantial way to fulfilling a major objective – to achieve the MDG target of reaching 0.7 percent of GNI by 2015. Irrespective of who wins the next federal election, both major parties have publicly committed to increasing the aid budget.

Nevertheless, even with these hard won commitments, the major policy objective of the campaign will not be achieved by the 2015 deadline.

There has also been significant movement on policy related to the quality of aid delivery and its effectiveness that reflect persistent lobbying by MPH agencies. Comments made by key policy makers acknowledging the views of the NGO sector suggest that MPH has made some, although not measurable, contribution to several policy positions. These include:

- Significant increases in funding to basic education and basic health which will be accelerated in the years 2007 to 2010.

- Greater support for HIV and AIDS programs.

- Increased support for effective multilateral organisations such as the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Global Vaccine Initiative and the Education for All Fast Track Initiative.

- Increased focus on the poor countries of South-East Asia as a share of total aid.

- A commitment to untie aid program funding.

- Increased emphasis on harmonising and coordinating aid around developing country development plans.

- Improved transparency and more emphasis on effectiveness.

- Increased funding for the delivery of aid through the NGO sector and for research and initiatives to promote demand-led governance through civil society.

Changing attitudes and influencing political change take time and require long-term campaigning. In three years, the MPH campaign has not achieved all of its objectives, but on balance it has been successful in mobilising public support, promoting political debate and has made important progress on at least one of its major policy objectives – the quantity and quality of aid.

Campaign lessons

For World Vision Australia, participating in the MPH coalition has been an extremely positive experience. However, working within a broader coalition of 60 partners has provided some interesting reflections for us as an organisation. The following observations correspond to research conducted in the UK about the coalition's effectiveness in that country, often these observations also reflect World Vision's experience. These are provided below without purporting to represent the views of other coalition members.

Leadership, decision-making and accountability

A broad coalition poses obvious challenges in terms of organisational structure, decision-making, budgeting and the priority of particular agendas. Consensus decision-making has its

benefits – it attracts more support – and its disadvantages - it takes more time and resources. Good results have been achieved, but with minimal central day-to-day management through a secretariat and little formal management authority, it has been difficult at times to ensure agreed decisions are acted upon in a timely manner.

Given that there are similarities to the UK experience, the evaluation report provides some important insights for the campaign in Australia.

The coalition model means there are inevitable trade-offs between leadership and decision-making. As in the UK, the downside is that there is "no clear relationship between activity, accountability and responsibility." (Martin, et al 2005)

Resourcing

Distribution of workload in coalitions can also be complicated - and as reported in the UK evaluation - this has led to considerable staff burnout which needs to be better managed in future.

"There needs to be a clear understanding of the work to be done, the resources and responsibility for carrying the work out, the mandate for oversight and the accountability to sign the work off. If this work is not done in advance, it stores up problems once the campaign is underway."

While it is difficult to account for both indirect and direct costs across 60 agencies, an estimate of the financial cost of the campaign has not been adequately recorded to enable a proper assessment of return on investment.

Messaging and lobbying

The growth of MPH has created some confusion among politicians and policy makers. Is it a campaign or a quasi organisation? This raises questions about the potential duplication of lobbying efforts, appropriate messaging and

whether there is the potential for MPH to undermine the efforts of the peak lobbying body, the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID).

While NGO partners might share the perspective that MPH and ACFID serve different purposes, the perception within the broader community may not be the same.

Planning

As in the UK, there is a gap in strategic planning which gets subsumed by the need to ensure week-to-week work is completed. This is, perhaps, a matter of resources but it also goes to the issue of responsibility. The following comment from the UK evaluation report provides a useful reflection for the campaign in Australia although the caveat is that there has been significant ongoing activity here.

> *"Without this strategic vision, the work of 2005 could be seen as the high-water mark of development campaigning, rather than the foundation of a genuinely global campaign."*

Monitoring, data collection, reporting and evaluation

As already stated, there has been no formal review or independent evaluation of the Australian campaign which makes it difficult, although not impossible, to analyse how effective it has been. More systematic monitoring, data collection and evaluation of campaign objectives and outcomes needs to be given a higher priority.

Conclusion

The scale of the Make Poverty History campaign is unprecedented. The ability of the campaign to create public awareness, mobilise supporters and attract significant media attention has helped to get development aid onto the national and international political agenda. It has created an environment where it

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Martin, Culey and Evans, 2005, Make Poverty History, 2005 Campaign Evaluation. 83.

Source: Make Poverty History, 2005, Campaign Evaluation. Martin Culey et al.

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is now more difficult for politicians to dismiss development aid as a peripheral issue lacking any traction in political constituencies.

Key events such as the G20 meeting in Melbourne in 2006 have helped build a high level of momentum in Australia and contributed to some key advocacy wins in the policy arena. But in seeking to ignite a worldwide movement to eradicate extreme poverty, MPH still offers enormous potential to inform and engage ordinary Australians across a wide, diverse and

geographically dispersed demographic. Furthermore, the objectives of the campaign remain closely aligned to World Vision Australia's mission and advocacy objectives as an organisation.

However, any campaign needs to be properly evaluated and analysed in the context of its ongoing costs and benefits to ensure that it is as effective as possible in achieving its major objectives.

Snapshot: International policy change

A detailed analysis of the results from the global campaign is beyond the scope of this case study and can be found in an independent evaluation of Make Poverty History undertaken in the UK in 2005.

The 90-page report drew from data collection, NGO surveys and in-depth interviews with campaigners, politicians and supporters. It analysed public and coalition-member perceptions, the campaign's structure, organisation and impact.

Its broad conclusions included that the campaign was highly successful in securing media attention, raising public awareness and simply communicating its campaign messages. However, the report was frank in its assessment that the nature and challenges of the coalition structure raised issues about its ability to continue in the long term.

While no final conclusion was drawn about whether the campaign ultimately achieved all

of its objectives, it was clear that significant progress had been achieved in the first year of the campaign.

Highlights

The report found that "important progress was made through the G8 in securing promises of extra financial resources for developing countries in the form of extra aid and the proposed deeper debt cancellation for some poor countries."

However, overall, the rate of progress towards the long overdue target of 0.7 percent was considered far too slow.

Increased aid:
Make Poverty History called for donors to immediately deliver at least $50 billion more in aid per year and set a binding timetable for spending 0.7 percent of national income on aid.

Result:
At the 2005 G8 summit, a commitment was made to provide an extra US$48 billion a year by 2010, which included between US$15-US$20 billion of new money.

Fifteen members of the EU have set themselves the goal of spending 0.56 percent of GDP on world development aid by 2010, and reaching the UN target of a minimum of 0.7 percent of GDP by 2015. The UK and some other countries committed to reaching 0.7 percent before 2015. So far, countries are on target to meet their 2010 aid volume commitments although there is some concern that most of this increase has been in the form of debt relief and not core aid funding.

Debt relief:
Make Poverty History called for creditors to cancel the debts of highly indebted poor countries.

Result:
To date there have been 24 countries that have benefited from the $US1.5 billion multilateral debt cancellation deal announced by the G8 in 2005.

Greening West Africa

The West Africa Natural Resource Management Project 2005–2007

Tony Rinaudo
Josue Sogoba

It was a drought and locust plague in 2005 that inspired the West African Natural Resources Management Project, a new environment-based approach to food security. By encouraging farmers across Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad to work with nature and maximise biodiversity through agro-forestry, the project aims to reduce the vulnerability of rural communities to environmental shocks, reverse desertification and improve food supply. However, in spite of drawing on the latest research, solid design knowledge and the best of intentions, the project has experienced several challenges during its first two years.

Food insecurity in West Africa

Many communities in West Africa struggle to find enough food to ensure they live active and healthy lives. More than 30 percent of the populations of Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Sierra Leone suffer from food insecurity. Ten percent of Nigeria's population also remain food insufficient (IFPRI 2004).

The majority of farmers in West Africa are reliant on mono-cultural agricultural systems which, depending on the region, may be millet, sorghum, maize, or a root crop such as cassava, and herders are reliant on pasture for their livestock. This over-reliance on a narrow range of crops and pastures - in an unpredictable environment - significantly increases vulnerability to food insecurity.

Past World Vision production-based approaches to food security in this region have mostly focused on improving productivity of staple food crops. While this might deliver valuable outcomes in the short term, it often overlooks or ignores the slow degradation of agro-pastoral systems taking place.

In a degraded state, the environment's ability to buffer shocks such as floods, droughts or pests can be compromised. For farmers this can result in reduced crop yields and large fluctuations in production from year to year. Unless root causes for this degradation are addressed, gradually sub-optimal yields from crops and pastures are likely to become the norm, rather than the exception. And if farmers are reliant on only one rain-fed crop annually, the effects of any kind of environmental shock can be devastating.

WEST AFRICA

West African Natural Resource Management Project (WA NRM)

In October 2004, West Africa experienced its worst locust invasion in 15 years. World

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Vision's initial response to this crisis was a call to equip farmers for locust spraying, followed by an expansion in market gardening programs. However, following advice from World Vision Australia, World Vision field partners were encouraged to consider the plague as part of an ongoing pattern of environmental shocks and think about taking a much longer term view of solutions.

In 2005, in collaboration with the International Centre for Research in Agro-Forestry (ICRAF), the International Centre for Research in the Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and Serving in Mission (SIM), World Vision established the West Africa Natural Resource Management Project (WA NRM). These three organisations are research leaders on the domestication and utilisation of plants, and on innovative farming methods appropriate to this region. They offered World Vision programs in all five countries access to practical experience and innovations in agro-forestry as well as up-to-the-minute research on the application of various plant species, many not traditionally considered for farming application. Using this knowledge, local farmers (women and men), government and World Vision staff could all be exposed to a range of alternative, but tested, viable and affordable farming options.

The West Africa Natural Resource Management Project is based on the following principles:

Principle 1. Maximise biodiversity

Research and field results suggest that increasing biodiversity can transform the extremely vulnerable, mono-culture agricultural systems typical in the West Africa region into diverse, robust, multi-species systems (Pasternak 2004).

ICRAF has identified that West African farmers traditionally use a number of coping strategies to deal with environmental uncertainty, including reliance on edible seeds, sourced from remnant indigenous bush plants, and exploiting trees for fuel, wood and charcoal.

Given that diversity of plants has cultural applications in a West African context, WA NRM promotes cultivating a wide range of hardy annual and perennial species on farms. This will provide a range of produce but, being a diverse agricultural system, pests (such as locusts) are unlikely to multiply to extreme levels. A high level of biodiversity also encourages natural pest predators back into the farm, and even if pests multiply, any one pest is unlikely to harm all crop species equally.

Among the species being promoted is a group of edible seeded Australian acacias. They are drought tolerant and produce highly nutritious seeds for people and livestock, and they also provide firewood and building poles (Rinaudo et al, 2002). Trialled successfully by SIM in Niger Republic over the past few years, these acacias also protect crops and livestock from strong winds, can be used for mulching, and they enrich the soil with nitrogen and organic matter which can lead to a doubling of crop yields.

Principle 2. Work with nature

At its core, the project recognises the farmer as a collaborator and enhancer of natural systems. Working with nature complements natural processes and maximises synergy between species and farming methods. This results in higher and more sustainable yields.

For example, by using nitrogen-fixing crops to improve soil fertility; creating habitats for beneficial pest predators; and improving microclimate effects by growing trees with annual crops, farmers can actually enhance the environment.

Principle 3. Start simple and build on local knowledge

The most sustainable system changes in a developing country almost always utilise locally available and affordable inputs and skills. By starting with what farmers already know and building on that knowledge base, there is a greater probability that new ideas

or approaches will be both understood and adopted. Introducing a few easy methods initially, and then allowing time for farmers to become proficient before introducing more, will enhance uptake overall. It is also crucial that any new methods being promoted are affordable, or can at least be easily copied or adapted by the target communities.

Principle 4. Respect community and individual freedom of choice

Solutions which are effective during the life of the project may be ineffective if conditions (climate, market preference, arrival of new diseases etc) change. Therefore, if communities and individuals adapt new farming practices according to their needs and local conditions, when conditions do change, their own knowledge base, networks and experience better enable them to adapt and cope with change (Bunch, 1982).

To promote the sharing of ideas, positive outcomes and new approaches from farmer to farmer, the WA NRM was designed to build on a progressive farmers' club model. These farmers' clubs aim to provide a framework for local farmers to meet, exchange experiences, assess, adopt and make choices regarding new farming methods and crops that are appropriate to their needs.

Principle 5. Facilitate community ownership

It is crucial to have a high level of grassroots ownership. Involving community members in the selection, testing and adapting of new methods is integral to facilitating buy-in of new ideas.

Principle 6. Work with government agencies

When government agency staff are included in training sessions, planning and execution of projects, coordinators can improve buy-in and support, and encourage their continued support beyond the life of the project.

Principle 7. Create a conducive policy environment

Unsound laws can work against sustainable natural resource management. In Niger Republic for example, for decades after independence all trees belonged to the government and farmers had to purchase permits even if they wanted to harvest trees on their own land. Heavy fines applied to anyone caught felling trees illegally but often trees were cut at night when nobody was looking.

Where policies work against favourable outcomes, WA NRM project leaders will appropriately challenge them by promoting more conducive policies enabling communities to sustainably manage their natural resources.

Outcomes 2005-2007

A start has been made on introducing agro-forestry systems from SIM and ICRISAT into WV programs in Senegal, Mali, Niger Republic and Chad. Farmers are being challenged, and some are beginning to experiment with a range of trees and annual crops in their farming systems.

Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), a sustainable agro-forestry farming system developed by SIM, is the major activity being promoted by WA NRM. Since its introduction in Niger in 1983, it is now used across more than 5 million hectares (LEISA, 2007). In addition to FMNR, exotic and domesticated local plant species are being promoted.

Progressive farmers in three World Vision program areas in Mali have received training and set up demonstration fields with edible seeded acacia trees. In Niger Republic, two acacia food demonstration days were attended by over 600 women. FMNR teaching was also completed in five villages, with a total of 50 farmers establishing acacia trees on their farms. In Senegal, a number of farmers have received training in FMNR and a number of projects are scheduled to start shortly. Mauritania, in contrast, has been slow to progress due in large part to their protracted relief
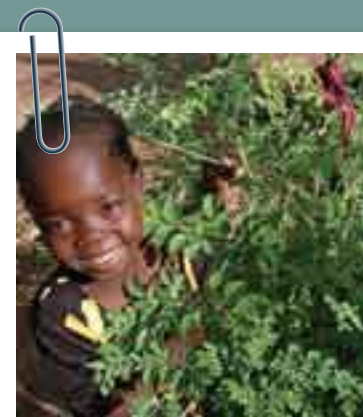
Top: Moringa tree, Mali.
Bottom: Farmers' club, Niger.

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Farmer's demonstration, Mali.

Program Details

Project partners:
World Vision Australia, World Vision Senegal, World Vision Mali, World Vision Mauritania, World Vision Niger, World Vision Chad, International Centre for Research into Agro Forestry (ICRAF), Serving in Mission (SIM) and the International Centre for Research in the Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)

Project start date:
June 2005

Project end date:
Current phase September 2007

Funding source:
Bounceback

Funds remitted from Australia:
US$519,292 over 2.5 years

response, as well as a change of leadership within the World Vision office. The results of desertification in Mauritania over the last few years have been devastating, and attempts are being made to re-ignite the project in that country.

Initially, 9,000 hectares of farmland and 2,500 hectares of forest will be managed under a FMNR system in Chad, involving some 90,000 beneficiaries across nine separate World Vision programming areas. Although they have only been practising FMNR for two years, initial responses from farmers in Chad are positive, and insightful:

"Thanks to the new technique our life has changed. Food production has doubled and many people, who were laughing at us, have also adopted the techniques for soil regeneration. As a result, there is always good crop production, the soil is protected from erosion and heat, and women can still get firewood. We have been using the same plot for more than 30 years and without such a natural fertilising possibility, we would soon stop getting food from it."
Malatin André, farmer, Loumia Valley, Chad

"This year is very exceptional for me because I have been able to get enough sorghum. I cultivated one hectare and harvested 15 bags of sorghum. Generally, I could get three to five bags when working this land in the past. This would have been

impossible if I was not taught the new technique of land management."
Khadidja Gangan, mother and farmer, Loumia Valley, Chad

Challenges 2005-2007

It would be convenient to say that the future of this project is secure, and that food and income-producing trees, restored soils, and crops that fail less frequently will significantly reduce the chronic vulnerability to food insecurity in West Africa. However, there is a combination of factors inhibiting progress.

The project was initiated using quick response funds made available to address the locust plague. While these funds offered an opportunity to mobilise resources within a reasonably short timeframe, in hindsight it would have made more sense to seek a multi-year, long-term commitment of funds instead. Ultimately the project's aims are not short term, and funding for this initiative is not sustainable in its current configuration. Project leaders are naturally concerned that if funds are not available precisely at the moments that target communities are mobilised and ready to act during the early stages, the project is likely to lose traction and have significantly reduced impact.

World Vision Australia program staff are currently investigating a range of solutions

to this problem. Additionally the World Vision Australia marketing department is piloting a new 'product' which will hopefully offer a stable, longer term solution to funding initiatives that address environmental restoration and assist poor communities to prepare for the effects of climate change – such as the WA NRM.

The WA NRM project also commenced at a time when WV staff, particularly in Niger Republic and Mauritania, were fully occupied with famine relief activities. Without a doubt, staff turnover, stress and overwork have negatively impacted project implementation in these countries.

While the partner organisations add essential and substantial value to the project, they also add extra challenges. Professional rivalries between the research centres has resulted in limited communication and collaboration between them. So in many ways, WV has found itself collaborating with two competing centres both looking for prominence of their own technologies.

Fundamentally, WV is committed to fostering farmer innovation and promoting freedom to pick and choose elements of technologies which meet their needs. Many scientists have spent years developing technologies that aim to suitably improve crop yields and food security in the Sahel region, and continued funding for research centres is often dependant on the successful impact of their research. As a consequence, researchers invariably do not want their work to be altered by farmers. When undertaking partnerships such as these with research organisations, it is crucial to be open and frank about both approaches and intentions. For WV, helping communities to adapt new, cost effective, easily replicable technologies and to choose elements of innovations most relevant to meet their particular needs is essential in ensuring this is a sustainable initiative.

Moving forward

While appropriately resourcing the WA NRM remains a short-term challenge for World Vision Australia, the early successes of this project (particularly in Chad and Niger), combined with growing supporter interest in agro-forestry, provide a strong basis to secure the necessary resources. Aside from this, growing global interest in agro-forestry suggests there is also exciting long-term potential to explore future income streams for communities through the sale of carbon credits.

The WA NRM is still embryonic, and for the foreseeable future environmental shocks will continue to negatively impact food security in West African communities – predictably more so as climate change takes its toll. The primary challenge for World Vision is to build on the current gains and continue to promote agro-forestry solutions within program areas until enough momentum is built to ignite a movement which will unfold across West Africa over the next 20 years.

Eventually, our hope is that beneficiaries like the Chadian farmers Malatin and Khadidja will supersede project staff as primary promoters of these new techniques, sharing clippings and seeds, and using the simple medium of everyday speech. So while this goal is still a few years down the track, the medium-term objective is to ensure that enough farmers in enough regions of enough countries have the knowledge, tools, experience and desire to demonstrate what is possible to their neighbours.

People power

Grassroots demand for good governance in Uganda, Brazil and India

UGANDA, BRAZIL & INDIA

Keren Winterford

Community Based Performance Monitoring (CBPM) is a demand-side good governance tool developed originally by CARE and the World Bank. In certain contexts, CBPM offers a means of improving accountability between government decision makers and the communities they serve. It also offers a way to collect data at the community level that can be used for high-level advocacy regarding improved service delivery.

World Vision has been road testing CBPM amongst communities in Uganda, Brazil and India over the past three years. Initial findings from these pilots show that CBPM demonstrates excellent potential to substantially improve development outcomes for people living in poverty.

CBPM training in India.

Understanding governance

Corruption, poor budgeting, poor service delivery and poor management are an impediment to effective development. Interest in these areas has been growing over the past few years, as the international community seeks to understand the drivers of poverty and ways to eradicate it.

Increasingly, wealthier countries are being asked to provide more effective aid, reduce debt to sustainable levels and implement fairer trade rules. Poor countries are being encouraged to provide greater accountability to their citizens and ensure the efficient use and allocation of resources.

The connection between human rights and transparent, accountable and participatory government, or good governance, is pivotal to the development process. Ever more resources are being channelled from multilaterals and government donors to poor countries, to increase 'supply of' government services. However, there are surprisingly few strategic and systematic programming initiatives encouraging the 'demand for' good governance from the grassroots level up. It will be both the supply of, and the demand for, good governance that will ensure effective and sustainable change in the long term.

Community Based Performance Monitoring (CBPM)

First used as a community scorecard process by CARE Malawi, CBPM was further developed by the World Bank in the Gambia. CBPM is a development tool that aims to enable and empower communities to influence the quality, efficiency and accountability of service

delivery, primarily as these services relate to government facilities such as schools and health centres. In addition to informing community action plans, data can be captured through the CBPM process, aggregated and used for advocacy purposes at state and national levels to influence government policies and resource allocation.

CBPM is a coordinated process where community members, in the presence of the facility's staff, government and political representatives:

- Are educated about standards set by their own governments for the provision of services in community-based facilities (such as health centres and schools);

- Review the level and quality of services currently provided against these standards;

- Take the opportunity to rate the quality and performance of the services currently provided; and

- Set reforms and action plans in a public forum, where facility staff, as well as government and political representatives, are asked to take some responsibility for implementing the action plan.

For CBPM to work, governments must have the capacity to be receptive so that the voices of community members and civil society can be constructively heard and answered. For this reason, mandated political and social space is required as a pre-condition and not all countries are able to offer this. Naturally, in some totalitarian or mono-party states, encouraging grassroots community members to actively demand improvements in service delivery might actually put their lives at risk.

However, when mandated political space is present, CBPM offers the community an opportunity to consider their government's performance against its own standards. Furthermore, for community members to share and voice their perceptions about the level and quality of services provided

to them with government and political representatives present can be empowering and can open up new channels for dialogue.

The Ugandan pilot

In 2004, World Vision Australia commenced a CBPM pilot in Uganda focusing on primary schools and health centres within World Vision Uganda programming areas.

Uganda provided a favourable political and social context, with the government taking specific actions to reduce poverty through initiatives such as the World Bank-initiated Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Through the Ministry of Finance, the Ugandan Government also recognises that grassroot organisations can play a vital role in collecting data that will assist the overall campaign to reduce poverty.

Some positive outcomes from this pilot have emerged.

At Nabyewanga Health Centre in central Uganda, inadequate buildings and water facilities were identified through the CBPM process. Government officials, politicians, service providers and the community all took responsibility. Armed with new-found confidence, community members approached their member of parliament who provided one million Ugandan shillings (A$500) as a contribution to improving the quality of existing services.

At the Buseese Primary School, eyes widened and mouths dropped when parents learnt that whilst their school's teacher/student ratio was one teacher to every 186 students, the government's standard was one teacher per 60 students. The poor performance of the students could be addressed fairly simply by securing the two additional teachers the school was entitled to. Unsurprisingly, the community agreed to put a plan in place to secure more teachers. Within months of the community process, and as a direct result of CBPM, the school had two new teachers on staff.
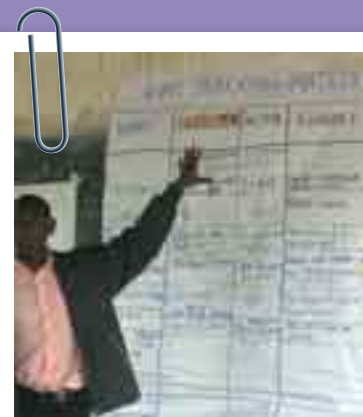
CBPM training in Uganda.

The CBPM process strengthened the relationship between service providers, parents and students, as they recognised their joint commitment to quality education. In the case of Buseese Parish, local politicians are active in development activities. With the information generated through the CBPM process, they were equipped to act on behalf of their constituents with the local government. The responsiveness of the government representatives in this process has also been critical.

Interestingly, aside from the provision of two new teachers, the services delivered by Buseese Primary School were improved in other ways too. Through their focus group discussion, students suggested that eating lunch at school would improve their ability to concentrate and improve their education. Parents and teachers agreed. Now, as a result of community contributions, children are receiving lunchtime porridge every day at school.

In the case of Buseese Primary School, parents and teachers from neighbouring schools heard about the community's response to the CBPM initiatives. As a result, four neighbouring schools are also providing lunchtime porridge for their students. Communities are also expressing interest for CBPM to be held in their own facilities.

CBPM in Brazil

The introduction of the CBPM tool in Brazil aligned with a pre-existing government mandate to encourage community-based participatory budgeting. So, in Brazil, local Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) were trained to implement CBPM as part of their core community activities in ways that linked with this participatory budgeting process.

The Brazil experience provides an interesting comparison to Uganda. The communities of Santa Fe and Santa Maria, in Vida de Criança, marched through the streets to the front of the

VI Regional Public Administration building. Highlighting issues raised within the CBPM process, their banners read "Communities of Santa Maria and Sante Fe mobilise for their right to health. Where is our clinic, Mayor?"

Whilst this action was acceptable in Brazil, such marches and public demonstrations are uncommon in Uganda, indeed it would not have occurred to Ugandans to incorporate this type of protest in their action plan. Clearly the social, cultural and political context in Brazil is different to Uganda and it's important to recognise that what constitutes acceptable community action in one place will not necessarily be acceptable in another.

CBPM in India

World Vision Australia and World Vision India initiated a CBPM pilot in early 2007.

In India, local animators (i.e. individuals trained in community mobilisation) have been chosen to facilitate the CBPM tool. Trained over a number of weeks as part of a regional team, they are now equipped to lead the process both within their own community and also in neighbouring facilities.

At Kishandahi Government Primary School, a six-hour drive from Calcutta, parents, teachers, students, government officials and politicians sat together for two days as part of a CBPM process to identify ways to collectively improve the quality of education in the school. Whilst recognising the need for the government to provide adequate services, many of the collectively decided reforms could be actioned by those present. It was agreed that the construction of a school fence, the planting of a garden and better use of the library would be undertaken by parents and teachers themselves.

Recognising that many of the government standards had been met, the community representatives sought ways in which to improve the school's facilities beyond the minimum standards set by the

government. The results highlight the way in which, once government standards have been met, CBPM can move beyond its primary focus of demand-led governance, to be a community-mobilising tool in ensuring the best outcomes from service delivery.

Reflections

We have seen varying responses from political and government representatives within CBPM processes so far. CBPM offers an opportunity for these leaders to perform their mandated roles, and in many instances they have relished the opportunity to be involved. In order to ensure active engagement and support of the process, it is suggested that facilitators work with political and government stakeholders prior to any community exercise.

In the instance of Buseese Primary School in Uganda, the local government representatives recognised the reality of the situation in the school, and when pushed by the community (backed by World Vision), responded positively and promptly.

However, power to improve service delivery often resides in positions higher than those present at CBPM activities. Whilst effort should be made to ensure as many power holders as possible are present, often decisions are driven by state or nationally determined policies or budgets. Real decision makers might even avoid attending if they know they are likely to be held to account in a public forum by enthusiastic parents.

It is for this reason that the aggregated information gathered through the community scorecard process is critical for informing state or national level advocacy in order to address poor service delivery. Community-based CBPM activities should be complemented with state or national level advocacy in order to strengthen community voice and ensure follow through if community strategies cannot

achieve results.

An important principle of CBPM is that communities decide their own actions and responses to knowledge gained through the process. Whilst respecting the primacy of community within the process, it is the responsibility of CBPM initiators such as World Vision to ensure a safe environment in which CBPM can take place. Of course, life is uncertain, and outcomes of a community-driven process are unknown, but reasonable care must be taken to ensure that individuals are not put at risk.

Since the CBPM pilot programs in Uganda, World Vision staff have also experienced an increased demand for their own accountability. When a World Vision contractor attempted to deliver a cracked water tank to a primary school, the community rightfully refused to accept it, demanding instead to be provided with the quality tanks to which they were entitled. This suggests that CBPM potentially offers a means to ensure NGO accountability to the beneficiary communities they are working with.

Learnings

Across the three countries to date, the CBPM pilot has provided some interesting learnings:

- While community demand for accountability from politicians and government staff has increased, communities are also demonstrating an increased awareness of their responsibility to improve the quality of service themselves;

- Recognising the changed power dynamics with the community that the CBPM tool can provoke, World Vision field staff in pilot programs are re-thinking their role from one of service delivery to facilitation and support of all stakeholders in achieving good governance. As one colleague in India put it, the result of CBPM activities may be the "marginalisation of World Vision";

Communities march for improved health services, Brazil.

Reviewing new approaches to our work

Community gathering, Uganda.

Program Details

Project partners:
World Vision Australia
World Vision Uganda (Uganda Pilot)
World Vision Brazil (Brazil Pilot)
World Vision India (India Pilot)

Project start date:
Uganda (April 2006)
Brazil (September 2006)
India (March 2007)

Project end date:
Uganda (September 2009)
Brazil (August 2008)
India (July 2008)

Funding source:
Uganda (Corporate and Major Donors)
Brazil (Child Sponsorship)
India (Child Sponsorship)

Funds remitted from Australia for CBPM:
Uganda US$64,160
Brazil US$59,160
India US$31,199

- Whilst much can be done at the local level to improve services, community-based 'demand for' good governance needs to be complemented by coordinated high-level advocacy, either state or nationally focused.

Moving forward

Clearly many reforms necessary to improve service delivery are simply beyond the control of those present at CBPM activities, whether they are community members, government representatives or politicians. However, it is clear that in appropriate contexts, CBPM offers significant opportunities for NGOs to improve the cost effectiveness and sustainability of community development initiatives.

We suspect that CBPM offers significant transformational potential beyond its core activities. To date however, evidence to support this, whilst anecdotal, has not been systematically documented. The way in which CBPM is co-constructed by communities, governments, World Vision staff and other stakeholders, and the results generated in the community in years to come will be instrumental in understanding how demand for good governance can be strengthened.

Governance the Wetenngerr way

The Wetenngerr Leadership and Governance Project 2005-08

Gabrielle Halcrow
Dr Stuart Phillpot

It's an extraordinary thing to realise you have no effective decision-making power. But this was precisely the situation in which the Aboriginal community of Wetenngerr found itself only a few short years ago. As a relatively recently formed remote community without a legally incorporated council, Wetenngerr was in a tenuous position. For World Vision and the community, a key step towards effective development has been to support the leaders to build and sustain appropriate governance structures and take some control.

What has evolved is a process of exploring the 'common ground' between the two worlds of western contemporary governance arrangements and the cultural basis of the community's traditional Indigenous systems of governance (Phillpot 1990).

Responding to Indigenous needs

Australia has one of the highest standards of living in the world. Indigenous Australians, however, remain the most disadvantaged group in terms of key social, economic and health indicators. In a growing population, now estimated at half a million people, life expectancy for Indigenous Australians is as much as 17 years less than that of their non-Indigenous counterparts; and lower than several less developed nations including Nigeria and Bangladesh. The causes of this imbalance are complex, layered and inter-related. Achieving meaningful outcomes that address the extreme disadvantage facing many communities and that overcome welfare dependence – specifically in remote Australia – is proving challenging for communities themselves as well as other development actors including not-for-profit agencies, service providers and local, state, territory and federal governments.

In 2003, in response to a request by both the local Member of Parliament and the community's leaders, World Vision developed a partnership with the Aboriginal community of Wetenngerr in Central Australia. Wetenngerr is

AUSTRALIA

very remote, even by central Australian standards and located in the Southern Barkly region of the Northern Territory. It is situated on an excision of a pastoral station, serviced by a clinic, a school and a station store, with a growing and mobile population of between 200-300 people. Indigenous communities in Australia often experience significant disadvantage: poor socio-economic status, difficulties accessing services, geographical isolation, poor environmental health conditions, health risk behaviours (e.g. alcohol misuse) and limited capacity or knowledge as to how to productively exert or take control over the factors that influence the circumstances in which they live (Wilkinson etal 2003). Wetenngerr was perceived by stakeholders to be one of the most disadvantaged and marginalised communities in the region.

Since first contact with non-Indigenous people in the 1870s, the Alyawarr families living in the region have been subject to an ongoing state of cultural, social and political flux. In spite of this upheaval, and due in part to their remote location, the Wetenngerr community has been able to maintain its language and its cultural identity. Thus, on many levels, while Wetenngerr is a place of change, it is also a place of survival.

Development approaches

World Vision established its relationship with the community and region with smallscale activities, focused primarily on re-establishing a community committee structure, engaging women in art and craft activities which supported a women's centre, and an in-school nutrition project. As a non-Indigenous and non-government organisation new to the region, developing relationships and trust proved a slow and difficult process. Entering into a partnership with a community where relationships operate according to kinship traditions involves engaging with a host of reciprocal obligations. It has been essential to invest substantial time and energy in clarifying the respective obligations

of the community members and World Vision as each step of the project has evolved. This has served to manage the tensions and risks that might arise through misunderstandings about the nature of the relationship at any given moment.

In order to implement an effective longer term community development program there were several key issues surrounding service delivery and governance that needed to be unravelled. Both from a World Vision and a community perspective the specific roles, functions and responsibilities of the various agencies delivering services to the community were complex and jeopardised the community's capacity to actively achieve any substantial quality of life improvements.

Through the consultation process it was evident that the community had no identified means of advocating for improvements in the quality of the services being provided from a range of agencies, who in turn were all operating in a shifting policy environment. An example of this was the cessation of funding to a core service provider responsible for delivering the Community Development Employment Program. The community was left for 12 months without a project officer. In this environment, the project officer role is vital for the community to function on a daily basis. As a result, there was no one to coordinate basic services such as rubbish collection, community maintenance, repairs, training opportunities, or to manage the main source of employment for 40 adults. As a consequence, isolation and despair took over.

Compounding this perceived inability to advocate for action was the confusion around the legal governance structures for the community. The land is freehold and listed as held by the Wutunurrgurra Aboriginal Corporation (WAC), as a corporate body since 1983. However, the original template constitution for the corporation did not indicate that it is a land-holding body and its incorporation status under the Aboriginal Councils and

Associations Act 1976 is exempt, making it effectively dormant. This dormancy limited the Wetenngerr community's capacity to negotiate contracts and agreements for improved service delivery. It additionally restricted the community's ability to access government funding normally available to other remote Indigenous communities. Until the legal ambiguities surrounding the dormant corporation could be resolved Wetenngerr would not have an incorporated body to represent the community.

Wetenngerr leaders spoke of the frustrations of having no 'voice' to advocate for improvements. Indeed, all decisions relating to funding and services provided to the community were effectively being made externally or with only limited consultation amongst community members. If their situation was to improve, it became obvious that the leaders and broader community needed to understand why they had no effective decision-making power.

Starting again (with governance)

In 2006, the program focused its development initiatives on improving the community's governance and leadership capabilities. A major challenge was to shift the perception, both within and outside the community, from one characterised by disadvantage and need to one of strengths and assets to be built upon. A key to this was recognising the Alyawarr family groups as "survivors" with much of their cultural identity intact, who had managed to negotiate effective arrangements over several generations that limited the impact of an external and powerful dominant culture.

There were also evident strengths and leadership capabilities within the community including: the ability to coordinate cultural events, such as yearly ceremonies (with other communities and elders) in and away from the community; the presence of an active church group which organises events, funerals and "sorry business"; the holding of community sports events; a community football team that is able to raise prize money and trophies for football carnivals; and an active women's centre involved in women's issues, art activities, and seed harvesting. It was crucial that any governance process built on these strengths and extended into and pervaded broader community life.

Initiatives aimed at building governance were based on developing authentic relationships within the community and building trust. By improving these relationships and sense of connectivity, people were encouraged to think both collectively and individually about how the advocacy and governance capacity of the Wetenngerr community might be increased. With the community's endorsement, World Vision also undertook research aimed at clarifying the community's legal history, particularly in relation to the dormant Wetenngerr Aboriginal Corporation's history. As part of this process a group of leaders

Reviewing new approaches to our work

Debrief with community leaders, Wetenngerr.

Program Details

Project partners:
World Vision Australia & the Wetenngerr Community

Project start date:
October 2005

Project end date:
This phase, September 2008

Target population:
The Wetenngerr Community

Funding source:
Corporate and major donors
Other funding sources

Total project budget:
A$394,498 over 3 years

conducted a fact-finding trip to the regional centre of Alice Springs to meet with key agencies and gain a clear, firsthand understanding. This information and the research findings were then used to form the basis of the community's governance story. Narrative storytelling techniques using traditional Alyawarra concepts and language enabled the complex issues surrounding western governance concepts to be shared simply, in a way that had meaning across the two cultures.

The story, when told to the wider community and elders in their language, was a turning point in the project and resulted in a dramatically increased understanding of why the community was not moving forward. The traditional owner and leader concluded that "we've got to wake WAC up!" That is, community members needed to revitalise and regenerate the dormant corporation if they were to improve their control of the situation. Since then, a number of key workshops have been held that have focused on "waking up" the corporation.

Reflections

World Vision's approach in the field is constantly evolving as the governance

process develops and the project team explores different approaches. Open meetings for example, that originally emerged as a response to pressure from external organisations, are changing. In the past, without these meetings, leaders had been expected to represent and make decisions on behalf of all the families, often with only limited information. This was seen to bypass the need for proper community consultation and became the source of conflict and stress for various families as well as the leaders themselves.

These open meetings have now shifted their focus, from serving as information sessions, where the decisions or requests made by external agencies were shared with the community, to forums for making decisions. A strong emphasis is placed on communication and at each important step the key points are recorded in Alyawarra - an oral rather than a written language – which serve as living minutes of meetings, replayed at each step to clarify issues and build on knowledge. Consultation is now something that takes place beyond meetings in the broader daily life, on hunting trips, social gatherings or camping out on country. Workshops are also held with a degree of ceremony, and trusted senior voices are used to share information and to place value on the knowledge created.

An extremely significant outcome of this journey has been the drafting of a new constitution for the WAC that is both understood and owned by the community. This constitution recognises all family groups and the traditional owners in the community. The community seems keen to increase its control over resource allocations and service delivery decisions, not on creating another service delivery organisation per se.

The governance process is also empowering this remote Indigenous community as elders, leaders and community members are all actively engaged in a process which is still very much a work in progress. What is certain is that there is an invigorated WAC with stronger processes for communicating and consultation both with the family groups, with World Vision, and with external agencies.

Internally, there are challenges and tensions facing elected councillors and the responsibility is high. It will be a long-term process to build the resilience of the corporation as it takes its first steps and so it is able to communicate effectively with service providers and external agencies. There is pressure on the members to succeed and bring about positive change for the community and demonstrate to the community that the 'council is strong', however some basic infrastructure and support required to actually conduct council business is still lacking. At the same time the dissonance between family and traditional values and western type "council decisions" may conflict with traditional governance structures (where family comes first). There is an ongoing need to develop communication channels to ensure that all community members are fully informed and supportive of community governance matters and that decisions are regulated by community forums to mitigate the pressure on councillors.

Moving forward

While World Vision is proud of the progress the Wetenngerr community has made, the costs associated with this process have been high in time, resources and pressure on staff, particularly in the field. It is almost impossible to separate professional from personal involvement in contexts such as these and the engagement is demanding. Governance building is one step in a much longer term program and a new design phase is planned for when the corporation is legally active.

The community is certainly now in a better position to negotiate with external agencies than it was two years ago. Following community pressure, the project officer position has now been filled by a community services manager who is accountable to the Wetenngerr Aboriginal Corporation. In simple terms, when basic services or housing maintenance needs arise the community members now have support to manage these issues. Not only will the leaking taps or sewerage be fixed, but in the future there will be a local team trained to ensure they stay fixed. As of mid 2007, the outcomes of the community's efforts will materialise in the negotiation of several service level agreements. Each of these will set out each agency's accountability to the community in ways that can be monitored and measured. This will represent a major power shift to the community's advantage.

The key development challenge is to find and sustain appropriate and authentic mechanisms of governance that ensure people have a voice and the right to meaningfully and respectfully participate in decision-making processes. Nevertheless, governance building is already serving as a foundation for this community to determine its own priorities and responses in a more sustainable environment, as it redefines its position and external relationships.

Growing Strong

Encouraging ownership of Early Childhood Care and Development in Vietnam

Leigh Mitchell
Phearak Svay

Health, nutrition and intellectual stimulation in early childhood years are crucial to the development of key brain pathways, necessary for children to realise their full potential. Today in Vietnam, 94 percent of children receive at least some form of primary level education, yet the developmental needs of preschool children have been largely neglected.

The Growing Strong project began in 2002 and set out to develop and improve the quality of, and access to, Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) for poor Vietnamese families. It performed well against its objectives.

This project excelled in the way it mobilised and maximised community ownership. By effectively working through the government-sanctioned Project Management Board (PMB) structure, community awareness and ownership of ECCD benefits were instilled. Furthermore, at a crucial moment in the project's timeframe, when children from extremely poor families were at risk of dropping out, it was the PMB that identified solutions aimed at improving their participation rates.

The Growing Strong project

It is generally agreed that neglect of early childhood development has long-term consequences for children. They invariably experience reduced academic performance, and are increasingly likely to drop out of school. They are also less likely to take an active role in the workforce. Neglect for early development can also result in lifelong learning difficulties, increased social isolation and antisocial behaviour which can have a profound long-term effect on a community (World Bank 1999).

With this in mind, in 2002 World Vision Vietnam (WVV), with World Vision Australia (WVA) support, launched a three-year project, entitled Growing Strong: Models for Early Childhood Care and Development, to improve and strengthen responses to ECCD in Vietnam. Initially devised as a pilot within A Luoi District and Hue City both in Thua Thien Hue Province, the intention

was to leverage findings from this project and roll out similar initiatives across other World Vision programming areas in Vietnam.

In many respects Growing Strong's strategy was extremely simple. Its strength as a development initiative wasn't in grand design or ambitious targets, it was in the way it successfully aligned knowledge, resources and expertise both within and outside the district. Achieving, for a relatively modest investment of funds, significant community empowerment within a short timeframe. This was achieved by:

- Building on best practice learnings from Save the Children (UK), UNICEF, and the World Bank (WB), as well as academic institutions such as the Vietnamese Ministry of Health Care's Institute of Nutrition, and other relevant community initiatives;

- Working through, strengthening and improving access to state-run educational centres and community-based kindergartens in both urban and rural areas across the district. The objective was to ensure all children aged 0-5 received quality education in a safe and suitable environment. Improved curriculum, improved access to basic teaching aids, appropriate and safe physical infrastructure and enhanced teacher/caregiver training were key components;

- Raised awareness of, and commitment to, the benefits of preschool care and education amongst parents. Over a three-year period, contributions made by World Vision were scheduled to decrease on the assumption that contributions made by the community, and parents in particular, would increase; and

- Taking full advantage of the government-sanctioned Project Management Boards. In Vietnam, all development projects including World Vision programs must work through a

Project Management Board (PMB).

PMBs often already exist at the ward/commune and city/district levels and offer a standing network of experienced community volunteers, used to facilitating multiple development activities.

The Project Management Board (PMB)

The PMB is typically comprised of the chairman and accountant of the Peoples' Committee, heads of the Women's Union and the Department of Education, a health officer, the headmaster of the primary school, a cashier and a community representative. While World Vision might offer support and guidance or even make recommendations regarding PMB members, it is the PMB and not World Vision that takes ultimate responsibility for implementing projects in Vietnam.

However, since the PMB offers direct links to and within the community, the Growing Strong project was able to directly access a pre-existing network of experienced, locally-based stakeholders. These stakeholders facilitated community engagement, resource mobilisation and an understanding of the objectives of the Growing Strong project within a very short timeframe. They also enabled both communities and parents to directly engage in the ways their kindergartens functioned, and to understand the benefits that ECCD offered their children.

The Peoples' Committee representatives play a critical political role in leading their community. Their endorsement regarding the importance of ECCD has been enormously influential in socialising the concept within the community. Additionally, these government representatives were able to link the project's aims and objectives with government agendas at the district level.

While the PMB offered extraordinary opportunities in terms of development and advocacy, its understanding of project cycle management differed from that of

VIETNAM

Phuoc Vinh Kingergarten, Hue City.

WVV. As a consequence, the program's progression has been monitored, but not according to World Vision monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

Key outcomes 2002-2007

In the A Luoi District of Thua Thien Hue Province, much of the population is engaged in agricultural activities such as fisheries, rice, vegetable and fruit harvesting and/or animal husbandry. It is often difficult for households to produce enough food to meet their own domestic needs, let alone produce the kind of steady income needed to send their children to school. Nevertheless, the PMB felt that the community would be willing to contribute as long as they had a good understanding of the benefits of the project.

With the upgrading of infrastructure and teaching materials for kindergartens, especially in A Luoi District, the project radically changed the hours of operation of kindergartens from half-day long to all-day long, enabling many parents to go out and earn their living. Thus, the provision of ECCD services has allowed parents to pursue various income-generating opportunities.

One parent acknowledged that in the past she would normally take her child with her when going to the field. However, she is happier focusing on her work, while her child is in the centre – the child's health has also improved and he is more active.

Following advice from the PMB, some parents particularly in rural areas, who are unable to afford to pay for ECCD with cash, are instead allowed to pay with firewood, eggs and vegetables.

The PMB also recommended that credit programs for poor families be introduced. Those who receive credit loans organised themselves into small groups, exchanging experiences in doing business and ways to return capital. In such meetings, topics such as health and ECCD were discussed. Recipients of credit loans in each commune or ward were trained by WV staff and the PMB on the credit program's objectives and how to keep statements and records about business plans, savings and returning capital loans. To date these programs have achieved a more than 90 percent repayment rate, providing opportunities for poor families to earn income to send their children to kindergarten.

With the program's assistance, parents have actively sought information and materials to understand the preschool needs of their children. Parent education groups meet regularly to discuss childcare, development methods and to share their experiences. Over time, through participation in the Growing Strong project, parents have begun to recognise positive behavioural changes in their children. Participants told staff that their children now greeted them when they got home after class, and that they were generally happier as expressed through singing songs, dancing, reading poetry and reviewing lessons learned at home.

During a discussion on the most significant changes, the PMB reported a noticeable improvement in both teachers' and principals' professional and management skills. The quality of care also seems to be improving as evidenced when the Son Thuy Kindergarten recently

won third prize for creativity in a recent provincial competition.

In the Son Thuy Commune prior to project implementation, 98 percent of 0-3 year-old children were unable to attend nurseries. Less than two years later, the nursery attendance rate rose from 2 percent to 48 percent.

Furthermore, in Bac Son Commune, prior to the project, there was only one combined kindergarten class of 36 children. The number of children attending kindergarten in that commune has now more than tripled.

Challenges

As the project was devised from the outset to be sustainable and owned by the community, parents were encouraged to contribute financially towards their child's education. Contributions made by World Vision decreased as contributions made by targeted families and the local PMB increased. For a majority of participants this model for sustainability worked successfully. However, in all areas it was found that dropout rates would be highest amongst children from the poorest of families if the contributions were to be abruptly stopped.

Through community consultations it became clear that as many as 34 percent of parents in an urban centre would be forced to withdraw their children if the project was to end at its scheduled time – after three years. Following recommendations by the PMB, a one-year project extension was granted to enable extremely poor children continued access to ECCD services, while giving their parents more time to concentrate on generating income and improving their livelihoods. It was felt that by doing this, these children would have better opportunities to attend school in the future.

To complement the project extension, the PMB also recommended that existing credit programs be redesigned to target more entrepreneurial poor families and a

scholarship program be initiated to target the community's most vulnerable children.

However, at the end of the one-year extension, it was found that 11 percent of the poorest children in the same location would still drop out. Recognising that the credit programs were simply not appropriately meeting the needs of the poorest families, the PMB arranged alternative payment options and provided their own resources to cover monthly fees until these children were ready to transition to primary education.

Another key concern was that children aged 0-3 were experiencing significantly more difficulties accessing ECCD services than those in higher age groups. In Vietnam, children aged 0-3 are often left at home with their siblings and not cared for properly by working parents who are busy with other essential livelihood activities. As such, the children are not given the opportunity to reach their optimal development during this early age. Through several discussions with community and local partners, it was suggested that WV work more with parents in order to provide ECCD services to the 0-3 age groups.

In response to this, WV began working with communities to model home-based childcare networks, managed by parent groups and specifically targeting children aged 0-3. In order to sustain this new home-based model, WVV provided training in home-based care, nutrition, child development and healthcare skills for parents and community volunteers. Finally, existing ECCD facilities were renovated to be more appropriate for those aged 0-3.

Snap-shot:
What is Early Childhood Care and Development?

Children do not just grow in size, they develop, evolve and mature, mastering ever more complex understandings of the people, objects and challenges in their environment. Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) refers not only to what is happening within the child, but also to the care that child requires in order to thrive. For a child to develop and learn in a healthy and normal way, it is important not only to meet the basic needs for protection, food and healthcare, but also to meet the basic needs for interaction and stimulation, affection, security, and learning through exploration and discovery.

ECCD activities are those that support young children appropriately and seek to strengthen the environments in which they live. ECCD therefore includes: working with parents to strengthen parenting skills; working to provide or strengthen day care options; developing preschools and other early childhood education programs that address the child's needs in holistic ways; and striving to bolster the community in its economic, physical and moral support of families and young children.

References:

World Bank, 1999, Early Childhood Counts: Programming Resources for Early Childhood Care and Development.CD-ROM.The Consultative Group on ECCD. Washington D.C.:

Source: The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development (CGECCD) www.ecdgroup.com

Reviewing new approaches to our work

Project Management Board member, Hue City.

Program Details

Project partners:
World Vision Australia, World Vision Vietnam, various other community based organisations, NGOs and local agencies.

Project start date:
January 2002

Project end date:
Phase 1 complete, Phase 2 until June 2008

Funding source:
75% AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) with match funding from
12.5% Corporate and Major Donors
12.5% Innovative Quality Initiatives (Child Sponsorship)

Australian funds remitted overseas by Financial Year (FY):
FY 2003 US$37,403
FY 2004 US$87,427
FY 2005 US$69,623
FY 2006 US$47,782
FY 2007 US$43,145

Total Australian funds remitted overseas:
US$285,380

Moving forward

Since its introduction four years ago, Growing Strong has now been phased out of the urban area and completely integrated within WVV's child sponsorship-funded Area Development Program in the rural area.

WVV and WVA have used this project as a model upon which to base a second ECCD initiative within Tra Bong District of Quang Ngai Province. Access to pre-existing resources, such as local knowledge, staff and materials, in addition to pre-existing relationships with government is helping this second ECCD program to succeed.

Under its national education strategy, WVV has also employed an ECCD National Coordinator to roll this program out across all World Vision child sponsorship programs in Vietnam. This will include approximately 30 programs in total and plans are in place to roll out programming in Nepal as well, with potential to replicate it in other South-East Asian countries.

Health sector development in Aceh

Post-tsunami partnerships in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam

Louise Searle

Rapid changes in Aceh's social, political and economic context post-tsunami made it, and continue to make it, challenging for humanitarian and development actors to plan detailed and overly prescriptive programming. In a constantly changing operating environment, context analysis, upon which responses are usually designed, outdate rapidly. Recognising the unique challenges of this context, a 'facility' mechanism was chosen as the most appropriate way to support and improve quality health sector services within this northern Indonesian province.

The global community responded to the 2004 Asian tsunami with unprecedented levels of funding and support. As images of the disaster and remarkable stories of survival were broadcast around the world, individuals, families, the business community and governments were quick to donate millions of dollars for relief and reconstruction.

A complex humanitarian emergency such as this presents an unpredictable, dynamic environment for program planning and delivery. World Vision Australia recognised that new, innovative and flexible methods would be needed to adequately respond to this disaster, especially in Indonesia.

The province of Aceh was closest to the epicentre of the earthquake and worst affected by the tsunami, with 14 of 21 districts devastated. More than 128,000 people died and another 93,000 people were officially reported missing. Over half a million people were displaced and more than 149,000 injured. (World Health Organization 2005). In the health sector, infrastructure including hospitals, clinics and health offices were significantly affected and the health workforce was seriously depleted, with more than 700 personnel reported dead or missing (Abdulla 2005).

Entering the Aceh context was challenging for most donors. After decades of civil conflict, few agencies had established links to the province. The scale of the response was enormous, with more than 300 agencies on the ground in the first month (Bennett et al 2006). The response was challenging to coordinate and not always appropriate, with some incidences of supply-driven and poorly targeted donations and services. The health sector was no exception. By 6 January 2005, the

ACEH

Health check at a Child Friendly Space, Banda Aceh.

Case study
Aceh

Top: Health check at a displaced persons centre, Banda Aceh.

Bottom: Temporary health clinic, Banda Aceh.

World Health Organization advised that no additional field hospitals were required, yet they continued to arrive. Two years on, the district hospital in Meulaboh, West Aceh is now faced with funding the safe destruction of 200 cubic metres of expired and unused pharmaceuticals.

Despite significant donor investment in the health sector, staff from three Melbourne-based agencies involved in the response were concerned that key areas were being neglected by existing donors and programs. Recognising these gaps, Aceh Partnerships in Health (APiH) was initiated through a contractual partnership between the Australian International Health Institute, Burnet Institute and World Vision Australia. A joint field assessment in February 2006 confirmed several themes - including HIV and AIDS, disability, adolescent health, mental health, and research and health policy - where strategic financial and technical assistance could be beneficial. APiH was not intended to directly implement any activities itself. Instead, it was designed to support existing systems and governance structures by partnering with local government, non-government and educational institutions.

The 'facility' as a development approach

Rapid changes in Aceh's social, political and economic context made it, and continue to make it, challenging to plan detailed prescriptive project designs. The operating environment is constantly changing and contextual analysis that provides rationale for selecting particular activities can quickly become outdated. Recognising the unique challenges for development programming in this context, a 'facility' was chosen as the most appropriate way to manage funding.

The facility is a relatively new form of development assistance that utilises a flexible approach to planning and funding. Rather than requiring upfront detailed analysis and design that informs

a precise implementation schedule, it is instead governed by an agreed scope, broad objectives and a set of criteria for selecting partners and activities. Funding for activities is driven by identification of needs by partners as they become apparent. Reflection on achievements during actual implementation becomes the best and immediate indicator of if, and how, future activities should evolve.

The APiH facility operates within and supports the Aceh Provincial Strategic Plan for Healthcare (2006-2010). In addition to receiving technical assistance to design and implement health activities, partners are also supported to enhance their organisational capacity. This is achieved, for example, by learning how to develop budgets and proposals, improve human resource management and financial management and reporting, and acquire new skills such as problem analysis and strategy development. Rather than substituting for gaps in health service delivery or health system weaknesses, APiH strengthens the capacity of existing agencies and makes resources available at moments when they will hopefully have the most beneficial impacts.

The facility also has the flexibility to fund Rapid Response Initiatives, where local organisations who may not already be partners of APiH can access funding for discrete activities such as staff training, attendance at workshops and seminars, short-term technical assistance or smallscale equipment or infrastructure support. Examples of activities funded under this initiative in 2006 include the Provincial Mental Health Planning Workshop, the development of new mental health legislation, and support for World AIDS Day activities. This event was a first for Banda Aceh and without APiH's investment is unlikely to have occurred.

While in many respects World Vision Australia feels the APiH facility is an effective and appropriate response, demonstrating its effectiveness remains a significant challenge. The humanitarian

community, including World Vision, is increasingly focused on improving agency accountability through measuring the impact and effectiveness of relief and development activities. However, the current frameworks available to assess achievement and impact of projects are largely irrelevant when trying to capture the contribution of a 'facility' response.

APiH: the challenges of evaluating 'effectiveness'

The majority of development projects implemented during the last 30 years have utilised the logical framework approach to project design and management, for at least some stage of the project management cycle. This approach assumes projects are governed by linear logic, with a clear cause-and-effect relationship between activities and outcomes. It is reliant on the future being easy to anticipate and uncomplicated to plan. New models of program delivery such as the facility have emerged, in part due to critique of the logical framework approach and perceived limitations in its application. They therefore require alternative frameworks for design, monitoring and evaluation (DME). However, a 'blueprint' DME framework

for facilities does not exist, and APiH is facing a number of challenges, as explored below.

Challenge 1:

A pre-agreed 'scope' guides funding decisions within the facility. Decisions are not based on planned and prescriptive outcomes or objectives, as they are in other development approaches.

The facility approach adopts an agreed 'scope' of work that only determines the types of activities that can and cannot be funded. In the case of APiH, the scope restricts funding to organisations working in the health sector in earthquake and tsunami-affected areas of Aceh and Nias Island. However, the scope simply provides parameters for funding and guides the way forward for selecting partners and activities. Unlike other development approaches, funding decisions are based on the consistency of proposed activities within the scope, not because they are designed to achieve a particular objective or purpose. Therefore, if activities fit within the scope and the facility is being managed within the agreed parameters, it is considered to be operating effectively. It is not logical to try and set indicators of achievement or

1. Traditional development project structure
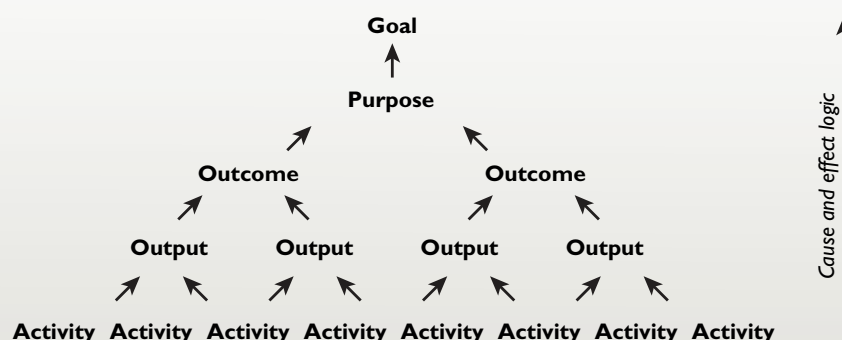
Project logic assumes implementation of activities will result in outputs and achieve pre-determined outcomes, or objectives.

impact because activities and objectives are not predetermined.

Challenge 2:

The humanitarian community is increasingly being asked to demonstrate value for money as part of improving accountability mechanisms to donors. Within a facility approach it is actually quite difficult to determine 'value for money'.

It seems that APiH is not alone in this experience. In a review of programs in 2004, AusAID found that programmatic approaches such as facilities tend to be very staff-intensive and highlight tension between the desire to create a flexible, responsive and efficient mechanism while ensuring adequate focus and impact. The review described a commonly posed threshold question by staff involved in the review – "what is stopping this facility from just being a slush fund?" (AusAID 2005). In the case of APiH, annual partner program plans and clear documentation guiding partner selection and requirements for release of funds have so far ensured adequate focus. Determining value for money, however, remains highly subjective and judgment varies according to individual and institutional experience.

With less emphasis on upfront design and planning and greater emphasis on flexibility, rapid response and progressive

engagement with partners, facilities need to have appropriate accountability systems in place to ensure funds are dispersed through a transparent process. Facilities also require significant upfront investment to employ program staff and technical advisors who need to be in place at inception to identify and work with potential partners. APiH experienced a lengthy start-up phase, where staff worked alongside partners to assist in project identification, design and the development of appropriate financial management systems before funds could be dispersed and activities commenced.

Challenge 3:

The APiH facility focuses, in a large part, on organisational development, institutional strengthening and good governance.

While designed as a health facility, organisational development has been a critical component of APiH's investment in local partners. While this is encouraging and likely to enhance sustainability, the contribution of APiH in this area risks being invisible if monitoring and evaluation systems are not designed to adequately capture the process by which partners are learning and achieving. Repeating partner capacity assessments (currently conducted prior to contracting a partner) is one way that APiH hopes to capture organisational change.

2. The facility approach to development

Facility Goal

Scope of the facility
(Governance group)

Facility goal:
To contribute to the achievement of the Provincial Health Office of Aceh's strategic plan by strengthening local capacity to promote and deliver quality health services.

Scope of facility:
· mental health
· disability
· adolescent health
· HIV
· research & policy; and
· organisational development

Represent funded activities, approved by the governance group, that sit within the scope.

Local NGO's, government agencies and other partners

Challenge 4:

Many of APiH's partners to date have been involved in facilitating networks, engaging in advocacy, and attempting to influence public opinion. It is typically difficult to monitor and evaluate the impact of advocacy-based work.

In some theme areas, such as HIV and AIDS, APiH has clearly been the catalyst, helping to transform the HIV sector in Aceh. Increasing dialogue, collaborative partnerships between local NGOs and government officials, and revitalisation of the Provincial AIDS Commission are all, arguably, partly attributable to APiH's work and influence. A year ago, HIV was rarely mentioned by either health policy makers and practitioners, or within communities, and yet the raised profile of this issue resulted in more than 700 people participating in Banda Aceh's inaugural World AIDS Day activities in December last year. However, capturing social change and pinpointing an organisation's input into that process is complex to measure, especially given the relatively short period of implementation.

Challenge 5:

Facility approaches are not primarily concerned with establishing a logical connection between achievement of activities and intended project outcomes. The focus and methods for
monitoring and evaluation, typically used in more traditional development approaches, are therefore not suitable.

Instead of concentrating purely on tracking progress in implementation and achieving predetermined indicators of success, APiH's monitoring and evaluation framework emphasises organisational learning from achievements and challenges, and mapping changes in the health sector. Accountability remains important with monitoring of systems, processes, decision making and the quality of individual activities; so does evaluating the effectiveness of the facility approach as a method to deliver flexible development assistance.

Reflections

While it is possible within the APiH facility to evaluate individual activities that have been implemented by local partners against their own expected outcomes and objectives, it is not possible for the facility to demonstrate collectively what it has achieved. This is because multi-layered partnerships are involved and the facility funds diverse activities that are not related, except where they fit within a common scope of work.

However, despite no formal link between facility activities or among partners, there are interesting synergies forming

Reviewing new approaches to our work

Newborn, Banda Aceh.

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between APiH's partners in Aceh. Critical networks and coalitions are developing, where partners are working collectively to achieve health sector gains. Any attempt to measure individual contribution, though, may be counterproductive and potentially damage partner trust and cooperation (Chapman 2002). Instead, APiH will examine changes within the health sector during implementation and, through stakeholder analysis, try to identify how APiH has been linked with, or contributed to, those changes.

The APiH facility has provided World Vision Australia with an opportunity to think critically about new approaches to development, both in terms of the way business is conducted, and the methods used to fund and implement programs.

While it is not possible to objectively measure the impact of facilities, it is feasible to find ways to understand whether the actual mechanism for delivering funds was effective, and to capture opinion about APiH's contribution to health sector development in Aceh. It will be interesting to monitor whether this level of information will continue to satisfy growing industry demand for documenting evidence of impact in the coming years.

Contributor's biographies

Editor and project coordinator

Martin Thiele is an advisor within the Strategic Projects Unit of World Vision Australia's Policy & Programs Group. Prior to joining World Vision in 2006 he worked in television, documentary film, publications, arts management, cultural development and services to marginalised youth. He has a Masters in International Development.

Section 1: Reflections on program effectiveness

The Machinga HIV & AIDS Project 2003-2006

Community coalitions for combating HIV and AIDS in Malawi

Dr Paul Woods is World Vision Australia's Senior Country Program Coordinator for Malawi and Zambia. He joined World Vision in 2002. He completed formal studies in international development and later spent time in the hills of northern Vietnam studying towards a PhD in agroforestry. He has a particular interest in natural resource management and has lived and worked in Australia, Borneo, Vietnam, Samoa and Malawi.

Food in crisis

Evaluating the effectiveness of food aid operations in southern Africa

Viv Mancusi has been working as Desk Officer with World Vision Australia's Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs team for almost seven years. In addition to overseeing project administrative functions, she manages a small portfolio in Lesotho and is currently completing her Masters in Public Health.

Junus David has been managing food aid projects since 1998. He started with World Vision Indonesia in 1998, moved to East Timor in 1999 and to Azerbaijan in 2001. He originally studied information management and joined World Vision Australia's Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs team in 2004.

Refocusing the sponsorship model – Pilahuin and Lamay

Reflections on effectiveness from Peru and Ecuador

Belinda Pratten is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. With a background in psychology she has worked on NGO and AusAID programs in East Timor, Kosovo and Papua New Guinea. She has a Masters in Public Health.

Jenny Torres is the Ministry Quality Manager for World Vision Ecuador. She has held several positions with World Vision Ecuador over the past nine years including Sponsorship Coordinator, Manager, Programs Direction and more recently as Coordinator of the International Audit review in Ecuador. Jenny has a degree in Information Technology.

Janet Cruz Granda has been the National Director of World Vision Ecuador since October 2004. Prior to working with World Vision she spent 15 years in executive consultancy and management which included strategic and business planning, administration and corporate finance. She is a graduate in Business Administration from the Catholic University of Ecuador.

Brett Pierce has worked with World Vision Australia for 14 years in various roles and is currently with the Program Effectiveness team overseeing the quality of sponsorship programs. His educational background is in vocational education and training, communications and he is currently completing a Masters in International Community Development.

Defining success – Begasin Bugati

Understanding 'effective' development in Papua New Guinea

Jonathan Treagust has been World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Thailand and Papua New Guinea. He

grew up in Papua New Guinea, completed a Masters in International Development in the United Kingdom and has worked in the aid sector and agricultural development in both PNG and South Asia.

David Sweeting worked as a mechanical engineer for four years before joining the Australian Youth Ambassador Program and volunteering in Fiji. He joined World Vision Australia as part of the 2007 graduate program.

Section 2: Sectoral or multi-country interventions

Child friendly responses

Child rights and child protection issues following the Pakistan Earthquake

Claire Beck is part of World Vision Australia's Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs team and Team Leader of the Community Resilience and Project Management Team - with specific responsibility for Afghanistan and Pakistan. Prior to coming to World Vision she worked in Pakistan for 12 years. Claire is a trained teacher and has completed a Masters of Public Health.

Reconstructing responses

The trials and tribulations of World Vision's tsunami shelter program

Joyati Das is currently the Urban Poverty Program Coordinator in the Special Projects Unit of World Vision Australia. In January 2005, she was sent to Thailand to conduct rapid assessment of the tsunami disaster and was seconded to Sri Lanka for three months in March 2005 to set up the Stakeholder Liaison Unit (later renamed the Humanitarian Accountability Team) to ensure community engagement processes were included in the shelter program.

Children of Romania

Reflecting on 15 years of child protection work in Romania

Valentin Sabau is the Manager of Cluj Area Development Program in Romania. He has a background in social work and has worked with World Vision Romania for 13 years.

Maria Muzur is a social worker by profession and currently works as a supervisor with World Vision Romania, where she has worked for 12 years.

Corina Popescu is the Manager of Valcea Area Development Program and is the Coordinator of the Valcea Children of Romania project. She has several years experience as a caregiver in orphanages, working in child support and outreach and as a social worker in the Children of Romania project. She has been working with World Vision Romania for 13 years.

Roxana Trupina has a Masters in Management of Social and Health Services. She has six years of field programming and project management experience with World Vision Romania.

Fair Trade, the Brazilian experience

Making markets work for the small producers as a pathway out of poverty

Roni Oracion has been World Vision Australia's Microenterprise Development Advisor for seven years. Prior to emigrating to Australia from the Philippines, Roni was Executive Director of an NGO in the Philippines called Appropriate Technology Centre for Rural Development.

Closing the cycle to human trafficking

World Vision's law enforcement collaborations in the Mekong sub-region

Susu Thatun is World Vision Australia's Senior Policy Advisor on Child Protection and Trafficking. Prior to this, she spent seven years as Program Manager at the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking. Susu's work with families whose lives are torn apart by child trafficking has taken her to Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

Section 3: Reviewing new approaches to our work

Why campaign?

World Vision's experience of Make Poverty History in Australia

Andrew Hassett has played an active role in World Vision Australia's campaigns team and was heavily involved in the Make Poverty History campaign. He has worked across World Vision's marketing, public policy and campaigns teams. He studied commerce and arts and has a Masters in International Studies.

Sue Cant is a policy adviser in World Vision's Government Relations Division. She was previously adviser to the Shadow Minister for Pacific Island Affairs and Overseas Aid, Bob Sercombe. Prior to this she was assistant foreign editor at The Age newspaper and has worked as a journalist in several developing countries.

Anueja Gopalakrishnan works with World Vision Australia in the Public Policy and Government Relations teams. She as an Honours Degree in Biomedical Science, a Masters in International Law and is currently completing a Masters in Public Health.

Greening West Africa

The West Africa Natural Resource Management Project 2005–2007

Tony Rinaudo managed relief and development programs in the Maradi Integrated Development Project in Niger Republic for 17 years before joining World Vision Australia. From 1999 until 2006 he was Country Program Officer for Kenya and Ethiopia and then Chad and Senegal. He currently holds the position of Natural Resource Management Specialist in World Vision Australia's Integration Team.

Josue Sogoba lives in Mali and is coordinator of the WA NRM project. He has been facilitating training in land degradation and restoration, natural resource management, natural regeneration, project design and evaluation, Emergency Relief and Disaster Mitigation track 1 & 2 facilitation for five West African countries. Josue has a Masters in Environmental Auditing from Imperial College, London.

People power

Grassroots demand for good governance in Uganda, Brazil and India

Keren Winterford is a Quality Advisor for World Vision Australia with expertise in community development, facilitation and design, monitoring and evaluation. She has worked in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and recently commenced a PhD exploring impact of language use within the development sector.

Governance the Wetenngerr way

The Wetenngerr Leadership and Governance Project 2005-2008

Gabrielle Halcrow is the Regional Program Coordinator for World Vision Australia's Australian Programs. With a background in public health, she has worked with remote communities for over seven years in South Asia, the Pacific and recently Indigenous Australia across a range of

public health, water and sanitation and community development programs.

Dr Stuart Phillpot has three decades of community development experience in Australia and internationally. He has held senior executive posts in State and Federal Government service, and academic posts with the University of Canberra. He speaks basic Indonesian and Pitjanjatjara and has finely developed skills in Indigenous community process, and in natural and agricultural resource management.

Growing Strong

Encouraging ownership of Early Childhood Care and Development in Vietnam

Leigh Mitchell has worked in many Asian countries in various roles including human rights, peace media and corporate social responsibility. He joined World Vision Australia's Asia Unit as part of the 2007 graduate program.

Phearak Svay is World Vision Australia's Country Program Coordinator for Vietnam and Laos. Born in Cambodia, he has first-hand experience of quality early childhood care in developing countries and potential to positively influence all stages in life.

Health sector development in Aceh

Post-tsunami partnerships in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam

Louise Searle has a background in designing and managing projects that promote inter-agency partnerships, encourage the adoption of flexible funding and new forms of development assistance. She has a special interest in local health systems and has worked with World Vision Australia's Asian tsunami response program since 2005.