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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

SUCCESS STORY

A LOCAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION BETTER EQUIPPED TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Local NGOs' capacity built to better served the community



Halt Sida members are busy selling Aquatabs and distributing water-related educational materials

Élvière Eleta, PSI/ASF Sales Agent

Strategic planning workshop was part of the capacity building activities undertaken under the USAID-funded AIDSTAR project to empower local NGOs to be useful actors in the community. As a whole, twenty local NGOs from all the DRC's project-targeted provinces benefited from these activities. These organizations were even assisted in developing their financial and administrative manuals.

Halt Sida is a Congolese non-governmental organization (NGO) that is operational in Kinshasa and in five other provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Sud-Kivu, Nord-Kivu, Maniema, Province Orientale and Katanga. In Kinshasa, it targets schoolchildren and out-of-school youth in the Masina area. In April 2012, the NGO began a partnership with PSI/ASF under the USAID-funded AIDSTAR project mainly in HIV/AIDS prevention activity through awareness-raising sessions.

In May 2013, Halt Sida was invited to participate in a strategic planning exercise organized by Social Impact (SI) and PSI/ASF as part of the project's component related to capacity building of local NGOs. When initially asked what its NGO would become at the end of the AIDSTAR project, Titi Mulamba the coordinator replied: "We'll simply stop our activities as we won't be able to continue paying our office rent." Then, Anicet Mayira, an SI coach, suggested to Halt Sida that by bringing together stakeholders (community, public services and NGOs) to discuss community problems, the NGO would open horizons and might have access to other resources.

Back at their headquarters, Halt Sida members held a brainstorming session and identified waterborne diseases, including diarrhea, as a major cause of high infant mortality in their community. They realized that they could contribute to reducing diarrhea prevalence in the community by allowing people to have access to "Aquatabs," a water purifier. They also realized that they could earn some money by selling the product. In August 2013, the NGO purchased a pack of Aquatabs, which they easily sold and that enabled the NGO to double its initial investment. The NGO members were encouraged by this positive experience, and gradually bought more and more Aquatabs cartons such that a few months after the first test, they were able to buy five cartons.

Halt Sida is proud to help children in its community combat diarrhea by drinking purified water. The NGO is also excited to continue this activity since the community's drinking water needs still have not been met and the activity allows them to solve internal operational problems. Halt Sida envisions a bright future thanks to the USAID-funded strategic planning workshop its members attended.