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Educational Quality Improvement Program
Classrooms • Schools • Communities

**USAID/AFRICA BUREAU ACTIVITY
FINAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2003 – OCTOBER 2006**



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With:

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Creative Centre for Community Mobilisation
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Acronyms

AB	Abstinence and Be Faithful
ACI	Africa Consultants International
ADC	Area Development Committee (Malawi)
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AIR	American Institutes for Research
ADC	Area Development Committee
CNLS	Senegal’s National AIDS Council
COP	Country Operation Plan
CRECCOM	Creative Centre for Community Mobilization
DAC	District AIDS Coordinator
DACC	District AIDS Coordinating Committee
DC	District Commissioner
DEC	District Executive Committee
DFiD	UK Department for International Development
ECOWAS	Economic Council of West African States
EDC	Education Development Center
EQUIP	Education Quality Improvement Program
ERNWACA	Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
FHI	Family Health International
FQEL	Fundamental Quality and Equity Levels
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
GVH:	Group Village Headperson
HBC:	Home Based Care
HEARD	Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division, University of Kwazulu Natal
HIV	Human Immune Virus
IATT	Interagency Task team on HIV/AIDS and Education
IBE	International Bureau of Education (UNESCO)
IEC	Information Education Communication
IIEP	International Institute for Education Planning
INEADE	Institut National d’Etudes et d’Actions pour le Développement de l’Education (Senegal)
IRI	Interactive Radio Instruction
LDTC	Lesotho Distance Training Centre
LC	Listening Club
LP	Learning Post
MACRA	Malawi Communication Regulatory Authority
MBC	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
MCRP	Malawi Community radio Program
MEPS	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (Bénin)
MIS	Management Information System
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MoAC	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (Swaziland)
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoI&T	Ministry of Information and Tourism
MTL	Malawi Telecommunications Limited



MTT	Mobile Task Team for Mitigating and Preventing the Impact of HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector
MWCR	Mudzi Wathu Community Radio
NAC	National AIDS Commission
NERCHA	National Emergency Response Council for HIV/AIDS
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NTIC	Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication (Senegal)
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PADDEM	Programme d'Appui à la Déconcentration et Décentralisation de l'Education (Senegal)
PEA	Primary Education Advisors
PEPFAR	Presidential Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PLWHA	People Living With HIV/AIDS
PSI	Population Services International
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RANET	Radio Network (Zambia)
SABC	Africa Channel (Zambia)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
STL:	Studio Transmission Link
TA:	Traditional Authority
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	The United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
VDC	Village Development Committee
VH	Village Headperson
WHO	World Health Organization
ZaCoMeF	Zambia Community Radio Forum
ZCRP	Zambia Community Radio Program



I. Objectives

The EQUIP1 Africa Bureau Associate Award was signed on September 30, 2003, and includes five activities for the USAID Africa Bureau:

Feasibility Study of Regional West African *Sesame Street* Model

The goal of this study was to examine the feasibility of executing a *Sesame Street* project in West Africa. EQUIP1 provided the information needed to make an informed decision about the value of investing in a *Sesame Street* project in the region. This feasibility study assessed whether and how *Sesame Street*, possibly in conjunction with other complementary media-based interventions, such as Education Development Center's Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) programs in Guinea and Nigeria, could serve the early childhood/early primary school education needs of the West Africa region. The study focused on the countries proposed by USAID (Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal). As a result of its findings, the report was to include a set of recommendations for the implementation of a pilot program. After submission of the report, USAID would decide if it would fund the implementation of a pilot program at the regional level. In September, 2004, a decision was made not to continue with the *Sesame Street* pilot.

Implementation Period: September 2003 – September 2004

Community Radio Programs

Zambia Community Radio Program (ZCRP)

To address the many problems facing rural populations, the Zambia Community Radio Project, Community Radio Education to Mitigate Multi-sector Impacts of HIV/AIDS (ZCRP) was created and implemented. Led by implementing partner Education Development Center (EDC), ZCRP worked with communities that have developed proven and successful responses to some of their most pressing problems. These “easy to replicate” development success stories were featured each week on the popular local radio show *In My Village*. Two versions of *In My Village* were produced and broadcast every Sunday evening on community radio stations in Chipata and Lundazi, Zambia. The shows were carefully crafted to allow villages to present their community and development initiative in a way that is both entertaining and motivational. The Chinyanja and Chichewa language working title for this program description reflects its local focus, and the language allows for cross border transference into the Mchinji region of Malawi as a first step. A Malawi adaptation was in the planning stages as of December, 2005.

Implementation Period: September 2003 – January 2006

Malawi Community Radio Program (MCRP)

The Malawi *In My Village* Community Radio Project (MCRP) was modeled after its sister Zambia program. As such, it aims to prevent and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS through the effective use of radio shows in Malawi. Although the shows were broadcast nationally over Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, special emphasis was placed on Mchinji district which served as a pilot district for the program production and implementation of many of the HIV/AIDS prevention, self help and monitoring activities planned for this project. The set-up of a pilot community radio station in the Mchinji district was an important component of the expansion into Malawi.

Implementation Period: January 2006 – October 2006

West Africa Mobile Task Team Model

A new West Africa Mobile Task Team (MTT/West) modeled on the University of Natal Southern MTT for HIV and Education will be adapted specifically to meet the needs of West African countries. Once the new entity is established, funds will support provision of strategic and implementation planning for HIV response in education services to West African MoEs. Funds will also provide support for the West Africa MTT-model (MTT/West) to facilitate training of the technical consultants by the University of Natal MTT/South, to document and disseminate the MTT/West replication experience, and to seek additional funding partners for the West African institutional base of the MTT/West among (but not exclusively from) agency members of the UNAIDS Interagency Task Team on HIV/AIDS and Education (IATT).

Implementation Period: September 2003 – March 2006

Lesotho

In response to the difficulties of Lesotho's herd boys, EQUIP1 undertook an assessment of the current status of education access, quality, and equity for the herd boys and the activities and projects of the Government of Lesotho, donors, multilateral organizations, and NGOs and selected an intervention in collaboration with the Government and the Lesotho Distance Training Centre, with the concurrence of USAID. This intervention targets the educational needs of these young men by providing them with life skills that will enable them to break the cycle of poverty and disease.

Implementation Period: September 2003 – September 2004

Swaziland

EQUIP1 will assist the OVC population of Swaziland in breaking the cycle of poverty, HIV/AIDS, and orphan hood. Activities included an initial assessment of current efforts to address the needs of the OVC, including UNICEF's efforts focused on school-feeding programs and community children's centers, to identify best practices and lessons learned. Following the assessment, EQUIP1 piloted a community-based intervention in collaboration with the National Emergency Response Council (NERCHA) targeted at increasing the abilities of communities to integrate OVC into their social nets and in providing access to basic literacy and income-generating skills to OVC, with the ultimate goal of decreasing their vulnerability and breaking the cycle of poverty and disease.

Implementation Period: September 2003 – September 2004

II. Executive Summary

Feasibility Study of Regional West African *Sesame Street* Model

A feasibility study was commissioned by the USAID Africa Bureau Education Division to assess whether and how *Sesame Street*, possibly in conjunction with radio and print media could help support the early childhood/early primary school education needs of the West Africa Region. Towards that end, in October 2003, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) awarded a sub-agreement to the Education Development Center (EDC) and Sesame Workshop to jointly produce this study

Methodology

A literature review produced six country profiles. (Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal). Four countries (Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal) were visited by assessment teams who conducted research and meetings with a wide spectrum of stakeholders identified and contacted with the help of local coordinators and USAID missions. These site visits were followed by two in-depth qualitative research studies, (Nigeria, Senegal).

Findings

The following questions and answers informed the study:

- Can the Sesame Workshop model and complementary educational media, such as Interactive Radio Instruction, have an impact on the needs of West Africa's children?

Yes. An integrated *Sesame Street* intervention can greatly benefit pre-primary and primary education in the region. Regionally produced materials highlighting West African culture will be very well received.

- Is there interest in and support for pursuing a broader West African adaptation of *Sesame Street*?

Yes. Educators, broadcasters, government officials including ministry of education representatives expressed a need for materials to prepare children for a smooth integration into school environment that would also serve as instructional materials in a school setting. All the above stakeholders as well as parents and children expressed great interest and support for a West African *Sesame Street* adaptation.

- Are the necessary conditions present for a successful *Sesame Street* initiative?

There are logistical issues: representation throughout the region, multiple languages, inadequate facilities, training of media production specialists. However, there is a favorable broadcast policy environment and a strong indication that this project will help achieve the broad goals and objectives of policy makers throughout the region. The support and enthusiasm demonstrated for this project indicates that the technical and logistical problems are manageable and surmountable.

- Is *Sesame Street* in West Africa a sustainable endeavor?

Given the *Sesame Street* track record and ability to leverage both public and private donor support, a sustainable initiative is likely to be developed. An initial investment of five years by USAID will allow time for the formation of strategic partnerships and a sustainability plan.

- How can we sketch the broad contours of what such an initiative might consist (i.e. what combination of media and related activities would seem most appropriate)?

A one year development phase will identify partners, assess production capacity and establish production and broadcast plans. This will be followed by a four year implementation phase during which the project will produce three seasons of a West African *Sesame Street* television series in both French and English. Pilot radio and outreach components including print will also be produced during this period. Local language radio adaptations will be tested in two countries.

To this initial list, EDC and Sesame Workshop added:

- How can *Sesame Street* best respond to educational needs in West Africa?

A multi-pronged approach would yield best results. The regionally produced television series will be the core and should be reinforced through local radio and print adaptations.

- What language(s) should be used to present content?

The general consensus among stakeholders was that if one language is chosen, it should be the official language. The television programs provide visual clues that help children to understand the official language, but the radio programs need to be adapted in the local language.

Recommendations

USAID should invest in a five-year program that will include a flagship West African television series coupled with a pilot radio and multi-media outreach projects. Both pilots would initially be implemented in two countries, one Anglophone and one Francophone, with subsequent expansion, funding permitting. Sustainability would be ensured through public and private partnerships and sponsorships. The project should work closely with educators, producers and broadcasters to plan and implement a *Sesame Street* project uniquely tailored to meet West African needs.

Results

The report was submitted to USAID in September, 2004. EQUIP1 was informed in March, 2005, that USAID had decided not to move forward with the *Sesame Street* pilot at this time.

Community Radio Programs

Zambia Community Radio Program (ZCRP)

The radio program – *Ku Mudzi Wangu: In My Village* – provided community-level radio education support as a pendant companion to the central government support for provision of education in HIV/AIDS-affected countries. Delivery of radio broadcasts provided strategic education to support village-level mitigation of (selected) multi-sector impacts of HIV/AIDS, accompanying mentoring assistance to village listening clubs, together with small grants to selected village associations to help strengthen communities in regions heavily affected by HIV/AIDS so that they can better feed and care for their families and for orphans and vulnerable children, ensure that pupils are ready to learn at school and manage local environmental resources for a secure, healthy and productive future. *In My Village* was developed on a pilot basis in its first two years, in eastern Zambia (with the expectation of trans-border application into Malawi) to explore implementation in a trans-boundary context. An external mid-term

evaluation of the project was a part of the approved work plan. The data was collected and analyzed but the evaluation report was not completed because of the unanticipated termination of the project.

In the initial stages of the project key stakeholders were identified, a needs assessment was begun, and recordings made of sample materials for radio programs. Two radio stations, Radio Breeze in Chipata and Radio Chikaya in Lundazi agreed to partner with ZCRP and develop and broadcast radio programs. Two programs, each 45 minutes in length were broadcast every Sunday, one in each district. Five themes were agreed to for the programs:

- HIV/AIDS (Prevention, Care and Support)
- Vulnerable Children and Education
- Income Generation
- Food Security and Agriculture
- Environmental Health

Implementation

In 2003, local staff was recruited and a local office was set up in Chipata; Juarez and Associates developed a monitoring and evaluation plan; networks with local NGOs were created.

A format for the shows was finalized. Each program featured local history, music, story telling and a successful activity worth replicating. Each village profiled in a program received a solar powered wind-up radio to be used with a Listening Club that would provide feedback. The first program was broadcast in July, 2004

Radio Network Zambia (RANET) donated 100 wind-up solar powered radios for the Listening Clubs. Another 500 radios were given to Radio Breeze, who asked the project to distribute them to the villages.

The program continued to grow in 2005. The *Zambia Daily Mail* developed a weekly *In My Village* feature. There were two features on the Voice of America television series *Healthy Living* broadcast throughout Africa.

Small grants and technical assistance programs were launched. New partnerships were formed. ZCRP became a member of the newly founded Zambia Community Media Forum (ZaCoMeF). A stakeholder meeting with key partners and supporters (40 participants) was organized by ZCRP. Interest was expressed in expansion within Zambia beyond the pilot Eastern Province.

Analysis of feedback received from listening clubs in anticipation of the mid-term evaluation was undertaken. Key staff members participated in various workshops and conferences. Expansion into Malawi continued. Three staff members were recruited and underwent on-the-job training in Chipata. Office space was leased.

A letter of termination was received in November, 2005.

Results

Very positive feedback on the project was received from governmental partners: the Minister of Community Development, the Provincial Minister, Permanent Secretaries, the District Commissioner and Line government Heads of Department; non-governmental partners and stakeholders; and NGOs and village representatives from Chipata and Lundazi.

A total of 99 trained and supervised village clubs were formed. Mid-term data collection confirmed residents are regularly listening to programs and in many cases replicating one or two of the broadcast activities.

Challenges and Lessons

Rapid growth and acceptance of the program created some logistical problems which were overcome with hiring of additional staff. Communication breakdowns due to adverse weather conditions or equipment breakdown were a challenge. Recording and analyzing data was also difficult and the international consultant from Juarez and Associates provided training to local staff. Finally, Village Chiefs felt excluded because during recordings ZCRP staff worked with the village Headman. This was rectified.

Recommendations

The design elements that helped *In My Village* have an impact are elements needed for good development work. The project responded to a local need, shared local solutions and fostered pride in local communities. It worked in collaboration with local authorities, NGOs, media and other partners to ensure relevance and avoid duplication.

Malawi Community Radio Program (MCRP)

Malawi – *M'mudzi Mwathu: In My Village* – Community Radio Program was created when USAID/Malawi decided to fund the Malawi portion of this community radio project with PEPFAR funds through the EQUIP1 mechanism. The project was implemented in two phases: a) community mobilization which included focus group discussions, training of village and school mentors and capacity building of government extension workers, and b) recording of radio shows highlighting relevant and replicable village activities. These shows were aired on the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) till such time as the Mchinji community radio station was set-up and functional. A total of 28 thirty-minute programs were broadcast on MBC and these were rebroadcast and repeated on the community radio once it was in place for a total of 80 programs.

Listening Clubs were formed and provided with wind-up radios and cassette players in both villages and schools, with trained leaders that would provide momentum for the village to implement activities relevant to the mitigation of HIV/AIDS impacts targeting orphans, people sick with AIDS and Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT). A resource center was established at the radio station office which provided access to information on HIV/AIDS.

Implementation

CRECCOM in collaboration with AIR formulated the design of the project. Offices and a studio were leased, furnished and equipped for recording radio programs and project staff was hired. Project staff was trained, both in Zambia and at community and private radio stations in Malawi. A business plan was written, a broadcasting licence obtained from the Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA), permission obtained, for a fee, from Celtel to use their tower for antennas and from Malawi Telecommunications Ltd (MTL) to use their building for transmitters. Monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the activity was built into the program design.

An American company, Radio Systems Inc. donated equipment for the radio station and also arranged for low cost procurement of other needed items, which were installed with technical help from a local consultant. As soon as it started broadcasting, it gained enormous popularity, not only in the Mchinji district but also in parts of two neighboring districts and the capital city which could receive the signal.



Community residents offered their services and volunteers were trained to help with some of the radio activities. The station also started selling air time to raise funds for eventual sustainability.

The project worked in close collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Tourism (MoI&T), the National AIDS Commission (NAC), with village elders and traditional authorities to encourage community ownership of the station. A newsletter was published and distributed to all stakeholders. Media representatives were also invited to the radio station on two occasions and publicized the project activities on both TV and in the newspapers and on National Radio, Capital Radio and Transworld Radio.

Lessons Learned

Community radio is a powerful means for reaching out to people on social issues and for disseminating knowledge and practical information. Mobilized and sensitized communities are self-motivated and committed and do not demand material remuneration. A partnership between a local NGO and an international NGO is a powerful tool for capacity building.

People are willing to undergo VCT but centers are often situated out of community reach. Listening Clubs continue to function and implement activities even after the project has ended. This was verified by Malawi staff when they visited Chipata in Zambia after the termination of the ZCRP.

Challenges

From a programmatic perspective, the project was often faced with demands for services for which the project had no mandate, such as people requesting VCT services or recreational centers for young people. The project ran into logistical complications based on the fact that American-made radio equipment is not always compatible with Malawian power disruptions and failures.

It was also difficult and disappointing to suddenly end a project just when it had become so popular and communities had become very interested in its messages. Losing competent and well trained staff was also difficult.

West African Mobile Task Team (MTT/West)

USAID funded the creation of a West African Mobile Task Team (MTT/West) to prevent and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS in the education sector. The project concept was based on the first Mobile Task Team that had been working successfully with Ministries of education in southern Africa since 2000. According to the signed agreement, a Consultative Group (CG) comprised of representatives from EQUIP1, USAID and MTT/South would serve as a steering committee. The CG selected African Consultants International (ACI) to be the institutional base for MTT/West. Thereafter, ACI was also included in the CG.

MTT/Southern Africa provided specialized technical assistance to Ministries of education (MoE) in a high prevalence HIV/AIDS environment in the following areas:

- development of HIV/AIDS policy for the Education Sector
- development or improvement of strategic plans
- creation or strengthening of HIV/AIDS management units
- strengthening of national and decentralized management information systems
- development of HIV/AIDS activities in the higher education sector

For MTT/West simply replicating this approach was not the answer. It had to be adapted to West African realities to respond to the unique challenges of the West African environment:

- Varying but generally lower HIV prevalence levels and lower visibility of the epidemic called for different approaches to develop commitment and specific ways of dealing with the stages of the epidemic as they evolve;
- Education in West Africa is largely based on the Francophone system which has different structures and processes from Southern African education models;
- Research and scientific data on the impact of HIV/AIDS on Education in West Africa and the impact of interventions in the Education Sector on HIV/AIDS is lacking;
- Cultural, religious and political factors that can influence the education sector in West Africa are often unlike those in Southern Africa and therefore require the development of new or adapted approaches;
- Teachers unions often play a different role;
- Universal enrolment remains a goal rather than a reality.

Implementation

In January, 2004, staff members from USAID/Washington, USAID/Senegal, EQUIP1 project manager and MTT/South co-coordinators met to discuss the new project and its collaboration with MTT/South. MTT/West would help West African MoEs to develop strategies for addressing HIV/AIDS. Eventually MTT/West would become autonomous and independent of ACI technical assistance and USAID funding.

The MTT/West core team consisted of three members who worked in close collaboration with two ACI HIV/AIDS specialists. A roster of potential experts with diverse expertise was established. Quarterly meetings were regularly scheduled and there was constant communication between team members. A four step approach to in-country consultation was established: situational analysis; advocacy; design and implementation of activities; monitoring and evaluation.

ACI-MTT/West participated in MTT/South quarterly meetings, visited its institutional base at the University of Kwazulu Natal and attended a MTT/South training in Botswana. MTT/West members accompanied a 30 member Guinean delegation on a learning tour, and also attended the MTT/South three-week winter school. Translation of MTT/South documents into French was undertaken by MTT/West. Modules were created by MTT/South in collaboration with the International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP) in both English and French.

Collaboration with other actors in the field of HIV/AIDS and education was established. MTT/West adapted a careful, comprehensive approach to make itself known and establish its credentials. This involved collaboration with other actors in the field, MoEs, international and bilateral organizations, international and local NGOs, PTAs and Teachers Unions, and participation in conferences and meetings in Senegal and the sub-region.

MTT/West established a working relationship with the Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA/ROCARE). An MTT/West team member facilitated the ERNWACA conference on Education Research Response to HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa in 2004, in Mali, and later that year participated in the design and organization of a workshop for key researchers from eight West and Central African countries in collaboration with ERNWACA, UNESCO and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).

Country-specific Activities

Activities were undertaken in four countries to lay the ground work for MTT/West assistance.

- *Senegal*: MTT/West met with USAID/Senegal, with government officials, the National AIDS Council, international organizations, and NGOs to discuss possible activities and funding.
- *Mali*: MTT/West received strong support from USAID/Mali. A half-day meeting was organized with the MoE to present the MTT/West project to over 30 key representatives in different government departments and partner organizations.
- *Benin*: MTT/West was able to make a significant contribution due to the fact that contacts in Benin were facilitated by the USAID/Washington Africa Bureau Education Division. USAID/Benin requested help from MTT/West in identifying HIV/AIDS related assistance that it could offer to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education during a two-year bridging period between major education programs. After team visits and meetings with key stakeholders MTT/West produced a comprehensive report that guided USAID/Benin's development of its interim HIV/AIDS and Education policy.
- *Guinea*: Despite an excellent network of contacts, MTT activities in Guinea did not take off because of a pre-existing assistance relationship with MTT/South which was never transferred to MTT/West. In March, 2006, ACI was asked by Family Health International, Guinea, to undertake a training workshop for Guinean journalists to prepare them for a national campaign against stigma and discrimination.

Results

Two documents were produced by MTT/WEST: a Guide to Qualitative Research Techniques in French and a document mapping Regional Financial and Technical Resources. ACI-MTT/West also designed a computer-based country profile system that would gather essential information on HIV/AIDS and Education in each country requesting assistance, on activities and resources.

ACI grew and developed as an organization in the context of this collaboration with EQUIP1. However, ACI had to spend a great deal of time and effort in dealing with requirements generated by the complexities of the management mechanism.

Challenges

The project was terminated on April 30, 2006 after two short no-cost extensions. The termination letter said that this was in no way related to the quality of the accomplishments of the project or the performance of its team. It was unfortunate that just when MTT/West was becoming a known entity and requests for assistance were beginning to surface, all activities had to cease. However, from its inception, the development plan encouraged mobilizing additional funding from USAID, US Government and other donors. ACI is committed to try and do this because it firmly believes in the pertinence of the services that MTT/West can offer in West Africa.

Lesotho

The Basotho people have a long tradition as pastoralists and boys start learning to care for herds of cattle at a very early age, often in adverse conditions. Especially in the mountainous regions, the herd boys have little or no access to education. In response to the difficulties experienced by Lesotho's herd boys, USAID initially planned as assessment of the current status of herd boys to education access, quality and equity,



and of activities and projects of the Government of Lesotho and donors in addressing these needs. The findings would be published in a report and a round table organized to disseminate information and generate interest that would leverage activities and interventions to benefit herd boys. EQUIP1 staff made two trips to Lesotho to gather information and meet with government representatives, international donors, and NGOs. As a result of this research it was apparent that there already existed a great deal of literature documenting the situation of herd boys and several round tables had taken place around this topic. USAID agreed to a change of strategy; this was possible because of the flexibility of a cooperative agreement; and it was decided to fund a program or activity already underway or one that needed funds for replication.

Implementation

Options were discussed with the Government of Lesotho and with the Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre (LDTC) which is the unit in the Ministry of education responsible for targeting the herd boys. The LDTC has established distance learning centers or Learning Posts (LP) in five of the ten districts. They were asked to prioritize their needs. The LDTC requested wind-up cassette players for the LPs. There is no electricity in the remoter mountainous areas and a dearth of printed materials. The cassette players would allow the used of taped materials. Additionally the LDTC requested carpentry, agricultural and candle-making kits to provide skills training which would prepare the herd boys for income generating activities so that they could earn a living after they stop herding cattle.

USAID agreed to provide three wind-up cassette players for each of the 180 LPs, as well as five electric players, one for each of the district offices, so that broken or mutilated tapes could be replaced without having to go back to the LDTC main office in Maseru. Cassette tapes were provided so that LDTC could record lesson materials. Kits for skills training were also provided by USAID for each LP.

Challenges

One of the problems was finding large quantities of wind-up cassette players. The procurement was complicated because they had to be purchased in South Africa and transported to Lesotho. Another difficulty was the delivery of the cassette players to the LPs because of transport problems.

Results

The Lesotho Embassy in Washington and the US Embassy in Lesotho provided a great deal of help and support. There was an official handover ceremony on Maseru which successfully concluded this activity.

Swaziland

The objective of this project was to assist orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in Swaziland break the cycle of poverty and HIV/AIDS. Initially it was suggested that this activity should provide funding to enhance the work targeting OVC undertaken by the National Emergency response Council for HIV/AIDS (NERCHA), which is a parastatal with an excellent record for efficiency. Upon inquiry it was learned that NERCHA is not an implementer and is presently sufficiently funded through the Global Funds for HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis.

Implementation

The decision was then made to research interventions undertaken by local NGOs and write a prospectus for NGOs to propose an intervention to help and support OVC. In March, 2004, EQUIP1 staff went to Swaziland to do on site research. The team discovered that OVC were getting a great deal of attention and that the government was working on a draft policy for OVC with UNICEF. The team also learned

that the older orphans heads of household fall through the cracks as there is no specific budget line item for older orphans in the Global Funds for HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. Furthermore, the team was told that most local NGOs were lacking in capacity to implement interventions.

In May, 2004, EQUIP1 met with USAID and it was decided that the funding available would be given to NERCHA to help with an intervention directed towards mature orphans. NERCHA identified three programs as their priority: food security; non formal education and HIV/AIDS awareness. For food security the project would identify older orphans and teach them agricultural skills such as plowing, cultivation, harvesting with help from the community. This component of the program was to be implemented with the help of the Ministry of Agriculture Cooperatives and NGOs under NERCHA oversight. Basic functional literacy would be taught by the Sebenta Adult Literacy Institute in the centers established by UNICEF, with a curriculum adapted to the needs of OVC. HIV/AIDS awareness would also be taught to the orphans at the center. USAID agreed to provide the funds needed for these projects. It costs approximately \$12,800 to fund these programs per chiefdom and each chiefdom will serve approximately 40 households. NERCHA explained that this funding will be able to help a large number of orphans and have considerable impact.

Results

The project was successfully concluded in September 2004.

III. Project Activities

Feasibility Study Regional West African *Sesame Street* Model

Introduction

This feasibility study was commissioned by the USAID Africa Bureau Education Division, via the EQUIP 1 Leader with Associates Award. The primary goal of this study was to assess whether and how *Sesame Street*, possibly in conjunction with other complementary media based interventions such as Education Development Center's Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) programs in Guinea and Nigeria, could serve the early childhood/early primary school education needs of the West African region.

Towards that end, in October, 2003, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) awarded a Sub-agreement to the Education Development Center (EDC) and Sesame Workshop to jointly produce a study that would respond to the following questions:

- Can the Sesame Workshop model and complementary educational media, such as Interactive Radio Instruction, have an impact on the needs of West Africa's children?
- Is there interest in and support for pursuing a broader West African adaptation of *Sesame Street*?
- Are the necessary conditions present for a successful *Sesame Street* initiative?
- Is *Sesame Street* in West Africa a sustainable endeavor?
- How can we sketch the broad contours of what such an initiative might consist (i.e. what combination of media and related activities would seem most appropriate)?

To this initial list, EDC and Sesame Workshop added:

- How can *Sesame Street* best respond to educational needs in West Africa?
- What language(s) should be used to present content?

Methodology

Over the course of the first half of 2004, joint teams comprised of education, research and media experts from EDC and Sesame Workshop, conducted extensive research, including a literature review that resulted in the production of six country profiles (Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Guinea, Mali). These profiles were enriched with information gathered by EDC local research consultants in all six countries. Based on the information from these profiles, carefully selected assessment teams visited four of the six West African countries: Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal. During these site visits, team members met with various stakeholders identified and contacted with the help and support of local coordinators and USAID missions. These stakeholders included representatives from Ministries of Education, Health and Communication. Other stakeholders encountered included media producers and broadcasters, educators, representatives from the corporate and private sector, NGOs (including health and education development organizations), donors and funding agencies.

The site visits were followed by two in-depth qualitative research studies in Nigeria and Senegal that were designed to determine the appeal and comprehension of mock programs among children, parents and educators alike. All of the assessment teams were impressed with the favorable response of the numerous stakeholders, the children, parents, caregivers and educators, who engaged the assessment teams in open and lively debates regarding the viability of such a program.

Findings

- Can the *Sesame Street* model and complementary educational media, such as Interactive Radio Instruction, have an impact on the needs of West Africa's children?

Findings from the literature review, stakeholders meetings and field studies indicate that an integrated *Sesame Street* intervention has the potential to greatly benefit pre-primary and early primary education efforts throughout the region of West Africa. A comprehensive *Sesame Street* intervention, complete with complementary educational outreach media support materials and with the support of key stakeholders including educators, broadcasters and sponsors, would make a significant contribution to education systems throughout a region where existing educational opportunities and media materials are limited.

Through the judicious use of the broadcast media (both television and radio), as well as related educational outreach materials, *Sesame Street* would have wide reach among the primary target group of West African pre-primary and early primary school-age children and their families. Concentration on regionally produced materials highlighting the West African cultures in all their beauty, complexity and diversity would meet the strong approval of stakeholders. As *Sesame Street* has demonstrated all over the world, productions can be carefully crafted not only to meet shared educational objectives but also to help foster self-esteem and an appreciation of children's own culture and environment in a context in which positive media images of young children and their families are rare.

- Is there interest in and support for pursuing a broader West African adaptation of *Sesame Street*?

Among stakeholders interviewed, the question was not whether a *Sesame Street* type intervention was needed, but rather when and how such a project could begin. Broadcasters recognized that they had not met mandates requiring them to contribute to both formal and non-formal education. It was almost universally felt that a regionally produced *Sesame Street* production would help meet these mandates and also respond to the need and desire to broadcast locally produced materials for the target audience. Educators were impressed with the quality of the materials presented and felt that they would be received with excitement from both pre-school and early grade students. All recognized the dearth of appropriate and culturally relevant educational media materials that could be used by children both at school and home. Many expressed a desire that the materials should be made available to them for use in their classrooms but expressed a concern that many of their schools lacked the needed television monitors. Nonetheless, they felt confident that the television shows would indeed find their audience and that they would be well received by both children and parents alike.

Government officials, including representatives of the Ministry of Education, were certain that the materials would not only help prepare children for a smooth integration into the school environment but could also be used as instructional materials within the school settings. Most expressed a desire to be involved in determining educational objectives to ensure relevance within their own programs. Children who had the opportunity to view a mock television episode demonstrated a high degree of interest, a general understanding of the program's main themes and a desire to have more access to these types of shows. The parents also felt that their children would benefit from culturally appropriate children's programs and many expressed a wish to share in the viewing and listening experience with their children.

- Are the necessary conditions present for a successful *Sesame Street* initiative?

At first view, the task of developing a *Sesame Street* media initiative designed to meet the specific needs of each country within such a large and diverse region seems daunting indeed. However, we have learned that the region and its member countries do indeed have much in common. There will,

of course, be logistical issues that will need to be addressed. Care must be taken to ensure representation from throughout the region. Producers will have the added problem of producing materials in multiple languages. Inadequate studio facilities and production equipment may have to be reinforced. Participating media production specialists will need to be trained in the rigorous methodology employed by Sesame Workshop. But, the demonstrated need for quality educational media targeting young children is great. There is a favorable broadcast policy environment and a strong indication that a project of this sort will help to achieve the broad goals and objectives of education policy makers throughout the region. The support and enthusiasm demonstrated by the various stakeholders involved in this study indicates that logistic and technical problems are both manageable and surmountable.

- Is *Sesame Street* in West Africa a sustainable endeavor?

Given *Sesame Street*'s track record and demonstrated ability to attract a wide range of private and public donor support, there is little doubt that a sustainable initiative could be developed. A major initial five year investment by USAID that would lead to the implementation of a project described in the recommendations section which would enable the project to leverage support from commercial partners and other sources. Based on preliminary conversations during the feasibility study in West Africa, potential funding sources for a West African *Sesame Street* program were identified. They include international and local organizations, government institutions, and private sector initiatives. Through the formation of strategic partnerships and the development and implementation of a sustainability plan, we strongly feel that an initial five year investment will yield substantial regional and country specific benefits, long beyond the end of the proposed five year timeframe.

- How can we sketch the broad contours of what such an initiative might consist (i.e. what combination of media and related activities would seem most appropriate)?

The recommendation section of this report describes in some detail the nucleus of a five year project plan that has two distinct phases; a one year development phase followed by a four year implementation phase. During the development phase, the team will identify partners, assess production capacity, develop key regional educational objectives and create production and broadcast plans for the project. During the implementation phase the project will produce three seasons of a West African *Sesame Street* television series in both French and English. The implementation of pilot radio and outreach components and subsequent expansion of these initiatives will also take place during the implementation phase. Local language radio adaptations will be produced and tested in two pilot countries as will additional outreach materials including print.

- How can *Sesame Street* best respond to educational needs in West Africa?

There is clearly a need to help pre-school children prepare, adapt and adjust to a formal school environment. Age appropriate materials are in short supply and young West African children understandably encounter great difficulties learning in languages other than their mother tongue. Based on the findings of this study, we believe a *Sesame Street* initiative could best respond to the many educational needs by developing a multi-pronged media approach described in the recommendations section of this report. This multi-media approach would embrace a variety of media (television, radio, print and outreach). Content should offer children positive role models in a culturally appropriate manner. While recognizing the importance of the flagship regionally produced television series, we believe content should be reinforced through local radio and print adaptations that can more easily respond to the question and use of local languages.

- What language(s) should be used to present content?

For both political and logistical reasons, the general consensus among stakeholders was that, if one language is to be chosen for a possible *Sesame Street* television program, it should be the official language. As there are two official languages in the region, this consensus means that parallel versions of core programming in English and French are necessary. Reactions to the mock *Sesame Street* television episode confirmed that children had a generally good understanding of the main themes presented in the television program, although many of the children did not understand some of the details in the segments. Apparently the visual clues accompanying the audio messages helped to ensure a basic understanding of the program and its individual segments. However, the radio elements as tested did not achieve the same levels of comprehension. We feel strongly that radio adaptations in local languages will be needed to ensure a much higher degree of comprehension and address the problem of interest retention as described in the research section of this report.

EDC and Sesame Workshop drafted and submitted the final Feasibility Report to EQUIP 1 on August, 20, 2004. Recommendations were informed by findings from the literature review and 6 country profiles, including Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal; from recommendations and concerns which emerged during stakeholders meetings held in Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana and Benin; and from conclusions drawn from the field research in Senegal and Nigeria.

The literature review and country profiles confirmed the need for early childhood development programs throughout West Africa, where enrollment and retention rates in primary and secondary schools are amongst the lowest in the world. Conversations with stakeholders including Ministry of Education officials as well as private and national producers and broadcasters, reiterated that need and highlighted government and private initiatives which seek to develop and disseminate educational and culturally appropriate programs for young children on television and radio networks as well as in formal and non-formal education settings. Respondents from the field research in Nigeria and Senegal enjoyed both the television and radio mock *Sesame Street* episodes and encouraged the development of a West African *Sesame Street* model in response to insufficient and inappropriate children's media shows and early childhood development programs.

Recommendations

The report recommended that USAID invest in a project designed to produce and make available to countries throughout the region a wide range of new and innovative West African *Sesame Street* material. This material would include a flagship regional West African television series coupled with pilot radio and multimedia outreach projects. Both pilot projects would be initially implemented in two countries, one Francophone and one Anglophone, and would include small-scale studies to gain information that would inform subsequent expansion of these initiatives, funding permitting. Outreach projects would entail the development of multimedia content that may include print, audiocassettes, or other materials, as well as training materials for educators and parents. In order to ensure sustainability and allow the project the needed time to build up partner and sponsorship support, it is important that USAID support a minimum 5-year initiative that would include two distinct phases: a one year development phase to be followed by a four year production and implementation phase. The project would work closely with educators, producers and broadcasters in participating West African countries to plan and then implement a *Sesame Street* project that will be uniquely tailored to the needs and interests of the children, educators and parents of West Africa.

Results

The feasibility study was submitted to the USAID Africa Bureau Education Division in September, 2004. EDC and Sesame Workshop met with EQUIP1 Washington staff and members of the USAID Africa Bureau Education Division and made a presentation on the methodologies used for this feasibility report and presented key findings.

In March, 2005, the Africa Bureau Education Division informed EQUIP1 that it had decided not to move forward with *Sesame Street* West Africa.

Community Radio Programs

Zambia Community Radio Program (ZCRP)

Introduction

In both Eastern Province in Zambia and Mchinji District in Malawi, sero-prevalence rates hover near 20%. With loss of labor, illness and an influx of orphans, rural populations in both countries are today struggling to cope with the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS. Thanks to many years of information campaigns waged by many actors, knowledge of HIV/AIDS is relatively high. Unfortunately, strategies to mitigate the ravages on Zambian and Malawian families and communities have, to date, lagged far behind.

In its first two years, the Zambia Community Radio Program *In My Village* (ZCRP) was developed and implemented on a pilot basis in Eastern Zambia to mitigate community impacts of HIV/AIDS. Led by implementing partner Education Development Center (EDC), ZCRP worked with communities that have developed proven and successful responses to some of their most pressing problems. The shows were carefully crafted to allow villages to present their community and development initiative in a way that is both entertaining and motivational. These “easy to replicate” development success stories were featured each week on the popular local radio show *In My Village*. Two versions of *In My Village* were produced and broadcast every Sunday evening on community radio stations in Chipata and Lundazi, in the Eastern Province of Zambia. A Malawi adaptation was in the planning stages as of December, 2005.

In order to ensure relevance and interest, project personnel and partnering radio stations worked in close collaboration with provincial and district government institutions including representatives from the Ministries of Education, Agriculture, Communications, Health and Social Development in Zambia and, in Malawi, the Ministry of Information and Tourism (MoI&T), the National AIDS Commission (NAC) and the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC). Other local partners included over 30 local NGOs and FBOs. These organizations provided the program with technical expertise and helped identify successful activities and villages where they took place. Partners also ensured that communities wishing to replicate any featured activity would have access to necessary local technical expertise. ZCRP also worked with villages to form listening clubs, which provided regular feedback in order to help improve the radio shows. The feedback demonstrated high enthusiasm for the programs.

The original Cooperative Agreement provided for the program to run through September, 2007. However, on November 23, 2005, EDC received from the American Institutes for Research (AIR), the EQUIP1 lead awardee, a termination notice for the program. After subsequent negotiations, the Zambia portion of ZCRP ceased operations on December 31, 2005. The termination letter indicates that the termination order “was not a reflection of our team’s performance under the agreement. In fact our accomplishments and efforts have been viewed very favorably.”

Implementation

The ZCRP award was signed on September 30, 2003. In the first quarter, ZCRP international staff formed relationships with key stakeholders, began a needs assessment, began recording sample material for radio programs, experimented with program formats, and established implementation plans. Key accomplishments included:

- Project activities and plans were introduced to two Eastern Province radio stations: Radio Breeze in Chipata and Radio Chikaya in Lundazi who agreed to form partnerships with ZCRP to develop and broadcast *In My Village* programs.
- An initial project implementation plan was developed in collaboration with Radio Breeze and Radio Chikaya, with the input of selected partners and NGOs.
- Preliminary work on an area needs assessment was undertaken.
- A draft list of thematic topics for the *In My Village* radio program series was developed from this needs assessment activity and is included below.
- Radio content gathering exercises were conducted, in collaboration with Radio Breeze and Radio Chikaya, in four villages.
- Pilot episodes for format testing were edited in collaboration with Radio Chikaya.

Thematic topics:

- HIV/AIDS (Prevention, Care and Support)
- Vulnerable Children and Education
- Income Generation
- Food Security and Agriculture
- Environmental Health

International staff also began recruiting candidates for local personnel positions and laid the groundwork for ZCRP financial and management systems during this project quarter.

In the first half of 2004, ZCRP staff completed start-up activities and began project implementation in earnest. Local project staff was hired and housed primarily in Chipata, with a program coordinator housed in Lundazi at Radio Chikaya and a project manager in Lusaka. Led by Juarez and Associates, the project implementing partner tasked with monitoring and evaluation, ZCRP developed a monitoring and evaluation plan. The program extended its network of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in order to further assess needs and to establish ongoing partnerships for program input.

During this period, ZCRP local and international staff finalized the plans for *In My Village* programming and continued to collect program material. In order to instill a feeling of pride and add entertainment value, the program decided to feature in each *In My Village* show local artists, musicians, historians and storytellers. The format would give the village an opportunity to describe their town, their role within a larger community and their history. Villages would be chosen carefully with help from local NGO partners and technical advisors to ensure the relevance of the featured development activity. Prior to recording, ZCRP would inform villages of its upcoming visit and ask them to prepare songs and dramatic skits that addressed the chosen featured theme and topic.

Monitoring and evaluation would be assured by a full time staff member who would work with local communities and listening groups to identify program needs and to measure impact. Each participating village profiled via the recording of an *In My Village* program would receive a solar powered wind up radio which they would use to form dedicated *In My Village* radio listening clubs. In this way, the project would be able to track qualitative information regarding the effectiveness and impact of each of the broadcast shows.

Even as program staff and partners were revising and finalizing these plans, they were also putting them into action, visiting villages to record program material and editing the recordings into 45-minute programs for broadcast. The recordings used most commonly spoken local languages in the two districts, Nyanja in Chipata and Chewa in Lundazi. In June, ZCRP signed an agreement with each of the two community radio stations outlining the rights and responsibilities of the project and the stations.

In July, 2004, Radio Chikaya broadcast its first *In My Village* program on a water and sanitation activity in Kampandila village, and Radio Breeze broadcast its first program on tree planting to improve soil fertility in Kasosa village. Both stations broadcast the programs weekly throughout the remainder of the project. The programs showcased identified community success stories with a view towards encouraging replication of successful activities in other villages. Messages were tailored to explain how and why activities were started, and how they have been maintained. The full list of programs broadcast during the project and their themes is included in Attachment A.

By October, the *In My Village* shows were amongst the most popular at both participating radio stations. Due to the program's success, Radio Network Zambia (RANET), an institution designed to make weather, climate and related information more accessible to remote and resource poor populations, donated 100 wind up and solar powered radios to the project. These radios helped the project to form dedicated *In My Village* radio listening clubs in both Chipata and Lundazi, providing a source of regular qualitative feedback to help the project better meet the needs of its audience. Another 500 radios were donated to Radio Breeze, who asked the project to help distribute the radios in support of the *In My Village* shows.

The program continued to grow in 2005, with the expansion of ZCRP's partnerships with development-related NGOs, media groups and other stakeholders; an increase in the number of radio listening clubs, generally at the rate of one club per village recorded for the program; project-supported replication of featured activities; and expansion into Malawi.

In the first quarter of 2005, the weekly radio broadcasts continued, with 25 original radio programs broadcast. ZCRP formed, trained and provided wind-up radios to 14 additional listening clubs. The listening clubs proved very responsive, particularly in Chipata.

Also in the first quarter ZCRP began an important venture in supporting the replication of featured activities. After a broadcast on the income-generating activity of bee keeping, using traditional methods, in Makoa Village, numerous villages expressed an interest in replicating the activity. ZCRP located a local group, Maluwa Honey which used more modern methods and thereby produced honey more efficiently. Maluwa Honey, ZCRP, and ten local villages arrived at an agreement to provide support to the villages to start their own beekeeping ventures. ZCRP paid half the cost of six hives for each village and Maluwa Honey provided the remaining half on credit. ZCRP and Maluwa held a joint training for representatives from the ten villages.

The project successfully developed important partnerships with local and international print, radio and television media during the quarter as well. These included partnerships with the *Daily Mail* of Zambia in working to develop a weekly *In My Village* print feature as well as two short features aired on the Voice of America weekly television program, *Healthy Living*, which is broadcast throughout Africa via the SABC Africa channel.

Plans for the expansion of ZCRP into Malawi were established during this quarter. After submitting a proposal in December, 2004, to the government of Malawi, ZCRP Senior Program Manager, and Radio Breeze's Director met with Malawi's National AIDS Commission, Ministry of Information and Tourism and Malawi Broadcasting Corporation. Their proposal was received favorably, a draft memorandum of understanding to be signed by the project and the MoI&T was discussed, and all parties agreed to move forward with the proposed project expansion into Malawi.

In the second quarter of 2005, ZCRP recorded and broadcast 27 new programs in collaboration with the two community radio stations. All 27 newly recorded villages were provided training and a solar/wind up radio set for the formation of *In My Village* radio listening clubs. In addition, 11 more groups were formed in Lundazi, where, due to scheduling problems, the M&E Assistant was unable to inaugurate listening clubs at the time of recording, the normal project procedure.

The small grants and technical assistance program to support new bee keeping ventures continued to make progress. The large majority of the 60 installed modern hives developed working swarms. Many of the villages expressed an interest in purchasing additional hives (at the village's expense). The special *In My Village* shows on this bee keeping activity also elicited great interest on the part of other villages.

ZCRP continued to expand its outreach and build partnerships. The project became a member of the newly founded Zambia Community Media Forum (ZaCoMeF), an umbrella body for Zambian community media initiatives, including community newspapers, radio stations, TV ventures, and others. The planned print version of *In My Village* debuted in the *Zambia Daily Mail*. The project also held a successful stakeholders meeting with key partners and supporters. The 40 participants, including representatives from the Ministry of Community Development, Food & Agricultural Organization (FAO), Zambian press, Society for Family Health, Media Institute of South Africa (MISA), First Voice International, RANET, One World Africa, University of Zambia School of Agriculture Studies, engaged in a lively discussion. A number of them expressed interest in expanding the project beyond the pilot Eastern Province. The Chipata Coordinator also attended three meetings for the District AIDS Task Force during the quarter.

Plans for expansion into Malawi also continued, with an agreement between ZCRP and the government of Malawi that project start-up should include the opening of a sister project office in Mchinji, Malawi.

During the third quarter of 2005, recording, production and broadcast continued in both Zambia locations and ZCRP continued to meet its weekly broadcast schedule and receive indications of high interest in the programs by its target audience. Twenty-five new listening clubs were formed and clubs continued to provide copious written feedback to the project. ZCRP began to analyze this wealth of information in more depth in anticipation of a mid-term evaluation of the project to be conducted by Juarez and Associates.

In July, the international consultant from Juarez returned to Zambia where he worked with the project's M&E assistant and other staff members to prepare for a mid-term evaluation. Dr. Enge was pleasantly surprised with the wealth of information that the project had been gathering especially via the village profiles and the listening group responses. During his trip, six translator/transcribers were given short term contracts in order to ensure that data collected by the project via community profiles and listening group responses could be entered for analysis.

Key staff members including the Lusaka-based manager, Miriam Shakafuswa, and local coordinator, Godfrey Chitalu, received requests to participate in various workshops and conferences. In August, Ms.

Shakafuswa was invited to Bangkok where she presented ZCRP at the World Health Organization's 6th Global Conference on Health Promotion. In Chipata, Mr. Chitalu was asked to present the project and to further discuss potential collaboration with VSO, Celtel, First Voice and others.

Expansion into Malawi continued, as the project hired two Malawi staff members in addition to the one already on board, made a lease agreement for an office in Mchinji, continued to liaise with Malawian stakeholders, and established plans for the Senior Program Manager to relocate to Malawi. By the end of September, the Malawi staff came to Chipata for an on-the-job training period during which they planned to work jointly with Zambia staff members to produce Zambia programs plus the first programs for Malawi.

The last quarter of 2005 began well with EDC's Chief of Party/Senior Program Manager, (COP/SPM) Robert Eiger's relocation to Malawi in early October. As soon as he arrived in Malawi, the COP/SPM briefed key partners including the Ministry of Information and Tourism (MoI&T), the National AIDS Commission (NAC), USAID/Malawi, MBC and others of his arrival. The COP/SPM also visited project staff in Chipata, where he participated in the first part of Malawi staff training. Zambia recording continued, while initial recordings for Malawi programs were expected to begin during the second part of the staff training.

On November 23, EDC was officially informed by EQUIP1 that USAID had issued a termination letter for the project and EDC was instructed to terminate its project activities effective December 15, 2005. The termination decision was a big disappointment to all project staff. The project had been well received in both countries. The Zambia portion of the project closed on December 31, 2005.

Results

Monitoring and Evaluation

The data collected by the M&E Assistant and numerous other sources of data indicate a very positive response to the *In My Village* programs among the communities of Eastern Province. Within three months of the first broadcast, both Radio Breeze and Radio Chikaya reported that *In My Village* was amongst their most popular programs.

Also within the same time period, NGOs and representatives from area villages began to flock to ZCRP's small Chipata office to recommend program ideas and village sites. This is exactly what ZCRP had hoped to achieve: a sense of pride in one's ingenuity and capability coupled with a new spirit and belief that the communities themselves need not wait for help from the government and others. *In My Village* shows reinforced the idea that each of us can make a difference.

The feedback generated by listening groups also demonstrates the reach of the *In My Village* programs. The feedback came from dedicated listening clubs, which received free wind-up radios, were rigorously trained by ZCRP staff, and were assigned a project staff liaison. ZCRP provided radios that had been donated by outside groups, as well as start-up instruction, to hundreds of additional listening clubs which could not be trained or supervised given the limited resources of the project.

ZCRP eventually formed 99 trained and supervised listening clubs in Zambia.

Mid-Term Evaluation

Dr. Kjell Enge, an international consultant for Juarez and Associates, was in the process of developing a mid-term evaluation of the project at the time the termination notice was received. Although the data

collection and much of the data entry had taken place, due to the immediate nature of the project termination, the evaluation was not completed. Dr. Enge reports the following preliminary results:

1. Out of 1,170 valid respondents, 73% had radios.
2. Of those, 89% got good reception from Radio Breeze and 83% from Radio Chikaya.
3. Out of all the stations listed on the questionnaire, Breeze and Chikaya had the highest ratings for listener satisfaction.
4. 65% out of 1,048 said they had listened to the ZCRP programs.
5. Half of those heard the most recent program before the interview.
6. Out of all the topics, most liked the programs on community issues.
7. 88% of those feel the programs are very relevant and 80% sit and listen to the entire program.
8. About 2/3 say they have discussed the program content with other community members.
9. Over one half said that in some way they had tried to replicate what they had heard.
10. The most replicated activities included improved agriculture, livestock production, and HIV/AIDS sensitization.
11. Most of the activities mentioned were carried out by village committees who were assisted by individuals.
12. Almost half of those said they had been successful with what they tried.
13. 40% said they had been somewhat successful.
14. 10% said they were not successful.
15. Many expressed a desire to replicate some of the activities they had heard on the radio but had not been able to do so.
16. The biggest barrier was the lack of funds.
17. The next barrier was lack of knowledge.
18. The majority said they would like to try some of the activities at a later date.

Replication

In a document written after the receipt of the termination order, ZCRP Project Coordinator confirmed a high rate of replication. He stated, “More than seventy villages have started replicating one or two themes of what was broadcast. Some of the activities replicated are on Home Based Care, Adult Literacy Centers, establishment of Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) Centers, Fish Farming, Conservation Farming, Carpentry, Bee Keeping, Voluntary Counseling and Testing.”

The Bee Keeping program described in the project chronology above is the best documented example of villages organizing to replicate featured development activities. It is functioning successfully in 10 villages. Some additional examples follow:

- In Zizwe village of Chipata, chief Mpezeni’s area began an initiative to start an adult literacy class following the Mcheleka village radio show aired in January, 2005, whose theme was adult literacy education. The same village had earlier started an Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) center after listening to the ZCRP program from Kangombe village.
- Zanini village of Lundazi recorded a steady rise in requests from other villagers to be trained on an agro-forestry venture featured in one of the shows. Fourteen other villages had their members trained on the growing of agro forestry and fruit trees.
- Kamtowa and Mabviyamba villages, asked for help to replicate a food storage bins project.
- Reformed Open Community Schools (ROCS) coordinator received requests from 2 villages for help to start a community school, following the Malembe and Kachiwala village radio shows.
- Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Lundazi manager reported that more than 14 villages had requested LWF’s services as described in an *In My Village* show.

- According to the coordinator, “Eastern Province has the highest number of IRI centers in the country as a direct result of *In My Village* shows. This information can be verified by Provincial Outreach Coordinators.”

Feedback and Commentary

Feedback from governmental and non-governmental partners and stakeholders is an additional indication of the positive results of ZCRP. The coordinator provides the following examples:

- The Minister of Community Development recently appeared on national television in support of the good work the project was doing in eastern Zambia. He had earlier sent his Deputy Minister for a site visit to confirm the reports from the field that ZCRP was doing well.
- The Provincial Minister, Permanent Secretaries, District Commissioners, and Line Government Heads of Departments have praised the project’s contribution towards issues of development in the province. The Deputy Minister advocated for the replication of the Eastern Province project to other provinces in Zambia on the main news.
- The Provincial Development and Coordination Committee included the project in the main Chipata District Development Committee (DDCC) strategic plan.
- The World Health Organization invited the Project Manager to showcase ZCRP to global stakeholders at the 6th Global Conference on Health Promotion in Bangkok, Thailand in August, 2005. This was in recognition of the work being done in Eastern Province. Representatives from several countries including Thailand, Papua New Guinea, and Switzerland showed high interest in ZCRP after attending the presentation.
- On hearing of the closure of the project, the Secretariat for the Chipata District AIDS Task Force sent a letter of recommendation outlining the relevance of the project and expressing a need for major stakeholders to be consulted on the impact of the project before a decision to end it was made (See Annex 2).

Additional sources of feedback and commentary, both formal and informal, such as CARE Zambia and the Chipata District AIDS Task Force also provide evidence of ZCRP’s positive impact.

Challenges

The problems encountered in technical areas stemmed primarily from the rapid growth and acceptance of the program and the distance of the Lundazi site from the project office in Chipata. In late 2004 and early 2005, ZCRP was charged with forming and maintaining numerous new listening groups, communicating with new partners and media outlets, establishing plans to expand into Malawi, handling quickly increasing attention and demands due to the popularity of the programs, and overcoming occasional breakdowns in communication with the partner station in Chikaya, located far from the Chipata office. The result was a quickly dwindling supply of recorded programs, particularly in Lundazi. The program accelerated its production schedule and employed a highly qualified production consultant to take charge of the Lundazi programs, thereby keeping on schedule.

The response rate of the Lundazi listening groups was lower than that in Chipata, given the project staff’s less frequent contact with the groups in the province more remote from the project office. Several strategies were used and helped reduce the discrepancy between the two locations, but the situation was not fully resolved at the time of the termination notice.

The program faced a challenge in recording, entering, analyzing and making use of the tremendous amounts of data received from the listening groups and other sources employed by the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. The international consultant for implementing partner Juarez and Associates, Dr. Enge, visited the program and guided the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist in efficiently and

effectively undertaking these tasks. The data collection and review performed by Juarez and Associates in preparation for the midterm evaluation also provided ZCRP with the opportunity to complete more of this work.

There was concern as to the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist's independence as an impartial evaluator of the project given his direct employment relationship with EDC. That relationship was severed and the Specialist continued to serve the project successfully in the employ of another implementing partner, Juarez and Associates.

Finally, many local area Chiefs expressed concern that they had been excluded during the project's recording sessions as project staff usually worked with village headmen and not the Chiefs. ZCRP made increased efforts to include the Chiefs in their recordings and experienced fewer such complaints as the project progressed.

Recommendations

Abundant evidence (summarized above) demonstrates that ZCRP was well received and resulted in increased development activity in the villages among its audience. This program also demonstrates that, in areas struggling with high rates of HIV/AIDS and associated problems, local knowledge and ingenuity is at work, and that effectively sharing that knowledge and ingenuity can have an impact. The design elements that helped *In My Village* have an impact are elements of good development work in general. The project sprang from and responded to local needs, celebrated and shared local solutions, and fostered pride in local communities. It facilitated sustainable self-improvement activities initiated by local villages and based on real experience. It worked closely with local authorities, NGOs, media outlets and other partners to ensure relevance to local needs and avoid duplication of efforts. It sought regular feedback from its beneficiaries and changed according to expressed need and interest. It did all of these things cost-effectively through its partnership with community radio stations and villages interested in sharing their experiences. Using similar design elements tailored to their contexts, community radio programs in other locales can help foster development activity with positive and sustainable impact.

Malawi Community Radio Program (MCRP)

Introduction

In its first two years, the Malawi – *M'mudzi Mwathu: In My Village – Community Radio Program* was developed on a pilot basis in eastern Zambia to mitigate community impacts of HIV/AIDS. The trans-border application in Malawi is based on best practices and lessons learned in the Eastern Province in Zambia. The Chinyanja and Chichewa language working title for this program description reflects its local focus, and the language allows for cross border transference into the Mchinji region of Malawi as a first step. (See Annex 3 for a map of Mchinji District and key district features.)

After the termination of the Zambia Community Radio Program, USAID/Malawi provided funding to support project activities in Malawi to begin *In My Village* programming and complete construction of the planned community radio station.

Although the shows were initially broadcast nationally over Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, special emphasis was placed on Mchinji district, which acted as a pilot district for the program production and implementation of many of the HIV/AIDS prevention, self-help and monitoring activities planned for this project. The set-up of a pilot community radio station in the Mchinji district was one of the important components of the expansion into Malawi.

In My Village is a branded series of radio shows for village Listening Clubs combining local music and history with strategic lessons and information to address selected HIV/AIDS impacts. Program priorities reflect USAID/Malawi’s PEPFAR Country Operational Plan (COP) priorities. *In My Village* supported the PEPFAR indicator 1.1, “Number of individuals reached through community outreach that promotes HIV/AIDS prevention through abstinence and/or being faithful.” All programs were tailored to produce outcomes that deliver particular progress on PEPFAR indicator 1.1. In addition to HIV prevention through abstinence and being faithful, thematic areas for *In My Village* radio programs included:

- Education for OVC
- Income generation for PLWHA and OVC
- Food security and agriculture for PLWHA and OVC

Implementation

CRECCOM, in collaboration with AIR, formulated the design of the project. The project was implemented in two phases which were: community mobilization and the radio shows. Community mobilization included briefing meetings, focus group discussions, sensitization and mobilization meetings, training of village and school mentors, and capacity building of government extension workers on social mobilization strategies. Radio programming focused on airing programs on the yet-to-be established community radio station in Mchinji District to provide a forum for information sharing and community mobilization on HIV/AIDS issues. However, the radio shows started with broadcasting on Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) Radio One when the radio station was not yet in place. 42 radio listening clubs were set up in order to assess impact and outreach of the radio program broadcasted on MBC Radio One. The project design meetings were attended by: AIR’s Vice President, International Development Program, Dr. Janet Robb, the Project Manager and the Project Technical Advisor. CRECCOM representatives were: Executive Director Zikani Kaunda, Assistant Executive Director (Operations) Madalo Samati and Project Director George Jobe. Following the project design, offices were leased, a studio was equipped, and additional staff hired to work with CRECCOM.

The project’s implementation plan was to start with selected areas belonging to a few Traditional Authorities (TAs) within the 8-month life span. The TAs selected were Nyoka, Zulu, and Kapondo. The actual selection of specific areas, within the TAs, where Listening Clubs would be formed, was referred to Area Development Committees (ADCs). Fourteen villages and 6 schools were selected. An ADC is comprised of various stakeholders under each TA that includes Group Village Headperson (GVHs), Village Headpersons (VHs), government extension workers from various departments, religious leaders and political leaders. A TA has a number of GVHs (about 10 to 15) under him or her while each GVH has a number of villages (such as 15 to 25) under him or her. A village is a community consisting of 35 families on average.

Besides talking about the project, members of the ADCs were sensitized on HIV/AIDS and support for education of OVC. The participants commended the project for emphasizing abstinence and being faithful in its approach. They said that the project had come at the right time as tobacco sales were just starting.

The Listening Clubs were established in each one of the featured villages. Each LC had 2 mentors, trained by project staff and 32 members. These LC played a key role in translating what is heard on the radio into positive activities. A radio was presented to each LC. Two school-based Listening Clubs, under each of the 3 TAs, were selected by the ADCs for a total of 6 schools.

In the last two months of the project's lifespan, an additional 22 village-based listening clubs were established to now cover all the TAs in the district for a total of 36 village listening clubs. Altogether, there were 42 Listening Clubs established with the addition of the 6 school LC.

Sensitization Meetings

Thirty-six villages and 6 schools were sensitized on the project and HIV/AIDS mitigation strategies. Major themes which were tackled during the meetings were:

- how HIV spreads
- the impact of HIV/AIDS
- avoiding contracting HIV/AIDS through AB
- discarding some of the cultural practices,
- mitigating the impact of AIDS through orphan care, home based care and Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT)
- avoiding discrimination

People were empowered to voice their feelings and observations. They lamented that some cultural beliefs and ignorance were proliferating the spread of HIV/AIDS. It was learned that people marry widows and widowers, without taking precautionary measures such as VCT, even though partners to the widows or widowers were believed to have died of AIDS.

Having trained the leaders, chairpersons and secretaries, of the first 20 Listening Clubs, the project facilitated training of members of the clubs through community-based training sessions. There were 792 members in total. Members of each club underwent a 2-day training session on HIV/AIDS, leadership skills, facilitation skills, reporting, and support for education for OVC among others. The training was conducted/facilitated by 6 club leaders and government extension workers who had undergone a training of trainers.

The project held a sensitization meeting with 57 government extension workers, 48 male and 9 female, from different government departments: Forestry, Health, Agriculture, Social Welfare, Education as well as Gender and Community Development. The participants were the District Commissioner, 6 Primary Education Advisors, 4 Community Development Assistants, 3 Social Welfare Assistants, 12 Health Surveillance Assistants, 10 Agricultural Extension Development Officers and 14 Forestry Officials. The meeting aimed at sensitizing the extension workers on the goals and objectives of the *In My Village* project as well as requesting them to support the project's activities and its LC. In his speech Mchinji District Commissioner, Mr. Harry Phiri, urged the field extension workers to reach as many people as possible with HIV/AIDS messages. He was grateful that the *In My Village* project had come to complement government policies such as the fight against HIV/AIDS, encouraging income generating activities and support for OVC.

In order to enable leaders of radio LC to lead and guide implementation of project activities efficiently, the project trained 71 listening club mentors and community leaders (47 men and 24 women) in leadership skills, facts on HIV/AIDS and facilitation techniques. They comprised: 14 Group Village Heads, 14 Listening Club Chairperson, 14 Listening Club Secretaries and 16 Listening Club Committee Members as well as the District Commissioner, 1 District AIDS Coordinator, 3 Traditional Authorities and 1 External Facilitator. Apart from theoretical presentations the leaders were exposed to a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) practical in one of the villages. The FGD was attended by 1,400 people who were sensitized to surface issues that spread HIV in their community and how they would combat the disease. The training achieved its objectives as shown by peoples' comments and by what people were able to do at the end of the training. For instance, Sub Traditional Authority Nyoka said that the training

had really helped chiefs as it had empowered the villagers to be taking an active role in community development without waiting for someone to be doing the work for them. Other leaders of LC said that the training had made them understand their roles and the strategies to use in order to win support from other people so that their clubs would be well organized and self-reliant. Traditional Authority Zulu especially commended a presentation on *A Winning Facilitator/Leader* which had enlightened him on how he could be a good leader. The participants learned to make work plans to guide their activity implementation.

The second training drew together 40 leaders of school-based radio Listening Clubs, 30 men and 10 women, comprised of: 6 Head Teachers, 6 teacher Patrons, 6 pupil Chairpersons, 6 pupil Secretaries, 4 Primary Education Advisors, the District AIDS Coordinator and a representative of the District Education Manager. At the end of the training, one of the Primary Education Advisors, Mr. Balaza, expressed appreciation to the project for bringing together older and younger people, as it was rare to find a forum of both the youth and the adults. He said the training had enabled adults to hear what the youth knew and thought about HIV/AIDS and helped adults to learn how to handle the youth as far as HIV/AIDS was concerned. One of the head teachers, Mr. Chipokosa, said that he had been touched by Mr. George Jobe's testimony on advising friends and relatives to go for VCT instead of just mocking them. He confessed that he had learned a lot on how to approach people with HIV/AIDS symptoms and that from now onwards he would try his best to encourage people, especially those who are sick, to go for VCT.

Resource Center

The station established a mini Resource Center (RC) where both visitors and staff could easily access information on HIV/AIDS. The Resource Center has various publications on HIV/AIDS that had been solicited from the National AIDS Commission (NAC). They include newsletters, posters, fliers and various documentaries. Whoever visits the office has access to the publications. The only challenge with the RC was that sometimes people took home with them some of the publications after reading them. There has also been a great demand for calendars that are published by NAC.

Capacity Building

The project had 7 staff members on site: Project Director, Senior Production Specialist, Production Specialist, Community Mobilization/Training Specialist, Administration Assistant, Driver and Messenger/Office Assistant. However, there was a radio station in the offing which needed broadcasters. Hence, capacity of the all the staff members, including the Messenger, had to be built through internal training. They all were able to broadcast.

The training included visits to other radio stations: both community and private. The radio stations visited were Nkhotakota Community Radio in Nkhotakota District, Dzimwe Community Radio in Mangochi District, Mzimva prospective community radio station, and Lilongwe based private radio stations such as: Zodiac, African Bible College, Transworld, Channel for All Nations and Radio Breeze in Chipata, Zambia.

Three project staff members visited sites where the *Zambian In My Village* project had its Listening Clubs. The main objective of the visit was to learn how the *Zambian* clubs were sustaining themselves since the project had closed down. The staff visited and learned a lot from the 7 clubs. They found out that a good number of the LC still existed in one form or another such as bee keeping clubs or a farmer's clubs. Their project had given them small grants when it was closing down and the grants enabled them to continue their income generating activities.

The project's Training/Community Mobilization Specialist was provided with a one-week training in computer operation. She studied Microsoft Word, Microsoft Power Point, Microsoft Excel and Internet usage. This enhanced her ability in preparing training materials, writing project field reports and using Internet to enrich the information bank of the project on HIV/AIDS issues.

In My Village Radio Program

A 30-minute time slot was secured with MBC Radio One every Thursday from 6.30 pm to 7.00 pm for the *In My Village* radio program. It was considered a better option to start broadcasting through the national radio station as the project's community radio station had not yet been established. The program name *In My Village* was translated into Chichewa translation, *M'mudzi Mwathu*, at the request of the stakeholders in the district. Programs were sent from Mchinji to MBC Radio One in Blantyre, by coach line buses, and the project's Desk Officer, Ms. Margret Chelewani, received and logged them for broadcasting. Broadcasting of the program started on March 16, 2006.

A format for the program was developed. Project staff would record materials from local communities and transcribe the materials in the form of a script. The scripts were sent to the Project Manager and Technical Advisor at AIR Home Office, in Washington DC, for their input and to ensure that the programs did not deviate from PEPFAR guidelines. The programs included NAC approved messages on abstinence and being faithful. (See Annex 4 for a sample radio program.)

A total of 28 programs were broadcast on MBC Radio One while 80 broadcasts of the same program were done on the *In My Village* Community Radio Station once it was set-up, some of which were repetitions. Broadcasting on the community radio station made the program even more popular, prompting many local residents in the district to replicate its contents. It is believed that this is one factor that contributed to communities and schools establishing radio Listening Clubs on their own. People heard on the radio what their colleagues were doing in their clubs and were motivated to form their own clubs in order to help their communities.

Each of the 42 Listening Clubs was given a radio to facilitate easy access to the radio program. The clubs were also given recorded audiocassettes with programs that had already been broadcast so that club members could re-listen to the programs at their own convenience. The clubs were given tools that helped them to pick out issues raised in the programs. Project staff continuously visited them to ensure that the clubs were involved in discussions on what action they could undertake following the issues they had listened to on the radio programs. The program focused on interventions that people were carrying out to mitigate HIV/AIDS impact and how they had dealt with some of their problems. Cultural practices such as *fisi*, a practice used when a woman is unable to conceive with her husband, were also discussed on the program and their impact on health was discussed.

Some communities and schools have established Listening Clubs on their own without direct support from the project. For instance, 8 LC have been set up in 7 villages and one LC at a primary school through people's own initiative and resources.

Community Radio Station

A community radio station business plan was written and used to acquire a broadcasting license for the project's radio station from MACRA. Rooms earmarked for studios were furnished with appropriate furniture and sound absorbers.

The project acquired permission from Celtel Malawi to use its tower and from Malawi Telecommunication Limited (MTL) to use its building on Mchinji Mountain. The antennas were mounted

on the tower and transmitters were placed in the MTL building for a fee. In the course of running the radio station the antennas were transferred from the Celtel Malawi tower to the MTL one so that rental fees should be paid to only one service provider.

Radio station equipment was donated by Radio Systems Inc. USA, and the transmitters as well as the Studio to Transmitter Links (STLs) were installed by a local consultant, Mr. Hazwell Solomon. The President of Radio Systems Inc., Mr Dan Braverman, a company staff member, and the Technical Advisor from AIR later joined him. The trio installed studio equipment and for the first time tested the station on June 17, 2006. A broadcasting frequency, 102.6 FM, was obtained from MACRA in less than 18 hours. Within a month the station had already gained popularity in the whole Mchinji district and neighboring areas such as parts of the capital city, Lilongwe, and parts of districts such Dowa, Kasungu, Ntchisi, Dedza and Ntcheu. There were also telephone calls from some parts of Mozambique and Zambia commending the performance, clarity and programming of the station.

A list of programs for the station was developed through consultations with different stakeholders in the district on what they would like to be featured on the radio station. Some of the themes included were:

- Advertisements for fund-raising
- Greetings through letters and telephone
- Sports. This had already started being featured as people were eager to learn more about the World Cup through their own radio station. Most of them have stopped listening to the other radio stations in the country.
- HIV/AIDS forums where various specialists would come in with topical issues on the disease.
- Traditional songs and cultural programs
- Poetry and drama
- Debates on social and academic issues by both school pupils and adults.
- School quizzes both for primary and secondary school students.
- Guest Disc Jockeys (DJ) from schools.
- Youth forums

A Project Advisory Committee (PAC), comprised of 8 members, was formed with 3 religious ministers, 2 NGOs, 2 chiefs and the District Commissioner who chairs it. The PAC met 3 times within the project implementation period.

Two signposts were designed to enable stakeholders to locate the radio station premises easily. The signposts observed USAID branding protocols.

The station received 60 application letters from community members seeking to work for the radio station on a voluntary basis. Management short-listed 35 candidates, out of whom 15 were hired after interviews/auditions. Interviews involved:

- Speaking on radio
- Writing for audio production
- Censorship of what goes on air
- How a community radio station operates
- News gathering techniques
- News reading on radio
- Broadcasting ethics
- Handling recording machines
- Editing recorded materials into relevant programs

- Need for being role models on issues related to the fight against HIV/AIDS e.g. abstinence and being faithful.

The volunteers underwent intensive training. Subsequently, the volunteers started broadcasting programs and news on the radio station competently. One of them is reliably assisting with accounts of the sales from advertisements.

The station started selling airtime in order to raise funds in preparation for sustainability and to support the volunteers. People advertised their business and paid close to \$1.50 per slot; others sponsored programs at a small equivalent to \$3 per slot while others provided meals to the volunteers when they took them to cover their activities away from the station. The funds raised were also used to buy plain paper, which was stamped and sold to listeners at a fee equivalent to \$0.14. The listeners wrote greetings on the paper, which were read on the radio. The funds enabled the station to support the volunteers through meal allowances, transportation when gathering news, and equipment for recording programs such as batteries and CDs.

Stakeholder Involvement

The project put networking and stakeholder involvement at its core. It collaborated with the Ministry of Information and Tourism (MoI&T), the National AIDS Commission (NAC) and NGOs in Mchinji District. The MoI&T was made fully aware of the project. NAC provided the project with messages for inclusion in the program and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials for the station's mini Resource Center.

The project published one issue of its newsletter which was distributed to different stakeholders. The newsletter carried articles written by people at the grassroots and an editorial describing the project. The District Information Officer for Mchinji said that the newsletter helped him to learn more in depth about the project.

The *In My Village* Project Director, George Jobe, attended the EQUIP1 annual summit, organized by AIR, in Washington DC, in the US. The summit enabled the project to acquire more innovative insights from other EQUIP1 projects, especially for designing strategies for project sustainability.

The project involved the District AIDS Coordinator for Mchinji during training sessions for leaders of the LC. He handled topics regarding HIV/AIDS, hidden effects of the disease, OVC, and the importance of VCT. Project staff also worked with the District Primary Education Desk Officer from Salima District, who facilitated a session on “mentoring”.

The project Technical Advisor from AIR, visited the project twice. First, during the installation of radio studio equipment, he worked with project staff on HIV/AIDS messages that were used in the radio program. He also provided guidance on how sensitive information could be relayed through the radio in line with PEPFAR funding requirements. He also guided the station on sustainability measures for both the project and community radio station and discussed with them potential areas for project expansion. Another EQUIP1 staff member from AIR also made a field visit to Malawi. Mr. Shors worked with project staff in the compilation and documentation of success stories from the project initiatives. He visited 5 LCs, 2 of which were school-based while the rest were village-based.

Other AIR officials who visited the project were the Project Manager, Dr. Talaat Moreau, and Project Associate, Ms. Kerstin Tebbe, who assisted with project close out activities. They provided moral and technical support to staff members. The Deputy Director of EQUIP1, Dr. Daniel Oliver, who was in

Malawi on another mission, also visited the project. All the guests visited LC communities as well as the radio station.

The Project Director, George Jobe, attended an EQUIP Communications Workshop organized by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and its Leader Award partners in South Africa. The workshop was of real help to the project on several issues, which included methods for reporting and documenting of project activities, branding for USAID funded projects with required logos, and understanding EQUIP in detail.

Project management participated in the 12 District Executive Meetings. Some of the issues discussed at the meetings were renovation of roads in the district, welcoming new project or initiatives that had just been introduced in the district, and sharing plans that the government had for Mchinji.

July 19th is a day when Malawi commemorates National Day of Education activities. The *In My Village* Community Radio Station participated in the activities at 2 sites in the district.

USAID/Malawi and USAID/Washington staff made 3 field visits to the project's impact area. A pictorial presentation was prepared for the briefing which included the project description, project updates, indicators of success achieved, and sustainability mechanisms put in place. The first visitor was a USAID Consultant, who visited 2 project sites:

1. Kalulu Private Secondary School where club members had:
 - Introduced carpentry lessons to keep the youth busy after classes learning lifeskills
 - Fund-raised through agriculture and sales of carpentry products and supported orphans by paying school fees for 3 needy students,
 - 15 students had terminated love affairs to observe abstinence, and
 - Established 2 additional Listening/anti-AIDS Clubs in nearby villages.
2. Kambuwe Village Listening Clubs where people had:
 - Constructed 3 classroom shelters of grass as the school did not have any at all,
 - Constructed 2 pit latrines as there were none at all, and this mobilized surrounding villages to add 4 additional pit latrines,
 - Testified, through one male member Mr Zwaki Baziwel, that the establishment of the listening club had changed his attitudes and led him to be faithful.

The second visit was made by the USAID/Malawi Education Team leader, Dr Thomas LeBlanc and the Consultant. The two visited Kaphande village where club members had:

- sensitized residents on issues of HIV/AIDS
- established another Listening/anti-AIDS Club in a neighboring village
- 13 of the 33 members had gone for HIV testing to set a good example (the number included their Group Village Head (GVH))
- supported orphans with learning materials like pens and notebooks
- constructed a model pit latrine in the village that had resulted in the construction of 16 pit latrines within a month
- started 2 maize and vegetable gardens to fund-raise for support to orphans, the sick and the elderly
- used cultural practices to disseminate information on HIV/AIDS

The third visit was made by Dr. LeBlanc and 2 officials from USAID/Washington. They visited Nkunda village where club members had:

- sensitized their neighboring villages on issues of HIV/AIDS
- supported orphans with food and learning materials like pens and notebooks
- started a big vegetable garden to fund-raise for support to orphans, the sick and the elderly (the garden had been a role model to most communities in the district because of the modern farming methods they were using)
- used cultural practices to disseminate information on HIV/AIDS

The Desk Officer for Broadcasting at the Ministry of Information & Tourism Headquarters, Mr Robert Chilemba, toured the radio station to see how it was performing. He commended staff members on a job well done and said that he had heard several reports of the good performance of the station.

The project staff participated in the formation of a Civil Society Consultative Committee for Mchinji district. The committee sees to it that projects and organizations in the district share their activities with each other and avoid providing conflicting information.

Mass Communication Interventions

The project involved the media during its lifespan. Nine media houses were twice invited for publicizing the project. The initiative led to the featuring of the project activities 6 times on national television, once in the Chronicle Newspaper, twice in the Guardian Newspaper, once in the Nation Newspaper, 5 times on the national radio, 3 times on Capital Radio and twice on Transworld Radio.

The project published one issue of its newsletter. It compiled, designed, printed 1000 copies and distributed them to Listening Clubs and stakeholders. Community members themselves had written articles that appeared in the newsletter.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation was one of the core activities of the project. Project staff, project activities and radio station performance was monitored and evaluated. This was done through visits to villages in Mchinji and in some of the neighboring districts such as Lilongwe and Dedza; phone-in radio programs; recording of visitors; and a data collection exercise by professional data collectors. The popularity of the programs, and the communities' interest was demonstrated by the fact that on average the station received 200 to 500 visitors a day. The peak was on June 29th when 1,800 letters were hand-delivered at the station by listeners.

Staff monitored and supported 22 LC and found that they were replicating what they had learned from their fellow clubs through the radio programs. For instance, fund-raising for orphans through irrigation farming of vegetable and maize became common in all the initial 14 village-based listening clubs. At least 7 exchange visits had taken place, using their own resources, in order to physically see and learn in detail what they had heard in the radio program. The project clearly made an impact (see Annex 5 for Success Stories from MCRP Listening Clubs.)

Lessons Learned

Highly mobilized communities are able to use their own resources to advance goals and objectives of projects. People at the grassroots have excellent ideas which they are able to share when provided a conducive environment. Furthermore, the mobilized communities are self-motivated and do not ask for material rewards for them to undertake project activities. This is illustrated by the commitment club members have shown by identifying additional days when can they meet to reflect on the issues they have listened to on the radio programs. The Zulu community LC visited another LC in Kaphande which lies 15

kilometres away, by bicycle, in order to learn in detail about the development activities in Kaphande which had been broadcast on the radio program.

A community radio is a powerful tool for reaching out to people on any social issue. People are proud to be associated with a radio station of their own. Just a week after testing of the community station started, people were listening to it as if it already had expert announcers/broadcasters. Besides, the listeners themselves started asking the radio station to introduce sale of air time so that they could advertise and raise money for the community radio station. Most Mchinji residents tune in to their community radio station rather than others. This was reflected in the M&E report.

HIV/AIDS issues, combined with entertainment and a sense of ownership, make them compelling and interesting to listeners. In Mchinji, people made phone calls asking for more HIV/AIDS issues to be featured on the community radio station. Most people in the villages did not know the difference between HIV and AIDS.

The combination of an international organization, AIR, and a local NGO, CRECCOM, proved to be a powerful tool in project planning, implementation and documentation. The international organization brought in lessons from across the world while the local NGO had experience of the local environment. In addition, it was AIR that lobbied for the donation of radio station equipment while CRECCOM applied its wide experience in mass communication interventions.

Provided with good training, anyone in any community can be turned into a competent broadcaster as shown by the performance of the volunteer broadcasters after a two-week intensive training.

Most people are willing to undergo VCT but they lack the service where this can be done. VCT centers are not found within reach of most communities. If there were a project to provide mobile VCT services a lot of people would have known their HIV status.

Project sustainability can be guaranteed if Listening Clubs are prepared early enough to identify themselves with activities, so that when the project comes to an end, the club can be transformed into an activity group. This is what happened in Zambia after the project had closed down. This becomes easier when projects build small grants into their budgets to supplement activities started by highly mobilized and motivated communities.

Challenges

The short lifespan of the project meant that the project come to an end at the point when people had become highly mobilized. It was not easy to tell the communities about the project closure. In addition, the project closed down when the radio station had just started and the volunteer broadcasters needed more mentoring attention. At the moment there is high demand for Listening Clubs from local communities and communities are forming Listening Clubs with their own resources.

Parting with competent staff members that had made a project successful within 8 months was not easy.

Meeting demands for services for which the project had no mandate. For example, some people asked for VCT services and others asked for the establishment of community recreation/cultural centers where the youth could spend their time.

American-made transmitters that the radio station is using are not meant for a Malawian setting where power disruptions are frequent. Within three months of operating the station both transmitters were

damaged and their spare parts could not be found in Malawi. Transmitter modules were sent back to the US where new ones were procured and sent to Malawi.

Results

A great many stakeholders in Mchinji district became conversant with the project's goals, objectives and operations and were interested because of the impact the program demonstrated in just a few months. The Ministry of Information & Tourism and Mchinji District Assembly were also very supportive. The project reached many people with messages on HIV/AIDS which resulted in positive reactions from listeners to both the radio program broadcast on the national radio and the community radio station on issues regarding HIV/AIDS. The project's lifespan came to an end while many people still wanted to utilize it as a vehicle for realizing development and for mitigating and preventing HIV/AIDS. It is believed that a lot of success stories will continue coming on board even though the project has come to an end.

West Africa Mobile Task Team (MTT/West)

Introduction

EQUIP1 approached *Africa Consultants International* (ACI) in November, 2003 and requested ACI assistance in creating the West African Mobile Task Team to prevent and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector (MTT/West). The project concept was based on the first Mobile Task Team that has been successfully working with Ministries of Education in Southern Africa since 2000, with support from USAID. USAID chose ACI to host the new MTT/West based on its years of HIV/AIDS training and communication experience, and its reputation and contacts in the region. From its inception in January, 2004, to the closing of the project in December, 2005, MTT/West has been based in the offices of ACI in Dakar, Senegal.

This attempt to create a new West African Institution to assist USAID Missions and Ministries of Education in strategic and implementation planning to prevent and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector was supported with funds from the United States President's Africa Education Initiative through EQUIP1.

The first twelve to fourteen months of the project were devoted largely to laying the foundations of this new project. In two years, over half a million dollars were spent on the creation of a new, effective and credible institution adapted to the West African environment. In April, 2005, ACI was advised that additional funding would be added for project activities through September, 2006, and a work plan was developed accordingly. An unexpected cut in funding from USAID/Washington in December, 2005, unrelated to the quality of the accomplishments of the project, resulted in the suspension of activities just at the time when all the initial efforts were beginning to bear fruit.

Implementation

The MTT Southern Africa team provided specialized technical assistance to government ministries responsible for Education to help them improve their programs in a high prevalence HIV/AIDS environment. Among their many successes were:

- the development of HIV/AIDS policy for the Education Sector
- the development or improvement of strategic plans
- the creation or strengthening of HIV/AIDS management units
- the strengthening of national and decentralized management information systems
- the development of HIV/AIDS activities in the higher education sector

Simply replicating the MTT/Southern Africa approach, however, was clearly not the answer. The West African environment differs in many significant ways from that of Southern Africa. ACI's first challenge was the adaptation of the MTT/South (as the original MTT came to be known) model to the West African context.

Whereas most countries in Southern Africa are dealing with a generalized epidemic and extremely high prevalence rates, the countries of West Africa are at a turning point in their response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Most countries in the region are currently experiencing a concentrated epidemic and must take urgent measures to prevent the epidemic from becoming generalized. They need to respond to the challenge of the invisibility of the epidemic in a relatively low prevalence environment where many see HIV/AIDS as "theoretical" and do not really perceive the threat of HIV/AIDS in their sector.

No country or sector is truly protected from a possible explosion of an epidemic that has been known to spread quickly and insidiously in other countries. The great mobility of West African populations and the many cross-border relationships that exist provide an environment in which the virus could easily spread in this region. Several countries in West and Central Africa already register HIV prevalence rates of over 5% in the adult population.

As in Southern Africa, education is a key development sector in West Africa both in its role in training the population as productive members of society and as a major provider of employment for the civil service. The new challenge is to factor-in HIV/AIDS in the management of the Education Sector even before its impact on the system has become evident. This vital sector must be protected.

It was imperative for MTT/West to develop an approach that would respond to the unique challenges of the West African environment:

- Varying but generally lower HIV prevalence levels and lower visibility of the epidemic called for different approaches to develop commitment and specific ways of dealing with the stages of the epidemic as they evolve;
- Education in West Africa is largely based on the Francophone system which has different structures and processes from Southern African education models;
- Research and scientific data on the impact of HIV/AIDS on Education in West Africa and the impact of interventions in the Education Sector on HIV/AIDS is sorely lacking;
- Cultural, religious and political factors that can influence the education sector in West Africa are often unlike those in Southern Africa and therefore require the development of new or adapted approaches;
- Teachers unions often play a different role;
- Universal enrolment remains a goal rather than a reality.

The challenge was to draw on the lessons learned from 15 years of ACI experience in HIV/AIDS advocacy and institution building and combine them with the best practices of the Southern Africa MTT to help develop effective responses to HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector in West Africa.

ACI opted for the creation of a core group of three senior West African Consultants to participate in the strategic thinking on how to introduce this successful concept from Southern Africa to the West African context. The members of the core team were chosen for their expertise, their intimate knowledge and understanding of West Africa and West African realities, and their extensive networks throughout the region.

The MTT core team worked in close collaboration with ACI HIV/AIDS specialists Gary Engelberg and Dr. Fatim Louise Dia to develop a West African approach. Over the two years of the project, in addition to core MTT members, ACI continued to establish a roster of potential expert consultants from various countries in the region, who could intervene as part of the multidisciplinary consulting teams that would work with various Education Ministries in the region, in response to specific needs identified.

Based on the MTT/South model, ACI set up a system of quarterly meetings to allow MTT Team members to meet periodically, share information and plan upcoming activities. In January 2005, team members met in a retreat in Mbour, Senegal to discuss and assess accomplishments and lessons learned and plan how to build on them with upcoming activities in each country. During this retreat the team developed and adopted a four-step approach to in-country consultations: Situational Analysis, Advocacy, Design and Implementation of Activities, Monitoring and Evaluation.

In January, 2004, MTT/South co-coordinators joined USAID/Washington and AIR representatives in a visit to ACI in Dakar. They met with ACI senior staff to discuss the new project and possibilities for collaboration with MTT/South. The USAID/Senegal Education Team Leader was also invited to attend one working session.

A common vision emerged from this meeting. MTT/West was to be a new institution in West Africa providing targeted, short-term support to MoE's on an as-needed basis. MTT/West would help them to develop their comprehensive, systemic plans for addressing HIV in the Education Sector. Over the years, MTT would gradually take on its own identity and autonomy, becoming independent of both ACI's technical assistance and exclusive USAID funding as well. Diversifying funding sources was written into the project as a mid- and long-term goal. Participants at the meeting envisaged an independently functioning pan-African network of MTTs in Eastern, Southern and West Africa that would provide training to Ministries across the continent and exchange best practices, innovative approaches, and experienced consultants. It would provide a forum to exchange learning about the response to HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector among countries. In this network, among MTT/West's particular contributions would be the design of new strategies for working on HIV/AIDS and Education a low prevalence, francophone context.

The representatives from MTT/South were frank and generous in sharing their know-how and experience and pledged their support for the development of MTT/West. In discussions of strategy, it became clear that in the relatively low prevalence environment of West Africa, considerable efforts in advocacy for a systemic response to HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector would be needed prior to any interventions. Strengthening HIV/AIDS and Education research and data gathering to allow for evidence-based planning would be another major priority.

Before ACI and the core team could reflect on how to adapt the Southern African model to West Africa, they needed to familiarize themselves with the approaches of MTT/South. Between February and August, 2004, several important contacts took place between ACI-MTT/West and MTT/South. These included active participation in a quarterly MTT/South meeting in Johannesburg, a visit to the University of KwaZulu Natal Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division (HEARD) Institute in Durban, and attendance at an MTT/South training in Botswana on NTIC and information management. Two members of the MTT/West team then accompanied a 30 person Guinean delegation of key actors in Education to Southern Africa organized by MTT in Namibia, Zambia and Botswana in June. In August, the ACI Director and two MTT members attended the MTT/South three-week Winter School for participants from Ministries of Education from across Southern and Eastern Africa. This series of events resulted in greater

understanding of the MTT approach but, more importantly, set the scene for two years of ongoing collaboration with MTT/South in the shaping of MTT/West.

Initially the translation of MTT/South documents into French was identified as a priority. However, only a limited number of MTT/South documents had actually been translated when MTT/South, in collaboration with International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP), embarked on a project to develop IIEP modules in both English and French based on the original MTT/South materials. This allowed ACI to reallocate translation funds to the preparation of country activities.

Establishing Collaboration

MTT/West opted for a careful, comprehensive approach in the area of HIV/AIDS and Education. As a new and relatively unknown institution entering an area already occupied by numerous actors: Ministries of Education, international and bilateral organizations (UNICEF, UNESCO, HIV/AIDS Clearinghouse, the UNESCO ABE curriculum bank UNESCO in Switzerland, Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), KIT, UK Department for International Development (DFID), international and local NGOs (Aide et Action, World Education) and associations including PTAs, and Teachers' Unions, MTT/West needed to learn more about the current issues and activities planned by the various organizations involved, make itself known and establish its credentials. This was a gradual, time-consuming, labor-intensive process that continued over the entire two years of the project. In each country, the process began with contacts with the Education and Health Teams in USAID missions.

Promoting Interest and Strengthening Skills in HIV/AIDS and Education Research

In West and Central Africa, as compared to Southern Africa, little scientific data or research exist on the impact of the epidemic on the Education Sector or on the effect of the various measures taken on the development of the epidemic. Early in the project, MTT/South suggested that working on improving research and data gathering on HIV/AIDS and Education might be an interesting entry point for MTT/West. MTT/West subsequently identified this issue as a priority and devoted considerable time, effort and resources to improving the research and scientific data environment.

ACI and MTT/West made contact and held a series of meetings in Bamako and Dakar with the coordinator of the Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA/ROCARE) Kathryn Touré. This initiative illustrates one of MTT/West's basic tenets of working through and with existing organizations in a complementary relationship that helps to strengthen the partner organization while allowing greater attention to MTT/West priorities and greater outreach for MTT/West activities.

ACI and MTT consultants attended the ERNWACA/ROCARE Workshop on the Education Research Response to HIV/AIDS in West and Central Africa in Bamako, Mali in June, 2004. The workshop, which was also attended by representatives of IIEP/UNESCO, the HIV/AIDS Clearinghouse and ADEA, Southern African Development Community (SADC) and others provided an occasion for a presentation to West and Central African researchers on the creation of MTT/West and its potential role in the region. ACI and MTT/West representatives worked in close collaboration with participants and organizers to help define the HIV/AIDS and Education research agenda for the region. One of MTT/West's core members, was on contract to ERNWACA/ROCARE as facilitator for the meeting.

The ERNWACA/ROCARE coordinator subsequently participated in an MTT/West meeting in Bamako in October, 2004, to further discuss on-going collaboration with the members of the MTT/West core team. As a result, MTT/West participated in the design and co-organization of a workshop in Ouagadougou for 16 key researchers (ROCARE members) from 8 West and Central African countries on qualitative

research techniques in July, 2005, in collaboration with ROCARE/ERNWACA, UNESCO/IIEP and ADEA.

This collaboration took several forms. This time, ACI provided the services of MTT/West core team member, Mamadou Konaté, as principle designer/ trainer/facilitator for this workshop. MTT consultant Mamadou Bane, former ROCARE coordinator and program and evaluation specialist at the Malian Ministry of Education, also attended the meeting for MTT to make a presentation to participating researchers on MTT/West and its activities and to observe and evaluate the training. MTT also sponsored the participation of a Senegalese researcher at the workshop and through contacts with the USAID mission in Benin, helped to leverage mission funding for the participation of an additional two Beninese researchers in the workshop. Mr. Bane then joined the team in Benin following the workshop where MTT/West intensified contacts with the two Beninese researchers who had been sent to Ouagadougou so that they could eventually participate in research to improve the Beninese Management Information System in the Ministry of Education and identify local resources for research in HIV/AIDS and Education.

Finally, MTT/West once again provided the services of a core member to author a guide to Qualitative Research techniques in French. Most such documents are only available in English. MTT/West also made a significant contribution to the publishing costs of this important and much needed document. The document will be distributed by ROCARE to researchers throughout West and Central Africa with appropriate recognition of MTT/West's role and USAID branding.

Financial and Technical Resource Mapping Documents

Included in the initial agreement with AIR was the commitment that MTT/West would produce a document mapping financial resources available to West African Ministries of Education to fund HIV/AIDS and Education activities. The rationale for this activity was that a document should be prepared in advance to help Ministries fund new and innovative activities that would emerge as a result of consultations with MTT/West.

MTT/West contracted the services of a consultant to develop this mapping document. It turned out to be a bigger task than initially expected. The decision was made to include both financial support and technical assistance available. It also became clear that in addition to international sources, funding realities and sources differed from country to country. MTT/West thus decided to publish a first edition with specific country information on Senegal, Guinea, Mali and Ghana which, at the time, appeared to be the countries MTT/West would most probably work in during its first and second years of operations. The consultant conducted interviews in Senegal, Mali and Guinea and telephone interviews with key people in Ghana.

Four hundred copies of the document were printed in English and French versions and distributed to key actors in Paris (IIEP, Clearinghouse), Geneva (International Bureau of Education (IBE)), Washington (AIR, USAID, World Bank, Academy for Educational Development (AED)), Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, and South Africa (MTT/South). A time and cost extension was provided to the project from January 30 to April 30, 2006, to allow ACI to distribute the financial mapping documents.

The original plan was that as MTT/West activities expanded to other countries over the years, new, updated resource mapping documents would be produced for the new countries.

Institutional Issues

ACI spent a significant amount of time and effort in strengthening its systems and upgrading its program and financial monitoring mechanisms in order to respond effectively to the demands of EQUIP1 and USAID.

Subsequently, however, even as ACI became more effective administratively, a series of requests from EQUIP1 for developing successive work plans and budgets based on changing estimates of available funding and varying formats complicated operations and impacted program activities.

The second quarter of 2005 began with the exciting news in mid-April of the possibility that MTT could receive substantial additional USAID funding for activities from June, 2005 through September, 2006. This required the development of another work plan for that period and the submission of an accompanying budget, using the new budget shell provided by AIR. This process included a voluntary internal review of all MTT activities from September, 2004, through the end of April, 2005. As well as technical staff time, administrative staff time was largely devoted to these planning and budgetary activities.

By September, 2005, when ACI had received no word of approval of its June submission, MTT began to be concerned about funding. By late November ACI was, in fact, informed that no further funding would be available and that the project would close on December 15. ACI was advised that this in no way reflected dissatisfaction with the quality of work accomplished but was rather a purely administrative decision by USAID.

Subsequent to the official ending of the project, two short extensions were granted. The first extension through January 30, 2006 allowed the MTT/West Coordinator and the ACI administrative and financial team to complete administrative project close down. A second extension through April 30, 2006 allowed ACI to organize and pay for distribution of the Financial Mapping documents which had finally arrived from the printer after many delays due to extensive power cuts in Dakar and publishing errors that required correction.

Strengthening ACI

As a result of the MTT/West project, ACI broadened its already impressive 15 years of experience in the response to the epidemic. ACI increased its international, regional and national network and its expertise in the field of HIV/AIDS and Education in West Africa. New computer equipment with more capacity also supported new information services on HIV/AIDS and Education in its Documentation and Resource Center. The MTT/West project also helped ACI to upgrade its web site with a specific section on MTT West and HIV/AIDS and Education. This will lead to increased visibility for ACI.

Administratively, ACI grew and developed as an organization in the context of this collaboration. The accounting and reporting needs of the project accelerated the reform of ACI administrative and financial systems that were already underway with an international financial consultant. The project also stimulated the development of refined project tracking tools that are now used in other ACI activities as well.

Negative Side Effects

ACI had been selected as host institution for MTT/West on this NGO's experience and excellent reputation. With the unexpected suspension of the project, ACI suddenly found this reputation of dependability and quality service had suffered when it was no longer able to deliver on project commitments. After having toured the region explaining the objectives and benefits of MTT/West and introducing the concept to existing and potential partners, ACI had to move quickly in communicating

and explaining what had happened and why it might be a while before ACI and MTT could eventually fulfill their promises.

Furthermore, given its small staff, ACI had suspended many of its other smaller overhead generating activities in order to implement MTT/West. The sudden disappearance of nine months of projected overhead created major cash flow problems.

Country Specific Activities

Senegal

With over fifteen years experience in the response to HIV/AIDS, much of it in Senegal, ACI came to this task with an extensive network in the Stop AIDS community and a good reputation for work already accomplished in advocacy (political and religious leaders, media, private sector, associations of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), information dissemination and the strengthening of community based organizations. These included some organizations working with HIV/AIDS and Education. ACI had not yet worked directly with the Ministry of Education.

Pape Sow of the USAID/Senegal Education Team had participated in the initial Dakar meeting that launched the new MTT/West project. ACI, therefore, began its first country discussions with USAID/Senegal immediately following the launch. In a series of meetings with both the Health and Education teams ACI presented the MTT concept and discussed possibilities for eventual Mission funding of Senegal activities. The proposal for Senegal, and subsequently for other countries as well, was that central funding could cover initial contacts with the government but that once country activities were developed, they would be included in the local mission budget. Funding would be disbursed through the already-existing ACI sub-award with Family Health International (FHI) that was then being negotiated. It was in September, 2004 that these funds were eventually made available.

Pape Sow facilitated a formal meeting with the Permanent Secretary (Secrétaire General) of the Ministry of Education and various Division heads for ACI and the new MTT team. The meeting was also attended by Dr. Ibra Ndoye, head of Senegal's National AIDS Council (CNLS) to demonstrate high-level support for MTT/West's activities in the Education Sector. Following CNLS, USAID and MTT presentations, and discussions with the participants, the Permanent Secretary gave MTT the green light to begin working with the Ministry, with instructions that the contact person be Prof. Malick Sembene, the MoE AIDS focal point.

Several subsequent meetings with the HIV/AIDS focal point and his three-person School Health (Santé Scolaire) team took place. Rather than beginning work in Senegal, Professor Sembene initially focused attention on a series of important international HIV/AIDS and Education meetings that were being planned by the World Bank and by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Mauritania HIV/AIDS focal points. While this postponed the beginning of specific activities in Senegal, it provided the MTT team the occasion to meet education representatives from all over Africa, representatives of the World Bank, and the UNESCO IIEP Clearinghouse. It also provided an African Education forum to present the new MTT/West entity to key people from the entire region.

MTT/West also seized the opportunities offered by the presence of regional UNESCO and UNICEF offices in Dakar to make contacts with key people in these organizations responsible for HIV/AIDS and Education.

ACI and MTT/West representatives met with the Senegal UNICEF office, with the Senegalese publishers of educational materials, INEADE, with the local branch of ROCARE, with key Education Union

representatives involved in HIV/AIDS (who had been trained in HIV/AIDS and Development by ACI in HIV/AIDS workshops that pre-dated the MTT project) and with local NGOs such as Aide et Action and World Education involved in the Education Sector.

In January, 2005, MTT/West invited the HIV/AIDS focal point, Professor Sembene, to participate in its retreat in Mbour. This gave Professor Sembene the chance to better understand the possibilities for collaboration with MTT/West. The presence of MTT/South's Dhanaraj Chetty provided the professor with a glimpse of the type of collaboration that could also be developed in Senegal. As a result, specific negotiations took place with his School Health group (Santé Scolaire) to identify how MTT/West assistance could strengthen his organization and organize an HIV and Development workshop for the members of the Internal HIV/AIDS committee within the Ministry of Education to identify needs and priorities.

Mali

As in Senegal, ACI's previous HIV/AIDS-related experience and its excellent reputation in Mali laid the groundwork for the negotiation of its country activities. In particular, in the Education Sector, pre-existing collaboration with World Education on HIV/AIDS (materials development, teacher training, community involvement) facilitated contact and discussions of potential MTT/West activities with Education officials as well as with the USAID Education team. Through World Education, first Advisor to the Minister, M. Bonaventure Maïga, became a key ally in the promotion of MTT/West involvement in Mali. Pre-existing relations with the USAID mission Health team through other ACI HIV/AIDS training activities in Mali with the media, international organizations (workshop on OVC for UNICEF), and NGOs (Groupe Pivot Sante et Population, introduction of innovative HIV/AIDS education materials through the alternative schooling project at IEP in Katy), as well as a close working relationship with the UNAIDS Country Program officer, also established MTT's credibility and facilitated contacts.

ACI received excellent support from the USAID/Mali Education Team in developing contacts with key decision-makers in the Ministry of Education. Parallel ACI activities with World Education allowed ACI to include some of these same key Ministry actors in and HIV and Development training that gave them an idea of the ACI-MTT/West approach.

As in Senegal, ACI and the MTT/West systematically made contacts and cultivated relations with the representatives of international and national organizations as well as NGOs involved in HIV/AIDS and Education (World Bank Health and Education program heads, UNESCO, GTZ, Policy Project, Population Services International (PSI), World Education). A session with Mr. Malick Sene of the 'Haut Conseil' (coordinating body of HIV/AIDS funding in Mali) included extensive exchanges and convergence on strategies and approaches to the response to HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector. ACI also met with a staff member from EDC and with the head of the EDC PADDEM education decentralization project on possible collaboration for decentralized HIV/AIDS and Education activities.

In August, 2005, USAID, in collaboration with the Malian Ministry of Education, organized a half-day meeting in Bamako, to present the MTT/West project to over 30 key representatives of various departments of the Ministry of Education, NGOs and international partner organizations. The goal of the meeting was to raise interest in MTT/West assistance and explore possibilities for collaboration. Reactions to the presentation were overwhelmingly positive, and several weeks later, USAID received an official request from the MoE for MTT/West assistance. With the unexpected ending of the project, however, MTT was obliged to advise the MoE that it would be unable, at this time, to provide the requested assistance.

Benin

With hindsight, ACI can say that Benin is the West African country where MTT/West was able to make the most significant contribution to the response to HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector in the shortest period of time. This is due, in part, to the fact that contacts in Benin were facilitated by the USAID/Washington Africa Bureau Education Division following discussions during the Dakar meeting in February, 2005. MTT assistance came at a time when the Benin mission was in the planning phase for a two-year bridging period between major education programs. As a result of encouragement from Washington, the USAID Mission requested assistance from MTT/West in identifying HIV/AIDS-related assistance that it could offer to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS), its main partner in the Education Sector. MTT responded by sending a four person MTT team to Cotonou from in July, 2005.

With exceptional support from Cosme Quenum of USAID/Benin, the MTT team met with 45 people. These included representatives of USAID and the Education Assessment team, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, development partners and other stakeholders including NGOs, Trade Unions, PTAs and researchers, with a view towards future collaboration. At the end of the one-week mission, the MTT/West team produced a comprehensive report. It included a description of the context of the response to HIV/AIDS in Benin on the national level and in the Education Sector, an analysis of accomplishments, constraints, challenges and opportunities, and questions generated by this information. It also included recommendations on pertinent assistance to the MEPS that subsequently guided the Benin mission in the development of its interim HIV/AIDS and Education strategy.

Discussions of follow up activities by MTT/West in Benin were curtailed when the project closing was announced in November, 2005.

Guinea

As in Mali and Senegal, ACI had several major pre-existing HIV/AIDS-related activities and partners in Guinea (Peace Corps, HIV training for trainers of Primary School Teachers through FQEL, HIV Training of trainers of PTAs for World Education, and support for the creation of the 'Groupe Vie Saine', a major source of Life Skills and HIV and Development trainers for the entire Stop AIDS community in Guinea). ACI had also cultivated working relationships with the UNAIDS representative, the National AIDS coordinator, and GTZ.

During the life of the project, MTT/West made an impressive number of contacts with HIV/AIDS and Education-related actors. MTT consultants accompanied a Guinean delegation of 30 Education Sector representatives to Southern Africa, attended MTT/South Winter School with Dr. Balla Camara, the HIV/AIDS focal point from 'Santé Scolaire', had subsequent contacts with Guinean delegations at World Bank and ECOWAS meetings in Mbour. Guinean MTT/member Alpha Boubacar Diallo organized a series of meetings in Dakar with Dr. Balla Camara to discuss possible forms of collaboration. MTT consultant Susan Gannon visited to Guinea in the context of the financial mapping exercise and took advantage of her mission to make additional contacts for MTT/West. During the Mbour, Senegal meeting of Education leaders organized by the World Bank, ACI had initial discussions with the World Bank health specialist about possible participation of MTT/West in the upcoming Guinean National workshop to accelerate the Education response to HIV in Guinea. Initial contacts with the new USAID Education officer LeAnna Mar who had been a student at ACI's Baobab Center and had collaborated with ACI, Peace Corps and USAID in Guinea, had just begun when project funding was ended.

Despite having established an excellent network of contacts, MTT activities in Guinea never got off the ground. A blocked, pre-existing assistance relationship with MTT/South was never transferred to

MTT/West, which made interventions in Guinea impossible. The transfer to MTT/West was, in fact, being facilitated by the USAID/Washington Africa Bureau Education Division at the time of project closing. It is also important to mention that a highly unstable, volatile political and economic environment in Guinea also made work difficult for everyone.

In March, 2006, ACI was invited by FHI Guinea to undertake a four-day training workshop for Guinean journalists to help them prepare a national campaign against stigma and discrimination.

Country Profiles and Other Countries

As country programs began to develop, ACI and MTT/West designed a computer country profile system that was to allow the project to gradually gather essential information on HIV/AIDS and Education in each country where assistance was requested and keep track of activities and resource people. In addition to the countries where MTT/West activities took place during the life of the project, exploratory discussions about MTT/West consultations with representatives of several other francophone and Anglophone countries also took place. These include Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mauritania, The Gambia, and Togo. Neither the country profile system nor the potential contacts with other countries survived the cuts in project funding.

Results

It is reasonable to take into account the importance of several factors that had a negative impact on the development of MTT/West: the complexities of the funding mechanism, the time and effort necessary to establish a new institution, bureaucratic delays, power cuts, transfers of key USAID and government actors, lack of equipment, and transport difficulties.

Much of what ACI was able to accomplish in creating MTT/West has been built on the groundbreaking work of MTT/South and their generous assistance in the orientation of our West African team. MTT/South has remained faithful to its pledge to support the development of MTT/West to this day. ACI experience in the response to the epidemic undoubtedly contributed to the successes achieved. The highly professional performances of our West African MTT/West core team members accounted for the pertinence and the quality of MTT/West activities. Supported by its administrative and support staff, ACI and MTT/West were able to begin to introduce new concepts and approaches to the response to HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector.

It must be said that MTT's greatest programmatic success in Benin was due in part to active support from the Education Office in USAID Washington and the subsequent interest generated with the Education team in the Benin USAID mission. This was the beginning of an effective model of collaboration involving both encouragement and support from the central level followed by quality implementation by MTT/West in the field. Had the program continued, the influence of the central level education team would certainly have been felt in promoting the development of MTT/West activities in Mali and Guinea as well.

Just as USAID's investment was beginning to bear fruit in the form of concrete activities with Ministries of Education throughout the region, the project was abruptly and unexpectedly ended. The results of this administrative decision were to bring MTT/West activities to an unexpected halt, after commitments had been made to Ministries of Education and partners throughout the region. And yet, it was clearly stated by USAID that the curtailment of funding was not a reflection on project performance and that, in fact, "project accomplishments and efforts have been viewed very favorably."

It is fortunate that from the creation of MTT/West in January, 2004, the development plan encouraged mobilizing additional funding from other USAID or US Government operating units and additional funding partners for MTT/West. This means that despite the termination of USAID/Washington Africa Bureau central funding, ACI has a mandate to continue independently seeking funding from USAID country missions and from other sources in order to ensure the continuation of MTT/West activities. While is not an easy task, ACI remains committed to the MTT approach and is convinced of the urgency of this work in HIV/AIDS and Education in West Africa.

Lesotho

Introduction

In the mid to late 1800's the Basotho people moved into a mountainous region and settled in what is now known as Lesotho. The Basotho have a long tradition as pastoralists and boys begin learning how to take care of herds of cattle at a young age by working for neighbors and prosperous cattle owners. Boys as young as six years old are sent into the fields, usually alone, to move with and to protect the cattle. The work is difficult as the herd boys face loneliness, adverse weather conditions, meager food rations, cattle thieves, and little access to health care or education. In exchange for such servitude, the boys' families are paid a small sum of money that they use to pay for their own basic needs such as food and clothing. In some cases, the impoverished families receive debt forgiveness or food instead of cash. Often, the boys receive corn and milk for sustenance and a cow or sheep at the end of the year.

Payment of a herd animal allowed boys to slowly accrue their own herds as they grew older. That changed as young men began to give-up herding to work in the gold mines of South Africa. Working in the mines did not require an education or skilled training. But mining is becoming less and less of an option. In the 1980's, many gold mines began closing, and in the 1990's, mines began preferring to use non-migrant workers. A further difficulty is that cattle-thieving has been increasing. Thus, while it was once possible for young Basotho men who had been herd boys without an education to earn a living as either cattle owners or mine workers, these opportunities have been dwindling.

In response to the difficulties of Lesotho's herd boys, EQUIP1 undertook an assessment of the current status of education access, quality, and equity for the herd boys and the activities and projects of the Government of Lesotho, donors, multilateral organizations, and NGOs and selected an intervention in collaboration with the Government and Lesotho Distance Training Center, with the concurrence of USAID, that targeted the educational needs of these young men by providing them with life skills that will enable them to break the cycle of poverty.

Implementation

In the project's initial stage, a literature review on interventions targeting herd boys took place, followed by site visits. An EQUIP1 staff member went to Lesotho and met with Ministry of education representatives and returned with a great deal of documentation. A second team consisting of two staff members conducted a one-week visit in March, 2004.

The purpose of the visit to Lesotho was to research interventions focused on herd boys, undertaken by the Government of Lesotho, international donors and NGOs, in order to determine where USAID might most usefully channel the funding that is available to the Africa Bureau for this purpose. Also to investigate the utility of a Roundtable in order to highlight successful practices and lessons learned. One team member was responsible for taking photographs and arranging them to illustrate the situation of the herd boys and to use that as a basis for a visual presentation.

To gather the necessary information EQUIP1 staff met with the following stakeholders:

- The Long Distance Teaching Centre (LDTC) at the Ministry of Education. This is the essential body for targeting herd boys and has a number of programs in collaboration with donors and NGOs. The LDTC has 179 distance learning centers in five out of the ten districts. UNICEF’s “School in a Box” idea is also being tried in some areas.
- The US Embassy Special Project Coordinator, US Department of State, was extremely helpful in indicating key donors and in helping to contact them.
- The Peace Corps Country Director introduced the team to Peace Corps volunteers who were based in remote areas. They were working with the formal education system, but were able to provide first-hand information about the status of herd boys in the lowlands as well as in the mountains. The latter are much more isolated and removed from social contact and access to education. The Director also arranged for a very competent guide/translator/driver to work with the team. This person was a part time teacher and knew the region well.
- The UNICEF Resident Representative and Education officer. UNICEF informed the team that there were a large number of reports, including some very recent studies on interventions focused on herd boys, as well as a series of Roundtables and seminars on this subject.
- The Development Cooperation Ireland Program Advisor said that it was the largest bilateral donor in Lesotho and works directly with the government. It is presently helping the GOL put together a strategic plan for education. The program advisor pointed out that there is no official non-formal education policy in effect.
- The World Vision Director Operations explained that WV works in seven of the ten districts using community committees that identify local issues. Since 2002 the focus has been on food security, HIV/AIDS, water and sanitation, health and education. WV also provides after hours literacy training for herd boys. The Director mentioned that communities could benefit greatly from knowledge that herd boys have regarding erosion control, grazing and natural herbal medicines.

LDTC arranged for the team to visit Literacy Sites in different districts, one in an urban area and one in a rural area. Outside Thaba Tseka, a northern capital, the team visited a Skills Training class where the students were taught carpentry. This is a pilot project. In order to participate, the students must have completed literacy class. Learners were herd boys as well as adult women. The team also conducted interviews with the help of their guide/translator with teachers and herd boys at the learning sites, as well as with herd boys in the mountains. All the herd boys with one exception said that they did not like being herd boys.

A picture slide show on the herd boys of Lesotho with music and narrative was created by EQUIP1 to illustrate the plight of the herd boys.

As a result of meetings with Government officials, donors, and NGOs, the team discovered that there already existed a large body of documentation on interventions targeting herd boys, and that there had also been a series of Roundtables on this topic. The team’s research led to the conclusion that USAID could more usefully employ the available funding by helping to enhance and/or replicate programs and activities that were already being successfully implemented and were in need of additional funds.

On return to Washington EQUIP1 team met with USAID’s Africa Bureau Education Chief and staff to discuss their findings. This resulted in a change of strategy. Since there was already so much information available on herd boys, as well as a very recent media piece, a UNICEF DVD *Growing up Alone: Herd Boys in Lesotho*, it was decided to use the money for funding a worthwhile program or an activity already in process or needing funds for replication.

Because of the flexibility provided by a cooperative agreement and with the concurrence of USAID Africa Bureau Education Division, EQUIP1 was asked to discuss alternative options for funding with the LDTC.

The LDTC prioritized their needs as follows:

- Wind-up radio cassette players for each of the LPs. The materials in print are very limited, existing only for the instruction of the local language, Sesotho, and basic Math. There is often no electricity in the remoter areas. These wind-up cassette players would be able to provide taped materials which would be dubbed at the LDTC in Maseru. Learning materials on tape already exist because of the radio programs that were used for distance teaching before the national radio station was privatized and became too expensive for the LDTC to be able to use. Furthermore, radio transmission in the more mountainous areas is variable.
- Carpentry Kits, Agricultural kits and Candle-making kits. These again are for the LPs and for the skills training classes that are being progressively launched as tools and materials become available. The LDTC deemed it essential for herd boys to learn life skills and income generating activities so as to be able to earn a living after they stop being herd boys.

It was agreed to provide these materials to the LDTC for distribution and use in the LPs. In addition, it was considered prudent to provide cassette players to the five District Offices that will be training the teachers in the LPs in their use, and to also provide each District with an electrical player which will be able to record learning material tapes if these should break or deteriorate. The wind-up cassettes players cannot be used for recording.

The decision to use the funding available to provide equipment to the Lesotho Distance Teaching Center (LDTC), to be used in the Learning Posts for teaching literacy and numeracy and practical skills, was finalized by EQUIP1 headquarter staff in agreement with USAID and the LDTC. (See Annex 7 for a list of equipment purchased.)

Training would be provided to the Learning Post volunteer teachers by the LDTC District Officers.

EQUIP1 staff arranged for the purchase of this equipment. The wind-up radio cassette players were purchased from Good News Media in Cape Town, South Africa, who imports them from Sydney, Australia. Tapes for the wind-up cassettes players were purchased from another company in South Africa, the tools were purchased from two different vendors in Lesotho. All these vendors were located with the help of the LDTC. The U.S. Embassy in Lesotho took delivery of these items and stored them in the Embassy warehouse.

Stickers were provided with the USAID logo, to be affixed to the wind-up cassette players. After the delivery of the cassette players, the US Embassy informed EQUIP1 staff that due to unforeseen events there was no more room in the warehouse, so it was arranged for the rest of the equipment to be delivered to the LDTC warehouse where it was housed under secure conditions.

The LDTC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with AIR, acknowledging receipt of the equipment and agreeing to ensure delivery of the equipment to the designated Learning Posts and regions, and ensure that the equipment is used for its intended purpose. LDTC also agreed to provide a report to AIR by the end of December 31, 2004, giving detailed information on actual accomplishments with targeted goals; if goals were not met, an explanation of why not; a summary of district and regions being served and how the equipment was being used; and visual documentation such as photographs and copies of news media write-ups.

The Lesotho Embassy in Washington provided a great deal of help in reaching people and in advising the EQUIP1 Washington staff on matters of government protocol. The staff also received a great deal of practical help from the US Embassy in Lesotho throughout the various stages of this project.

The US Ambassador to Lesotho agreed to officiate at the official handover of the equipment to the LDTC. The ceremony was scheduled for Friday, September 24, 2004, at the offices of the LDTC. The Project Manager of this activity was in Maseru for the handover and for meetings with the LDTC and the US Embassy Special Projects Coordinator. A list of senior officials from the Ministry of Education and other government units was compiled by the LDTC and invitations were sent out by the US Embassy. The Deputy Permanent Secretary of the MoE and the Chief Education Officer accepted the equipment on behalf of the Minister of Education. Arrangements were made for two herd boys and their teacher to also attend the official handover ceremony.

Ambassador June Carter Perry expressed great interest in the project and the hope that it would be possible to continue to provide help to the herd boys. At a follow-up meeting with the district officers and the staff of the LDTC it was also noted that the gift of the equipment had created a great deal of interest and that there was certain to be an increase in enrollment at the Learning Posts, and the LDTC also hoped that there was a possibility of continuing to provide help

This activity, targeting the educational need of herd boys, was successfully concluded in September 2004.

As agreed, the Lesotho Distance Teaching Center (LDTC) provided a report to AIR by end December, 2004, giving detailed information on the status of the project. The skills training equipment had been distributed to the designated LPs in the five districts but the wind-up cassette players had not yet been distributed because:

- a) there were transport problems;
- b) the scenarios for the audio tapes were being updated and pilot tested; and
- c) the tape duplicating machine needed to be replaced because it could not be repaired.

Lessons Learned

It is essential to ensure that there is an efficient and reliable delivery mechanism in place for moving equipment from a central point to remote locations.

A detailed and complete report (with annexes) on the Lesotho Herd Boys Activity is available on the DEC website including the CD picture slide show.

Swaziland

Introduction

In Swaziland, a land-locked country slightly smaller than New Jersey, more than one third of adults are estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS. As HIV/AIDS takes the lives of men and women, children are being left vulnerable and orphaned. In 2002, Swaziland has 40,000 orphans and that number was expected to climb by 10,000 each year. By 2010, orphans whose parents had died of HIV/AIDS may represent one-sixth of the Swazi population. Of these orphans, the most at-risk are the ones living in child-headed households, estimated to be as high as 10% of households in especially poor areas. In addition, the current food shortage is having a particularly harsh impact on orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). Despite the fact that OVC tend to drop-out of schools to use school fees for money for food, families and OVC continue to eat less and suffer malnutrition. As food prices have climbed (e.g.

maize increased by 61% in 2002) families have been refusing to take-in OVC, further exacerbating their situation. OVC are also at high risk of sexual abuse in rural and urban settings, thereby increasing their own risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.

The sero-prevalence prevalence rates for HIV/AIDS in Swaziland are very high and USAID wanted to fund an intervention that would help orphans and vulnerable children break the cycle of disease and poverty with the help of the community.

Implementation

In an initial meeting it was suggested that this activity could perhaps enhance the work undertaken by Swaziland's National Emergency Response Council for HIV/AIDS (NERCHA). During the USAID Africa Bureau's Education Division's Workshop in Mbabane, the work done by NERCHA through the establishment of a community center where help and counsel was available after school and at the end of a work day, had been seen at first hand, and deemed highly effective in reaching and helping orphans and vulnerable children. However, upon enquiry it was learned that NERCHA is not an implementer and is presently sufficiently funded. After an initial literature review and assessment of current efforts, the original intention was to design a small pilot project targeting one or two communities and including village elders, traditional healers, parents and young children. The purpose of the intervention was to help communities find ways to help OVC break the cycle of disease and poverty. It was decided that after the completion of the research a one-page prospectus for NGOs would be written and a committee would be set up to review proposals and pinpoint an intervention. An estimated time line for the activity was established which included evaluation of the pilot activity and dissemination of results.

EQUIP1 staff went to Swaziland in March. The objective of the visit was to research the plight of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), including UNICEF's efforts focused on school feeding programs and community children's centers, and to find out if there were programs that were helping OVC to break the cycle of poverty and were sensitizing communities to integrate these children into their social networks.

The team discovered that OVC were getting great deal of attention, particularly in the South, which is the drought area. The government is working on a draft policy with UNICEF for OVC, and is depending on NGOs to implement interventions.

It was also learned that the National Emergency Response Council for HIV/AIDS (NERCHA) is a parastatal entity that reports to the Prime Minister's office and is the coordinating agency for access to Global Funds for HIV/AIDS. All donors and organizations contacted praised the efficiency and efficacy of NERCHA. The US Public Affairs Officer explained that capacity was lacking in most of the NGOs and implementers in Swaziland and that NERCHA was an exception.

EQUIP1 staff met with the following stakeholders:

- US Embassy Public Affairs officer and the HIV/AIDS specialist. Both provided the team with very useful information on who was actively involved with orphans and vulnerable children and was able to estimate the ability and competence of the implementers.
- NERCHA National Director and the Assistant Coordinator. NERCHA works at the national as well as at the grass roots level and tries to use existing, traditional structures, not necessarily create new ones. It also works to create equity and sustainability. It is closely involved with orphan care.
- UNICEF Education Officer. UNICEF supports feeding programs in 80 schools; provides grants for school fees to needy children; and has set up neighborhood care points for AIDS orphans.

- Peace Corps Assistant Director. Peace Corps had only just returned to Swaziland. Their program is focused on income generating activities that benefit AIDS orphans. Peace Corps is presently working in the southern and eastern regions.
- JTK Associates Director who informed the team that a great deal of attention is presently focused on OVC, but that the government is counting on NGOs to undertake interventions. However, many of these NGOs are lacking in capacity. A national policy for OVC now exists in draft form. NERCHA is doing a good job coordinating activities, but there is still an absence of effective planning at the national level.
- World Vision HIV/AIDS Program Manager and an Associate. WV works with local committees to help identify problems at community level, and runs Area Development Programs (ADP) in ten villages. Each ADP costs about \$350,000 per year to operate.
- The Salvation Army implements school-related programs, in particular scholarship programs for about 300 children in urban and peri-urban area.
- Caritas is implementing the Orphan Aid project that focuses on supporting families who have taken in AIDS orphans. Community based programs cover a large spectrum of activities, food security and health, sanitation, housing, and income generation. Caritas also implements the Education for Development and Democracy Initiative (EDDI) girls' scholarship program.
- SOS National Director arranged for a tour of the SOS Village facilities for orphans that provide family, housing, food, education and health care. SOS is conceptualizing a new project that will take care of orphans in their own communities, instead of bring them into SOS orphanages.
- Bristol-Myers-Squibb helps support the HIV/AIDS Prevention Project that Save the Children is implementing, which provides psycho-social support services.

EQUIP1 proposed the following options for funding to USAID:

1. NERCHA is planning an intervention directed towards more mature orphan heads of household, to help them grow food crops. Funds would initially provide tools, fertilizer, seed and other inputs in conjunction with the Swaziland national agricultural service. Community volunteers would help identify orphans and help them with plowing. An educational aspect, functional literacy, can also be incorporated into the OVC project. The issue of skills transfer is very important and the project would also encourage OVC to become literate using non-formal schools at established centers, which would also include a mini-library for the children's use. The estimated cost is \$12,800 per Chiefdom, which will reach out to 40 child headed households at \$320 per household.
2. UNICEF is planning to create Neighborhood Care Points for OVC, which would provide informal education and daycare so that the OVC could come to school with their younger siblings. The cost is estimated at \$85,000 per center, and presently UNICEF does not have funding for this project.
3. World Vision also has Neighborhood Care Points which provide food to OVC. Children cannot cook so WV provides food and adults do the cooking. Each center costs approximately \$60,000. Also half the OVC are over age for primary school so WV works with the church to provide basic literacy and life skills. Perhaps these centers could also be used to provide basic literacy skills.
4. Save the Children provides life skills training for OVC who are heads of household. It includes two phases: a. skills for becoming effective young leaders; how to use resources effectively; household management and problem solving, and b. personal growth and development; how to deal with peer pressure; reproductive health.

In May, 2004, EQUIP1 met with the USAID Africa Bureau Education Division, and it was decided by USAID that the funding available for this project would be given to the National Emergency Response

Council for HIV/AIDS (NERCHA) to help with an intervention directed towards orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). NERCHA would work with its partners and provide oversight and administrative support.

NERCHA is a parastatal that works closely with the Deputy Prime Minister's Office and is charged with the management of the Global Funds to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for Swaziland. Funding is available from other sources for social centers that are being built in Chiefdoms. Each chiefdom serves a number of villages. These centers will provide a venue for HIV/AIDS interventions that will include mitigation, care and support, and prevention programs, as well as cooked food for school children, and psycho-social counseling, but there is no funding available for programs focusing on older orphans that NERCHA would like to support. Therefore the funds provided by USAID will play a crucial role.

After discussions with the NERCHA National Director, and with the Assistant Coordinator-Impact Mitigation, it was agreed that the funding would be directed towards programs for the older orphans as more mature heads of household. These are the older orphans who often slip through the cracks as there is no specific budget line item for programs addressing these older orphans in the Global Funds for HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis.

NERCHA identified the following programs as their priorities:

- **Food Security.** Funds will be used to support the Indlunkhulu project in the chosen communities. This project enables orphan children to learn agricultural skills which they can use in their own homesteads. The field that will be plowed in the selected Chiefdoms will be tended by the community members and the harvest used to provide for destitute children. The OVC will take part in the plowing, cultivation and harvesting of the fields. The project will also assist the older OVC to plow fields at their homesteads (if the land is not cultivated it reverts back to the Chiefdom or the local authority, or to other people who might take advantage of the orphans). Community members will also assist the OVC to have small vegetable gardens.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC) will be implementing this project together with NGOs working in the chosen area under NERCHA oversight. The cost of these programs is estimated at \$12,800 per Chiefdom. Each chiefdom under the project will serve approximately 40 households at \$40 per household. The community will help identify the beneficiary orphans.

- **Non Formal Education.** This program is being implemented by the Sebenta Adult Literacy Institute. Sebenta already has a curriculum adapted to the needs of OVC for non-formal education which will be used in this program. Basic functional literacy and numeracy will be taught to the older orphans in non-formal programs. Neighborhood Care Points are being built with outside funding in Chiefdoms and will provide a venue for the basic literacy and HIV/AIDS awareness programs.
- **Early Childhood.** There is also an Early Childhood Care and Development program (ECCD) implemented by the Lutsango (women's regiment). This project will not use the funding provided by the USAID Africa Bureau, but will complement the other activities.
- **HIV/AIDS Awareness.** The program as a whole will also support HIV/AIDS awareness and educational campaigns. The campaign will focus in particular on OVC and youth and be implemented at the community level. A number of NGOs will be implementing this aspect of the project under NERCHA oversight. In all the communities that will benefit under the project there are the Chiefdom HIV/AIDS committees that are responsible for implementing the project at the Chiefdom level.

USAID Africa Bureau Education Division agreed to provide the funds needed for these projects. NERCHA expressed their deep appreciation for the funding. NERCHA pointed out that this funding will reach a large number of households and make life easier for a great many orphans and vulnerable children. An agreement was prepared and signed to allow transfer of funds to NERCHA. The Project Manager visited Mbabane in September to finalize the agreement and to check into the transfer of funds to the National Emergency Response Council on HIV/AIDS (NERCHA).

In meetings the National Director and the Impact Mitigation Coordinator explained that in October NERCHA would be holding meetings and workshops with all stakeholders to strengthen NERCHA's coordinating role; for information dissemination; and arriving at a joint understanding of what everyone's roles and responsibilities were, so that all would be working in collaboration and not at cross purposes. NERCHA intends to create eight centers that will be models for the non-formal education programs in two communities in each of the four regions so that every region has a model.

The Project Manager also attended a meeting of stakeholders that explained the priority given to the agriculture component of the program. Representatives from UNICEF, FAO, Kellogg Foundation, World Food Program and the Ministry of Economic Planning Development, discussed the problem of orphans who were unable to cultivate their land, and the importance of food and nutrition in order for a child to be able to attend school and actually learn.

There was a meeting with SABENTA to discuss the literacy component of the program. SABENTA has been involved with adult literacy, but now has a curriculum ready and pre-tested in six subjects for young learners. SABENTA was asked to do an assessment study on the educational needs of out-of-school OVC (see Annex 7).

For HIV/AIDS awareness, NERCHA wanted the Chiefs to play a leading role in requesting information, raising awareness, and requesting expert assistance. Visits were arranged to three different centers, one urban; one run in a private individual's house; and one under construction in a rural area, where there are feeding programs as well as literacy programs.

Results

The project was successfully concluded in September, 2004. As agreed, NERCHA provided quarterly reports for one full year showing the advances that the project was making.

Annexes

Annex 1: Final Financial Report for Africa Bureau Activity

Project	Original Budget*	Total Expenditures
<i>Sesame Street</i> Model	\$370,575	\$370,634.71
Community Radio Programs	\$1,651,484	\$1,647,896.74
West Africa/MTT	\$946,012	\$940,075.85
Lesotho	\$207,796	\$207,795.78
Swaziland	\$207,105	\$207,105.35
Total	\$3,382,972	\$3,373,508.43

*The totals listed as Original Budget are per the contract modification number 4 dated May 2006 that reduced both the total award and the individual project awards.

Annex 2: Letter from NUNV HIV AIDS Specialist/District AIDS Task Force



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
CHIPATA DISTRICT AIDS TASK FORCE
OFFICE OF THE NUNV SPECIALIST
EASTERN PROVINCE
P.O.BOX 510072
CHIPATA
TEL: 062 – 223148

9th December, 2005

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: ZCRP LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

I refer to the above subject.

As secretariat for all the District based HIV AIDS intervention measures, I write to sincerely commend the work being done by the Zambia Community Radio Project, in the province generally and in Chipata particularly.

To start with the Zambia Community Radio project has formed more than 200 radio listener groups that have been associated with HIV AIDS debate, discussion and intervention at village level. These groups are each replete with a full village committee and a wind up radio from where they listen to, not only health but developmental oriented broadcasts from community radio stations.

The Project has recorded a popular series of radio shows whose impact is unprecedented in the entire Catchment area of Breeze FM that enjoy more than 90% of listeners in the entire province. It will take ages for Our Village or Mudzi Wathu brand name to be completely forgotten especially that from inception the project continues to broadcast an entirely new episode and never repeating.

I was part of the team that trained members from eleven villages, whose stimulated desires as a result of aired shows have started doing honey production. And it is arising from this that ZCRP sent on behalf of three communities a proposal to Community Response to HIV AIDS (CRAIDS).

Our office and other members of the District AIDS Task Force are in the process of doing a field appraisal for the ZCRP Community Response to HIV AIDS Mkwékama proposal, which if approved for funding will help three communities of Mkwékwe, Kampala and Makowa.

For the first time in the history of major HIV AIDS communication projects, ZCRP has provided a base for the collection and analysis of data from the villages being targeted. ZCRP has provided us with information on request on their targeted communities. This information to mention a few include, occasional video clips, village profiles, village pictures and village demographics. In a district where such information is hard to come by, we have no option but to recommend a project of such nature.

The staff at the helm of the project is an active member of the District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCC) and the District AIDS Task Force (DATF). This has allowed interaction at a level where local policy makers are fully aware of the projects impact. For instance the project, whose tenure we were told was meant to end in late 2007, has been included in all our strategic plans for the district. I believe this is so for the other districts in the province, where the Mudzi Wathu radio foot print reaches.

ZCRP has been so instrumental in the past two World AIDS day celebrations, as can be verified with hundreds of villagers that turned up for the last two occasions fully identifying with ZCRP.

Recently UNDP commissioned a consultancy that was undertaken by journalists among them Amos Chanda and Edem Djokote, of the Zambia Daily Mail and Post Newspaper respectively. In this report ZCRP was prominently mentioned as one of the few projects that was fully complimenting the ideals of the UN Volunteer Specialist on HIV AIDS

We have also received verbal commendations from the traditional rulers in the district that are fully behind the ideals of the Zambia Community Radio Project. Senior Chief Nzamane of the Ngoni people is one of the many that are not only excited about the project but are willing to garner support for the continuation of the project.

We would appreciate that when a decision to fully close the project is undertaken major stakeholders in the province should be consulted on the impact of the project, lest a satisfied community is left in wondering at the decision.

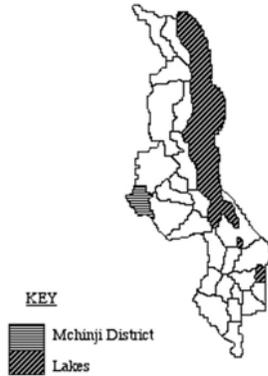
I'm available for further comments and clarifications.

Yours Faithfully,

Eunice Masi
UNV HIV AIDS Specialist/District AIDS Task Force

C.C District Commissioner

Annex 3: Map of Malawi Showing Mchinji District



Key District Features

Size Sq. Km	Population		Community Based Organizations	Hospitals/ Health Centres	Orphans	Secondary Schools	Primary Schools	Nursery Schools
	Male	Female						
3,356	164,095	160,846	300 +	15	24,400 +	19	185	246

Annex 4: Sample Radio Program Format for Malawi Community Radio Program

No.	Details	Timing
1	Theme song or signature tune for opening the program	1 minute
2	<i>Welcome</i> Physical introduction of the program by the village presenter	2 minutes
3	Introduction song of the village or school being featured	1-2 minutes
4	<i>History of the village/school</i> - Tribe(s)'s background of people - Initial traditions and rituals before settling there (Cultures before)	2.5-3 minutes
5	Historical (link) song	3 minutes
6	<i>Developmental success story</i> - How other cultures have influenced the community whether positively or negatively, with regard to HIV/AIDS - Three to four people elaborate on undesired behaviors	1 minute
7	Song – Link-promotion – traditional song	30 sec-1 min
8	<i>Development story- success story</i> - Mentioning the felt problems - Suggested solutions to the problems - What are the limiting factors to those changes/solutions	
9	<i>Village presenter linking to testimonies</i> - Testimonies by the infected or affected people and even those who are succeeding in mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS. - Source of the problems - Song – Link	
10	Messages to the masses on AB including NAC approved messages Solutions to the testified problems by role model or guests/old people	
11	CONCLUSION	12 minutes
12	Reminding listeners about <i>In My Village</i> - Major solutions presented in the program - Encouraging listeners to listen to the next program - Branding and disclaimer Presenter out	
	SIGNATURE – TUNE-OUT	

Annex 5: Success Stories from Malawi Community Radio Program

Success Story One: “In My Village” Brings Girl Back to School

With all her hopes shattered, Rosette Bokola, a young girl from Nyoka village, had dropped out of school due to an unwanted pregnancy in 2005. A fellow schoolboy had proposed making love to her and, due to lack of counseling and guidance, she accepted, thinking that the affair would add to her enjoyment of life. When she discovered that she was pregnant she and the boy decided to get married. But, to her surprise, the marriage was only the beginning of numerous problems which included taking care of her child and the new family. Her husband was violent and physically abused her on the slightest pretext. She put up with it because she didn't know what else to do. To complicate matters even more, one of her sisters died giving birth to twin babies. Rosette was asked to take care of the two babies in addition to her own.

However, one day Rosette saw a light at the end of the tunnel. In April, 2006, *In My Village* project staff came to her village, to sensitize the community on HIV/AIDS and to mobilize them to find solutions to the problems encountered in their everyday life without waiting for external help and support. The project staff also talked about the importance of education especially for orphans and vulnerable children. A Listening Club was formed and a mentor trained. Club members were asked to listen to the radio programs broadcast once a week, featuring villages that were undertaking activities to help the sick, the poor, orphans, and inform communities of the dangers of HIV/AIDS and how to avoid them. After the sensitization meeting Rosette decided to try and go back to school. She consulted local leaders for advice on how she could do this. She was advised to approach an orphan care center to look after her sister's children. She decided to divorce her husband. She joined the Nyoka Listening Club, which had started an irrigation farming activity, so that she would have resources to sustain her.

Rosette returned to school and she is now in Form 2 at the Mchinji Mission Community Day Secondary School. Her mother is helping her by taking care of her child. Rosette is paying school fees with money earned by selling the vegetables she grows with the village Listening Club. She urges all young girls who are married and who dropped out of school, to go back and finish their education. Her classmates are used to the fact that she has a child because she told them her past history. She looks and behaves like any other student at the school. “Had it not been for the *In My Village* Project” says Rosette Bokola, “I would have never realized my dream of finishing school and of one day working just like the women I admire in town.”

Success Story Two: Support for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Gets a Boost

In the Mchinji district, HIV/AIDS and other diseases have turned a lot of children into orphans. Nkunda village is one of the communities that has been affected. The major challenge, as in most communities in the district, is donor dependency when it comes to support for OVC. The Nkunda people, in Traditional Authority Nyoka's area, did nothing to help themselves.

When the *In My Village* Project started operating in the district, it mobilized people to help support OVC. This was one of the project's mandates. Several sensitization meetings were held and this topic was discussed; a Listening Club was established and club leaders and members trained. The major focus was to motivate community members to become self-reliant: to identify and discuss their problems, devise their own solutions, draw action plans and take action to solve the problem themselves.

A program had been broadcast featuring Chapakama village which was supporting its OVC through personal contribution of resources. Another program followed which featured Mchitanji village's irrigation farming. The Nkunda Listening Club was impressed by the villages' actions and resolved to stop waiting for a donor to come to their aid. Members contributed money amounting to MK5,000.00

which was used to buy school writing materials and foodstuff for orphans and vulnerable children in the community. The more they gave, the more they wanted to do to support education for OVC, and care for the sick and the elderly. To sustain their activities, they asked their chief for a piece of land on which they started a winter crop of maize and vegetables. With their own money they bought necessary fertilizers. They sold the vegetables and continued their support for OVC, the sick and the elderly. When the *In My Village* project started closing down, the club had already started selling their green maize. They supported over 100 OVC, 25 elderly and sick people and were constructing a pit latrine for a man who was blind and destitute.

Publicity of the Nkunda village activities mobilized the other village-based Listening Clubs to follow suit. Seven other communities, where the project had not established Listening Clubs, started their own, and began replicating activities to support OVC and elderly and sick people following Nkunda's lead.

Success Story Three: Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) No Longer Frightening

In the project's impact area most people find it hard to go for VCT and learn their status. Therefore widows and widowers who remarried could, through sheer ignorance, spread the disease to their partners.

However, when the *In My Village* project introduced its interventions, people started reflecting on what the radio programs were featuring and the messages they were broadcasting. The Clubs started discussions on the extent of damage happening because of the lack of knowledge of a person's HIV/AIDS status. They also realized that people were dying of the disease when they could have prolonged their lives through administration of antiretroviral treatment (ARV). They also learnt a lot from the literature that the project got from the National AIDS Commission (NAC) and gave to Listening Club members.

The first community to act was Kaphande in Traditional Authority Zulu. The 15 member club discussed VCT at length. Some members were afraid to have their blood tested. Eventually 3 people walked to a VCT center, 15 kilometres away, where one person tested HIV positive. Upon hearing the news 7 more club members, including Group Village Headman Kaphande, also went for VCT. Two of them tested positive. In all, 3 of the 10 who went for VCT tested positive. Publicity of the initiative motivated 16 people from neighboring villages to have their blood tested. Over 600 people from Group Village Headperson Nkunda's area went for VCT. The Chairperson of the Zulu Listening Club, Rudolph Njemu, followed. In an effort to lead by example even the Project Director, George Jobe, had his blood tested. As a result, verbal reports from NAC indicated that in the Mchinji district a large number of people went for VCT during the national week of testing.

Annex 6: Equipment Purchased for Lesotho Distance Teaching Centres (LDTC) for the Learning Posts (Lesotho)

The following equipment was purchased:

- 545 wind-up radio cassette players (3 for each of the 180 Learning Posts)
- 5 electrical cassette players (The wind-up cassette players cannot make recordings. It was considered advisable to provide an electric player to each of the five district offices so that broken or mutilated tapes could be replaced without having to do it from the LDTC main office in Maseru.)
- 3,650 Cassette tapes
- 40 carpentry kits (1 kit for each of the 40 regions)
- 540 agricultural kits (3 per Learning Post)
- 20 candle-making kits

Annex 7: Study on the Educational Needs of Out-of-School Orphans and Vulnerable Children (Swaziland)

Introduction

Sebenta was approached by the National Emergency Response Council for HIV/AIDS (NERCHA) and the Lutsango Lwabomake to conduct an assessment study on the educational needs of the out of school Orphaned and Vulnerable Children, in the following areas:

Hhohho Region:	Nkamanzi and Mvuma;
Lubombo Region:	ka Langa; Mpolonjeni;
Manzini Region:	Mahlangatsha (Mmambatfweni)

Methodology

Composition of the Team

A Sebenta Team with members from the Administration Section and from the Curriculum Department embarked on the exercise of visiting the afore mentioned areas together with the relevant Sebenta Regional Officer, and the relevant Lutsango Lwabomake Coordinator who would mobilise the community and gather the learners in the various KaGogo centres for the team to assess their needs.

Working Tool

Sebenta designed and used a form where the following information on each child was gathered; i.e. Name of child; the Name of the Caregiver; their relationship; Age of child; gender; His/her education level; the recommended Sebenta program the child may enter; the name of the possible facilitator; the status of the child (double or single orphaned) as well as the status of the home; (a child headed home or not).

Findings

Table 1 is an analysis of the number of the OVC found in each area and the recommended Literacy program for them.

Table 1

No. of . . .		Recommended Program		Status of Home				Name of Facilitator/s
Orph.	Vulner	Basic Literacy	NUPE	G H	M H	F H	R H	
38	65	104	2	24	40	20		Zodwa Zikalala & Khanyisile Vilakati
	2	1	1		2			
					3			
8	6	13	1	5		4	4	Khetsiwe Msane & Zinhle Magagula
3	2	5		2	3			

KEY: GH – Granny Headed; MH – Mother Headed; FH – Father Headed; RH – Relative Headed

Observations

- In some areas most of the children were not orphaned but vulnerable, with both parents alive; for example, in Nkamanzi only 38 out of the 103 children were orphaned having one or both parents dead, the rest had both parents who were either too poor or uncaring or away. Most of the children lived with their grannies or other relatives.

- There was some confusion among the community members as to exactly which children to bring to the centers for a needs assessment, as most of the out-of school children were already in school following the Ministry of Education’s call that *all children should go to school* (although their school fees had not yet been paid).
- In addition the community brought a number of children whose ages ranged from 5 to 9 year olds, when in fact Sebenta offers literacy to older OVC, the 10 year olds and above.
- The programs for agriculture (food security) and HIV/AIDS awareness will be started after the children have started the education program. This will ensure that the education program receives the primary focus.

Challenges

Communication was a problem so it was difficult to identify areas to be visited. As a result the team managed to visit only five areas out of the eight areas that were identified:

- Start-up was delayed because Sebenta had to wait for the Lutsango coordinators to mobilise and coordinate the community and gather the potential learners at the centres for the Training Needs Assessment. The Coordinators are without vehicles so they had to do a lot of walking to try to coordinate with the Tindvuna Tetinkhundla and other community authorities. Thus there were delays in fixing dates to visit the KaGogo Centers.
- Not all the coordinators had contact numbers for Sebenta to reach them to plan the trips and do follow ups. The team was unable to visit the Shiselweni Region because it was unable to contact the coordinator as there is no phone.
- Community participation was somewhat low. This could be because the assessment was carried out towards the end of the school year. Sebenta classes resume in February and children will be more eager to attend classes at the start of the year.
- Other possible reasons could be:
 - There was no out-of school child who needed Sebenta services in certain areas.
 - ii) Some members of the community did not get the information
 - iii) The guardians had already taken their children to school following the Ministry of Education’s call that all out-of-school children should go to school.
 - iv) The kaGogo Centres were too far for them.
 - v) Some of the targeted learners were already attending classes in the UNICEF National Care Points (NCF).

Recommendations

- The Lutsango Coordinators should all be given cell phones for ease of communication, as well as vehicles.
- The Lutsango Coordinators should be involved in identifying the areas of need as they are very familiar with these areas.
- Sebenta should clearly indicate the ages of the children to be brought to the Sebenta classes so that the needs assessment can determine the number and level of classes necessary.
- The planning needs to take into account the instruction provided by the UNICEF NCFs and harmonize coverage between them and the Sebenta classes.
- There also has to be a proper definition of a Vulnerable Child; and a policy direction on who is eligible to be given assistance.

Next steps

- The community should identify the older OVC.
- The community should take these OVC to the Sebenta classes
- The community should enroll the younger OVC in the formal schools

- Sebenta/NERCHA should organize a training workshops for the facilitators
- NERCHA should provide learning materials
- Sebenta/NERCHA should provide furniture
- Sebenta/Nercha should provide monitoring & evaluation

