



USAID/Zambia PCI Africa KidSAFE End of Program Evaluation Report

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Prepared by:
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
&
ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXPERTS

No. 6052 Sibweni Rd, Northmead, P.O Box 32273 Lusaka, Zambia
Tel: +260 211 290185, 955 047243, **E-mail:** info.3C@iconnect.zm

Leonard C. Mulenga and Christian Chileshe with the assistance of Gibson Masumbu, Kelvin Mulungu, Daisy Kambandu

Table of Contents

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Acronyms | 4 |
| List of Tables | 5 |
| Executive Summary | 6 |
| 1.0 Introduction..... | 8 |
| 1.1 Objectives of the Final Evaluation of the Program..... | 8 |
| 1.2 Evaluation Methods | 9 |
| 1.3 Analysis of Data..... | 9 |
| 2.0 Performance and Achievements of the Africa KidSAFE Program | 10 |
| 2.1 Performance and achievement of the program’s goal..... | 10 |
| 2.2 Performance of the Program on Objective 1..... | 11 |
| 2.3 Performance of the Program on Objective 2..... | 13 |
| 2.4 Performance of the Program on Objective 3..... | 16 |
| 2.5 Performance of the Program on Objective 4..... | 17 |
| 2.6 Performance of the Program on Objective 5..... | 18 |
| 2.7 Summary of overall performance of the program based on targets met..... | 19 |
| 3.0 Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Impact of Program Activities..... | 20 |
| 3.1 Relevance of the Program Activities | 20 |
| 3.2 Effectiveness of the Program Activities | 20 |
| 3.3 Efficiency of the Program Activities | 21 |
| 3.4 Sustainability of the Program Activities..... | 22 |
| 3.5 Impact of the Program Activities..... | 24 |
| 3.6 Summary assessment of the program on the basis of key organizational performance indicators..... | 25 |
| 4.0 Main Findings, Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations..... | 26 |
| 4.1 Main findings and Conclusions of the end-of-term evaluation | 26 |
| 4.2 Lessons from the Program | 27 |
| 4.3 Recommendations..... | 29 |
| REFERENCES | 32 |

Acronyms

| | |
|----------------|---|
| AIDS | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| CBO | Community Based Organization |
| CPU | Child Protection Unit |
| DCOF | Displaced Children & Orphan Fund |
| DSWO | District Social Welfare Officer |
| FCCGs | Family Circles of Care Groups |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| KidSAFE | Shelter, Advocacy, Food, Education |
| LLT | Lupwa Lwabumi Trust |
| MCDSS | Ministry of Community Development and Social Services |
| MYSCD | Ministry of Youth Sport & Child Development |
| NGO | Non-government Organization |
| OVC | Orphan and Vulnerable Children |
| PEPFAR | President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief |
| PCI | Project Concern International |
| SHG's | Self Help Groups |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| VSU | Victim Support Unit |
| ZNS | Zambia National Service |

List of Tables

| | | |
|---------|---|----|
| Table 1 | Indicators and targets for assessing the achievement of the project goal over the mid and end-of term evaluations | 10 |
| Table 2 | Indicators, baseline benchmarks, targets and achievements of the program with regard to reduction of number of at-risk children moving from families and communities to the streets | 13 |
| Table 3 | Indicators, targets and achievements of the reintegration component of the program | 14 |
| Table 4 | Indicators, baseline benchmarks, targets and achievements of the program by the mid and end of-term evaluations for provision of high quality street and facility based services | 16 |
| Table 5 | Indicators, targets and achievements by the mid and end-of-term evaluations for increased public awareness and participation in the protection and promotion of the rights of street children | 17 |
| Table 6 | Indicators, baseline benchmarks, targets and achievements of the program by the mid and end of term evaluations for increased capacity of government, local implementing partners, civil society and private sector, for effective implementation of interventions to benefit street children | 18 |

Executive Summary

The Africa KidSAFE program sought to address the immediate and long-term needs of the at-risk and street children. It was funded by USAID and implemented by Project Concern International and its local partners.

The end-of-term evaluation of the Africa KidSAFE program sought to establish the extent to which the program achieved its goal and specific objectives. The goal of the program was to consolidate and expand a safety-net of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that can effectively meet the immediate and long-term needs of the at-risk and street children. Attainment of the goal was also dependent on meeting two main objectives: (i) 12, 000 OVC receiving direct services from the program; and (ii) 1, 500 caregivers trained in providing care to OVC by the end of the program. The attainment of the five specific objectives was similarly tied to meeting specific targets for each of the objectives.

The evaluation found that 9, 678 children had received direct services from the program by the time it ended in September 2010. At the same time, the program had trained 5, 778 caregivers in providing care to OVC. The program therefore narrowly missed its first target for the goal, but exceeded the second target by 385%. We have therefore concluded that, the program achieved its goal.

Performance of the program on its five specific objectives was however mixed, because whereas it met all its targets for objective one [reduced number of at-risk children moving from their families and communities to the street], it only met some of the targets for objectives 2, 4 and 5, and did not meet any of the targets for objective 3 (increased number of children benefiting from high quality street and facility-based services) at all. The program nevertheless reduced the number of at-risk children moving from families and communities to the streets. It also built the capacity of the Government of Zambia for provision and management of child protection services by training its frontline officers in child rights, child law, and in the child reintegration procedures and guidelines. The program also developed and tested the reintegration protocol and guidelines, and demonstrated that, reintegration was an effective strategy for addressing the ills associated with children living and working on the streets without social or public support.

On the negative side, the program could not reach the set target for children benefiting from its high quality street and facility-based services, owing to the reduction in the population of street children. The program also failed to raise public awareness and participation in initiatives aimed at promoting child rights and welfare, due to a cut of its budget by USAID.

The program, however, achieved its goal and most of the specific objectives. It therefore, helped consolidate and expand a safety net of NGOs and CBOs that could effectively meet the immediate and long-term needs of the at-risk and street children. This was evident from the continued provision of some services to the caregivers, at-risk and street children, by the local partners of the program, with neither the financial nor the technical support of USAID and PCI respectively. The program was also relevant, and to a great extent effective, efficient and sustainable. Some of its initiatives were in addition expected to continue having a positive influence on Zambia's child protection policy and administration for some time to come.

The recommendation is that future child protection programs should consider promoting the Self Help savings led programs for middle level vulnerable households and cash transfers for extremely vulnerable populations as these have been shown to be effective in addressing child poverty. The Self Help savings led program works well for middle level vulnerable groups who are able to save a minimal amount weekly for future loan schemes within their groups. The Government of Zambia should also be encouraged to adopt the human rights and human development based paradigms for its child protection policies and programs.

1.0 Introduction

This report presents the findings of the end-of-term evaluation of the Africa KidSAFE program. The program was funded by USAID and implemented by Project Concern International (PCI) and its local partners. The full list of the local partners of PCI is given in Appendix 1.

The Africa KidSAFE program sought to address the immediate and long-term needs of street and at-risk children. Street children live and work on the streets of urban centers, while the at-risk children live in vulnerable urban households and communities. They are faced with the constant pressure of taking to the streets to provide for themselves and/or contribute to the welfare of the households in which they live.

The overall goal of the Africa KidSAFE program was to “consolidate and expand a safety-net of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that can effectively meet the immediate and long-term needs of the at-risk and street children” in Zambian urban centers.

Five objectives supported the overall goal of the Africa KidSAFE program. These were:

- (1) To reduce the number of at-risk children moving from their families and communities to the street;
- (2) To increase the number of children moving from the streets back to communities through family and community reintegration;
- (3) To increase the number of children benefiting from high quality street and facility-based services;
- (4) To increase public awareness and participation in protecting and promoting the rights of children on the streets;
- (5) To increase the capacity of the Government of Zambia, local implementing partners, civil society organizations and the private sector to effectively implement interventions that benefit the at-risk and street children.

1.1 Objectives of the Final Evaluation of the Program

The final evaluation of the Africa KidSAFE program had five objectives. These were:

- (1) To establish the extent to which the Africa KidSAFE program attained its objectives;
- (2) To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the Program activities, especially in the following: (i) Capacity Building; (ii) Economic Empowerment (Micro-Finance and Self-Help Groups); (iii) Community Mobilization; (iv) Reintegration; and (v) Street-Based Services;

- (3) To document success stories (where such exist) from the four main thematic interventions of the program, namely: (i) Community Mobilization; (ii) Economic Empowerment; (iii) Reintegration; and (iv) Street Based Services;
- (4) To identify and document lessons learnt from the program; and
- (5) To recommend measures that could help strengthen the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of future programs.

The objectives of the final evaluation of the program were drawn from the Terms of Reference provided by USAID. They are reproduced in full in Appendix 2.

The rest of the report presents the research methods used to address the objectives of the final evaluation of the Africa KidSAFE program, its findings, conclusions and recommendations.

1.2 Evaluation Methods

To address the objectives of the final evaluation of the Africa KidSAFE program, secondary and primary research methods were employed to obtain data to aid the evaluation.

The review of literature was the principal secondary research method used. Most of the literature reviewed was on child social protection in low-income countries, because the Africa KidSAFE program was essentially a child protection program in Zambia, a low income country. Records held by the program were also reviewed, while interviews; focus group discussions; and a questionnaire survey were the main primary research methods employed in the evaluation of the program.

The review of literature made it possible to assess the relevance of the program. Reviews of the program's records and documents, interviews and focus group discussions with caregivers, as well as a questionnaire survey of the street and at-risk children made it possible to assess the extent to which the program attained its goal and objectives.

1.3 Analysis of Data

Program reports and records were analyzed by thematic identification and categorization, while the data obtained through interviews and focus group discussions was subjected to meta-analysis.

Data collected through the questionnaire surveys was first coded and then entered on Microsoft Excel spreadsheet program. After checking the data for inaccurate entries, it was processed and analyzed by running frequencies and deriving descriptive statistics.

2.0 Performance and Achievements of the Africa KidSAFE Program

In this section, we analyze the performance of the Africa KidSAFE program with regard to the extent to which it achieved its goal and objectives.

Assessment of the extent to which the Africa KidSAFE program attained its goal and objectives was based on the analysis of changes in the performance indicators for the goal and each of the objectives. We therefore sought to establish whether the targets set for the attainment of the goal and each of the objectives were met.

2.1 Performance and achievement of the program's goal

The goal of the Africa KidSAFE program was to establish a network of civil society organizations and Government institutions effectively meeting the immediate and long-term needs of the at-risk and street children.

Two indicators were set for measuring change towards the attainment of that goal.

The indicators, their baseline benchmarks, targets and achievements of the program on its goal by the mid and end of term evaluations are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Indicators and targets for assessing achievement of the goal

| Indicators | Baseline | Target | Mid-Term | End of Term |
|--|----------|--------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| Number of OVC receiving direct services | 3,032 | 12 000 | 10 375 | 9 678 Boys: 5 612 Girls: 4 066 |
| Number of Caregivers Trained in Caring for OVC | 801 | 1 500 | 3 313 | 5 778 |

Table 1 shows that the target of 12 000 OVC receiving direct services from the program was not achieved by the end of the program, because only 9 678 children (of whom 58 and 42% were boys and girls respectively) had received direct support from the program. The targeted number of caregivers trained in caring for OVC was, however, nearly quadrupled, as 385% (5 778) of the targeted caregivers were trained.

It is evident from table 1, that the program performed exceptionally well on the number of caregivers trained in caring for OVC than on the number of OVC that received direct services from the program. The targeted number of children receiving direct services from the program was marginally missed.

Table 1 also shows that, the number of OVC receiving direct services from the program was revised downwards after the mid-term review. The revision was a result of data verification carried out in January 2010, to eliminate errors, due to multiple counting of children that received services from more than one partner. Data verification also showed that the program had not developed a very robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System.

A network of civil society organizations and Government institutions effectively meeting the immediate and long-term needs of the at-risk and street children, therefore, seem to have been consolidated. This conclusion was arrived at by accessing the extent to which the targets for the five objectives of the program were met. Assessments of the performance of the program on each of the five objectives are given below.

2.2 Performance of the Program on Objective 1

Reduced number of at-risk children moving to the streets:

The Africa KidSAFE program promoted social and economic empowerment activities for vulnerable households. Caregivers were, therefore, encouraged to mobilize resources through own savings, and to engage in viable income generating activities. Children, on the other hand, were made aware of the risks of street life, and provided with educational support, to encourage them to remain in school.

In addition, the low-income urban communities were mobilized and encouraged to engage in activities aimed at preventing children from drifting to the streets. As a result, the program undertook prevention activities in 20 low-income urban communities in cities and towns along the old line of rail from Livingstone (1) to Kitwe (2), through Lusaka (13), Kabwe (2) and Ndola (2). The targeted low-income urban townships are given in Appendix 3.

The Motivation Mentoring Programme

Like all schools under the Zambia Open Community Schools Secretariat, Chipata Community School in Lusaka seeks to meet the education needs of orphaned and vulnerable children. It was therefore one of the schools targeted for the Motivational Mentoring (MM) Programme undertaken by Lubuto Library Project. Forty pupils in grade seven, eight and nine participated in a 12-week intensive mentoring programme.

Mr. Honest Mutesha, a teacher at the school who participated in the programme observed that, most pupils in the school were either orphans or vulnerable children from deprived households. Most pupils in the school therefore had little hope of succeeding in life. The children selected for the programme were initially very inactive and could not easily speak out. In general, they were characterized by very low self esteem.

According to Mr. Mutesha, the MM programme changed the lives of the children that went through it. Their perspective of life changed. The once inactive children became active in virtually all school activities. Those who could not initially speak out, for example, became so confident that they had no problem with making sure their point of view was heard. The programme therefore contributed to the children becoming more assertive.

The children that had participated in the program mentioned a number of topics that they were taken through. These ranged from self esteem, honesty, perseverance, self motivation and discipline. Jane Daka, a Grade 7 pupil, for example, felt that she had become an honest person because of the program, while Bydon Mtonga, a Grade 9 pupil, said that he had developed a purpose for his life and wanted to become a lawyer.

To assess the extent to which the program helped reduce the number of at-risk children moving from their families and communities to the streets, we examined the performance of the program on each of the 7 pre-selected indicators for objective 1. The indicators, targets, baseline benchmarks, and achievements of the program on objective 1 by the mid- and end-of-term evaluations are given in table 2.

Table 2: Indicators, baseline benchmarks, targets and achievements of the program on objective 1: reduction of at-risk children moving from families and communities to the streets

| Indicators | Baseline | Target | Mid-Term | End of Term |
|--|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| No. of children in targeted communities benefiting from primary prevention activities | 0 | 7000 | 11399* | 7026 |
| No. of Targeted Households participating in primary prevention activities | 0 | 3000 | 4062 | 7389 |
| No. of Targeted Communities with Early Warning Systems | 0 | 1 | 15 | 20 |
| No. of Community Prevention Plans Implemented | 0 | 20 | 15 | 20 |
| No. of Targeted Compounds with youth clubs serving as focal points for recreation, education and child rights services | 0 | 20 | 15 | 20 |
| Inter-institutional coordination and referral system developed | 0 | 85% | 0 | 100% |
| % of targeted communities with multi-sectoral coordination for vulnerable households | 0 | 85% | 60% | 60% |

Note: Components of the early warning system are given in Appendix 4.

**: numbers revised when Data Verification Excise was undertaken after midterm evaluation*

Table 2 shows that, the program achieved all its targets for objective 1, with the exception of one; 85% of targeted communities with multi-sector coordination for vulnerable households. The target for the proportion of communities with multi-sector coordination for vulnerable households was not met, because the program worked with existing multi-sector coordinating committees in the targeted communities. It did not therefore go out to establish multi-sector coordinating committees. The program's approach was consistent with the local government framework for the high density low-income urban settlements which states that settlements ought to have multi-sector coordinating committees to oversee social and economic development in their areas (GRZ, 2006).

2.3 Performance of the Program on Objective 2

Increased number of children moving from the streets back to the communities through family reintegration:

Six targets were set for the reintegration component of the program. The indicators, targets, and achievements of the reintegration component of the program by the mid and end-of-term evaluations are given in table 3.

Table 3: Indicators, targets and achievements of the reintegration component of the program

| Indicators | Baseline | Target | Mid-Term | End of Term |
|--|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| No. of Children reintegrated in families or communities | 557 | 2000 | 409 | 508 Boys: 400 Girls: 108 |
| % of Reintegrated Children that remained in their homes for at least six months | 20% | 60% | 71% | 42.5% |
| No. of Children withdrawn from the streets | 458 | 3000 | 760 | 1187 |
| No. of children withdrawn from the streets and referred for residential care in centers and govt. facilities | 458 | 1500 | 401 | 808 |
| % of KidSAFE members involved with tracing or reintegration trained in new protocols and guidelines | 0 | 100% | 50% | 100% |
| No. of DSWOs trained and involved in implementation of reintegration protocol and guidelines | 0 | 30 | 16 | 32 |

Table 3 shows that the program met two of its six targets for objective 2, which sought to increase the number of children moving back to their families and communities through family reintegration. The indicators for which the targets were met are: (i) the number of DSWOs trained and involved in the implementation of the reintegration protocol and guidelines (107%); and (ii) the proportion of KidSAFE partners involved in tracing or reintegration trained in the new protocols and guidelines (100%).

Although the program did not meet four of its targets for objective 2, it re-integrated 508 children into their families and communities. This was 25.4% of the 2000 children targeted for reintegration. Furthermore, 43% of the reintegrated children were successfully reintegrated, because they remained with their families for at least six months after reintegration. About 54% (808) of the targeted 1500 children were also withdrawn from the streets and referred for residential care in centers and Government facilities, while a total of 1187 children were withdrawn from the streets by the end of the program.

The underperformance of the reintegration component of the program was largely due to extreme poverty levels in homes where children were coming from and being reintegrated. Poverty was the major factor for children running away from homes, and yet the children were being reintegrated in the same households without addressing the poverty levels which was the primary

Reintegration – A Successful Story

*Justina*¹ is a young lady who has lived on the street for the past 7 years and has experienced the brutality of street life. Many are the times she has had to engage into **sex for a living, and the consequences of this have not been light. She has multiple** diseases resulting from the STIs. Though she looks shabby, she talks brightly under the hype of ‘sticka’ (the street name for glue).

News about a mobile health service van has been spreading in town among the street children. Justina one day decides to make use of the service to have her STIs treated. As she goes into the van, the welcoming nurse and staff welcome her warmly and open up to her, she does the same and tells them of her ordeal. She says she got the STD from among the guys she sleeps with and some have now known and abandoned her. She is given medication and referred to outreach workers so they could check on her. The MS team also keeps track of her and administers the medication every time they are in town.

When she recovers from her STIs, she starts to engage in sex again, and gets pregnant. When the MHS team sees the pregnancy, they work with the outreach workers and refer her to a center in Chilenje (Tulum) where she is taken care of.

During this whole period, from the first day she went to the MHS, she has received counseling on how she could not have got the STD if she were at home. The due date finds her at the center and she is taken to UTH where she delivers safely. Unfortunately, some days after delivery, the child dies.

The tragic death of her much beloved daughter brings Justina to a place where she realizes the value of life. She then asks to be taken home in Kanyama and is successfully re-integrated.

Justina is now a happy lady that has been noticed by a man that has proposed marriage. We can now only wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

¹ Not her real name

factor for taking to the streets. Moreover, this activity was the first of its kind in Zambia, hence partners did not have hands on experience in reintegration. The program nevertheless showed that reintegration was a viable and sustainable option for taking children off the streets. It also developed and refined the reintegration protocols and guidelines in line with the laws of Zambia.

Although the developed reintegration protocol and guidelines were yet to be adopted by the Government, they were bound to be critical to any future reintegration efforts. Officials in the MCDSS were also confident that, the Government would in the near future adopt the reintegration protocol and guidelines developed by the program.

2.4 Performance of the Program on Objective 3

Increased number of street children benefiting from high quality street and facility-based services:

The services, included: outreach; counseling; education; and health, as well as drop-in-centers; and residential care and support facilities for children awaiting reintegration or placement in long-term care.

Three indicators were pre-selected for the assessment of the program on objective 3. Table 4 shows these indicators, their baseline benchmarks, targets and achievements by the mid and end-of-term evaluations.

Table 4: Indicators, baseline benchmarks, targets and achievements on objective 3: provision of street and facility based services, by the mid and end of-term evaluations

| Indicators | Baseline | Target | Mid-Term | End of Term |
|--|----------|--------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Number of Children benefiting from street or facility based services | 3420 | 7375 | 4682 Boys: 2837 Girls: 1845 | 2473 Boys: 1665 Girls: 808 |
| Number of Children accessing street based services | 1045 | 2500 | 1346 | 1613 |
| Number of Children accessing facility based services | 2 375 | 4875 | 3414 | 1713 |

Table 4 shows that none of the targets for objective 3 were met. The program did not therefore increase the number of children benefiting from its high quality street and facility based services. Table 4 also shows that, there were discrepancies between the achievements recorded at the mid

and end-of-term evaluations. These discrepancies, as already observed, were due to multiple counting of children served by more than one partner. The recorded end-of-term achievements were, however, accurate and in line with the data verification undertaken in January 2010.

Although the program did not meet its targets for objective 3, about 2, 473 children benefited from the street and facility-based services. About 67% and 33% of the beneficiaries were boys and girls respectively. A much lower number of children benefited from the street and facility based services than was expected, because of a decrease in the number of children living and working on the streets over the life cycle of the program. The decrease in the number of children living and working on the streets was due to the removal of a significant proportion of them from the streets by the Zambia National Service (ZNS). Those removed from the streets by the ZNS were taken to its camps for rehabilitation and skills training.

2.5 Performance of the Program on Objective 4

Increased public awareness and participation in the promotion and protection of the rights of street children:

Table 5: Indicators, targets and achievements by the mid and end-of-term evaluations for increased public awareness and participation in the protection and promotion of the rights of street children

| Indicator | Baseline | Target | Mid-Term | End of Term |
|---|----------|--------|----------|-------------|
| No. of initiatives by firms, faith-based organizations and the general public in favor of street children | 2 | 10 | 28 | 30 |
| Number of awareness and/or advocacy activities conducted | 201 | 480 | 67 | 98 |

Table 5 shows that the targeted number of initiatives in favor of street children by the private sector, faith-based organizations and the general public was achieved. The targeted number of public and community awareness and advocacy activities were, however, not achieved. Getting at least 10 initiatives in favor of street children was certainly an easier target to achieve, as the initiatives could be one-off events. Raising public awareness on the plight of street children and advocating for their rights and well-being, on the other hand, were much harder targets to achieve, because a number of issues came into play, such as changing the perceptions of street children and substantial commitment to child rights.

Activities aimed at raising public awareness were also undermined by a cut in the budget of the program made by the USAID. Most public awareness raising activities were consequently not carried out. The lack of public awareness raising activities was confirmed by a public survey

carried out in the targeted communities. It showed that public awareness of the program was as low as 25%. Theater performed in the targeted communities did not, therefore, raise public awareness sufficiently, particularly among adults. This should not, however, be surprising, because the theater for development targeted children rather than adults.

2.6 Performance of the Program on Objective 5

Increased capacity of the Government of Zambia, local implementing partners, civil society organizations, and the private sector to effectively implement interventions that benefit the at-risk and street children:

To achieve objective 5, the program had to meet seven pre-selected targets based on an equal number of indicators. These indicators, their baseline benchmarks, targets and achievements by the mid and end-of-term evaluations are given in table 6.

Table 6: Indicators, baseline benchmarks, targets and achievements of the program by the mid and end of term evaluations for increased capacity of the Government, local implementing partners, civil society and private sector to effectively implement interventions that benefit the at-risk and street children

| Indicators | Baseline | Target | Mid-Term | End of Term |
|---|----------|--------|----------|-------------|
| No. of cities in Zambia where street children access KidSAFE services | 4 | 10 | 7 | 9 |
| No. of communities with a coordinating body identified and trained | 0 | 20 | 10 | 13 |
| No. of functional district street children committees chaired by the District Social Welfare Office | 1 | 10 | 10 | 7 |
| No. of DSWOs trained in child care/child law | 2 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| % of KidSAFE partners whose services are rated satisfactory in terms of agreed quality standards | 0 | 85% | 50% | 86% |
| % of partners implementing quality circles or other performance reviews to assess and improve on their services on a quarterly or semi-annual basis | 0 | 100% | 50% | 75% |

Table 6 shows that, the program only met a third of its targets for objective 5. The targets met included 10 DSWOs trained in child care and child law, and 86% of KidSAFE partners provided services rated satisfactory on the basis of the agreed quality standards for child care facilities. The agreed standards for child care facilities are given in appendix 5.

The program increased the numbers of districts providing services for street children to 9, and had 7 functional District Street Committees chaired by the District Social Welfare Officers by the end of the program. Redeployment of 3 of the 10 trained District Social Welfare Officers to other districts by the Government contributed to failure to have 10 functional District Committees chaired by the District Social Welfare Officers by the end of the program.

Table 6 also shows that 75% of the local partners of the program carried out the quality circles, or other performance reviews on a quarterly or semi-annual basis. 25% partners did not therefore carry out any performance reviews, due to lack of skills amongst their staff. The program did not also provide training to the 20 targeted communities with coordinating multi-sector bodies, because the partners were unable to establish working relationships with some of the multi-sector bodies.

2.7 Summary of overall performance of the program based on targets met

The overall performance of the program in terms of the targets met was mixed. However, it achieved most of its targets for the overall goal. It also met all its targets for objective 1 and most of the targets for objectives 2, 4 and 5. The program did not, however, meet any of its targets for objective 3. Failure to meet the targets for objective 3 [Increased number of children benefiting from high quality and street and facility-based services] was attributed to the reduction in the population of street children over the life of the program. The program, nevertheless, helped consolidate and expand a network of NGOs that could effectively meet the immediate and long term needs of the street and at-risk children in Zambia. It also helped reduce the number of at-risk children moving from their families and communities to the streets. The program also built the capacity of the staff of DSWOs, the partner organizations and caregivers for effective implementation of interventions in favor of the at-risk and street children.

Although the program was not able to meet four of its six targets for objective 2 [increased number of children moving from the streets back to the communities through family reintegration], it helped reintegrate some street children in families or communities, and placed others in residential care. The program also helped establish procedures and guidelines for the reintegration of street children back into their families and communities.

The program was also not able to extend its street and facility-based services to the expected number of children, let alone enhance public awareness, advocacy and participation in the protection and promotion of the rights of street children. The number of children taking up street and facility-based services could not reach the set target due in part to the ZNS skills training intervention which resulted in a reduction in the population of street children. Similarly, most activities aimed at raising public awareness of the plight of street children were not implemented, because the USAID had cut down the budget of the program.

3.0 Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Impact of Program Activities

In this section, we assess the performance of the program on the basis of key organizational performance indicators. The key organizational performance indicators include: *relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; sustainability and impact*. An assessment of the program is therefore attempted on the basis of each of these indicators in turn.

3.1 Relevance of the Program Activities

The relevance of programs is assessed on the basis of its interventions being relevant to the needs of its primary beneficiaries. The relevance of the Africa KidSAFE program is therefore assessed on the basis of whether its interventions met the needs of vulnerable households, at-risk and street children.

Low-income urban households were in general the primary beneficiaries of the Africa KidSAFE program in Zambia. These households were vulnerable because of lack of wage employment and/inadequate incomes, and capital to invest in profitable income generating activities on a sustainable basis. Their plight was worsened by poor access to essential infrastructure and services (CSO, 2006).

The Africa KidSAFE program was relevant to the needs of vulnerable urban households, at-risk and street children in Zambia, because it helped address some of their needs. In that regard, the program made it possible for the caregivers to engage in income generating activities by facilitating access to micro-finance services for some and mobilizing others into Self-Help Groups, though the Self Help savings program could not work for the ultra-vulnerable, Engaging in income generating activities enabled the vulnerable households to improve the living standards of their households, and thereby helped prevent the at-risk children from taking to the streets. Similarly, the provision of educational support to the at-risk children helped keep them in school and away from the streets. Provision of street and facility-based services, on the other hand, helped address vital immediate and short-term needs of the street children, and protected their rights and integrity as human beings. The Africa KidSAFE program was therefore relevant to vulnerable households, at-risk and street children.

3.2 Effectiveness of the Program Activities

Section 2.0 of the report, which provides an assessment of the performance of the program with regard to whether it met its set targets for the goal and each of the five objectives, clearly shows that, the program was effective. This was evident from the proportion of the targets the program met for its goal and each of the five objectives. The program met nearly all the targets for the goal and most of the targets for four of its five objectives.

The targets associated with the program’s capacity building activities were met in full, while those associated with reintegration and public participation were only met partially. Thus, the capacity building activities were the most effective components of the program, while reintegration and public participation components were also effective to some extent. The Street based services were, however, ineffective, as none of the targets for their attainment were met. We have, nevertheless, concluded that the Africa KidSAFE program was on the whole effective.

3.3 Efficiency of the Program Activities

Efficiency of the Africa KidSAFE program was assessed on the basis of optimal use of financial resources with specific reference to the utilization of budgetary allocations, and timeliness of the disbursements in relation to the implementation of the program activities.

Table 7 shows the program’s budgetary allocations, actual expenditure and the proportion of the budget spent by budget lines.

Table 7: Africa KidSAFE Program: Budgetary allocations, expenditure and proportion of the budget utilized

| # | Description | PCI Budgeted Contribution | Original USAID /DCOF Budget | Total Budgeted Funds | Actual Expenditure | Proportion of Budget Used |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | KidSAFE II Overall Totals | 2,599,190 | 6,215,780 | 8,814,971 | 4,073,205 | 46% |
| | KidSAFE I & II Overall Totals | 5,198,380 | 12,431,561 | 17,629,941 | 5,694,871 | 32% |
| 2 | KidSAFE II Direct Charges Only | 2,260,544 | 5,370,128 | 7,630,672 | 3,463,214 | 45% |
| | KidSAFE I & II Direct Charges Only | 4,521,088 | 10,740,256 | 15,261,344 | 4,809,914 | 32% |
| 3 | KidSAFE II Sub-grants Only | 484,256 | 2,519,029 | 3,003,285 | 1,035,555 | 34% |
| | KidSAFE I & II Sub-grants Only | 968,512 | 5,038,059 | 6,006,571 | 1,224,407 | 20% |
| 4 | KidSAFE II Training Only | 39,042 | 244,647 | 283,689 | 357,016 | 126% |
| | KidSAFE I & II Training Only | 78,084 | 489,294 | 567,378 | 549,900 | 97% |

It is evident from table 7 that, the program was characterized by gross under expenditure of budgetary allocations for all the budget lines, except training. All the budget lines apart from the training budget line spent less than 50% of their budgetary allocations. The training component was also the only one that recorded an over expenditure of 126% during the second phase. It was also the only budget line that nearly used its full allocation during the first phase.

The low budget utilization was due to the absence of a distinct program management unit within PCI. Even the sub-contracting of grant-making to SoCLi latter, did not improve the utilization of the budgetary allocations. Grant-making should therefore have been kept within PCI, because it was closely linked to the implementation of program activities. The close link between grant-making and implementation of activities was in fact evident from the reports of the partners of PCI. Lupwa Lwabumi Trust (LLT), for example, observed that: "...the program was characterized by long delays in the transfer of resources from PCI". As a result, there were long time lags between provision of training (in income generation) and implementation of income generating activities, as the grants from PCI were supposed to provide the seed capital for the income generating activities. The delays in the disbursement of resources therefore adversely effected the implementation of the activities. It also affected the timeliness with which the program activities were implemented.

Close examination of the expenditure patterns also suggest that, there was poor linkage between the implementation of program activities and the disbursement of resources. It is instructive in that regard to note that, though the training budget was completely utilized, most of the training was carried out over a short period of time towards the end of the program. The training provided was therefore not properly linked to the relevant program activities.

Although we cannot link expenditure to any specific activities and calculate the cost of the program per client, because of the absence of detailed budgetary allocations and expenditures for the program, it was evident from the activities implemented in the communities that, the resources availed to the program were put to good use. The program was also worthwhile, as it was the only program that promoted and protected the rights of the at-risk and street children at the time. It was also the main program that provided some protection to street children on a consistent basis in urban Zambia.

3.4 Sustainability of the Program Activities

The main question addressed in this section is: would the activities implemented under the program continue without the technical and financial support of PCI and USAID respectively?

In low-income communities, such as the ones targeted by the Africa KidSAFE program, effective community participation is usually the key to the sustainability of the activities. Effective community participation was therefore emphasized in the design of the program. Interviews with the partners of the program that implemented most program activities, however, revealed very little community participation. This was also borne out of the public survey of the targeted communities, which revealed very little awareness of the program. Nevertheless all the program partners claimed to have taken sustainability issues into account. To that end, measures to ensure, the partners would continue to render services to the caregivers of the at-risk and street children long after the program were reported to have been taken.

Close examination of the sustainability plans of the program partners, however, suggested that, only the larger partners (such as Fountain of Hope, Jesus Cares Ministries, Rainbow and Friends of Street Children, to mention a few) had reliable sustainability plans. The sustainability plans of the smaller partners that were solely dependent on the program for funding were mostly hypothetical, as they had yet to yield any resources. The larger partners were therefore more likely to continue providing some services to prevent the at-risk children from taking to the streets, and protecting those already on the streets.

However, not all the preventive and protective activities were expected to continue. The more expensive protective programs, like reintegration and provision of street-based services, in particular, were not in the plans of any of the partners, because they required enormous resources that were beyond the reach of most partners. Reintegration and street based services had therefore ended with the program.

A number of activities were, nevertheless, expected to continue without the technical and financial support of PCI and USAID respectively. The activities that were expected to continue included: the Self-Help Groups; provision of parenting skills; and propagation and awareness of child rights and child care; as well as the reintegration procedures and guidelines.

The Self Help Groups were expected to continue, because the successful ones had continued to operate even after the withdrawal of the Group Facilitators provided by the program. Most of the Self Help Groups that continued to operate were able to do so, because they had acquired momentum of their own as solidarity groups. They had therefore expanded their focus, from being strictly means of mobilizing savings and capital, to solidarity groups and platforms for exchange of ideas on common challenges. Some very poor women and men that found the conditions of the micro-finance services prohibitive also saw the Self Help Groups as alternative means of mobilizing savings, and obtaining loans at the lowest possible cost. The Self Help Groups were, therefore, likely to continue long after the program that had introduced them.

The technical skills given to members of Self Help Groups during the life of the program were also likely to give them a head-start in mobilizing other resources, such as the grants for vulnerable women introduced by the MCDSS. This was likely because the Self Help Groups already had some of the requirements demanded by the grant making organizations. Recipients of grants from the MCDSS, for example, would be expected to have group bank accounts, and to have been registered with the Department of Community Development. These requirements were not likely to cause problems for the successful Self Help Groups, because exposure to the program had equipped them with skills to meet such requirements. Successful Self Help Groups like the Twatasha group of Ipusukilo, Kitwe, for example, had already even taken steps to register with the Department of Community Development. They had also opened a group bank account.

However, while we are confident that the successful Self Help Groups would continue long after the program, we cannot be sure whether these groups would continue to be savings-led rather

than grant-led. This is because access to grants, such as those being offered by the MCDSS might change the orientation and internal dynamics of the groups.

The propagation of child rights and parenting skills were also likely to continue for sometime to come, because the partners that provided public awareness and training in child rights, through theatre for development, reported having found the means of carrying on those activities. Similarly, the staff of Rainbow and Cicetekelo in Ndola reported that, the provision of parenting skills had been taken up by a number of church based groups in the low-income urban settlements. The provision of parenting skills was, therefore, likely to continue for some time to come.

The program was also assured of continued influence on the administration and management of the child protection services in Zambia, because of the exposure of the social welfare officers and child protection officers to child rights, child care and the reintegration procedures and guidelines. The Government was moreover expected to adopt the reintegration protocol and guidelines developed under the program. Thus, the ideas and practices, relating to upholding the rights of children and the integrity of the family introduced by the program, were likely to remain part of the child protection policy and administration in Zambia.

3.5 Impact of the Program Activities

An assessment of the impact of the Africa KidSAFE program on child protection policy and practice in Zambia is attempted in this section. It should, however, be noted that only innovative ideas and practices can influence public policies and practices. Such influence also tends to lag behind. As a result, the impact is usually only evident after some time. In some cases it can even be several years after the introduction of the innovative ideas and practices. Since the Africa KidSAFE program only ended a few months ago, the impacts identified and presented here are strictly speaking just potential and/or likely impacts of the program.

The Africa KidSAFE program had a number of innovative ideas and practices for child protection policy and administration in Zambia. These were bound to have a bearing on Zambia's future child protection policy and administration in the short, medium and long term. Some of the innovative ideas and activities had already had some short-term influence, because they had been tried out on an experimental basis. The reintegration of street children in families and communities, for example, was tried out during the life of the program. Such ideas and activities, therefore, have had some short-term influence, and could be expected to influence Zambia's child protection policy and administration in the medium and long term.

We identified four main innovative activities introduced by the program, which are likely to influence Zambia's future child protection policy and administration. These are: the provision of parenting skills; propagation of child rights and child care; development of the reintegration protocol and guidelines; and reintegration of street children back into their families and communities.

The provision of training in parenting skills was a result of the recognition of a lack of parenting skills among some parents in the low-income urban settlements. This was not surprising, because parenting skills in Zambia have traditionally been obtained through informal education within the extended family set-up. In the urban setting, however, some new parents may not have the support of their extended families. Such parents were not likely to have adequate parenting skills, due to lack of contact with the extended family networks. However, since the provision of parenting skills had been taken up by community based church groups, it was likely to be availed to new parents that may be in need of those skills. Provision of parenting skills was therefore likely to remain one of the major outcomes of the Africa KidSAFE program. To be more effective, however, there would be need to institutionalize the provision of parenting skills through either the Department of Community Development or the local authorities.

By training the staff of the partner civil society organizations, DSWOs, CPU and VSU in child rights, child care, child law and in the use of the reintegration protocol and guidelines, the program helped promote the culture of upholding child rights among the frontline civil society and public sector workers dealing with child protection issues on a daily basis. The frontline workers' participation in the reintegration of street children also helped put the observance of child rights into practice. Thus, the knowledge and experience gained by these workers was likely to remain with them for the rest of their working lives, and was bound to influence their management of child protection services in the short and medium term. Long term influence could also be expected, because the Government was expected to adopt the reintegration protocol and guidelines developed under the program.

Participation in the reintegration of street children into their families and communities also helped the officials involved to experience first hand, the procedures, processes and the effect of reintegration on the lives of the children and families concerned. This experience was likely to put reintegration on the list of options for addressing the challenges that come with the emergence of street children. The Africa KidSAFE program, therefore, introduced and demonstrated the potential of reintegration as an option for the resolution of problems associated with children living and working on the street with neither social nor public support.

3.6 Summary assessment of the program on the basis of key organizational performance indicators

The assessment of the Africa KidSAFE program on the basis of key organizational performance indicators shows that, the program was relevant and some what effective, efficient and sustainable. Furthermore, the program was expected to have some short, medium and long-term impacts on child protection policy and administration in Zambia, because it introduced frontline child protection officers in the public and civil society organizations to child rights, child care and the reintegration of street children back into their families and communities. The introduction of parenting skills to parents in need of such skills was also likely to positively affect the raising of children in low-income urban settlements, and spread the child rights in the fabric of those communities.

4.0 Main Findings, Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations

In the final section of the end-of-term evaluation of the Africa KidSAFE Program, we tease out the main findings and draw some conclusions, lessons and recommendations for future child protection programs. We begin, however, with the main findings and conclusions, before drawing some lessons and recommendations.

4.1 Main findings and Conclusions of the end-of-term evaluation

By the time the Africa KidSAFE program ended in September 2010, 9,678 OVC had received direct services from the program, instead of the targeted 12,000. In addition, 5,778 caregivers had been trained in caring for OVC. The program had, therefore, narrowly failed to meet its target for the number of children that had received direct services, but had exceeded its target for the number of caregivers trained in caring for the OVC by 385%. On the basis of these findings, we have concluded that, the program achieved its overall goal and helped consolidate and expand a safety net of NGOs and CBOs that could effectively meet the immediate and long-term needs of the at-risk and street children in Zambia. This conclusion was also supported by the continued provision of services to the at-risk and street children by the local partners without the technical and financial support of PCI and USAID respectively. Even the smaller local partners of the program pledged to continue providing services to the at-risk and street children once they had mobilized resources from other sources.

The performance of the program with regard to meeting its targets for each of its five objectives was mixed, as some targets were met, while others were only partially met, and the targets for objective 3 [Increased number of children benefiting from high quality street and facility-based services] were not met at all. However, the program met all its targets for objective 1 and most of the targets for objectives 2, 4, and 5. Accordingly, we have concluded that the program helped reduce the number of at-risk children moving from their families and communities to the streets. To some extent, the program also had some children reintegrated in families or communities, while others were drawn from the streets and referred for residential care. It also helped establish procedures and guidelines for the reintegration of street children back into their families and communities. Furthermore, the program helped build the capacity of the staff of the District Social Welfare Offices, Child Protection and Victim Support Units, as well as those of the partner civil society organizations. A good number of caregivers were also trained to make them effective participants in interventions aimed at raising the living standards and upholding the rights of the at-risk and street children.

On the less positive side, the program failed to increase the number of street children benefiting from high quality street and facility-based services. It also found it difficult to increase public and community awareness, advocacy and participation in activities aimed at protecting and promoting the rights of street children. Failure to increase the number of children benefiting from high quality street and facility-based services was partly due to the reduction in the population of street children as most of them were taken to skills camps for rehabilitation and skills training. A cut in the budget of the program by the USAID was also the other reason advanced for failure

to increase public awareness and participation in interventions aimed at improving the welfare and upholding the rights of the at-risk and street children.

On the basis of the performance of the program with regard to meeting its targets for its five objectives, we have drawn four main conclusions. These are:

- (1) the program significantly helped reduce the number of at-risk children moving from their families and communities to the street;
- (2) the program demonstrated that reintegration could be an effective strategy for addressing the challenge of children living on the streets without family or public support;
- (3) the program developed and tested the reintegration protocol and guidelines in accordance with the laws of Zambia; and
- (4) by providing training in child rights, child law, child care and child reintegration procedures, the program increased the capacity of the Government of Zambia and local civil society organizations for implementation of interventions in favor of the at-risk and street children.

We have further concluded that, the Africa KidSAFE program was relevant, because it addressed issues of child poverty, which were at the core of the problem. The program was also effective because most of its targets were met. Its capacity building initiatives were, however, the most effective, while those aimed at increased public participation in interventions aimed at improved welfare and observance of the rights of the at-risk and street children were the least effective. Some program activities were also sustainable and could therefore be expected to continue playing a positive role in enhancing the welfare and the rights of the at-risk and street children in Zambia. Furthermore, some program activities could be expected to continue having a positive influence on child protection policies and practices in Zambia. The Africa KidSAFE program, therefore, achieved its goal and most of its specific objectives. Thus, the program helped consolidate and expand a safety net of NGOs and CBOs that can effectively meet the immediate and long terms needs of the at-risk and street children in the low-income urban settlements that were targeted by the program.

4.2 Lessons from the Program

Apart from the unintended outcomes, there were also lessons learnt from the implementation of the Africa KidSAFE program. Some of the lessons are given below:

- (1) Implementation of the Africa KidSAFE program demonstrated that it was possible to create a network of civil society organizations focused on addressing specific social problems even in the context of scarce financial and human resources;
- (2) Provision of adequate capacity building aimed at improved management anchored in transparency and accountability was helpful to small civil society organizations in

resource poor areas, as they enhanced their capacity to diversify sources of funding for their interventions;

- (3) The program underestimated the time required for a number of interventions, especially those relating to public and community mobilization, reintegration, and mobilization of Self Help Groups;
- (4) The program also underestimated the resources required to implement some of its main interventions. In particular, the resources required to effectively carry out the reintegration of children back into their families was grossly underestimated;
- (5) The success and survival of nearly half of the savings-led Self Help Groups promoted by the program under economic empowerment showed that it was possible to resuscitate and promote the culture of saving even amongst the poor;
- (6) Despite the mixed results obtained in terms of the proportion of successful cases of reintegration of children back into their families and communities, the program demonstrated that sustainable reintegration could be possible, if not rushed and if the push factors that forced the child out of the family in the first place were addressed, and the child and caregiver/family were reconciled;
- (7) The program showed that the children reintegrated directly from the streets were more likely to return to the streets, because they were still addicted to life on the streets, especially in terms of their behavior. This was in part due to most street children having been addicted to drugs, especially “stika” (glue inhaled on the streets for short-term “relief”). Successful reintegration therefore required treatment of drug addiction;
- (8) Experience acquired by the staff involved in the reintegration process resulted in improved coordination between the institutions involved, and resulted in better management of the challenges which previously frustrated the reintegration process;
- (10) Children who had spent more than six months on the streets found reintegration in families much more difficult. To successfully reintegrate such children, it was essential to prepare them for family life by initially taking them to transit homes or camps. Such facilities, however, required trained counselors who could provide intensive counseling to help the children reform and learn to live in a family set-up, without drugs and other services associated with street life.

4.3 Recommendations

Given the findings and conclusions and lessons learnt from the implementation of the Africa KidSAFE program, it is our considered view that, the program correctly attributed the movement of children from their families and communities to the streets, to extreme poverty and deprivation, as well as, other social problems, including child abuse and exploitation. Below are the recommendations for future programming of street children interventions:

- 1) Given the conflicts that arose between partners resulting from operating in the same geographic areas, in future programs involving multiple partners, the partners should operate exclusively in specific areas. This is essential to avoid wasting time on conflicts;
- 2) Future street children programs should focus more on prevention of streetism through economic empowerment programs for the vulnerable households and ensuring that the out of school children are given alternative skills training and linked to job opportunities.
- 3) Economic empowerment activities in low income urban settlements should not be confined to any particular model, because different models suit different social groups. For example, while some social groups found Self Help Groups highly relevant to their needs, they were not relevant to other social groups, especially those with no ability to even save a minimal mandatory contribution required for Self Help savings. In this case future programs should consider giving some form of social cash transfers to these households or groups. Social cash transfers have proved cost-effective in addressing child poverty in experiments carried out in middle and low-income countries, including South Africa and Zambia respectively (see for example, Barrientos and Dejong, 2006 and Schubert and Slater, 2007); Micro financing services should also be encouraged;
- 4) The program revealed very high levels of illiteracy, especially among poor women. This significantly limited their options for poverty reduction. There is therefore need to improve the literacy levels among poor women in particular in order to address the different facets of poverty effectively. The MCDSS should therefore be encouraged to extend its adult literacy programs to the low-income urban settlements to help reduce illiteracy and enhance the opportunities for poverty reduction; and
- 5) Finally, given the achievements made in raising the standards of care, and the critical work that went into the promotion of reintegration, we recommend that future child protection programs in Zambia should engage the MCDSS and the MYSCD with a view to helping them make a paradigm shift from the traditional social welfare models to the human rights and human development based paradigms used by the multi-lateral and bilateral development agencies. This is essential to build on the achievements of the Africa KidSAFE program.

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