



FOCUS ON HIV/AIDS III/2008

Dear colleagues,

This is FOCUS ON HIV/AIDS, a newsletter of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation for its collaborators and partners. The electronic medium lives through interaction. You are invited to send us your suggestions, requests and information flashes. Please mail to: claudia.kessler@unibas.ch or christina.stucki@unibas.ch, who have developed this issue in collaboration with Nathalie Vesco from SDC nathalie.vesco@deza.admin.ch. The editors are grateful for any contribution received!

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SDC internal: Capacity building on HIV/AIDS and mainstreaming

- **SDC Sensitisation Workshop: HIV/AIDS in Humanitarian Aid Practice, Entebbe, Uganda, November 13-14th, 2008**

A two day workshop was organized by the humanitarian aid department for the “Great” Horn of Africa region including Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Zimbabwe and facilitated by members of the Swiss Tropical Institute and SDC Headquarters. It allowed to get some 20 SDC collaborators and partners working in humanitarian aid on board of the growing SDC community of those informed and engaged in contributing to the HIV/AIDS response both at the level of their workplaces and through their activities with beneficiaries.



A very busy group preparing their presentation on mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in the post election conflict in Kenya

It was the first time that a training workshop was held in the “field” specifically looking at mainstreaming in relation to humanitarian aid practice. Participants received a methodological introduction and then worked on practical case studies, bringing in their wide range of country and context experiences. It was felt that the SDC approach to mainstreaming HIV/AIDS was also very relevant to humanitarian aid practice and participants agreed that something can be done in all stages of emergencies (pre-during-post), as long as a proper situational analysis helped define appropriate intervention levels. The issue of sexual violence taking on epidemic forms in many conflict situations and being a major driver of HIV/AIDS transmission was highlighted. Participants left empowered and committed to make a difference where they work. They received very strong support by a committed leadership from SDC headquarters present at the workshop. The group commitment at the end reflects an ambitious effort ahead!

- **Regional Workshop HIV/AIDS East and Southern Africa Department, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, November 18-20, 2008**

The facilitator team traveled from Uganda to Tanzania to welcome another group – this time development actors working for or with SDC in Eastern and Southern Africa – for another 3 day workshop on HIV and AIDS. Since the Community of Practice (CoP) in this region, working on HIV/AIDS, exists since 2001, participants arrived with a full rucksack of experiences in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS and in contributing through HIV specific activities to the response. They therefore played a strong role in presenting inputs at the workshop. Old and new CoP members from Tanzania, Mozambique, Burundi, Rwanda, South Africa, Madagascar and Switzerland attended the workshop. After an introduction to mainstreaming HIV/AIDS, we learned about the HIV/AIDS situation in Tanzania regarding aspects such as the epidemiological situation, scaling up antiretroviral therapy in the health system or the funding situation and the challenges they face. Highlights for everyone were the 3 field trips (see also report on Femina HIP below) organized on the second day. They led us to civil society organizations who do wonderful HIV related work with funds received from the Rapid funding Envelope – a funding mechanism supported by SDC and other donors. Issues related to social protection (see also report on Kwa Wazee below) were another major focus of the workshop. The gathering definitely allowed renewing the commitment and motivation of the CoP members and they all left encouraged by the closing words of Carin Salerno, the head of the Swiss Cooperation in Tanzania, who promised that HIV/AIDS would from now on be top on her agenda again!

SDC supporting the HIV/AIDS response – two practical examples from Tanzania

- **Femina HIP- reaching young people on issues related to sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS**

In a country where the Ministry of education and vocational training still does not allow condom demonstration in schools, where adolescent girls who become pregnant are rejected from school and where religious and traditional values strongly influence the dialogue around these issues in society one needs to find innovative ways of reaching young people with important prevention messages. Giving them a voice and a wide range of platforms to express their views, questions and concerns is an approach used by Femina HIP (the Femina health information project) – a Tanzanian NGO funded 10 years ago and supported by SDC through the Rapid Funding Envelope mechanism and through direct financial support. Femina HIP uses social marketing approaches to reach young people, their teachers, parents and wider community members. They also do not just cover HIV/Aids vertically, but use an integrated health promotion approach, with lots of information on sexual and reproductive rights, civil education, sanitation, malaria and other health issues.



A beautiful, very “hip” and glossy “edutainment” magazine “Fema” is published quarterly and sold (6000 copies per edition at 1200 KSh) and distributed (in more than 150’000 copies) for free to secondary schools and NGOs. There is a Kishaueli version adapted to the needs of rural populations. In addition, they also have a website: <http://www.feminahip.or.tz/> targeting adolescents and soon also their teachers. In addition, they have a TV show with soap operas and actors known all over Tanzania and often being the hottest debated stories the day after the broadcast. The production is low-cost with in-studio production happening in one of Femina HIP’s meeting rooms. In addition, they have also stand alone publications, such as a booklet with testimonies of people living with HIV/AIDS, a booklet on medical and nutritional advice for people on antiretroviral treatment, and many others. One of the most innovating publications is the popular version of the national HIV/AIDS strategy, translated into the national language and illustrated in a way that everybody in the general population can get the main messages. The Fema team is trying to cooperate with private sponsors and corporate companies for advertisements in order to subsidize the production. However, this seems to be a very difficult endeavor and the team stresses that sustainability cannot be a short-term goal. What is sustainable, however, as in all social marketing approaches, is the induced behavior change. Young people who take on healthier behavior will shape the HIV epidemic in the future and the effect can last for several generations.

Find more information under: http://www.feminahip.or.tz/G-Behind/view_partner.php?id=384
Or contact them under: Femina HIP, PO Box 2065, Email: femina-hip@raha.com

- **KwaWazee – mitigating the HIV impact on elderly people and their grandchildren through social protection via cash transfer**

Could you imagine being over 60 years of age, having lost several of your children to AIDS, caring for the grandchildren they left behind and having a monthly budget of an average of US\$ 3,5 to cover all needs of a three person household PER MONTH? This is the situation that HelpAge International encountered in a rural area of Tanzania (Nshamba) during a household survey they conducted. To mitigate the situation of elderly people in Tanzania and to provide social protection, the KwaWazee project has been developed in 2003.. The project has recently been evaluated – a collaboration between REPSSI, World Vision, HelpAge International and SDC. It showed that pension funds can have a positive impact for older people in need in Tanzania. By the end of 2007, nearly 600 older people were receiving a regular monthly pension of US\$ 5. Additionally, main carers received child benefits of US\$ 2,5 for each grandchild. This made really a difference to their lives.

A focus group discussion revealed interesting aspects:

All of the participants in the discussions have lost at least one of their own children, mostly due to HIV/AIDS. But – most striking – they learnt that the surviving children don't seem to care very much about their own mothers. Typically, daughters marry and move to live far away leaving their children with the grannies. Sons usually leave the village in search of job opportunities, live in the towns or at the Lake Victoria, and are not seen again. Disappointment in this middle generation is felt not only by the grandchildren. On the question – if being again 20 years old would you again decide to have children – all the grannies participating denied it strongly. Although the grannies indeed feel the burden of caring for their grandchildren, this is accompanied by a strong bonding and the grandchildren have supplanted their own children in terms of affection.



Before being integrated in the KwaWazee program, the participants usually worked as daily labourers (if they got the chance) with a salary of about 20 Cents per day. One granny said: “We had to work for other people but what we got, was not enough. So we had to define our priorities: first the food, if some small money remained, we could buy some soap or matches”. What has changed since being part of the KwaWazee program? Food still ranks highest, but they are able to buy some additional food in the form of maize flour, small dried fishes, salt, some cooking oil and some sugar. Some are dividing the pension in two parts – one for additional food, the other part for soap, kerosene, or for clothes and shoes for the children. The relationship between the grannies and the grandchildren has improved. In the absence of the parents the grandchildren address their wishes for school material, clothes etc. to the grannies. In the past when the grannies couldn't respond to these expectations, grandchildren might have disrespected them. This has changed. Isolation has decreased. Grandchildren and grannies themselves are more confident to go into the village because

they are now clean and dressed in clean clothes. Planning became possible and makes more sense now, providing a little bit more control over life. One of the grannies said: “Often you have dreams that you can eat this or that, or that you can do something with the children. Formerly the dream remains to be a dream. But now I can plan in order to make real one or another dream”. To receive money regularly – even small, lump sums – increases substantially the locus of control.

The evaluation showed a positive difference in terms of reduced begging, better health of the pensioners and better nutrition of the children, improved school enrolment and saving capacity of the elderly in the intervention villages. Some of the major evaluation recommendations are:

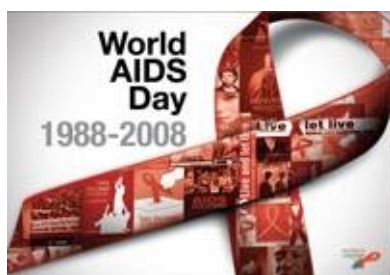
- The needs of elderly and the children they care for should be included in the agenda of policy makers, services providers and donors.
- The Tanzanian Government should consider introducing a comprehensive social protection package to reduce poverty. This should include income security for older and disabled people through social pension, child benefits, unemployment benefits and universal access to health services. This is particularly relevant given the country’s high HIV/AIDS rates.
- Strong identification systems are a precondition for the inclusion into national social protection schemes. Many older citizens have no birth certificate or identity cards.
- The Tanzanian Government, in accordance with its exemption policy on health care, should continue its effort to make health services available to older people, young children and single mothers free of charge.

Scaling up and making the approach sustainable in the Tanzanian national system will certainly be the major challenges for the way forward.

Further information about “Kwa Wazee” can be found under: <http://www.kwawazee.ch/E/>

International: Epidemiological update “Lead – Empower – Deliver”

- **World AIDS Day 2008**



1 December 2008 marks the 20th anniversary of World AIDS Day. Since 1988, efforts made to respond to the epidemic have produced positive results, however, the latest UNAIDS report on the global AIDS epidemic indicates that the epidemic is not yet over in any part of the world. Together with its partners, the World AIDS Campaign set this year’s theme for World AIDS Day as “**Lead – Empower – Deliver**”, building on last year’s theme of “Take the Lead”.

Designating leadership as the World AIDS Day theme for 2007-2008 provides an opportunity to highlight both the political leadership needed to fulfil commitments that have been made in the response to AIDS – particularly the promise of universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010 – and celebrating the leadership that has been witnessed at all levels of society.

Useful resources

- **Understanding the politics of national HIV policies**

Are you unsatisfied with the performance of current national HIV policies? Do you agree that prevention policies and messages in many contexts are still not targeting people most at risk? Claire Dickinson and Kent Buse will tell you what to consider if you wish to influence policy in this sphere. In their technical approach paper “Understanding the politics of national HIV policies: the roles of institutions, interests and ideas” they argue that in many contexts, politics, ideology and ignorance have greater influence on HIV policy than do evidence and best practice. Dickinson and Buse examined the interactions among institutions, interests and ideas in HIV policies in low- and middle-income countries through a review of 28 peer-reviewed articles reporting on empirical studies of policy change. What they found is that context matters –a lot – since a country’s history and culture influence the development of ideas, institutions, power structures and interests. The latter are all influential factors in shaping policy responses to HIV/AIDS. Greater consideration needs also to be paid to discourses, i.e. to understanding how and why discourses around HIV emerge and how they affect perceptions of social problems and how they may support or undermine evidence-informed policy. Despite the political nature of HIV policy, Dickinson and Buse found surprisingly little published analysis of the political determinants of HIV policy in low- and middle-income countries. However, their analysis of the limited literature at hand provides evidence enough to conclude that analysis of the political dimensions of policy can direct attention to the drivers and constraints to policy change. Therefore, such analysis ought to constitute a standard component of each and every national response.

The full article can be downloaded via this link:

<http://www.hispinstitute.org/projects/?mode=type&id=234626>

- **“Joint Reviews of National AIDS Responses: A Guidance Paper”**

With the lessons learned from the Joint Review processes in Kenya and other countries, UNAIDS has developed a new publication entitled “Joint Reviews of National AIDS Responses: A Guidance Paper”. It aims to help countries conduct Joint Reviews and improve coordination, implementation and funding effectiveness among the many stakeholders involved in national responses.

http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2008/jc1627_review_nationalaids_eng_en.pdf