



Evaluation of Integrated Programme on HIV/AIDS, Gender Based Violence and Poverty in the Free State, South Africa

Executive Summary

Oxfam GB Programme Evaluation

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Oxfam Great Britain requested a review of their Free State programme from commencement of its implementation in 2003 up until nearing the end of the programme in February 2006. The aim of the programme was to have a joint approach to GBV, HIV/AIDS and poverty alleviation. Four partners participated in the review namely, Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA), Lifeline; Thusanang Advice Centre and Pheko ka Kopanelo. The former two are based in Welkom and the latter two are based in Qwa Qwa both situated in the northern part of the Free State province in South Africa.

In total two hundred and three staff members, board members, volunteers, partner beneficiary groups and stakeholders were interviewed as part of the review. The methods used were structured and semi structured interviews and focus group discussions.

Overall the programme emerged to be positive, with the unique approach jointly addressing the triple burden of HIV/AIDS, GBV and Livelihoods as been directly relevant to the problem it aimed to address. Beneficiary groups indicated that the approach not only helped them to recognise the abusive situation they were in but also helped them to take steps to get out of it. The awareness components deepened beneficiary participants understanding of the problems and where they intertwined.

These components which were positive of the programme were conducted in an external environment that was not always conducive. Government approached these issues in separate departments with little initiative to cross over. Government also limited their services as opposed to broadening it putting increasing pressure on partners. Finally the lull in the local economic environment and the lack of municipal initiative made it difficult for the livelihood component to go beyond basic subsistence production. Hence whilst beneficiary groups realised that poverty had to be confronted along side HIV/AIDS and GBV, it was not as easy to implement this in a sustainable manner.

OGB assisted partners with their strategy and planning. Whilst most partners were able to implement according to their agreement, not all were able to do so yet alone report on it. Managing donor contracts were not always accepted tasks partners

could take on board. Still participants of the review indicated that the implementation of the programme made a difference and was to a good if not of an excellent standard.

In regard to advocacy, partners through their outreach work and door to door campaigns had access to a wide range of information. Apart from lobbying the state for enactment of new legislation and streamlining the implementation of legislation, very little lobbying was directed towards increased and improved government service delivery. The partners were very active in the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, and linked this concretely with National Condom Week which coincided with this campaign.

Based on the above the following are the **recommendations** made:

The triad approach deepened the analysis of the problem that was aimed to be addressed. The approach insistent on a holistic addressing of issues drawing on logical links and helping partner beneficiaries to deepen their understanding. For this reason the support for this initiative must continue.

However the triad approach did not shift organisations from working away from symptoms of the problems towards the cause of the problems. The approach also came face to face with the limitations of government, particularly government's inability to work across department lines. For this reason ongoing lobbying for improved and the spreading of service delivery must continue.

It is recommended that OGB encourage partners to plan for only a narrow set of activities which they must be bound to implement. The reporting criteria from OGB must be specific and clear.

The lay counselling, group counselling and awareness type work must be supported as the immediate impact was successful, the outreach is high and the staff, volunteers and transport will be the costs. The use of trained stipend paid volunteers must be intrinsic to the plan. These activities must reach further into the surrounding townships and villages.

The livelihoods in its current form should not be supported. What needs to be supported is ongoing engagement of the partner organisations with the local Municipality, Department of Agriculture, Department of Public Works, Department of Trade and Industry and Department Social Development to access their poverty alleviation programmes. The partners should meet with these departments, track down the appropriate person, and open up negotiations on opportunities for the identified beneficiaries. The outcome of this approach should be the basis of a further strategisation of the livelihoods intervention.

It is recommended that Oxfam GB utilises the organisations for collecting information. I.e. in future contracts with partners, OGB makes as condition ongoing information to be collected / provided by partners. What information is collected must be directly relevant to OGB advocacy work.

Oxfam GB should only provide support for activities that have an outreach nature such as research (e.g. as door to door campaigns), awareness talks, lay counselling, group counselling and support groups. These activities should be outreach in nature and spread widely. Such activities along with a broader spread will encourage a feeder system for information collection.

Oxfam must ensure that volunteers are receiving stipends for such activities. This is critical if a stable volunteer base is to play a role. This should be integrated into the contract and follow up that stipends are paid must be made.

Oxfam GB should take the responsibility to provide staff and volunteers on what information is needed. They should ensure that only meaningful and relevant information is collected promoting that less rather than more is collected. In addition, OGB should collect information directly from partners and even directly from field staff and volunteers. This should be done fortnightly or monthly where information collections meetings are held with all relevant staff and volunteers.

OGB should not only extract information that will feed into its wider advocacy campaign. It should look at a long term capacity building of staff and volunteers who contribute to collection. On going skills upgrade should be provided by OGB covering issues such as research, writing, advocacy, the use of the information provided etc. These can be done as an hour to two hour sessions during every collection meeting.

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