



Submission No 82

**Review of Australia's Relationship with the
Countries of Africa**

Organisation: Australian Council for International Development
(ACFID) – Answers to Questions on Notice



**SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEFENCE AND TRADE (THE COMMITTEE).
Inquiry into Australia's Relationship with the Countries of Africa.
*Responses to questions at the Public Hearing 27 April 2010 and follow-up questions
provided by the Committee Secretariat on 25 May.***

A. Questions taken on notice 27 April 2010 complement the following issues in our initial submission to the Committee:

1) *Comments on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*

In our initial submission, ACFID stated:

“The four MDGs identified by AusAID as a basis for the Africa Framework are important but the ACFID Africa Working Group believes that these alone are too narrow. As the MDGs are really an important global communication tool (which ACFID strongly supports), but not necessarily a basis for aid programming in complex environments on their own. It is unclear whether it is intended that the MDG targets are the focus, or whether the MDGs are being used as a shorthand description for the broader sector of which the MDG target is one part.”

Senator Moore asked ACFID to expand on comments, in particular she queried

- a. *“what discussion you have had with AusAID, what your interaction with AusAID has been when you have been raising this with them.”*

In negotiations with AusAID in mid-2009 on the proposed Framework for Development Assistance to Africa 2009-2016, the ACFID Africa Working Group commented on a lack of clarity regarding whether the four identified MDGs referred to an intention for programming by sector or represented specific targets to be aimed for as outcomes. ACFID notes the MDGs express ends, not means of development – they are not intended to prescribe a particular development methodology.

The Working Group emphasised the interrelated nature of the MDGs - gender inclusive programming for example, is seen as central to the achievement of all of the MDGs. The Working Group stated that particular goals should not be valued over others. It is noted that the Australian aid program is not designed with an explicit and narrow focus on particular MDGs in other regions, such as Asia or the Pacific, for example.

ACFID stresses the argument of Professor Jan Vandemoortele (2010) that the critical condition to achieving the MDGs by 2015 is reducing disparities within countries. He demonstrates that inequity has slowed progress at the national level in many countries. Given the vulnerability of the poorest to global market shocks and climate change, to sustain achievements towards the MDGs, key national statistics must be adjusted to demonstrate impact on the poorest 20 per cent of the community.

For further detail, please see:

*William Easterly, [‘How the Millennium Development Goals are Unfair to Africa’](#),
Forthcoming World Development*

Jan Vandemoortele and Enrique Delamonica, [‘Taking the MDGs Beyond 2015: Hasten Slowly’](#). IDS Bulletin, January 2010.



2) *Technical assistance*

In our initial submission, ACFID recommended that

*'The Australian Government adapt its approach to development as follows..
Recommendation 8. Not invest excessive resources in technical assistance programs in Africa.'*

Senator Moore asked for clarification. In particular, she asked for further information on

- a. *"what you define as 'technical assistance' because it is such a wide area and give the arguments for and against";* and
- b. *"can you give us examples – I just think it would be useful to know, when there is so much about the technical assistance program linked to capacity building, and all those links are made quite clearly, whether there are some examples about where it is best practice, where it may have worked well but would supplement the argument you have made in the submission."*

ACFID welcomes the announcement in the Aid Budget 2010/11 that AusAID will conduct a review of the technical advisory system, together with partner governments, in response to the 2009 ANAO report. Across the aid program, including in Africa, ACFID recommends the Australian Government reduce the proportion of aid delivered via highly paid consultants and advisers. To build local capacity and reinforce culturally relevant approaches, the use of local consultants should be strengthened as well as the provision of budget and sector-wide support to partner countries.

The Africa Working Group notes the current intention of the Partnership Facility within the AusAID Africa program – to provide 'targeted technical assistance to African countries by responding to countries' requests for assistance'. In the implementation of this Facility, the Working Group would advise against one-off highly paid consultancies and short-term advisory arrangements, instead using local consultants and increasing the provision of budget and sector-wide support to partner countries.

While advisers can play critical roles in setting up systems and ensuring delivery of essential services such as health and clean water, as Andrew Hewett, Vice President of ACFID, highlighted in an editorial in the Canberra Times on 14 May 2010, technical assistance is best when it also gives the communities the skills and knowledge to do the job themselves (full article available here

<http://www.oxfam.org.au/media/releases/opinion?p=3520>).

In Mozambique, the Burnet Institute worked with two national HIV networks from 2004 to 2010 to increase the HIV technical and organisational capacity of networks and their memberships. Burnet's aim was to work intensively with 50 local organisations to enable them to function effectively as civil society organisations providing quality prevention, treatment and care services to AIDS-affected communities. Burnet also assisted these national networks to increase their skills in lobbying and advocacy, which contributed to greater engagement with government and the introduction of two new laws to protect the rights of positive people in Mozambique. The approach to capacity building was based on the use of local and regional expertise to train, mentor and ultimately increase local or Mozambican capacity.



3) Scholarships

Melissa Parke MP raised a question about scholarships, citing in particular the proposals of the Australian Leadership Program for Africa.

Across the aid program, ACFID recommends Australia further increase the volume of basic education funding as planned. Education assistance should be maintained at around 20 per cent of the aid budget and basic education one third of this.

The Africa Working Group considers the priority of Australia's support in the education sector to be increasing access in the countries of Africa to basic education – with a focus on supporting girls to complete primary school. Scholarship and leadership programs focus on people who have already benefited from higher education, for whom other opportunities are also available.

ACFID would like to see more balance, with an increased emphasis on in-country training and regional opportunities. We welcome the availability of a proportion of scholarship funding for in-region opportunities, which will enhance leadership within local communities.

ACFID acknowledges the proposal by the Australian Leadership Program for Africa. We recognise the value in selecting groups of people from one African country at a time, instead of individuals, given the support network this will create.

ACFID recommends however, that particular attention should be given to ensuring the program, adapted from the 'Governor's Leadership Foundation' initiative running in South Australia, is coherent with the business culture and where possible, language, of African contexts. Involving African community members in the planning, implementation and monitoring of each country group will be critical to its success. In this regard, ACFID notes a need for a more nuanced contextual analysis of the governance situation of individual African countries. We would hesitate to endorse the blunt analysis on which the current proposal is premised.

4) Chronic emergencies and protracted situations

Melissa Parke highlighted that the ACFID submission indicated:

'...Australia has no specific policy to address chronic emergencies or protracted situations...'

She asked "*in your view, what should be Australia's policy?*"

This relates to the following ACFID recommendation:

Recommendation 15. Develop a policy to better address chronic crises as part of AusAID's Humanitarian Action Plan.

ACFID recommends the Australian Government focus on protracted crises and complex emergencies in a more strategic and consistent manner. A clear policy in this area would meet the expectations of the Australian public, as there is significant public interest in protracted crises in Africa, demonstrated through the high level of public donations to the continent.

ACFID recommends Australia adapt its approach to address global trends of acute chronic vulnerability, and establish a more strategic and consistent response to protracted crises and complex emergencies. This can be achieved through the development of a dedicated policy and implementation plan. The framework would require clear indicators to monitor and evaluate implementing partners as well as mutual accountability indicators for AusAID performance.

The policy should clearly acknowledge the distinction of complex emergencies and protracted crises as unique from humanitarian emergency response to man-made or natural disasters. The policy needs to be flexible enough to adapt to the diverse contextual challenges and ensure a focus on local capacity and capacity building. The policy would bring Australia in line with best practice internationally, following the examples of donors such as the UK Department for International Development and USAID, to account for global trends of greater chronic vulnerability. This would also complement broader foreign policy objectives and contribute to meeting the massive challenges in addressing complex emergencies and protracted crises. It is suggested that the policy articulates the requirements for response including extensive planning and contextual solutions for humanitarian, early recovery and development assistance to meet immediate and longer-term needs.

The policy should be accompanied by practical annual implementation plans. The implementation plan should use flexible funding modalities to better reflect the unpredictable nature of operating in insecure environments. It should also address the current gap in AusAID funding allocations by enabling predictable and timely multi-year funding arrangements between AusAID and Australian humanitarian and development NGOs.

A further suggestion could be for the implementation plan to formalise, critique and expand the 'humanitarian plus' model which AusAID designed specifically for assistance to Zimbabwe (but is not applied to other areas of programming). The implementation plan should also monitor and encourage UN agencies to improve the efficiency with which funds are transferred between them and their implementing partners.

A policy and implementation plan of this nature would assist Australia to move away from the historically reactive approach on protracted and complex crises. It would help promote sustainable program delivery to affected populations, and more adequately assist in addressing immediate and longer term needs.

Please refer to the supplementary comments to the Committee by World Vision Australia for further information.

5) *Protection of civilians*

In our initial submission, ACFID recommended that:

'Recommendation 16. Strengthen resourcing and commitment to the protection of civilians in high-risk areas of Africa, including the Sudan.'

Melissa Parke asked "*how should our government strengthen its resourcing of and contribution to protection of civilians in high-risk areas?*"

According to the most widely agreed definition, the concept of protection encompasses all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law, including human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law.

ACFID would like to draw the Committee's attention to the critical issues of how the Australian Government can strengthen its resourcing and contribution to 'humanitarian protection', which includes the protection of civilians (PoC) in armed conflict and the protection of disaster affected populations. It is important that the Australian Government has a broad understanding and consistent, whole-of-government approach to PoC issues. This includes:

- Australia's role in supporting peacekeeping operations, including the reform process;
- building understanding within the Australian Defence Force and Australian Federal Police of community and humanitarian protection activities and the role of NGO facilitation in this area;
- the need for increased civil-military coordination capacity; and
- the role the Australian Government is playing with the African Union in supporting the development of PoC guidelines and training.

Although these strategic-level discussions are critical, the comments below primarily focus on programmatic issues where Australian aid agencies have significant expertise. Operationalising PoC will be the starting point for developing capacity and expertise, which will inform and initiate a whole-of-government policy. From an NGO perspective what is often left out of the Australian Government's discussions of PoC is the critical importance of community-based humanitarian protection programming, which is why we focus on these issues here.

ACFID recommends that AusAID:

- Make a strong commitment to strengthen 'humanitarian protection' in its forthcoming Humanitarian Action Plan.
- Establish a dedicated *Humanitarian Protection Unit* composed of 2-3 staff members to strengthen AusAID's contribution toward Australia's commitment to protection internationally. The Unit should be charged with the task of strengthening AusAID's support for the protection of disaster-affected communities and civilians in armed conflict while strengthening Australia's whole of government approach.
- Develop an AusAID Humanitarian Protection Framework that:

- a. Sets a clear strategy and framework to guide AusAID's work that takes into account the risks, challenges and sectoral developments.
- b. Establishes standards/guidelines for all humanitarian programs. This would involve:
 - i. highlighting the importance of a rights based approach, a community-based approach and the use of common protection tools and methodology;
 - ii. developing standards common to all protection work;
 - iii. establishing standards for specialised/stand alone programs including, *inter alia* Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Child Protection, Rule of Law;
 - iv. developing minimum standards for specific sectoral assistance programs.
- c. Create a dedicated fund for humanitarian protection and funding guidelines for AusAID-funded protection programs (including mainstreaming protection, building local protection capacity, building the protection capacity of humanitarian agencies, specialised protection programming and protective humanitarian advocacy).

Please refer to Annexure A for further information.

6) *Independent evaluation of Australian NGO programs*

In our submission, ACFID cited the

'Beyond Basic Needs' paper produced by the UK's prestigious Overseas Development Institute (ODI), which looked at the approach taken by the Australian NGOs. The paper states that '*development programs work best when they reflect the local reality and respond to both rights violations and a lack of access to services*' and notes a number of strengths of Australian NGOs' approaches.

Please refer to Fiona Samuels, Victoria James and Kerry Sylvester, 'Beyond Basic Needs'. Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Project Briefing 19 April 2009. Available at <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/details.asp?id=3185&title=beyond-basic-needs-marginalised-vulnerable-african-communities> last accessed 26 May 2010.

Available at Annexure B

B. Follow-up questions provided by the Committee Secretariat on 25 May.

1) *Development in Africa*

The submission from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry notes (Sub. 26, p. 8) that there has been an increased interest in purchasing land in developing countries as a means of securing the food needs of more developed countries in the region and in other regions. DAFF adds that this is positive in terms of injecting much needed investment and up-to-date farming techniques and technologies, but has raised concerns about the impact on local farmers, traditional landowners and the distribution of food produced and profits earned from these ventures.

- How prevalent is this practice of purchasing of land by developed countries?
- Has this been a positive or negative development?
- What has been the response so far in the African countries where this is occurring?



- Are any trends apparent in this response?

The increased interest in purchasing land in developing countries as a means of securing the food needs of more developed countries must be viewed in the context of principles of self-determination and sustainable livelihoods. Of primary importance is the capacity of developing countries to produce food to meet the needs of their own population. ACFID highlights the need for a greater investment in capacity building for small landholders to ensure sustainable local food production.

Priority should be given to smallholder farmers, the majority of whom are women, to sustainably diversify and increase agricultural productivity as well as improve their income and assets. Initiatives to purchase land for more capital-intensive production risk turning local farmers into farm labourers. Land ownership by smallholder farmers is already undermined by large-scale commercial production of coffee and tobacco, for example, that takes up land that could otherwise be used for growing food. Smallholdings are also continually reduced as poor families distribute it among male children establishing their own families, rendering the smaller lots less capable of producing sufficient food to meet family needs.

Across the aid program, ACFID recommends Australia lift the proportion of Australia's aid budget to rural development and agricultural expenditure to 12-14 per cent over three years. Investment that supports smallholder farmers should be prioritised. The Australian Government must commit to meeting our fair share of the existing need for humanitarian food assistance.

2) *Benefits of Working with Australian NGOs in Africa*

You note (p. 8) that Australian NGOs work directly with local organisations and communities strengthening community capacities to address development needs and engage with government officials. You add that with increasing emphasis on decentralisation, civil society needs to have the capacity to engage with government.

- How do Australian NGOs select African communities for assistance and the projects to be undertaken?

Australian NGOs work in collaboration with their international partner organisations or local partners. Decisions to work in particular districts or locations are made on the basis of consultations with government authorities and considering the spread of other non-government organisations and the local context. Typically NGOs conduct situation assessments, which inform decisions about which communities to work with and projects to be undertaken. A range of selection criteria are employed to identify project sites – including coverage of services provided by government and other international and national NGOs, also organisational resources, both staff and financial. In-country partners are involved in planning, selecting areas to work, and agreeing priorities. Strategies to achieve change are developed according to the specific contexts in each country. In these decisions, Australian NGOs benefit from the knowledge of local staff. The World Vision Australia 15 year multi-sector development plan is an example of how Australian NGOs plan long term for sustainable development programs.

- How do you increase the capacity of civil society to engage with government?

Australian NGOs increase the capacity of civil society to engage with government through training, in lobbying and advocacy. NGOs contribute to building relationships between the state and citizens by fostering demand for good governance but also through assisting to develop a more active civil society that government may be more inclined to engage with.



Australian NGOs and their partners also play a vital facilitating role through the implementation of activities that are specifically designed to bring government and civil society together. Some examples include joint provincial or district information exchange and planning and joint implementation of local responses to development issues. Initiatives which involve civil society organisations in the monitoring of government service provision are also relevant in this regard. We also recognise the important role bilateral donors can play in this area by increasing space for civil society engagement in home countries as well as in consultations with partner governments.

Would you provide some examples of the collaboration between Australian NGOs working in Africa and African-based NGOs and NGOs of other donor countries?

Example: Plan International Australia and Plan International Uganda.

With funding from the Australian Government's aid program for Africa, Plan Australia implemented a project which included community legal education campaigns from 2004 to 2010 in order to help ensure citizens are informed of their rights in Ugandan law. Training was also provided to local volunteers, leaders and government service staff to increase their capacity to carry out their responsibilities. Community volunteers were trained to provide advice and support to adults and children whose rights were being abused, and to resolve cases at community level or refer these on to the appropriate government institutions for action. Many women and children have had their property and inheritance rights and other rights protected through these initiatives.

Example: CARE Australia in Malawi.

To overcome the difficulties in delivering services to rural and marginalised populations in Malawi, CARE Australia promoted their Community Score Card (CSC) model. This participatory tool brings together service providers, including government, and service users to jointly analyse the provision and utilisation of services, identify any underlying issues and, through joint action planning, find a shared way of addressing these matters and improving quality. Through the CSC process, communities were able to voice concerns and participate in developing solutions to improve delivery of local services as well as influence delivery of health services nationally.

The success of the CSC tool has resulted in high demand for training, replication and adaptation of the tool by government structures and civil society within Malawi as well as NGO programs across Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Example: Caritas Australia in Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Isabelle is fourteen years old. Like many women her age in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Isabelle is a rape victim – and a mother. While hospitalised during her difficult pregnancy, Isabelle joined the Sexual Assault Program run by Caritas Goma and supported by Caritas Australia. The program provides medical, legal and economic support to 600 men, women, girls and children - victims of sexual violence. Isabelle was able to obtain counselling, medical help, and financial assistance. She has subsequently benefited from a micro loan and trained as a seamstress in order to make her own living. She is able to run her own business selling the clothes that she makes. Isabelle is in a position to purchase food for herself and provide for her family as well (her elderly grandmother, younger brother and her son).

Isabelle is now an active member of the community and is able to share her story to help other girls in her position.

3) Working with the Mining Sector

The submission from the Australia-Africa Mining Industry Group (Sub. 50, p. 6) suggests that Australian mining and service companies could facilitate re-engagement with Africa via public-private partnerships to deliver social development assistance to ensure relatively limited government aid funding is applied to maximum social, financial, political and strategic advantage. The submission added:

A mining operation or mining development project provides an immediate commercial focus for the delivery and management of social development programmes that could be branded as 'AusAID' or 'Australian' projects. Government agencies and/or the independent consultants could ensure that the programmes are appropriately implemented and managed, and are consistent with UN regional objectives. It is important to stress that companies do not see this concept as an opportunity to abrogate responsibility, but rather a mechanism to increase the scope of these programmes, and implement and manage them in a more strategic way.

- How do you respond to this proposal?
- How might such close links be facilitated?
- A perception could arise that the NGO had become associated with the private mining project. How do you respond to this possibility?

ACFID is reluctant to endorse the proposal from the Australia-Africa Mining Industry Group to establish public-private partnerships to deliver development assistance. Given the commercial nature of mining operations, we consider companies need to take full responsibility for committing their own funds. There are also certain risks involved in allocating Australian official development assistance in the way outlined.

As Oxfam has stated in their submission to the Inquiry, Australian mining companies that fail to respect and uphold human rights through good policy and practice can cause harm to the communities living around their operations. It is first and foremost the responsibility of mining companies to ensure policies and practices are in place which respect and protect human rights. To further the objectives of Australia's enhanced bilateral engagement with the countries of Africa, it is increasingly important mining companies conduct their operations as good corporate citizens.

The Australian Government can assist in ensuring Australian mining companies operate appropriately. This is particularly important in resource rich countries characterised by weak governance and conflict. As Oxfam recommends, company access to government services, such as trade and investment advice and export finance and insurance, should be linked with demonstrated compliance with international human rights standards, voluntary initiatives and best practice. ACFID also recommends Australian mining companies adhere to the OECD Code of Conduct on Transnational Corporations. Australian NGOs are currently, and will continue to be, engaged in strengthening governance at a policy level within communities affected by mining operations.

ACFID recognises that a number of Australian mining companies currently have programs in place with development objectives and already partner with local organisations. The Africa Working Group notes that the communities who are the focus of these corporate social responsibility programs may not necessarily be the poorest of the poor. In addition,

the effectiveness of the programs may be undermined if they are only undertaken for the duration of the mining operation.

Please refer to the Oxfam submission to the Inquiry for further information.

4) *Specific Sectors of Aid Delivery*

You recommend (p. 18) that eye care interventions be considered as a health area that needs attention because this will build on the success of the Australian blindness initiative in the Asia and Pacific regions.

- How might this intervention be achieved in Africa?
- Do you have particular Australian NGOs in mind as being well-placed to undertake this work?

Please refer to the Vision 2020 Australia submission to the Inquiry, 'Eliminating Avoidable Blindness in Africa: a Role for Australia' May 2010.

5) *Trade and Investment*

You call (p. 21) for maintaining efforts in the WTO to ensure free trade, especially in agriculture while acknowledging that some countries in Africa may need to protect the agricultural sector and associated population from the impact of unfair subsidies in rich countries.

- Regarding Africa, what degree of sectorial protection is compatible with WTO free trade arrangements?

The decision-making base for international economic governance should be broadened. The Australian Government is in a strong position to actively pursue a pro-poor approach to trade agreements through the G20. It is critical to ensure all low-income countries, including the developing countries of Africa, have effective tariff and duty free access to developed country markets. The Australian Government should maintain pressure on the United States, the European Union and Japan to cut agricultural subsidies.

A 'one size fits all' approach to international trade will not meet the needs of the developing world. To promote sustainable economic development in the countries of Africa, the degree of sectorial protection should take into account the individual circumstances of each country. Exactly how these circumstances should be accommodated is a matter for discussion and negotiation.

The nations of Sub-Saharan Africa are already relatively open to trade. In 2005, the weighted average tariff on manufactured imports in Sub-Saharan African countries was only 8 per cent (World Bank, 2007, 'World Development Indicators'). For many African countries, the experience of liberalisation has been a negative one. Following liberalisation in the 1980s, growth rates of many African countries halved and living standards steadily declined (Chang, Ha-Joon 2007). The World Bank now recognises that its advice about the benefits of trade liberalisation was too optimistic (2001, 'Proposal on market access for non-agricultural products').

Please refer to Oxfam Australia 'Trade Agreements and Development in the Pacific', a submission to the Australian Government July 2008. Available at <http://www.oxfam.org.au/resources/filestore/originals/OAus-TradeAgreementsPacific-0708.pdf>

Supplementary remarks to Part A, Question 5)

Implications for implementing humanitarian protection and potential operational gaps for future support are outlined below:

- *Need for protection funding in humanitarian response:* A policy commitment to protection as a core component of humanitarian action needs to be accompanied by funding to protection activities when calling for concept papers and/or proposals during an emergency response.
- *Effective protection mainstreaming requires targeted funding:* Effective protection mainstreaming requires dedicated funding to implement institutional changes to policy and practice, and to adapt sector programs and activities to meet standards.
- *Need to assess the risk of protection initiatives:* The Do No Harm (DNH) concept is central to protection work. However, there is little guidance on how field staff should assess the risk of either action or inaction in relation to identified protection issues. More needs to be understood about the decision-making process that protection officers undertake in relation to risk assessment.
- *Sustainability of protection programs is based on local ownership and capacity:* Since the expulsions of NGOs from Darfur and increased restrictions on humanitarian access in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Burma and Sudan, there has been more recognition of the need to build local protection capacity and ensure a community-based approach to protection.
- *Need for increased engagement of communities in protection to ensure sustainability:* A community-based approach is essential to strengthen individual, family and community 'self-protection' strategies and capacities and to ensure ownership, empowerment and sustainability of protection interventions. The ActionAid document 'Safety with Dignity: A Field Manual for Integrating Community-based Protection Across Humanitarian Programs' is a particularly useful tool.
- *Strengthen the protection focus of Disaster Risk Reduction activities:* DRR activities have a tendency to focus on physical 'hazards', as opposed to human-generated protection 'threats', and often do not fully consider conflict dynamics. Protection could be more effectively included in many aspects of DRR, especially local risk assessment, community disaster preparedness and response plans and early warning mechanisms.
- *Need for rigorous and effective monitoring and evaluation:* Effective mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the efficacy and impact of protection initiatives are few. More needs to be invested in the development of innovative approaches that define and capture success.
- While the establishment of the Global Protection Cluster is a positive development in terms of enhanced coordination, it has also meant however, that some protection actors, particularly local ones, are not recognised or resourced.

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Key points

- Development programmes work best when they reflect local realities and respond to both rights violations and lack of access to services
- Basic and 'beyond basic' needs programming should be planned together from intervention design, with a clear step-by-step process to move from one to the other
- A rights-based approach to programming is crucial in the achievement of long term and sustainable empowerment of marginalised groups

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Beyond Basic Needs: Programming for marginalised and vulnerable groups – The Australian Partnerships with African Communities (APAC) Programme

Fiona Samuels, Victoria James and Kerry Sylvester

The Australian Partnerships with African Communities (APAC) programme is a five-year cooperation agreement (2004-2009) between the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and Australian NGOs to address emerging development challenges in Southern and Eastern Africa, using community-based approaches. With the end of the five-year agreement in sight, it is time to look at the key lessons, successes and innovations of the programme. This briefing is the second of three. The first explored People in Planning processes (Samuels, et al., 2008) and the third will highlight the innovative ways in which Australian and African NGOs have worked together.

This Briefing focuses on aspects of service delivery that go beyond the provision of basic services. It explores the ways in which APAC partners in Kenya, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia have, increasingly, recognised the need to address issues of vulnerability and exclusion to achieve lasting changes.

Sub-Saharan Africa, where APAC is operating, has seen the convergence of a number of factors that have increased the vulnerability and marginalisation of people who are already poor. These factors have included high HIV prevalence rates, humanitarian emergencies (both man-made and natural) and poor governance structures. This has been referred to as a Triple Threat (UN, 2003). While the provision of interventions to meet basic needs are essen-

tial where poverty is pervasive and where the majority of people live on less than \$2 per day, there is growing recognition that these should be accompanied by strategies that empower people to know their rights and demand equitable access to services.

Why 'Beyond Basic Needs' (BBN)?

Development and human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. For development to be sustainable, marginalised and vulnerable groups need secure and long-term access to the resources required to satisfy their needs, including economic, social, cultural, civil or political resources.

A rights-based programming approach (Box 1) is one approach that acknowledges the need to go Beyond Basic Needs (BBN). BBN includes issues of respect, safety, the need to 'belong' and trust (see Box 2). Examples of BBN-type of approaches can be found in APAC programmes that address stigma and discrimination and in those that provide psychosocial support to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and other marginalised and vulnerable groups.

Two broad approaches are seen among APAC partners. First, those that started out by addressing basic needs and used their success to go beyond their original goals, realising that lasting change would only be possible if they also addressed issues of rights and exclusion. And second, those that started with

Project Information



Australian Government
AusAID

An Australian Government, AusAID initiative. Written by Fiona Samuels (ODI), Victoria James (New Dimensions Consultancy, NEDICO, Zimbabwe), and Kerry Sylvester (Technical Advisor for Livelihoods and Food Security, APAC). We would like to thank the full APAC team for their comments and contributions. For more information, please contact Fiona Samuels (f.samuels@odi.org.uk). For further information on AusAID/APAC programmes, contact Lucy Kirimi (Lucy.Kirimi@dfat.gov.au).

Box 1: Rights-based programming

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): 'A human rights based approach leads to better and more sustainable outcomes by analyzing and addressing the inequalities, discriminatory practices and unjust power relations which are often at the heart of development problems. It puts the international human rights entitlements and claims of the people and the corresponding obligations of the State in the centre of the national development debate' (<http://www.undg.org/?P=221>). Underpinning this are the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Box 2: Concepts related to Beyond Basic Needs (BBN) and Basic Needs (BN) as defined by the APAC technical team

Beyond Basic Needs (BBN): Safety, love, psychosocial support, self esteem, dignity, voice, self-worth, personal fulfilment, identity, freedom, participation and distributive justice.

Basic Needs: Shelter, food, water and sanitation, education, health.

programmes to tackle the barriers to people exercising their basic rights and, during implementation, recognised the importance of ensuring basic needs, such as shelter, health, clean water, education and food security.

From BBN to BN and back again

Three examples of the work of partners are described below: the ChildFund (CF), working in Kenya, Uganda and Zambia; Plan/FIDA (the Association of Women's Lawyers) in Uganda, who began with BBN and moved to BN; and Chikuni, in Zambia, who started with a focus on BN and shifted to BBN.

From BBN to BN: ChildFund (CF), Kenya, Uganda and Zambia. The original purpose of CF's programme was to improve the psychosocial wellbeing of children and youth living with HIV by strengthening community-based support systems. Findings from baseline surveys showed that communities were unable to adequately care for and support HIV-affected and other vulnerable children and youth in their own communities, and that counselling and other psychosocial support services for vulnerable children/youth were extremely limited.

In response, programmes were developed that included: vocational training for vulnerable households; HIV prevention education; peer education; life skills; child/youth mobilisation, empowerment and participation; and provision of children's/youth clubs. Psychosocial support to children was also provided by building the capacity of teachers and carers in the community. Training caregivers, teachers and a range of other stakeholders, such as the police, meant that it was not only the individual child and his or her family who received support, as was occurring in CF's earlier child sponsorship programmes, but the community, in general, became more involved in providing a supportive environment for vulnerable children and their families.

Children whose psychological and material needs are met are much more likely to become self-sufficient and participate actively in their own development (Richter et al., 2006). The move beyond the provision of basic needs has been facilitated by food security initiatives with caregiver groups and in schools. One example is the establishment of school gardens, where food from the gardens is used to enhance school-feeding initiatives, or sold to generate income to benefit pupils, particularly OVC. Children and parents involved in the gardens also benefit through acquiring farming skills and learning about appropriate technologies.

From land-grabbing to domestic violence – from BN to BBN: Plan/FIDA. The Plan/FIDA programme works explicitly on rights issues, both the abuse of individual rights and the barriers to accessing services (e.g. education) that stem from stigma and discrimination. FIDA works on the basis that people can only assert their own rights and respond to the rights of others if they are aware of those rights. The programme has improved access to legal services by children, women, and men affected by HIV and AIDS through training clan leaders, religious leaders and law enforcement officers in will-making, succession and inheritance laws.

From BN to BBN: Chikuni Mission. This Catholic mission in Southern Zambia is a partner of the Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific in the APAC programme. The Mission has developed a Home Based Care (HBC) programme to provide care and support to people living with HIV in the mission area, and runs a hospital and a community radio, as well as many other community projects.

The Chikuni HBC programme has had remarkable success in reducing levels of stigma and discrimination towards those living with HIV, and a number of local leaders are open about their positive status. Support groups are now involved in local decision-making bodies and a weekly radio programme is designed and delivered exclusively by people living with HIV. At the outset, the Chikuni HBC programme aimed to reach those living with HIV with basic health care and support. It soon moved beyond this, as it became clear that stigma and discrimination played a big part in the community response to HIV and AIDS. The success of the programme is due, in large part, to the broad range of activities led by people living with HIV.

What makes the BBN approach work?

Using a rights-based programming framework, APAC's Beyond Basic Needs programming has empowered marginalised and vulnerable populations. There are six key elements in this success:

Participation and responsibility. The APAC programmes have demonstrated clearly that where participation is part of decision making, planning and execution the chances of success are higher,

with participants taking on increased levels of responsibility. Many of the APAC programmes took a nuanced approach to participation, with different groups with different levels of adherence to the programmes having different levels of participation. In the Chikuni HBC programme, for example, people living with HIV formed Positive and Living Squads (PALS), but this was backed by the active support of traditional and community leaders, which legitimised the initiative in the eyes of the whole community. There is a high level of both individual (e.g. adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART)) and community responsibility in the Chikuni programme, which augers well for sustainability of its initiatives.

In both of the CF programmes, child participation was central to success. Children took responsibility for planning and carrying out the activities and campaigned actively for their rights with government officials and politicians.

Breaking the barriers. Partners aim to break the often hidden barriers to accessing services. For example: HIV-testing facilities only make a difference if they are used; antiretroviral drugs only work if taken at the right time in the right way and with sufficient food; and counselling services for victims of domestic violence can only protect if domestic violence is recognised as abuse. The APAC programmes work on these issues through stigma and discrimination programmes, psycho-social support initiatives and through legal and community counselling services.

The Chikuni Mission boasts a near 100% HIV-testing rate and there are, at present, no cases of treatment adherence failure. This is the result of intensive and innovative work to address stigma and discrimination. The work by Plan/FIDA on legal and paralegal services has brought the issue of domestic violence to the forefront in communities. Debate on how to reduce incidence of domestic violence and punish perpetrators is now part of the programme, and defilement cases are now being tried in the Ugandan High Court. The CF psychosocial support programmes with teachers and vulnerable children have resulted in less discrimination in schools, and the self-esteem of children has increased.

Seeking legitimacy. APAC partners sought legitimacy by inspiring trust and acceptance with individuals, communities, government services and policy makers. Examples include:

- Care and its local partners, Mvula Trust and AWARD, worked with national government (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry) to mainstream HIV and AIDS in their plans;
- CF Kenya, Uganda and Zambia established active partnerships with District Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Committees (DOVCCs), caregivers and youth councils;
- Plan/FIDA developed strong partnerships with local police through active engagement by police in DOVCCs, and through ongoing partnership between the police and community legal advisers.

Targeting and working with unconventional partners. APAC partners have developed innovative ways to identify target populations. FIDA, for instance, included men – an often neglected but critical group – as key players in rights-based programming. CF ensured that head teachers were included in work on protection, stigma and discrimination, providing leadership within schools. Similarly, CF was supported by the community to identify vulnerable youth and children, while FIDA recognised the key importance of clan leaders, including them as principal targets for capacity building.

Standard and innovative ways of measuring change. Strong monitoring and evaluation systems, the use of baseline surveys and continuous documentation have helped APAC partners identify and address the vulnerabilities facing marginalised and vulnerable groups. As well as measuring 'hard' outcomes, such as the numbers of children staying at school, and the numbers of people testing for HIV, APAC partners have measured 'softer' issues, such as self belief, self worth, safety and security. CF, for example, has made progress in developing monitoring instruments that have been used by community members to judge the impact of activities. These included measures of self esteem and confidence (see Box 3). Other programmes have shown clear examples of people who were once 'invisible', including children and young people, being empowered to speak about their situations and lobby for change.

Significant involvement of the community allows for sustainability. Community involvement in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation offers an opportunity both for learning and for following the future progress of the intervention. Plan Kenya has, for example, involved communi-

Box 3: Child Fund Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tools

Indices were developed to gauge the psychological and social wellbeing of children. These worked as both monitoring and evaluation tools to assess the impact of programmes on children and their perceptions of their own wellbeing.

The psychological wellbeing index contains 13 variables, including:

- I blame myself for what happened;
- I feel like leaving this world;
- I have an upset stomach when I think about some things in my life;
- I am satisfied with my life.

The social wellbeing index contains seven variables, including:

- I have arguments with family members;
- I feel loved and wanted by my family;
- I trust my relatives to look out for my best interests;
- I have an adult to comfort me when I am sad or sick.

Responses range from: 'never', 'rarely', 'sometimes', 'frequently', to almost always. These indices were used in group sessions and fed back to children and carers as a form of real time monitoring. The programme was adjusted according to the results. The indices were also a formal part of the impact evaluation at mid-term and will be used in the final evaluation.

ties in data collection, analysis and dissemination. Other APAC partners have involved traditional leaders, which has made the adoption of programmes at community level much easier. Such leaders are respected as the custodians of culture and are major community power brokers. Stigma and discrimination has decreased where those living with HIV are now involved in decision-making and communities are, increasingly, accepting them. The success of the Chikuni HBC programme in Zambia is a prime example.

Lessons learned

BN and BNN are not mutually exclusive – they need to go hand in hand. Meeting Basic Needs addresses only the most immediate vulnerabilities faced by marginalised and vulnerable groups and the needs are likely to be continuous. At the same time, offering only Beyond Basic Needs, without addressing basic needs, is likely to result in resources being diverted to meet those basic needs. Programmes should address both basic needs provision as well as long term strategies to deal with policy changes and higher level outcomes.

Scale-up requires addressing BN and BBN from the outset. BN and BBN should be addressed together, though not necessarily simultaneously, from the initial design of the programme. Indicators on when the programme should shift from one to the other should be clear from start-up. The situation and context will determine whether interventions should start with BN or BBN programming. During implementation, interventions should be sensitive, flexible and have a strong learning framework in which staff continuously review and document progress, lessons, strengths, challenges and threats.

Strategic partnerships are crucial to empower vulnerable populations. The BBN model has shown that strategic partnerships with civil society, community leaders and government structures are complementary and will help to provide a comprehensive response to vulnerable groups. Partnerships

with civil society will help to increase resources, for instance, while government partnerships will provide an opportunity for policy development, change and implementation.

Rights and responsibilities form the bedrock of sustainable development. All of the APAC programmes reviewed showed that it is impossible to address chronic poverty without acknowledging that poverty is, in itself, a rights violation, and ensuring that excluded and marginalised communities benefit directly from programmes. The programmes that have resolved this issue have some common ground. All worked with 'vulnerable' groups and gave active support to their leadership and involvement. All have worked with sustainable and long-lasting structures.

BBN approaches need validation through measurable impacts and tangible results. The ability to measure and demonstrate results is essential in going Beyond Basic Needs. The case studies were selected largely on the basis that they demonstrated tangible results, such as increased access to HIV testing or in decreased cases of property grabbing. But, very importantly, they show how and why these improvements have happened. This means that the models can be replicated.

Constant monitoring and flexibility is necessary to ensure that programmes respond to differing forms and levels of vulnerability. One of the hallmarks of the success of these programmes is that, although there are clear indicators to measure success against baselines, programmers are constantly reviewing who is vulnerable and who is accessing care. Programmes can, therefore, not only be refined to meet their initial goals, but to ensure that new lessons learned can be applied as vulnerabilities change, or as hidden vulnerabilities become more transparent.

The provision of Basic Needs and Beyond Basic Needs services are interlinked and are complementary. Both are critical for the achievement of long term and sustainable empowerment for marginalised and vulnerable groups.



Overseas Development
Institute

111 Westminster Bridge
Road, London SE1 7JD

Tel +44 (0)20 7922 0300

Fax +44 (0)20 7922 0399

Email
publications@odi.org.uk

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Institute 2009
ISSN 1756-7602

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