

Linking & Learning

newsletter

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Introduction to SAN!
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SAN! Projects in Malawi
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Welcome to our maiden May 2008 newsletter

Dear Readers,

I WELCOME you to our maiden newsletter, which introduces the Linking and Learning concept for the Orphans & Other Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Malawi. The newsletter is a platform for OVC to speak out their minds, and their servicing institutions and individuals to present their desire for the nature of anticipated change in the lives of their children under care.

It is a platform for sharing information with regards to challenges and successes and exploration of solutions to advancing the quality of life of OVCs. These project areas appreciates the important role child serving institutions are providing and the strength of community based interventions. It is the desire of partners in the Lobbying and Advocacy Project under the Linking and Learning concept to build on the current strengths.

In this regard, project partnership is about active participation of all people and institutions targeted, including the OVC themselves. Such approach forms the core concept of the project which is Linking and Learning, an initiative by our donors, the STOP AIDS NOW! (SAN!), in the Netherlands.

It is expected the project will achieve, by the way of contribution, reasonable assurance that public resources are available to OVC and also that it is well known as to where the social and legal services can be found. It must be realized that issues of OVC are human rights concerns. Among others, 'the Best Interest of the Child', and First Call for the Child are fundamental principles of child rights. If the entire Malawi nation understands this concept, we will all prioritize issues of the child especially the OVC on top of the national development agenda. Children regardless of their status have all their time and the entire world to live and develop into productive citizens.

Lastly, I appeal to partners and stakeholders to contribute articles in either English or Chichewa. You may also raise any questions for experts to answer and debate on topical issues concerning OVCs.

Let us walk together to realization of our intended objectives. I wish you all the best of attainments in the year 2008 and beyond. We thank our donors, STOP AIDS NOW! of the Netherlands for their financial support towards the lobbying and advocacy, and the Psychosocial Support Projects

Rodgers Newa—Executive Director (CEYCA)
On Behalf of SAN Partners in Malawi

Introduction to Stop Aids Now! (SAN!)



OVC need special attention

STOP AIDS NOW (SAN!) is a partnership between Aids Fonds and Four Dutch Organisations providing international Development Aid.

SAN! is working towards a world without HIV/AIDS.

SAN!'s work involves fundraising, campaigning and lobbying, integrating the fight against HIV/AIDS into development cooperation innovation in working methods and forms of Cooperation.

Mission

The Objective of SAN! is “More

and Better”. The mission is: ‘working together towards a world without AIDS’.

“More” refers to increasing the number of activities of organisations in the south.

SAN! focuses on activities that provide information, support and treatment to people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Special attention is however being given to activities aimed at prevention.

SAN! activities at local level are carried out by local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) spread across the country.

“Better” refers to improving the quality of the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The aim is to improve working methods and forms of cooperation. Linking and learning, capacity building and innovation are encouraged.

SAN! Projects - Linking & Learning

THERE are two projects that SAN is sponsoring under the linking and Learning concept, namely Lobbying and Advocacy; and Scaling up of Psychosocial Support Services. These projects are overarching goal from the GOM's National Plan of Action for OVC in that they seek to contribute to the facilitation of support for care, protection and development of OVC in coordinated manner in order to provide them with an environment in which they realize their full rights and potentials.

Lobbying and Advocacy

THE PROJECT brings together and builds on the experiences of the four key organisations: NOVOC, CEYCA, PLAN Malawi and MHRCC with CEYCA being the lead organisation. NOVOC, as the name suggests (see page 4), links up an already diverse number of organisations particularly at the grassroots level hence ensuring that this project does indeed address the felt needs of OVC.

MHRCC is an organisation that has enormous expertise in capacity development while PLAN Malawi brings to this project its international experiences as it is an international NGO working in various countries the world over.

Project Objectives

- An increased number of OVC and with caretakers who have more knowledge on how to access basic social services including judicial redress.
- Prevalence of a legal framework that is accessible and supportive of improvements in the plight of OVC.
- Development and utilization of the relevant advocacy and lobbying skills to ensure the plight of OVC remain on the top of the agenda of GOM and the public at large.
- Increased networking and exchange of experiences/best practices between/among participating organs and beyond.



Centre for Youth and Children Affairs

CEYCA is a non governmental organisation (NGO) with a focus on youth/children development programme. The organisation empowers youth skills training, training of trainers, participatory education and mobilizing of youth into formation of youth clubs. Formed in 1995 and registered in 1997, CEYCA is a no-profit NGO and is affiliated to major youth and human rights networks including the Council for Non Governmental Organisations (CONGOMA), Human Rights

Consultative Committee (HRCC), Human Rights Youth Network, and National Youth Council of Malawi - a coordinating body of all youth organisations in Malawi.

Internationally, CEYCA is affiliated to Children's Network based in the UK and the Southern Africa Human Rights Organisations Network.

Mission

"An NGO that exists to promote the rights and active participation of Children and young people."



Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre

The Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre was established in 1996 and operated under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Malawi Government prior to being registered under the Trustees Incorporation Act in 2000.

MHRRCs primary purpose is strengthening the capacity of human rights civil society organisations throughout Malawi.

Mission

"MHRRC is committed to promoting a sustainable human rights culture in Malawi by working with civil society organisations and other institutions through resource provision, networking and research in Malawi."



Network of Organisations for Vulnerable and Orphaned Children

In March 2001 an historic meeting took place at Chongoni in Dedza District that brought together various Orphan Care Stakeholders in Malawi. The Ministry of Women & Child Development and other key organisations initiated the meeting. A consensus was reached that a national network for orphan care stakeholders was required and a steering committee was given the task of developing a plan for the network and NOVOC was born.

NOVOC functions to network Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) service providers, to build their capacity, thus

offering quality services to orphans and vulnerable children. NOVOC focuses on the following priority areas : Networking & Capacity Building, Child Protection & Advocacy, Psychosocial Support, Food Security and Resource Mobilisation

Mission

"NOVOC exists to promote, facilitate and empower individuals and organisations involved with the care and support of orphans and other vulnerable children so as to improve quality of life and expand services"

PLAN Malawi



PLAN Malawi is an international humanitarian, child centered development organisation working with families and their communities to meet the needs of children around the world. Non political, and with no religious affiliations, we aim to build a better world for children, now and in the future.

Mission

Plan strives to achieve lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children in developing countries through a process that unites people across cultures and adds meaning and value to their lives by:

- Enabling deprived children their families and their communities to meet their basic needs and to increase their ability to participate in and benefiting from their societies
- Fostering relationships to increase understanding and unity
- Promoting the rights and interests of the worlds children

Scaling up of Psycho social Activities Project

THIS PROJECT intends to scale up Psychosocial Support Activities in Malawi through linking and learning. The project brings together and builds on the experiences of the four key organisations: NOVOC, YONECO, ECC and Eye of the Child with NOVOC being the lead organisation.

It (the project) is integrally linked to and conceived with the same framework as that project focusing on” lobbying, advocacy and access to justice” that is under the leadership of CEYCA.

The four organisations (called key partners) in this project have been selected largely on the basis of their comparative strength vis-a-vis a project of this nature coupled with their resolve to work jointly. The project can in summary be said to underpinned by the following five theses:

- a. that OVC remain one of the most critical challenges facing poverty stricken and HIV/AIDS hard hit country.
- b. That much of what is happening at the moment is addressing the physical/material needs of OVC.
- c. That until recently there have been few organisations that are addressing the psychosocial dimension.
- d. That these few organisation are employing different strategies focusing on different target groups hence accumulating varied experiences in the process.

Project Objectives

- Increased understanding of psychosocial support issues, strategies and interventions for OVCs service providers through linking and learning in Malawi by December 2008.
- To create a learning environment for the provision of improved Psychosocial support services rendered to OVCs by December 2008.
- Increased integration of Psychosocial support in the various OVC related initiatives undertaken by various organisations in Malawi by December 2008.
- Increased networking and exchange of experiences/best practices between and among the participating organisations and beyond.

Partners involved in Psychosocial Activities Project

Ecumenical Counselling Centre (ECC)

THE ECC is a faith based institution owned by several local Christian organisations such as the Malawi Council of Churches (MCC), the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM) and the Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM) together with the Christian Health Association of

Malawi (CHAM) and the Association of Christian Educators in Malawi (ACEM).

Vision

ECC vision is to improve the life of the common person through training in counseling and provision of

counseling services.

The prime focus is on those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. The fundamental principle is delivery of counseling in gender sensitive and human rights based approach supported by Christian faith values.

Youth Net and Counselling (YONECO)



YONECO is a non-political, non-profit making non governmental organisation that was formed in September 1997.

It was established to address the social injustices and reproductive health issues affecting the youth, women and children.

YONECO is a member to a number of networks like council for Non Governmental Organisations in Malawi (CONGOMA), Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education

(CSQBE), Malawi Network of Aids Service Organisation (MANASO) and Human Rights Consultative Committee (HRCC).

Mission

YONECO is committed to empowering the youth, women and Children; combating the spread of HIV infection; mitigating the impact of AIDS; and, promoting human rights and democracy for socio-economic development.

Eye of the Child (EYC)



Issues of OVC in the Department of Social Welfare, training and child protection, are main activities targeted by EYC.

It has a training centre which conducts annual training in Orphan Care Management, Child Protection Management and Psychosocial Counselling designed to assist actors in the children sector to acquire additional skills and knowledge necessary for the protection, care,

management and Psychosocial Counseling of Orphans and other Vulnerable Children.

Given the challenges children are facing in view of fast changing community situations owing to social change, a deliberate action is made to equip stakeholders in this area with new skills to ensure they address children issues in a professional and competent manner.

The Link...



Local stakeholders appreciate a SAN! initiative.

THERE exists a number of well intentioned organisations that work towards the improvement of life of OVC. Some of them have engage in lobbying and advocacy, social mobilization campaigns, and in other relative areas.

Others work in the area of access to justice improvement. Till now, however, there have not been deliberate efforts explored the like minded organisations to come together with a view of learning from each other and sharing worst and best practices in the multifaceted OVC programmes.

The tradition has been to work in isolation. Unfortunately, this has resulted in a situation where the possibility of knowledge pooling,

knowledge management and knowledge sharing, has not been deepened - and the net effects had they been put in place - would have seen improved capacity of the various actors involved.

The four core organisations would therefore like to build on the experiences and expertise that various organisations have accumulated over the years through working with their OVC or other target groups.

For this reason, the Linking and Learning project puts together a consortium of organisations with a clear and concise approach to meeting the challenges faced by institutions involved in OVC service provision.

Other Partners

IT IS recognized here that while seven organisations mentioned earlier constitute primary partners in the Linking and Learning projects, various other organisations beyond these will soon be fully involved.

They include, among others, organisations or actors such as: NAPHAM; Malawi Child Parliament; ACEM; MEJN; TUM; Traditional Leaders; NAC; the Ministry of Women & Child Development; District Assemblies; other National, Regional or District based NGOs dealing with OVC.



Project Beneficiaries

“Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children”



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*“transforming Equal Social
Relations and the
Achievement of
Social Justice”*

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*“Children in Difficult
Situations Are the Reason
We Exist”*