



SAN! Project Managing HIV And AIDS in the Workplace

Project Activity Report for January- June 2006

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July 2006

Acronyms

AAA	-	African Air Ambulance
AAR	-	African Air Rescue
ACORD	-	Agency for Cooperation and in Development
AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARVs	-	Antiretroviral
ASO	-	AIDS Service Organizations
CDRN	-	Community Development Resource Network
CSOs	-	Civil Society Organizations
FUE	-	Federation of Uganda Employers
FURA	-	Foundation for Urban and Rural Advancement
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GFAMT	-	Global Fund against AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis
HASAP	-	HIV and AIDS Support and Advocacy Program
HIV	-	Human Immune – Deficiency Virus
IEC	-	Information, Education and Communication
ILO	-	International Labor Organization
LPG	-	Local Project Group
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGOs	-	Non-Governmental Organizations
OI	-	Oxfam International
PC	-	Project Coordinator
PLWHAs	-	People Living With HIV/AIDS
SAN	-	STOP AIDS NOW!
TASO	-	The AIDS Support Organisation
TOR	-	Terms of Reference
UAC	-	Uganda AIDS Commission
UN	-	United Nations
VCT	-	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
GIPA	-	Greater Involvement of People Living with AIDS
AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
TTP	-	Tripartite Training Program
UCS	-	Uganda Catholic Secretariat

Executive Summary

This report highlights all project activities undertaken during the last six months (January-June 2006) and covers the second half of the first year since the project inception in June 2005. The report also presents observations made, challenges faced and makes suggestions for the second year. The project, initiated by STOP AIDS NOW! works with 82 NGOs spread in 15 districts of Uganda. The focus is on HIV and AIDS at workplace with a mission of “*working together towards a world without AIDS*”.

Some of the activities that the project has been able to accomplish include; baseline survey and dissemination of findings, regional workplace policy sensitization workshops, selection of regional lead organizations, support supervision visits, project registration, LPG and their directors meetings, distribution of Good Donorship Guidelines, networking and advocacy on workplace policies with other development organizations. ACORD- HASAP has continued to provide administrative support as a host organization and the coordination office receives guidance from the Local Project Group (LPG) committee.

The process for developing HIV/AIDS workplace policies has started and 18 organizations have drafted workplace policies that are awaiting review by the project committee. There is willingness and support from the management of participating organizations to address the issue of HIV and AIDS in their workplaces and this continues to be a big resource under this partnership. There are also developments under the Global Fund against AIDS, Malaria and TB in Uganda where requests for priority areas have been made and the workplace issues are to be considered. This will call for SAN! Project to continue offering technical support and supervision where necessary to see that organizations move from policy to policy program. The emphasis will be put on organizations that are not consistent in attending capacity building activities and meetings organised by the project. The operational research team has already embarked on analysing the findings of the baseline survey and other project documents to fit into the process of moving forward with the first phase.

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1.0: Introduction

This report presents the summary of the project activities carried out and highlights the key observations and challenges noted during the second part of the first year (January to June 2006) since project inception in 2005. STOP AIDS NOW (SAN)! Project is a partnership between five Dutch Co- funding Non Governmental Organizations namely: HIVOS, ICCO, CORDAID (MEMISA) and Novib (Oxfam) and an AIDS specific organization called AIDSFONDS. The pilot project in Uganda was initiated in June 2005 and aims at facilitating organizations to develop and implement comprehensive HIV/AIDS workplace policies.

1.1: Project Goal and Objectives

The project continued to pursue the goal for which it was established- to contribute to the reduced spread and better management of HIV/AIDS in the workplaces among participating organizations in Uganda through:

- Building capacity of organizations in increasing understanding, ownership and better practices in managing of HIV/AIDS in the workplace
- Supporting participating organizations to develop and implement comprehensive HIV/AIDS policies
- Working with LPG (local structures) to enforce the linking and learning and guide the implementation process.

1.2: SAN! Project Partner Organizations

Eighty-two partner NGOs are involved in the project and are at the level of participation. Despite this, they all have interest in addressing HIV and AIDS in their workplace. There are other development organizations, which have been involved in the project activities through sharing experiences and soliciting their technical skills during the capacity building workshops. For instance, Micro Care Ltd has often shared experiences in health insurance and FUE has been involved in the project workplace policy development workshops.

2.0: SAN! Project Activities Undertaken

Since January up to June 2006, the project has accomplished the following activities:

2.1: Baseline Survey

The project hired an external consultant from Makerere University to work with the Project Coordinator in planning and executing the baseline survey among the participating organizations. The exercise took place from January to March 2006 and covered 52 organizations. It aimed at providing information to the SAN! Project for a better understanding on how participating organizations are managing HIV and AIDS in the workplaces and how they could be guided to achieve the project objectives. Secondly, the survey helped to identify the opportunities and constraints that are crucial in the implementation process and collected views from the key players on how these constraints could be minimized.

2.2: Baseline Results Dissemination

The Project Coordinator presented the baseline survey findings. The survey was mainly qualitative in nature and employed participatory data collection methods namely; in-depth interviews with the directors of organizations, group focused interviews with members of staff, literature review and observations. The survey sample was 52 out of 81 organizations, which represents 64.2% of organizations selected from 15 districts in 3 regions of Uganda. The sample was purposively selected on the basis of location, size, donor and main focus. The key main findings were disseminated and emphasis was on the following: Staff knowledge on HIV transmission and prevention, attitudes towards PLWHA, existence of workplace policies, impact of HIV/AIDS on the workplaces, access to care and treatment, challenges of implementing the policy guidelines and opportunities identified. Recommendations were also made and they included: use of IEC strategy, peer education strategy, “ABC” approach, emphasis on access to ART for members of staff and their family members, linking organizations to national funding opportunities.

The SAN! Project Officer shared the unique aspects on how donors have opened dialogue with the local NGOs that they support and expressed their commitment in supporting HIV and AIDS work in the work place environment. The purpose of the guidelines is to ensure that organizations take their positions and come up with principles or commitments on how to address HIV/AIDS in the workplace. There are efforts to ensure that the Good Donorship Guidelines are popularized in a wider donor community. What remains is to ensure: testing of the guidelines in Uganda and India, implementation of the guidelines by SAN! Partners, advocating for Good Donorship among other donors, develop an M & E tool to monitor the implementation.

2.3: Distribution of Good Donorship Guidelines

The Good Donorship guidelines that were developed by the consultant and approved by the SAN! Directors at Novib in December 2005 were dispatched to SAN! Project Uganda in March 2006 for distribution. All participating organizations have received hard copies and the guidelines will be part of the project piloting. These guidelines have generated interest among other NGOs in Uganda that are not part of the SAN! Project but who wish to get an idea of how they can open dialogue with their own donors.

2.4: Regional Workplace Policy Sensitization Seminars

Two regional sensitization workshops were held in North Eastern and western regions of Uganda in January and March 2006 respectively. The regional workshops provided an opportunity to interact with the staff of respective organizations within the region and introduce them to HIV/AIDS workplace policy and peer education strategy in addressing HIV and AIDS in the workplace. These sensitization workshops also included other organizations within the region that may provide possible areas for networking (AIDS Service Organizations). This helped to popularize the workplace policy issues and make the SAN! Project and its work known in the region. What was observed is that there is little being done by organizations to address HIV/AIDS in their workplace. However, there is willingness of staff to support the SAN! Project initiatives.

2.5: Workplace Policy Development Workshops

Three workshops were held in January, April and May in Northeastern, Western and central regions of Uganda respectively. These workshops aimed at enabling organizations to build their capacity to develop comprehensive HIV/AIDS workplace policies and increase understanding on how they could translate policy into programs. The key

aspects discussed included facts about HIV/AIDS, values clarification, impact of the epidemic, developing workplace policies and implementation, peer education strategy and use of “Good Donorship Guidelines”. We also involved other providers for treatment services and the district health service for information sharing. Organizations realized that policy guidelines help to prevent infection, ensure a safe healthy working environment, mainstream HIV/AIDS activities at the workplace and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS, provision of treatment, care & support. Organizations that had developed the policies shared with others about the process and challenges they went through to have the draft in place. This was a learning opportunity where participants in groups reviewed draft policies of other organizations and pointed out the gaps. It emerged that organizations need to revisit their policy guidelines and think through the commitments they made and involve all the key players at the workplace. The modalities on how organizations should proceed once the draft policies were developed were also discussed.

Organizations also expected support including; formulation of policy, training of peer educators, carrying out HIV/AIDS status survey, developing operation plans, monitoring and evaluation. It was also noted that all the policies presented lacked an aspect of community participation that is often ignored.

2.6: Other Development Partners Support

Federations of Uganda employers, ILO and Micro Care Ltd have continued to participate in the San! project workshops. FUE has been the main facilitator and ILO agreed to be part of the policy review committee. The SAN! Project is now registered with the FUE and the arrangement has been built to receive such amount of support from the Federation.

2.7: Selection of Regional Lead Organization

The process of selecting organizations to take lead in the project work is on going and so far two organizations have accepted to take up this task. Health Need Uganda and Foundation for Rural and Urban Advancement (FURA) have agreed to take a lead for Northeastern and Western regions respectively. The selection of the lead organizations was done by organizations themselves in each region and was based on: willingness, accessibility, location, human infrastructure and time availability. Part of their expected duty is to; collect WPP developed by organizations, monitoring progress according to agreed work plan, reporting on progress and issues emerging in the region.

The key role of the lead organization (among others) is to coordinate, attend review meetings, help in communication, participate in support and monitoring visits and write reports on how the project implementation is progressing.

The question of how they can be facilitated to ensure successful implementation of this role, they suggested a monthly consolidated financial support totaling to 600.000/= (six hundred thousand shillings only). This would cover expenses on communication to participating organizations, transport, stationary, top up salary for staff undertaking this assignment and meals while in the field. The role of SAN! Project is to ensure that the funds received result in the specified output as per the agreed work plan.

2.8: Local Project Group Meetings

Two LPG meetings were held in Kampala in the months of March and June 2006. The Local Project Group that represents all the SAN! Project participating organizations. The LPG member organizations include; Community Resource Development Network (CDRN), Agency Co-operation and Research in Development (ACORD), Tripartite Training Programme (TTP), Uganda Catholic Secretariat, Concern World Wide, Health Need Uganda, Oxfam and National Forum of People Living with HIV and AIDS in Uganda. The meetings discussed project progress, examined the work plan, baseline survey report, participation in the Global Fund, Constituting the workplace policy review committee, Good Donorship Guidelines and the annual project budget.

2.9: Directors Meeting for local Project Group Organizations

The directors' meeting for LPG organizations took place at Muyenga hotel in June 2006.

The key issue for this meeting was to update the directors of the LPG organizations about the project progress so far, and address the question of whether there is added value to their individual organizations since they started to participate in the SAN! Project. The Good Donorship guidelines and request for their commitment was also shared. While some of the members said that the participating of their staff in the SAN! Project activities has indeed helped their organizations to reflect about HIV/AIDS workplace policies and have as a result developed draft policies, others said there is need to revisit the time spent on LPG activities given the individual organization role one may be playing. It was generally agreed that all directors need to support the project since it is the local group that owns it, besides the long term benefits that will accrue to them including possible access to local funding.

2.10: Skills Building Workshops

In April 2006, the Local Project Coordinator attended a three days skills development workshop in Johannesburg on building civil society resilience on HIV/AIDS. It was organized by Intrac and Care-South Africa and attended by Civil Society Organizations from East, Central, West and Southern Africa including donors from the North. This provided an opportunity of sharing practical experiences and good practices in responding to the impact of HIV/AIDS on Civil Society Organizations and identifying ways to foster effective dissemination of information and learning. The Project Coordinator presented SAN! Project experience in developing and implementing HIV/AIDS workplace policies based on openness and dialogue between CSOs and donors.

2.11: Joint Oxfam HIV/AIDS Mainstreaming Regional Meeting

The Project Coordinator attended the JOHMET meeting in Mombasa, where he participated in their strategic framework development. The main purpose was to develop the strategic business plan for the joint Oxfam International HIV/AIDS program for 2006 to 2010. The meeting focused on incorporating the strategic priorities including: internal mainstreaming, program mainstreaming focusing on livelihoods and humanitarian programs, linking and learning, and advocacy. Key outcome was agreeing on various ways of working together and sharing country plans for 2006-2010. Next meeting for JOHMET will be in Rwanda in October 2006 and focus will be on improving the monitoring and evaluation framework.

2.12: Follow-up Visit to Organizations

A three days follow up visit in western region took place in June 2006. The purpose was to discuss with the lead organization their role and expectations as the lead organization. It was also to carry out on sport assessment in terms of what organizations are doing since the last workshop on workplace policy development and get to know why some organizations are not taking any step to forward their draft policies to the coordination office as earlier agreed. It was noticed that organizations still think that they needed to wait until funding starts for them to proceed with workplace policy implementation. The lead organization has not moved as fast as expected in developing workplace policy and implementing and act as an example.

There is a need to give more support to Kabale and Fortportal dioceses since they seem not to fully participate in the project activities. While they are willing to participate in this project, the structure under which decisions are made is wide and beyond the control of focal point person. There is need to equip the staff for the lead organizations with skills on monitoring and evaluating the implementation process. Lead organizations should also internalize their expected role in this. While some organizations visited have started on the process, they need to finalize the development of HIV/AIDS workplace policies that would guide them

2.13: Meetings with Health Service Providers

The SAN! Project coordinator together with SAN! Project office had a discussion with Micro Care Ltd. This is part of the plans to convince organizations take on a health service insurance provider that is willing to include HIV/AIDS in the health package being offered. The team was updated on how far Micro Care Ltd has gone in negotiations with Pharm Access Foundation on health insurance issues in Uganda. While there is a possibility of SAN! Project being involved in this at a level of a partner, there is a need for further discussions especially on the issue of volunteer workers that are not catered for by the project to access treatment. In order to have a variety of health providers that organizations can talk to, the Project Coordinator had a discussion with the Director of African Air Rescue (AAR) health service Ltd who are also willing to work with the SAN! Project on this issue. We have planned another meeting with African Air Ambulance (AAA).

2.14: Applied Research Component

A supervisor for operational research that is based in the Netherlands has been identified, agreed to carry out the responsibility and visited the project in June 2006. The SAN! Project team held discussions with the two applied research consultants (Makerere and Amsterdam Universities) to start on the research process. The consultants reviewed the baseline survey tools and participated in meetings with the directors and LPG committee members. He drafted the plan of action to be followed.

2.15: Efforts to access Local Funding

The project responded to the Global Fund against AIDS, Malaria and TB call for ideas on priority areas. This was at the initial stage for developing the country proposal from which the Global Fund committee will base to call for proposals from individual organization to apply for grants. SAN! Project wrote a concept paper and submitted it to the

GFAMT Technical Review Team. The idea was to have the SAN! Project considered as a separate constituency that would receive funding through the lead organization (ACORD). It is hoped that this funding opportunity will be extended to the project since the workplace policy issues have been considered as a priority in the country proposal.

3.0: Observations During the Reporting Period

- Stigma and discrimination of staff living with HIV/AIDS (confirmed/unconfirmed), though declining as reported in the baseline survey and observed during the various capacity building workshops, it still remains one of the obstacles that most organizations face in establishing a supportive workplace environment. It is important that organizations consider this as an aspect that affects access to treatment and find practical ways to deal with it in the policy guidelines and programs.
- The Good Donorship Guidelines have added value and increased confidence among participating organizations in understanding the ways they can open dialogue with their donors in addressing issues related to financing workplace policy programs.
- The selection of organizations to take a lead at a regional level has made involvement, dialogue and sharing information easier between the SAN! Project and participating organizations. However, there is need to facilitate the lead organizations and build their capacity to carry out the expected responsibilities within the agreed project framework.
- Management in most organizations continues to give support to the SAN! Project on workplace policy development engagements. This has been exhibited by their participation, openness and identifying the focal point persons to follow up workplace policy issues in their organizations.
- Organizations now understand the need to operationalize the policy within their abilities and structure without first waiting for funding. They have identified some aspects of the workplace policy that do not need a lot of funding, as was the case before their sensitization on how to develop a workplace policy program.
- The continued support of the LPG committee and their directors in guiding the project is very helpful and has given the project its unique representation of a local structure that feel project ownership. However, there is a need for continuous encouragement to appreciate their role and the long term benefits of their participation to their individual organizations
- Simple and effective monitoring and evaluation framework for the workplace policy implementation is not yet in place. This needs to be developed to enable the logical monitoring of all developments for future evaluation.

- There is an opportunity for participating organizations to attract financial support locally given the fact that HIV and AIDS workplace policy issues have been recognised as a priority area. This would help to address the question of sustainability of policy programs. There are other networks and organizations that provide care, support and treatment like TASO, Uganda Cares (etc) who are willing to share information and possibly extend these services to participating organizations
- Though the lead organizations are willing to be part of the capacity building process and take a lead in achieving the project objectives, it is noted that they do not have capacity to carry out their role effectively. There is need to equip the staff for the lead organizations with skills on monitoring and evaluating the implementation process.
- Most organizations need encouragement and follow-up at this stage of policy development. The focal point persons are not yet confident to lead the policy development and program process within their organizations.

4.0 Planned Activities

The work plan and budget for the next six months have been approved by the LPG and finances dispatched by SAN! Netherlands. The project implementation will proceed as per work plan. The interventions are geared towards developing the workplace policies and ensuring that they are translated into programs. The first six months of year two of the project will mainly focus on providing capacity building and technical support to organizations developing workplace policies and transforming the policies into programs. Some of the planned activities include among others; support supervision and monitoring visits, policy guidelines reviews, setting up policy review committee, developing information data base, capacity building for lead organizations, developing M&E framework, finalising the project document, discussions on health insurance scheme and working with the operation research team.

5.0 Financial Expenditure

The project spent a total of UG 82,453,667 on activity, administration and facilitation costs from January to end of June 2006. Part of this money was from the transitional budget that had earlier been approved. However, this should change and the budget for each period should be drafted in time to allow approval and funds spent appropriately to the activity plan. Once again, the project acknowledges and thanks the SAN co-funding agencies in the Netherlands for the approval and extension of the financial support to enable the project undertake the above-mentioned activities. The audited books of accounts for this phase will be available at the close of December 2006.

6.0 Conclusions

The project is preceding well and the current speed and interest organizations have shown to address HIV and AIDS at place of workplace is encouraging. The positive reception and requests the project has received should be an opportunity for developing and implementing comprehensive workplace policies. This shows that policy development and operationalization is possible especially if all stakeholders are involved through collaboration and networking. The involvement of development partners in the SAN! Project need to be promoted in the next phase. The next phase will emphasize on translating policy into programs.

Annex 1: SAN! Project Activity Plan -January to December 2006

N0.	Activities	Lead Roles	Results	2006						
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Baseline Survey									
1.1	Consultant selection & Tools Dev't,	PC/Yvette/	-Consultant Selected -Research tools	X						
	Data collection, analysis & write-up	Consultant & PC	Baseline situation of participating organization		X	X	X			
1.2	Baseline survey results dissemination	Consultant/PC	Results shared with partners						X	
2	HIV/AIDS Work Place Policy Dev't									
2.1	Regional Sensitization workshops	PC/Facilitator	All organizations involved in SAN programs	X		X				
2.2	Policy development trainings	PC/Facilitator	-Skills acquired -WPP developed -Work plans & budgets developed				X	X		
3	Workplace policy implementation									
3.1	WPP review guidelines	PC/LPG								
3.2	WPP Review Meetings	PC/consultant/Yvette	Comprehensive policies seconded for support							
3.3	Selection of lead organization in each region	PC	3 Orgs. Accept the task					X	X	
3.4	Building capacity training for staff in the lead orgs.	PC/Facilitator	Skills enhanced							
3.7	Support Supervision visits	PC/Lead org.	-Assessment reports -Skill building -Policy assessment							
3.8	Discussions with Health Care Prov	PC/LPG/Yvette							X	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Project Capacity building & Coordination									
4.1	Project doc. Dev't	PC/LPG/ Yvette	Strategic framework developed							
4.2	Organization leadership Course	PC	Enhancement of management skills							
4.3	Appraisal for PC	Yvette, ACORD	PC appraised							
4.4	Develop funding proposal	PC/LPG/ Yvette	Proposal in place							
4.5	Developing Work plan & Budget for next phase	PC/Yvette	Work plan Budget							
4.6	Annual Leave	ACORD	PC on leave							
4.7	Development of Info. Data base	PC/Resource	Data base in place			X				
4.8	LPG Meetings	PC	Review & decision making							
5	Strengthening Collaboration/Networks									
5.1	Project registration with FUE	PC	Working together	X		X				
5.2	Meetings with development partners	PC/Yvette	Better understanding of SAN project				X		X	
5.3	Developing MOU & org. chart	PC/LPG/Yvette	-MOUs with ACORD, organizations -Chart in place							
	World AIDS day									
	Mapping of development partners	PC	Participation list of development partners in Uganda							
	Participation in National & International conferences	PC/Yvette	Shared SAN! Project experience							
	Directors of LPG org meeting	PC/LPG/Yvette	Meeting held						X	
	Lobby & Advocacy efforts	PC/LPG/Yvette	-Participation in national debates		X				X	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7

