

ZAMBIA

CPO Title: Children's and Community Empowerment

CPO code: 12

Program objectives

The goal of the CPO is to improve the participation of children, their families and communities in the development process.

Objectives:

1. To have effective children's groups in all communities by 2009
2. To promote the understanding and respect for Child Rights in all communities by 2009
3. That communities own and manage the development process and community development projects in all communities by 2009

Summary of Program

In this program, Plan is involving children as active participants in the development process and projects.

It builds children's capacity and self-confidence to, themselves, be the lead agents in identifying and addressing their priority issues. Plan is raising awareness about its role and promote practices to all members of the community that reflect knowledge, understanding and respect, and behavior consistent with children's rights. It strengthens community leadership structures such as CBDs, particularly ADCs/RDCs, CHWs, TBAs, CBDs, PTAs, seed growers associations to ensure well-managed community development projects that address children's and the wider community's unmet rights.

Progress of the Program

CCCD and Child Participation

Staffs have been trained in the CCCD concept and have used child participatory methodologies in the phase in process for new communities in Mansa PU. Participatory Learning Appraisal methods have been adapted in all project cycles. The CCCD approach has ensured active children and adults' participation, and is enhancing ownership and sustainability of development programs in all program units. Active child participation has been integrated in efforts to promote best practices in project implementation. In line with the CCCD approach, open exchange between children, their families and communities, development practitioners, and policymakers has been enhanced in order to develop effective approaches to improve the lives of girls and boys. Children's participation in the community development process and development projects has become key to the realization of children's rights. Children's representative groups have been established and participate in Area Development Committees/Resident Development Committees (ADCs/RDCs) representing interests and priorities of children such as in children's radio programs, the primary school improvement program, and child-to-child education on the rights of children.

Children's Groups and Sponsorship communications

Children's groups have been facilitated to design and produce their own communications with sponsors and others. Sponsorship communications have targeted development education and reflect program progress, important development issues affecting poor children, and measures that promote the protection and advancement of the rights of the child. Children now communicate openly with their sponsors and 12 articulate their unmet rights and priority needs. Development education among children, sponsors and donors is beginning to create a better understand the realities of the lives of poor children.

Enhanced Child Rights Awareness and Protection

Awareness activities on the rights of children have been done in this sector. Activities have focused on child rights pertaining to participation and protection against abuse, negligence, exploitation and behavior in particular. To help protect children from violence and other abuse, better communication between adults and children is being promoted as well as letting the children speak through child media programs. The Mazabuka Child Media project that is being done in conjunction with Youth Media Zambia has offered rural children an opportunity to share their experiences and teach others about children's rights. Advocacy at national level has been going on through meetings in networks and media publicity - radio and video documentaries for instance, as well as printed media. At community level in all PUs, advocacy to educate parents, community, church leaders various audiences on child rights has been done through workshops, seminars and community meetings, drama groups.

Access to Information

Children and their families' have been assisted to access information to widen children's horizons so that they can make informed choices about their own, and their community's, development. This is being done through a closer relationship between Plan, children, families, communities, civil

society organizations, Government institutions and donors in effective partnerships and collaborative alliances. Information collected from various networks as well as information produced based on the programs Plan is implementing is shared widely.

Building Relationships

Efforts have been made to enhance existing partnerships, while new ones are being created particularly with like-minded CBOs, NGOs and donor agencies. Plan staff have participated in local, national and international networks for advocacy on issues in pertinent areas in which Plan has experience. The sector has partnerships with government through relevant line ministries, INGO sub-group on children's issues, which Plan chairs, the Children in Need Network (CHIN), and the coordinating committee of the Global Movement for Children (GMC) on issues of HIV/AIDS, Police Victim Support Unit on Child abuse issues, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) on child counseling, and Youth Media on children's participation in collecting and disseminating information on children.

Community Capacity Building and Empowerment

Plan has provided capacity building and empowerment for community members, children and CBOs particularly ADCs/RDCs, to manage their own programs ensuring community ownership and sustainability. Gender balance in the composition of ADCs/RDCs is promoted. Women and children are involved as equal partners in project Implementation through other community groups. In the capacity-building process, emphasis is given to awareness raising on child rights and gender quality, considering local as well as national cultural factors and traditions that inhibit the participation of women and children in development. Specific activities have included the following:

- Training of community based development organizations in particular the RDCs/ADCs in all program units. These CBOs were trained in managing development projects, gender and child rights. The training emphasized the importance of women and children's participation in development.
- Established children's groups in all program units and strengthened existing ones. The Children's groups have been conducting child rights awareness and monitoring of child rights abuses in their communities.
- Child Rights Awareness and Protection activities were conducted in the year targeting children, parents, local leaders, church leaders, government officers and CBOs. These include training in child rights, legal processes, meetings in communities on children's rights, as well as media campaigns on radio, television and print media. Child to child clubs for in and out of school children continued raising awareness on children's rights in their communities targeting fellow children and parents.
- Para-legal desks to provide legal advice to communities were established in Chadiza Community.
- Advocacy on children's rights – Plan continued to work with other organizations in raising issues on children's rights. We participated in various network meetings such as the INGO forum on Child Protection, Committee on UN Study on Violence against Children, Violence against women committee and birth Registration stakeholders meetings. We had meetings with government ministries dealing with issues of children on various issues.
- Gender awareness workshops targeted at local leaders and their spouses were conducted in all program units. More than 400 leaders participated in the training. The trained local leaders continued conducting community awareness and mobilization on gender issues. Local leaders in Plan communities now appreciate women's rights and the need for partnership –equal participation of women and men in development. They have started participating in house chores. They now know that there is no work, which is for a woman or man. They now know that both women and men can do work. The Local leaders have continued sharing information and knowledge on gender and women's rights with people in their communities. They themselves are acting as role models to other members of the community in promoting and practicing gender equality in their homes and community.
- Workshops on Rights of the Girls were held in Chibombo and Chadiza program areas. In Chibombo, 20 children were trained. The same number (20) of children was trained in Chadiza as child rights promoters and educators. VSU, YWCA and LADA conducted the training in Chibombo while the one in Chadiza was done by a retired police officer. The topics covered included: Gender Roles; Myths and Facts; Women's Rights; Children's Rights; Girl Child Education; Self-awareness and self esteem; Domestic Violence; HIV/AIDS; and Communication skills. The children that were trained in Chibombo and Chadiza have formed Child-to-Child clubs on children's rights. Two clubs were formed in each program area. Children who were trained now know their rights and responsibilities. They are now able to share information and knowledge on Children's Rights and Responsibilities as well as women's rights with other children and parents in their communities. They are also monitoring children's rights abuses in the community and take necessary action.

Gender Audit

- Initial activities for the gender audit were implemented to set a better understanding of Plan's position on gender and to what extent gender has been mainstreamed in the programs. At country office a Gender Reference Group composed of 6 staff members was established. A gender training of the group was done. An assessment of staff in Mazabuka Program unit, Advisors and members of the Country Management Team on the level of gender awareness and how they mainstream gender in their program work as well as an assessment of Plan policies, strategic objectives, program outlines and the gender breakdown of Human Resource composition, has been done. The Gender Reference Group is very keen to share information and knowledge on gender with other members of staff at all program areas including Country Office. Plan can learn from the experience. The assessment indicates that Plan Staff are at various levels with regard to gender awareness and how to mainstream gender in their program work. Many Plan Staff do not understand gender and its relevance to their work as such Gender has not received the attention it deserves as a key element towards achieving Plan's objectives and goal.

Strengths

There has been good collaboration with newly developed partners like Youth Media and networking with UNICEF and the government on Universal Birth Registration and other legal issues affecting children. The sector now has an advisor for the first time, which will technically guide the program. There is potential for RESA to learn from the experience of Zambia on the Gender Audit and strategy to be developed out of the Zambian experience.

Weaknesses

There are still a number of traditional practices and norms that will slow the pace of women and children involvement and participation in development programs. These are however, likely not to adversely affect the program outcome as means have been put in place to mitigate the impact thorough training of traditional leaders and other community leaders.

Opportunities

54% of the Zambian populations are children. This offers an opportunity to champion children's rights and the participation of children in decision-making. The government willingness to domesticate the CRC offers an opportunity to work with the government to enact an appropriate CRC for the country.

Small-Grant Multi-funded Output Reports

(A) General Output Report

CPD name: Children's and Community Empowerment

Output title: Awareness raising for children, parents and communities on Rights of the Child (ROC)

Output code: SC10

Multi-funded: Y

Unit of output: Number of groups

Description of output:

Raising awareness of children's rights on Universal Birth Registration (UBR) in all Plan supported communities, coupled with advocacy activities of calls for action to government.

What is the problem you were trying to solve?

A study conduct by Plan late FY04 revealed a negligible number of children with birth certificates. Various reasons from parents for failing to obtain certificates for their children included a lack of knowledge, the difficult procedure to get a certificate, and the distance to travel to the registration centre. Most of them did not understand the importance of certificates to children accessing other rights and to proving children's identities. Government on the other hand has not strengthened the law enshrined in the Laws of Zambia under the Births and Deaths Registration Act, of 1973, Chapter 51, which provides for the compulsory registration of all children born in Zambia. This has been a concern particularly because it assented to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

How did your activity/ output help to solve the problem?

Children and parents now understand the benefits of registering all children. They are able to explain the implications of not registering a child and so far, the number of parents applying for certificates has steadily increased. Once government structures are in place to ease some of the problems such as distance, more will be done to increase the number of registered children through conducting mobile registration events right in the communities. Advocacy efforts are on going to lobby parliament to pass the draft bill that currently exists to decentralize birth registration from the Provincial Registrar Office to grass root levels at the District Assembly.

How did/does it relate to the program (CPD)?

It contributes to the CPD's core function of championing children's rights.

Community or SF/SC specific outputs:

Community.

Who contributed / participated and how?

With funding from Plan, children staged drama performances at the campaign launches which were reported on national radio and television. Plan has partnered with various NGOs and civil society to lobby government to decentralize registration offices.

Generic lessons learnt

Concerted efforts to convince people of their children's rights do yield positive results.

Application of principles

Ensuring child centeredness and cooperation.

Actual number of benefits broken down by SC/SFs and community

36

PU Specific Output Reports**General information items**

Output Title: Awareness raising for children, parents and communities on Rights of the Child (ROC)

PU name: Chibombo

PU Code: 2060

Output code: SC10

Time Period of output production: May to June 2005

Total Expenditure in US\$: 10,000

Summary of what was done:

The UBR campaign was launched at district level and in eight (8) communities in Chibombo district. Community members came together and constructed temporary shelters to house the special guests and prepared food and traditional drinks. Children ranging between 3 and 18 years of age from ECCD and basic schools presented child rights messages centred on UBR in poetry, testimonials, cultural songs/ dances and role plays. The events' masters of ceremonies were children. This gave courage to others to be brave to speak out on abuses that they suffer.

Quotes

Golf Kampekete (10 yrs) - Grade 4 boy at Kampekete Basic School "My school drama group was invited to participate at the UBR launch at Ibis gardens. I was one of those who went. We danced and said poems to tell the people why little children need to have a birth certificates. It was nice at Ibis Gardens and there were other children from other schools also doing poems and dancing. At the end we all danced together with the big people who came from Lusaka. It was my first time to go to such a place and tell big people about a birth certificate. When we came back, I told my mother that I want a birth certificate so that I can have an identity even if I am only a child. She told me she would take me to the Boma so that she can register me and my brother and sisters. My mother has also told her friends to take their children so that they can no longer have problems to enter them into grade one."

Niza Sinkala (17 yr old boy) - Grade II pupil at Chibombo High School

"All children should have a birth certificate to protect them from abuse and give them an identity. When I went to participate in the UBR district launch as part of my school drama group, I realised just how fortunate I am to have a birth certificate. It reminded me of the experience my family went through after my father died. His relatives wanted to take all the property that he left and distribute us children to relatives who could take care of us leaving my mother alone. It was only after my brother and the administrator of my father's property went to seek legal advice that they produced our birth certificates and were allowed to inherit our father's property and continue living with my mother. I now want to spread the news of how important it is to all my friends and relatives so that children like me should not be reduced to street kids after greedy family members have grabbed property. I also know that my birth certificate will help me get a scholarship or government bursaries when I finish my grade twelve and go university as I want to study engineering and be an engineer like my late father. I have all his old books and so it will be easy for me."

Mrs. Felistus Muchila - Headteacher Kampekete Basic School

"The grade 2 - 4 children went to perform at the District launch of the UBR and after they came back they lobbied their parents and friends to make it a point to obtain a birth certificate. Many parents have approached the school to find out the modalities of how to access a birth certificate and we have given them the necessary advice and directed them on where to go. It is evident that access to appropriate health services due to accurate information on the ages of children has improved even for those parents who have just recently gone to the Council Boma to register their children. In the past it was not perceived as important to accurately know the age of children but through us as a school and our enrollment criteria the community has understood the importance of the same."

CPD name: Children's and Community Empowerment

Output Title: Communications Volunteer Training and Support

Output Code: 5A13

Multi-funded: N

Unit of output: Number of sessions

Description of output:

Provision of material support and conducting 6 five-day training sessions for community volunteers in facilitating children's groups in producing sponsorship communications.

What is the problem you were trying to solve?

It came to light in Chibombo program unit that very few sponsored children were writing their own communications to their sponsors. Community representatives were writing most of them and as a result, only a fraction of the sponsored children appreciated the real benefit of building relationships and understanding the need to communicate with their sponsors. Sponsors also expressed dissatisfaction in the quality of communications, which usually did not reflect the true feelings of the child.

How did your activity/output help to solve the problem?

The volunteers have a clearer understanding of their role in children's production of sponsorship communications. Through topics that included quality control, they are able to better guide children in demonstrating their experiences through various means that include art and craft. And as one of their responsibilities is to deliver and collect communications to and from sponsored children, some of them were each supported with a bag, pair of gumboots, raincoat and bicycle to ensure that they work effectively.

How does it relate to the program (CPD)?

It contributes to increasing the percentage of sponsored family representative groups and sponsored families that take over responsibility of sponsorship and development. It also ensures quality communications productions that satisfy the sponsors and contribute greatly towards the building of relations between children and their sponsors.

Community or SF/SC specific outputs:

Community.

Who contributed / participated and how?

The ADC selected trainees from the communities in conformity with requirements, i.e. that only capable community members were identified. They were also involved in monitoring the participation of the sponsorship representatives. Plan on the other hand engaged qualified trainers and monitored and evaluated the performance of the trainees. In addition, Plan gave direction, guidance and funded the project.

Generic lessons learnt:

The community volunteers considered the training and material support a strong incentive and motivator that has contributed to quality communication. In Malombe community, 100 children are able to write their own communications.

Application of principles:

Child Centeredness to advance the rights of children to freely express their knowledge of improvements taking place in their lives.

Actual benefit: 249 Community Volunteers.