

Note on analysis and assessment of HIV/AIDS mainstreaming within selected EU development cooperation projects in Zimbabwe

This Note attempts to assess whether and with what success the issue of HIV/AIDS is being mainstreamed within 13 EU-funded development projects in Zimbabwe and, on that basis, to draw some conclusions and make recommendations. The assessment is based on the findings of a ROM monitoring team that incorporated the HIV/AIDS criterion into a normal ROM mission in the period August-September 2006.

Mainstreaming

Like charity and sustainable development, the jargon word “mainstreaming” covers many sins and is open to many interpretations. In this Note, mainstreaming is taken to mean incorporating the HIV factor as comprehensively as possible into all development and humanitarian actions of whatever kind and in whatever sector. It is also understood to imply **action**, not simply statements of principle, policy or good intentions.

Mainstreaming has two broad aspects – internal mainstreaming, whereby an organization incorporates the factor in terms of its own structure, staff, workplace and internal management, and external mainstreaming, in which the organization takes account of the HIV factor in relation to its external programme – strategic and tactical conception, feasibility, planning, resourcing (human, financial and temporal), implementation, partner relationships, monitoring and evaluation. The basic approach followed here is that put forward by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC/DEZA) in their consultative paper “Mainstreaming HIV in practice” and in “SDC Aids Policy 2002-2007”.

In this context, mainstreaming does not refer simply to non-HIV specific actions. The question must be asked whether HIV-specific actions themselves are sufficiently mainstreamed to provide or contribute to solutions appropriate to the scope and volume of the HIV threat. Mainstreaming in this concept presupposes that the genuine and long-term solution to HIV/AIDS comprises treatment where needed plus prevention or containment through life style change which includes the creation of a sustainable livelihood. The spectrum, therefore, ranges from direct treatment to sustainable development.

Summary of specific findings and recommendations per project monitored¹

HIV-specific projects:

1. SANTE/2004/097-238: MdM/FACT: Mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS on children and young people in Chipinge. (Monitor: Alicia S. Pieterse)

There is no conscious mainstreaming approach. Positive aspects include a workplace policy (awareness, VCT and treatment for affected staff), nutrition gardens, inclusion of PLWHAs in project management and a strong education/training component.

Recommendations: study the benefits of implementing a clear mainstreaming approach; Strengthen education, skills and income- generation potential especially of PLWHAs, women and vulnerable groups; Prioritize M&E systems, share successful practices.

¹ Based on Notes supplied by each monitor which are available on request.

2. SANTE/2004/078-699: CESVI/COSVI/ISPED: From PPTCT to a comprehensive HIV Treatment and care package and ONG-PVD/2004/065-358: DRC/ZRC: Community based HIV/AIDS prevention in Zimbabwe.
 (Monitor: Clare Sycamore)

There is no formal policy or strategy of mainstreaming within the workplace. Neither project incorporated nutritional/food security issues or partnered with other organizations working in relevant fields. The CESVI project takes little or no account of promoting and using Zimbabwean expertise, indicating an underestimation of the value of national knowledge on mainstreaming both in the workplace and through the projects core activities. The ZRC project maximises local expertise but does not take advantage of international expertise that could be available for mainstreaming through the IFRC. Both projects in question address wide and heterogeneous beneficiary populations, making mainstreaming and effective targeting difficult. Neither project has formal mainstreaming policies for gender and environment.

Recommendations: ensure that projects integrate HIV/AIDS factors into their total working environment; promote multi-disciplinary and inclusive approaches; promote operational partnerships with non-HIV specific projects (e.g. community development) which have solution-oriented expertise to offer; improve techniques of identifying and profiling beneficiaries; integrate HIV, gender and environment (as one exercise) into mainstreaming actions

3. SANTE/2005/100-200: UNFPA/ZNFPC: Increasing utilisation of comprehensive youth friendly SRH services at district level in Zimbabwe.
 (Monitor: Kevin Lyonette)

There is no specific mainstreaming policy but the project does aim to facilitate treatment, counselling and prevention services for vulnerable youth within the ZNFPC programme which is itself located within the national system. The longer-term, solution-oriented aspects of livelihood, skill and capacity building or employment are not dealt with at all. Identification of beneficiaries is generic and there is no specific policy for mainstreaming gender and environment.

Recommendations: integrate HIV/AIDS into the complete working environment; in an inclusive approach, find competent operational partners to supplement HIV-specific activities with solution oriented livelihood and income generation opportunities; improve profiling and targeting of beneficiaries; incorporate HIV, gender and environment into the mainstream as one inclusive exercise.

4. ONG-PVD/2003/065-376: TdH Italy/FOST: Support to Mazowe and Guruve commercial farm communities to respond to the needs of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs). (Monitor: Chris Hichibala)

Note: this project is included under the HIV-specific category given the likelihood that the OVCs are the children of parents who have died from HIV/AIDS.

No evidence of internal mainstreaming; treatment and awareness are provided and a nutritional garden (mini-irrigation scheme) works well but on a limited scale.

Human Rights and Democracy projects

5. DDH/2005/108-341: MISA: Open the airwaves broadcasting campaign in Zimbabwe. (Monitor: Rea Simigiannis)

No evidence of a specific internal mainstreaming policy and practice. Externally, HIV/AIDS, given its national and local importance, would logically be a regular

theme of discussion and analysis on community radio but it is not specifically planned as such.

Recommendations: implement an internal programme and provide for full and regular treatment of the issue in radio broadcasts.

6. DDH/2003/075-534: Commonwealth Fund: Zimbabwe Local Democracy Enhancement. (Monitor: Rea Simigiannis)

Only one municipality has included PLWHAs as a stakeholder or interest group. The Urban Governance Index (of HABITAT/UN) includes HIV/AIDS but the issue was not given high priority.

Recommendations: formulate and implement a full mainstreaming policy where HIV/AIDS is a fundamental aspect of local governance.

7. DDH/2004/088-891: ZLHR: Capacity building of human rights defenders in Zimbabwe to optimize their basic human rights in the prevailing legal and socio-political environment. (Monitor: Barbara Ackah-Yensu)

A good internal programme is in place. Externally, ZLHR has set up an HIV/AIDS and Human Rights Unit in 2004 and is meeting with stakeholders to develop an HIV/AIDS Charter for Zimbabwe.

Recommendation: continue as planned.

8. DDH/2004/063-999: LRF: Application for the Legal Resource Foundation's Paralegal programme in the Midlands and Masvingo provinces. (Monitor: Barbara Ackah-Yensu)

Internally, a good workplace programme. Externally, workshops are being organized on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights and a pamphlet on HIV/AIDS and the Law has been published.

Recommendation: continue as planned

Community development projects

9. ONG-PVD/2004/ 095-182: AFRICA NOW/DDP: Increasing income opportunities from smallholder dairy production. (Monitor: Chris Hichibala)

Little evidence of specific mainstreaming. No real attempt to deal substantively with the issue.

Recommendation: implement a full mainstreaming programme.

10. 9 ACP ZIM 3: NAO/ZDCP: Developing communities programme Phase II. (Monitor: Kevin Lyonette)

No evidence of any mainstreaming policy and practice despite strong recommendations from the Final Evaluation of Phase I. The PMU has drawn up an Action Plan to implement the recommendations but no action has been taken in regard to HIV, gender or environment.

Recommendation: formulate and implement a full mainstreaming of HIV, gender and environment as a basically important aspect of feasibility, planning, implementation and M&E.

11. 9 ACP ZIM 4: NAO/MPP: 13th Microprojects programme. (Monitor: George Hayford)

Internally, there is a deliberate policy and guidelines. Externally, there is little or nothing.

Recommendation: formulate a specific and comprehensive policy and Action Plan which includes the integration of HIV/AIDS, gender and environment.

12. Stabex 94: NAO/ CTC: Stabex Cotton Training project. (Monitor: George Hayford)

The Cotton Training Centre understands the HIV/AIDS issue and has put in place a good and effective plan both internally and externally. Workshops on HIV/AIDS are an integral part of the training curriculum.

Recommendation: strengthen the existing good practice by a specific and comprehensive plan incorporating HIV/AIDS, gender and environment.

Commonalities identified

- With the laudable exceptions of the CTC, LRF and ZLHR projects, there is little or no evidence of systematic mainstreaming of the HIV/AIDS issue either internally or externally.
- Many project managers pay lip service to the idea. A number say they have a policy but few show any real understanding of the issue and of how to address it in a systematic, programmatic and inclusive manner. The intimate linkages and dependencies between HIV/AIDS, gender and the environment are not acknowledged.
- There seems to be a real lack of operational guidelines on **how** to mainstream the issue(s).
- Few, if any, of the projects assessed showed a vision of solutions. The project activities were necessary but insufficient in terms of achieving genuine long-term solutions.
- The HIV-specific projects generally suffered from a lack of specific profiling and defined targeting of beneficiaries. See 2 above.
- No project showed the use of operational, multi-disciplinary partnerships in pursuit of long-term solutions.

Recommendations**1. National level:**

- Acknowledge that, tragically, HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe is as routine and basic an element of daily life as water, air and energy while being a critical national issue.
- Recognize that, while all actions connected with preventing or treating HIV/AIDS may be considered positive, unless they are part of or linked to a context that provides solutions to the problem, their impact will be limited and probably temporary. They may well be necessary (e.g. awareness) but they will also be insufficient. The long-term solution to HIV/AIDS comprises treatment where needed and prevention or containment through life style change which includes the creation of a sustainable alternative livelihood. All programmes and projects should be tested against that formula and spectrum of activities.
- The Government should legislate that each organization must formulate and publish a policy and programme for mainstreaming HIV/AIDS within the workplace as a normal part of Health and Safety Regulations.
- The National AIDS Council should be pushed into action on mainstreaming HIV/AIDS. (Note: It is scandalous that three members of the ROM team separately tried to make appointments for interview with the NAC but were told that "they were too busy") The NAC could easily lead the way on

developing an inclusive approach to HIV/AIDS mainstreaming and, particularly, on developing M&E systems to achieve that aim.

2. Delegation level:

- Establish regular review of its own internal mainstreaming policy and practice.
- Externally, develop a policy and comprehensive operational checklist for use in the normal process of assessing potential projects and of M&E of existing projects. The checklist should cover the spectrum mentioned above of treatment where needed and prevention or containment through life style change which includes the creation of a sustainable alternative livelihood. Each project proposal or assessment should demonstrate programmatic components or connections (operational partnerships) dealing with the various elements of that spectrum, leading towards solutions rather than incomplete or temporary measures.
- Given the intimate linkages between HIV/AIDS and gender and the equally intimate linkages / thresholds which exist between Development, Health and Environment, mainstreaming should aim at integrating all three issues within one unified exercise. Operational guidelines and M&E systems should reflect this unity of concept, purpose and practice.

2. Project level:

- Mutatis mutandis, apply the recommendations addressed to the Delegation.
- Incorporate the detailed mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS, gender and environment as one exercise into project concepts, baseline data assessments, feasibility, planning, costing/budgeting, implementation, management and M&E.
- Be innovative and open to forging pragmatic and effective operational partnerships with others who have different but complementary skills so as to cover the solution-oriented spectrum and to have a greater prospect of providing an inclusive, comprehensive and sustainable range of benefits.
- Be rigorous in self-evaluation and M&E on these issues.

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