

ZIMBABWE

ISIPHALA SENTANDANE/ ZUNDE RENHERERA

Starting Year: 2005

Main Topic Area: MITIGATION - OVC

Contact Person:

Mrs. Nelly Tapelo
Masendu Primary School
Box 1410
Plumtree

Implementers:

The project operates under the auspices of Tjinyunyu Babili Trust and is being implemented by the community.

Funding:

Funding comes from the community and well-wishers.

Objectives

- To improve the quality of life of OVC and other vulnerable groups such as the elderly
- To support OVC in school with stationary and other accessories.
- To develop local innovative ways to manage the impact of HIV and AIDS.

Background

Like many communities in Zimbabwe, Ward 7 in the Bulilima District of Plumtree has been recording an increase in the number of orphans due to AIDS related deaths. In response to the plight of the orphans, the community began consultations to identify sustainable interventions. The community leaders decided to take a look and learn visit to Chimanimani District, where they were exposed to various community initiatives that support OVC. Tjinyunyu Babili, a local community based organisation led this process. Ward 7 has six villages and as at May 2006 had 218 identified orphans.

On return from the look and learn trip, the community leaders engaged the rest of the community, and decided that the local community must take a lead in solving local problems as opposed to waiting for external donors. The desire for self-reliance was spurred by the realisation that external donors only provide temporary relief as they usually leave and yet the problem may stay longer. Although external support would still be welcome as complimentary, the community was convinced that they must take the leading role in establishing the response to the problem. Thus the idea of Isiphala SeNtandane was mooted

ZIMBABWE

Main Activities

The project is coordinated at village level by village coordinators who form a link between the village and Tjinyunyu Babili Trust. The village coordinators collect reports from village volunteers who compile registers indicating the number of orphans as well as their needs in their designated areas.

There is a village volunteer for every six to 10 households, who undertakes two household visits a week to collect information on the needs of the identified orphans. These registers are compiled into a consolidated village register, which is then shared with the Ward AIDS Action Committee and Tjinyunyu Babili Trust.

Using the collected information on the number of orphans and their needs, the villages begin a process of mobilising resources to meet the expressed needs.

The project collects various items such as food, clothing, school stationery, toiletries, blankets, and any others that may assist in the welfare of orphans. Households in the ward have developed a giving spirit and they contribute a portion of whatever food they would have sourced. The community of ward 7 have also agreed on an interesting innovation, where upon realising proceeds from personal or communal projects, the proprietors donate a tenth of their proceeds towards the orphan project. This concept is however not enforced but depends on the good will of the community.

Following a near good harvest in the 2005/06 farming season, the project has managed to collect over 15 bags of maize that are kept at different distribution points in the ward.

Returning citizens based in neighbouring Botswana and South Africa contribute the bulk of the clothes and toiletries that are received by the project. The returning citizens and other members of the community also make cash donations, which are used to buy requirements for OVC and sometimes pay school fees. School fees have recently gone up and the initiative is facing some difficulties in paying school fees for OVC.

Collected items are kept at a village "Isiphala" from where they are distributed to those in need following the information in the registers.

Outcome

The project has united the people of ward 7 in their resolve to respond to their own problems using homegrown initiatives. As a result the 218 orphans in the ward receive constant support from their own community with limited external support.

Due to overwhelming contributions from members of the community, especially in the form of clothes, the project has now targeted the elderly and other indigent people in the community who can be assisted with the clothes.

During the drought of 2005-2006, the initiative procured maize from the Grain Marketing Board and assisted orphans in the area with that maize.

ZIMBABWE

Lessons Learned

- The commitment shown by the community of ward 7 in Bulilima district has clearly indicated that local problems can be addressed by local solutions through participatory methodologies.
- It has also been learnt that everyone in the community can make a difference despite the amount of individual contributions and that all people have something to contribute in the fight against HIV and AIDS.