



Regional workshop on “Strengthening responses to the Triple Threat in Southern Africa – learning from field programmes”, 02 and 03 July 2007, Maputo, Mozambique

Introduction

Southern Africa has experienced, in the last 5 years, recurrence of humanitarian emergencies driven by negative impact of climate variability, HIV/AIDS, gender inequalities and macro and micro policy environment. This has necessitated greater understanding of the complexity of livelihoods crisis facing southern Africa. Since 2006 the Southern Africa Regional Poverty Network (SARPN), Concern Worldwide (CW) and Oxfam International commissioned a joint field study covering a number of projects in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. The study was meant to identify how project activities have responded to long-term livelihood insecurity and short-term acute need. The study focused on four main areas:

1. knowledge and understanding by NGO practitioners of the drivers of food insecurity, community coping strategies in response to food insecurity and particularly differences for men and women;
2. appropriateness of the response to the ‘humanitarian imperative’ of saving lives and protecting livelihoods in response to HIV/AIDS in particular;
3. Interventions that should be strengthened to address the nexus between hunger, vulnerability and HIV/AIDS and new approaches that were being tested; and
4. Current targeting mechanisms around vulnerability and HIV/AIDS considering the gender dimensions of these and addressing inequalities.

The study points to the importance of livelihood diversification and innovative strategies, support that underpins self-reliance not perpetuating dependency, access to information, building on community coping mechanisms, close link between livelihood insecurity and politics, challenges of non-state actors in working on governance or rights issues and livelihood security. These, the study finds, will need to be complemented by programmes that are efficient and effective, adopting an integrated development approach, with strong partnerships between governments and other non-state actors, improving targeting by understanding the varying impact on groups and using participatory approaches. While recognising that these are no new issues the study points to the challenges encountered in designing programmes that effectively address these aspects.

The findings of this study are now available for dissemination to non-state actors and policy makers from southern Africa and beyond. SARPN, CW and OI are organising a two-day experience-sharing workshop to be held in Maputo, Mozambique **on 01st and 02nd July 2007**. SARPN, CW and OI recognise that there are other government and non-governmental interventions being implemented across the region in pursuit of the same goals as those drawn from projects covered during the study. There are also regional organisations working in areas such as food security, HIV/AIDS, human insecurity, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and social protection such as FANRPAN, Renewal, UN Agencies, SADC HIV/AIDS/Gender Unit and RHVP. The workshop will provide an opportunity for experiences to be shared and to reflect the results of the study.

Objectives

The objectives of the workshop are to:

- Share findings of the study and experiences of other stakeholders in the region working to address the challenges highlighted by the study.
- Promote learning from programme experience of participating organisations;
- Identify strategies through which stakeholders in the region can use the findings and experiences to inform and improve policy and practice at varying levels in the region

Expected outcomes

By the end of the workshop participants:

- Identify and agree on specific practical strategies for sharing knowledge and evidence at the local, country and regional level in responding to HIV/AIDS, hunger and vulnerability.
- Identify and suggest areas for further action research that can be explored
- Identify areas and needs for further learning of participating organisations (and of relevant other stakeholders in the respective countries)
- Identify possible policy actors and processes partners might be interested to engage with and that can be influenced by the results of current and future research.

Target group

The workshop is targeted at policy makers and influencers, practitioners and researchers from national, regional and international government and non-governmental organisations from the region. 35 participants are targeted for participation.