



Enhancing coordination among NGOs in the fight against HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UMOJA NI NGUVU: Together we are stronger (Swahili proverb, Tanzania)

NGO coordination continues to represent a delicate and challenging subject in the sphere of international development and cooperation. However it has still not yet been analyzed in detail and managed with the appropriate competence. This lack of study has hindered attempts to modify current trends and to find practical solutions to this problem.

A clear example of this type of issue was the response to Haiti earthquake in January 2010. On this occasion, Haiti, called "the Republic of NGOs" for the immense presence of NGOs, over 3,000 even before the earthquake, received many additional NGOs who flocked in to deliver aid. Regardless of their good intentions and economic commitments, the majority of their aid deliveries and responses were uncoordinated. This resulted in misinformation, fighting and confusion over aid assistance and distribution.

Coordination is a fundamental tool to avoid such a scenario. As a concept it covers many things but the main ones are: sharing of knowledge, ideas, past experiences, resources, and a call for joint actions.

This research looks firstly at the importance for NGOs to work in partnership and at the background that can encourage such talk and action. It refers also to the obstacles and challenges facing NGO coordination, showing examples of strategies already in place to enhance it and also giving recommendations on how to improve coordination and avoid miscommunication and waste of resources.

The discourse on coordination is relevant to NGOs that are willing to work together to achieve better results, sustainability and effectiveness.

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Thank you to all of you: professors, doctors, interviewees and classmates for spending some of your precious time with me sharing opinions, doubts, solutions, and giving me a broader perspective on this subject helping me to analyze this issue with a deeper and more critical point of focus.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

CBOs: Community based organizations

CHAPS: Community HIV and AIDS Prevention Strategy

GHIN: Global HIV/AIDS Initiatives Network

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

IDUs: Injecting Drug Users

IOM: International Organization for Migration

LSHTM: London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

MOH: Ministry of Health

MOHR: Ministry of Human Resources

MSM: Men who have Sex with other Men

NGO: Non-Government Organization

PLWA: People Living With HIV and AIDS

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNA-UK: United Nations Association of UK

I. Introduction

Coordination is a general problem which characterizes NGO practice and management, affecting not only the planning but also the delivery and the implementation of existing projects. In this report I will focus on coordination but with a specific reference to efforts in the fight against HIV and AIDS in countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Across Africa HIV and AIDS is posing an unprecedented challenge to individuals, communities and states. A phenomenon that is “robbing entire national economies of scarce skills, depriving children of their parents and the continent of a generation in the prime of their working lives”¹ and as such is a challenge to the human survival, human rights and human development.

Africa’s HIV crisis is complex, multi-faceted and influenced by many medical, social, economic and cultural factors. In fact we must recognize that this epidemic affects every aspect of development and it impacts all sectors in developing countries both internally and externally.

If we consider the current global dimension of our society and economy we can say that if state and non state actors will not be able to find or improve strategies and solutions to tackle the spread of these diseases, then the problem will expand at a faster pace to include developed countries as well.

These actors have the responsibility to work together to provide existing treatment for all people at an affordable price and to support the research and development of new medicines and technologies. Beside the logistic problems which often consist of scarce and inefficient public health facilities in developing countries, especially in rural areas, often managed by under-resourced and untrained staff, there are also social, economic and psychological aspects to consider. NGOs are responsible for delivering part of this aid response but very often they continue to fail to do so in the best and possible way as they do not invest appropriately or do not believe in the benefits of coordination and communication amongst themselves.

Lack of good governance combined with poor NGO coordination efforts keep affecting people and development. This is particularly noticeable during serious emergencies but it also occurs in the long run especially for those projects concerning health and sanitation.

¹ *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, Volume 10, N4, 2009

This report shows an analysis of the impact of coordination and NGO work in the HIV and AIDS sector since I agree that “any analysis of the political economy of HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa will ultimately recognize the crucial role of organizations clustered as non-governmental organizations.”² I argue that this role is changing and evolving due to many factors and one that I will take into consideration in this Thesis is the role of NGO interaction and their efforts (or disengagement) to coordinate their work and how this can advance or delay solutions and actions.

I have been working for the past four years for two NGOs in Africa (HUMANA and ALM), Malawi and Tanzania, on projects concerning Education, HIV and AIDS awareness campaigning and Micro-Credit projects targeting families affected by or living with HIV and AIDS.

An aspect that I found very challenging while working on the ground for these NGOs was the lack of effective coordination and the fragmentation in their respective working approaches, whilst trying, very often, to reach the same goals.

While working for these NGOs I contributed to creating links among different NGOs in order to establish a better communication network which, in my opinion, could have benefited the overall capacity of all the NGOs involved, both in the medium and long term. This task was very difficult because it implied to collaborate with NGOs that were not always willing to share budgets, missions and messages without any intention of competing among each other and without interacting with each NGO’s agenda and objectives, issues that I will discuss in detail in the following sections.

² Nana K. Poku and Alan Whiteside, *The political economy of AIDS in Africa*, Ashgate, Thesis, 2004

II. Methodology

The approach that I have adopted for this Thesis is essentially a qualitative examination of the current partnerships among NGOs working in the HIV and AIDS field and of the main obstacles that they encounter while delivering their work and actions looking.

The aim in particular was to understand why coordination is essential to NGO work and performance and to see what can be done to implement efforts in coordination to help to improve the process of building up NGO organizational capacity and to possibly encourage the adoption of shared codes of conduct, objectives and policies. In addition to these two issues, what I would like to highlight with this research are the different factors that are perceived as negative and which hinder the normal process of growth and success of NGOs especially those that occur while planning and coordinating their projects in partnership with other NGOs.

I will analyze data collected from interviews carried out in sub-Saharan Africa and in several countries in Europe on HIV and AIDS stigma, perception and in more detail with a special insight on the impact of inadequate cooperation, not only among NGOs but also between NGOs, the health sector, governments, donors, local communities and civil society organizations, people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS for projects that NGOs want to start or that they have already set up. The objectives of this report are to stress the importance of coordinated strategies and interventions to respond to the still uncontrollable and relentless advance of the HIV and AIDS epidemic. I will also describe advantages and disadvantages on working in partnership, looking at who is doing what, where the gaps in coordination are, and how the advantages in coordination should be taken into consideration to adapt with changing times and priorities.

Some questions that I would like to consider and that, in my opinion, are fundamental to this study are:

- Is it possible to strengthen inter-agencies mobilization in the fight against HIV and AIDS and create a multi-sector approach among partners?
- Why many NGOs are not coordinating enough at this stage in sustainable development?
- What are the main factors at stake?

My aim and interest would therefore be to examine current partnerships among NGOs with projects related to HIV and AIDS, some of the obstacles in terms of coordination and communication among them and also to analyze how NGOs are committed to making such collaboration more effective. I am also interested in the possible creation and implementation of NGOs networks with realistic objectives, genuine local community involvement, and constant supervision and frequent evaluations. The analysis of this Thesis is mainly the result of literature research supported by a series of interviews that I have personally conducted with NGOs professionals, professors and doctors all involved in humanitarian development work and research. The interviewees were asked a list of questions (please see Appendix in the last section of the Thesis) which covered a number of issues related to coordination and codes of conduct together with their personal statements on the current situation, policies and intervention on HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and stigma.

This examination will be followed by some policy recommendations for collaborative working among NGOs.

III. Background: countdown to the Millennium Development Goals

People have been talking about coordination for long time but the evidence shows that NGOs still have to run into the same sort of problems derived from poor coordination. If they want to adopt a method of working that can help them to maximize their work, reducing their costs, stress, then creative solutions must be found.

It is in fact evident that effective collaboration and coordination at all levels is pivotal to making the biggest impact. Despite this NGOs are still far from reaching a harmonious lasting coordination.

For example some NGOs have shown themselves to be offensive, arrogant and inefficient, particularly when they fail to cooperate with each other and with local governments and non-governmental bodies.

Coordination is not an easy and immediate process, but NGOs must recognize that partnerships that are able to bring long term change are the most successful collaborative relationships. Active partnerships are those that are “built through ongoing process of negotiation, debate, occasional conflict and learning through trial.”³ If the benefits to coordinate more are clear, why then are NGOs still far to achieve better coordination?

However some attempts have been done so far and we must be optimistic that more will be achieved in the coming years. The consensus at the national and global level is now the need to improve coordination of health and HIV and AIDS targeted programs. In 2004, the UNAIDS 'Three Ones' principles called for one national AIDS coordinating body, while in 2005 both the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Global Task Team on Improving AIDS Coordination among Multilateral Institutions and International Donors reported on how actors within the new global health architecture might better coordinate their activities. Critically in 2007 was the establishment of the Global Implementation Support Team, the Global Campaign for the Health MDGs, and the International Health Partnership. All of these attempts called for better coordination to achieve improved health outcomes.⁴

³ David Lewis and Nazneen Kanji, *Non Governmental Organizations and Development*, 2009, page 114

⁴ <http://www.globalizationandhealth.com> (access online: 25 May 2010)

Back in 2000, the UN stated the necessity of more cooperation in order to reach all the eight Millennium Development Goals that according to the UN provide a framework for the entire international community to work together towards a common aim.

This is one more example of the call for coordinating efforts, expertise and resources to achieve something that can have a huge impact on the lives of many people around the world, changing with the time the current trends of poverty and sustainable growth with the hope to fully transform the MDGs promises, challenges and expectations into reality in the remaining five years up to 2015.

Goal 6 of the MDGs has the ambitious targets of halting and reversing by 2015 the spread of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, and achieving by 2010 universal access to treatment for HIV and AIDS for all those who need it and finally to halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

Goal 6 is interconnected with other MDGs such as: eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (Goal 1), promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women (Goal 3), reduction of child mortality (Goal 4) and improvement of maternal health (Goal 5).

In my view, this interconnection explains how it is important to focus more not only in funding programs in sub-Saharan Africa to reach people already living with HIV and AIDS, but also in promoting better coordination and planning on the NGO sector especially for what concerns education and awareness campaigns targeting the youth, the relevant and proactive actor of change for the present and next generation.

I have to mention here also Goal 8, which is dedicated to achieving better global partnership and cooperation among NGOs, governments, private companies and intergovernmental organizations. Only equal and strong participation of all between the relevant parties will ensure the achievement of the MDGs.

12 June, 2010, London, UK: UNA-UK Forum, Humanitarian challenges in the 21st century

The same emphasis on the need of more teamwork and coordination to accelerate the MDGs successes and to work more effectively together through accountability was given by Helen Clark, head of the UNDP at her UNA-UK Forum opening speech. There she spoke about the specific importance of civil society

commitment and stressed the importance of new efforts to continue to implement strategies, policies and intervention on the remaining five years ahead.

Helen Clark declared during this Forum that “Sustaining the progress of the MDGs achieved so far is an imperative for action; the NYC Summit will help to establish and strengthen measures to accelerate MDGs achievements, but to make this possible and to drive forward the global action agenda, the priority will be to value with much more urgency working in partnership between North and South. No single actor can achieve the MDGs alone.”

Another speaker, Mr. Peter Scott-Bowden, Pandemic Preparedness and Response Coordinator for the World Food Program, framed the same concept in a following Panel on The Humanitarian challenges in the 21st century: “Unfortunately development work is still strongly fragmented, we need more partnership approach and we need to think about more inclusion of local civil societies along with a more coordinated assistance in terms of interventions and operations.” This Forum was a brilliant chance for all the participants to increase their awareness, future commitment and engagement in working in partnership to achieve better results towards the current global humanitarian challenges.

18-23 July 2010, Vienna, Austria: XVIII AIDS Conference

The main topics of this conference in relation to coordination in response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic were the following: MDGs, resources, funding, corruption, lack of political will and universal access to treatment (especially those from marginal and high-risk groups). From the outset, this conference emphasized that health is a right that should be accessible and guaranteed to everyone. Delegates from all over the world, doctors, NGOs practitioners, PLWA, policy makers have gathered together in Vienna to discuss how far we are in the fight against HIV and AIDS and what we need to achieve in order to stop this epidemic. The different speeches and findings concentrated on considering ways to end the pandemic and to keep the promises of investment in HIV and AIDS programs despite the critical global economic turn down, which has exacerbated the response to AIDS, in order to broader health and development goals. The agenda of the conference also looked at how to achieve further progress, calling for more visible and sustainable

actions and focusing on steps that can help to reduce the gaps in the response to the epidemic as well as strengthening results for the socio-cultural, political and structural constraints that can limit results and improvements.

The conference also agreed to the demand to all the participants to unite efforts and knowledge and, using lessons learnt, to build on the gains already made to help take the necessary steps for change in the fight against HIV and AIDS. At the closing it was announced that the next AIDS Conference will be held in 2012 in Washington DC, USA. Before that event, delegates and other participants were reminded to continue to implement, advocate and coordinate their strategies and interventions on HIV and AIDS care, treatment and awareness at all levels; to continue to try to influence leaders, donors and the private sector; to contribute to reach better results working in partnership; and ultimately to plan for creative solutions among different NGOs and other actors in the research and implementation of HIV and AIDS policies and programs.

IV. Findings in relation to working in partnership

“Health is a necessity, not a luxury; zero new infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS related deaths.”UNAIDS Vision

Despite working in different fields: emergency, health, environment, human rights, gender, NGOs face similar issues on coordinating their actions even if their approaches to manage resources and challenges can vary according to the specific sector involved, different policies and commitment of human resources, governments and civil society interactions depending from country to country. It is also important not to underestimate the vital role played by the social and cultural fabric, religion, values of different areas.

The weakness points on NGOs coordination seem to be recognized nowadays in: competitiveness towards funding and donors and lack of sharing practices and lessons.

This report looks in particular at coordination involving NGOs working on HIV and AIDS policies, prevention, education, care, counseling and treatment. In this respect I have been conducting interviews in Africa (Malawi and Tanzania) and Europe (Ireland, Italy, UK) concerning HIV and AIDS perception, response and NGOs coordination in many hospitals, Universities, local and international NGOs, health centers and youth clubs with doctors, professors, NGOs practitioners, health assistants and people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. The small sample that I have gathered, perhaps cannot give a complete view of the picture on coordination but can provide a good example of the current effort and debate over this issue.

The principle finding that emerged from these interviews was that the majority of the NGOs present in a specific area were not coordinating actions and resources, resulting in a host of problems.

The interviews show a series of organizational challenges facing NGOs in their operations. Six key issues emerged from these interviews and I am going to add to these also other issues coming from the literature.

According to the data and information that I have been able to collect through these interviews I can divide the issues on coordination into primary and secondary issues, according to their recurrence in the answers of the interviewees and to the degree of importance that they were giving to these issues.

Among the three main primary problems issued by these interviews on NGOs working in partnership there are: NGOs lack of resources and facilities; different agendas; and competition.

The secondary problems that emerged from these interviews were: sustainability of projects and partnership; lack of will to create a strong network of services in partnership; and duplication of efforts.

The interviewees were asked to answer a series of questions and to give details of their strategies on coordination with other NGOs, governments and local communities. They were also asked about their perception of the degree of importance that they recognized to coordination in NGO's work effectiveness not only on their planning schemes on the ground but also prior to this and in the subsequent evaluation of their operations.

IV.A PRIMARY ISSUES RELATED TO NGO COORDINATION

Resources

NGOs working in developing countries, more than ever, require attentive information of what is available and well-balanced use of resources to maximize project delivery and sustainable management of the same ones. Very often the capacity and the potential of finding and implementing resources or creating possible new channels of resources are scarce or alternatively can be underestimated. From this comes the recurrent issue on how to best use and share existing resources and how to coordinate the creation, sharing and preservation of new ones. A network of existing resources (materials, drugs, health centers, and staff members, expertise, and training centers) should be available to all the NGOs working in a determinate area. In this way people can know who is able to provide what to the others and sharing in this way all the resources available. It is also fundamental to secure additional and more productive investment in the health workforce if we want to ensure the best use of the resources available.

If there is no enactment of this, the risk is duplication of resources and the waste of time and money: “Resources and resource mobilization in the context of HIV and AIDS should not take place only after planning; it also means making better use of or maximizing existing ones”.⁵

The list of potential external partners is large: national or state governments, local governments, NGOs, religious groups, private business organizations, commercial financial institutions, official multilateral and bilateral development assistance agencies, international private voluntary organizations and so on. Such new partnerships are likely to be critical in ensuring the more effective use of resources; therefore “individual and community level initiatives within low-income settlements will need the support of a wider network of NGOs who can provide training, advice, representation and a host of other services.”⁶

Certainly mutual competition over resources and donor funding can inhibit cooperation. Nevertheless, NGOs- government partnerships are essential as well as a more active participation of political bodies and

⁵ UNAIDS, *Guide to the strategic process for a national response to HIV and AIDS*, August 2000

⁶ Michael Edwards and David Hulme, *Making a difference, NGOs and development in a changing world*, 1993, page 178

leaders to ensure that more people are aware of the importance of sharing strengths and resources to win this challenge.

Besides recognizing the role of NGOs in this field, we should also bear in mind that “priorities, conceptual guidelines and access to resources in the health sector would in most cases depend on the broader political economy of the country, its élite, and its government”⁷, therefore we should call for a more political engagement in the HIV and AIDS sector.

Among the resources we can also number the difficulty to find physical places where NGOs can meet and discuss on these important elements (use and sharing of local and non-local resources). Another issue, in particular for our projects in Developing Countries, concerns the technical difficulties encountered in delivering, for example, meetings because of lack of venues and facilities.⁸

Very often the fact that NGOs are not in contact with each other and cannot regularly meet to discuss together lead once again to duplication of resources already available and waste of the ones present. What result is that these resources do not actually reach the actual target of NGO projects.

The management of the resources is also fundamental. Members of NGOs working in partnership should agree which role they can have in this regard and produce frequent reports on this matter.

In my opinion lack of resources is a serious issue especially if it goes together with lack of commitment to fully implement the capacity of the existing resources and if there is no intention to change the investment criteria on new ones. NGOs need to study carefully if there is a substantial inequity of resources among regions of a country or among sectors. They also need to look at problems of investment, which lead very often to the allocation of resources where are not needed and to the denial of precious resources where they are. It is evident that more resources are needed in the response to HIV and AIDS, but also more control to prevent the duplication and fragmentation of those already in use.

⁷ S. Akbar Zaidi, *The New Development Paradigm , papers on Institutions, NGOs, Gender and Local Government*, 1999, page 227

⁸ Interview with Enida Friel, 2010

Different agenda

Working in partnership among NGOs means also being able to accept existing differences and points of view and compromising in order to find common solutions and strategies that can benefit all partners. NGOs run projects guided by different visions, values, missions and objectives. And this is the reason why, very often, individual NGOs planning strategies are not oriented to working in a context of openness to collaboration and to broader their own strategies. They are trapped into focusing in their own particular issues and concentrating only on personal strategies. Different agendas are the result of different approaches that NGOs choose in their own best interests, without taking into consideration that adapting agendas and goals to other NGOs agendas can be extremely beneficial. An example can be offered by comparing the work done by faith-based NGOs with other non-faith based NGOs working in the HIV and AIDS sector. An effective response to HIV will only be possible if all the players involved are committed to sharing their agendas in order to individualize and map strengths and identify common weaknesses. Thus helping both parties to implement each other's work.

An example can be offered by looking at faith-based NGOs that work in comparison with other non-faith based NGOs working both in the HIV and AIDS sector.

The main challenges that we face at the moment in general are connected with the fact that very often there is not that much time to organize other organizations-actors together and not enough focus from other organizations to plan together common goals and strategies. Also, it is very challenging to get different stakeholders together to discuss and collaborate on the same agenda and priorities.⁹

In most of the interviews this was seen as a result of many factors combined together but in particular it highlighted the issue of individual agenda instead of looking for possible points of contacts to share in each one NGO's agenda.

It is understandable that NGOs have different agendas and priorities but the fact that usually they do not talk or think about how these different agendas could actually be combined to reaching similar objectives is a problem and is often counterproductive.

⁹ Interview with Enida Friel, 2010

Another concern regarding different agendas is the possibility that individual NGOs will try to impose their own agenda, this will have a negative impact into NGO-NGO trust and sometimes on the actual needs of their targets, either they focus is improving people lives or strategies for development.

An effective response to HIV will only be possible if all the players involved are committed to share their agenda in order to individualize and map strengths, weaknesses as well as needs and priorities in order to implement each other's work.

Competition

Competition among NGOs has been recognized since long time mainly in relation to competitiveness towards funding, but now more and more also in relation to competition for effectiveness and credibility of actions.

In the short term this can actually boost NGO effectiveness, but in the longer term it can also embitter relationships and halt progress in NGOs coordination towards common goals.

NGOs need to identify how best they might support, but not substitute themselves for, what exists. They need to exploit their comparative advantage over the state in terms of the different relationship they can have with intended beneficiaries and their capacity to organize themselves in an appropriate manner, rather than compete. This was mentioned clearly by Enida Friel from Oxfam International: "Many NGOs feel that there is strong competition for funds and fear sharing information which we think should be minimized."¹⁰ The same concept was repeated by Dr. Colin Ball, CHIVA Africa Trustee:

Coordination is one of the most important and yet difficult objective to reach for NGOs. In fact, the existing NGOs' network is poor and it seems like the various NGOs are only trying to follow their agenda instead of collaborating in establishing common strategies for sustainability, rules of practice and for avoiding competition and aid duplication.¹¹

Another example on this issue was provided by this answer from Juliet Cockram, ACE Africa UK Director :

"The challenges that we face amongst other NGOs is the competitive attitude amongst some NGOs, lack of

¹⁰ Interview with Enida Friel, 2010

¹¹ Interview with Dr. Colin Ball, 2010

prioritization amongst some NGOs, tight resources with which to facilitate coordination and physical distance between offices and operations.”

With local and national government, disagreements sometimes arise on priorities. In addition, meetings are time consuming and often require travel from senior staff members.

An ethos of competition rather than sharing and learning has evolved; a top down approach which leaves the smaller community led NGOs with fewer funds to access and less opportunity to advocate for and share their solutions at a wider level. All this affects long term policy development.

NGOs should look at ways of how to transform this natural attitude into a positive interrelation, only like this they will be more likely to appreciate other NGO objectives and achievements and to work in a less competitive, more stimulating and interactive atmosphere.

IV.B SECONDARY ISSUES RELATED TO NGOS COORDINATION

Sustainability

Sustainability is a key issue on today's NGOs agenda. There is a responsibility to focus on the best practices and methods to engage local actors with the use of local resources helping them to reach their independence and autonomy in order to be able to run and manage projects, funds and trade without or with just minimal external aid.

On the issue of sustainability I want to quote here Michael Edwards and David Hume's work. They believe that effective development work on a sustainable and significant scale is a goal which has eluded both governments and NGOs. One of the most important factors underlying this situation is "the failure of NGOs to make the right linkages between their work at micro-level and the wider systems and structures of which they form a small part."¹²

"NGOs tend to work in isolation with each other; many are project oriented and tend to fold up once project funds have been exhausted."¹³ This entails problems of un-sustainability of projects and a vicious circle of searching for funds to start new projects without caring of or implementing existing ones.

In addition to this there is an" urgent need to consider how the great majority of the poor can be supported to develop their own strategies, making best use of their scarce resources."¹⁴

The sustainability of NGOs activity or effort is probably the most critical element in successful community development, and also in this respect coordination is a key element for achieving better success.

Sustainability means thinking in the long term and not just on the immediate impact some NGO actions have on people and development, especially when we consider actions and impacts on people affected by or living

¹²Michael Edwards and David Hume, *Making a difference: NGOs and Development in a changing World*, 1993, page 13

¹³ Akbar Zaidi, *The New Development Paradigm, papers on Institutions, NGOs, Gender and Local Government*, 1999, Page 185

¹⁴ Michael Edwards and David Hulme, *Making a difference, NGOs and development in a changing world*, 1993, page 171

with HIV and AIDS. This means that projects should focus not only in treatment and care of the people already affected by this epidemic but for example also on their children's future, orphans, child care givers and health facilities and staff.

We always have to think about the long term, but we can say that we have strengthened the emotional support available for families affected by HIV and AIDS, building, in particular, knowledge and access to vocational and business skills and education in order to empower the young people to sustain themselves and their families.¹⁵

Sustainability in relation to coordination suggests that NGOs should engage more in creating good and lasting relationships with their partners based on mutual listening and understanding. Over time this will build up trust and mutual good reputations that will enable all partners to ensure the continuity of their interactions.

Lack of will to create stronger coordination network

Many NGOs involved in HIV and AIDS projects lack of accurate research, before the actual practical planning phase, on the occurrence of the HIV and AIDS epidemic in the country of programmed intervention, the health capacities and the political structure and will in relation to the fight against this epidemic and finally, but not less important, the mapping of the social groups most vulnerable to the epidemic. All these factors underline the importance in sharing information and expertise across different sectors to make the current response to HIV and AIDS more effective.

Before the planning process begins, it is essential that detailed discussions are held with all representatives of various organizations and interest groups including local professionals, NGOs, associations. However there is often exclusion of those whom the plan is supposed to affect and this can lead to failures for example because of under or over estimations of the actual needs of these people.

In most cases, coordination networks can improve NGO work ensuring better results and referral to each other. These networks ensure that NGOs are not isolated while operating and searching for information and

¹⁵ Interview with Mark Glen, 2010

resources, and enable them to be better represented in the debate and decisions concerning the fight on HIV and AIDS.

Duplication of efforts

Sometimes NGOs duplicate services because of differences in philosophy or organizational objectives. In addition to duplication, absence of coordination has obvious negative consequences for inequitable health service delivery and also serious resource implications. Many NGOs are not only isolated from governments but also from each other. “Working alone, such NGOs are unlikely to receive support and technical assistance from any source.”¹⁶ This isolation can lead to duplication of responses essentially because of lack of information and coordination.

Mark Glen, HOPE HIV UK Director, described the importance of coordination as a tool to avoid duplication: “Working on coordination with different actors, local and international, is the best way for us to work and to avoid duplicating bodies of intervention and support”.

It is critical therefore to consider coordination not only in terms of improving all partners’ actions but also in terms of maximizing the expertise, resources and staff already in place and avoiding duplication creating new bodies of interventions among all the many already available.

Juliet Cockram, ACE Africa UK Director, referred as well to some of the issues above saying that:

“Collaboration addresses gaps in service provision and program planning is inclusive, avoiding duplicity and effectively utilizing all available local resources. Sharing can include: developing training packages and sharing resources e.g. HIV kits and condoms from Mohr and referral services”.

NGOs can be in part praised for their flexibility and strength in adaptation, contributing at times to the creation of new approaches to development strategies; however in the long term this may lead to duplication of efforts and resources if NGOs do not constantly record and monitor their actions and interventions and

¹⁶Andrew Green and Ann Matthias, *Non-governmental organizations and health in Developing Countries*, 1997

share them to learn from each other. They need to focus on actual and future plans but also look at what they have experiences and done wrong or right in the past.

IV.C OTHER ISSUES RELATED TO NGOS FROM THE LITERATURE

Lack of community involvement

All partners must recognize that community organizations have an essential role to play and must be able to control their own resources and take decisions in respect of their own future. The consequences of a lack of community involvement are best illustrated by a quote from a paper about one such community “Failures are almost inevitable when outsiders try to impose their points of view”.¹⁷

“Local community can help in understanding what works and what may not work in given settings, additionally, they can provide insights to enable better design of policy interventions.”¹⁸ The power of local communities is the knowledge that they can offer and transfer to a specific project and the knowledge that they have in terms of needs and constraints of a specific area and population.

Dr Colin Ball made the point during an interview about the importance of involving local partners and respecting in particular their culture and traditions:

In this way we avoid the usual mistake to apply western practice and methodology of intervention to places where they are difficult to be completely understood and efficient as they seem to be in other contexts. We try not to impose our work and conduct of working. We share views using open dialogue, listening and trying to help local people to assess problems, finding practical solutions and coordinating the work little by little to build a general structure to adopt in the hospitals for the care and treatment of patients affected by HIV and AIDS in association with local healthcare professionals, nurses and doctors.

He also recognized that collaboration and co-ordination involving local staff is of primary importance even if it requires spending a lot of time building trust and reciprocal confidence.

¹⁷ Hardoy, Hardoy and Shusterman, 1991, quoted in Michael Edwards and David Hulme, *Making a difference, NGOs and development in a changing world*, 1993, page 179

¹⁸ Margaret Kemigisa, *Social Networks and Health promotion: the case for HIV and AIDS prevention in Uganda*, PhD, Department of Public Health and Policy, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London, 2008

Like in a game or relationship, any alliance (partnership) or choice triggers both positive and negative consequences. How much can or should NGO “dare” to invest in this game among different actors (or partners)? Who is going to “win”? And who is going to compromise and adapt?

Very often there is also a minimal trust of the capacity of local partners and financial beneficiaries, and this can compromise relationships with local parties, guardians of traditions and customs of a specific society and culture. Creating mistrust and, once again, sterile competition.

Accountability, effectiveness and evaluation

Some of the ongoing “accusations” on NGO’s work both in the field and at headquarters are: lack of accountability, visibility and effectiveness.

The "project" approach towards HIV prevention and care adopted by NGOs is being questioned by those frustrated by the evident lack of impacts at any scale. They wish to shift instead the focus into governance, state accountability and engagement of civil society in political change. NGOs should engage in the process of "best practice" which is seen as a mean of addressing the lack of consistency or quality control in monitoring and evaluating HIV and AIDS interventions. This in turn relates to the overall lack of institutional accountability within the responses to the pandemic. ¹⁹

As Jennifer M. Brinkerhoff states in her work, evaluation and effectiveness go along together, “to ensure effectiveness we will need much better evaluation at all sectors”²⁰. This is true not only at the NGO level but it is relevant also at evaluations on the conducts and operations of the private sectors and governments as well.

A fundamental point to consider is also the measures available to assess the work of each NGO and the impact of their interventions.

NGOs have often been reticent about setting clear objectives and evaluation criteria for grassroots mobilization activities. Some have argued that the outcome of such projects is not quantifiable; some that

¹⁹Nana K. Poku and Alan Whiteside, *The political economy of AIDS in Africa*, 2004, page 26-27

²⁰ Jennifer M. Brinkerhoff, Stephen C. Smith and Hildy Teegen, *NGOs and the Millennium Development Goals, citizen action to reduce poverty*, 2007, page 76

they do not want to fall into” the trap of executing sophisticated cost-benefit analyses”²¹; and others that the results are less important than the processes involved in achieving them.

There is a need to develop a more systematic, practical evaluation process which will look at how best to integrate internal participatory processes and external evaluation procedures, including clarifying feedback and learning mechanism.

More on NGO effectiveness and coordination was mentioned by the following interviewees:

All these institutions collaborate together because they are equally committed to projects concerning HIV and AIDS care and treatment. This collaboration is effective because there is only one donor and one coordinating NGO, Family Health International, FHI, able to coordinate all the hospitals, public and private health centers. FHI links Village of Hope and all the other partners together, strengthening their bonds and work planning.²²

In my opinion NGOs are effective only when they are able to be integrated in the global scale for development since we still need to achieve a global sustainable development in Developing Countries for what concern not only health but also other sectors.²³

Our Africa Director sits on a committee made up of a number of NGOs, big and small, which engages in mapping exercises to identify who does what and where and from that exercise who could link with whom to maximize impact and spread resources, the results of this committee influences where HOPE HIV puts its resources.²⁴

The evaluation of the success and failures of different NGO strategies and approaches is an important process in order to avoid repeating mistakes and the waste of resources and of time. Evaluation should also encourage NGOs to coordinate the results of these assessments in order to learn from each other’s mistakes, and good practices.

²¹ Michael Edwards and David Hulme, *Making a difference, NGOs and development in a changing world*, 1993, page 188

²² Interview with Vincenzo Boselli

²³ Interview with Dr Colin Ball, 2010

²⁴ Interview with Mark Glen, 2010

NGOs growth

Making a difference, NGOs and development in a changing world, by Edwards and Hulme, divulged the findings of a study dedicated to the rapid growth that many NGOs from the UK have experienced and which has caused them some visible organizational problems. Such growth involves qualitative as well as quantitative change. Thus growth and change within non-profit making organizations is a highly complex process in which activities, mission, structure, governance and resources are knitted together in a complex and mutually dependent web. “Change in one aspect inevitably has knock-on effects on other aspects”.²⁵ The authors at the same time claim that the failure to maximize growth results in leaving undone much that could contribute to greater justice in the world and the alleviation of human suffering. “The internal resistance to growth, often arising out of a fear of diluting the purity of the mission or the culture of the organization, should be recognized as a cause for concern within the NGO community.”²⁶

Partnership working is perceived to be important to tackle health issues and has become popular in health promotion. However it is often difficult to implement because there are a number of factors involved; for example: finding solid partnership, developing clear policies, building organizational capacity.

A key factor in collaborative NGO growth is how they communicate among each others to transfer knowledge and share lessons learnt. Although NGOs talk of “partnership”, control over funds and decision-making remains highly unequal.²⁷

NGOs growth can be influenced by church, grassroots movements, economy, politics, political repression, cultural traditions, globalization, cultural traditions, and so on, the issue one more time lies in the coordination among these parties, their capacity to involve in active participation the local people and the discourse over capacity building, who is building certain capacities and for whom.

²⁵ Michael Edwards and David Hulme, *Making a difference, NGOs and development in a changing world*, 1993, page 125

²⁶ Michael Edwards and David Hulme, *Making a difference, NGOs and development in a changing world*, 1993, page 127

²⁷ David Lewis and Nazneen Kanji, *Non- Governmental Organizations and Development*, 2009, page 20

Advantages and disadvantages of working in partnership

I would like to briefly summarize here both the advantages and disadvantages of working in partnership.

First of all it is well known that each NGO brings different resources, expertise and information into the partnership, since they recognize other way of thinking, planning, acting, solutions. The combination of many NGOs working in a network should therefore lead to the achievement of more productive results using fewer resources, maximizing performance and minimizing overall costs even if as we have seen before we cannot consider and assume that NGO coordination is a cost-free process and not time-consuming as well.

Some critical elements in coordination that I suggest should be considered as both positive and negative in the process of building partnerships among NGOs have been outlined in the work *Non-governmental organizations and health in Developing Countries*. These are: “coordination is a formal and structured process, it should not destroy the autonomy of individual NGOs, it involves regular and long term communication and it should be for the benefit of all parties involved.”²⁸

Some of the areas of concern of coordination pointed out by Collins are the issues of “differing organizational structures and procedures, unequal and irregular access to resources, differing priorities and interests between governments and individuals.”²⁹

More on this was stated by Vincenzo Boselli and Juliet Cockram as follows:

The answer is clear, yes, collaboration is a fundamental part of our work but we are realistic and we recognize that it works for our project but we know that other projects find it more difficult to collaborate. The positive aspects that I can think about this issue are the fact that collaborating allows to share territory and areas of expertise and intervention, to be more integrated in the general organizational structure and to add to each other and share supplementary aid, strategies, technical knowledge and values.³⁰

²⁸ Andrew Green and Ann Matthias, *Non-governmental organizations and health in Developing Countries*, 1997

²⁹ Collins, 1994, page 116

³⁰ Interview with Vincenzo Boselli, 2010

“ACE Africa values and promotes collaboration at all levels, in order to maximize available resources, reduce duplication, share lessons learnt and generate a stronger united voice on issues. ACE Africa develops collaboration at all levels, from the grassroots through community structures.”³¹

To summarize, in these interviews collaboration, communication, sharing information were all seen as points of strength. It is the lack of these that leads in the majority of cases to failures in project planning, delivery and implementation. The interviewees suggested that the perceived need for collaboration is fairly high but many factors impede these collaborative efforts.

As any personal relationship, partnership needs effort, input, constancy, compromise, clarity. The process of working together is a process of building organizational capacity and deciding to adopt shared objectives, policies and strategies.

Oxfam International is aware of all these difficulties and for this reason we try to put more effort and emphasis on them. Without any doubt it is complicated to work with different NGOs and other actors. We believe therefore that if more NGOs start to believe in the importance of this collaboration and networking capacities the outcome will be more beneficial for everybody involved in International Development.³²

³¹ Interview with Juliet Cockram, 2010

³² Interview with Enida Friel, 2010

Example of efforts to establish better and stronger coordination on HIV and AIDS

Global HIV and AIDS Initiatives Network

I had the chance to meet Professor Neil Spicer, Lecturer on Health Policy and Global Health Initiatives at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He is currently researching the effects of global HIV and AIDS initiatives and health systems in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and Zambia. This study is based on:

“examining the issues of harmonization, alignment and coordination, building health systems capacity, human resources, the public-private-NGO mix, marginalized groups' access to key HIV and AIDS services and the effects of the Global Fund on civil society organizations.”³³

The research that he is conducting forms a part of a network of similar studies across 15 low and middle-income countries that is coordinated from LSHTM and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, called the Global HIV and AIDS Initiatives Network.

This network gathers case studies carried out in twenty two countries (including eleven countries in Africa) exploring the impacts on existing health systems of three main Global Health Initiatives: the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and the World Bank’s HIV/AIDS programs including the Multi-country AIDS Program (MAP) . Being a network, GHIN supports individual country studies by informing policy development at national and international level. In my opinion all these objectives are important points to reflect on for NGOs that are willing to start working in partnership. GHIN objectives are based on:

- *communication*, (with the aim to facilitate communication between different stakeholders such as researchers, donors, global policy makers and to reduce transaction costs);
- *share research experience and resources* (like tools, methods, lessons learned and findings);
- *maximize comparability*;
- *dissemination* (to stimulate debate).

³³ www.ghin.lshtm.ac.uk (access online 29 June 2010)

UNAIDS Three Ones

The Three Ones Principles were decided during a meeting in 2004 to make clearer and visible key donor's efforts to strengthen their support in the response of HIV and AIDS epidemic. The objectives of these principles are the following:

- One agreed HIV and AIDS action framework that provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners;
- One national co-ordination authority;
- One monitoring and evaluation system;³⁴

The idea behind these principles is to help donors and developing countries to better manage and use resources and to work in partnership to find solutions that are comprehensive and effective on a country-by-country approach. This partnership was also created to help in reaching universal access to HIV and AIDS prevention, care and support by 2010 as stated by G8 leaders in 2005.

Remarks

Both these initiatives enlighten the issue of coordination in working in partnership and agree on the significant key element of coordination for enhancing NGO and other actor's actions in response to HIV and AIDS. What I believe these two examples have to guarantee in order to be efficient is the capacity to build trust and increase mutual respect in order to better achieve their objectives and implement results. Another important element is to recognize greater representation and responsibilities on the coordinating structures-bodies and to establish a common commitment to monitoring and evaluation.

³⁴ <http://www.unaids.org/en/CountryResponses/MakingTheMoneyWork/ThreeOnes/default.asp> (access online 27 July 2010)

V. Policy recommendations

The last section of this study-research looks at some of the feasible solutions to move NGO coordination and management in the direction of more efficient and constructive ways. The following recommendations are based on an evaluation of qualitative data and academic research. These are suggestions that demonstrate the benefits of sharing skills, knowledge and facilities in order to cut costs and strengthen the existing logical and operating frameworks.

These recommendations are the result of my research and interviews that I have been conducted and of my previous working experience in the NGO sector. I consider them useful for establishing an ideal model of coordination network. This model should enable NGOs to participate and engage in partnership work with a stronger commitment to clearer goals and reciprocal reliance. I have described what the most detrimental problems in coordination are. These recommendations will be useful since the beginning of the establishment of any NGO partnership, through the actual operations on the ground, and the situation post intervention. In all these phases it will be considered essential to evaluating the success, failures and improvements of these operations in partnership. I believe these are valuable steps forward in NGOs collaboration, and should also prepare the ground to agree on sanctions that can regulate their codes of conduct and working operations.

Recommendations concerning resources

1. NGOs working in partnership should periodically plan how to better use and manage effectively their existing resources and networks in order to establish development awareness and strategies to tackle aid wastages, corruption and mismanagement.
2. Partners NGOs should understand the nature and challenge of changing times and trends that will impact society and development in the future, in order to be flexible and ready to change and maximize accordingly the use of resources and people.
3. It is also fundamentally advisable to think carefully together in terms of resource allocation. Specifically for each beneficiary country, region or communities, and establish how much it is

possible to allot to each one of them, in what percentage and to creating a time frame for each allocation. NGOs should create a database to consider and monitor important information such as: donor's donations, who have donated how much and to which NGO, which donors are supporting which area, how many NGOs are working in the same area and doing what, what kind of resources do they lack of or abound with. Based on these data NGOs should focus on deciding how each NGO can transfer excess resources between themselves and how they can get the resources that they lack of through an exchange of information and expertise.

This should enable NGOs to avoid doubling up of services and allocations of resources in some areas and neglect of them in others.

Recommendations concerning different agenda

4. NGOs should hold discussions about different agendas, values and orientation of the different NGOs present in a specific area in order to reach a common impact and effort. The result of these meetings should help clarify different perspectives and priorities in solving problems that every NGO usually has to face and reaching goals.
5. NGOs can therefore learn from each other's different agendas how to focus on targeting people in need. Even if each NGO's work is tailored for their respective target group, the discussion that should arise should be of interest to all NGOs in the same operating areas and should look at how NGOs with different agenda can find ideas that can inspire and implement each other's mission.
6. NGOs should be aware even of the work of NGOs with different agenda and not only of those ones who pursue the same objectives in the HIV and AIDS field. This facilitates NGO workers to refer targeted people to the appropriate and already existing channel of support and to open up to different working approaches, aims and strategies.
7. Creating a strategic networking platform for NGOs for dialogue around emerging issues related to HIV and AIDS and development will help to identify key elements in common and to generate more clarity on the discussion over roles and responsibilities at all levels.

Recommendations concerning competition

NGO competition can actually have positive aspects, since it can help to push NGOs to accomplish best results with the optimization of costs, resources and time. It could also fuel NGOs' drive to succeed and to implement goals. At the same time, however, there are also negative aspects.

Building better partnership among NGOs increases the possibility of sharing practical skills and up to date real world knowledge through active learning and participation.

Issues that matter to most of the NGOs, no matter what their agenda and as a consequence of that it reduce the factor of competition, to unite efforts and intentions in similar directions.

To diminish the competition among NGOs, it is possible to review the meaning and purpose of programmed partnership and key partnership styles to recognize the added power and support that each NGO can obtain if they collaborate without competing.

8. It is also fundamental to examine the values and principles that each NGO can contribute when working in partnership, considering also factors which could underpin partnership and, draw on each NGO's own experiences, explore how these could translate into practice, listing the pros and cons.
9. To avoid creating new competition, each NGO should identify some of the challenges, pitfalls, drivers and the tensions that arise in partnerships. And consider the types of methods which can be used in partnership development, and being explicit and clear on the needs and aims of working in partnership.

Recommendations concerning sustainability

The evidence suggests that partnership requires a sustainable and well organized structure one whose responsibility is to plan ahead and also to avoid costly unfinished interventions and overinflated administrative costs which eats up disproportionate distribution of funds and time. Continuity is essential in NGOs services and delivery.

10. NGOs should therefore engage in a form of partnership planning that states the objectives to reach in the medium and long term, and strategies that will lead to local people participation and then subsequent total management of the project, resources and staff. NGOs should recognize that sustainability is the key to development, and that it is important planning in the long term instead than concentrating on the immediate goals to reach.
11. More efforts must be attempted to achieve sustainable development and to do so NGOs have to compromise and agree in terms of who is able to do what in the long term, and how it is possible to transfer that knowledge to other NGOs facing the same issues while focusing only on the present priorities they must also consider the impacts and progress of their actions in the future as well.

Recommendations concerning the lack of will to create stronger coordination networks to avoid duplication of efforts

There is an urgent need to create strategies for the involvement of representatives of different NGOs and to create a stronger NGOs network from the start of the planning phase of a particular project until the phase of delivery and evaluation. This will help to avoid misunderstandings in missions and objectives and also duplication of efforts in same geographical areas as well as areas of intervention and expertise.

12. Information sharing is one of the most basic activities of coordination that can reduce the problems mentioned above. At its most basic level, it allows organizations simply to know about one another's activities, implementation plans, donors, and resources.

At higher levels, it may enable strategic planning and enhance multi-agency program delivery.

13. NGOs must combine their aims and intentions and create a common action plan that will maximize their impact and credibility. To do so they have to define since the beginning of their alliance what the coordination of working in partnership implies and to set objectives that all parties agree in achieving together.

Recommendations concerning accountability, effectiveness and evaluation

14. It is essential to create a clear working-plan to share with other NGOs in order to avoid misunderstandings and frictions among each other. It is highly recommended that the partners will gather together to prepare a common working-plan which should cover not only the active operation strategies but also the different methods and deadlines for the evaluation of progress and mistakes, making clear the tasks and responsibilities of all the members (NGOs, donors, local communities, and governments) involved. All should be working in partnership and try to be clear on objectives and roles of each actor in the coordination of the planning actions. Information of all projects should be systematically gathered and examined by both internal and external staff for the purpose of improving project planning, resources and program delivery.
15. Early on it is important to state clearly the responsibilities and aims of each NGO working in partnership as well as its budget, year's commitment and number of local and international staff.
16. Another element to look at is to produce more clear and transparent documents on international cooperation interventions and funding. A detail plan of activities should be formulated in one overall format, indicating alongside each activity the particular NGO responsible and the necessary- approximate financial and human resources needed. The same can be applied for a format that gathers all the information useful in evaluating achievements, failures and successes.
17. Finally regular staff conferences taking into consideration all the possible obstacles and costs to this and large-scale inter-departmental meetings are an essential part of NGO networking, as through these more people become aware and involved in key decisions and this can often contribute to better future performances.

Recommendations concerning NGOs growth

18. NGOs should focus on individual growth without forgetting the benefit of working in network with other NGOs. This means that NGOs must be encouraged to build up confidence, trust and reliability in each other in order to achieve the goals of their missions as single and multiple operations.
19. Another recommendation to help NGOs growth is to ensure balance between partners to work in partnership despite different values and missions; NGO practice shows in fact the “dilemma” of different size which divides small NGOs and large NGOs. Very often the inequality of representation and visibility of smaller NGOs can create inequality in their way of thinking, working and progressing even if it is not explicitly pointed out that the smaller an NGO the less are its achievements and impact.
20. To reach a better level of quality and performance, NGOs should discuss and share models of equal representation and recognition to enable all NGOs to grow regardless their size or mission.
21. NGOs should also draw up a series of advice to share with other NGOs related to practices and lessons learnt when going through changes and development.

VI. Conclusions

All the NGOs that I have been able to interview on NGO coordination confirmed the focal idea of this Thesis that coordination represents a valuable tool to consider for reaching objectives. A broader view and open mind when coordinating plans and strategies are generally considered to be more effective and goals oriented than when operating alone.

Nobody in fact dismissed the importance of the term “coordination” a process seen by the majority of the interviewees as a point of strength for various reasons rather than a point of weakness.

Some strength of this process was described as the combination of: uniting expertise, knowledge, skills, and resources. Weakness of it was acknowledged as cost and time consuming.

According to this research and to my working experiences within the NGO sector, NGOs in order to scale up their activities and actions aim in general to adopt individual strategies involving different aspects related to each other like financial capacity, internal organization, program maturity and goals assessment.

In my opinion there should also be a focus on how improving not only individual NGO strategies but also scaling up their impacts in relation to other NGOs, increasing NGO-NGO partnership to work at both international and local level and to share and combine, when it is possible and opportune, practical approaches, technology and resources to make this alliance more reliable and efficient in terms of planning and consequent outcomes. The same thing I would say about assessment, even if it is not yet completely adopted by all NGOs, work assessment is relevant for any individual NGO and it is also important when there are different NGOs involved in the game. Assessment helps to build up more confidence in the goals achieved and to be more critical and proactive in possible changes to improve the work and impact of any future work.

In my opinion more accurate research and analysis on NGOs coordination and the impact of this, should be included in the literature to show that coordination, despite being a long process and time and cost consuming, it can have many beneficial results that should be promoted and encouraged.

“NGOs share a number of common features such as the centrality of mission and values, reliance on diverse sources and types of funding, and the existence of a voluntary governing body. These factors provide a sufficient basis to assume that NGOs may have something to learn from each other.”³⁵

Responses to HIV and AIDS must be coordinated with a holistic approach, one that can benefit the most vulnerable groups, involving the partners in expanding their work, mobilization, networking towards a common goal.

As conclusion we should bear in mind all the benefits of diversity represented by NGOs values, visions and missions and combine them into a more participatory common effectiveness joint framework. NGOs can definitely learn from each other and it is essential that they learn to do so to build consensus on their collective work. This will enable NGOs to build better practice, expertise and organizational effectiveness.

³⁵ Billis, 1989, Billis and Harris, 1991, Mac Keith 1991

APPENDIX

Below are the NGOs that were interviewed for this study. They are listed here in chronological order:

- FAMILI, Elizabeth Johnson, Executive Director, Lilongwe, Malawi, 6 September 2006
- NAC, Victor Khonde, Information Assistant, Lilongwe, Malawi, 6 September 2006
- NAC, Eliam Kamanga, Information Officer, Lilongwe, Malawi, 6 September 2006
- Umati Center Clinic, Useli, Clinic Nurse, Iringa, Tanzania, 14 January 2008
- Aga Khan Medical Center, Surgeon Leonard Nyanasyeki, Iringa, Tanzania, 27 January 2008
- Iringa Umati Center, Youth Center, Robert Kwarva, Project Site Coordinator and Youth Coordinator, Iringa, Tanzania, 28 January 2008
- Danish Diocese, Annette Chuma, Local Community Coordinator, Iringa, Tanzania, 28 January 2008
- PSI, James Sizya, Regional Manager, Iringa, Tanzania, 2 February, 2008
- Alpha Dancing Group, Eucharistic S. Kigullah, Psychologist, Iringa, Tanzania, 25 February 2008
- Allamano Center, Emmanuel Mwenda, Counsellor, Iringa, Tanzania, 19 August 2008
- S.Martin Counselling Center, Veronica and Mlawa, Counsellors, Mfyome, Tanzania, 29 August 2008
- HOPE HIV, Mark Glen, UK Director, London, UK, 25 March 2010
- Oxfam International, Enida Friel, Oxfam International HIV and AIDS Program Coordinator, Ireland, 21 April 2010
- Village of Hope, Vincenzo Boselli, Project Coordinator, Italy, 30 May 2010
- CHIVA Africa, The Children's HIV Association, Dr Colin Ball, Trustee and Lead Clinician for pediatric HIV at King's College, London, interview London, UK, 17 May 2010
- ACE Africa, Juliet Cockram UK Director, London, UK, 20 May 2010
- CUAMM, Doctors with Africa, Dr. Mario Battocletti, Italy, 2 June 2010
- ALM, Laical Missionary Association, Clementina Iezzi, Project Leader and Coordinator, Italy, 18 June 2010

Please note that the questions provided in the following interviews are the same questions asked to all the participants of this research. Also note that all the other interviews are available to read on request.

All the interviewees gave me the permission to use their answers for this Thesis.

Below are just two examples of the interviews that I have conducted with these NGOs.

HOPE HIV

London, 25 March 2010

Interviewee: Mark Glen, HOPE HIV UK Director

Type of Interview: phone interview

HOPE HIV, started in 1997, is about the generation of hope to support children and young people in sub-Saharan Africa affected by HIV and AIDS with community-based projects.

HOPE HIV Strategic Focus areas are: Emotional and Social Support, Education, Economic Empowerment and Child Rights.

www.hopehiv.org

1. Does HOPE HIV work in partnership with other NGOs, Governments or local communities?

Hope HIV works in partnership with Development Teams from local communities and local organizations because this is the best way for us to work and to avoid duplicating bodies of intervention and support.

We also work together with big organizations like World Vision.

We mainly focus on helping to build capacities in difficult and deprived areas. We believe that this is a key factor when working in Africa. Unfortunately, some NGOs in the field are not able to create a beneficial network among all the different actors present in a specific area of intervention.

2. What are the main challenges-difficulties that HOPE HIV has to face in co-ordinate its work?

The main challenges that we face are connected with the fundamental issues of capacity and organization. We have our own Development Team based in Africa that works constantly in partnership but very often we struggle because of poor structural capacities, lack of funds and reports.

3. Do you think that co-ordination is important? What are HOPE HIV strategies to improve co-ordination? Is it difficult to create an effective network and communication system among the different NGOs and other third parties?

We have two strategies: sharing knowledge and helping co-ordinate the work and projects working with other teams and Organizations, helping mapping the problems in the field.

4. What has HOPE HIV achieved so far in the fight against HIV and AIDS epidemic?

We always have to think about the long term, but we can say that we have strengthened the emotional support available for families affected by HIV and AIDS, building, in particular, knowledge and access to vocational and business skills and education in order to empower the young people to sustain themselves and their families.

5. What are HOPE HIV efforts to achieve greater coordination with other NGOs before and after going in the field? Do you actually coordinate your work before going on the ground or not?

Our Africa Director sits on a committee made up of a number of NGOs, big and small, which engages in mapping exercises to identify who does what and where and from that exercise who could link with who to maximize impact and spread resources, the results of this committee influences where HOPE HIV puts its resources.

6. Has HOPE HIV ever had a break down in coordination and communication that could have been avoidable? How did you deal with that to improve?

No, not to my knowledge - generally when we work with other NGO's, we work on separate pieces of an overall program.

An example would be our work with World Vision up in Northern Uganda, with former child soldiers. World Vision has a big 'rehabilitation' program for the kids and we have a 'vocational skills training' program that works alongside, so that if and when the kids come through their experiences and our emotionally capable of progressing, we provide the training to give them skills that will help support their future.

So far, there have been no breakdowns, but I guess key to that is the original terms of reference agreed between the 2 organizations - we place a lot of importance on the 1st yard.

7. How HOPE HIV better communicates to reduce the duplication of effort and improve inter-agency mobilization and strategies?

As I have mentioned you before we do this through the committee.

8. Do you find difficult to engage more in coordination and active participation civil society organizations? Do you do that before or after going in the field?

I cannot answer to this question because is not related to what we do.

9. Does HOPE HIV share projects evaluations with other NGOs? When does it do that? Before going in the field or after?

We try and offer "open source" information on our work, especially with our partners, we have never been asked for information like this from other NGOs, but we would be open to sharing our findings if appropriate.

CUAMM, Doctors with Africa

Italy, 2 June, 2010

Interviewee: Dr Mario Battocletti, Surgeon, working experience in Ethiopia and Tanzania for Cuamm, Doctors with Africa

Type of Interview: questionnaire

Cuamm, Doctors with Africa

Doctors with Africa Cuamm runs long-term programs strongly integrated with the healthcare culture and social tissue of the country, through a continuing dialogue with the local partners. CUAMM has current projects in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda

www.doctorswithafrica.org

6. Does CUAMM work in partnership with other NGOs, Governments or local communities?

Cuamm runs projects in the health sector working with constant open dialogue with the public and religious institutions present in each area of intervention. In all the countries where Cuamm operates there is a strong coordination in terms of its lasting services provided in different areas such as: training, disability, maternal and child care and in the fight against epidemics like AIDS, TB and malaria. Even the more recent programs activated by Cuamm in areas torn by conflicts or humanitarian emergencies, aim to combine immediate interventions with long term programs.

Cuamm mission is to improve the health conditions of people in Developing Countries through sharing health programs set by the Ministry of Health of each beneficiary Country, either if Cuamm works directly with the Government of a certain country or with some no for profit institutions like Missionary Hospitals (Tosamaganga Hospital, Iringa, Tanzania), in this second case planning the health programs with the local communities. Working in partnership with other NGOs is more difficult because we concentrate our work on health issues and we do not have enough resources to start to get involved in more areas (e.g. water sanitization, social issues, etc..) which are in fact related to health conditions. In Tanzania, at Makete Cuamm has started the first partnership with two NGOs: LVIA and ACCRA to try to improve the agriculture and wells of that geographic area.

2. What are the main challenges-difficulties that CUAMM has to face in co-ordinate its work?

The lack of human resources (doctors from Europe) available and willing to work in Developing Countries for long periods of time and the dramatic reduction in funding for the International Cooperation in Developing Countries. For what concerns the operations on the ground, at this time, after 60 years of presence and experience, Cuamm is able to act with competence and confidence in different contexts.

3. Do you think that co-ordination is important? What are CUAMM strategies to improve co-ordination? Is it difficult to create an effective network and communication system among the different NGOs and other third parties?

Sure, it is important and it is an open issue at a global scale of debate. We must remember that working in partnership should be a union of strengths and not weaknesses, but very often this is not understood...

4. What has CUAMM achieved so far in the fight against HIV and AIDS epidemic?

Cuamm runs many programs on HIV and AIDS in all the seven countries where we work. To summarize, all programs must always be shared with the Government but reaching this point is still difficult. We give a lot of importance and priority to be present with constancy and competence, sharing our expertise in all the different phases of the delivery with the local staff.

We have created many Counseling and Testing Centers which are getting more and more clients, but we believe that is fundamental to share the problem and challenge represented by the HIV and AIDS epidemic with the local population to reach impressive outcomes.

5. What are CUAMM efforts to achieve greater coordination with other NGOs before and after going in the field? Do you actually coordinate your work before going on the ground or not?

Working in the health sector in particular in Developing Countries it is essential to share the survey with the local population following a programmed and shared plan. It is also important that the same local people are the ones that will continue to carry on Cuamm activities in the future and monitoring them. The coordination plan very often is not shared with us, very often even if we work in certain contexts since long time ago, other NGOs are present that overlap their programs with ours. In this regard it is our duty to try to establish a link among these NGOs and share plans even if it is quite complicated to do so. Our model of working is very famous, since Cuamm is one of the most prestigious and experiences NGO to operate in the health sector in Developing Countries. To be realistic we need a lot of patience.

6. Has CUAMM ever had a break down in coordination and communication that could have been avoidable? How did you deal with that to improve?

I cannot think about a specific example, but certainly this was representing and still represents today a big issue. In certain contexts is not that easy to work, people responsible in coordination seem to change very often for different reasons, funding has to be managed separately and with complex presentations of financial statements even if the programs are shared. Very often we find on the way many difficulties with the risk of pointing at the others when problems arise instead of sharing them and finding common solutions to them. As in life, choosing a life partner is an hard challenge and therefore it is important to consider all the factors at stake before taking a final decision.

7. How CUAMM better communicates to reduce the duplication of effort and improve inter-agency mobilization and strategies?

I have answered already in the previous questions; Cuamm engages a lot local partners and help them to find their path to sustainable growth and progress.

8. Do you find difficult to engage more in coordination and active participation civil society organizations? Do you do that before or after going in the field?

Cuamm involve both. Local communities are always present in Cuamm strategies and plans. Instead there is a limit for example in being open to work with NGOs from different countries and not just with the ones of the same country of origin, this is a limit in working in effective partnership that also Cuamm should consider more.

9. Does CUAMM share projects evaluations with other NGOs? When does it do that? Before going in the field or after?

Cuamm shares projects evaluation with constant frequency before going in the field, once there and ultimately sharing the final report.

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