

**LAGAFA HIV and AIDS Analysis Study Report Dissemination
Workshop**

Tuesday, 21st February 2012.

Crossroads Hotel, Lilongwe



Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET)

City Centre adjacent to Zain House

P.O Box 203, Lilongwe,

Malawi.

Welcome Remarks

The CISANET National Coordinator welcomed the participants and asked them to introduce themselves. He indicated that though the draft report was provided, it would be circulated electronically. The participants' contributions will help CISANET to move forward; hence he asked them to be free and contribute freely.

Opening Remarks

The LAGAFA RPC stated that the study was commissioned out of a need to fill an information gap in the area of mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in Food and Nutrition Security policies and programmes. The study was funded by European Commission under the auspices of the Local and Global Action for Food Security in Africa (LAGAFA) Project.

He further provided a brief background of the LAGAFA Project which commenced in October 2009 and will phase out in September 2012. He however pointed out the prospects of it having a success under a different call for proposals by the same European Commission by at least December 2012 however he did not give a definitive assurance informing the audience to just keep their fingers crossed. He stressed that Food and Nutrition policies should address issues of HIV and AIDS. The dissemination meeting was held as part of information sharing but also to brainstorm on possible opportunities for advocacy in HIV and AIDS Programming, especially with the crucial component of nutrition in the National Response. Having made these few remarks, he declared the meeting officially open.



Presentation on the Study

Findings:

The presentation was done by Samuel Bota, a consultant from the RENEWAL Network. He introduced RENEWAL as a research based Network which operates in five countries namely; Republic of South Africa, Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia. It is funded by the Institute for Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and its core business hinges on HIV and AIDS Programming with particular emphasis on its interrelationship with nutrition. In his presentation, he pointed out various gaps existing in Agricultural or agriculture related FSN policies with regard to HIV and AIDS mainstreaming as it relates to

Nutrition. He stressed on the possible areas of entry for CSOs intervention. A comprehensive understanding of the findings can be gotten from the study report as well as the presentation whose soft and hard copies were all availed.

Discussion:

- ✓ The Nutrition Officer from the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development wondered why such an important study had to be commissioned this late when it could have informed the National Response better had it been conducted earlier. She was informed since the funding was made available through the LAGAFA Project which started in 2009 there was no way it could have taken place earlier, at least with the LAGAFA funding in mind.
- ✓ A representative from Maikhandu wanted to know the sampling frame for the study if any and he was informed that the consultants tried to analyse all HIV and AIDS related Agriculture and FSN policies they could get of, so they did not necessarily sample. In concurrence with the study findings, he further bemoaned the lack of a Fisheries Policy that adequately mainstreams HIV and AIDS Nutrition when it quite clear that the Fisheries sub-sector is among the hardest hit with HIV infection rates and accelerated AIDS impacts. This was also echoed by a representative from the Kalondolondo Programme.
- ✓ The representative from the Kalondolondo Programme further indicated the apparent gap in evidence of local foods such as *Luni* and *bonongwe* in terms of nutritive value and how they contribute towards the nutritional as well immune status of PLHIV. This is therefore an under-researched area requiring further exploration. He also concurred with the study findings in terms of the poor operationalization of the FISP Programme in terms of how it mainstreams HIV and AIDS. He revealed that Kolondolondo has done several research studies which have clearly exposed how the most vulnerable and poorest among the FISP beneficiaries are predisposed to HIV infections through the pressure of queuing on lines to liquidate their coupon vouchers for say three days. He bemoaned the MoAI&WD's seeming lack of interest to safeguard the welfare of these marginalized groups after the coupon distribution process as it immediately steps aside. Hence there is need for CSOs to participate in Monitoring and Evaluation of FISP. On PMCT, he indicated that crops, fisheries, and livestock production with a holistic emphasis on nutrition should support the initiative.
- ✓ A representative from FAO pointed out that the Extension Policy should have been among those reviewed by the consultants as it also has a strong bias on the component of nutrition.
- ✓ The LAGAFA RPC indicated deficiency in knowledge among CSOs in differentiating between policy, program, strategy, approach and initiative contributing to their state of passivity. Additionally, CSOs are not proactive as to know when the policy is effective, inactive or outdated. He further pointed out that on the government side resources constrain timely review of outdated policies. Hence, CSOs should advocate for regular policy reviews by the government.
- ✓ A representative from NASFAM suggested that in the "challenging the status quo" section of the consultants' presentation, the impact of the global economic crisis should be considered and how this has affected funding towards HIV/AIDS for example there has been a reduction towards HIV and AIDS financial support from the Global Fund to finance National Responses. He further indicated that the study should have analysed the National Budget for Agricultural Sector in terms of how much is allocated towards HIV/AIDS initiatives/programmes. He also suggested that the study should synopsized

the importance of the Agriculture Sector given that our economy is largely agro-based and how HIV and AIDS have affected the sector. He also proposed that the presentation of the policy gaps and recommended strategies should be condensed into a matrix for easy readability.

- ✓ A Representative from NAC commented that there is need to relook at the drafted National Agriculture Policy because it has been in draft form for a long time and there is no indication of whether it will be adopted soon and what strategic direction it will take, and if they have taken issues like Fisheries policy on board. Additionally, he indicated that NAC has revised the National HIV and AIDS policy and has come up with National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan which the consultants must make reference to as they are among the major up to date Policy Frameworks.
- ✓ A representative from UNAIDS commented that all sector players must take responsibility to mainstream HIV/AIDS in all policies and programmes and to think about how to locally or alternatively finance the National Response in light of the global financial crisis. She further indicated that CSOs need to respond to national initiatives and see to it that they are well translated at community level.
- ✓ The LAGAFSA Project Manager pointed out that there is need to observe progress on domesticated Declarations and to consider the yet to be finalised MGDS II as among the major policy documents to input into.

Group Work

The participants were divided into two groups to come up with a way forward. The activity involved coming up with immediate steps and actions that need to be taken by CSOs in order to enhance effective mainstreaming of HIV issues in the Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Policies and Programmes, and who will take such steps and actions (i.e. how and when).

Presentation by group 1:

- ✓ By end of March 2012, the consultant should review other policies that have been effected by HIV/AIDS and identify the gaps; for example Agriculture Extension Policy and Green Belt Initiative.
- ✓ By end of April CISANET needs to develop an advocacy strategy to mainstream HIV/AIDS and related issues in food and nutrition security policies and programmes.
- ✓ Once the advocacy strategy is developed, CISANET should dialogue with the government on policies that have gaps.
- ✓ CISANET should take a leading role in ensuring that reviewing and drafting of policies is inclusive.

Presentation by group 2:

Immediate Steps/Action	Who?	How?	When?
Prioritising issues (especially we were we could make great impact)	CISANET	By mainstreaming to larger advocacy plan	Immediately/A SAP/February

e.g. Fisheries policy)



Stakeholder mapping – who is doing what in respect of herbs and spices research?	CISANET	Stakeholder meetings Stakeholder mapping tool Consultation/research o herbs/spices in use and evidence	Next Months (Before June)
Lobbying with Pharmacies and Poisons Board to regulate HIV Herbs and spices	CISANET/Other CSOs Pharmacies and Poisons Board	Meeting/workshop with parliamentary committees on HIV, Health and Agriculture	By May
Commission a study to check on efficacy of the herbs/spices	CISANET	Consultant/ Possibility of Clinical trials	3 – 5 years
Dissemination workshop of these study findings	CISANET	Workshop	Before June

Comments:

1. The LAGAFA Project Manager proposed that on traditional foods and spices, CISANET can work with DAES and Bunda College. He further proposed a research on budget allocation to HIV/AIDS initiatives.
2. The LAGAFA Regional Project Coordinator pointed out that FAO provide nutrition table and engagement of CISANET with Poison Board and pharmacies is not ideal. Rather CISANET can engage with MoH/MoAIWD which can lead to the identification of relevant stakeholders to work with.

3. A representative from MoAI&WD indicated that the Ministry does not have nutrition table, but Bunda College can rightly come up with nutrition table for indigenous vegetables.
4. A representative from NAC noted that Poison Board and pharmacies are better to lobby for.
5. A representative from NASFAM pointed out that CISANET should review its strategic plan in line with HIV/AIDS issues.

Closing Remarks

The CISANET National Coordinator thanked the participants for their contributions to the platform and the consultant for the work. He pointed out that after the meeting the contributions are still welcome to be communicated to the consultant through CISANET.

He clearly indicated that some of the recommendations that were made, for example, clinical trials are out of the mandate of CISANET. However, CISANET will work with other relevant Networks like MEHN in ensuring that HIV/AIDS is mainstreamed in Food and Nutrition Policies and Programmes. He invited the participants to join the newly developing “Nutrition and Social Protection” Thematic Group under the new CISANET Strategy pending at the AGM to be held in March 2012. He also informed the participants about the forthcoming policy dialogue meeting on 23rd February, 2012 where issues related to the FISP will be discussed. He finally emphasised that results dissemination will still go on through CISANET website, Facebook, and Twitter, and he encouraged the participants to visit CISANET website at least once a day to be kept abreast with its goings on.

ANNEX 1: PROGRAMME

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

TUESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2012- CROSSROADS HOTEL, LILONGWE

TIME	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR
9:00-9:15	Participants Registration	Vanessa/Raymond
9:15-9:20	Welcoming Remarks	CISANET National Coordinator
9:20-9:30	Opening Remarks	CISANET Board Chairperson
9:30-10:30	Presentation on Study Findings	RENEWAL NETWORK
10:30-10:45	HEALTH BREAK	
10:45-12:00	Group Discussions, Plenary and Way Forward	Raymond
12:00-12:10	Closing Remarks	CISANET National Coordinator

12:30

Lunch at Cross Roads Hotel

END OF WORKSHOP

ANNEX 2: PARTICIPANTS' REGISTRATION FORM

a) List of Participants

Name of Participants	Name of Organisation	Phone Number	E-mail Address
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b) Workshop Program

Vanessa: Attach program