**Annual Project Progress Report 2013**

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| **Project Title** | Strengthening the Capacity of National Volunteer Infrastructure for HIV and AIDS Response in Swaziland | **Country** | **SWAZILAND** |
| **Atlas Award ID** | **00061849** | **Implementation Modality** (i.e DIM or NIM)  | NIM |
| **Implementing Partner(s)** *(If joint project please indicate all IPs)* | NERCHA |
| **Project ID(s)**  | **00078848** | **Participating Countries***(applicable only in case of regional projects)*  |  |
| **Total Project Period** (start and end date) | April 2011 to March 2013 | **Total Award $***(List all funding Sources and amount e.g: SVF, CIDA, UNDP TRAC etc. and indicate UNV component of the award)* | UNDP US$ 250,000UNV (SVF) US$ 250,000UNV (FF) US$ 300,000NERCHA US$ 111,600 (in kind) |
| **Project Manager** **(name, telephone, e-mail)**  | Government Seconded StaffAllen Waligoawaligo@nercha.org.sz | **Project Assurance** (name, telephone, e-mail)  | UNDP Programme Officer.Senelisiwe Ntshangase senelisiwe.ntshangase@undp.org |
| **Reporting Period** | **1st January 2013 to 31st December 2013** | **Date of last reporting on the project** | **1 January 2012 to December 31 2012** |

1. **Brief summary of the project:**

The objective of the project is to strengthen capacity of civil society organisations in financial management, monitoring and evaluation, project management and resource mobilisation; provide technical support, training and mentorship skills; strengthen and enhance coordination, management and operational skills of the global fund implementing partners and other multi sectoral response to HIV/AIDS at all levels in line with the national HIV/AIDS strategic framework and decentralization policy. The project also aims at advocating and lobbying for the creation of an enabling policy environment for volunteerism in fighting against HIV and AIDS in Swaziland and to promote and enhance inter-agency partnerships, cooperation and collaboration in fighting HIV/AIDS pandemic in Swaziland.

1. **Brief summary of the UNV component of the project**

UNV will assist NERCHA in the implementation of the project through the UN Volunteer Project Technical Specialists who will be based at NERCHA. UNV will also be responsible for providing technical support to CSOs and VIOs in areas that are in need of capacity enhancement. The Portfolio Manager for Southern Africa will be providing technical backstopping to the project team on the volunteerism component. These areas include, volunteer mobilization and management, resource mobilization and proposal development, financial management and organizational development.

1. **Relevant UNDAF/One UN outcome**

To contribute to reduced new HIV infections and improved quality of life of persons infected and affected by HIV by 2015

1. **Project Progress during 2013 (January 1st- December 31st):**

In 2013 the project continued to strength the capacity of CSO through the placement of National Volunteers. The National Volunteer programme has gainedg popularity and ten CSOs are benefiting from this programme. The program leveraged resources with the UNAIDS/EU technical support project aimed at accerelating the implemention of the national HIV response to support twenty National volunteers. Ten of volunteers supported under the UNV and other ten under the UNAIDS/EU project. The volunteers attached to ten civil society organisations namely, Swaziland Business Coalition on HIV&AIDS (SWABCHA), Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA), Cheshire Homes, Church Forum, Swazialnd Natonal Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (SWANNEPHA), Save the Children, Alliance of Mayors Initiatives for Community Action on AIDS and the Local Level (AMICAALL), National Emergency Response Council on HIV & AIDS (NERCHA), NERCHA Information Centre and Southern African HIV&AIDS Information Dissermination Services (SAFAIDS). Fourteen of the National Volunteers are Monitoring and Evaluation officer, five are in Finance and one is an ICT Technician to support the operationalization of online skills database an information reservoir not only for skills match making but also for decision support, development & uplifting of volunteerism in HIV national Response and a platform for providing HIV manpower for the country.

During the reporting period a total of 13 national volunteers resigned. Three of them were finance volunteers of whom two resumed their studies at Masters Level and one joined gainful employment. Eight M&E volunteers resigned following the securing of employment with these organisations SWANNEPHA, AMICAALL, Save the Children, ICAP, Baylor Clinic and Ministry for Planning and Finance. One ICT volunteer resigned and joined mobile company MTN.
It’s noted that 7 of the M&E volunteers who resigned had been trained and sensitised on the M&E concepts and RBM.

Under the project 112 people (84 females and 28 males) were trained on th Gender and Human Rights responsiveness analysis of the National Multi-sectorial strategic framework of HIV AND AIDS (2009-2014) and Gender Checklist. The participants came from Public Sector , Civil Society Organisation (CANGO), and the private sectors (SWABCHA), and the national Volunteers. The trainings were aimed to highlight the linkages between gender, women’s rights and development so that participants appreciate the significance of gender mainstreaming as a strategy to achieve equality to access HIV services, to raise the level of awareness of stakeholders and commitment to the national gender policy and gender objectives within the constitutional, legal and policy framework, to promote and advocate for their implementation in line with the international norms for sustainable development and to develop individual and organizational competencies in gender-mainstreaming as a means of contributing to the strengthening of HIV implementers and national capacities in this area.

Twenty eight (28) officers (19 females and 9 males), from CSOs including the national volunteers were trained on Results Based Management. This training aimed at strengthening the capacity of CSOs in gaining knowledge and understanding concepts of results based management. This was aimed at enabling NGOs to be results focused when developing their plans and implementing the national HIV response. The results based thinking was a novelty for most of the participating NGOs, and was considered as an ‘eye-opener’ by most. In -house follow-up would be very beneficial in order to incorporate the results based thinking to annual and longer period plans.

Twenty six officers (16 females and 10 males) from Alliance of Mayors Initiatives for Community Action on AIDS and the Local Level (AMICAALL), were trained on Project management cycle. The training on Project management cycle aimed at enhancing the capacity of AMICAALL staff to effectively manage donor funds and promote transparency and accountability. The focus was on project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. They participants were also introduced to results based management, the use of log-frame and project cycle logic. Only two of the participants had been trained in the topic before, although they are responsible for project planning in the AMICAALL town offices.

The project also strengthened the capacity of 14 National M&E volunteers (7 females and 8 males) on M&E skills. The training was an introductory training to basic M&E concepts and skills, as the volunteers are fresh graduates and did not have previous skills in the area of M&E. All the M&E volunteers who were recruited by the date of the training (11th -15th February, 2013) were included.

Technical Support was brokered for the Swaziland National Network of People Living with HIV(SWANNEPHA) to facilitate the development of its strategic plan aligned with the extended National Strategic framework (2014-2018) The development of the strategy was consultative both with the member organisations and the external stakeholders including the donors among others (UNAIDS, PEPFAR) lead by NERCHA. The strategic plan for SWANNEPA focused on key areas that SWANNEPHA should embark upon to help contribute to the global target of zero new HIV infections, zero AIDS related deaths and zero stigma and discrimination. The 2014-2018 SWANNEPHA strategy has put a lot of focus on unifying the ‘voice’ of PLHIV as an integral part of the work forward and this voice carries a mandate from the membership. The process to develop the church Forum strategic plan was initiated and at advanced stages.

To strengthen resource mobilisation three NGOs were supported with project proposal development and budgeting. These include Church Forum, the proposal focused on promoting gender awareness among the church based actors, and it was submitted to PEPFAR. The proposal got a positive funding decision. The second proposal developed was for SWANNEPHA’s focused on strengthened engagement of PLWHA in development and the proposal was submitted to OSISA. The development of the proposal was participatory and consultative, a one-day brainstorming, writing and budgeting session was held with key stakeholders. The outcome of the proposal is not yet known.
SWAGAA was supported to prepare a funding concept note for EU on improved service delivery for support services of victims of GBV and economic empowerment for marginalized women. The exercise included a brainstorming session with project officer, joint drafting of the concept note and a one-day session on budgeting and basics of logframe and other tools used by EU was held for a wider range of staff.

Strategic advice to SWANNEPHA was provided and monitored in relation to organizational practices and culture as it relates to internal communication, meetings and adherence to staff policies. Pursuant to observations that information flow was an issue in the organization, recommendations for internal communication and meeting schedule was agreed upon. During the year, weekly programme meetings were resumed, but meeting techniques still require improvement.

NERCHA brokered technical support to develop a regional proposal for funding to SADC HIV Fund on HIV mainstreaming in the public sectors. The proposal included five countries i.e. Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Swaziland will lead its implementation. The funding will provide technical support to key public sectors to integrate HIV in their institutional mandate.

1. **Policy-level Interventions*: Please list (if any) significant policy advocacy or policy level initiatives/gains undertaken through this project during this period (e.g: new legislation on volunteerism, inputs to the National Human Development report etc.)***

The establishment of a systematic National Volunteers programme and development of the national online data base has created awareness for a systematic approach to managing National Volunteers and the need for development of a national volunteer policy in Swaziland. Currently the Country office is having discussions with the various Ministries on the development of the National Policy on Voluntarism since this intervention will cut across all sectors.

1. **Approximately how many volunteers were mobilized during 2013 through this project**

1. International UN Volunteers (Please indicate if there are any Fully Funded volunteers working in this project**): One International UN Volunteer fully funded by the Finnish Government placed.**
2. National UN volunteers: **None**
3. Non-UN Volunteers/community volunteers: (Criteria: if mobilization was attributed to UNV support/ interventions. You may include volunteers mobilized on IVD). **20 National Volunteers fully funded by the project :10 by UNAIDS (TSP project) and 10 funded by UNDP / UNV**
4. **Project Challenges: (list *2 key challenges specially related to delivery)***

1. The management of national volunteer program has been challenged by lack of commitment by the service provider contracted to manage the volunteer program. Thus volunteer monitoring, supervision and recruitment/replacement of volunteers has required a considerable contribution from the project staff. Provision of technical support has not been possible, as the institution-IDM did not have the capacity to provide volunteer mentorship. Notably is that the administration of the Volunteer allowances has been mainly smooth and handled professionally.

 2. Collaboration with the Coordinating Assembly of Non-Government Organization (CANGO) has been challenged by turn-over of CANGO staff, as both Organization Development (OD) and M&E officers of CANGO resigned when good working relations and common plans were developed. The OD officer was replaced after 6 months gap, but the position of M&E officer will not be filled due to financial constraints. This is a crucial challenge as smooth collaboration with the NGO coordinating body is essential to ensure that NGOs are fully involved and own the project. However, there is an opportunity to improve the cooperation and links with CANGO, as the volunteer program is gaining popularity and the opportunities provided by the project are becoming visible.

1. **Lessons Learnt: *(list 2 key lessons learnt and how it will be addressed in the future work plans)***
2. Volunteer positions are always volatile, and resignations are prevalent. This was experienced both from the side of national volunteers, as well as the international volunteer. Turnover has been significant throughout the project. This shows that the experience acquired by the Volunteers in their placement contributes towards human development and also creates opportunities for getting into mainstream employment. Noted though is the pressure placed on NGOs who have to continuously reorient the new Volunteers on institution, NGO Structure and area of work.

2. In the absence of sustainable funding amongst NGOs, organizational development related activities are usually not prioritised and the first to be cut. Most organisations are involved in resource mobilisation however budgeting skills remains a gap and finding a niche in the framework of donor requirements is always a challenge, and these aspects should be addressed in the future.

1. **Budget and Delivery:**
2. ***the budget for the UNV components of the project for 2013:***

US$ 50,000.00

1. ***the expenditure of the UNV components of the project for 2013:***

US$ 46513.40

US$ 3466.00 yet to be retired by NERCHA

1. ***The delivery rate:***

 100%

1. **Future Work Plan**

* M&E refresher/introduction training to the new Volunteers ones taking advantage of the skills and experience of the longer term volunteers
* 2-day retreat for national volunteers to share on volunteering experience, best practices and lessons learned, plus sharing the findings with host organizations
* 1-day training on supervision skills for organizations hosting volunteers
* 3-day training for finance volunteers and their supervisors (+ other identified NGOs) on identified topic (suggestions: budgeting, financial reporting, audit preparations, internal auditing)
* 3-day training on M&E (including sessions on RBM and eNSF) for SWABCHA
* Support SWABCHA internal training on the new M&E system
* Support Save the Children to develop mobile M&E system
* In-house mentoring for AMICAALL M&E
* Engaging consultancy to carry out study on volunteer
* Support the development of the Church Forum strategic plan

Prepared by: Katja Jose Date: 19/11/2013

Approved by Ms Allen Waligo - NERCHA Project coordinator.