



CHARITY CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



MARCH 2021 REPORT

**ON THE AFRI-SEED FUND (CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND) PROGRAMME FOR
VULNERABLE WOMEN OF SOLWEZI DISTRICT**

ABSTRACT

This report evaluates the Coronavirus Relief Fund which has now been developed into Afri-Seed Fund programme by Charity Center for Children and Youth Development (CCCYD) located in Solwezi. It sets out what the project is about, how well it is being implemented, whether it is achieving its objectives, and what the major conclusions and recommendations are. The aim of the Afri-Seed Fund programme is to assist vulnerable women recover and sustain families from COVID-19 shocks to the rural and marginalized communities of Solwezi district through payment of microloans to vulnerable but viable women, formation of village banking groups and training of beneficiaries in micro-business management.

Based on the findings, The Afri-Seed fund programme is fulfilling its mandate as it is a revolving fund hence, providing much needed relief to quite a large number of women. The harmony between how the program gives microloans and how the money is put to effective use is commendable. In addition, many beneficiaries did attest to the value addition that the Afri-Seed fund programme has brought to their lives. Therefore, the program is indeed meeting its intended objectives. Many programs can learn from how CCCYD has been carrying out the Afri-Seed fund programme.



INTRODUCTION

Community-based programs and their community partners are increasingly interested in evaluating the work that they do in their communities. The interest may be externally driven, such as funders' requirements or the need to prove "value" to community leaders, or it may be internally motivated, such as the need to obtain new funding to expand or sustain services or simply the desire to explore program effectiveness and improve quality. There is growing evidence that program sustainability is supported, by carefully planned and well-implemented program evaluation, which may be process evaluation. The importance of process evaluation is that it provides early feedback as to whether the program is being implemented as intended. This type of evaluation enables us to understand the specific components of the project, how the project is being delivered and whether or not the delivery is effective.

Women's economic empowerment is critical to achieving gender equality and sustainable development. Women are key contributors to economies as producers of food, managers of natural resources and as entrepreneurs and employees. Additionally, women are the main providers of unpaid care and domestic work - globally, women do 2.6 times the unpaid care and domestic work that men do. Economic empowerment is one of the most powerful routes for women to achieve their potential and advance their rights. Since women make up the majority of the world's poor, meeting poverty-reduction goals requires addressing women and their economic empowerment. Working with women makes good business sense. When women have the right skills and opportunities, they can help businesses and markets grow. Women who are economically empowered contribute more to their families, societies and national economies. It has been shown that women invest extra income in their children, providing a route to sustainable development.

In line with the above thought, this paper serves the purpose of being an evaluation report on the process evaluation of the Afri-Seed fund programme for Charity Centre for Children and Youth Development. Charity Centre for Children and Youth Development (CCCYD) is a Non-profit, Non-political and Non-religious Organization located in Solwezi district of North-Western province of Zambia. The organization was established to help Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs), Youth, women and persons with physical challenges improve their standards of Living

through the provision of several life skills, education support, HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, provision of micro-entrepreneurship skills and as well as material support.

The focus of this report is on women empowerment, the findings of this evaluation if put to use, may provide project officials, key players and beneficiaries with valuable information that would enable them to improve on the delivery of the project.

LAYOUT OF THE REPORT

Following this introduction, the second section of this report gives a comprehensive description of CCCYD Afri-Seed fund programme. The description includes the main goal and objectives, mission statement, history of the organization, description of the project, project areas, and the target groups of the program as well as how they are identified.

GOAL

To provide support to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs), youths, women and persons with disabilities.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Organization's mission is to promote and enhance the capabilities of children, youth and women in Zambia and beyond to effect positive social change that would necessitate the development of their lives, communities and the nation at large

HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION

Charity Centre for Children and Youth Development was established in May, 2005 in Kasempa district. It was then registered with registrar of societies in Solwezi district on 3rd September, 2010 with Registration No. ORS/102/41/434. On the 5th of May, 2014, the organization later migrated and legally registered with the Zambian Government under the Registrar of NGOs Ministry of Community Development and Social Services with registration NO. RNGO 101/0253/14.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Zambia is among the many Countries that have been affected by the Corona Virus which has claimed lives in many Countries around world and Solwezi District has not been spared from the

pandemic. Most of the poor People especially vulnerable women in Zambia live on less than a dollar per day and COVID-19 has just worsened the situation. Women are the most affected people in the communities. In Solwezi, all the families have been confined in their homes spending the little income raised from their small business. Therefore, COVID-19 has left families in Solwezi without food, soap and other essential basic needs such as medical bills and many others, which are cardinal for human survival. The loss of business and employment opportunities due to COVID-19 has caused many vulnerable women to be involved in prostitution and other illicit activities to enable them earn a living which compromises their human dignity.



Some of the Afri-Seed Fund beneficiaries (Coronavirus Relief Fund for vulnerable women)

Goal of the Project

The goal of this project is to help 500 vulnerable women recover and sustain families from COVID-19 shocks.

TARGET POPULATION

Geographical Targeting

The intervention was implemented in North-Western Province and specifically in Solwezi district and intends to expand to the uttermost of the province. Most of the poor women are located in peri-urban and rural areas and as such, the organization gave priority to such geographical setups.

Household Targeting

Particular attention will be given to vulnerable women in households which are leaving below the poverty datum line and surviving on less than a dollar a day and COVID-19 has just worsened the situation. Priority will be given to women in households like marketeers, with a very narrow asset base and limited livelihood options. The programme will develop specific targeting criteria that will be participatory and be used in selecting project beneficiaries and participants.

Individual Targeting

CCCYD works in North-Western province's rural and urban communities, where access to services is limited and scarce. The organization works with the most vulnerable youth, women and children. It seeks to improve the quality of life of individuals within organized groups. Among other vulnerable community groups, CCCYD will work to improve the livelihood of the orphans and vulnerable children, the elderly above 50 years, people living with HIV, the disabled, the youth less than 25 years, widows and widowers.

Governance, Partners and Funders

The organization is made up of all persons who have agreed to promote and foster the aims and objectives of the organization. We have the Board of Directors comprising of five (5) members which is the policy organ of the organization. The Board headed by the Chairperson and seconded by the Vice chairperson. The rest are board members. The Executive Director is an ex-official in the board. CCCYD is governed by a board of trustees that oversee the work of the director. The director is responsible for overall financial and programmatic management of the organization, liaises with donors and partners, provides strategic direction and is in charge of the resource mobilization. The organization has partnered with organizations such as; Planet Startup Incorporation a volunteer charitable organization, listed as a 501(c) (3) public charity by the Federal Government in the United States. It also partnered with Crutches 4 Africa from United States in 2014. The NGO also handles funding from donors, namely Savings Bank Foundation for International Cooperation, US embassy based charity as well as various other donors.

CCCYD observes financial reporting systems and provides financial and narrative progress reports according to donor-specifications.

PROGRAM THEORY FOR AFRI-SEED PROGRAM

The appropriate task of the evaluator is to describe the theory that is actually embodied in the program's structure and operation". Charity Centre for Children and Youth Development under the Afri-Seed thematic area aims at providing revolving funds to vulnerable women in marginalized communities of Solwezi district.

In order to achieve its goal for the Afri-Seed program:

IF women are provided with Afri-Seed funds.

AND

IF women start up their businesses.

AND

IF women are taught micro-business management.

AND

IF relationships between beneficiaries and funders are maintained and improved

THEN

Improved household income, access to quality education services for vulnerable children in women's households of Solwezi district will be achieved and sustain their lives from the Covid-19 shocks, therefore, this will provide an escape route from poverty for them and future generations.

LOGIC MODEL

GOAL: Help 500 vulnerable women recover and sustain families from COVID-19 shocks.

Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Indicators	Data to be collected

1. To help women start up their micro-entrepreneurship business	1. Funds 2. Human resources	1. Disbursement of funds. 2. Training of women.	1. Funds disbursed. 2. Women trained.	1. Improved businesses 2. Sustainable livelihoods. 3. Vulnerable children access quality education 4. Poverty reduction	1. Amount disbursed 2. Number of women trained	1. Carry out interviews 2. Make observations
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Comment, Assumptions and Risks

Looking at the logic model that was developed, the proposed interventions look feasible and attainable although the following assumptions need to hold:

Without financial support, the Afri-Seed program by CCCYD is bound to fail, it is therefore assumed that the organization will continue receiving support from well-wishers in terms of finances, technical assistance as well as collaborative support to ensure that the program succeeds the program depends on the available finances or funds. There is need for community participation in order for the program to succeed. This may include mobilization of vulnerable but viable women like marketers to be recruited and trained in micro- business management and also ensure that parents take their children to school, feed their homes and most importantly learn how to save and reinvest as a sustainable way of surviving even after the Afri-Seed programme.

EVALUATION METHOD

The main aim of this evaluation research is to gather information on the Afri-Seed program of CCCYD, based on observations and interviews from beneficiaries of the program. This is so, in order to provide information on what the program is and its effect on the beneficiaries that is to

verify the program, and assess whether or not the program is being delivered as intended and also assesses the progress which the program is contributing to its beneficiaries.

Sampling

Respondents included in the sample included beneficiaries of the project. To draw the sample for this evaluation, respondents were conveniently selected to participate in the interviews. Convenient sampling proved to be the ideal method because it was not possible to have all the targeted respondents available at the time the data collection was being done, as such, those that were available were included and interviewed.

Data Collection

There are two general types of data collection methods which were used in the evaluation process, quantitative and qualitative that can be used in any evaluation. Quantitative methods systematically document the existence or absence of program outcomes (such as knowledge, skills, behaviour, condition or other occurrences), often by using surveys or assessments. These methods aim to yield unbiased results that can be generalized to a larger population. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, explore in detail the behaviour of people and organizations and use observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups and enrich quantitative findings. They help to understand the 'how and why' including explaining whether the program is likely to be the cause of any measured change. In cases where outcomes are not achieved, qualitative data can help understand whether this is a case of program failure or implementation failure. There are different types of data collection methods that can be used in any evaluation. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, no one approach is always best, and a carefully selected mixture is likely to provide the most useful information.

Process evaluations may draw on either existing data or new data to meet their evaluation needs, or both. Existing data include internal program records as well as external datasets. New data collection include surveys, assessments, interviews, focus groups, and observations/field notes. Because a process evaluation often seeks to explore questions about fidelity of implementation and program processes, this type of evaluation typically draws on several data sources capturing both qualitative and quantitative information.

Data Collection Method and Instruments

In collecting data for the evaluation, qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The main method used was unstructured face-to-face interviews with stakeholders of the project. The beneficiaries were interviewed. Prior to the process evaluation, data was collected to help clarify the project theory, this information was collected using unstructured interview schedule through face-to-face interviews. For this evaluation, beneficiaries were interviewed individually and a paper based questionnaire.

The major strength in the data collection methods used, interviews and review of project website and brochures is that, from the interviews conducted, respondents were given an opportunity to be interviewed in a language they were comfortable with. This allowed respondents to fully express themselves. Secondly, some respondents that were interviewed agreed for the discussions to be recorded allowing for accurate information to be captured. Review of the project website and brochures also provided an insight that was verified and confirmed through the interviews making the approach work so well.

The major weakness in the approach used was that the interviews were done for a short period of time due to COVID-19 pandemic. On the website review, the major weakness is that the project website does not have documentation making it difficult to use for detailed document review.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed manually. Questionnaires were administered to the targeted sample and all the responses were recorded and counted. In choosing quotations to use in this study, preference was given to those that were expressed succinctly. In addition, confidentiality was highly encouraged as the data collected was strictly for the evaluation report. Data was analyzed in line with the following themes:

- ☐ Program design
- ☐ Program implementation process and services
- ☐ Satisfaction of the beneficiaries with the project.

All the responses were placed under one of the above themes

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Program Conceptualization and Design

The study reveals that on inception, the program was designed to provide empowerment among vulnerable women of Solwezi district. Initially, women who were business women and had stopped because of the Covid-19 hits and were left vulnerable, were targeted. The study found that the project was running as designed in that most of the beneficiaries are the targeted people who are vulnerable but viable women.

Program Implementation Process and Services

From the findings, it was established that services being offered are according to implementation plan. Most encouraging is the collaborations with the stakeholders like the donors who are cardinal in promoting women empowerment. Generally, the quality of the service was viewed to be fine.

Satisfaction of Beneficiaries

On the overall, most of the beneficiaries are satisfied with the service they are getting from the Afri-Seed program. It was also observed that most of the beneficiaries attest to the fact that their lives have been transformed for the better as a result of the program. For example, some of the beneficiaries have been able to resume and sustain their businesses as well as support their families and are now able to take their children to school. It is worth noting that improved livelihoods and improved literacy skills among their children is a big empowerment to beneficiaries, the society and to the nation as whole. Most of the beneficiaries agree that they are empowered as a result of the Afri- Seed program.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the Afri-Seed Program is fulfilling its mandate as it has been providing revolving funds to vulnerable women keeping orphans and vulnerable children to start small home based business that would help them recover from major negative impacts of COVID-19. Vulnerable women are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. It is the women that feed households and helps children attend school and meet health costs. The harmony between how the program provides revolving fund to vulnerable women keeping orphans and vulnerable children and how the funds are put to effective use to start a small home based business to help

them recover from major negative impacts of COVID-19 is commendable. Businesses have improved, which has put the funds to good use. In addition many beneficiaries did attest to the value addition that the Afri-Seed Program has brought to their lives. They are now able to feed their families, pay for their children's school fees and still grow their businesses. However, the impact of COVID-19 should not be overlooked if the program is to be a success. Therefore, the program is indeed meeting its intended objectives. Many programs can learn from how CCCYD has been carrying out the Afri-Seed program.



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