



A ThreeLeftHands view on the 2009 HIV/AIDS
program project proposal for FHI Zeway

March 24th 2009

Zeway, Ethiopia

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Foreword

Not knowing where their donations to NGO's were precisely used for and questioning if Africa is really that bad as being told, three men decided to check out the continent for them self. These three men are us; Henk Rigter, Marten Mulder and Minne Bonnema, hereafter referred to as 'we' or 'the ThreeLeftHands'(TLH), which also identifies the non-profit organization we founded to explore and to document the situations throughout Africa. While doing this, we help out people and organizations where ever we can and report about our activities to the Netherlands using various media among which our website ThreeLeftHands.com. Africa is a big continent and we cover all the distance in our easy recognizable 25-year old and orange minibus.

As being a supportive organization, ThreeLeftHands strive to improve other organizations that are being visited. To achieve this ambitious goal, the ThreeLeftHands posses a various skill set which are acquired through study and, mostly, excessive practice. Fields of expertise wherein TLH can excel are especially, but not limited to, internet and other computer applications, (mechanical) engineering, marketing / communication and business management. In cooperation with the counterpart organization, one or more projects are appointed to the ThreeLeftHands and after completing the goals agreed upon, ThreeLeftHands moves on to the next organization that will hopefully also benefit from their visit. As long as an organization is serving the public, ThreeleftHands will not differentiate between organizations and offer their services completely free of charge.

While the ThreeLeftHands are perfectly capable of taking care of their own, a donation or expense coverage is never expected, but always highly appreciated

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Organization Profile

Name: ThreeLeftHands

Established: July, 2008

Mission:

To experience Africa by own hand, to report on situations throughout Africa from a different, sincere view and to help out people, communities and organizations where possible.

Vision:

Africa is often referred to as 'The Lost Continent' and news feed from this region often agrees with this negative alias. Whether is famine or war, dictators or rebellion, there's not much good coming from Africa. We don't believe that. We believe that there is more to a story, more to a continent than the media tells us. Also we believe that one man can make a difference and therefore we travel through Africa to make that difference and find out what's Africa about by our own experience. By our stories, we hope to inspire people to try to change the world as well.

This are the ThreeLefthands:

Henk Rigter, age 25

Fields of expertise: Communication, marketing and management;

Marten Mulder, age 24

Fields of expertise: (Mechanical) engineering and teaching;

Minne Bonnema, age 26

Fields of expertise: Computer applications, internet solutions and business management

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We prefer contact by email. That is, when we are not in the direct neighborhood. When we are, you are allowed to speak to us.

Introduction

As an extension of the 2004 – 2007 HIV / AIDS project, in 2009 the Comprehensive Community Based HIV/AIDS Prevention, Care and Support Project('the project'), will start and last for at least one year. For this project, Food for the Hungry Ethiopia Zeway('FH Zeway'), received a project proposal. The ThreeLeftHands('TLH') were asked to look into this and agreed upon analyzing and commenting on the proposal.

This report is not written on the project itself and we now focus only on the project proposal. We are aware of the fact that already improvements have been made thanks to the monitoring of the previous project and we wish all the stakeholders success on implementing this project.

People reading this report are supposed to also have read the project proposal, so we feel no further introduction is needed.

1.0. Comments

1.1. Sustainability of Youth2Youth Groups

- In paragraph 2.2.I. it is stated that Family Health International already mentioned that “Young people are not particularly interested in health issues like HIV/AIDS. Young people invest their time in such areas as religion, schools, job training, agriculture, sports and the media.” The only action being taken to counter this obstacle is to spend a certain amount of meetings to the subjects of the youths preference. However, this they can do at other occasions as well.
- For the people attending the Y2Y groups there is no incentive. Besides information on HIV/AIDS, in which they are not interested, there is no reason at all to attend the meetings.
- Paragraph 2.3 suggest that group members will be encouraged to educate other youth on the subject. Nowhere is explained how this encouragement looks like.

1.2. Dependency on external sources

- The success of the project greatly depends on the reliability of the community or faith based organization leaders and other community influential people. This is a group of 'co-workers' that is not under the direct control of FH Zeway or one of the other stakeholding parties. Nowhere in the proposal is mentioned how to control them or how to check their effectiveness.
- Besides a certificate there is no incentive to get actively involved in the project. Sure, some of this is covered because religious leaders are serving their God while educating people or promoting abstinence, but how many extra time will people invest in a project without being rewarded?

1.3. Mother Support Group effectiveness

- The MSG gets its members from women positively tested at a hospital. Because of the strong stigma of having HIV/AIDS, the women will rather walk away without visiting the MSG. Nowhere is given a option to counter this obstacle.
- Its not clear how MSG's address to the 'Lost to follow up challenge'. A rather important part of the effectiveness of the activity, we think.

2.0 Recommendations

- To drop the Y2Y activity. Instead, project influence is more effective at schools, sportclubs, jobtraining, etc., where the youth actually is attending out of free will. A much more open attitude is to be expected when people are in their preferred surrounding. Send volunteers or promoters to these locations to educate the youth.
- If the existence of the Y2Y groups is required, an incentive for the attendees is recommended. For example, a positive remark on a school report, that actually means a difference in the students future.
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- To not let the success rate of the project depend on the youth educating other youth. Even if they had training, they still are youth, and in no way encouraged to help the project.
- Dependency on community leaders has to be thoroughly controlled. We do not suggest not to trust these influential people, but it is also not recommended to be naive. Rather, have the influential people accompanied by a contracted volunteer or promoter. Preferably at all times.
- In order for the Mother Support Group activity to be successful, testing when being pregnant must be obligatory, as must visiting the MSG be when testing positive.
- It is advised to monitor the project also determining goals in terms of knowledge, attitude and behavior. This helps evaluating and, when needed, adjusting the goals. For knowing and feeling are both very different things, as are feeling and behaving. E.g.: One might correctly identify ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV, had sex in the last six months, but did not use a condom. Knowing these facts allows the adjustment of focus in the project and is therefore essential.