



***NAME OF GOOD PRACTICE:*** *Community Education through Theatre*

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***CATEGORY:*** *Gender Based Violence*

***INSTITUTION:*** *Umsimisi Community Project*

**COUNTRY:** SADC GENDER PROTOCOL SUMMIT - Swaziland

**DATE:** 18 – 19 March 2013

**VENUE:** Ezulwini Convention Centre

**GENDER EQUALITY BY 2015, YES WE MUST!**

# Community Education Through Theatre for Development (T4D)

- Creates interactive educational theatre production depicting gender based violence with repackaged messages from research findings, feedback from previous programs, media reports and through information from other partners;
- During community dialogues, the production is presented to trigger people's minds;
- The cast is derived from a pool of artists already trained by Umsimisi Community Project.
- Workshp performance for stakeholders before the production is taken out for public education



# WHAT IS THE PROBLEM BEING ADDRESSED? WHY?

- We realized that a number of facilitators use lecture/classroom approaches, distribute pamphlets to educate members of the public. While we don't dispute the effectiveness of the approaches, the observation is that it leaves out some people in the process, especially the illiterate members of the society;
- This influenced the establishment of a participatory kind of approach in informing and educating the society on gender based violence;
- The uniqueness of the tool over other Medias is that it uses people in the process; depicting their own culture; accommodates all groups of society indiscriminately, easy to identify with issues; addresses all myths and misconceptions on spot; gives sense of ownership to the response; it has the power to influence behavior change; it triggers people's minds for participatory discussions in community dialogues.



# HOW IS THE PROJECT CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE 28 TARGETS OF THE SADC PROTOCOL?

<b>PROTOCOL TARGET</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>
<p><b>Article 20-25</b> where it talks of the provision for the implementation of variety strategies, including enacting, reviewing, reforming and enforcing laws aimed at eliminating all forms of gender based violence.</p>	<p>community sensitization for the public to stand up and claim their right, hence influencing change and facilitating the participation of women in decision making in the traditional and modern structures from community to national level.</p>
<p><b>Article 27:</b> HIV AND AIDS; this article covers prevention, treatment care and support in relation to HIV/AIDS.</p>	<p>Community sensitization through community dialogues on Gender and HIV.</p>

# DESCRIBE YOUR TARGET GROUP

- The approach targets general members of the public,
- Key people include the Community Leaders for buy in & take their role in the fight against gender based violence in their own communities.
- The public is educated so as to break the silence on all forms of gender based violence realized in the community starting at family level nation.



# OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To assess the public attitude towards representation of women in traditional and modern structures of governance;
- ❖ To develop and implement a communication strategy addressing gender based violence and its linkages to the spread of HIV, culture and human rights;
- ❖ To establish gender sensitive support systems for women and youth in decision-making positions from community level;
- ❖ To design and disseminate repackaged information to end gender based violence and facilitate a move for women's participation in decision-making positions in response to women's socio-legal/political/cultural/economic concerns.



# PROCESS

The steps include:

- ❖ Community workshops for the community leaders for their buy in and support of the program including mobilizing members of the public;
- ❖ Identification and workshop for the cast from the pool trained by Umsimisi Community Project and produce the educational production;
- ❖ Workshop performance for stakeholders, including the media before the production is taken for community education for stakeholder input for coordinated messaging;
- ❖ Community dialogues where the educational production is performed to trigger people's minds on gender based violence issues for participatory discussions afterwards.



# PROCESS

- Identification of community based volunteers for consistent touch with the community;
- however, due to resource constraints this exercise hasn't been effective;
- Sharing information with other stakeholders through different forums/networks.





# WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN SUCCESSES?

- Partnerships with other local NGOs;
- Uncovering cases of violence and referred to relevant organisation for further assistance on survivors.



# WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN SUCCESSES?

- Training of youth theatre groups who are continuing with community education through theatre in own communities;



# KEY OUTPUTS (MATERIALS ETC.)

The outputs include:

- The successful running of the community dialogues where cases of abuse against girls were uncovered and referred to relevant stakeholders for further action;
- Successfully producing and airing radio jingles to create awareness on gender based violence, with some produced for other stakeholders;
- Trained young people on theatre skills who now run their own theatre groups in their communities professionally;
- Training of trainers of other young people, with one young lady enrolled at the Limkokwing University, she is doing multimedia, specializing in video filming where we shall use the skill to document and share community practices.



# CHANGING LIVES

- The major life change is realised on the young people involved in theatre, taking it professionally (livelihood);
- Ability to mobilize communities and engaging with community leaders;
- skills development within the organisation to improve the work of the organisation.



# LESSONS LEARNT

- Ability to engage with communities, incl community leaders for community mobilization;
- Approach the sensitive subject of gender and deal with resistance from community influential people;
- Ability to use theatre and get maximum participation in the discussions on community dialogues.



# WAY FORWARD

The approach is sustained through:

- Community based volunteers who act as a link between the organisation and the communities;
- Ongoing community sensitization programs/engagements with the communities by local theatre groups;
- Strengthening partnerships with other role players on the ground, eg local organisation and other structures already active in the communities.