

COSMO FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

1. Description

- 1.1. Name of beneficiary of grant contract: CARE Österreich
- 1.2. Name and title of the contact person: Kathrin Pauschenwein, Program Officer
- 1.3. Name of partners in the Action: ARCT-Ruhuka and Haguruka Association
- 1.4. Title of the Action: COSMO - Community Support and Mentoring for Orphans and Vulnerable Children/ Youth
- 1.5. Contract number: ONG-PVD/2006/118-763
- 1.6. Start date and end date of the reporting period: December 28th , 2006 to March 31st , 2010
- 1.7. Target country(ies) or region(s): Rwanda, Northern Province (Musanze District) and Southern Province (Ruhango, Muhanga and Kamonyi Districts)
- 1.8. Final beneficiaries &/or target groups¹ (if different) (including numbers of women and men):
Final beneficiaries:
 - The families and household members of the targeted OVCY
 - All children of the Project target area
 - All community members in the Project target area
 - The Government of RwandaTarget group:
 - 9,000 Orphans and Vulnerable Children,
 - 700 Nkundabana (=volunteer child mentors)
 - 100 local government representatives and officials and
 - 700 community members
- 1.9. Country (ies) in which the activities take place (if different from 1.7): NA

¹ "Target groups" are the groups/entities who will be directly positively affected by the project at the Project Purpose level, and "final beneficiaries" are those who will benefit from the project in the long term at the level of the society or sector at large.

2. Assessment of Implementation of Activities

2.1. Activities and Results

Expected Result 1: The capacity of the Nkundabana associations is enhanced to an extent that the associations sustain themselves following program completion

Activity A.1.1. Project inception and baseline study

Preparation of budget revision:

Because CARE's salary structure changed between the time the Project was designed and its approval and because local partners ARCT and HAGURUKA requested an increase of their staff in the Project, it was necessary to start the Project by preparing a budget revision. Meetings were held with the EU delegation about this revision and approval was obtained on April 18th 2007. The budget revision caused delays in Project implementation. Without it, CARE, Haguruka and ARCT could not finalize team recruitment and the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between CARE and ARCT and between CARE and HAGURUKA.

During the Project implementation, two other budget revisions were made. The second revision was made in July 2008 and approved by EC in February 2009. This was due to changes in the Project strategies and needed approval from EC because some budgetlines needed a significant increase while others have been decreased. The third budget adjustment was made in October 2009 and approved in December 2009. This purpose of the last adjustment was requested to allow the COSMO team to complete activities that were not yet achieved within the original Project period. Thus, a budget reallocation and a no-cost extension were prepared to solicit additional time and adjustments in some budget lines. Both the budget reallocation and the request for the no-cost extension were approved by the European Commission in December 2009. Therefore, the Project implementation time frame changed from 36 months to 39 months.

Hiring of the Project team:

The first step towards implementation of the Project was to recruit the Project staff. The team was complete, including partners' seconded staff, in late April 2007. As with the MOUs with local implementing partners ARCT and Haguruka, staff recruitment at CARE was delayed because some positions required the donor's prior approval of the budget revision. Note that among CARE staff, 85.7% are former EU & ADA funded Nkundabana Initiative for Psychosocial Support (NIPS) Project staff. Besides having to ask for a budget revision, another delaying factor is that we did not immediately advertise all Project positions outside CARE. Vacancies were first advertised internally but could not all be filled by internal candidates, making it necessary to advertise externally. In the meantime, CARE changed its policy and all vacancies are immediately advertised both internally and externally. Staff recruitment at CARE was already taken as an opportunity to work with ARCT and Haguruka. Representatives from the two organizations participated in the recruitment of CARE staff by sitting in interviews of the positions that supervise the staff seconded by ARCT and Haguruka.

However, in July 2008, the Project staffing structure was modified after the resignation of the first Project Manager. The change has been that the position of "Psychosocial Supervisor" has been cancelled and many of its responsibilities shared between the new Project Manager and Social Workers. In addition, the CARE's Health Program Manager was requested to contribute a percentage of his time in order to support the Project team; particularly the Project Manager and his post was changed a bit to embrace OVC and become Health and OVC Program Manager.

Preparation meetings with ARCT and HAGURUKA

Several meetings took place to discuss about Project implementation and modes of collaboration. Discussions with ARCT and Haguruka led to major changes in the way to implement the Project as compared to the original budget. Building on lessons from NIPS, it was decided to form one Project team to which all three organizations would contribute staff. In addition to CARE's above mentioned staff, it was agreed that Haguruka would second two full time staff members and ARCT/Ruhuka four. Also, instead of having each partner implement a piece of the Project independently, it was agreed to plan and implement all activities as one team in order to be more

cost-effective but also in order to increase cross-fertilization and learning between the three partners. Following initial meetings, a scope of work and a draft Memorandum of Understanding was drafted for each partner organization and a budget revision was sent to the EU. Unfortunately, the MOUs could not be signed until June 1st 2007 because we first had to have obtained the formal approval of the EU on the budget revision.

Steering Committee Meeting:

As agreed in the MOUs with ARCT and Haguruka, a joint Project steering committee was put in place and the committee's mandate was jointly defined as follows during the 1st meeting that took place on June 7th, 2007.

- Provide leadership and guidance to the Project team;
- Joint selection and recruitment of all field based Project team members, including the Project manager hired by CARE and the seconded employees of both ARCT and Haguruka;
- Measuring Project quality and impact through ongoing monitoring and evaluation of Project activities, including identification and documentation of challenges, lessons learnt and best and promising practices;
- Review and approve quarterly action plans for the next quarter and activity reports for the past quarter to be produced by the Project team;
- Review and approve annual action plans and annual narrative reports to be produced by the Project team;
- Decide on allocations of resources to the different Project activities in a way that maximizes cost-effectiveness;
- Reviews Project strategies and advises on necessary changes; and
- The committee will meet quarterly or more often if necessary.

Team building and orientation:

In order to ensure integration of the seconded staff from ARCT and HAGURUKA to the rest of the Project team, to create a sense of togetherness and collective responsibility towards achieving Project objectives, a series of meetings were held at team level at the beginning of the Project and on June 25th and 26th, the whole Project team and the members of the steering committee met jointly in Musanze to achieve the following objectives:

- Reflect on lessons learnt from NIPS and determine how to integrate them into COSMO.
- Have a common comprehension of the Project objectives and its different components, particularly the new ones (Early Childhood Development, Placement and Succession Planning, Nkundabana serving other categories of OVCs, not just CHH)
- Review the action plan for the 1st year and agree on implementation and priorities

Procurement

Other Project inception activities involved the preparation of a procurement plan. Given the fact that CARE had received approval from the EU to continue utilising NIPS computer equipments, vehicle and motorbikes; few items had to be procured for COSMO. These include six laptop computers, two printers, two photocopy machines, and office furniture (rolling chairs).

Installing offices:

As recruitment was taking place, field offices in Musanze district and in Muhanga for the Southern Province were being identified. In Muhanga district, the former CARE office was closed and CARE moved into Haguruka's office. In Musanze, an office was first obtained free of charge from the Health District Director who is also in charge of child protection and Family Promotion. However, district authorities claimed the office back shortly after the Project team had moved in. So, in September 07, the COSMO team based in Musanze moved into another office hired by CARE in Musanze from which other two Projects from CARE were operating. In January 2009, the Project team in Muhanga District moved from Haguruka office to a new office hired by CARE, after finding out that the office was not large enough to accommodate CARE and Haguruka staff as the later had increased the number of its staff.

Preparation meetings with local authorities

Meetings with Local Authorities of Musanze, Ruhango, Kamonyi and Muhanga districts were also held and were crucial preliminary steps for the Project's future success because without any information about the Project, local authorities can't be involved, engaged and committed. They, together with communities and children, are key stakeholders. Taking into account the decentralization policy and dynamics in Rwanda, no development Project can be effective and successful without local leaders' involvement. In fact, Nkundabana themselves keep on stressing on the importance of strengthening their links with local authorities. While NIPS was very well known by local leaders in the Southern Province, many key officials at decentralized level had changed between the end of NIPS and COSMO's inception and in Musanze, the Project was new. In the former NIPS zone, one meeting per sector was held in each of the 20 sectors, bringing together CHH, Nkundabana, district and sector authorities and CARE staff to explain and present the Project. It was observed and highly appreciated that Nkundabana continued their job even after the closure of NIPS.

Project official launch

The Project was officially launched on September 27th 2007 in Musanze. All the organisations involved in OVC activities in Rwanda were invited and the following participated, just to name a few: SCF-UK, CHAMP, CRS, World Vision, Director in charge of protection at MIGEPROF and many other OVC stakeholders. The launching ceremony was honoured by the presence of the former Minister of Gender and Family Promotion, Mrs Valerie Nyirahabineza², and the Head of European Union Delegation in Rwanda, at that time Mr. David Mac Rae. In his speech, Mr. Mac Rae praised Nkundabana for their work. "Rwanda has known the worst not long ago, but through you, it is experiencing its best". The Minister insisted on the contribution of children to the country's development and peace and stability. She called for a rights based approach when working with children and genuine participation of the community in caring for their orphans and vulnerable children.



From left to right: **Philip Christensen**, Country Director, CARE International in Rwanda; **Valerie Nyirahabineza**, Former Minister of Gender and Family Promotion, **David Mac Rae**, Former Head of European Union Delegation in Rwanda and **Eugene Rusanganwa**, Former Psychosocial Supervisor, who became the COSMO Project Manager since July 2008.

² Valerie Nyirahabineza is now a member of the East African Community Parliament

Baseline Survey

As planned, the baseline study and the design of the COSMO Project M&E plan were to be facilitated by an external consultant. After having launched the bid publicly in Rwanda, CARE received several applications but only one had the required quality but was well above the available budget. Since the consultancy firm which had been selected, SIAPAC (Social Impact Assessment and Policy Analysis Cooperation), was affiliated with UNAIDS' "Technical Support Facility", CARE requested TSF for support for the baseline. TSF for Eastern Africa is based in Nairobi and has been established by UNAIDS to respond to the growing demand for quality short-term technical assistance to scale-up HIV and AIDS interventions, including OVC Projects, across Eastern Africa. The TSF is managed by UNAIDS as part of its strategy to help strengthen coordination and capacity for effective HIV and AIDS interventions in line with national priorities and plans. TSF services are managed by AMREF and provided through a pool of local, regional and international consultants. After initially welcoming CARE's application, TSF requested the file to be re-submitted via local partner Haguruka after realizing that international NGOs were not eligible for TSF's support. In the end, TSF accepted to cover costs worth \$44,000, for this consultancy. The rest was covered by the COSMO Project and was split between the EU/ADA budget and the COVANCE/ECD budget (see more below about COVANCE's support for the Early Childhood Development component of the Project). With these delays in finalizing the TSF application and also because verification of selected Project beneficiaries in Musanze has been very time consuming, the baseline started only in November 2007. In total, 210 OVCs and 197 Nkundabana have been interviewed in Musanze district, 210 Nkundabana and 210 CHH were interviewed and 22 Focus Group Discussions with Nkundabana, local authorities, NGOs, community members, and opinion leaders have been held in the ex-NIPS Project zone. Interviews with 36 care takers of children enrolled in the ECD initiative in Kamonyi District were completed in February 2008. The final version of the baseline report and M&E plan were completed at the end of July 2008. These documents have been a result of various meetings and discussion sessions that brought together consultants from SIAPAC and COSMO technical staff (COSMO M&E Officer, Health and OVC Program Manager and Health and OVC Sector Coordinator). One of the reasons why the baseline was very time consuming was because it has been designed in a way to train the Project team, particularly the person in charge of M&E and Project partners, in basic quantitative and qualitative research.

The report presents findings from the baseline survey in Musanze District for the roll-out of the Nkundabana program in this new area. The study was combined with an impact assessment and lessons learnt documentation in the three districts: Kamonyi, Muhanga and Ruhango (Former NIPS zone). Lessons learnt from the three districts guided the programming in Musanze since it was going to integrate other vulnerable children with adults living with them. The new development with the COSMO M&E plan is that it contains exit indicators that will be measured six months after the Project has ended. This will help staff to think in advance about the Project's exit strategy and how to sustain COSMO results. The report also presents findings regarding the baseline situation of children in the three day care centers launched in Kamonyi (Early childhood development intervention that was being piloted in Kamonyi). The baseline information helped to revise the log frame and provided inputs for the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. Besides the revised log frame, monitoring and evaluation system and tools, the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan contains a technical sheet that provides the definition of outcome indicators and shows how they will be measured during impact assessment.

CARE appreciated the fact that the whole process has been a learning opportunity for the three organizations: CARE, ARCT-Ruhuka and Haguruka.

The baseline report highlighted the following findings:

- In the first three NIPS districts, child-headed households were prioritized. In Musanze District, households were identified according to a community-led participatory process based on a vulnerability analysis. In Musanze District, two-thirds of the households prioritized for COSMO had at least one adult member, and were largely female-headed, compared to one-third with adults in the first three districts.
- In Musanze District, two-thirds of the volunteers were male.
- Over half of all OVCY care giving households in Musanze District had suffered from a severe shock that had hurt their economic status. In part, this reflected weak coping strategies.
- Almost all OVCY care giving households in all four districts were built at least in part with informal materials, with problems associated with the purchase of building materials and maintenance.

- In Musanze District, one-third of the OVCY who were of school-going age were not attending school. Non-attendance was lower for the first three districts, at just over 20%.
- In all four districts, social capital systems were quite weak, particularly in Musanze District. This is despite the fact that the majority of OVCY care giving households reported living proximate to family members, and despite the fact that the sense of community was rated as strong by most households.
- In Musanze District, few OVCY had received minimum package services. Key gaps identified by OVCY were associated with education (formal schooling, vocational training, and apprenticeships), and health insurance. This is consistent with priority needs as identified by Nkundabana.
- In Musanze District, few of the OVCY targeted for COSMO support had been reached by any other service providers.
- In Musanze District, over 80% of those identified for COSMO had been listed as households most in need in their respective umudugudu.
- In all four districts, the Nkundabana volunteers are quite well known. There is, however, some confusion about program targeting and incentive systems for the volunteers that may weaken support.
- In all four districts, the majority of OVCY averaged only one meal per day.

The baseline consultants also formulated a number of recommendations based on the lessons learned in Kamonyi, Muhanga and Ruhango Districts:

- Findings from all four districts suggest that the model itself is quite sound, underlining the findings from the previous evaluation of the program. It is recommended that the COSMO team consider how they can be a more active proponent of the Nkundabana model in national and particularly district fora. For the moment, a new Project called NISU (Nkundabana Initiative for Scale Up) has been designed and funded by EC to help MIGEPROF replicate the Nkundabana model at the national level. This has been done to respond not only to the recommendation but also to the need because most of the OVC stakeholders are using different approaches while MIGEPROF wants to harmonize approaches around supporting OVC.
- The focus on psychosocial counseling and positive socialization is clearly central to the success of the OVC response in Rwanda. The Nkundabana model therefore offers important lessons to be learned about scaling up and scaling out similar approaches. Current reach is only around 10% of children in need. The shift to allow communities to identify those most in need, rather than a specific focus on child-headed households, is also welcome. This recommendation has been taken into account during COSMO design because in Musanze both child headed households and other vulnerable children have been targeted to increase social cohesion among OVCs.
- In addition, the Nkundabana focus on community-based systems of identification of children most in need is sound, and should also serve as a way forward for the identification of children most in need. Given that almost all of the children prioritized by Nkundabana were also listed by umudugudu as 'children most in need', findings suggest that the children targeted are clearly in need.
- The NIPS and COSMO recognition of the poverty affecting the volunteers themselves is a key strength of the program, and its focus on improving their socio-economic status is welcome. This has enormous replication potential. To serve this purpose, COSMO team has worked with Nkundabana volunteers to identify what they can do to boost their economic situation. They have chosen to cater for cows and they have received cows in their associations; these cows will serve as revolving credits among Nkundabana associations' members. The voluntary saving and loan methodology has also been introduced among Nkundabana associations and they are now saving and providing loans to members.
- Savings and loan schemes have served as the primary vehicle for responding to the poverty of Nkundabana volunteer households, but the schemes not performed as well as required to be sustainable over time. Ideally, loan repayment rates should approach 100%, and high rates of repayment must be enforced before any loan replenishment takes place.
- The situation analysis of OVC found few differences in conditions for male and female OVC, but did note important differences in terms of what these conditions implied for the future well-being of male and female OVC as they grew up. Some of the focus group discussion participants in the three NIPS districts highlighted concerns about sexual exploitation, early pregnancy, and gender-based violence, suggesting that these all need particular attention, especially towards Project closure.

- A common problem for many Projects, especially those with a strong social welfare focus, is sustainability of interventions following Project completion. Ideally, an exit strategy should be part of Project design, with the exit strategy discussed from the beginning with stakeholders, including the volunteers and the OVCY. With this in mind, specific indicators have been developed for the exit strategy, and are included in the COSMO logical framework.
- Given that significant additional funds are available specifically for OVC through Round 7 of the Global Fund, it is recommended that CARE/Haguruka/ARCT consider whether funds can be secured for a follow-up support initiative for Nkundabana institutional infrastructure in Kamonyi, Muhanga, and Ruhango districts.
- Findings from the survey highlight serious problems with shelter, and the prioritization of shelter by many OVCY and caregivers. However, experience from the 2003-2006 NIPS highlights equal attention needing to be given to continued support for repairs and rehabilitation. With COSMO, 103 OVCs received appropriate shelter.
- Replacement of capital equipment was a particular problem for NIPS. For COSMO, funds need to be set aside by the associations for replacement of such equipment, which should be facilitated by CARE/Haguruka/ARCT.
- Despite efforts to the contrary by the team, over time, it appears that the flexibility designed into NIPS was reduced during implementation. To the extent possible, this should be avoided for COSMO, by reinforcing the message that the Nkundabana are encouraged to increase their decision-making role.
- Burn out does not appear to be a major problem of the Nkundabana volunteers. However, key disincentives for the volunteers are associated with the availability of materials to support OVCY. Findings from the pre-school survey highlight serious child development challenges, and the importance of early childhood care and development initiatives. Key informants underlined the importance of securing the services of trained educators, and the need to focus on child development, rather than child minding.

Besides the baseline, an M&E Plan has been developed. It contained data collection and reporting tools, data management, data flow and the impact measurement at the end of the Project.

Activity A 1.2: Execution of technical expansion of the Nkundabana model: placement and succession planning in Kamonyi

This being a sensitive and new activity in the Project area, it required to go through a number of steps while sensitizing partners, local authorities and partners on its benefits for children. Planned steps under the activity were:

- Preparation meetings with partners to define the package of services
- Refine training modules and tools (For memory work, etc)
- Training of 26 local leaders and 50 Nkundabana to implement this component
- Identification of 50 households to benefit from succession and placement planning package of services
- Delivery of succession and placement planning package to 50 households (home visits, preparation of foster families, memory work, will writing, etc) by trained volunteers with technical support from Project team
- Ongoing monitoring and documentation of activity (i.e., problems encountered, solutions found, lessons learnt)

As mentioned in the Project proposal (page 9), the original Nkundabana model was developed for children living without adult's support in households headed by children (CHH). One of the lessons learnt from the NIPS Project is that, as the expression says, it would be "better to prevent than to cure". In other words, instead of limiting Nkundabana to support children once they are abandoned by adults in the community, children at risk of becoming a CHH could be identified and offered a succession and placement planning package in order to prevent them from ending up alone, without adults support in the community. A will could be written to make sure the children know what belongs to their care taker and to officially document the succession to the child. This would tremendously reduce the number of children who see their properties and land grabbed by neighbours or distant family members when their care taker dies. The placement of the child could also be organized in advance by identifying someone in the family, friend or neighbourhood who would be willing to take the child in

his home when the care taker dies. An important aspect of placement and succession planning is the preparation of memory books to ensure important information about the child's parents and history is documented.

Since this activity was totally new, a series of meetings with ARCT/RUHUKA and HAGURUKA were held, including a one day workshop on July 17th 2009 which took place at ARCT's office, to jointly define the package of service to offer under this placement and succession component, to identify training needs for Nkundabana and other persons involved, to agree on steps to develop these training modules and to agree on selection criteria for the children to be enrolled under this pilot. The meetings helped Project team members to have the same understanding of what "placement and succession planning" is all about. They discussed implementation strategies, designed an action plan and agreed on the training module. As far as the training module is concerned, CARE was requested to prepare the general orientation of the activity; ARCT-Ruhuka was requested to prepare the psychosocial aspect (what to do to limit trauma of the child and prepare him for the death of his care taker and his life after, etc) while HAGURUKA was to work on the legal issues (what to do to prepare a will that will be officially recognized by local authorities? Which documents are necessary? How to officially arrange placement of the child? Is it equal to an adoption? Fostering? Etc). As for selection of children to benefit from the placement and succession package of service, it was agreed to first target children enrolled in CARE's ECD Project in Kamonyi District.

The key stakeholders identified include Nkundabana, cell committee members in charge of social affairs, cell executive secretary, a staff member in charge of social/judicial affairs at sector level, parents/caretakers, future caretakers and child beneficiaries. Other people at the District level should be involved indirectly as they deal with OVCs and people living with HIV/AIDS issues on a daily basis. These people include the Vice-Mayor in charge of social affairs and the Technical Assistant of the District AIDS Control Commission (DACC).

The package of services defined include services such as preparing the family property list, will preparation, assistance to making the will official, preparation of the memory book, home visits to discuss child placement with all the concerned people, sensitization and preparation of the three parties (children, parents and local authorities) involved in the placement, technical support in the preparation of the documents that regulate the placement; technical assistance to regulate the documents, counseling as a preparation of the loss of the parent/care taker, counseling after the death of the parent and technical support to implement the placement. As far as the immediate actions are concerned, the steering committee decided that in the near future, the Project team will identify potential households that will participate in the placement, start raising the awareness of local authorities, communities and other stakeholders, and finalize the training modules and prepare all the necessary tools and materials needed.

Training of 26 local leaders and 50 Nkundabana to implement this component

Thirty-five Nkundabana from Musambira, Karama and Nyarubaka sectors who were selected to facilitate the implementation of the placement and succession planning attended an eight day training workshop divided into three phases. The training workshop was organized as follows:

Date	Venue	# participants	Topics
24-27/7/2009	Musambira	35	- Concepts of memory work, memory box and memory book - Helpful and Active Listening techniques - Care and support to households members during the process of memory work
10-11/08/2009	Musambira	35	- Practical exercises on the development of the memory box
11-13/11/2009	Musambira	35	- Recapitulation of child rights - Succession law and will development - Placement of child and the law on adoption

After the training sessions, Nkundabana were expected to help selected households undergo the memory work and the development of wills.

- Twenty-six local authorities at sector and cell levels, and three paralegal advisors were sensitized on the concept of placement and succession planning and on their role in the activity in Musambira, Karama and Nyarubaka sectors from Kamonyi District. The sensitization meeting took place on the

21/12/2009 in Musambira and Karama. Sixteen leaders from Musambira and Nyarubaka Sectors attended the meeting in Musambira. Ten leaders from Karama Sector attended the meeting organized in Karama. Local leaders were supportive and they promised to collaborate with Nkundabana and to play their own role where necessary.

- On the same day, 73 adult members of targeted households from Musambira, and Karama sectors attended a sensitization meeting on succession and placement planning and on the process they have to go through. The meeting took place concurrently with 20 participants in Karama and 53 participants in Musambira. Participants accepted to collaborate with Nkundabana and they appreciated the support.

Comments:

- The Project initially planned to train 50 Nkundabana who would then support 50 targeted households. However, it was determined that Nkundabana were already mentoring more than one of targeted households so 35 Nkundabana were trained to support 51 households to develop their wills and memory boxes.
- It was planned to have 26 local authorities attend a training session but after having them attend a one day sensitization session the Project staff found that the sensitization meeting was sufficient to orient them on their role and responsibilities.
- It was planned to sensitize 100 adults' members of targeted households, i.e. two per targeted household, but only 73 attended the sensitization sessions. Only 73 individuals participated because some households had only one adult.

Identification of 50 households to benefit from succession and placement planning package of services

The participatory process for identifying households to be supported by the Project in succession and placement planning was conducted among beneficiaries of the early childhood development (ECD) initiative supported by CARE. Fifty-one households were selected by community members, including local authorities and parents of children who are enrolled at the ECD centers supported by CARE. The criteria to select these households included:

- Being a beneficiary of COSMO/ECD;
- Being in a household headed by a person older than 60;
- Being in a household headed by an HIV positive person who is at the last stage;
- Being in a household headed by a young adult who is going to leave the household soon in order to create his/her own family; and
- Being a child living in a foster family and whose parents have died without having completed a will.

Among those 51 households identified, 16 were not beneficiaries of the Nkundabana program before, which means that they did not have an Nkundabana mentor. They were assisted to select an Nkundabana not only for the purpose of having one who will facilitate the development of the memory box but for on-going psychosocial support.

Delivery of succession and placement planning package to 50 households by trained volunteers with technical support from the Project team

All 35 Nkundabana involved in placement and succession planning made home visits to 51 identified households and they planned together how the process would be organized. The process of gathering memory books and will writing started in all the 51 households facilitated by Nkundabana. During the process, the Project team found that it was not easy for Nkundabana to go ahead with this new and sensitive activity given the cultural context and their weak experience. Thus, the Project Team decided to select only 8 households and to facilitate the development of memory books and will writing, and to associate the Nkundabana in order to help them get more capacity through learning by doing and then allow them to do it on their own later.

By the end of the Project, the selected 8 households were helped to develop their memory boxes, and had their wills written and approved by authorities. For children living in foster families, a fostering form was signed by the head of the family and approved by authorities. The remaining 43 households will be helped by trained Nkundabana and local authorities to go ahead and finalize their memory books and wills writing. This is one of the activities that were handed over to local authorities and Nkundabana during the Project closing ceremonies including the list of 43 households that urgently need memory books and wills.

Ongoing monitoring and documentation of activity (problems encountered, solutions found, lessons learnt, etc)

After going through the above experience, the Project Team identified a number challenges and lessons, which include, but not limited to, the following:

Challenges:

The implementation of this activity has been a difficult learning process as it was new for staff and new in the cultural context. It took a long time to develop a common understanding among staff regarding the process and appropriate community members to involve while developing staff capacity to continue and scale up the initiative.

Lessons Learned:

Even if the Project ended before all the identified households complete the process, some lessons have already been identified.

- Placement and succession planning is a process that requires sufficient time, flexibility and patience for both households and facilitators.
- The memory work brought out traumatic memories for many participants and the process had to be stopped for a while. It is important that the process be facilitated by people with strong psychosocial skills and it was found that Nkundabana could be appropriate members of the community for this work if the process starts at a later stage after they have accumulated necessary skills in terms of providing psychosocial support.
- Even if the concept was totally new in the Rwandan context and so to the participants, it was welcomed as an opportunity to work on trauma issues and to prevent future rights abuse.
- The activity has helped children in foster families to trace family members who they didn't where to find them.

To date, these are the outputs under the component of placement and succession planning:

- A training module was developed and includes memory work, laws related to succession and placement and exercises on will and memory box development.
- Fifty local authorities at the district, sector and cell level in Kamonyi District were sensitized on the placement and succession planning component and they were supportive.
- Fifty-one households were identified to participate in the activity of placement and succession planning
- Thirty-five Nkundabana were trained to facilitate the activity of succession and placement and received materials including documents on child rights and protection, a recorder and digital camera to use during the process.
- Fifty-one households received a kit for memory work. The kit includes a briefcase, 1 photo album, 1 register, pens, pencils, and paper.
- Some elements of the succession and placement planning package of services were delivered; home visits were completed and ;
- Eight households have developed their memory boxes, wrote and officialized wills.

Early Childhood Development

One of the lessons learnt from NIPS is that children below 5 years were not being taken care of by the Nkundabana model. Therefore, CARE fundraised for activities directed towards this category of children. Fortunately, COVANCE, a US based global drug development Services Company accepted to fund the component of Early Childhood Development that targeted children below 5. This component was part and parcel of COSMO Project though not funded by EU or ADA.

The ECD component was piloted in Kamonyi District. 281 children aged between 3 and 4 years. They were enrolled in 3 day care centers and those aged 5 and 6 were helped to attend two nursery schools. After the successful pilot of ECD in two years, CARE got more funds to extend activities in Kamonyi District, to start new day care centres in Musanze District and pilot a home-based care approach for children under 6. CARE Rwanda was also selected by CARE USA to submit a proposal on Child Survival, and a big Project that will use an integrated home-based care approach for the child survival was designed and submitted.

A 1.2: Execution of technical expansion of the Nkundabana model: production of an Nkundabana toolkit including a comprehensive training module for Nkundabana

The COSMO Team had an idea of supporting the Rwandan government, specifically the Ministry in charge of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), to replicate the Nkundabana model as it is one of the objectives of the 2007-2011 National Strategic Plan. For this purpose, the COSMO Project team decided to develop a toolkit that describes the model with guides and comprehensive training modules. The financial support to this activity was provided by a Private donor called John FOUNTAS, from USA.

With the technical assistance from three consultants who complemented one another, the COSMO Project developed a Nkundabana toolkit that describes from the beginning, how the model has been established and implemented, defines sustainability mechanisms and its monitoring and evaluation framework. This document also includes training modules and all necessary tools and guides: identification and reporting formats, guidelines to facilitate different meeting with communities, etc. The document was developed in close collaboration with all partners involved in Psychosocial Support to OVCs, including the ministry having support to OVCs in its attribution (MIGEPROF), UNICEF, National AIDS Control commission (NACC), World Vision, World Relief, Save the Children UK, BAMPOREZE, UYISENGA N'IMANZI, HOPE AND HOMES FOR CHILDREN, USAID The first three organizations later joined COSMO implementing partner organizations (ARCT-Ruhuka, CARE and Haguruka) to form the steering committee for the development of this toolkit. After the first draft was ready, CARE organized a pre-validation meeting on the 5th November 2009 with the organizations above mentioned, in order to get timely feedback from other stakeholders working with OVCs. The meeting has been very fruitful and constructive comments collected. The document was reviewed and a validation meeting organized later. The conclusion of this validation meeting was that MIGEPROF decided that the document is recommended at national level to any partner who would need to replicate the Nkundabana model.

After the toolkit was validated by partners and endorsed by the Honorable Minister (MIGEPROF) in January 2009, it was finalized based on the recommendations made during the validation workshop, and translated in Kinyarwanda and English. Annexes and training modules to the toolkit were also translated either from Kinyarwanda or French in order to have three complete versions in Kinyarwanda, French and English. The process of translation and editing took longer than anticipated due to the technical aspect of the document and its volume. The toolkit was printed and disseminated at the national level in a meeting that brought together all the stakeholders in OVC on March 30th, 2010 in Kigali. The toolkit will serve as a guiding document for the replication of Nkundabana model by various partners. This will be done under another EC funded Project called Nkundabana Initiative Scale Up (NISU). NISU will provide technical support and training to 6 local non-government organizations to scale up the Nkundabana model. The toolkit will also be used for visibility. It will be disseminated nationally by MIGEPROF and globally by CARE International.

Activity A 1.2: Execution of technical expansion of the Nkundabana model: institutional development and organizational strengthening of Nkundabana associations

The following strategies were planned under this activity:

- Assessment of activities carried out by Nkundabana associations between NIPS & COSMO Projects
- Updating list of children supported by Nkundabana in the former NIPS Project area
- Assessment of Nkundabana associations organizational and institutional capacities and needs;
- Revise existing training module on association management (assess missing themes, strengthen module regarding advocacy skills training including fundraising skills, all based on above mentioned assessment);
- Train 25 Nkundabana association committees at sector level in association management and organizational/institutional development including 4 Nkundabana associations in Muhanga, 7 in Kamonyi, 9 in Ruhango and 5 in Musanze for a total of 125 Nkundabana committees members;
- Facilitate registration of Nkundabana associations as legally recognized not-for-profit associations at sector level: 4 in Muhanga, 7 in Kamonyi, 9 in Ruhango and 5 in Musanze
- Establish/revive existing district level Nkundabana committees (one per district in all four districts);

- Provide ongoing technical support to Nkundabana associations at sector level and to their district level committees to effectively engage and collaborate with local authorities in all districts (once a month in Musanze and quarterly in the southern Province: Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango districts);
- Provide each Nkundabana association in all four districts with IDOS kit (starting capital, basic office supplies and materials and specific training);
- Hold two appreciation days in each sector of the four districts; and
- Facilitate establishment of children's forums in four districts with support from other stakeholders.
- Finalize the performance based motivation system and pilot implementation in Kamonyi, Muhanga & Ruhango districts

Assessment of activities carried out by Nkundabana associations between NIPS & COSMO Projects

This activity consisted mainly in assessing the level of functioning of Nkundabana associations in the former NIPS zone, after nine months without external support (time between the end of the NIPS Project and the start of COSMO); except for the Mugina sector association which enjoyed support without interruption thanks to a small bridge grant from ADA.

Once in place, the Project team based in Muhanga undertook to visit each Nkundabana committee at sector level of the former NIPS Project in the districts of Ruhango, Kamonyi and Muhanga to assess their current level of operations, beneficiaries (children) and Nkundabana satisfaction level and main problems and challenges encountered during the 9 months that preceded the start of COSMO.

In the three districts, out of 481 Nkundabana, 10 were "fired" by their colleagues between NIPS and COSMO because they were not visiting the children regularly and 4 died. In accordance with the findings of the external evaluation of the NIPS Project, the team found that most Nkundabana had continued to visit the children and to help solve their problems, except the 10 mentioned above. Existing Nkundabana also identified 93 households of vulnerable children in need of psychosocial support. In order not to overload existing Nkundabana, they facilitated the selection of 21 new Nkundabana by the identified children between the end of NIPS and the beginning of COSMO: 12 Nkundabana for 49 CHH in Kinazi and Ntongwe Sector, 6 new Nkundabana for 30 CHH in Cyeza sector and three new Nkundabana for 12 new CHH are from Kayumbu sector. The new CHH have been identified by Nkundabana in collaboration with the associations of CHH established by NIPS. This is probably the most important indicator of the model's sustainability. While some differences could be noted between groups of Nkundabana, all did their best to continue to serve the children, despite difficulties and frustration in the absence of support from CARE. Children reported ongoing support from their Nkundabana, except in one case of a girl who accused her Nkundabana of having sexually abused her (the case has been handled by the Police) and Nkundabana demonstrated ongoing commitment and dedication but also signs of powerlessness which could affect their motivation in the long run. When trying to determine what made the difference between the different groups' quality of work, the level of collaboration with local authorities and communities at large were the main factor, which prompted the team to put the emphasis on strengthening the ties between Nkundabana, local authorities and community members.

Updating list of children supported by Nkundabana in the former NIPS Project area

Shortly after the above assessment, the Project team started updating the lists of CHH per sector because due to the new territorial reform (Geographical Delimitation), some of them were taken to the district of Nyanza; others left the area searching for job opportunities elsewhere or because they got married and removed from the lists of beneficiaries and replaced by new households that were enrolled by Nkundabana. Results of this update revealed that 457 Nkundabana (227 females and 230 males) from Ruhango, Muhanga and Kamonyi districts were supporting 2,333 CHH (1,119 households headed by girls and 1,214 households headed by boys) with 3,122 siblings (1,593 girls and 1,529 boys). In total, 5,455 children (2,712 girls and 2,743 boys) were being looked after by 457 Nkundabana organized in 21 associations (4 in Muhanga, 7 in Kamonyi and 9 in Ruhango).

Later in 2009, the Project team updated the lists of CHH/OVC and Nkundabana in Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango District. This update is done regularly because the recruitment of OVCs and therefore the selection of new Nkundabana is an ongoing activity in the Nkundabana model. It was found that OVCs supported by Nkundabana reached 7,146 (3,733 females and 3,413 males) living in 2872 CHH. These OVCs were being supported by 529 Nkundabana (245 males and 284 females).

The table below summarises results of the last update regarding the number of CHH, their siblings and total of Nkundabana supporting them:

District	Sector	Number of mentors (Nkundabna)			# of CHH		# of siblings		Total number of all OVCY supported by COSMO		
		M	F	T	M	F	M	F	M	F	Total
Muhanga	Cyeza	6	29	35	120	119	159	107	279	226	505
	Muhanga	3	7	10	54	41	39	33	93	74	167
	Nyarusange	4	3	7	26	27	25	29	51	56	107
	Nyamabuye	16	20	36	56	37	70	70	126	107	233
	Shyogwe	6	11	17	45	46	36	52	265	98	363
Sub-total Muhanga		35	70	105	301	270	329	291	814	561	1375
Ruhango	Ntongwe	21	17	38	95	99	134	118	229	217	446
	Kinazi	24	35	59	102	94	149	138	251	232	483
	Ruhango	25	20	45	161	134	220	224	381	358	739
	Byimana	9	11	20	51	43	75	69	126	112	238
	Mbuye	5	8	13	126	104	147	132	273	236	509
	Mwendo	9	11	20	90	87	93	108	183	195	378
	Kabagari	5	12	17	71	72	101	89	172	161	333
	Kinihira	15	11	26	94	64	124	125	218	189	407
Bweramana	8	18	26	93	92	103	139	196	231	427	
Sub-total Ruhango		121	143	264	883	789	1146	1142	2029	1931	3960
Kamonyi	Kayenzi	13	5	18	40	46	65	68	105	114	219
	Kayumbu	10	7	17	45	35	67	61	112	96	208
	Musambira	17	9	26	52	51	87	70	139	121	260
	Nyarubaka	8	12	20	49	47	75	60	124	107	231
	Mugina	21	18	39	97	72	112	140	209	212	421
	Nyamiyaga	12	11	23	41	64	60	99	101	163	264
	Karama	8	9	17	41	50	59	58	100	108	208
Sub-total Kamonyi		89	71	160	264	365	525	556	890	921	1811
Grand Total		245	284	529	1448	1424	2899	1989	3733	3413	7146

Assessment of Nkundabana associations' organizational and institutional capacities and needs;

Organizational and institutional capacities and needs of Nkundabana associations have been assessed with the technical assistance from an external consultant hired by the Project. This assessment revealed Nkundabana associations' organizational and institutional strengths and capacity gaps. Results have guided to know what improvement and capacity building are needed

The following are the main findings from the assessment:

- Nkundabana associations do not have authentic legal personality delivered by recognized authority (at ministry level);
- Nkundabana associations mixed up activities of their associations with saving and loan activities;
- There has not been any standardized programming at association level, and Nkundabana associations do not have quality control systems;
- Nkundabana associations do not have any fundraising mechanisms in place and members do not regularly pay contributions to ensure sustainability of their activities after the Project;

- Nkundabana associations have gained some technical capacities and attained a certain level of organizational development with regards to governance, leadership, structure, and planning. However, building financial and material capacities of Nkundabana associations to increase their sustainability is still required.

In order to improve the above mentioned Nkundabana capacities, the following recommendations have been formulated:

DOMAIN/AREA	CAPACITY BUILDING REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED
Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provided that Nkundabana associations do not have authentic legal personality delivered by recognized authority (at ministry level), all the associations need to be assisted by CARE to obtain such legal status by fulfilling all requirements. ✓ Nkundabana need refresher training on the functioning of the structures of the association (general assembly, Board of directors, and Monitoring committee).
Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All Nkundabana associations should benefit a strong orientation on how to run saving and loan activities and Nkundabana associations separately. ✓ They should also be trained on financial control, Project management, principles of accounting particularly basic accounting especially for non profit organizations.
Governance and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Principles of leadership, motivation, governance and accountability are judged crucial for the good management of Nkundabana associations
Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strategic and operational planning is lacking among Nkundabana associations and is leading to lack of focus. ✓ They should also learn some skills on how to develop small proposals to be able to increase fundraising opportunities.
Monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems	Training is required in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monitoring and evaluation processes ✓ Tools, frequency of monitoring or evaluation ✓ Communication, reporting format and related techniques
Quality control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Elements of quality control should be introduced in all aspects of trainings linked to Nkundabana work, appropriate ethics and deontology; and CARE staff should insist on quality control mechanisms and tools to be applied by Nkundabana associations.
Networking among Nkundabana associations and with other key actors (collaboration with local authorities and other services providers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skills in public relations, negotiation, fundraising, are most required. ✓ Study tours where the approach has worked and is operational should be organized because these cross visits could contribute to the improvement of Nkundabana services.

Revise existing training module on association management (assess missing themes, strengthen module on advocacy skills training including fundraising skills, all based on above mentioned assessment)

Following the assessment of the Nkundabana Association's needs and organizational and institutional capacities, the Project team decided to conduct training sessions on identified gaps. A training module containing new topics such as fundraising and advocacy was developed. The skills were found important for individual Nkundabana and for their associations in order to help OVC access the minimum package of services after the COSMO Project ends. The new modules have been integrated into the Nkundabana toolkit.

Train 25 Nkundabana association committees at sector level in association management and organizational institutional development

It was expected to train Nkundabana associations' committees on how to strengthen their capacity and structures. In May 2009, 105 (55 males and 45 females) committee members of the 21 Nkundabana associations from Muhanga, Ruhango and Kamonyi districts attended a six day training on leadership, governance, bookkeeping, financial control, planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation. Twenty-five Nkundabana were from 5 associations in Muhanga, 35 were from 7 associations in Kamonyi and 45 were from 9 associations in Ruhango. 16 local authorities also attended the training in order to understand how they will be working with Nkundabana associations.

In Musanze, five Nkundabana associations were formed at the sector level (in Gashaki, Musanze, Cyuve, Nyange and Kinigi sectors) and 21 branches at cell level have been put in place. In addition, 35 of these Nkundabana committees at sector level from five Nkundabana associations spent 3 days in training on forming associations and on the national law pertaining to non-profit organizations. They also received support to develop their constitutions. In addition, from 9th to 10th March 2009, 25 Nkundabana from five Nkundabana association committees attended a three day training workshop that was organized in Musanze on the following topics - leadership, governance, bookkeeping and financial control. In total, 130 Nkundabana members of associations from Muhanga, Kamonyi, Ruhango and Musanze districts benefited capacity building trainings that were recommended by the assessment of Nkundabana associations' capacity.

Challenges:

The Project succeeded in building sufficient technical capacity among Nkundabana at the individual level and at the association level, as reported by Nkundabana themselves. But Nkundabana associations still need material and financial capacity in order to support their activities. The issue of transportation fees for meetings was raised as a major challenge for the future, especially when Nkundabana will need to attend meetings or do advocacy in remote places. Lack of financial resources to purchase office supplies was another challenge mentioned by Nkundabana associations. It was planned to establish and revive Nkundabana committees at the district level but after finding out that this activity was going to cost a lot of money, it has been dropped.

Facilitate registration of Nkundabana associations as legally recognized not-for-profit associations at sector level: 4 in Muhanga, 7 in Kamonyi, 9 in Ruhango and 5 in Musanze

After reorganizing Nkundabana associations according to the 2005 territorial reform, the next activity was to help them register as non-profit associations. However, the Project team faced a number of constraints while trying to facilitate registration of Nkundabana associations at sector level as required. Sector authorities were confusing the application of the national policy to encourage all informal groups/associations to become cooperatives, and were forcing Nkundabana to do the same. As it was agreed with districts Vice Mayors in charge of social affairs who attended the workshop during the Project annual technical review workshop held on January 17th -18th 2008, these Vice Mayors helped sector authorities to understand the context of Nkundabana associations. They held meetings with sectors executive secretaries and this issue has been resolved. As a result, all the 26 Nkundabana sector level associations from Kamonyi, Muhanga and Ruhango have been registered at the sector level. 9 associations are in Ruhango, 7 are in Kamonyi, 5 in Muhanga and 5 in Musanze.

Establish/revive existing District level Nkundabana committees (one per district in all four districts)

This strategy was not implemented. In fact, the initial idea of having an Nkundabana committee at the district level to coordinate Nkundabana activities and to interact with the district authorities was abandoned because with the new decentralization and territorial restructure the districts are very large, almost as big as the former provinces. Therefore, the Project team prioritized strengthening Nkundabana sector committees with the philosophy that if they can interact well with sector authorities, they can achieve a lot at the sector level including advocacy activities and then build their relations with district authorities later.

Provide ongoing technical support to Nkundabana associations at sector level and to their district level committees to effectively engage and collaborate with local authorities in all districts (once a month in Musanze and quarterly in the south)

In their regular visits, Project field staff met with all 26 Nkundabana associations every quarter in the South and every month in Musanze District to provide advice and technical support in terms of association management and networking. As an outcome, most of the local authorities in Kamonyi, Muhanga and Ruhango Districts collaborate well with Nkundabana associations to address OVC issues. An example of this collaboration is when authorities were planning to integrate issues of vulnerable children in their plan, Nkundabana were requested by authorities to facilitate the process of identification of OVC to be assisted with funds from local government. However, in Musanze District, there is a need to continue^{^^^^} the support to Nkundabana in order to strengthen their capacity in networking and to mobilize local authorities to their responsibility in supporting the work of Nkundabana.

In addition, the Project team accompanied Nkundabana association members while they developed their annual action plans and sustainability strategies. All 26 Nkundabana associations created in the four Districts developed

comprehensive plans and strategies that will help individual Nkundabana to continue the mentorship of OVC and the Nkundabana associations to continue their roles in advocacy and monitoring and support to Nkundabana and to children. The Nkundabana associations decided to base their plans on their own capacities. Key activities planned are as follows:

- 1) Organize fun days for children;
- 2) Organize community work to assist OVC in agriculture and shelter construction;
- 3) Organize meetings for review of quarterly plans;
- 4) Recruitment and integration of new eligible OVC in the Nkundabana model and graduation of eligible youth;
- 5) Organize advocacy activities that include identification of needs and present them to service providers; and
- 6) Organize and implement sensitization or training for OVC on life skills.

As a result of Nkundabana advocacy activities and of the implementation of other planned activities by Nkundabana associations, Project staff has identified the following:

- Nkundabana associations in the southern province recruited 60 new households headed by children and graduated 37 households. This happened in all Districts (Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango) and in all 21 sectors;
- One Nkundabana from Nyamabuye Sector, Muhanga District, in the name of Pasteur MBARUBUKEYE advocated for 10 girls and 10 boys to benefit from financial support for vocational training (tailoring and carpentry) from "Bureau Social de Gitarama", a Faith-based Organization working in Muhanga District;
- Two OVC households in Kinigi Sector from Musanze District got shelter assistance from a local company named SACCOLA, after advocacy made by the Nkundabana association committee; and
- In Cyeza Sector of Muhanga District, one Nkundabana named Fortunee succeeded to get back a cow of an OVC that was taken by neighbors after an unfair decision by local authorities.

Provide each Nkundabana association in all four districts with IDOS kit (starting capital, basic office supplies and materials, specific training)

The Project identified office materials available in CARE's offices that were purchased with COSMO budget and that won't be used by NISU Project to be given to Nkundabana associations. The Project has given Nkundabana associations materials that will be managed by the associations of Nkundabana in order to help OVC to implement their income generating activities. Most of incomes generating activities initiated by OVC are about agriculture and small livestock and they need ongoing support from Nkundabana in order to ensure their sustainability. Materials provided to Nkundabana included seeds, farming related tools, fertilizers and pesticides. However, the idea of providing financial support directly to Nkundabana associations has been rejected as it was found not complying with European Commission principles/procedures and was not foreseen in the original proposal. That is the reason why the Project team decided to buy the above mentioned materials.

Finalize the performance based motivation system and pilot implementation in Kamonyi, Muhanga & Ruhango districts

Informed by the baseline findings and supported by recommendations from the discussions with Nkundabana on the application of this system, the Project team decided to defeat this strategy. It was found out that the performance based motivation system was going to paralyze social dynamics (social cohesion, mutual support, consultations, etc) within Nkundabana associations. This was motivated by the fact that it has been difficult to come up with objective criteria and mechanisms of ensuring evidence-based evaluation of Nkundabana performance. The system was to frustrate some Nkundabana. It was also found out that the system was not sustainable, unless the government integrates Nkundabana structures among other structures of volunteers who receive some kind of motivation as it is done with Community Health workers.

Hold 2 appreciation days in each sector of the four districts

Appreciation days were organized in 16 Sectors in ex-NIPS zone in December 2008. This event has been an opportunity to award certificates to 322 Nkundabana who have been serving as Nkundabana for 5 years. In those sectors 432 Nkundabana were appreciated. Children and youth who benefited from Nkundabana care and support during that period shared their testimonies on how their lives were saved due to Nkundabana care and support. Girls who got pregnant before and who were supposed to continue being exploited sexually succeeded

to stop that habit and regained recognition from community members as other girls of their age (in Rwandan culture, when a girl gets pregnant, she is stigmatized by the society). Others were accompanied by Nkundabana to benefit from support provided by the Project and they are now able to meet some of their basic needs, such as access to health services by paying *mutuelle de santé* by themselves, providing food to their families and school materials.

In February 2009, appreciation days were organized once in 5 sectors of Kamonyi District. 70 Nkundabana who have been serving as Nkundabana for 5 years received certificates. Children and youth who benefited from Nkundabana care and support during that period shared their testimonies on how their lives improved as a result of Nkundabana care and support. However, one Nkundabana was not appreciated based on the recommendations of his peers because he failed to fulfill his responsibilities. Other Nkundabana found it unfair to appreciate such people.

In March 2010, appreciation days were implemented in all sectors of Musanze District. 242 Nkundabana were appreciated. As a sign of recognition, those Nkundabana received a certificate of appreciation and a goat.

As the motivation of volunteers Nkundabana was identified as an issue for the sustainability in all four Districts, 196 cows were purchased and distributed to 196 Nkundabana who will raise them and later give back one progenitor to be redistributed to other Nkundabana. This form of motivation was highly appreciated by Nkundabana, OVCs and local authorities and it will help improve family economic status.

During the same occasion, children and youth who have been helped by Nkundabana got a chance to share how they appreciate Nkundabana support. Paul, a teenage head of a household from Muhanga district, with strong emotions, had this to say: *"I was encouraged by my Nkundabana whom I now call my parent, to be patient and continue the vocational training in mechanics. I completed the training and I am now hired and working in a garage, well paid and I manage to pay school fees for my young brother who is now in senior three. I couldn't believe that it could be possible for me to reach that level".*

On the other hand, Delphine from Mugina sector, Kamonyi District, a young girl heading a household, with such a strong laughter, said: *"You all understand that I couldn't have managed to continue supporting a family of 6 siblings left to me by my parents after their death when I was 12. I was abandoned by relatives and neighbors. My weapon was to cry all time. I could not talk to neighbors whom I considered as enemies. I didn't like adults because I was thinking that they don't like my family. In that situation, Project staff asked me to select my Nkundabana. I did it and my Nkundabana brought back life in my family. I can spend two days without stopping telling you what my Nkundabana has done for us and my story can take longer before it ends".*

While it was planned to organize these kind of events twice a year in all the 26 sectors, this has not been possible after finding out that this planning was too ambitious in terms of both time and money. The Project team has decided to ensure that one appreciation day is organized once in each sector, during the Project life and make sure events are organized in all the sectors.

Challenges

Even though Nkundabana are happy with the public recognition of their commitment, they were expecting to get material support from the Project as recognition of their long period of commitment to voluntarism and as motivation for the critical period that will follow the Project's closure. The Nkundabana and even community members expressed that they were not satisfied by the Project's strategy for motivating volunteers, which includes symbolic gifts and tokens during the appreciation days and enrolment of Nkundabana in VSL groups.

The Project staff had to think about other methods of motivation that can be more sustainable. It was decided to provide a few cows to each Nkundabana association. Cows were distributed to Nkundabana who do not have a cow and who have demonstrated great commitment to their work as Nkundabana. These cows will serve as rotating credit among all Nkundabana. This form of motivation was highly appreciated and was seen as a contribution to the national program reducing poverty as it is in line with the government vision/poverty reduction strategy of "One Cow per Family. The Project agreed with Nkundabana from Musanze District to give goats as gift to them during the appreciation days that was organized in March 2010.

The above initiative has come as a response to the baseline findings that had revealed that 30% of Nkundabana in Musanze District were seriously facing a problem of food insecurity. In all the three districts, Nkundabana reported having problems of paying schools fees their children. This means that some Nkundabana also fall in the category of vulnerable people and therefore need support. This is not surprising given the fact 56% of the population is under the poverty line.

Facilitate establishment of children's forums in 4 districts with support from other stakeholders

While the COSMO team planned to support districts to organize and facilitate meetings to establish children's forums, MIGEPROF instructed all districts in Rwanda to establish forums. These forums were established from the lowest level, umudugudu, up to the district level. The role of the Project team was to link OVC to those forums. However, until the end of the Project, these forums were not yet operational and the decentralized levels themselves cannot provide sufficiently technical support. There is a need for partners to provide technical support to the forums and to help them become operational.

As an alternative solution, the Project continued to assist self-support groups of OVC through meetings. These gatherings provide OVCs with learning forum opportunities and motivation for mutual support. Project staff met with all self-support groups once in Musanze District, while in the southern province, Nkundabana associations accompanied regular meetings of OVC groups. Those groups provided a good opportunity for OVC to gain skills from their peers and to plan for activities aimed at supporting those among them who are in need.

Activity A.1.3 Geographical expansion of the Nkundabana model to Musanze district

For this activity, the following tasks were planned: Identification of OVCs and Nkundabana, start up events, Kick-off training to orient new Nkundabana, establishment of 5 Nkundabana associations at sector level with small branches/groups at cell level in Musanze district, Purchase and distribution of bicycles, T-shirts and other motivation items to new Nkundabana in Musanze, Organize cross-fertilization and learning visits of 75 Nkundabana representatives and 26 local authorities from Musanze with the Nkundabana associations in the three districts in the south; In Musanze, organize exchange sessions with Nkundabanas from the three southern districts to share experiences and give guidance to associations of Nkundabana in Musanze; and support 21 self-support groups of OVC beneficiaries at cell level to become operational.

Identification of OVCs and Nkundabana

Preliminary meetings with local leaders and identification of selection criteria for sectors & OVCs

As mentioned above, contacts with local authorities were made in the whole Project area but additional efforts were dedicated to contacts with Musanze authorities because the Project was to start from scratch in that district. It was also very critical to target the most vulnerable children. In doing so, the Project team also wanted to avoid targeting children in all 15 sectors of the district, which would have made follow-up and Project implementation much more difficult and costly. Instead, it was strategic to target sectors considered to be the neediest. To agree on the selection of sectors and children, a participatory process of dialogue and selection with local leaders at district and sector level took place. First, on March 15th 2007, the Project team organized a workshop in Musanze where all Sector Authorities representatives and key District representatives participated. The purpose of this workshop was to present the Project's objectives and to agree on a list of criteria based on which the Project team and local authorities would jointly select the sectors in which COSMO would operate. The following criteria were agreed upon: numbers of children living in child headed households, percentage of people living in extreme poverty, prevalence of violence against women and children, HIV prevalence, degree to which sector has been affected by genocide and infiltrations activities, rates of literacy and finally prevalence of polygamy. In reality, collecting information on each of these criteria has not been easy because little was already documented at sector or district level. It was therefore eventually decided to select sectors based mostly on vulnerability of children. It was necessary to agree on vulnerability criteria to identify OVCs. In order to determine which vulnerability criteria to use, a participatory method was adopted by the Project team with community representatives on one side, and representatives of local authorities at cell and sector levels on the other side, to find out what the community of MUSANZE calls or refers to as a vulnerable child. A total number of 177 community members including children and women, and 150 local authorities participated in the exercise which took place in 12 sectors of Musanze District. The results of this participatory research showed that the Musanze

community considers a vulnerable child/youth as someone who meets most of the following conditions/criteria: permanent lack of food (eats once a day by begging); no access to medical care (uses wild herbs for treatment); no access or rapid drop out from primary education; handicapped; orphans living in poor foster families or living in child headed households whose head is under 18; no or poor shelter. The root causes of child vulnerability revealed by communities through this exercise are extreme poverty of parents due to large families because of high prevalence of polygamy combined with no family planning and lack of land.

Training of community facilitators to assist with identification of OVCs in each sector:

After having agreed on the vulnerability criteria, the team had to proceed with the identification of these children in each of the 15 sectors. If the team had to do this on its own, it would have taken at least six months. Involving local leaders in the facilitation of the beneficiaries' identification was not only making it possible to identify the children faster but it also contributed to getting them involved and engaged in the Project. Therefore, in the course of April and May 07, the team trained 223 local authorities' representatives from cell and sector levels as facilitators to oversee the identification of OVCs in their respective administrative unit. The training prepared them to facilitate the identification of children while at the same time sensitizing them on children rights and the Project objectives. This table shows the dates of the training of community facilitators and number of participants:

DATE	SECTORS	PARTICIPANTS
23/4-24/4/07	Remera, Gashaki, Rwaza	47
26/4-27/4/07	Gataraga, Busogo, Shingiro and Kimonyi	51
10/5-15/5/07	Kinigi, Musanze and Nyange	48
21/5-22/5/07	Cyuve, Gacaca, Muhoza, Muko and Nkotsi	77
	Total	223

Participatory identification of OVCY at village level

Subsequently, the trained facilitators went back to their respective administrative units and organized community meetings in each village of the 15 sectors of Musanze district, during which community members identified their OVCs using participatory rural appraisal methods, particularly the mapping exercise. After having been told of the criteria that local communities had previously suggested defining a vulnerable child, community members were asked to draw a map of their village and mark the place where children fitting this description were living. They then had to provide additional details, such as number of children in the household, etc. A total of 14089 OVCY (7745 CHH and 6344 other OVCY) have been identified through this process in the 15 sectors of Musanze district. This information combined with information on the other criteria determined for sectors' selection allowed the team and local leaders to select the sectors of Gashaki, Cyuve, Musanze, Nyange and Kinigi as COSMO's zone of intervention. However the total number of OVCs identified in these five sectors was 5040 (of whom 2141 CHH and 2899 other OVCY) while the Project had a target of 2000. Generally team members found that the poverty in which families and children live in Musanze is worse than in the other three districts where the Project operates. Children suffer more from food shortages and poverty than in the Southern Province. There was an urgent need to sharpen the selection criteria to come to a number of children closer to the Project target. In order to do so, a process of physical verification started.

Physical verification of identified OVCY

As far as the context of poverty is concerned, most of Rwandese people are poor. So, during the physical verification, COSMO social workers in close collaboration with village and cell coordinators looked for the poorest households, those commonly called "Abatishoboye" in Kinyarwanda, meaning poorest of the poor, because they can't meet any of their basic needs and are completely depending on others for their daily survival. The verification was done in each village and took 6 weeks. The results of this verification were re-discussed with local authorities as a final guarantee that the neediest were targeted. After the verification with local authorities, the lists of confirmed OVCs were submitted to newly elected Nkundabana for a physical verification, which eventually resulted in maintaining 2317 OVC households in the 5 selected sectors. **N.B:** However, these statistics were not final, because the children in all households were not well identified by community members. The verification process continued and finalized by Nkundabana during the home visits and identification. The final statistics of OVCs who participated in the Project are presented in the table below:

Sector	Male	Female	Total
Gashaki	155	125	280
Cyuve	413	408	821
Kinigi	65	75	140
Nyange	267	287	554
Musanze	440	394	834
TOTAL	1340	1289	2629

Identification of Nkundabana

After OVC identification, the next step was to identify the Nkundabana. The process took place as follows: OVCs were invited at the cell office to get together according to how they live (close to one another). Each group of three to six CHH or other OVC depending on the number of children into those households (Nkundabana will not be mentoring more than 3 households or 10 children) was requested to identify two Nkundabana; one as their preferred choice and the second in case the first one would not accept to take on this responsibility, based on criteria previously established by the children during that same meeting. Only two Nkundabana refused: the first said that he had no time for assuming roles set up by children and the second reported that it was for personal reasons. In the two cases, the second person the children had suggested was contacted and accepted. In mid September, the identification of Nkundabana was over. In total, 239 Nkundabana had been identified to mentor 2,317 OVCs. After identification and acceptance by Nkundabana, the Project team met with the Nkundabana in order to ensure the ratio Nkundabana/households. During the June workshop, the team, based on experiences of the NIPS Project, decided to limit the number of households to mentor to 3 per Nkundabana. In order to make sure Nkundabana would dedicate more time to other children in the household and to the care takers, it was also agreed to look at the total number of children in the household, not just at the number of households. If two households have more than 10 children, then the Nkundabana should not be mentoring another household. This led the team to carrying out some readjustments after the Nkundabana accepted to serve as child protection volunteers. The increase in number of OVCs resulted in the increase in number of Nkundabana. Instead of having 239 Nkundabana originally identified and selected by the children, new Nkundabana were added on. In total, 242 Nkundabana were selected and retained during the whole Period of the Project. The table below presents the statistics in detail:

Sector	Male	Female	Total
Gashaki	22	8	30
Cyuve	43	33	76
Kinigi	11	3	14
Nyange	38	13	51
Musanze	34	37	71
TOTAL	148	94	242

Comment:

There was some level of concern among the Project team because 629 more OVCs have been selected than planned for. Note that the proposal plans to target 2000 OVCs in Musanze. Local authorities suggested keeping this number because all these children were really extremely vulnerable and that, according to them, leaving some out could cause problems in the community. For the Nkundabana, on the other hand, 242 have been selected. Again, there are 42 Nkundabana more compared to the proposal's target. However, this is in line with the final evaluation report of NIPS which pointed at the risk of Nkundabana burn out, low performance and motivation if the number of households and children per Nkundabana was too high. The COSMO team had adopted this recommendation during the June 25th, 26th workshop.

Start up events

Shortly after identification of beneficiaries & Nkundabana, start-up events were organized in all the five sectors. Start-up events serve the purpose of confirming Nkundabana in their role (by asking community members to confirm whether Nkundabana are persons of integrity) and of gaining community support for Nkundabana. Each event gathered community members, local authorities, Nkundabana and OVCs from the whole sector. In total, 6 events were held (these start-up events were held in 5 sectors. In Musanze, we had to organize two events

because of the distances from cells to sites), gathering 1089 OVC and 222 Nkundabana, and 896 community members. Communities confirmed Nkundabana selected as people of integrity. All OVCs didn't attend the events because some of them were at school and others are too young to participate in public ceremonies. 15 Nkundabana didn't attend because of social problems (preparation of wedding ceremony, illnesses) but even these Nkundabana were confirmed by the communities as they are well known by them. Start up events are also the occasion to sensitize communities on their role in the Project and on children's rights, which consists mainly of assisting Nkundabana, warning them in case of a problem in the household of the children, providing labour to build houses for the children, help cultivate their land and mostly not abusing children's rights. Community members expressed their satisfaction about the transparency with which the Project is implemented, the way they have been involved in selecting the most vulnerable children and promised their support to Nkundabana and to the children. The end result of these events is that COSMO was officially launched in different sectors by sectors' authorities and Nkundabana were officially mandated to visit OVCs households, protect them and their properties and advocate on their behalf at all levels.

Dates and participants in the start-up events:

Date	Sector	Participants		
		OVC	Nkundabana	Community members
17/09/07 and 21/09/07	Musanze	324	58	263
18/09/07	Nyange	127	52	153
19/09/07	Gashaki	132	30	125
20/09/07	Cyuve	423	72	216
25/9/07	Kinigi	83	10	139
Total		1089	222	896
General total		2207		

Kick-off training

Following the start up events during which Nkundabana were confirmed in their duties, 237 Nkundabana (82 females and 155 males) from five sectors went through the so-called "kick-off" training which, as its name indicates, officially marks the start of Nkundabana's work. The 3 days kick-off training focuses on Nkundabana's roles and responsibilities, their job description and code of conduct, the collaboration between Nkundabana and with local authorities and communities and discusses Nkundabanas' expectations and constraints as a community volunteer versus the expectations of children. Building on lessons learnt from the NIPS Project which revealed higher expectations from children compared to what Nkundabana could give (including material and financial support from Nkundabana), Nkundabana were taught during the kick-off training to be very clear as to their role towards the children and not to create expectations which they won't be able to meet. CARE will also be very clear towards the children and will share the job description of the Nkundabana with them to reduce unrealistic expectations.

Other topics discussed during the kick-off training include: COSMO Project objectives, main activities and the Project methodology; introduction to child rights and child protection, advocacy and techniques of fundraising, introduction to active listening, forming Nkundabana associations, monitoring and evaluation tools: action plan, data collection (OVC register) and report writing (Sharing information). These topics however will be developed in separate future training.

Besides the Nkundabana, and 38 local authorities (13 females and 25 males) attended the training. They include cell coordinators and executive secretaries and one person in charge of social affairs at sector level. By inviting local authorities into the kick-off training, CARE learnt that it is another way of compelling local authorities to participate actively in the Project activities and to support Nkundabana solving OVC problems. The emphasis was put on the fact that child protection is their problem, not CAREs and that CARE only comes in to help them establish community based support systems through Nkundabana to protect their OVCs. Stressing their leadership role in the Project and their responsibility towards OVCs right from the start are important strategies to ensure Project sustainability. The collaboration mechanisms between Nkundabana and local authorities were discussed. Reporting channels and meetings to share information and finding solutions together were well defined, building on the experience and tools developed during NIPS. During these kick-off trainings, two

Nkundabana and one CHH from the former ex-zone NIPS participated to share their experiences. The training enabled both Nkundabana and local authorities to understand the role of an Nkundabana in the community, the role of local authorities and that of the community members at large in supporting OVC. They well understood the importance of combining efforts of the three categories of people to better solve the problems of OVC.

It is worth to mention that this training was a success according to Nkundabana because they had Nkundabana and CHH from the former NIPS zone that played a role of training co-facilitators by sharing what they went through their experience in implementing the Nkundabana model for the first time. It was very easy for participants to understand the topics because they had concrete examples regarding roles and responsibilities, constraints involved and successes of the model.

After the kick –off training, trained Nkundabana started home visits to OVCs. The most important problems they found in households are extreme poverty, lack of proper shelter, food insecurity, no health care, no access to education, property grabbing and physical abuse. Bicycles have been ordered for and distributed to Nkundabana to support them during their visits to CHH.

Organize cross-fertilization and learning visits of 75 Nkundabana representatives and 26 local authorities from Musanze with the Nkundabana associations in the three districts in the south

82 Nkundabana, 2 OVC and 19 local authorities, from Musanze District, participated in cross-fertilization and learning visits in Kamonyi, Muhanga and Ruhango District. Details on people who participated in these learning visits are provided in the table below:

Date	Location Visited	Number of Participants		
		Nkundabana	Local Authorities	OVC
28-29/4/2009	- Muhanga District: Shyogwe Sector - Ruhango District: Byimana and Ruhango Sectors	26	0	1
21-22/5/2009	- Kamonyi District: Karama and Mugina Sectors	26	0	1
18-19/6/2009	- Ruhango District: Kinazi Sector - Kamonyi district: Musambira Sector	26	0	0
22-23/7/2009	- Kamonyi District: Mugina sector - Muhanga District: Muhanga sector	4	19	0
Total		82	19	2

During these visits, Nkundabana and local authorities from Musanze district got the opportunity to understand the extent to which Nkundabana associations in the former NIPS zone have contributed to the wellbeing of OVCs they have been supporting for six years . After the visit, Nkundabana and local authorities from Musanze District reported that they were impressed by the following:

- the way Nkundabana in the Southern Province support each other to find solutions to the problems of OVC; the collaboration between Nkundabana and local authorities; how former OVC supported by Nkundabana become Nkundabana to support other OVCs; and how OVC support each other through their self-support groups.

As a result of the cross-learning visits, Nkundabana from Musanze District started to report cases of abuse to local authorities and started collaborating with them in terms of rehabilitating shelter for OVCs instead of reporting those cases to Project staff as it used to be. Nkundabana improved their meetings at cell level by increasing their frequency and participation and they started inviting local authorities to attend their meetings.

Establishment of 5 Nkundabana associations at sector level with small branches/groups at cell level in Musanze district

During the kick-off training, Nkundabana elected provisional committee members at sector level and cell level. These committees got the mandate of organizing Nkundabana in 5 sector associations and in 21 branches at cell level, elaborating their constitution, internal rules and regulations and organizing the general assembly meetings to establish organs of the associations. The branches at cell level were supposed to meet regularly for mutual support in terms of child mentoring and protection. Provisional committees at sector level fulfilled their mandate with the technical support from the Project staff, they elaborated the Associations' constitutions and they

organized general assembly meetings to validate the constitutions and to elect their boards. The association's board at sector level is composed of 4 members of the executive committee (President, Vice president, Secretary and Treasurer); a committee of 2 counselors/advisors and a committee of 3 controllers.

Establish self support groups of Project beneficiaries at cell level & support them to become operational

In Musanze, OVC were mobilized by Project staff to form self-support groups at the cell level. In all 21 cells, OVCs agreed to join the groups, and in total, 21 OVCs self support groups were formed, and each individual OVC who is at the age of attending meetings is a member. Each group elected its committee, composed by the president, the vice-president and the secretary. These groups help children to meet, discuss their problems and support one another. They were and will continue to be a forum for peer education on life skills and children will discuss how to create economic activities and form cooperatives or organize village savings and loan activities.

46 representatives of these groups attended a 2 days training and learnt how to analyze problems and plan ahead. During the training session, participants drafted the objectives of their groups and they provided a plan of meetings of peers in order to share with them the outputs of the training, to sensitize them on Project activities and to start actively playing their roles as expected by the Project.

The Project team organized follow-up meetings with all 21 self-support groups of OVC in Musanze district and found that the groups are a forum for OVC to share information and to learn from each other. OVCs used the forum to organize meetings for peer education on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.

Comments

All planned strategies were implemented, except the organization of visits of Nkundabana from the southern provinces to Nkundabana in Musanze District because these visits were found not to be relevant since Nkundabana and OVC participated in the kick off training of Nkundabana in Musanze. Summary of achievements under the first expected result are as follows:

Item/Indicator	Achievement	Target
OVCs identified in Musanze district	2,629	2,000
Nkundabana identified and trained in child mentoring skills	242	200
Nkundabana organized into sector level associations	5	5
Nkundabana members of Village Saving and Loan schemes	212	200
OVCY organized into cell level associations across the four districts	2,460	9,000
Nkundabana trained in organizational management skills	130	130
Loan repayment rate of VSLs in Musanze	90%	100%

While it was planned to fully train all Nkundabana associations in savings and loan scheme management across the four districts, 30 VSL of Nkundabana in Musanze and 46 VSL of Nkundabana in the south have been trained on VSL management. Nkundabana in Musanze District were trained on the Intambwe methodology. Loan repayment among the savings and loan schemes is 90% in Musanze District, while it was expected to approach 100% across the four districts by the end of the Project. Community events have been organized at least once a year in each sector across the four districts. Appreciation days were organized once in Ruhango, Kamonyi, Muhanga and Musanze Districts. Fun days were organized three times in all four districts. Start-up events in all Musanze sectors and launching ceremonies have been organized at the beginning of the Project. Hand-over events between the Project team and local authorities were organized and implemented in all the 26 sectors. It is worth mentioning that 82 Nkundabana, 2 OVC and 19 local authorities from Musanze District participated in

Expected Result 2: Inclusive, community-based mechanisms for the protection of children/youth are established and institutionalized at decentralized level in all four districts

the cross-fertilization and learning visits in Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango District.

Activity A.2.1. Establishment and support to child protection committees

Planned strategies were to:

- Support to local authorities to establish child protection committees at all levels;
- Organize and deliver training of child protection committee members; and
- Provide ongoing technical support to child protection committees (support to organize meetings, reporting, visits, etc)

Support local authorities to establish committees at all levels

Instead of targeting 48 sector Child Protection Committees for training as planned, the Project supported eight sector committees. The reasons for this reduction are that the Project worked in 26 sectors instead of the planned 48 sectors, thus there is no reason to target sectors not covered by the Project. Furthermore, Child Protection Committees were initiated by MIGEPROF and recommended to partners for implementation yet MIGEPROF has the responsibility of providing guidelines to implement the committees. The process of developing and sharing the guidelines took longer than expected and were only handed over to implementers in March 2009. At the end of the Project, the strategy for capacity building for the committees has not been provided by MIGEPROF.

These delays in getting the guidelines from MIGEPROF impacted the target of the Project. It was not possible to commit to support 48 sectors in the remaining time of the Project and with the human resources available. To be realistic, the Project committed to pilot the initiative in 8 sectors, two sectors in each district, in order to gather lessons-learned and to be able to provide recommendations to partners and to MIGEPROF for future improvement, as well as to inform the future plans of the CARE OVC program. Other sectors will be supported by other organizations, because many of them also started to implement Child Protection Committees even in the COSMO zone. The main implementer is the Global Fund whose coverage overlaps with the COSMO zone and other parts of the country. This means that the sectors that weren't supported by COSMO received support from other partners. The establishment of Child Protection Committees is under the responsibility of MIGEPROF and district authorities. Other partners will be responsible for capacity building. The mandate of Child Protection Committees was enlarged to integrate prevention of gender-based violence. Selected sectors for COSMO are the following:

District	Sector
Musanze	Gashaki and Cyuve Sectors
Muhanga	Shyogwe and Nyamabuye Sectors
Ruhango	Byimana and Mwendo Sectors
Kamonyi	Musambira and Nyarubaka Sectors

Organize and deliver training to Child Protection Committee members

A four day training session was organized and conducted for 88 (54 males and 34 females) anti-GBV and Child Protection Committees members from the eight targeted sectors. Training covered topics such as family law, GBV law and child rights. More emphasis was put on child rights and the legal framework in place in Rwanda for child protection. Participants have also been oriented on the mandate and composition of the anti-GBV/CPC Committees at all levels.

See logistical details of the trainings in the table below:

Date	Venue	Targeted sectors	# of Participants		
			M	F	T
18-21 May 2009	Musanze	Cyuve and Gashaki Sectors in Musanze District	13	9	22
20-24 July 2009	Nyamabuye	Shyogwe and Nyamabuye Sectors in Muhanga District	15	7	22
10-14 August 2009	Byimana	Byimana and Mwendo Sectors in Ruhango District	14	8	22
17-21 August 2009	Musambira	Musambira and Nyarubaka Sectors in Kamonyi District	12	10	22
Total			54	34	88

Provide ongoing technical support to Child Protection Committees (support to organize meetings, reporting, visits, etc)

The Project decided to leave this activity to other partners that provide capacity building to the anti-GBV/CPC committees in order to avoid duplication. Through MIGEPROF, the Global Fund and other partners have significant support that is being provided for capacity building of Child Protection Committees. The committees targeted by COSMO are receiving sufficient technical support from the Global Fund program and there could be

duplication for COSMO to continue to support the committees. The Project has tried to link Nkundabana associations with CPCs for collaboration and mutual support.

Comment:

The committee members felt concerned by the violence against child rights and committed to integrate the new responsibilities in their day-to-day responsibilities. However, there is a need for accompaniment in terms necessary capacity building to be able to protect child rights.

Activity A.2.2. Haguruka: Training on Child Rights

The following are the planned steps:

- Organize and deliver training on children rights to 200 community leaders in Muhanga, Kamonyi, Ruhango and Musanze Districts;
- Training of 235 Nkundabana in Musanze district on children's rights
- Train representatives of Nkundabana in Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango in the law on succession; and
- Sensitize 500 community members in Musanze on children's rights.

Organize and deliver training on Children Rights to 200 community leaders in Muhanga, Kamonyi Ruhango and Musanze Districts

A critical activity to be conducted to prepare community members to protect children is to train them on children rights. In the implementation of COSMO Project, the responsibility of training people on child rights is invested with local NGO partner HAGURUKA, which has developed manuals detailing and explaining the key components of international and national instruments and laws protecting children. The training also includes information on succession and family law and women's rights. It also contains information on what to do when a case of rights violation is reported, which mechanisms for redress exist and how to access them. Over the three years, 157 community leaders were trained. Community leaders included members of the conciliation body (Abunzi), cell coordinators and sector executive secretaries. During this training, it was observed that most participants ignored child rights and did not often respect them. Participants recognized that the community has a long way to go if rights of people are not understood and protected.

On a number of occasions, the Project conducted training sessions on child rights and protection for community leaders other than the members of the Child Protection Committees. These additional participants attended a three day training session organized in Muhanga - 125 members of parent's committees (75 males and 50 females), teachers and volunteers in ECD (early childhood development) centers supported by CARE in Kamonyi District. Officials in charge of social affairs from cell and sector level attended this training as well.

Training of 235 Nkundabana in Musanze district on Children's Rights

242 (90 females and 152 males) Nkundabana from all the five sectors in Musanze were trained on child rights and on national laws related to the protection of child rights, succession and family law. The targeted number increased because the number of Nkundabana increased as the number of OVCs increased also. This training was of great importance for Nkundabana who attended. They realized how they didn't respect child rights in their daily work and how far their communities are in the respect of child rights. They took a decision of changing their behaviour and developed strategies of how they will protect and help others protect child rights.

Train representatives of Nkundabana in Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango in the law on succession

Over the first year of the Project, 90 Nkundabana, 7 Children heads of households underwent a three day training on child rights in the ex-NIPS zone. It was a kind of refresher training, because Nkundabana and CHH had been trained on child rights during the implementation NIPS Project.

Details on number of participants in the refresher training on child rights:

Location/Sector-District	Participants	
	Nkundabana	CHH
MUSAMBIRA-Kamonyi	20	
NYAMIYAG-Kamonyi	24	
CYEZA-Muhanga	26	
BYIMANA-Ruhango	20	7
Total	90	7

After launching COSMO, the Project team conducted the assessment of training needs in order to find the base for capacity building, and it was found that Nkundabana have sufficient information on the succession law as they were trained and were given documentation on the law by the NIPS Project. They also attended many sensitization meetings organized by various partners on the law. So it was decided that the training was not necessary and therefore cancelled.

Sensitization of 500 community members on Children's Rights in Musanze

375 (237 females and 138 males) community members attended a one day sensitization session on child rights and protection in Musanze organized between September and November 2009. Most of them are caregivers of OVC. Participants testified that their lack of information on child rights is the major cause of the violations of child rights. They confessed that they often violated the rights of their own children and of the other children they care for. They planned to change this in their homes and to sensitize their neighbors as well.

As it was originally planned, the target of 500 community members was to be reached by these sensitization sessions. Apart from the number reached in the table below, many others were reached during start and appreciation events because the focus is mainly on protecting child rights in general.

Activity A.2.3. Joint monitoring, evaluation and advocacy

Planned activities include:

- Hold quarterly Project steering committees to review progress and approve next quarter priorities;
- Hold six-monthly progress review and planning workshop;
- Participate in national level OVC Technical Working Group and advocate for priorities as agreed with partners;
- Support districts to organize a workshop with child protection stakeholders in the four districts to advocate for Project beneficiaries' referrals to ensure access to minimum package of services (Identification of stakeholders by district authorities);
- Purchase T-shirts, sweaters, caps and other "visibility" materials to be used to advocate for children's rights & motivate beneficiaries and Project partners; and
- Final evaluation.

Hold quarterly Project Steering Committees to review progress and approve next quarter priorities

In order to monitor Project activities, the steering committee members had to meet monthly at the beginning of the Project and quarterly after the first year of the Project. During the Project implementation period, a number of meetings took place and made important decisions and recommendations. The meetings were conducted on the following dates:

- June 7th, 2007: to discuss on MOUs implementation and on start-up activities
- July 9th, 2007: to follow-up the implementation of start-up activities
- August 2nd, 2007: to follow-up the implementation of start-up activities
- October 9th, 2007: to follow-up the implementation of start-up activities and discuss on financial and administrative issues
- March 13th, 2008: to discuss on the implementation of the component of placement and succession planning

- April 30th, 2008: to discuss on performance evaluation of staff and on the utilization the Project's emergency fund
- July 17th , 2008: to discuss on financial and narrative reports by partners
- August 8th, 2008: to make a decision on the strategies of implementing the placement and succession planning in the Project;
- December 16th 2009: to review the progress against expected outputs and results and to assess the level of implementation of the memorandum of understandings signed between CARE and its partners. It was found that the level of Project implementation is satisfactory. A few activities that were behind schedule were identified and during the meeting recommendations for prioritizing them during the three months of the no-cost extension.

In addition to the Steering Committee meetings, the Project team held quarterly review workshops to assess the progress and to approve priorities for the following periods. As all steering committee members attended the workshops, the meetings for the committee itself were significantly reduced. Other issues that had to be discussed by the committee such as administration, budget utilization and staff management were discussed in separate meetings organized regularly between CARE and individual partner organizations (HAGURUKA and ARCT-RUHUKA).

Hold six-monthly progress review & Planning Workshop

The workshops were conducted as follows:

- June 25-26th, 2007: Strategic workshop gathered COSMO team, Steering Committee members, Nkundabana representatives from the former NIPS zone and Representatives of Kamonyi, Ruhango, Muhanga and Musanze districts.
- January 18-19th, 2008: workshop to review progress against action plan for 2007 and to plan for 2008.
- September 29-30th 2008:a workshop to review progress against action plans for 2008 was held and this helped to orient the 4th quarter action plan
- January 14th-16th 2009: a workshop to plan for 2009. It was combined with developing an exit strategy as COSMO was to end with December 2009.
- June 23-26th 2009: All Project staff, two partner representatives, five Nkundabana, three OVC and Kathrin from CARE-Austria participated in the workshop. During the workshop, participants evaluated the Project based on realizations against the plan of action and against recommendations made in different meetings and workshops, constraints faced and solutions proposed. During this workshop, It was demonstrated that the Project was on track despite the long delay encountered in the beginning of the Project. For example, appropriate shelter was provided to destitute households, health insurance helped children access medical services and impacted on economic improvement as children had more time to work as they were not ill as often. At the outcome level, it was found that Nkundabana have built strong relationship with children and local authorities. Nkundabana took issues of OVC and found solutions by using local opportunities. Local authorities appreciate the work done by Nkundabana, support them and use them to reach OVC. Recommendations were made in order to prepare the sustainability and to organize a hand-over of results and beneficiaries unmet needs to local authorities and other partners. Here are some of them:
 - **In psychosocial component:** Strengthen the capacity of peer facilitators for Nkundabana in order to help them with their own case supervision, to be able to facilitate difficult trauma cases and, where possible, contact existing opportunities for psychosocial support.
 - **In Child Rights and protection component:** Prepare the handover of unresolved cases to HAGURUKA and local authorities and build the collaboration between HAGURUKA paralegal advisors and Nkundabana to continue to provide legal support to OVC.
 - **In education and health:** Before the end of the Project, the team assessed the financial capacity of OVC to pay for school and health insurance and lists of those who can not manage on their own, have been handed over to local authorities for follow up. In addition, mechanisms to establish a referral system in collaboration with district authorities and partners has been defined and handed over together

with a list of all service providers in Musanze district. Local authorities were asked to continue to work with Nkundabana while reinforcing their capacity in advocate.

- **IGAs and shelter:** Develop mechanisms that can protect, increase and sustain the productivity of the support OVCs received from the Project such as housing and income generating activities.
- **Nkundabana structure:** Define a feasible role for Nkundabana associations including the minimum necessary means for them to be able to operate and help them develop operational strategies through discussions with Nkundabana, OVC and local authorities.
- **General recommendations:** Additional recommendations were to organize a referral system similar to the system established by CARE in Nyagatare for PLWHA, organize a handover event, establish a stronger relationship between Nkundabana and OVC through sensitization meetings and strengthen the relationship between Nkundabana and local authorities.

All of these recommendations were implemented and are reported under specific activities, except the organization of handover ceremonies, which is detailed before the conclusion.

Participate in the National level OVC Technical Working Group Meetings and advocate for priorities as agreed with partners

The Health and OVC Program senior staff regularly attended different meetings organized by OVC Technical Working Group. These meetings helped OVCT TWG members share experiences and expertise. These meetings were mostly to comment on studies done to improve the quality of services given to OVCs. Among others, the study on best practices in working with OVCs, child protection & anti-GBV committee guidelines, vulnerability criteria for OVCs, OVC identification guide, Child Status Index; have been discussed in these meetings. OVC TWG members that have in their intervention community-based psychosocial support attended pre-validation and validation meetings that were aimed at providing inputs and commenting the Nkundabana toolkit.

Support districts to organize a workshop with child protection stakeholders in the four districts to advocate for referrals for Project beneficiaries to ensure access to the minimum package of services

The Project team organized and conducted a one day meeting on the 13th of November 2009 in Musanze District. 41 people attended the meeting. These include representatives of local structures, international NGOs, local NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, and health and education institutions. This meeting was an opportunity to present the results of an inventory of service providers developed by COSMO and to advocate for beneficiaries to take over after the closure of the Project. The service providers exercise aimed at mapping all stakeholders in OVC, the services they provide, eligibility criteria, location of services, contacts and procedures for getting information on services, and at producing a user-friendly tool that can be used by Nkundabana for referrals and advocacy.

Participants appreciated the meeting as well as the tool produced, because it was a good opportunity for stakeholders to start a discussion on service provision and on referrals. District authorities committed to continue to organize meetings in order to strengthen the referral mechanism and to continue to update the inventory of service providers produced by CARE. The meeting was also an opportunity for some stakeholders who do not focus only on OVC, like health facility staff, to understand the problems of OVC and to be compassionate.

However, the inventory of service providers also showed that there are very limited possibilities for referring children to material services like shelter, school materials and economic opportunities because many stakeholders limit their support to children selected at the beginning of the Project and don't have room for those who are identified after the initial selection.

Purchase t-shirts, sweaters and caps and other "visibility" materials to be used to advocate for children's rights and motivate beneficiaries and Project partners

The Project purchased and distributed 40 caps and 40 T-shirts to Project staff, partners and local authorities as visibility to be used to advocate for children. Other visibility materials aimed at advocating for children were

produced including 700 sets of playing cards printed with child rights and protection information and 700 booklets for Helpful Active Listening to OVC were given to Nkundabana and to OVC.

The following table shows a summary of achievements under ER2 vis-à-vis the targets:

Item/Indicator	Achievement	Target
Child Protection Committees formed with support from the Project	8	48
Sector Child Protection Committee members trained by Haguruka	88	250
Community leaders who attended training and sensitization on Child Rights by Haguruka	901	200
Households that benefited placement and succession planning services	8	50

Expected Result 3: The most urgent health, protection and development needs of OVCY in Musanze District reached by the programme are met.

Activity A.3.1 Establishment and Management of an Emergency Fund for OVCY

Planned activities include:

- Payment of health insurance out of the emergency fund for 8,500 children in the four districts;
- Shelter construction for 107 households of OVC in Musanze Districts; and
- Respond to emergency needs of children as they occur in the Project area (e.g. pay health care, urgent interventions).

Payment of health insurance out of emergency fund to identified children in the four districts

For the year 2008, 6,323 OVCYs were supported with prepaid health insurance in Muhanga, Kamonyi, Ruhango and Musanze. In 2009, a total of 6,044 OVCY received health insurance from the Project in December 2008 to cover the period of January-December 2009. In 2010, only 1,407 OVCs from Musanze District were supported with health insurance for the year 2010. One could easily observe that the number reduced from year to the following. This was due to the fact that some OVCs became able to pay health insurance for themselves. For example, before the payment for 2010, an assessment was done in collaboration with Nkundabana and it was found out that 1,407 OVC were unable to pay on their own.

Before the Project paid the health insurance for 2010, Nkundabana prepared lists of children in need of support for health insurance and submitted them to the local authorities so that they could be added to the lists of other most vulnerable people who were to get support from the district or from other partners. In the Southern Province (Muhanga, Kamonyi and Muhanga Districts), Nkundabana reported that 60%, more than 3,000 beneficiaries, were able to pay the 2010 annual contribution for health insurance by themselves. In Musanze, all beneficiaries who finished vocational training and apprenticeship managed to pay for health insurance for themselves and for their siblings. This means that at least 30% (774 OVC) of participating OVC in Musanze were able to pay health insurance. These statistics do not include other OVC empowered by VSL activities or indirectly by Nkundabana and those who got income from rabbits. In the whole Project zone, the estimated percentage of children empowered to the extent that they were able to pay for their own health insurance is 50%.

Beneficiaries testified this support was of great importance as most of them used to use wild grass as treatment when sick. This service enabled them to use health facilities whenever they fall sick. One of them appreciated this support in the following words: *"If my younger sister had become blind, how should I have succeeded to help her walk, when personally I hardly walk? Fortunately, we had health insurance thanks to the Project; she was cured and protected against blindness, said Valence, a teenager from Musanze District in the Northern Province.*

Shelter construction for 107 households of OVC in Musanze Districts

In total the Project supported 112 households to get shelter and household items (blankets, cups, pans, plates and basins). The new houses have three bedrooms and one sitting room all with doors, and roofs made of iron sheets. The walls are made of mud and trees or with mud bricks. The houses are sufficient to protect children and are a great improvement from their original houses.



This was the home of a family 9 children and their parents, in Musanze District. Many of the OVC selected for shelter assistance by the COSMO project lived under similar conditions.

This is the house constructed with support from the COSMO project.



Respond to emergency needs of children as they occur in the Project area (e.g. pay health care, urgent interventions)

Two OVC received support from the Project to get special medical treatment for complicated diseases not covered by health insurance and six OVC received support to pay school fees for their last year of studies in secondary schools when they had to drop-out.

Activity A.3.2 ARCT-Ruhuka – training and psychosocial activities

Planned activities include:

- New training on Helpful Active listening for Nkundabana from Musanze, Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango on Helpful and Active Listening
- Refresher training for Nkundabana from Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango on Helpful and Active Listening;
- Peer Support Groups Advanced Training on HAL
- Organize Nkundabana to provide support during times of national mourning (Genocide);
- Clinical supervision and personal development sessions for Nkundabana by Project trauma counselors in all four districts;
- Clinical supervision for all Nkundabana by peer facilitators in all four districts; and
- Organize fun days in all four districts based on the new recommended way of implementing them jointly agreed with the team and Nkundabana.

New training on Helpful Active listening for Nkundabana from Musanze, Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango on Helpful and Active Listening

242 Nkundabana, 5 local leaders from Musanze District and newly identified 55 Nkundabana from the ex-NIPS zone attended a ten day training workshop on Helpful and Active Listening. The topics covered in HAL training included trauma and counseling theory, HIV/AIDS, sexual violence/rape, grief and mourning, techniques of active listening and introduction to placement and succession planning.

About Nkundabana from the ex-NIPS zone, the trainers found that these Nkundabana were familiar with active listening as they received coaching from their peers. Therefore, the Project team decided not to continue organizing training on HAL for the remaining Nkundabana newly identified, not only because they were found to have sufficient skills, but also because the process of selecting new Nkundabana is an ongoing process even after the Project has phase-out. It would not be feasible to organize training activities each time there is a new Nkundabana recruited.

Instead, the Project team made a decision to rely on the capacity of existing Nkundabana to support new ones through coaching and guidance. The peer supervisors/facilitators received additional training. They attended a two day workshop November and December 2009 in all four districts and were oriented on how they can coach new Nkundabana. There are 98 peer supervisors trained by the Project, an average of four per Nkundabana association.

Refresher training in HAL

A five-day refresher training on HAL was also organized for 507 Nkundabana and 2 representatives of local authorities at sector level in Kamonyi, Muhanga and Ruhango Districts. The major objectives of the sessions were to refresh Nkundabana on HAL techniques, on facilitation skills applied to groups of children and adults based on art therapy exercises developed by CAPACITAR, (techniques using songs and plays to help people with traumatic problems to relax after strong emotions), provide Nkundabana with basic elements on succession and improve Nkundabana resilience using personal development exercises. During the refresher training, several participants manifested very strong emotional problems and sometimes indirect trauma as a result of their volunteer work and being confronted to overwhelming problems of children.

Peer Support Groups Advanced Training on HAL

In 2008, the training for peer support groups was organized and conducted in ex-NIPS zone for four people per Nkundabana association in order to gain enough knowledge and to start facilitating the clinical supervision sessions for their peers and to facilitate the expression of emotions. Five day training was conducted for 79 Nkundabana from 20 sectors in total.

In 2009, a total of 19 Nkundabana (6 female and 13 male) from Musanze District attended the same training from the 16th to the 20th of February 2009 at EER Guest House in Musanze, in order to become peer supervisors in Helpful Active Listening for OVC. The topics covered included those of HAL training but with an emphasis on facilitation techniques and managing emotions. This training was so important because it will make possible the sustainability of the clinical supervision after the expert counselors' contracts come to an end during the Project phased out. Nkundabana peer supporters started organizing clinical supervision for their peers.

Organize all Nkundabana to provide support during times of national mourning (Genocide)

This activity was planned as demanded by local authorities who lack skilled people to support cases of trauma during the events of the national commemoration of the genocide organized from April to July every year. Local authorities see Nkundabana as skilled people who can provide support if prepared. The Project team met Nkundabana and prepared them for that. It was also suggested that the Project provide special clothes for the Nkundabana who will provide support during this period. They received a jacket with printed indications in order to be identified during different mourning events.

All 757 Nkundabana supported by the COSMO Project in the four districts intervened during the mourning period for the commemoration of victims of the Genocide, supporting the work of specialized trauma counselors in facilitating cases of crisis. The support was welcomed by local people and authorities. The Nkundabana were

seen as a mechanism for community-based support that will continue to be available for cases of trauma, particularly in Muhanga, Kamonyi, Ruhango and Musanze Districts.

Clinical Supervision and Personal Development Sessions for Nkundabana in all four districts

All 757 Nkundabana in all four Districts attended the quarterly sessions on clinical supervision and personal development facilitated by ARCT Counselors. The sessions are organized in the form of meetings during which Nkundabana discuss difficult cases which they can't solve on their own and exchange experiences (clinical supervision) and during which they discuss their own emotions and feelings they have when facing extraordinary situation of children (personal development session).

During the first year (2007), 149 Nkundabana from six sectors of the ex-zone NIPS (Musambira, Nyamiyaga, Kayenzi sectors in Kamonyi; Kinazi and Byimana sectors in Ruhango District; Cyeza in Muhanga District) participated in the sessions of clinical supervision at least once: 65 three times, 66 twice and 18 once.

During the second year (2008), all 242 Nkundabana from Musanze District and 124 Nkundabana in ex-NIPS zone participated in the sessions of clinical supervision three times.

In the third year, only 242 Nkundabana in Musanze District participated in the sessions facilitated by ARCT counselors three times, while Nkundabana in the ex-NIPS zone attended the sessions facilitated by their trained peers.

Challenge

During these sessions, Nkundabana reported that they were frustrated by social problems faced by children and which are not addressed by the Project as they go on with the home visits. The problems include, but are not limited to, lack of food and school fees for students in secondary school.

Clinical Supervision and Personal Development for Nkundabana peer facilitators by counselors

These peer facilitators organized and conducted clinical supervision sessions for 428 Nkundabana at least twice in 2008 in Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango Districts (ex-NIPS zone). It was found that Nkundabana from the ex-NIPS zone might not necessarily need more efforts from counselors as facilitators of clinical supervision sessions. The capacity was transferred to some of Nkundabana as facilitators during the advanced training facilitated ARCT counselors. Peer supervisors have conducted one day sessions for their peers every month in 2009 in the Southern Province and since May 2009 in Musanze District. During these sessions, 110 trauma cases among OVC have been discussed by Nkundabana and recommendations to handle the cases were formulated by group members. The cases were in general caused by social problems, unwanted pregnancies, family problems, property loss, physical and sexual violence and HIV/AIDS. Peer supervisors reported to have assisted 32 cases of trauma crisis in the 3 districts of the Southern province.

Peers supervisors gained assurance as they facilitated more sessions. However, they reported low attendance on the part of their peers due to their lack of confidence in the supervisors and to the fact that they did not receive transportation fees. The attendance began at 48% and did increase up to 51% in the last months of 2009. Peer supervisors were advised by counselors to work with those who are willing and apply disciplinary measures stipulated in the Nkundabana code of conduct for Nkundabana who do not perform well. The problem of low attendance in activities organized by Nkundabana without any Project support is a sign of lack of motivation and a concern for the sustainability. Therefore, it was found necessary to develop additional mechanism for continuing motivation.

Comment:

Even if there was a low attendance, the approach of using peers to replace Project staff was a success. Peer supervisors got sufficient skills to facilitate case supervision and to help their peers to fight against indirect trauma among themselves.

Individual and group counseling for children in need and for Nkundabana in all 4 districts

Children who have shown signs of trauma are assisted by Nkundabana but complicated cases or children who do not improve with Nkundabana's support are referred to the COSMO Counsellors (the ARCT seconded staff to the Project) for individual professional counselling.

ARCT-Ruhuka trauma counselors supported 23 individuals to go through the individual counseling process; ten clients in Musanze District and 13 in the ex-NIPS zone. Eleven clients were OVC and twelve were Nkundabana. One client was determined to have a mental illness and he was referred to the psychiatric hospital for specialized treatment. Two clients were quickly rehabilitated and other continued the process until the end of the Project, but with a great improvement. They will continue to receive support from their own Nkundabana who were prepared for. In addition, counselors facilitated group counseling sessions for three groups every month: one group of 16 Nkundabana, one group of nine OVC in Musanze District and one group of 16 OVC in Muhanga District. All Nkundabana and OVC in need of counseling received the support from counselors. The planned target (20 Nkundabana and 50 OVC) was higher than the cases identified.

Challenges

There are no other psychosocial services available near beneficiaries in the whole zone of the Project for referrals when necessary. This required building sufficient capacity in Nkundabana in order to be able to continue supporting each other and providing psychosocial support to children. The training of peer facilitators was one solution, but the Project needed to find an additional strategy for the sustainability of psychosocial support. Therefore, two day refresher training was conducted for the 98 peer supervisors in order to be able to supervise each other and to serve as focal persons in Helpful Active Listening.

Organize Fun Days in all 4 districts based on new recommended way of implementing them as jointly agreed with the team and Nkundabana for 8,500 OVC

The Project Team changed the strategy of organizing fun days from the community level fund days to the household level events. According to the new strategy, all children supported by Nkundabana were gathered together with the Nkundabana's own children and spouse. They take time to share their life experiences, to discuss on specific themes proposed by the Project staff at the beginning, and later by Nkundabana and children themselves. During the events, children have fun in terms of dances, songs and games and share drinks or food and they plan mutual support activities, if need be. In the beginning, the Project provided money to Nkundabana to purchase drinks or food, but beneficiaries will later find their ways in which things will continue to function when the Project stops providing financial support. These events are organized during holidays so that all children can participate.

The Project team organized fun days twice in Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango District and three times in Musanze District at household level for OVC, Nkundabana family members and neighbors. All participating OVCs attended the events. Nkundabana and OVC also took this opportunity to discuss how they will be organizing this day after the Project. Small contributions of food items should be voluntarily made by OVC, Nkundabana and neighbors to organize fun days in the future. However, Nkundabana and OVC agreed to continue organizing events even when they do not have food or drinks to share. Participants should meet for praying, dancing and sharing news and problems. They recognized that fun days are important in their lives; therefore they have to continue even after the Project closes. The planned target for fun days was not reached because it was found very difficult to organize the events for all children in the same time in terms of logistical arrangements.

With the end of the Project, the following have been the achievements under psychosocial activities:

Item/Indicator	Achievement	Target
HAL refresher training	802	700
Quarterly sessions on personal development and clinical supervision	757	700
Nkundabana trained as clinical supervisors	98	N/A
Clinical supervision provided by peer Nkundabana	427	
People who benefited individual counseling	23	N/A
People who benefited group counseling	41	
Trauma cases accompanied	571	500

507 Nkundabana from Ruhango, Muhanga and Kamonyi got HAL refresher training. The 55 new Nkundabana in ex-NIPS zone and 242 Nkundabana from Musanze District received HAL training. All 757 Nkundabana in all zones participated in quarterly session of personal development and clinical supervision organized by counselors

from ARCT. 98 peers Nkundabana from Ruhango, Kamonyi, Muhanga and Musanze have been trained as supervisors in clinical supervision skills. Clinical supervision was provided for 427 Nkundabana by peer supervisors in Muhanga, Kamonyi and Ruhango in 2008. But the attendance was limited to 51% (386) at the end of the Project. Individual counseling sessions have been done with 12 Nkundabana and 11 OVC. Then, three groups went on to the group counseling process: a group of 16 Nkundabana and a group of 9 OVC from Gashaki sector in Musanze District and a group of 16 OVC from Muhanga District. In total, 571 cases of trauma of OVC were assisted by Nkundabana in their daily psychosocial support to OVC: 461 in 2008 and 110 new cases in 2009. It was expected to have 500 OVC reached by ARCT-Ruhuka psycho-social support activities, or referred for such services. Fun days were organized twice for all participating children in Nkundabana households. They got in touch with their Nkundabana's own families and they socialized.

Activity A.3.3 Haguruka – legal advice and assistance to OVC

Planned activities include:

- Disseminate case reporting format (simplified one) to all Nkundabana in all 4 districts to create an inventory of children in need of legal assistance and who were not registered at birth;
- Organize mobile clinics for birth registration of non registered OVC in all four districts;
- Hold consultation meetings between Haguruka paralegal advisors and Nkundabana to determine modes of collaboration between them; and
- Provision of legal assistance by Haguruka in all four districts as well as through other means: local authorities, abunzi, professional lawyers, etc.

Disseminate case reporting format (simplified one) to all Nkundabana in all 4 districts to make an inventory of children in need of legal assistance and who were not registered at birth

236 cases of Child Rights violation were identified in all four districts during the whole Project period. In general, cases are about: rape, physical violence, property right violation, succession, and search for paternity. One 171 OVC not registered at the birth were identified in all four Districts. Details of how these cases were handled are included in the below headings:

Organize mobile clinics for birth registration of non registered OVC in all four districts

28 cases in Musanze District and 5 cases in ex-NIPS zone were registered after they were presented to local authorities and after the mobilization of caregivers on the importance of registering a child by the HAGURUKA Legal Counselor. Local authorities committed to collaborate with Nkundabana to continue the registration of the remaining OVCs.

Hold consultation meetings between Haguruka paralegal advisors and Nkundabana to determine modes of collaboration between them

These meetings were organized in Musanze District in February and in April 2009. One hundred seventy-three (173) Nkundabana met with 13 paralegal advisors who were recently trained by HAGURUKA in order to support Nkundabana in their work with OVC. These two community structures have to collaborate in order to help abused children regain their rights. The meetings were good opportunities to understand the role of each other and discuss on their collaboration.

Provision of legal assistance by Haguruka in all four districts as well as through other means: local authorities, abunzi, professional lawyers, etc

63 cases from the Southern Province have been processed and concluded in the appropriate structures with the facilitation of the Project's legal advisors. 67 cases from Musanze district have also been concluded: 65 of them have been solved while two of them have been stopped as there was no way to continue processing them. For the later cases, it was found out that there are children looking for paternity but for which it has been impossible to trace the link with their parents. It is worth mentioning that now Nkundabana and OVC are aware of different laws as a result of different trainings and sensitization and as a result many new cases for registration are being reported to the legal advisor. All cases of abuse were documented and channeled to the right organs for assistance.

Below are cumulative achievements under activity 3.3:

- All 236 cases identified by Nkundabana from the beginning received a support from the Project's Legal Advisor and are in the process for assistance. Of those, 128 were closed successfully and two were closed because there was no way to continue them. Others are in the process either in formal courts, in decentralized structures or in community forms of mediation (abunzi structures).
- 14 paralegal advisors have been trained and connected to Nkundabana for collaboration in addressing legal needs of OVC.
- 171 cases of children not registered at the birth were identified. 33 were supported for registration without penalties. Local Authorities accepted to facilitate the process of registration and they won't charge fine.
- Two HAGURUKA staff was seconded to COSMO. However, the problem of turn-over affected the Project in both zones.

Challenges

Legal procedures take a long time, and the Project team didn't manage to find solution to all the cases identified. All cases were handed-over to HAGURUKA as they will continue to operate in the Project zone. HAGURUKA agreed to continue to follow up those cases. The hand over of cases was done before the Project's end date.

Activity A.3.4. Facilitation of Access to Education

Activities planned include:

- Identification and selection of trainers/centers for Vocational training/apprenticeship schemes
- Monitor the use of secondary school funds managed by Nkundabana associations in Ruhango, Muhanga and Kamonyi Districts
- Ongoing fundraising for secondary school support
- Purchase and Distribute kit and uniforms for primary education to 1148 OVC
- Purchase and distribute kit/materials for literacy training to 291 OVC
- Incentives for 21 literacy training facilitators
- Purchase and Distribute basic kit/materials for vocational training/apprenticeship (note-books, basic tools) to 323 OVC
- Payment of fees for Vocational training /apprenticeship to 323 OVC
- Follow-up of children enrolled in various education opportunities

Identification and selection of trainers/centers for Vocational Training/Apprenticeship schemes

Two vocational training centers and 22 local workshops were identified and trained OVYs that were in need of vocational training and apprenticeship. These opportunities helped the Project to have a bigger number of the targeted OVC with apprenticeships than with vocational training. The problem of finding institutions or individuals who can facilitate vocational training and apprenticeship was serious and delayed the implementation of the trainings. It took a long time to have trainers for all children/youth targeted for vocational training and apprenticeship.

Monitor the use of Secondary School Funds managed by Nkundabana Associations in Ruhango, Muhanga and Kamonyi Districts

CARE deployed a lot of efforts to raise additional funds for secondary school education and so far funds have been raised to support 78 children. With these funds, the Project used the approach that consists of granting funds for the entire school cycle through Nkundabana associations, rather than giving money only for one year and leaving the children very insecure about whether or not they will be able to continue their studies or not. The amount necessary for each child to finish the full cycle, including a contingency fund in case s/he needs to repeat a class and money for supplies is transferred on the account of Nkundabana associations through a tripartite agreement between CARE, the Nkundabana associations and district authorities. Children are not signatory but have copies of the agreement as well. Nkundabana are now familiar with the process of transferring required funds from their bank accounts to the respective schools bank accounts. All children performed well in class and Nkundabana verify their reports at the end of every quarter.

Ongoing Fundraising for Secondary School Support

It was not possible to find other opportunities for secondary school support. However, a number of OVC supported by the Project to continue primary school were in a need of the support for secondary school. The Nine Year Basic Education Program established in the country in order to facilitate the education for all will help to address the problem of those who finished their 6th grade in 2009.

Purchase and Distribute Kit and Uniforms for Primary Education for 1,148 OVC

1,148 OVC received support of primary school materials in 2008 while 1,151 (520 males and 631 females) primary school pupils received school materials in January and February 2009. As a majority of them received school uniforms the previous year, the Project did not distribute uniforms in 2009. The only children who received uniforms are those who entered primary one and those who had dropped and who have been reintegrated. In total, 31 girls and 33 boys received school uniforms. In secondary schools, 92 OVC (38 females and 54 males) also received school materials. In total, 1,307 children received school materials for primary and secondary school. All these children are from Musanze District.

Purchase and distribute Kit/Materials for Literacy Training to 291 OVC

The following materials were distributed: pieces of chalk and teaching books, preparation exercise books, pens and rulers. In total, 21 literacy centers with 21 literacy teachers have been identified to be given those materials and to help OVC in need to attend literacy training. The training took a period of 6 months. While 291 students were enrolled in the training, 188 (134 females and 54 males) completed the training. Drop-outs were due to lack of food in general.

Incentives for 21 Literacy Training Facilitators

21 literacy trainers received facilitation fees of \$15 per month each. These fees were a motivation for the literacy trainers who normally serve as volunteers so that they get more motivated in order to train not only targeted OVC but also other community members during the 6 months. This motivation was decided after the assessment made by the Project team with the purpose of identifying available opportunities and constraints for literacy training. It was found that even if there are volunteers in charge of literacy training, those volunteers are not committed and when people go to the training they rarely find them. This is the reason behind the decision of providing financial motivation to the trainers.

Purchase and distribute Basic Kit/Materials for Vocational Training/Apprenticeship

374 OVC/Youth (159 females and 215 males) completed vocational and apprenticeship training and each graduate received a comprehensive starting kit in order to make productive their skills: 23 completed vocational training (17 males and 6 females) while 351 finished apprenticeship.

See how the kits were distributed:

- 126 received tailoring kit;
- 34 received kit for carpenters;
- 59 received tool boxes for mechanics;
- 25 kits for knitting; and
- 130 received kit for hair cutting.

All these OVC/youth started their businesses and they have already started responding to their basic needs and to those of their siblings. All of them reported to have paid health insurance for themselves their siblings for the 2010. They are able to get both food and clothes as well.

For the purpose of sustaining activities, some of them formed or joined voluntary saving and loan groups that will enable them getting familiar with the culture of saving over time.



Payment of Fees for Vocational Training /Apprenticeship

As mentioned above, 23 OVC (17 males and 6 females) were enrolled in vocational training and 351 (198 males and 153 females) were enrolled in apprenticeship. Both categories of OVCs benefited training fee for the whole period of the training.

Comments

Only twenty-three (23) OVC finished vocational training as opposed to the initial target for vocational of 130. In the third amendment for COSMO, the number was reduced from 130 to 27. This change was due to the lack of vocational training opportunities in Musanze District. Most of the OVC could not leave their household and travel far for the courses. It is also due to the lower level of education of most of the targeted OVC, since a completion of a minimum of 6 years of primary school is a requirement for vocational training enrolment. Twenty-three out of 27 children/youth who started the training completed it - one who dropped-out left to get married and three left the centers and joined the apprenticeship.

As an alternative to vocational training, the Project organized apprenticeships in the proximity of the OVC and the difference in the target for vocational training was compensated through this strategy (the apprenticeship targeted a bigger number than planned). 374 OVC have been reached in both vocational training and apprenticeship, instead of 300, the new target as per the amendment no 3. The target increased because the Project managed to find other trainers in the proximity of OVC.

Follow-up of Children Enrolled in Various Education Opportunities

The Project staff made regular follow-up visits to vocational training and apprenticeship workshops in order to see if the contractors for training facilitation fulfill their scope of work as agreed, and if the trainees take advantage of the training. All enrolled children finished their training program and they started running their businesses in various corners of Musanze District as mentioned above. See the statistics of all supported OVC /youth:

Course	Male	Female	Total
Mechanics	59	0	59
Carpentry	34	0	34
Tailoring	17	109	126
Knitting	4	21	25
Hair cutting	101	29	130
General total	215	159	374

Challenges

- Food was a big challenge for OVC who were enrolled in education activities. Some of the heads of household had to leave their training location earlier in the day or be absent for some days in order to look for food for their siblings.
- Some contractors did not respect what they adhered to and did not provide enough materials for students and some of them did not give enough time to the coaching of trainees. This behavior obliged the staff to make many field visits and to have long discussion with children and contractors. One of the

contracts was terminated for the mentioned reasons. Through participatory monitoring and evaluation, Nkundabana and OVC monitored the training activities and this helped improve the quality of the service. Nkundabana played an important role in keeping them in the training, sometimes providing food from the own households or asking for food for them from neighbors.

Activity A.3.5. Establishment of and Support to Professional Guilds

24 youth among those who finished vocational training and apprenticeship decided to work in groups. Eight groups in total were formed: one group of carpenters, six groups of tailors and one for knitting. The rest preferred to work independently. Children in groups affirm to get more income than those working independently, because working in groups increases visibility and it is an opportunity to learn from each other. However, some children are impatient to get income and are tempted to sell the kit distributed to them by the Project. Fortunately, Nkundabana intervened on time and the security of the kits is now guaranteed. For instance, a group of children who learned tailoring in Cyuve sector were about to sell their kits to their former trainer when Nkundabana knew it they collaborated with local authorities to stop them. They used this opportunity to sensitize children and community members on the protection of the kits.

Activity A.3.6: Peer training on life skills for 350 OVC/youth

A five day training workshop was conducted on HIV/AIDS& STD and on the adolescent reproductive health, in all four Districts, between December 2008 and November 2009. The total number of trained peer educators during the reporting period is 415 (194 females and 221 males). The trained peer educators started organizing the sessions for educating their peers on the same themes and the Project team provided technical support through coaching visits and technical meeting. 276 OVC/youth were reported to have gone for VCT as a result of the peer education. Another big number of youth and children mobilized are willing to go for voluntary counseling and testing for HIV. No case of tested HIV+ was reported to the Project.

The activity of facilitating exchange sessions using sports and fun activities between peer educators to learn from each other and improve their knowledge in all four districts has been organized and implemented in March 2009 at the sector level in all four districts. The sessions were organized in a form of competition and more than 3,125 children/youth participated. The activity was a good opportunity to assess the knowledge of youth in HIV/AIDS and reproductive health. It was found that the knowledge is high. Children/youth developed techniques of educating their peers and community members in general by role plays, songs and poems. They demonstrated a sense of creativity during the competitions.

Under the Expected Result 3, the Project has achieved the following since its inception:

Item/Indicator	Achievement	Target
OVCs who benefited bed nets	2,000	2,000
OVCs reached with psychosocial activities	571	500
OVC who received legal support and accompaniment	407	N/A
Par legal advisors trained by Haguruka	14	15
OVCs supported with school materials	1307	600
School drop out attending literacy classes	188	130
Youth who attended vocational training	23	130
Youth who attended apprenticeship training	351	250
OVCY attended life skills training as peer educators	483	300
OVCY supported with health insurance	6,323	N/A
OVCs who got shelter and households items	112	N/A
OVCs who got fees to complete secondary school	6	N/A
OVCs assisted to get special medical treatment	2	N/A

Human Interest Story

“The Project removed me from the street where I was living. I have now an appropriate shelter and other household materials. Now, I finished the training in knitting and I got a machine. This is the time for me to get rid of all my problems. This is a dignity for me. I am now like other children who have both the mother and the father. In next few days, I will be a boss (a rich person). Many organizations used to identify and register us but they never supported us, they only reminded us of our problems. This Project gave me hope when I was about to die...” testified **Beatrice Nyiraghunga**.



Beatrice, 20 years old from Musanze District, was moved when receiving the knitting kit after the training

Expected Result 4: Economic Security of Households is Improved

A 4.1: Execution Development of Income Generating Activities

Planned activities include:

- Disseminate CSI (Child status Index) tool to Nkundabana to collect indicators to measure the impact of interventions on nutrition and economic situation of beneficiaries;
- Identification of OVC households to benefit from livelihood security interventions in all four districts based on vulnerability & identify relevant and adequate intervention based on their situation;
- Purchase and distribution of seeds for small garden to OVC households and Nkundabana in Musanze District;
- Purchase and conditional distribution of small livestock (goats, pigs...) to selected households and associations;
- Training on Income generating activities for selected OVC; and
- Financial and technical support to OVC & Nkundabana IGAs.

Disseminate CSI (Child Status Index) tool to Nkundabana to collect indicators to measure the impact of interventions on nutrition and economic situation of beneficiaries

Though this activity was not initially planned, it was recommended by MIGEPROF to partners in order to monitor the changes made in the well-being of OVC and to identify the needs that can be addressed or put on the agenda for advocacy. COSMO piloted the use of the Child Status Index (CSI) in Kinigi Sector in Musanze District to assess the improvement made in the wellbeing of participating OVC. 97 OVC were sampled and different domains of the minimum package of services for OVC were assessed.

The following are the findings:

1. Food security: 60% have regularly enough food and 1.5% has severe food insecurity.
2. Nutrition and growth: 88.8% are well grown with energy level for their age and 3% show signs of malnutrition.
3. Shelter: 83% has adequate shelter, 11% have inadequate shelter and 5% don't have shelter.
4. Care: 80% receive care of an adult (this is maybe more related to Nkundabana care and support) and 15% are completely without care of an adult.
5. Abuse and exploitation: 97% are protected against abuse.
6. Legal protection: 93% are sure of the legal assistance if abused.
7. Wellness: 87.5% are healthy and active and 7% have serious health problems.
8. Access to health care: 92% receive all health care when ill and preventive care.

9. Emotional health: 90% reported to be happy, hopeful and content.
10. Social behavior: 86% like to play with peers and participate in group and family activities.
11. Performance: 71% are learning well as expected by caregivers and 29% have serious problems with learning and performing in life or developmental skills.
12. Education and work: 61% are enrolled in and attending school/training regularly.

It was also found that only 3% received assistance from other organizations for shelter construction. This means that all interviewed children or caregivers were mostly supported by COSMO Project.

Identification of OVC households to benefit from livelihood security interventions in all four districts based on vulnerability & identification of relevant and adequate intervention based on their situation

Seven hundred and five (705) of the poorest OVC households were selected by community members to benefit from technical and material support from COSMO in order to implement income generating activities. The Project team helped them to identify activities they invested in and provided agricultural materials and training. The household are divided in the different districts as follows:

- Musanze: 180
- Kamonyi: 175
- Ruhango:225
- Muhanga: 125

Besides these households, 42 OVC associations were selected to also benefit from technical and material support. Those associations were selected because they are a group of very poor OVC and they do not have enough capacities to run activities that can generate sufficient income. The assistance given to those associations will help them become more productive cooperatives in the future. The Project preferred to support OVC with income generating activities instead of enrolling them in VSL activities because various assessments proved that the poorest people, particularly vulnerable children/Youth, can not successfully implement VSL activities if they do not receive any other material and financial support.

Challenge

The Project team had planned to provide financial and material assistance to 705 households of OVC and to 42 associations of OVC in order to help them implement their small businesses and other income generating activities. Later on, the Project team was informed that principles of the European Commission on income generating activities are far from microfinance. These principles were not taken into consideration when identifying activities to be implemented by OVC. The Project team collaborated with beneficiaries to adapt the planned income generating activities to the sense of income generating activity in the EC context. Many of activities were aiming at selling agricultural products like vegetables and fruits and livestock. The new selection of income generating activities resulted into the following types of activities:

- Growing vegetables
- Growing mushrooms
- Growing cassava
- Bee keeping
- Small livestock: goats, rabbits, and pigs
- Fishing
- Hair cutting/dressing
- Growing potatoes

Purchase and distribution of seeds for small garden to 500 OVC households and Nkundabana in Musanze District

After a successful pilot of and training on small gardens for 46 households of OVC, the Project scaled-up the activity in all 1,029 participating households of OVC and in 242 households of Nkundabana. Seeds of cabbage, carrots, onion and amaranth have been purchased and distributed to all households for replication (the photo below is a sample of gardens developed).



As a result of the strategy, small/kitchen gardens reduced problems of malnutrition in OVC households and contributed to increased food security. Local authorities in Musanze District appreciated the concept. The Mayor of Musanze District recommended it to all households of Gashaki sector by the Mayor of Musanze when he was visiting the sector and surprisingly saw the gardens made by COSMO beneficiaries. Development of kitchen gardens became a routine for Project beneficiaries not only because they saw their profit, but also because decentralized structures made this activity a priority for the whole population. So, there is a hope that they will be sustainable.

Purchase and conditional distribution of small livestock (goats, pigs...) to selected households and associations

After a participatory needs assessment, beneficiaries selected types of small livestock they needed. Various types of small livestock were purchased and distributed to beneficiaries, including goats, pigs, sheep and rabbits. All participating OVC households in Musanze District received two animals each: one goat/pig/sheep and a rabbit. Total number of animals distributed is 2,058 to 1,029 households while it was planned to distribute, 2000 livestock.



Chantal, 18, lives with her young sister who is 14. She is proud of having received a goat that has already produced.

For the sustainability of the support a committee made up of Nkundabana and children was established to manage the use of small livestock. The livestock was given as a rotating credit, so that the rest of Musanze community, especially the most vulnerable households can access to this opportunity with the time. By the closing date, OVC had started benefiting from livestock, especially from rabbits.

Training on Income generating activities for 605 selected OVC

The Project team organized sensitization meetings on income generating activities for 705 identified households and OVC associations between June and November 2009. Targeted OVC/youth selected income generating activities they would like to implement and identified technical and material support needed in order to develop successful income generating activities. As the activities selected are mostly agriculture and livestock, they were expressed needs in training in modern techniques of agriculture like how to use fertilizers and pesticides, to quantify and to distance seeds, how to grow mushrooms...; and in keeping small livestock appropriately (housing, feeding, fighting against diseases for small livestock, etc.). Targeted OVC were supported to acquire skills needed for implementing these activities and they got material support from the COSMO Project. A five day

training of trainers' workshop on agriculture and livestock was organized and implemented in all four districts in February and March 2010. In total, 146 OVC and 68 Nkundabana were trained. After the training, the trainers trained all children/youth who had to implement IGAs and who were not reached by the training of trainers. Each trainer got a task of training at least four OVCs just after the training, which they did by March 2010. This brought the trained people to more than 1000 OVCs trained in agriculture and livestock.

Financial and technical support to OVC & Nkundabana IGAs

The Project had planned to provide funds to OVC and Nkundabana in order to help them implement their small business plans, but later on some kinds of businesses were found ineligible according to European Commission principles around income generating activities. Beneficiaries were helped by the Project team to select other income generating activities. A plan for capacity building was developed with beneficiaries comprising of training activities in specific skills for selected IGAs (Income generating activities) and support with materials. The plan was implemented between January and March 2010.

Comments

The number of livestock distributed was higher than the planned target: 2,058 distributed versus 2000 planned because the available budget allowed the Project team to do so and the way Nkundabana and the Project team collaborated in purchasing the livestock facilitated getting quality animals at cheaper prices. The Project also supported a larger number of households with small gardens than what was planned: 1,029 households of OVC and 242 households of Nkundabana were reached, while 500 households were planned. Planned training and material support for the implementation of Income generating activities was delayed because of the misunderstanding of the sense of income generating activities in EC context.

A 4.2: Execution Implementation of CLASSE-Intambwe savings and loan model

Planned activities included:

- Purchase of Intambwe kits;
- Organization of interested Nkundabana and OVC from Musanze district in VSL groups and training on Intambwe methodology;
- Financial and technical support to saving and loans activities in all 4 districts; and
- Monitoring of MOU with Banque Populaire signed during NIPS Project.

Purchase of Intambwe kits

Thirty Village Saving and Loans (VSL) groups in Musanze District received kits for the Intambwe methodology. The kit is composed of a wooden box for savings, register for bookkeeping, individual books for saving and loans, and a calculator.

Organization of interested Nkundabana and OVC from Musanze district in VSL groups and training on Intambwe methodology

Twenty nine (29) out of 30 village savings and loan groups that were created for Nkundabana and OVC late in 2008 continued to implement CARE VSL methodology. The composition of groups is as follows:

- Total number of members: 399 (187 females and 212 males)
- Members who are OVC: 110
- Members who are Nkundabana: 202
- Members who are adult-headed OVCY care-giving households: 87

One group made of OVC failed to continue the activities of saving and loans because it was hard for them to make weekly saving and some members of the remaining groups resigned also. The number of interested people at the beginning was 465. It means that 66 people dropped-out, all of them are from OVC households. The major reasons of dropping out were the failure to find amount for saving regularly. The situation of saving and loans activities by December 2010 was as follows:

- Average saving per member: 3,762 RWF,
- Cumulative amount of loans: 1,173,456 RWF,
- Percentage of saving given out as a loan: 73, 6%.
- Reimbursement rate: 76%

A part from the training implemented for the leaders of VSL groups, the Project trained all members of in their respective groups on VSL methodology and on running their small business and on bookkeeping. The groups were also prepared to continue to work without the support of CARE's Project. There is a hope that VSL groups will continue after COSMO stopped its activities, seeing how they were interested and based on the capacity built in them.

Challenge

The Project staff in charge of monitoring VSL activities reported to be overloaded and therefore incapable of providing proper support to VSL groups in Musanze District. The Project has to ensure a good monitoring and enough support to the groups in order to make the approach successful. To fulfill this responsibility, the Project made a decision of hiring a temporary employee specialized in VSL methodology to assist the team in the follow-up, given the fact that Project social workers were very busy with Project phase out activities. The temporary staff worked from November 1st, 2009 until February 2010.

Financial and technical support to saving and loans activities in all 4 districts

Financial support was not provided due to the fact that COSMO did not plan in the Project proposal to implement microfinance.

The Project Social workers and later a temporary staff provided technical support to VSL groups through coaching visits on a monthly basis. As results of the technical support provided, all 399 members of VSL groups regularly save fixed amounts (150 RWF each). Some individuals, mostly Nkundabana, started taking loans from the groups and initiated small businesses.

OVC have trouble in performing well due to their poor economic situation. All groups made only by OVC were found weak in applying the VSL methodology. As a positive impact, VSL activities created a strong social cohesion and mutual support among members. Group members have a strong ownership but they still need to be more technically empowered. The gaps are in bookkeeping and in the selection of areas of investment. The Project has to make sure that these gaps are filled by the closing date.

Monitoring of MOU with Banque Populaire signed during NIPS Project

The MOUs with Banque Populaire about the use of credit funds established with NIPS funds expired and there was a need to amend them based on the territory restructures made after the creation of the funds, and based on how the MOUs have been implemented so far or simply to close them. Project staff made follow-up visits to all 7 branches of Banque Populaire and realized that Bank personnel don't have enough information on the MOUs or didn't respect them at all.

In order to assess the implementation of those MOUs with Banque Populaire, and also the utilization of credit funds by beneficiaries, the Project hired an external consultant who carried out a situation analysis of CHH (23 VSL groups) and Nkundabana VSL (34 VSL group) and to determine the status of credit funds deposited in Banque Populaire during the implementation of NIPS Project.

The findings from the assessment indicated that out of 21,000,000 Rwandan francs deposited as a credit fund in banks, the outstanding credit was 13,078,076 Rwf and the balance on accounts was 8,099,398 Rwf. Seeking how to phase out with this credit fund in favour of beneficiaries, CARE, through its Economic Security Program, should put in place only one more responsible committee for 3 Districts, to preside over and govern all activities related to this credit fund. This committee should be composed of representatives of VSL (as IGs seem not sustainable as structure); CARE representative should only attend this committee at the beginning. The MOUs with banks and Intergroupements on the use of the credit funds should be reviewed as well and the banks should continue to recover all credits given to VSL groups.

Assessment of the functioning of intergroupement and development of the capacity building plan based on the assessment

The intergroupement is a union of village and saving groups working in the same area and its committee made of Nkundabana and OVC representatives is in charge of linking the groups to the financial Institution, building the

capacity of VSL groups in terms of business plan development and in monitoring the reimbursements of groups that got credit from the bank. This structure was put in place during NIPS Project.

The follow-up activities organized by the Project team helped to find out that Intergroupements had problems in functioning. The Project team supported some of them to organize the meetings of the general assembly in order to review their internal rules and to renew their committees. However, others were not even reached because they do not function. The Project hired a consultant for technical assistance in assessing the functioning of all 7 intergroupements created during the NIPS Project and formulation of recommendations for the way forward. It was found by the assessment that out of 7 intergroupements, four had good performance in the past and three others needed to be restructured.

Comments

All planned strategies were implemented. However, it was initially planned to reach 548 adult-headed OVCY care-giving households with in CLASSE savings and loan methodology but the target will not be reached because CARE International reviewed its strategies of the implementation of CLASSE savings and loan methodology to improve the quality. The strategy that affects the COSMO plan is the number of village saving and loans group that have to be supported by one field staff. It is a recommendation that one full time staff supports 15 groups. In Musanze District, the Project already supports 30 Groups with 2 staff members who are also involved in other Project activities. The decision made was not to increase the number of VSL group members. The Project will remain with the target of 100 adult-headed OVCY care-giving households.

The Project did not provide financial support to VSL groups and it is not planning to do so because the Project did not plan to do microfinance at the beginning. As an alternative, the Project will ensure that VSL groups that perform well are linked to financial services before the end date.

Summary of achievements under Expected Result 4:

- 2,058 small livestock were distributed to 1,029 OVC care giving households in Musanze (goat, rabbits, sheep, and pigs).
- 705 most vulnerable households and 42 associations of OVC received technical and material support for IGAs in all four districts including agriculture training and related materials.
- 1,029 OVC were trained on development of kitchen gardens via pilot practices done in 46 households in Musanze District.
- 87 adult-headed OVC care-giving households were integrated in Nkundabana and OVC VSL groups in Musanze District.

Expected Result 5: Targeted OVCY aged 2-6 are reached with an effective ECD intervention in Kamonyi District

The ECD initiative was piloted as one of the COSMO components until the end of December 2008, after which the component became a separate Project because the ECD program grew with time and as various small donations were raised. However, the COSMO and ECD teams continued to share information, ideas and lessons learned.

In a short time, the ECD initiative has shown success in terms of achieving changes in the lives of young vulnerable children largely due to the use of the comprehensive 5x5 model. This model uses 5 components at 5 levels. The components are: health, nutrition, child development, protection and economic security. Levels are: individual, caregiver, household, community and national policy level.

CARE's ECD pilot caught the attention of partners in OVC and in education programs, and government bodies like MINEDUC and MIGEPROF. The community-managed centers received many visitors who came for cross-fertilization and learning visits and some of them started copying the model. Even if the early childhood development is a concern and even a priority for the government, very few actors have initiated activities to support the most vulnerable children in the rural areas of Rwanda and the government does not have capacities to expand ECD centers in all communities.

Final Evaluation

The COSMO Final Evaluation was conducted with the technical assistance of a team of three independent consultants among them two are internationals and one national. The consultants were selected based on their high qualification in social sciences and public health and experience in conducting Project evaluations and research in general.

This evaluation had two primary objectives. First, it sought to assess the COSMO Program effectiveness in reducing vulnerabilities among OVCs in Musanze District. Second, the evaluation examined the prospects for sustainability of the Nkundabana associations in the southern province. In particular, these objectives focused on the following:

1. COSMO program effectiveness: reduced vulnerability among OVCY in Musanze district.

Specific objectives:

- a. Determine whether or not development, health and protection needs of OVCY participating in the COSMO program were met.
- b. Determine whether or not economic and livelihood household security of OVCY participating in the COSMO program are improved.
- c. Determine whether or not psychosocial wellbeing of OVCY participating in the COSMO program is improved.
- d. Determine Nkundabana perceptions of program implementation, program effectiveness, and own issues related to vulnerability.

2. Sustainability of Nkundabana associations in three districts in the southern province of Rwanda.

Specific objectives:

- a. Determine key stakeholder perceptions of program implementation, program effectiveness, and appropriateness of beneficiary targeting efforts.
- b. Determine key stakeholder perceptions of local ownership and local capacity for program sustainability including such factors as technical, managerial and organizational capacity.
- c. Determine key stakeholder perceptions regarding coordination and collaboration among participating parties.

The findings from the evaluation revealed the following:

COSMO program effectiveness, according to OVC:

- COSMO reduced vulnerability among OVCY in Musanze district.
- COSMO targeted the most vulnerable and at-risk children in Musanze District: 91% of the sampled youth for the survey are orphans.
- The program met the material needs of beneficiaries by providing personal items needed by children, such as bed nets, livestock. Further, a higher number of beneficiaries reported to have more adequate shelter compared to non-beneficiaries.
- However, nearly one-third of OVC were living in households that experience severe food insecurity during the month prior to the survey. Compared to the situation found during the baseline study where 87% were food insecure.
- Participating OVCY attained needed services, but needs are high.
- COSMO beneficiaries reported to have stronger peer relationships, more frequently reported having an adult in their life that they trust, and less frequently experienced people speaking badly of them or their families or making fun of them. However, the levels of marginalization remained high) a half of surveyed Nkundabana reported that the community rejects orphans); a significantly higher proportion of beneficiaries reported that people were jealous of services they receive.
- Many OVCY have psychological symptoms at very high levels.
- COSMO beneficiaries were found to have greater knowledge of HIV.

COSMO program satisfaction, according to OVC:

- The majority of youth reported that their Nkundabana have value - they give good advice (88%); they help OVCs feel more confident (87%), they help protect the child 84%). Most youth (90) reported that they trust their Nkundabana

COSMO program effectiveness, according to Nkundabana:

- Among Nkundabana, 4% have severe food insecurity while the baseline study had shown that 30% of surveyed Nkundabana were food insecure
- The vast majority of Nkundabana reported to have a good psychosocial wellbeing seeing the level their social connectedness (94% agreed that their neighbors visit them; 96% reported to have many friends in their community)
- The majority of Nkundabana were hopeful about the future (85.7%) and reported being happy (79.6%)
- About motivations for volunteering, an altruistic aspect to the motivations of volunteers was seen: 100% indicated that they volunteer because they are concerned about the less fortunate; 98.8% reported that they volunteer because they feel that it is important to help others
- Nkundabana are highly committed to the continuation of the program and the vast majority reported that they will continue visit the OVCY that they mentor, even if the CARE Program stopped (98%). 92% reported that their associations are sustainable in their current form. However, many Nkundabana wish that they had more training to address the needs of OVCY
- Stakeholders are committed to sustainability, but lack of financial support will be a challenge
- The majority of surveyed Nkundabana said that COSMO helped local authorities address needs of youth (96%), but fewer (63%) reported that community members help them in their work as mentors

Sustainability of Nkundabana associations in three districts in the southern province of Rwanda

- Nkundabana and local leaders believed that the program targeted the most vulnerable children, but Nkundabana noted that they are many more vulnerable children who need to be enrolled
- The way in which Nkundabana were selected (by children themselves) ensured that the program would be implemented by Nkundabana without hesitation
- The program has been effective in meeting the basic needs of OVCYs: all stakeholders interviewed perceived the Nkundabana as proxy-parents that OVCY need foremost
- Nkundabana and local authorities perceive that COSMO has benefited participating OVCY by helping with their protection issues, removing them from isolation and helping them with education and decent housing
- The collaborative efforts between CARE and local leadership and the various trainings offered to Nkundabana and community leaders have helped to provide wholesome support to the OVCYs
- Nkundabana appreciated how partners brought different expertise to the program: legal assistance and protection from HAGURUKA and Helpful Active Listening from ARCT-RUHUKA
- It would be possible to sustain the Nkundabana model given the activities that have already been initiated by Nkundabana and community leaders.
- Even if Nkundabana will continue to provide care and support to OVCYs, they will miss material support that was provided by CARE if any other service provider can't help find them.

Project Closeout Activities and Hand over to Local Authorities

As it had been recommended by Project beneficiaries and local authorities, before the end of COSMO, the Project team organized hand-over events in all 26 sectors in which the Project was operating in. Those events aimed to report to communities the achievements of the Project, the needs of OVCs that were not addressed and to officially hand-over the beneficiaries, as well as the achievements to local authorities and communities. Those events were implemented in March 2010 in 26 sectors and were reported as a success, because beneficiaries, local authorities and other community members knew that they had to take-over and they reported to have been prepared enough. The package handed-over was made of:

1. A summary of the Project outputs per sector
2. The list of OVCs that participated in COSMO;
3. The list of all Nkundabana
4. The list of Nkundabana trained as trainers in psychosocial support
5. The list of OVC/Youth peer educators in HIV/AIDS and reproductive health

6. The list of OVCs who attended vocational training and apprenticeship;
7. The list of OVCs who still need legal assistance because the process was not closed before the end of the Project;
8. The list of OVCs and Nkundabana who received livestock as a revolving support.

Photos below illustrate some of the Project closeout public events that were facilitated by the Project team:



The COSMO Social worker in Musanze District presenting The Project achievements to the population in Musanze sector.



Philip Christensen, CARE Rwanda Country Director (on the right) handing over a certificate of appreciation to an Nkundabana in Musanze District, Cyuve sector.



A mood of party characterized the hand-over events

Conclusion

The Project achieved all planned activities and reached planned targets in general. Services given to OVC started bearing fruits in Musanze Districts. Children in vocational training/apprenticeship started earning money out of what they have learnt. Income from skills and from rabbits which started producing were used to pay health insurance, kitchen gardens reduced malnutrition and increased food security. Nkundabana and local authorities indicated that they will sustain the Nkundabana model as it became their own.

By the end of the Project, Nkundabana in Musanze District did not have sufficient competencies and skills to allow them to sustain care and support to OVC, like those from the Southern Province. This was even reflected in the Final Evaluation. Additional time for capacity building is necessary and CARE should look for additional funding.

2.2.1 Please list all contracts (works, supplies, services) above 5000€ awarded for the implementation of the action during the reporting period, giving for each contract the amount, the award procedure followed and the name of the contractor

The following contracts were awarded during the whole Project's life:

- The Namibian based company SIAPAC was contracted for the baseline and helping the team to develop the Project monitoring and evaluation plan. An official call for bid was launched and published in the Rwandan media as per CARE's internal procedures and in line with EC procurement rules. The terms of reference were also directly sent to various possibly interested consultancy firms with relevant expertise, including the Technical Assistance Fund (TAF) of UNAIDS. Three offers were received, the one from SIAPAC and two from Rwandan consultants. CARE's procurement committee sat and reviewed the three offers against the evaluation score card that had been prepared for that purpose. The two offers from Rwandan consultants were eliminated based on their poor technical quality, despite the fact that they were cheaper. Following TAF's approval to support this consultancy, CARE and SIAPAC slightly have revised the budget and Level of Effort to incorporate more support from SIAPAC for data entry, hence increasing the total budget of the consultancy from \$61,031 to \$69,149. However, thanks to the support from TAF, the maximum compensation that SIAPAC received from CARE became \$28,379, instead of \$61,031 as per the original contract. Since the consultancy included the ECD component and that ECD is funded by COVANCE, COSMO's budget covered a maximum of \$10,000, -. Money "saved" on the baseline will be reinvested in the Project final evaluation.
- The contract of 15,000 USD for technical assistance in conducting the COSMO Final evaluation was awarded to three independent consultants. The opportunity was advertised as follows: An official call for bid was launched and published in the Rwandan media as per CARE's internal procedures and in line with EC procurement rules. The terms of reference were also directly sent to various possibly interested consultancy firms with relevant expertise, including Tulane University. Five offers were received among them an international consultancy firm (SIAPAC). This offer was too expensive (Above \$60,000) and therefore rejected. The other two offers were appreciated but required to provide more additional information. They were also not retained as they presented a budget with indirect costs of over 20% making them expensive too. The consultancy has been reopened and only one offer of three independent consultants was appreciated. It was technically and financially viable. It has been necessary to make a sole source justification and get it approved by CARE before deciding to contract them.

2.3 Please provide an updated action plan ³

n/a

3. Partners and other Co-operation

3.1 How do you assess the relationship between the formal partners of this Action (i.e. those partners which have signed a partnership statement)? Please specify for each partner organization.

³ This plan will cover the financial period between the interim report and the next report.

Partnership with ARCT-RUHUKA

CARE worked with ARCT-Ruhuka since 2003 and it is a partner organization that has been highly committed to its scope of work in the Project, the communication was excellent and the budget utilization and reporting was good. ARCT-RUHUKA continues to prove that it is a partner of choice.

Partnership with HAGURUKA

The relationship with HAGURUKA was good as well. However, the change in staffing made HAGURUKA slow in reporting. CARE staff has planned a number of visits to HAGURUKA to remind them of the deadlines and making corrections of reports, especially financial one. .

All partners were actively involved in the start-up meetings for the NISU Project. The two organizations have already planned start-up activities for NISU (Nkundabana Initiative Scale-up) Project, another phase of Nkundabana program funded by the European Commission and whose purpose is to help local NGOs replicate the Nkundabana model. The two partners will continue to work with CARE to improve and to implement the Nkundabana model and at the same time, to provide technical support to other national and international NGOs to replicate the Nkundabana model in Rwanda as well as in the region.

3.2 How would you assess the relationship between your organization and State authorities in the Action countries? How has this relationship affected the Action?

The relationship with MIGEPROF improved over time. MIGEPROF was represented in planning NISU start-up activities and appreciated the fact that CARE will provide the ministry with a seconded staff to implement OVC related activities planned in its strategic action plan. MIGEPROF recognizes that CARE plays an important role in child protection.

3.3 Where applicable, describe your relationship with any other organizations involved in implementing the Action:

- Associate(s) (if any)
- Sub-contractor(s) (if any)
- Final Beneficiaries and Target groups: participation of Nkundabana and OVC in the review workshop of June 2009; participatory monitoring and evaluation of Project activities and regular field visits created strong relationship between COSMO staff and Nkundabana and OVC. They perceive COSMO as a unique Project, because it allows participation and has concrete plan that addresses the real need of beneficiaries.
- Other third parties involved.

Local authorities were also involved during the whole Project life. They appreciated the COSMO Project because it was implemented in a participatory manner; it was systematically planned and well organized. One Executive Secretary of CYUVE Sector from Musanze District testified that COSMO served as a role model and its strategies are a good example that will be recommended to other partners. He said: "COSMO taught us how to educate other organizations to better work for the population. We appreciated your systematic plans, your step by step implantation and how you involve every part in the cycle of the activities". Any support needed from local authorities was easily obtained by the Project when available. Hand-over events organized at the end of the roject were highly appreciated by Local authorities, because they were a sign of accountability and of good collaboration. One Sector Executive secretary in Musanze District revealed this: "If other Projects were implemented like COSMO, the poverty would quickly be reduced very soon.

3.4 Where applicable, outline any links you have developed with other actions

The COSMO Project is linked to the new NISU Project, a new CARE Project that is funded by the EC to scale-up the Nkundabana Model. NISU will inherit from COSMO materials and experience including a manual called the

Nkundabana toolkit that was developed as part of the COSMO Project will be used by the technical support unit to train partners in Nkundabana model. The Technical Support Unit is made of CARE, ARCT and Haguruka

3.5 If your organization has received previous EC grants in view of strengthening the same target group, in how far has this Action been able to build upon/complement the previous one(s)? (List all previous relevant EC grants).

Strategies applied in NIPS Project were used to implement COSMO activities and lessons learned helped improve some activities. Concrete examples include: The way the three Project partners now work together; the reduction of households that Nkundabana mentor, from 5 during NIPS, to 3 in COSMO; strengthening capacity of Nkundabana to better listen to the children, particularly those who are not the head of the households.

4. Visibility

How is the visibility of the EU contribution being ensured in the Action?

Caps, T-shirts, booklets and game cards with the EC logo were distributed to partners, Project staff and beneficiaries and are being used and serve as visibility materials. In addition, the Project conducted an inventory of service providers for the purpose of organizing a referral network of partners in OVC area in Musanze District. The information collected was put in a document that can be used by Nkundabana and by partners for referrals. This user-friendly document that carries the EC logo was disseminated in a workshop of stakeholders. The Nkundabana toolkit is another document developed with EC funds. This document was disseminated at the national level and at the international level it has the EC logo and acknowledgement. Six hundred hard copies of the toolkit were printed and are being disseminated countrywide. Electronic copies were sent to various country office of CARE and to other partners. Before the COSMO end date, beneficiaries' hand-over events were organized in all 26 sectors of the Project area. Banners that carried EC logo were used to publicize the events. In the same purpose of visibility and communication, media that include the Rwandan Television and Radio 10 were used to communicate the impact of COSMO. EC was all the time mentioned as funding agency.

The European Commission may wish to publicize the results of Actions. Do you have any objection to this report being published on EuropeAid Co-operation Office website? If so, please state your objections here.

No objection.

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