Evaluation of Zimbabwe NGO Food and Water Initiative
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Initiative Summary

Initiative Name	Zimbabwe NGO Food and Water Initiative		
AidWorks initiative number	INJI89		
Commencement date	June 2010	Completion date	October 2012
Total Australian $	$ 5 million		
Total other $	$ 0		
Delivery organisation(s)	Caritas Australia, Plan Australia, Save the Children Australia		
Implementing partner(s)	Plan Zimbabwe, Save the Children Zimbabwe, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Caritas Hwange, Caritas Harare, Caritas Chinhoyi		
Country/Region	Zimbabwe		
Primary sector	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Program		
Initiative objective/s	The Objectives of the Zimbabwe Food and Water Program were to: - Improve access to agricultural products and food security in rural areas. - Improve access to safe water, basic sanitation and hygiene, which accords with minimum UN standards. - Improve local capacity to construct maintain and repair water and sanitation infrastructure. - Improve opportunities for women, the disabled, and those with HIV to benefit equitably from project activities and be involved in project decision –making.		

Evaluation Summary

The $5 million AusAID Food and Water initiative was a Zimbabwe-specific NGO window that provided support to Australian–accredited NGOs (ANGOs) to undertake work in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and food security sectors between June 2010 and October 2012. The goal of the NGO Food and Water initiative was to improve food security and access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene in rural areas.

The ANGOs supported through the NGO Food and Water Initiative were:

- Save the Children, programming in Binga district, between 9 June 2010 and 31 October 2012
- Caritas, programming in Makonde and Sanyati districts in Mashonaland West and in Hwange district in Matabeleland North, between 24 June 2010 and 31 May 2012; and
- Plan, programming in Chiredzi district in Masvingo, between 1 July 2010 and 28 February 2012.

The independent evaluation of the Food and Water Initiative was carried out between August and November 2012 to provide an independent assessment of the performance of the three NGO projects and the extent to which the objectives of the Funding Window had been achieved.

The fieldwork carried out in Zimbabwe in August–September 2012 included observations, interviews, household visits, and focus group discussions with project staff, government representatives and community

members in project areas. Interviews were also held with AusAID in Harare (also Nairobi), AusAID partners in the WASH and Food Security sectors, including the WASH cluster coordinators (UNICEF and OXFAM), representatives from GRM International and Community Technology Development Trust (CTDT) (a partner of The Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific Ltd (AFAP) under AusAID regional NGO program – the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES). An NGO learning workshop involving all program partners was also held on 14 September 2012.

Evaluation Objective:

The main purpose of the evaluation was to provide an independent assessment of the outcomes of the three NGO projects and the extent to which the objectives of the NGO Funding Window have been achieved (against AusAID's standard evaluation criteria, including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, M&E and gender equality). The evaluation also verified information contained in the NGO Project Completion Reports.

The Evaluation also made recommendations for Australia's future engagement with ANGOs in Africa, looking closely at the appropriateness of engagement approaches with ANGOs within the context of Zimbabwe, particularly with the movement from humanitarian support to a protracted transition engagement. This assessment also assessed the relative merits of a standalone Zimbabwe NGO program and directing support to NGOs in Zimbabwe through a regional window, such as the AACES program.

Evaluation Completion Date: November 2012

Evaluation Team: Donna Clay; Independent Consultant; Africa Capacity Building Foundation Resource Facility Coordinator (Ernest Etti); Roselyn Kapungu and Dagobert Mureriwa (AusAID Evaluation Manager)

AusAID's response to the evaluation report:

General comments

- The independent Completion report meets AusAID quality criteria. Supported partners have agreed to have it published on the AusAID website. Presented findings were supported by evidence and the report sufficiently meets AusAID's quality requirements to close this activity.

- The evaluation of the Zimbabwe NGO Food and Water Initiative demonstrates that short-term NGO funding windows, if well-structured, can achieve results in a short period of time.

- However, such immediate outcomes depend upon a supportive operating environment, the capacity of NGOs, and other related factors.

- The operating environment for NGOs/CSO operations in Zimbabwe in the immediate future is uncertain and likely to be a difficult one. There are likely to be increased restrictions on CSOs in the lead-up to the next election.

- NGOs/CSOs operating in Zimbabwe will play an important role in the next few years to ensure the presence of a diversity of voices, approaches and expertise in programming and policy development in Zimbabwe, including for long-term sustainability even in sectors such as WASH and Food Security.

- Through periodic discussion meetings between Post and Australian-funded NGOs, AusAID will encourage CSO-initiated policy dialogue, and will facilitate ongoing cross-learning and independent engagement by partners on coordination of activities and sharing of results.

AusAID's response to the specific recommendations made in the report[1]

Recommendation	Response	Action	Responsibility
Effectiveness *Food security* • That AusAID and NGOs consider strengthening the emphasis on facilitating market development and access in future food security and livelihoods programs, ensuring adequate time and support for this element of the programming. • That NGOs ensure a focus on environmental appropriateness and quality issues in crop and livestock project activities. • That NGOs ensure project activities are implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner, and ensure staff have skills in conflict prevention and reduction. • That NGOs maintain coordination and clear communication with all stakeholders, including the establishment or participation in new (or existing) coordination structures to facilitate this.	**Agree** AusAID provided $20 million to the Protracted Relief Program (PRP), a four year, agricultural assistance program that provided poor farmers with agricultural inputs through market-based measures, such as provision of vouchers for inputs. The successor program to PRP – focused on agricultural market development – is currently being planned, for commencement in 2014.	Recommendations to be included in upcoming Agriculture and Food Security Program Designs	Agriculture and Food Security Senior Program Manager
WASH • That NGOS and AusAID strengthen the focus on hygiene within water, sanitation and hygiene programming[2]. • That NGOs and AusAID explore more affordable WASH technologies being piloted for use in Zimbabwe (e.g. the Zimbabwe Communities Approach to Total Sanitation (ZIMCATS) and upgradeable latrines). • That NGOs and AusAID explore other, potentially more effective approaches in hygiene promotion and creation of demand for sanitation. • That NGOs consider how they might participate in supporting the development and strengthening of supply chains for water and sanitation materials.	**Agree** AusAID through the WASH cluster has encouraged NGOS to strengthen participatory health and hygiene approaches (rural and urban). The Protracted Relief Participatory Health and Hygiene Index as a tool to track participatory health and hygiene education impact has been adopted by a number of WASH partners. AusAID supported the pilot for the ZIMCATS and upgradable latrine pilot in two districts. The pilot results have since been approved by Government and being scaled up by UNICEF through the DFID-led rural WASH national program. The same program is supporting revival of rural businesses to support distribution of WASH rural infrastructure spare parts.	AusAID will continue to advocate for utilisation of site specific low cost appropriate WASH technologies.	WASH Senior Program Manager and Program Manager

Recommendation	Response	Action	Responsibility
Gender, Disability and HIV and AIDS • That NGOs consider collaborations and partnerships with specialist organisations for targeted work aimed at improving opportunities for women, the disabled, and those living with HIV and AIDS to benefit equitably from WASH and food security projects, and to be involved in project decision-making. • That NGOs ensure adequate collection of data and analysis, sufficient to inform an understanding of the needs, priorities, experiences, levels of participation and differential impacts of projects on women and men, people with disabilities and people living with HIV and AIDS. • That NGOs facilitate specific and effective mechanisms for engagement and participation by women, people with disabilities and people living with HIV and AIDS in all stages of the project cycle.	**Agree** AusAID NGO funding windows have increasingly emphasised learning and information sharing activities. Best practices on mainstreaming gender and disability are routinely discussed at Africa Australia Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) regional meetings which bring together AACES-supported NGOs working in Zimbabwe with those working in other countries in the region.	AusAID will encourage information sharing among NGOs through periodic meetings with NGOs supported under different funding windows. AusAID will present report findings at the 2013 meeting with Zimbabwe NGOs, and make the report available to NGOs via the AACES and ANCP networks.	
Efficiency • That NGOs seek to ensure project design is realistic, reflects adequate organisational capacity, with sufficient staffing and resources to deliver the project with the requisite timeframe. • That AusAID overtly assess the question of whether the project design is realistic and achievable when appraising project proposals, as part of discussions of 'capacity to deliver'. • That, where circumstances allow, AusAID consider a longer design or inception phase for programs, to assist in stronger engagement with stakeholders in project development, and deeper testing of project design with the reality on the ground in Zimbabwe. • That, if AusAID require a Value for Money analysis of this program, this be done when financial information becomes available with the remaining completion report in December 2012. Any Value for Money analysis should adopt a methodology and analytical framework that acknowledges the differences in project activities and delivery mechanisms within this Initiative.	**Agree** AusAID now considers an inception or diagnostic phase for all NGO programs. The inception phase for new initiatives such as the CSO WASH Fund has been used to inform long term programming. AusAID is now providing multiyear funding.	AusAID will encourage information sharing among NGOs through periodic meetings with NGOs supported under different funding windows. AusAID will present report findings at the 2013 meeting with Zimbabwe NGOs, and make the report available to NGOs via the AACES and ANCP networks.	Agriculture and Food Security Senior Program Manager. and WASH Senior Program Manager and Program Manager

Recommendation	Response	Action	Responsibility
Sustainability *Food security* • That NGOs ensure adequate staffing, time and other resources are allocated to enable sufficient support and accompaniment for market-oriented livelihoods approaches. • That NGOs maintain and strengthen a focus on quality and environmental appropriateness in crop and livestock project activities. • That NGOs provide sufficient support and time for the development of effective governance systems for groups. • That NGOs ensure project activities are implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner, and ensure staff have skills in conflict prevention and reduction. • That NGOs continue to implement projects which are consistent with government district development plans, and in coordination with relevant government departments and staff, while also looking at ways in opportunities for engaging in program and policy dialogue with government at various levels. • That NGOs maintain a focus on establishing and strengthening community based support and advice networks. *WASH* • That NGOs and AusAID explore more affordable technologies being piloted for use in Zimbabwe (e.g. ZIMCATS and upgradeable latrines). • That NGOs and AusAID explore other, potentially more effective approaches in hygiene promotion and creation of demand for sanitation. • That NGOs consider how they might participate in supporting the development and strengthening of supply chains for water and sanitation materials. • That NGOs consider integrating livelihoods components more tightly with WASH program components to support investment in WASH infrastructure and items. *Gender, Disability and HIV and AIDS* • That NGOs consider collaborations and partnerships with specialist organisations to ensure the integration of project activities with ongoing longer-term and multi-level specialist programs.	**Agree** AusAID has shared the evaluation report with partner NGOs and encouraged them to take note of evaluation recommendations in future programming.	AusAID will encourage information sharing among NGOs through periodic meetings with NGOs supported under different funding windows. AusAID will present report findings at the 2013 meeting with Zimbabwe NGOs, and make the report available to NGOs via the AACES and ANCP networks.	Agriculture and Food Security Senior Program Manager. WASH Senior Program Manager and Program Manager

Recommendation	Response	Action	Responsibility
Gender Equality • That NGOs consistently disaggregate project data by gender. • That NGOs ensure this data informs a gender analysis of differential circumstances, roles, needs, priorities and program impacts by gender. • That NGOs ensure gender roles and relations are taken into consideration in the design of initiatives, to ensure substantive equality of opportunities for women (rather than formal equality). • That NGOs apply specific strategies to engage women as well as men, hear their perspectives and understand their different needs, priorities and experiences, and enable their effective participation in consultation and decision-making throughout the project cycle, ensuring the allocation of adequate time, resources and expertise for this. • That NGOs consider ways to engage men in order to influence attitudes and behaviours, and engage men as allies for the promotion of gender equality. • That NGOs consider developing linkages with organisations undertaking program and advocacy work on gender where gender expertise is required.	**Agree** AusAID has shared the evaluation report with partner NGOs and encouraged them to take note of evaluation recommendations in future programming. AusAID will present the report's findings at an NGO meeting with all our ANCP, AACES and other NGO partners to take place in Harare in late 2013. The report will be made available to NGOs more broadly via network the AACES and ANCP networks.	AusAID will encourage information sharing among NGOs through periodic meetings with NGOs supported under different funding windows. AusAID will present report findings at the 2013 meeting with Zimbabwe NGOs, and make the report available to NGOs via the AACES and ANCP networks.	Agriculture and Food Security Senior Program Manager. and WASH Senior Program Manager and Program Manager
Monitoring and Evaluation • That NGOs more consistently include and report on outcome indicators and targets in monitoring and reporting. • That NGOs reflect WASH service standards in indicators and targets, where relevant. • That NGOs consistently disaggregate data by gender and other relevant axes of potential vulnerability. • That NGOs consider the adoption of specific strategies to engage with and hear the perspectives and experiences of marginalised groups through the program cycle (including in monitoring and evaluation), and that AusAID and NGOs recognise that this may require additional time and resources. • That AusAID consider the development of program level indicators against which the success of the program as a whole could be more clearly assessed. • That AusAID clarify the roles, responsibilities, authorities and resources available for its monitoring and evaluation of programs, including program and financial monitoring, and information management. • That AusAID include a learning component in future funding programs, to draw lessons from the program and to share expertise between NGOs, and between NGOs and AusAID.	**Agree** Partners have been encouraged to conduct social baselines to put in place strategies that capture cross cutting issues program impacts AusAID has just finalised M&E review for both WASH and Food security sectors. AusAID Zimbabwe is developing standardised indicators across the food security and WASH sector programs. Over the next year, the Zimbabwe program will put in place a program level performance assessment framework, which will be negotiated with partners and against which partners will report. Learning and information management components are included in both the AACES and CS WASH fund. Biannual learning events provide opportunities to share lessons from across African NGO programs.	AusAID will encourage information sharing among NGOs through periodic meetings with NGOs supported under different funding windows. AusAID will present report findings at the 2013 meeting with Zimbabwe NGOs, and make the report available to NGOs via the AACES and ANCP networks.	Agriculture and Food Security Senior Program Manager. and WASH Senior Program Manager and Program Manager

Recommendation	Response	Action	Responsibility
AusAID Management of the NGO Food and Water Initiative • That AusAID clarifies issues around roles, responsibilities, authorities, and resourcing for program management between posts and Canberra in future funding windows. • That AusAID identify and take advantage of opportunities provided through program funding to collaborate with experienced NGOs and draw on their analysis and relevant expertise for policy and program development.	**Agree** Discussions have been held to clarify that responsibility for program management sits with Harare Post. AusAID convenes a WASH sector group, which includes all NGOs delivering activities through AusAID funding. The WASH group is a forum designed to allow sharing of lessons between NGOs and AusAID. Lessons, particularly around delivering 'soft' hygiene skills through NGO partners have been integrated into AusAID's WASH infrastructure programs.	AusAID will encourage information sharing among NGOs through periodic meetings with NGOs supported under different funding windows. AusAID will present report findings at the 2013 meeting with Zimbabwe NGOs, and make the report available to NGOs via the AACES and ANCP networks.	Harare Post, Desk and Canberra NGO section
Programming in transitional contexts • That AusAID consider the funding of another Zimbabwe NGO Funding Window of at least three years duration. The Zimbabwe NGO Funding Window provides unique opportunities to harness the expertise and support the enabling environment for civil society organisations in the critical next few years in Zimbabwe. While some evaluation ratings indicate less than satisfactory performance in some areas, future programs will be strengthened by application of the recommendations of this report and lessons generated through this program.	**Disagree** Although acknowledging the critical role NGOs play, and have played in Zimbabwe's transitional environment, AusAID has undergone a strategic analysis of how it delivers aid in Zimbabwe, and will focus support through a few existing partners delivering large, multi-year programs. This does not exclude NGO partners, but instead integrates them into larger partnerships with Germany's GIZ and UNICEF to deliver activities in areas where they have comparative expertise, including hygiene education. AusAID will also fund NGO activities in Zimbabwe through centrally-managed NGO funds, including AACES and the Civil Society WASH fund – these multi-country NGO programs recognise that lessons are best shared by NGOs internationally and regionally, and that there are economies of scale in managing NGO activities.	Nil	Harare Post, Desk and Canberra NGO section

Recommendation	Response	Action	Responsibility
• That AusAID consider longer funding timeframes for 'humanitarian plus' funding windows, allowing some flexibility for changing and unpredictable contexts.	**Agree** AusAID does recognise the need for longer timeframes for humanitarian plus activities. In WASH, AusAID is funding a 3-year $25 million activity through GIZ and a 3-year $30 million activity through UNICEF. Both are aimed at early recovery of urban water systems. In food security, AusAID is involved in the design of a major multi-year program aimed at recovery of rural food and agricultural input markets.	No further action required	

---

[1] The majority of the recommendations made in this report are for the consideration and action of the NGOs that implemented the program. These NGOs have been provided with a copy of the report and it has been distributed within AusAID to ensure the recommendations can be considered in the design of future AusAID-funded investments.

[2] This suggests a need for improved analysis, efforts and approaches in hygiene promotion, aimed at strong community mobilisation, shifting social norms in relation to hygiene behaviours, and the potential addressing of any practical impediments to behaviour.