

GOOD PRACTICES 6

Magazine for capitalising good practice on human rights, gender, community research and community systems strengthening issues

Half-yearly N° 00006 December 2023



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Best Practices
for Sustainable
Impact**

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Promoting Best Practices for Sustainable Impact

Dear Readers,
It is with great pleasure that we present the sixth and final publication of the bi-annual magazine GOOD PRACTICES, part of the AZIMA project. Over the years, we've explored various initiatives and advances in the field of health, focusing on best practises aimed at improving the lives of the most vulnerable communities.

In this special edition, we present a selection of articles that illustrate the importance of integrating human rights and gender into the drafting of the Global Fund GC7 financing concept note and the capacity building of key actors in the fight against illicit drugs.

In addition, this edition highlights the achievements of two (02) projects that are at the end of their cycle: the AZIMA project on its contribution to strengthening the community system, and

NFM3 on the significant progress made in the fight against HIV/AIDS thanks to the support of the Global Fund. All of this progress is evidence of the ongoing efforts to promote sustainable health for all.

Through these articles, we aim to highlight the importance of best practices and community involvement in promoting sustainable impact. The initiatives featured in this edition showcase the positive results that can be achieved when human rights, gender, community research, and capacity building are holistically integrated into development projects.

We hope this latest edition of GOOD PRACTICES will inspire you to continue your own efforts to promote good practice and build a more equitable, healthier future for all.

Enjoy the reading!

The editorial team

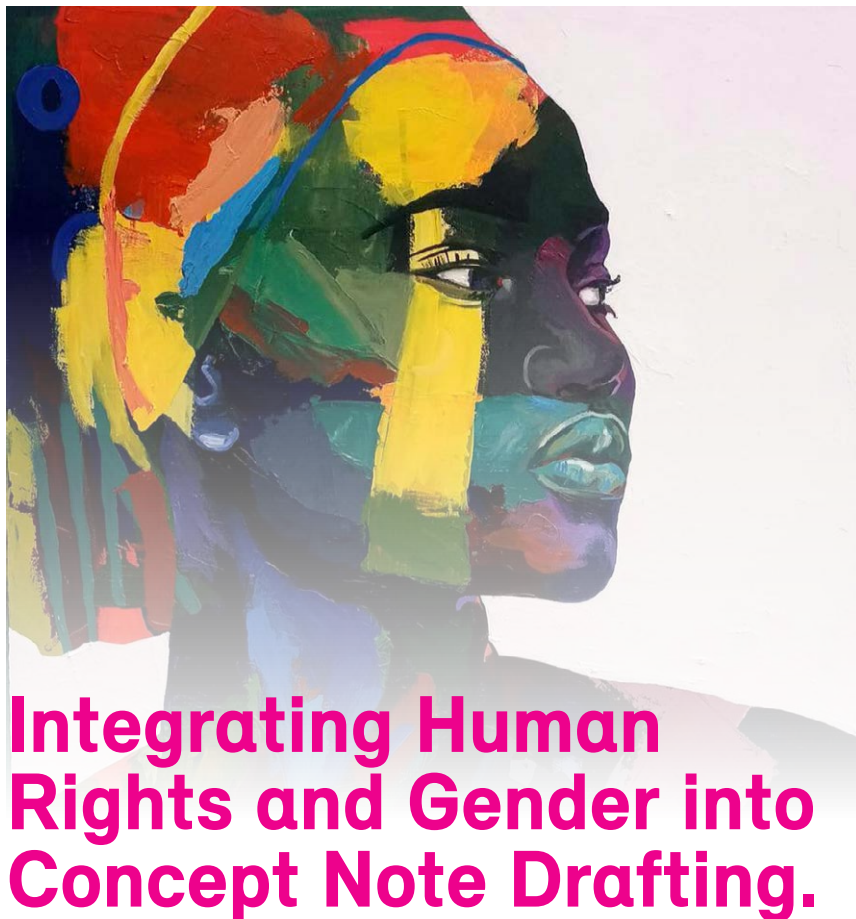
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Integrating Human Rights and Gender into Concept Note Drafting.

Developing a concept note is a key step in the process of applying for funding from the Global Fund. There is now recognition that the integration of human rights and gender in all their dimensions is essential at this stage to ensure equitable, inclusive, and fundamental rights-respecting health programmes.

The right to health is a human right that implies access to quality care for the entire population without discrimination. Incorporating a human rights-based approach into the development of the concept note ensures access to health care for all, without discrimination or stigmatization. This means recognizing and respecting the rights of key populations and vulnerable groups, who are often the most affected.

Similarly, integrating a gender perspective into the development of the concept note is essential to address the specific needs of different gender constituencies. This includes understanding gender inequalities in access to health care, identifying barriers to gender and sexual equality, and proposing appropriate interventions to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.

The thematic workshops organized by civil society during the country dialogue for Global Fund GC7 funding provided an opportunity to gather the needs and priorities of key populations and vulnerable groups. These exchanges highlighted the importance of human rights and gender in country proposals.

Within the framework of the NFM3, specific policies and programs have been developed to

eliminate discrimination and gender-based violence (health sector strategy, national strategic plan, etc.) and to ensure equitable access to health care for all, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. In addition, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that health programmes respect human rights and gender equality.

This includes the collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data, the training of health workers on gender and human rights issues, and the implementation of accountability measures to combat discrimination and rights violations. This has made it possible to implement more specific interventions aimed at targeted populations, regardless of their gender or risk practices (TS/CTS, MSM, TG, UD/UDI...etc).

Thus, integrating human rights and gender into the design of the concept note has a number of advantages. First, it ensures that health programs are more effective and more responsive to community needs. By taking into account the specific realities of key populations and addressing gender inequalities, it is possible to promote better use of resources and achieve more sustainable results.

However, this integration also poses a number of challenges, including cultural or political resistance to addressing sensitive human rights and gender issues; the difficulty of collecting disaggregated data; and the establishment of appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to measure the impact of programs on human rights and gender equality.

*Dr. SOKA Armelle
ICN Ethics Manager / ICN Country
Dialogue Advisor.*



The AZIMA Project: Strengthening Community Systems for Sustainable Impact

Funded by AIDS and Rights for Southern Africa (ARASA) and implemented by the NGO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION (ACT) in Cameroon, one of the objectives of the AZIMA project is to strengthen community systems for sustainable development. Indeed, strengthening community systems is essential to promoting sustainable development. By actively involving communities in the design and implementation of projects, it is possible to respond more effectively and appropriately to local needs and create resilient systems.

The approach adopted was participatory, consulting with community members through discussion forums and the establishment of a task force to identify their needs, priorities and capacities, and to ensure that these were reflected in the GC7 funding application. Through these initiatives, communities were encouraged to play an active role in planning and implementing the interventions that will underpin GC7. In addition, the project focused on building the capacity of community actors through training on leadership, project

management, community mobilization and advocacy.

As a result, communities were better informed and involved in national strategies to fight HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Community actors have acquired essential skills to support and promote public health at the local level. In addition, the project has contributed to the emergence of sustainable practices by strengthening the capacity of communities to generate and use data to monitor program coverage and quality and to advocate for programmatic interventions.

In conclusion, the AZIMA project has demonstrated the importance of strengthening community systems for sustainable impact. By involving communities in decision-making processes and building the capacity of local actors, it is possible to create resilient systems that meet the needs of the most vulnerable populations and contribute to sustainable development.

*Montserrat MFOULOU
Communication manager*

Achievements and Challenges of the NFM3 in Cameroon, Towards Sustainable Health for All

The Global Fund NFM3 in Cameroon has made significant progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Major investments have been made to strengthen health systems, improve access to testing and treatment services, and promote awareness and prevention.

With regard to HIV, the results of awareness-raising activities for

MSM, TG, DU/IDU, with a total of 21,214 men who have sex with men (MSM), 703 transgender people (TG), 15,698 drug users (DU) and 2,637 injecting drug users (IDU) sensitized and educated between 01 January 2021 and 30 September 2023.

In terms of screening, various strategies were implemented, such as voluntary screening campaigns, screening in reception centers and health facilities, screening of index cases and HIV self-testing. Through these different strategies, a total of 22,138 MSM, 740 TG, 15,698 DU and 2,637 IDU have been screened. Of those screened to date, 1,000 MSM, 65 TG, 318 DU and 103 IDU have tested positive, resulting in seropositivity rates of 4.5% for MSM, 8.78% for TG, 2.03% for DU and 3.9% for IDU.

The project has also implemented treatment linkage strategies, particularly through psychosocial workers in partner health facilities and peer navigators. Through these strategies, 947 MSM, 61 TG, 315 DU and 95 IDU were linked to antiretroviral (ARV) treatment. Despite operational challenges, 95% of people who tested positive for HIV were linked to treatment.

However, the treatment linkage strategy needs to be strengthened.

With regard to the care and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), the project implemented syndromic diagnosis activities and the distribution of STI kits. A total of 1,793 MSM, 64 TG, 926 DU and 257 IDU were identified as STI cases, demonstrating the importance of these preventive measures.

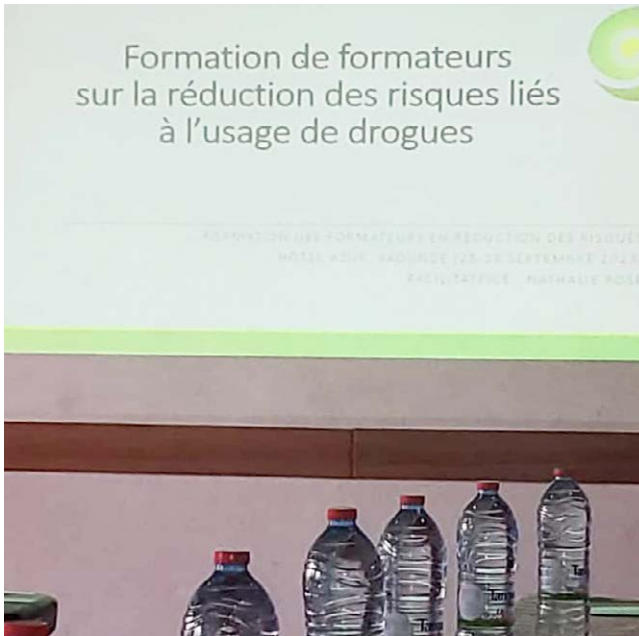
Despite the progress made, challenges remain in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Cameroon for the MSM, TG and IDU targets. Barriers such as lack of financial resources, inadequate health infrastructure and socio-economic disparities continue to limit the effectiveness of interventions and access to quality health care for key populations and the most vulnerable groups.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on efforts to control these diseases in Cameroon. Resources and attention have been diverted to managing the health crisis, resulting in disruptions in the overall provision of essential health services, particularly for MSM, TG and DU/IDU.

To achieve sustainable health for all, it is essential to strengthen partnerships between governments, international organizations, civil society actors and communities. Continued investment in health systems, training of health workers and the search for innovative solutions are also needed.

*Jacques OMBILITEK
National Coordinator Global Fund Project
For MSM, TG, DU/IDU targets.*





ners workshop to provide the knowledge and skills needed to implement effective harm reduction approaches. This initiative is an important contribution to the empowerment of key actors in the fight against drugs. For each of them, this training was crucial in guiding their various initiatives and actions.

For civil society organizations, the work enabled them to build their capacity in the field of drug-related harm reduction and to strengthen their expertise in implementing effective programs and interventions. Participants acquired in-depth knowledge of harm reduction strategies, best practices and evidence-based approaches. As a result of the training, civil society organizations are better equipped to provide quality services tailored to the needs of people who use drugs.

For health workers, the training helped to strengthen their skills in managing drug users and promoting harm reduction. Participants were trained in counseling techniques, screening tests, overdose management and prescribing opiate substitution treatment. By building the capacity of health workers, CARE and ACT have helped improve the quality of health services for people who use drugs.

For drug committee leaders, the workshop raised awareness of harm reduction approaches among decision-makers and empowered them to plan and implement more effective policies and programs. As a result, drug committee leaders gained a better understanding of the issues surrounding drug use and innovative harm reduction approaches.

Stéphan TIECK
Project Manager

CARE and ACT strengthen the skills of key actors in the fight against illicit drugs

As part of their commitment to reducing the risks associated with drug use, CARE and the NGO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION (ACT), with support from Fhi360, have played a crucial role in building the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs), health workers and officials from the National Anti-Drug Committee. Their efforts focused on conducting a training of train-

