

Community Involvement Working Group – Meeting Minutes from Friday 2nd September 2011

Attendees:

David Rugaaju (Chair of working group- Concern), John Mugabo (MVP), Origene Rutayisire (CRS), Jeffery Komant (Wellspring, RENCPCo-Chair), Kirsten Lake (Wellspring)

Venue: Wellspring Office

<p>1. Introductions and updates on organisational interventions</p>	<p>David shared about Concern’s intervention with PTCs in Huye and other Districts (3 others where they work with 25% of the sectors). Explaining that saturation is taking place in Huye (all 14 sectors) and that it is here that they have been working with SEOs who have been in place for a sometime. It is in this District that they have begun ‘Sector PTCs’ (established in June 2011) to help unify the voice of different PTCs from different schools- to feed into the District reporting structure. These Sector PTCs will also serve to hold the school PTCs accountable in their role and responsibilities. These PTCs have been involved in identifying the poorest children and then assisting them to try and address the problem of ‘drop-outs’ due to poverty. They have been developing different income generating projects and Concern has also helped with some funding/financial support.</p> <p>The manual (approved by the textbook approval committee- MINEDUC, March 2009) has already been shared with RENCPCo members and is awaiting final approval/launching from the Ministry of Education. (Concern’s booklet on PTCs has been shared with RENCPCo members and some have been involved in its use; Wellspring, VSO, Action Aid, ADRA, WorldVision, Care). MINEDUC have also used this manual to train 3 trainers from the Northern and Southern Provinces to facilitate PTCs there.</p> <p>John shared about the education side of MVPs vision to portray the Millennium Development Goals in action in Bugasera (working in 5 Primary Schools and 1 Secondary School). They have specifically been training PTCs on their role and responsibilities using the Concern Manual. This has involved the DEO. They are facing the challenge now that these PTCs have been empowered and know what to do but they are still not being effective. They especially ineffective when there are challenges in the relationship with the school’s Head Teacher. MVP works closely with the ‘group leader representative for development’ at the village level. They are about to launch a ‘community mobilisation team’ – ‘community education workers’- using volunteers to try and sensitise and mobilise educational activities. This is part of their educational campaign to address issues and discuss how to make PTCs more effective.</p> <p>John requested ideas from the group on names/titles for their ‘community education workers’ – pleased email ideas or suggestions directly to him.</p> <p>Origene from CRS shared that they have been involved in school based projects which require community mobilisation. Communities have developed small projects including small income generating activities. The income from these IGAs is used to support schools and OVCs. PTCs they have been working with have instigated ‘drop-out prevention teams’ to help address the challenge of school drop outs. A ‘tool kit’ for use by PTCs in this area will be developed. In one example it has been seen that 30 children have returned to school due to this initiative/focus. CRS recognise that PTCs are a key force for addressing this issue and indeed other school / community challenges.</p> <p>Origene shared a little more about their other educational programs and specifically their</p>
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	<p>involvement in Teacher training/education. CRS have been encouraged to be an active member of the Teacher Development working group.</p> <p>Kirsten and Jeff shared about Wellspring. Wellspring’s approach to PTCs is not directly related to their roles and responsibilities but rather using them as a way to equip and sensitise the parents at the school. Wellspring trains the PTC leaders in various units ‘Parent-Teacher Relationships’, ‘Foundation of Good Parenting’ and ‘Family Relationships’ and then trains and supports these PTC members to deliver these units to all the parents in their school community. It is an intervention designed to support the community and equip them to be more proactive in their child’s education and schooling. It is seeking to bring some heart and perspective changes to the school community. We have also provided leadership training for the lead PTC member in each school to help facilitate the working relationship between the school leadership and the PTC. Wellspring has shared the donated manuals from Concern with each PTC and Wellspring trainers have spent a little time on what the manual includes and its implications. However it has not, thus far, been a focus of Wellspring to equip PTCs in their specific roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Through this sharing it became clear that there are some common challenges:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The effectiveness of PTCs. Even when they are in place they are not necessarily doing what is expected. 2) The role of PTCs. With the growth of Primary into 9YBE schools and the vision for ECD and 12 YBE PTC’s roles and responsibilities are becoming greater and there can be some confusion and challenges within this growth.
<p>2. Recap of activities (included in update above)</p>	<p>i) Visit to Huye to observe Concern’s program</p> <p>ii) Visit to MVP to observe community involvement (the way forward) and sharing ideas and suggestions</p> <p>These were opportunities to share experiences.</p>
<p>3. Action for CIG</p>	<p>i) To connect with and try to encourage participation from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSO • ADRA • Action Aid • WorldVision • Care <p>in the CIG working group and to clarify their interventions in the area of PTCs/community involvement. This would then feed into a mapping activity of Community Involvement initiatives across the country. Thus providing the RENCP with a comprehensive understanding/awareness of the scale and depth of different interventions to inform information/experience and skill sharing.</p> <p>ACTION BY: David Rugaaju, chair of CIG working group</p> <p>ii) Concept paper to be written for the CIG followed by the mapping activity</p>

	<p>ACTION BY: David Rugaaju, chair of CIG working group</p> <p>iii) Updating of email list and contacts (especially in view of first action point)</p> <p>ACTION BY: David Rugaaju, chair of CIG working group</p> <p>iii) Promotion of ‘consistency of practise’ among PTCs in Rwanda. Sharing and skills sharing to ensure that partners know the expected guidelines and standards to ensure consistent good practise.</p> <p>ACTION: TBD</p> <p>iv) Action point (iii) should potentially include training from Concern for other partners working in this area to support and strengthen PTC involvement.</p> <p>ACTION: TBD</p> <p>v) Contact to be made with VVOB to follow up the official approval and release of the PTC manual.</p> <p>ACTION BY: David Rugaaju</p>
<p>4. CIG Priorities/ Recommendations for the JRES</p>	<p>i) There needs to be consistency among PTCs and their engagement with school communities across Rwanda. This is to ensure that PTCs are being effective and working to expectations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend the official approval and release of the manual by MINEDUC. • Stronger/better links between education stakeholders so expectations and performance are clear (SEOs, PTCs, HTs, Inspectors, DEOs). • Expectations of PTCs to be made clear with the introduction of ECD and 12 YBE. Is it one PTC for the ECD right through 12 YBE? CIG recommends that ECD in particular needs a separate PTC/community involvement plan. There are also different needs in Primary and Secondary but these PTCs could remain as one but be enlarged with certain members focused either on Primary or Secondary. <p>ii) To use the recent or incoming SEOs to help to strengthen and bring accountability to PTCs.</p> <p>iii) Parents have concerns about the performance and accountability of teachers. A recommendation is that SEOs are used to help ensure accountability of all staff at the school level and thus bring assurance and greater confidence to the parent community.</p>