



NDA

National
Development
Agency



MATOME CRECHE AND KGALUSHI DROP-IN CENTRE

CLOSE OUT EVALUATION REPORT

MARCH 2014



MATOME CRECHE AND KGALUSHI DROP-IN-CENTRE

LIMPOPO PROVINCE

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

BY



March 2014

PART A
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. BACKGROUND

Matome Pre-school and Crèche was established in 2005 by the women of Simpson (Ga-Ramaswikana) who felt the need to have a good early childhood learning centre within their village. Kgalushi Drop-in- Centre was established in 2006 and serves 147 orphans. The drop in centre is constituted by 15 members who assist in the provision of food to the orphans on a daily basis. The centre is also located at Simpson, also called Ga- Ramaswikana

The Minister of Social Development established a programme called “Taking DSD to the Community”. These two centres were identified through this programme at Simpson (Ga-Ramaswikana). A profiling was conducted by the Department of Social Development, SASSA and the NDA. The profiling has revealed that there is one crèche and one drop in centre in the area. Both are poorly equipped and under resourced. The two centres share a yard and are adjacent to a primary school.

2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this evaluation was to:

- 2.1 provide a comprehensive performance overview of the entire project;
- 2.2 highlight the lessons learned so that the conclusions and recommendations arrived at can assist the organization in moving forward and be sustainable; and
- 2.3 highlight project alignment with the municipality IDPs and relevant government sector Department’s programmes.

3. METHOD / APPROACH

The evaluation involved a review of the project documentation, field visits and structured interviews with the relevant project stakeholders. These included the following:

- In-depth literature review of the documentation detailing the project, with a focus on the specific objectives of the project;
- Conducting interviews with the NDA Development Managers of the project, project staff involved in the project, etc;
- Review of the evaluation outputs and evidence of each stated objective in the project documents in order to determine the outputs and outcomes;
- Conducting records and documents reviews on planning, reporting and outputs achieved during the life cycle of the project;
- Review management structure / systems both administrative, financial and human resources, to ascertain the programme's viability and sustainability after cessation of funding from the NDA.

4. KEY FINDINGS

Skills transfer has so far been offered in good governance and financial management only. Four members of the board and management committee of both the Matome Pre-School and Crèche and Kgalushi Drop-in-Centre attended this training. Further training is still to be undertaken, for the staff, in Project Management, Conflict Management, Child Care, First Aid, Food Preparation and Vegetable Production.

The creation of a more suitable environment for activities that stimulate language, learning and creativity among the children is linked to the completion of the new and more suitable teaching centre. Once the fittings on this structure are completed, this objective will be achieved.

Several of the specific objectives of the project have not yet been achieved as many of the activities that were to be implemented pursuant to these objectives have not yet been implemented. These include, the vegetable garden and the procurement of toys and educational materials.

The infrastructure development process, which involves construction of the multipurpose centre, drilling of boreholes, installation of ablution facilities, installation of septic tanks, and fencing of the site is 99% complete.

5. KEY LESSONS

- It is important that there should be a detailed discussion of specifications for buildings constructed through project funding, as changes effected after the fact create unexpected expenditure which lead to unplanned alterations to the project implementation process. For example, zink doors were procured and installed in the building which now the project implementers are learning have to be replaced with wooden doors. This scenario could easily be avoided through a periodic discussion of the bill of quantities by the service provider, the funder and the recipient.
- The use of local service providers for the construction of the centre is commendable. The focus on utilizing local people for the infrastructure development activities of the project has resulted in a total of 72 job opportunities being created.
- Matome Pre-School and Crèche and Kgalushi Drop-in-Centre have been quite effective in harnessing political support at provincial and national government level, as well as financial and non-financial support.

6. CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS

- The extension of the project end date, due to delays experienced in the construction, has meant that those activities associated with the completed centre (such as the purchase and delivery of the children's toys and educational materials) as well as those associated with the other infrastructure such as the boreholes, septic tanks, (for example the vegetable gardens) had to be stayed until the construction and installations are completed. This meant that the objectives intended to be achieved through the implementation of these activities would not be achieved by the original project end date.
- At the moment the two clear avenues for the projects to generate own incomes are fees and subsidies. Methods for collection of fees from parents of the children attending the Pre-School and Crèche will have to be improved upon. Ensuring that the necessary steps are

taken to secure subsidies for each qualifying child is important and urgent. Cost cutting measures should also be explored over and above the vegetable gardens. A formal, structured plan to attain financial sustainability over a period of time is important. However in the immediate term, the above steps should be implemented for sustained income generation.

- This intervention has had the positive effect of giving and serving as inspiration for the community. The Drop-in-Centre and the Crèche and Pre-School are the only early childhood development programmes in the community. The fact that these have received this much attention and support gives the community a positive outlook on the future prospects of the centre. There is a need for introduction of methods for monitoring the efficiency and periodically evaluating the effectiveness of the ongoing activities of both the Crèche and Pre-School and Drop-in-Centre at an organizational level.
- Apart from the slight delays at the beginning of the project, the Matome Pre-School and Crèche and Kgalushi Drop-in-Centre intervention is on course towards achievement of the project objectives.

PART B
CLOSE-OUT EVALUATION REPORT

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1. BACKGROUND

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The Minister of Social Development established a programme called “Taking DSD to the Community”. These two centres were identified through this programme at Simpson (Ga-Ramaswikana). A profiling was conducted by the Department of Social Development, SASSA and the NDA. The profiling has revealed that there is one crèche and one drop in centre in the area. Both are poorly equipped and under resourced. The two centres share a yard and are adjacent to a primary school.

The crèche has been providing early childhood learning to children from the surrounding village for the last 7 years. They currently have 80 children between the ages of 0-5 at the creche. At the moment there are two practitioners, one cleaner, one gardener and a cook who prepare meals for all the children. The practitioners were provided with training conducted by the Department of Education. Both practitioners have level 3; however, there is a need for further training. The centre offers voluntary services to community members when need arises.

The Drop in centre has been providing food for the orphans for the last 6 years. The centre ensures that each child is provided with a balanced meal on a daily basis. They also provide counseling, life skills education and assist orphans and vulnerable children with homework. They ensure that the children’s clothes including their school uniform are clean.

There is a need for a proper infrastructure to accommodate and take care of the children whose parents are at learning institutions and those who are working. There is also a need for the provision of water. There is water scarcity in the area. The community members rely on one borehole, a dam and two tanks provided by the municipality. There is no proper fencing of the site, hence the members are unable to engage in the food security programme. They are using

pit latrines (toilets) which are not in good condition. There is no clinic in the village and the community members travel more than twenty kilometers to access health facilities. They rely on a mobile clinic which visits the village once in two months. The availability of a proper infrastructure will also assist children to have access to first aid medication.

Overall objective of the programme

The overall objective of the project is to establish a Day Care Centre that will provide Early Childhood Development and serve as a Drop-in-Centre.

Specific objectives of the programme

The project aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

- I. Increased access to quality education and proper care for 259 children, orphans and vulnerable children in the community.
- II. Capacitated practitioners, gardeners and cooks including the volunteers.
- III. A well balanced meal for the children, orphans and vulnerable youth on a daily basis.
- IV. A well established temporary medical centre for children.
- V. Employment opportunities for community members created.
- VI. Reduced poverty through a food security programme.
- VII. Improved life skills education and counseling for vulnerable, children and orphans.

2. EVALUATION AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this evaluation was to:

- 2.1 provide a comprehensive performance overview of the entire project;
- 2.2 highlight the lessons learned so that the conclusions and recommendations arrived at can assist the organization in moving forward and be sustainable; and
- 2.3 highlight project alignment with the municipality IDPs and relevant government sector departments' programmes.

3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation involved a review of the project documentation, field visits and structured interviews with the relevant project stakeholders. These included the following:

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4. RESULTS

4.1 Project Design

4.1.1 *Community involvement*

The Grant Application clearly outlines that Matome Pre-School and Crèche and Kgalushi Drop-in-Centre are community based programmes. The members of the community are the founders and have been actively involved in ensuring its successful take-off. For instance, in de-bushing the site, fencing the site and building a shack. They also contributed money to buy equipment such as cooking utensils. The Minister of Social Development's campaign on "Taking DSD to the community" at Ga-Ramaswikana has also raised the public profile of this project within the community. Members of the community also continue to support the project by enrolling their children in the crèche.

4.1.2 *Project Activities*

The project implementation plan outlines a set of activities that are tied to each of the specific objectives of the project. Each activity has been appropriately tied to a clear timeframe as well

as to a specific party who is tasked to carry it out. The implementation plan makes it easy for implementers to track performance of tasks as well as overall project progress. It should be complimented by a monitoring and evaluation plan that helps to track and measure efficiency (adherence to timeframes and budget) as well as effectiveness (achievement of planned results) of project activities.

4.1.3 Project Monitoring

The Grant Application does not address the issue of project monitoring at all. In the section of the project plan where this issue is supposed to be outlined, the project plan simply outlines the project objectives as well as the steps that will be taken to achieve them. Since the project plan does not address the question of monitoring and evaluation of the project, it is not surprising then that the centre does not have a monitoring and evaluation plan or system relating to its operations. The only measure of formal monitoring of the project operations is through the project progress reports submitted to the NDA periodically in line with the financing agreement.

4.1.4 Output / outcome / impact clearly defined?

The Grant Application spells out specific outcomes that are to be achieved through the project. The progress attained towards achievement of these outcomes is indicated in summary below:

4.1.4.1 Well equipped practitioners, cooks and gardeners with relevant skills

Capacity building for the practitioners, cooks, gardeners and board members was planned to take place through training in the following areas: Project Management, Financial Management, Conflict Management, Good Governance, Child Care and First Aid. As at the completion of this evaluation, only training in Financial Management and Good Governance had been undertaken. A total of eight members of the board and management team for both the Drop-in Centre and the Crèche attended the training.

4.1.4.2 Established vegetable garden

The de-bushing and the rest of the preparation for the gardening project have been completed. Although there were problems with the participants failing to meet on several occasions, this problem has been overcome. It is anticipated that the food security programme would have commenced by the end of March as the water provision will have been completed by then.

4.1.4.3 Creation of a conducive environment for stimulating the language, learning and creativity among the children (Well resourced centre)

The toys, educational materials had not yet been procured at the time of completion of this report. The procurement of these items was linked to completion of construction of the building. The construction process is in its final stages. The toys and educational materials were to contribute towards the creation of a suitable environment for activities that stimulate language, learning and creativity among the children.

4.1.4.4 A Proper ECD / Drop-in-Centre

The construction of a building in line with specifications & drilling of boreholes, toilets & septic tanks, and the installation of electricity supply have been undertaken. These will go a long way towards creating a proper centre.

4.1.4.5 Create an emergency care facility

First Aid training has not yet been provided to the practitioners and a First Aid Kit had not yet been acquired at the time of completion of this report. This activity was intended to be facilitated through the support of the Department of Health. The project awaits direction from the Department of Health concerning this matter.

4.1.4.6 Community awareness on the rights of children

It is anticipated that practitioners, the community and other stakeholders would be engaged to implement advocacy activities within the area to raise awareness and mobilise the community around issues of the rights of the children. Advocacy is intended to be an ongoing activity within the community. As at the conclusion of this report, advocacy activities had not yet commenced.

4.1.5 Capacity

The capacity of the project to provide good quality early childhood development and support to orphans and vulnerable children has been substantially bolstered through the NDA intervention. The NDA support has secured the project a more suitable facility through the construction of the new centre. The training of the project members in financial management and good governance has improved the efficiency of the centre in record keeping and administration of finances, as well as in improving governance. As the remainder of the training programme is completed, greater capacity to deliver additional, as well as current, services more effectively will be acquired. The effect of that will be a more wholesome and better experience for the children.

4.2 Implementation Process

4.2.1 Implementation of activities

4.2.1.1 Timeframes

In terms of the financing agreement, it was anticipated that the project would commence on September 01, 2012. However the first tranche was transferred only at the end of October 2012. The project was scheduled to be undertaken over a period of twelve months, from September 01, 2012 to August 31, 2013. The implementation plan outlines a twelve month activity schedule with timelines. However, the project manager indicates that there were delays relating to acquiring building plans which have resulted in a request for extension of the project end date. As at this stage, a new project end date had not yet been communicated.

4.2.1.2 Adherence to Implementation Plan

The project team has managed to adhere to the project implementation plans to a large extent. Apart from the delays relating to acquiring the building plans, which have resulted in the extension of the project timeframe, much of the implementation process is on track. There were a few structural adjustments that were effected to the building as well as the septic tanks after installation, which were not of a significant nature, and were intended to effect some improvements.

4.2.2 Skills Capacity

There is still much that needs to be done with regards to skills capacity. As at this stage, skills training have only been offered in Financial Management and Good Governance. Training in Project Management, Conflict Management, Child Care and First Aid is yet to be offered to the project members. There has therefore been limited input into the development of the project skills capacity. Although project reports indicate much improvement in the manner in which the project is progressing since the training intervention, much improvement can also be expected to result from additional training in the outstanding topics. Some of the outstanding topics have a direct bearing on the services provided to the children.

4.2.3 Support from the NDA

The project team has received extensive support from the NDA DM. The project manager has indicated that they were satisfied with the support they have and are continuing to receive from the NDA. The NDA DM has for instance assisted with such matters as approaching the Department of Social Development to assist the project with water provision related matters, as well as with issues pertaining to resolving attendance of meetings by project members.

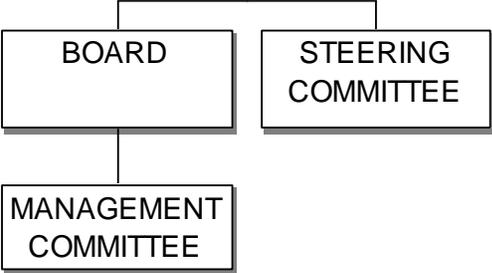
4.2.4 Receipt of Resources

The project has received financial support to the value of R 1,038 600.00 from the NDA. Additional resources were mobilized from the Department of Education in the form of provision of curriculum to the value of R 20 000, from the Department of Agriculture in the form of provision of technical training to value of R 20 000 and from the Department of Social Development in the form of skills training, child subsidies, feeding scheme, and health services to the value of R 79 000. The first tranche of the NDA funding was released to the project in October 2012. As at this stage the final tranche is yet to be transferred.

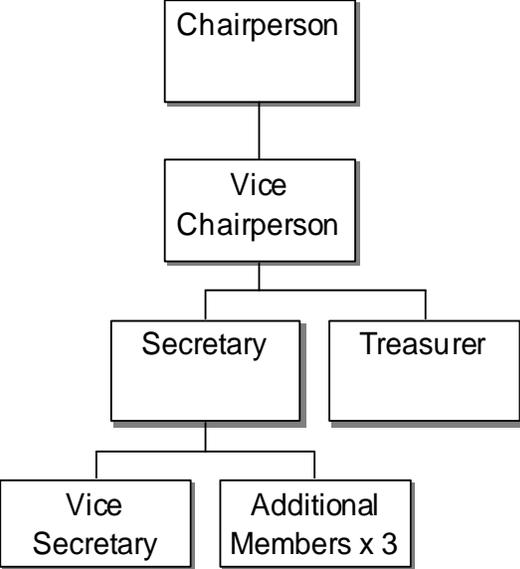
4.3 Project Management

4.3.1 Structure

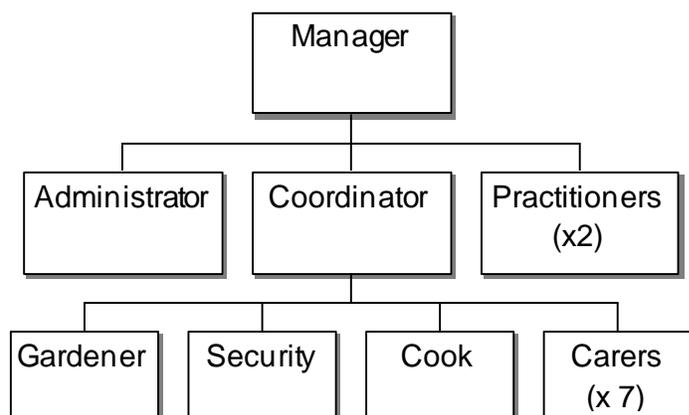
The project management structure can be schematically presented as follows:



The Management Committee has the following portfolios:



The management structure of the project is as indicated below:



4.3.2 Systems

The Matume Crèche systems are manual and unsophisticated. The Grant Application lists computer skills as one of the skills areas to be improved upon. However this aspect is not included as one of the budget line items. As at this stage, this training has not yet been implemented. There needs to be much improvement pertaining to introducing more electronic and more efficient systems. Monitoring and Evaluation systems should be included in this. The focus should go beyond general record keeping and information management.

4.3.3 Governance

Matome Pre-School and Crèche has a board that comprises of seven members. The current board is fairly new. None of the members have been on the board for more than two years, hence the need for enhancement of the board's knowledge and skills in governance. Four of the members of the board have attended training in good governance provided through this intervention. The training has provided greater insight to the members as pertaining to the responsibilities and functions of the board. The members are enthusiastic and upbeat about the prospects of the project with the new skills that they have acquired.

4.3.4 Sustainability

Institutional sustainability refers to the extent to which an organisation is capable of continuing to offer the same level of products and services without complete reliance on external support. It refers to how long the organisation can continue to operate at optimal levels if external support were to be withdrawn. In order for any social sector organisation to achieve this level of

sustainability it must have the necessary internal, human, material and financial resource capacity to do this. This will generally require a healthy and reliable source of own income, complimented by multiple sources of top-up funding. Matome Pre-School and Crèche and Kgalushi Drop-in-Centre have both not yet developed this capacity. The combination of child subsidies and monthly fees paid in by parents can help establish the foundation of a financially sound operation. A formal written sustainability plan is required in order to steer the centres towards greater self-reliance and eventual self-sustainability.

4.4 Resources

4.4.1 Resources mobilization

Matome Crèche and Pre-School and Kgalushi Drop-in-Centre have mobilized the resources for implementation of this project from the National Development Agency (funding in the amount of R 1, 103 600.00), the Department of Social Development (provision of training, child subsidies, feeding schemes and health services estimated at R 79 000.00), the Department of Education (provision of curriculum, estimated at R20 000.00), and the Department of Agriculture (provision of technical training, estimated at R 20 000.0) and own contribution (estimated at R 80 000.00).

4.4.2 Utilization of resources

Resources mobilized through this project have been applied mainly to provision of skills training in Financial Management and Good Governance. As well as to construction and electrification of the centre, installation of the fence and septic tanks and stands, drilling of boreholes and debushing. The final tranche is expected to be transferred during the extension period, which will cater mostly for the remainder of the training sessions, the purchase of the toys and educational materials, finishing touches on the building and some minor installations for the vegetable gardens. By and large, the acquired resources have been properly allocated and utilized. Where there have been deviations, they have been minor and these were discussed with the NDA.

4.5 Achievement of Overall Goals

Overall Objective

The overall objective of the project is to establish a Day Care Centre that will provide Early Childhood Development and serve as a Drop-in-Centre.

The overall objective of the project has been successfully achieved in that a Day Care Centre and an Early Childhood Development centre is up and running. The project's focus goes beyond establishing the centres but focuses more on improving the quality of the services provided by the centres to enhance the impact reached in society through the interventions.

Specific Objectives

The project aimed to achieve the following specific objectives:

- I. Increased access to quality education and proper care for 259 children, orphans and vulnerable in the community**

Access to quality education and proper care for 259 children, orphans and vulnerable children in the community has been enhanced through the construction of the new centre. The new building has significantly bolstered the creation of a conducive environment for teaching and learning as well as providing the orphans and vulnerable children with essential services through the Drop-in-Centre.

- II. Capacitated practitioners, gardeners and cooks including the volunteers**

This objective has not yet been fully met as the only training that has been conducted so far is training on Financial Management and Good Governance. Further training of the project members in project management, conflict management, child care, first aid, food preparation and vegetable production is yet to be conducted.

- III. A well balanced meal for the children, orphans and vulnerable youth on a daily basis**

This objective was to be achieved mainly through augmenting the children's diet through the introduction of the vegetable gardens as well as training in food preparation. As at the

completion of this evaluation, the drilling of the borehole for water provision had been completed and the debushing had also been completed. The final list of the participants in the vegetable gardening initiative had also been tabulated. According to the project manager vegetable gardening is to commence soon. The training in Food Preparation had not yet been conducted. It is anticipated that these two activities will be concluded in the last phase of the project. Only then can it be expected that this objective will be achieved.

IV. A well-established temporary medical centre for children

The achievement of this objective required that the training in First Aid and the acquisition of a First Aid Kit should be completed. So far, training has not yet been conducted and the First Aid Kit has not yet been acquired. This objective can only be expected to be achieved in the future once the necessary skills and equipment have been acquired.

V. Employment opportunities for community members created

Approximately 72 temporary jobs have been created through this intervention. Members of the local community were employed during the construction of the centre as labourers, during the installation of the fence around the site, and during the debushing in preparation for the vegetable garden.

VI. Reduced poverty through a food security programme

The food security programme is not yet in full swing. The vegetable gardens were just being started at the time of conclusion of this evaluation. Although the vegetable gardens are not the only step required to contribute towards the reduction of the effects of poverty on the children, as the feeding scheme also forms part of that process, they are however a crucial part of that process. They will assist with provision of a balanced meal as well as reducing the cost of providing meals to the children.

VII. Improved life skills education and counseling for vulnerable, children and orphans.

This objective has also not yet been accomplished. The activities surrounding this objective are yet to be implemented.

5. CONCLUSIONS OF THE EVALUATION

5.1 Major conclusions of the evaluation

- The extension of the project end date, due to delays experienced in the construction, has meant that those activities associated with the completed centre (such as the purchase and delivery of the children's toys and educational materials) as well as those associated with the other infrastructure such as the boreholes, septic tanks, (for example the vegetable gardens) had to be stayed until the construction and installations are completed. This meant that the objectives intended to be achieved through the implementation of these activities would not be achieved by the original project end date.
- Only two out of the seven objectives had been satisfactorily met at the time of conducting this evaluation, the rest are yet to be fully met as the associated activities will only be implemented during the extension period of the project.
- Although not yet completed, the skills capacity building process has already attained much improvement in the financial management and governance processes of the centre and is certain to result in the necessary capacity for the project to achieve its overall objective being established.
- The project has served to ensure that the current employment opportunities for members of the project are secured, and new job opportunities are created. In total, 72 jobs were created through this intervention.
- This intervention has had the positive effect of giving hope and serving as inspiration for the community. The Drop-in-Centre and the Pre-School and Crèche are the only early childhood development programmes in the community. The fact that these have received this much attention and support gives the community a positive outlook on the future prospects of the centre.

- Apart from the slight delays at the beginning of the project, the Matome Pre-School ad Crèche and Kgalushi Drop-in-Centre intervention is on course towards achievement of the project objectives.

5.2 Benefits associated with the programme

The programme has generated the following benefits both for the beneficiaries of the services of the centre as well as for the members of the community:

- Skills training for members of the board in Good Governance and Financial Management.
- A new, appropriate building for both the Pre-School and Crèche and the Drop-in-Centre.
- A vegetable garden that involves members of the community in positive activity and generally raises awareness on the plight of orphans and vulnerable children.
- A reliable source of clean water, in the form of boreholes, for the Pre-School and Crèche and the Drop-in-Centre that will also benefit members of the community.
- Better ablution facilities for the centre.
- Improvement in the general awareness of the community on the rights of children and general mobilization around issues pertaining to the welfare of children in the community.
- Continued and better support for the children through ECD services as well as through the services of the Drop-In-Centre (relating to assistance with homework, school uniforms, and general care and minding of the orphans and vulnerable children).

5.3 Unexpected benefits from the programme

The project has not produced any unexpected benefits so far. All of the benefits derived from the project have been directly linked to the specific activities of the project.

6. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Recommendations regarding the programme as a whole

Upon review of the relevant project documentation and based on interviews conducted with the project team we have satisfied ourselves that this intervention will have a positive impact on the project in the immediate term, and in the long-term a more far-reaching effect can be achieved, should the following recommendations be considered and appropriate action be taken.

These recommendations if implemented together will produce the desired effect of achieving organization wide improvement:

a) **Organizational Planning**

- **Financial Sustainability**

At the moment the two clear avenues for the projects to generate own income is through fees and subsidies. Methods for collection of fees from parents of the children attending the Pre-School and Crèche will have to be improved upon. Ensuring that the necessary steps are taken to secure subsidies for each qualifying child is important and urgent. Cost cutting measures should also be explored over and above the vegetable gardens. A formal, structured plan to attain financial sustainability over a period of time is important. However in the immediate term, the above steps should be implemented for sustained income generation.

- **Internal monitoring and evaluation**

There is a need for introduction of methods for monitoring the efficiency and periodically evaluating the effectiveness of the ongoing activities of both the Crèche and Pre-School and Drop-in-Centre at an organizational level.

- **Governance**

Training has been provided to the board members on Good Governance. Part of the application of the skills learnt must involve the development of clear roles and responsibilities of the members. A formal structuring of the board for effective performance is also recommended.

b) Ongoing Support

Ongoing support for the Crèche and Pre-School and Drop-in-Centre is absolutely essential. The two centres play a pivotal role in the life of the community of Ga-Ramaswikana. The continued involvement of the Department Social Development, Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture in the activities of the Pre-School and Crèche and the Drop-in-Centre beyond the NDA intervention will ensure that the benefits of this initiative are sustained.

6.2 Predictions about the future of the programme

- Once the full complement of the planned training of the project members is completed, the future prospects of the centres will be greatly improved. Provided there is a consistent process of incorporating acquired skills into the modus operandi of the centres.
- The fact that the project has been in existence for approximately six years means that there is extensive commitment among the members to ensure that these centres are sustained and will continue to provide services to the community.
- Matome Pre-School and Crèche and the Kgalushi Drop-in-Centre provide essential services in a community that has very little in the form of social amenities or social institutions, where the two are the only ECD and Drop-in-Centres available. For the foreseeable future, there will continue to be a rise in the demand for the services of these centres.
- Given that much of the project activities were not yet completed at the time of this evaluation, it is not possible to realistically measure the impact of this intervention among the beneficiaries as well as within the community in general. However there are positive effects already reported on resulting from this intervention as alluded to in this report. The future prospects of this project are positive.



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