

# Engaging Faith-Based Actors in Advocacy

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS – ALL THE 10 CLUSTERS FROM BURUNDI, KENYA, RWANDA, TANZANIA, AND UGANDA

### 1. PREAMBLE

This is a summary of key messages from the evaluation of 10 Clusters based in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The initial draft was formally presented in early June to the OAIC and CKU leadership. Thereafter an opportunity was availed to the Evaluation Team to present the same during the CKU AGM and useful feedback received. In terms of field work, the report from the 5 Clusters based in Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda Clusters is presented separately on Annex A whilst the report from the 5 Clusters based in Burundi and Tanzania is on Annex B

### 2. ROLE OF FAITH COMMUNITIES

**2.1 Role of Faith Communities:** There is evidence on the ground that the prophetic voice of the church is being enhanced.

**2.2** The ecumenical spirit is encouraging as clusters are getting better positioned to engage in diaconal work and steer constructive engagements within the churches, mosques as well as within communities.

**2.3** *In Rwanda*, AEBR church members continue to perceive themselves as being 'sent by God' as their disposition, they would act 'prophetically' through life and worship in the church.

**2.4** *In Nakuru*, The prophetic voices of the clusters has been strengthened and there has been the good will of the community and relevant duty bearers practical actions impacting lives as the cluster has had the ability to address the issues in the community.

**2.5** *In Northern Uganda* the prophetic voice has been strengthen by its proclamation among the clergy and among other religious heads so that the topic is widely discussed.

**2.6** Within the three clusters in Tanzania, Sanjaranda Sumbawanga, Singida and in Burundi (Dutarabane) and the key role of the Church as a prophetic voice in the community was noted, for instance, mainly as advocating for the unemployed youth and women, as well as building advocacy coalitions and fighting teen and school girls pregnancies.

**2.7** In Burundi, the Churches network (Dutabarane) are in the process of engaging duty bearers on the need of the Protestant Churches being allowed to teach Christian Religious Education (CRE) in Primary and Secondary Schools. Thus making it not a preserve of the Catholic Church only to teach CRE. They about 30 plus Dutabarane Church Members are

jointly (very rare occurrence of point action), developing a CRE curriculum to engage the government with. The Anglican Bishop of Bujumbura is leading this process.

### **3. ENHANCING DIALOGUE WITH DUTY BEARERS**

3.1 In Nakuru Cluster, there is evidence on the ground that faith leaders have engaged in strategically advocating and engaging with the duty bearers and this is yielding results. For instance the religious leaders called for a meeting with the ward administrators to know how the issue of bursaries was being handled and who the beneficiaries are. From the meeting the religious leaders were able to advocate for inclusion, transparency and involvement of communities during the entire bursary awarding process. As a result the bursary vetting process has become more transparent and inclusive while those benefiting from the bursaries include the very deserving cases.

3.2 In both Burundi and Tanzania, duty bearers' engagement has been witnessed, with successful outcomes in Tanzania and Burundi, where duty bearers have taken action, as well as committed to a community charter for pro-active action, in addressing community challenges like school girls pregnancies, abolishment of arbitrary taxes that are a hindrance in for youth and women as micro-businesses.

3.2 **Advocacy strategy is in place in most of the Clusters:** The strategies have been developed with the rights holders' participation. Within Nakuru, the latter have already adopted the strategy and developed a work plan on how to engage the duty bearers. Further still alongside the strategy paper is the Community which is already shaping social accountability and advocacy on the ground. The advocacy strategy is focused on strengthening of the existing CBOs, Faith platforms, Youth groups and Women groups who have been strategically prepared to take seriously their respective roles responsibilities and are working on the social accountability with the grassroots level of the community.

In both Tanzania and Burundi clusters, the Advocacy strategies are in place in all the Clusters. Burundi have an advocacy style that is conducive for community members

### **4. ACCESS TO NATIONAL AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT SUPPORT:**

There is evidence of active engagement with duty bearers at both local and national levels.

4.1 **The DRMPA Community within West Pokot** got empowered to directly have access to services from duty bearers through influencing the budget process. For example, having had access to the leaders who control ward development fund, the church was able to access financial support for the following public institutions namely Kapkimar and kachumakinei early child education centres with kshs. 500,000 each, two classes were completed. This has enhanced easy access of the young children to education.

**4.2 In Eastern Uganda**, the Ministry of Local Government headquarters has been very helpful to OAIC Uganda and they have pledged to provide the necessary guidance, tools and support the development and spread of Social Accountability activities in the country. An Act of Local Government was availed together with existing approaches and frameworks so far used in individual districts to foster accountability in the districts.

**4.3 The Nakuru Cluster** has been at the forefront in advocating for gender equity, equality and inclusivity at the community and church level. This is planned to feed into the county and national debates regarding the 2/3 gender rule and gender equality. With regard to matters of education especially bursaries allocation at ward level, there has been a very clear advocacy agenda by the FPFK Nakuru cluster.

**4.4 In Northern Uganda Cluster**, all people in all regions through their Churches have started conversations related to SA and how it engenders effective and quality service delivery. It is noted that at Church level the SA word is a household or familiar word now and this helps awareness of a previously unknown concept. A cultural change has happened where people are conscious that an avenue is now available to discuss issues of accountability and transparency. In addition, awareness of SA principles has created interest in the community and the local government structures.

**4.5 In Kenya today**, issues at national level include advocating for a level playing ground to reduce education-inequality in posting of teachers both at primary and secondary levels which is a function of teachers' service commission at national level. There is also the ongoing advocacy issue about health care delivery being taken back to National government. Indeed, devolving health has been marred with serious challenges that seem to overpower management of the county government.

## **5. ENHANCED COMMUNITY VOICE ON ACCESS TO SERVICES:**

In West Pokot thousands of different church members are now engaging their leaders in a constructive manner and the messages reach many people. Some 200 youths and about 100 women have been trained. This has helped expand the SA message. For example one of the youths who attended the training at Tamugh asked the current member of parliament of Kapenguria, why the constituency bursary 2019/2020 had not been disbursed. Further still, the holding of radios shows with senior religious from different wards has taken the SA message across the county and has sustained the message of SA at ward level since the religious leaders keep on sharing the information whenever opportunity arises.

## **6. GROWING INFLUENCE OF ADVOCACY CHAMPIONS:**

Within Nakuru Cluster, as a result of training and exposure, there has been collective voice which led to the removal of the ward administrator office from the Rhonda Market to its place outside the market as this would reduce the space for the local traders in the market. The use of community score cards and petitions for advocating for the needs and issues pertaining to the community is undertaken in the cluster.

## **7. REVIEW OF QUALITY AND SCOPE OF ADVOCACY WORK.**

There is an observable expansion of ecumenical space:

**7.1** Within the Project in Rwanda, a forum of 40 Pastors was formed from 12 different Christian denominations: Catholics, SDA, Methodist Church, Anglican Church, Baptist and the church of Nazarene. Their issues for discussion include Social Security and improving education.

**7.2** Within Nakuru Cluster, the training of the SUPKEM leadership during the COVID 19 interventions has been very strategic to OAIC. More community members are being selected to sit in project implementation and oversight committees.

**7.3** Within Nakuru Cluster, the scope of advocacy and the kind of development being witnessed is totally different from what it used to be in the previous years combative, with the community having taken a back seat but now the community is actively in the driving seat leading. This has improved the structures of the clusters as they are also learning through this process in being fully socially accountable to the community in their engagement so it has worked on both sides. For the duty bearers the tremendous development is a testimony to the changes realized as they have engaged the community.

## **8. CREATIVE APPROACHES IN PLACE**

**8.1** The Nakuru cluster has been using street theatre (acting) to pass information to its key actors on community atrocities. In order to pass information, the artists have drawn and written messages on public walls demanding for services. The messages are strategically passed to the key actors to deliver and act. The sensitization of the community on the need to take precaution by use of Magnetic theatre to pass the information to the public and organize community awareness on the dangers of the covid pandemic has worked very well.

**8.2** The PSC meetings have been creatively organised. They continue to involve a relatively smaller group representing all the clusters and can be able to articulate SA learning in a better, concise and contextualised way thus allowing other clusters to learn and replicate what fits them. They have played a key role in giving voice to the community members in diverse ways. For example, the fact that the PSC constitutes representative members of all the clusters, they are able to ensure that the process is steered as per the wishes and ideas of all the clusters. The PSC acted as a meeting point to share the progress update and challenges for amicable interventions, it is also an avenue to share new experiences encountered by other clusters to improve on the state of other clusters

**8.3** OAIC has also been able to bring the SA experience to the Global Level through the OAIC's participation in Global platforms such as the Global Partnership for Social Accountability at the World Bank Headquarters. The Organization has also been using the

immense resources of knowledge acquired in working together with its member churches. These included theological and cultural resources from an African perspective. What is needed now is how the organization can leverage on such connections to access resources for continuing the great work on the ground.

## **9. ROLE OF PME:**

**9.1** There was no budget provision for a baseline in the Application although this was a requirement of the LFA Progress Assessment. This was finally addressed in 2020 and the baseline survey was subsequently conducted for each of the 9 clusters in the Project. The baselines ultimately did serve as a self-evaluation, and in this respect, were timely in giving a year-by-year comparative analysis of what were the outcomes.

**9.2** The staff in charge of PMER has done well in collating the data and making the evaluation work more facilitated in terms of collection and analysis. This was a challenge before as highlighted in the 2017 evaluation report findings. There are areas, though, where Clusters could have benefitted better from the staff capacity if they were more readily available.

**9.3** CKU, has played a facilitator role beyond providing finances. They have been excellent in keeping the support team on track and constantly asking clarifying questions that helped OAIC distil the best strategies to address issues as they came up with. Most of the meetings were convened by CKU and Kristine always shared notes from the meetings. CKU was also diligent in holding the support team to implementation timelines.

## **10. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**10.1 Weaning Out The Clusters:** It is observable that Clusters are at differing levels of capabilities. There are those Clusters that have benefitted from close to a decade of capacity development on their advocacy work and they are increasingly beginning to play a pivotal role at Regional and National levels. Their capacity building needs should now focus more on enabling them to use their rich experiences to advocate at regional and national levels and influence policies at such levels.

In the Tanzania and Burundi Clusters, and together with the two Clusters in Kenya, the Nakuru and West Pokot Clusters they have built a solid experience in advocacy work and they have an opportunity to continue on their own if they can have access to other funding opportunities. In four clusters, transitions of project team leaders or transfers created some difficulty. In Rwanda, the project has had 4 different leaders in less than 3 years. The project leaders for Eastern Uganda and FPFK clusters were General Secretaries and the planning for events for the two clusters was a major challenge and often, frustrating.

### **10.2 Program Planning and Monitoring**

a) As part of enhancing M&E, it is prudent to undertake a baseline survey at the beginning of the project so as compliment monitoring and evaluation process such as mid-term

review and endline survey. This enhances measuring the changes at different stages of the project against the baseline data.

### **10.3 Program Outcomes Faith Communities role**

a) Within the political context of Tanzania, for the SA trajectory, the best approach which was incorporated by the clusters involved engaging constructively the local government leaders and engaging them at different stages of the project hence a good working relationship was developed. Engaging with the local government leaders at cluster level in community dialogues prompted the leaders to hear from the community members about their issues. For instance in Sumbawanga cluster, youth and women had unemployment issues.

### **10.4 Role of OAIC in Project Implementation**

a) OAIC may consider strengthening internal controls within the financial systems of the organization and improving on human resource administration.

b) There is a need to have key performance indicators for staff involved in undertaking interventions line with their contracts and job descriptions.

d) Based on the OAIC financial assessment,<sup>1</sup> OAIC and clusters may need technical support and capacity building in management of financial matters on quarterly basis so as to strengthen internal controls.

e) Need for OAIC to establish a communication plan, for engagement with technical resource persons.

**10.5 Theology has been incorporated in the curriculum** of theological colleges as seen in the Sumbawanga Mlimani Theological College and Sanjaranda Bible College cluster.

### **10.6 Discerning the Future of the AMINIKA Project**

a) Interfaith forums are crucial for promoting sustainability of social accountability initiatives. In addition, incorporation of SA in the learning curriculum of the theological colleges is crucial for sustainability of SA interventions.

b) Embrace technology and social media to increase the outreach of SA interventions

c) Enhance reporting and capturing results and insightful change stories on quarterly basis.

d) The engagement of young people in SA is imperative and

e) Creating a visual documentary of change stories in SA trajectory in the nine clusters can show case the impact of the SA learning trajectory and serve as a learning tool for replicating the success and impact of the SA interventions. Gathering change stories could also be done as a routine project activity on bi-annual basis and at the end an audio and

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<sup>1</sup> Per Heljmekker

video documentary could be made to show case the impact of the SA learning trajectory within the clusters so as to inspire others.

## 11. IN CONCLUSION:

11.1 It is clear that having good and positive relationship with the government is important in advancing advocacy campaigns for key services that are needed by the respective communities. The role of the Church in contributing to social accountability within the community is evident. This is based on the position of the Church, the aspect of interfaith forums and the approach used by church to build a good working relationship with the community and do constructive engagement with the government within the clusters. This has prompted the duty bearers to play their role within the clusters in Burundi and Tanzania.

11.2 The advocacy work by the Clusters continues to bear fruit. There is today, a growing number of responsive public institutions as a result of engaging the county government. Service delivery has since improved and an example here include equal distribution of bursary to secondary students, technical students and university students, construction of pre-primary centers across the county and equal distribution of seeds during planting season.

11.3 There is evidence of improved civic competence. Indeed public participation has been on the increase all along, not only that, there has been active public participation with members of public closely monitoring their community charter they presented during public participation forums to the service providers.

**11.4 COVID 19 Pandemic has slowed down the momentum:** The Pandemic has exposed the religious fraternity which for a long period has been shying away from embracing and using technology. In addition, the COVID 19 Pandemic affected the pace of implementation of the SA trajectory in Bujumbura cluster and the clusters in Tanzania. However, despite Covid 19, the clusters in Tanzania and Bujumbura undertook some interventions such as engaging duty bearers and interfaith forums but with the precaution of observing social distance and personal hygiene such as hand washing, and as per guidelines of the Ministries of Health.

11.5 OAIC has provided useful leadership to the Project, at a time when it is struggling with her own internal sustainability challenges. This reality has often constrained on their ability to invest their time fully in steering the projects. An example here is that cases of delays have been mentioned by clusters in the processing of financial requests and this has often slowed down implementation of different activities thus impeding implementation.