

**LINK ASSOCIATION FOR THE RELIEF OF
CHILDREN (LARC)
COMMUNITY ACTION SUPPORT PROJECT
EVALUATION**

Submitted to UNICEF by:
Sharon A. Mulenga
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Abbreviations

CASP	Community Action Support Programme
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CHIN	Children in Need
CINDI	Children in Distress
CMO	Community Mobilization Officer
DOVCC	District Orphan and Vulnerable Children Committee
FHI	Family Health International
IGA	Income Generation Activities
LARC	Link Association for the Relief of Children
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSU	Victim Support Unit, Zambia Police Service
ZIHP	Zambia Integrated Health Project

Executive Summary

Introduction and Methodology: In 2000, the Link Association for the Relief of Children (LARC) and UNICEF agreed to a three-year cycle, renewable yearly, to fund the administrative expenses of LARC. Further cooperation involves the Community Action Support Programme (CASP). The goal of CASP is to develop a successful model for the regional distribution of small grants to community-driven OVC initiatives. LARC's capacity to assess, disburse, and manage grants was also developed through creation of governing policies and instruments. UNICEF allocated a total of US\$50,000 for the grants. LARC received the applications, evaluated them, selected grantees, distributed funds, and monitored project performance.

This evaluation of CASP has been undertaken at the request of UNICEF Lusaka. The primary objective of the evaluation was to assess how the regional small grants to OVC initiatives benefited grantee institutions and their targeted beneficiaries, particularly children. The CASP assessment was undertaken using a combination of office review of documentation and field assessment of the grantees and LARC. The consultant reviewed documents relating to the project, developed an assessment tool, and set up a field visit itinerary and a work plan to accomplish the evaluation, using participatory tools and interview guidelines. Work took place at the LARC office in Ndola and at selected project sites.

Policies and Instruments Developed: In the development of the grant-making cycle, LARC and UNICEF devised a cycle including a grant policy, a toolkit for the granting process, allocation protocols, financial management at LARC and in the community, and management support to the community organisations. The allocation policy included limits for grants, the number of grants in a cycle, the types of acceptable expenditure, and payment protocols. The policies, procedures and instruments are generally good examples of grant management.

It was agreed that grants would be made to LARC members that met the standards listed, and this rule was followed and documented. The forms were generally understandable and relatively simple, and the LARC staffs were able to ensure that applications, pre-project evaluations, and reporting were completed on the required forms. However, the forms had significant gaps in checking applicant governance and other resources, a realistic budget, and a simple work plan that enabled monitoring and changes if circumstances required it.

UNICEF capacity building for LARC worked well, and their use of the formats was good. However, the application process showed that LARC had difficulties extending the institutional strengthening skills downward to its member institutions.

Grant Process: The aim of the initiative was to fund a small number of organisations that would have a large impact on children in the community. Preference was given to organisations where applications that would have a sustainable impact. Applicants were apprised of the conditions that would govern the use of the grants. Fifteen grants were planned, to be between US\$1000 and US\$7000. Over twice that number were given. It was felt that as many organisations as possible should benefit from this initiative. This created some difficulties.

Evaluation of Grant Applications and Grant Decisions: LARC assisted organisations in the filling out of application forms in order to ensure that applications were complete when being considered by the Allocation Committee. Files show that the staff checked forms, and performed complete pre-project assessments that contained the information that was requested. An Allocation Committee comprising of prominent persons who were not directly involved in any LARC member organisation was constituted to review and select projects.

The Allocation Committee considered 31 applications and awarded 15 grants in the first round, and considered 37 applications and awarded 17 grants in the second round as shown in the table below. Four grantees from the second round had received grants in the first round. Grants could be categorized as skills training (7), schools support (5), income generating activities (18, including farming (3), tailoring (4), fisheries(1), chickens (9) and a piggery(1)), one women's loan fund, and one sports facility dorm rehabilitation.

While the procedures were followed and the projects funded appeared to be of value, the allocation process did not adequately address governance, management structures and historical information on previous project implementation, or sustainability issues. Budgets were not assessed to determine if they were realistic.

Monitoring and Related Adherence to Programme and Financial Reporting:

After grants allocation, LARC staff was required to visit projects to ensure that the funds were being used as intended, the grantee was succeeding in its goals, and the grantee was able to fulfil the financial and operational reporting obligations and ensure the maximum effectiveness of OVC interventions. There are records of project visits that discuss the progress of the projects. All of the grantees embarked on the projects that they agreed on in the approved project documents. In the examination of the financial records at LARC and project sites, all projects had presented receipts equal to the grants that they were given.

Larger organisations with formal management structures have better-established record keeping procedures and practices. There was strong evidence of very regular visits and attention in the field by LARC, and this is praiseworthy. However, there are a number of limitations in using the LARC visits as the primary documentation for project assessment, including problems with monitoring responsibility on LARC rather than on the organisation, and its subsequent transfer of responsibility and resolution of implementation problems.

While budgets were presented with the best intentions, they often underestimated the real costs of implementation. In the FGD, members openly discussed the difficulties in budgeting for projects. The FGD also spent some time discussing the limitations of one-time funding, especially in IGA, as they felt that one-off funding does not produce sustainable results.

Support to Beneficiaries and Impact on Children: From project records, visits and the FGD over eight thousand children have been reported to enjoy a direct or indirect benefit from the CASP. There is no doubt that a large number of children have benefited from the CASP initiative, with many examples at the community level to testify to the changes in children's lives. On a visit to a school where children had

received bursaries, the head and teachers openly welcomed the members of the CBO. It was clear that they had worked together for a long time as they spoke about several children's circumstances, demonstrating shared concerns for the children.

The interpretation of what denotes successful interventions that impact positively on children does not appear to be the same by all the partners. While the organisation should define the beneficiaries and the impact on their lives, the skills necessary to make a determination of success that is understood by all partners is not evident.

Sustainability: Issues related to sustainability are particularly difficult in projects implemented at community level, and the focus has to be balanced between the felt needs of the community and the anticipated capacity of the grantee to carry on with the grant activity. After careful consideration and review, the consultant found that of the 32 projects, 10 were sustainable, 2 were uncertain, 16 were unsustainable, and four were inherently unsustainable. The sustainable projects were typically those with dedicated management, with larger, long-term institutions with national or international affiliation. The success stories were typified by good governance structures and strong implementation protocols. Interestingly, the success stories included a number of orphanages.

Projects funded for IGA activities were successful at the beginning, but were unable to sustain the activity. Three major IGA limitations were identified; lack of experience with business, no market research, and no methods to check project status to make needed changes. Successes in skills training or contributions to schools were largely contributions of equipment that enabled training and studies to be more feasible and sustainable in existing structures.

From the discussions with partners it is evident that sustainability planning was not fully addressed in the project planning process. Mechanisms were not in place to confirm or modify implementation, get help, or end an intervention when it was no longer appropriate or useful. The most important issues that emerged during the FGD about assets were premises and the security of goods.

Linkages of LARC, Beneficiary Organizations, and other Service Providers: LARC is primarily known as a networking organisation that shares information with its membership. In the granting process, LARC uses its network to confirm the suitability of applications, soliciting advice from institutions and partners. When grantees have completed a training programme, LARC has referred the organisation to other member organizations for further activities. LARC has extensively used district services such as agricultural extension in partnered activities.

Comparison with SCOPE-OVC: In comparing the implementation of the two granting processes, it is clear that each organisation has used a similar grants process. The two institutions have also faced similar difficulties and enjoyed similar successes at the community level. The main differences involve the SCOPE support structure, absence in the LARC application process of work plans and governance materials, more application responsibility with LARC grantees, a more complex SCOPE decision-making process, and SCOPE having more stringent reporting requirements tied to tranching of funds. It appears that the single most important factor in successful grant-making is funding initiatives for local organizations that

already have in place governance structures and strong implementation management protocols. These two institutions could learn from each other and collaborate more closely in grants activities.

Recommendations

1. Policy and programming: LARC needs to review its policy and implementation strategy to reflect the change from networking and advocacy to a wider scope of activities. When they are doing programming for grants, they must very carefully define and adhere to their target and the anticipated number of grantees they may reach, and try not to extend themselves beyond their (and their grantees') capacity.
2. Application process: Consideration should be given to allowing applicant institutions from those outside the LARC membership. A simple functional work plan with benchmarks is an important addition to the forms. The applicants and LARC must ensure that the enabling environment is suitable for project success and sustainability if that is desired. Budgeting must be realistic, and should be confirmed by looking at other institutions or businesses that operate such programs.
3. Grants selection: As management costs are significant for small grants, attention should be paid to how the applicant will pay for its management requirements. If IGAs are desirable, it should be as a part of training for target clients, or a practical demonstration of an idea that adults responsible for OVCs can emulate. For other types of assistance such as skills training, renovation of buildings, and school assistance, a key determination should be whether the grant will cover an input to an existing arrangement that will enable it to work better or longer. Grant types should be diversified in order to avoid mass failure, such as the poultry example for LARC.
4. Governance of partners: An observed weakness was the governance of grantees, particularly management, capacity to operate without other funds, and basic accounting and writing skills. While LARC has a good set of grant management tools, they need to be devolved more effectively to the grantee level. LARC is well placed to strengthen its partners in management and governance, and should proceed accordingly.
5. Grant operations and monitoring: There needs to be additional clarity within grantees about their own monitoring role, and particularly what to do when things go wrong. This may include work with grantees to ensure that they complete reports and learn to self-monitor and alter their own grants as requirements emerge. Additionally, government and private institutions should be linked to projects where appropriate for training, technical and supplies information. The LARC staff visits should be retained as they are excellent in motivating and encouraging grantees.
6. Sustainability: Sustainability is a key issue, and in some cases sustainability is at odds with community requests and needs. LARC and UNICEF should set up criteria to determine selection in this regard. Project completion should be defined in the grant, and a review and report with lessons learned be completed by the grantee with LARC review and comment.

Introduction

This evaluation of the Community Action Support Programme (CASP) under the Link Association for the Relief of Children (LARC)/UNICEF initiative has been undertaken at the request of UNICEF Lusaka. The general goal of the assessment was to examine the actual achievements of the project in relation to the objectives set out in the project proposal. This assessment documents the process, experiences, number of beneficiaries, and lessons learnt and challenges faced during project implementation. Issues related to cost efficiency and sustainability were also considered.

The primary objective of the evaluation was to assess how the regional small grants to OVC initiatives benefited certain Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and their targeted beneficiaries, particularly children. The scope of work included a review of the policies and instruments developed, the grant process, implementation of grant application evaluations and decisions, monitoring and reporting, support to beneficiaries and impact on children, sustainability of the grant projects, linkages of LARC, beneficiaries and other service providers, and a comparison with similar initiatives in the Copperbelt.

Methodology

The CASP assessment was undertaken using a combination of office review of documentation and field assessment of the grantees and LARC. The consultant reviewed documents relating to the project at LARC offices. She developed an assessment tool. The consultant set up a field visit itinerary and a work plan to accomplish the evaluation, using participatory tools and interview guidelines.

The work took place at the LARC office in Ndola and at selected funded project sites. First, an office review of project documents, administrative files, reports and policy documents was undertaken. Each project file was considered with regard to compiling and processing the application; undertaking pre-project assessments; preparing the project agreement document; following of grant disbursement procedures, and reporting, monitoring and evaluation of the funded projects.

Field visits to selected projects were carried out after the office document review. The consultant used the assessment tool as a guide for the collection of information. The consultant visited twelve projects representing fifteen grants. The selection of projects to be specifically reviewed was made to ensure a representative sample of the different types of proposed interventions requested by applicant institutions. Projects were located in Kitwe District, Mufulira District and Ndola District. Sectors funded under the grantees reviewed included skills training (3), school projects (2), and income generating activities (8, including 5 poultry projects, a piggery, an urban plots program, and a fishery), a women's loan fund, and a sports site dormitory rehabilitation. Site visits included interviews of project promoters, club members, and members of the general public. Project documents available in the grantee institutions were evaluated, taking into consideration the planning, application, and implementation processes. The role of the community or club membership in the project cycle, the impact of the project on local communities, and the financial management of the grant were integral parts of the assessment process.

All funded NGOs and CBOs were invited to attend a one-day focus group discussion (FGD). In the first session, participants discussed a number of issues related to the grant making process, planning and implementation at organisational level and concerns and limitations. Project results, impact, and sustainability were also discussed in the morning. In the second session participants discussed cooperative activities, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and compliance with government regulations.

Description of LARC and the CASP Grants Programme

Link Association for the Relief of Children (LARC) is a provincial network on the Copperbelt in Zambia. LARC was formed in 1995 to facilitate networking among member organisations, linking institutions dealing with OVCs and advocating for the rights of children. The main objectives of LARC are to strengthen the capacity of NGOs, CBOs and all institutions dealing with OVC; advocate to government on policies, laws and legislature that would benefit OVC and the poor; and facilitate networking amongst NGOs and CBOs dealing with OVC. LARC members include NGOs, CBOs, the business community, and government bodies involved in programmes and projects that directly engage with orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). The organisation currently has a membership of around one hundred institutions

LARC works to maintain contacts among members and perspective members, develop responsibility and self-reliance in communities, and promote understanding of the impact of poverty, HIV/AIDS and other problems on OVC. LARC disseminates information, sources assistance such as food, and acts as a liaison body with government departments on the Copperbelt and with Children in Need (CHIN), a national network and advocacy organisation. To meet its aims and objectives, LARC has a secretariat to carry out day-to-day operations. The secretariat organises meetings, receives reports from members and amalgamates/shares information with interested parties, keeps a register of activities being undertaken by members in order to avoid duplication, conducts surveys and studies, facilitates the procurement of supplementary food, and advocates for the rights of children, especially for education and medical care.

To provide members with skills to better offer services to OVC, LARC conducts workshops and seminars on fund raising, management, advocacy, adoption and fostering, and models of orphan care. Members offer different programmes for OVC including community schools, tracing of families, listening centres, street kids projects, income generation and linkages with the Victims Support Unit of the Zambia Police Service.

LARC's policy supports strategies for OVCs that include:

- Giving priority to the extended family as a mechanism of coping with OVC problem
- Promoting a home environment situation through fostering and adoption
- Forming first-aid family units whilst relatives are being traced or a foster/adoption family can be sought.
- Keeping siblings together

- Avoiding as much as possible the institutional care of children
- Cooperation with the District Social Welfare Departments
- Carrying out advocacy for all the rights of children.

In 2000, LARC and UNICEF agreed to a three-year cycle, renewable yearly, to fund the administrative expenses of LARC. Further cooperation between the two organisations involves the Community Action Support Programme (CASP). CASP is a joint initiative between the LARC and UNICEF aimed at building the capacity and scaling-up assistance to OVC by CBO member organisations through small grants. The goal of CASP is to develop a successful model for the regional distribution of small grants to community-driven OVC initiatives. Within the grant-making process, LARC's capacity to assess, disburse, and manage grants was also developed through the development of policies and instruments to govern the process.

The main activities of CASP (the UNICEF LARC initiative) are to:

- Make small grants to Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) and Community Based Organisations (CBO) for projects that would help OVCs
- Monitor and support these projects to ensure they are succeeding
- Help the NGOs and CBOs to account for the funds

UNICEF allocated a total of US\$50,000 for the grants. LARC received the applications, evaluated them, selected grantees, distributed funds, and monitored the performance of the funded projects.

Programme Findings

Policies and Instruments Developed

In the development of the grant-making cycle, LARC and UNICEF devised a process that repeats itself twice over a twelve-month period. The cycle includes the development of a grant policy (included in the cycle possibly in error), a toolkit for the granting process, allocation protocols, financial management at LARC and in the community, and management support to the community organisations. The allocation policy included limits for grants, the number of grants in a cycle, the types of acceptable expenditure, and payment protocols. A toolkit of documents and procedures was produced which included the application form, guidelines for applicants, application evaluation checklist, allocation information consolidation, evaluation forms for the allocations committee, grantee reporting forms and standard letters.

The policies, procedures and instruments are generally good examples of grant management. It was agreed that grants would be made to LARC members that met the standards listed, and this rule was followed and documented. The forms were generally understandable and relatively simple, and the LARC staffs were able to ensure that applications, pre-project evaluations, and reporting were completed on the required forms.

While the agreed policies and procedures for the granting process were generally followed, the information requested was not rigorous or detailed enough to give LARC a true picture of the member organization's capacity to attain the goals as set

out in the application. The fact that an organisation is a paid-up member of LARC and has a bank account does not offer a judgement as to its ability to carry out a project to its agreed goal.

UNICEF provided capacity building to LARC to prepare it to become a regional grant making body for small grants to community driven OVC initiatives. This worked well, and their use of the formats was good. However, the application process showed that LARC had difficulties extending the institutional strengthening skills in terms of policies and procedures downward to its member institutions. Applicant institutions required sessions with LARC staff on how to fill out the application forms, and fairly extensive help was required from LARC. As the forms were relatively simple, strengthening seems particularly important.

The language of the grant making structure appeared to be confusing to some officers and grantees. The cycle might have included a review of policy and amendment as appropriate, but generally these policies could stand for a year or longer without review.

A critical part of projects is a time plan with benchmarks to help people know whether they are making progress. The reporting forms were difficult for the grantees, as they had not prepared clear action plans in order to reach the project goal. They did not have clear obtainable benchmarks as they implemented the project, but worked toward the overall goal of the project. This made it difficult to identify and consult with LARC in order to make changes in project design when problems were encountered. This was especially true of the poultry projects when they faced an unanticipated raise of one hundred percent in the cost of chicken feed. LARC policy clearly states that children should be cared for within the family. In the selection of projects, the policy statements of LARC as an organisation were not always followed. This is especially evident in grants to support to institutions offering residential support to 'orphans'. Selection of these projects is understandable as these institutions have better management structures, making the chances of accountability and successful implementation higher. However, the policies should have been either changed or notice made in the files why this choice was made in violation of the existing policies.

The LARC office has records on file for each of the projects. Examination of the files showed that the granting process has been followed in terms of forms and formats. The consolidation of all information on each project in individual files would give a more immediate and complete picture of each project. For example, the project visit reports are kept in a notebook. While such documentation can be read and used, it would be faster and easier for a staff person if these notes were filed by project.

Grant process

The aim of the initiative was to fund a small number of organisations that would have a large impact on children in the community. The range of grants was planned to be between US\$1000 and US\$7000. The organisations applying for grants were informed that those requesting smaller amounts of funds stood a greater chance of their application being successful. If the project was to require funding levels of US\$10,000 and above it would not be funded, nor would grants be given for part of the project budget in the hopes of finding the balance of funds needed to meet the

project goal. In order for the Allocations Committee to approve a grant it was necessary for the organisation to present a proposal that could be achieved with the money provided. Budget items that were considered were operating costs, capital costs and seed funding for income generating activities that support OVC.

Preference was given to organisations where applications that would have a sustainable impact. Revolving fund initiatives were considered a high priority, as they would benefit a larger group of people over a longer period of time. Above all, the projects that received grants would have to benefit orphans and vulnerable children, and would not create dependency either in the organisation that received the money or in the clients of the organisation.

Applicants were apprised of the conditions that would govern the use of the grants. They included agreement that:

- The grant could only be used for the exact purpose that had been agreed in the application. If the organisation later need to change the expenditure plan, prior permission would need to be sought from LARC, who would in turn consult UNICEF.
- The organisations were required to report on the activities supported by the grant on a bi-monthly basis, through the completion of a liquidation form. Information on the liquidation form was to include information on the children that were being helped by the grant.
- All expenditures were to be supported by receipts.
- If the grant was a one-time grant, LARC/UNICEF could decide to purchase the item on behalf of the organisation, or alternately require the organisation to produce three quotations for the grant expenditure.
- When accepting the grant, it was agreed that LARC or UNICEF could visit the project, take photographs, and talk to children and adults involved in the project

The capacity building provided by UNICEF resulted in the development of a good model for project selection, assessment and disbursement of funds by LARC. The application process and responsibilities of the grantees were clearly set out. The application process was followed, as the guidelines were well presented so that the applicants were able to meet the requirements. Where applicants had questions or concerns about the applications, LARC staff gave them advice on how to meet the requirements.

In the original objective of CASP a total of fifteen grants were to be made with the US\$50,000 funding. In the actual granting process twice the number of grants was approved using the same amount of funds. It was felt that as many organisations as possible should benefit from this initiative. This phenomenon is common in communities where resources are few and the needs are great. Here the temptation is to spread funds thinly to try and meet the needs of many groups, with potentially negative consequences on the effectiveness of the projects. When the granting institution and the beneficiaries share this view, it often means that results are marginal and beneficiaries overestimate their ability to meet the goals that have been set.

Evaluation of Grant Applications and Grant Decisions

After application, LARC staff visited the organisations to learn more about the projects for which funds were being sought. LARC also assisted organisations in the filling out of application forms in order to ensure that applications were complete when being considered by the Allocation Committee. Field visits were arranged for each application to confirm the content of the application and seek additional information in order for the staff to 'advocate effectively' for each project to the allocations committee.

Files show that the staff checked forms, and performed complete pre-project assessments that contained the information that was requested. These assessments were the basis of the presentations to the Allocation Committee. Members of the committee used an appropriate checklist to analyse the applications. The completion of this process culminated in a decision on each project by the Allocation Committee.

An Allocation Committee comprising of prominent persons who were not directly involved in any LARC member organisation was constituted to review and select projects that would be given grants under the project. The Allocations Committee included the chairperson of LARC (ex-officio), a representative of the Catholic Church, a senior member of another church, the Town Clerk of Ndola, a professional person, a senior representative of the Victims Support Unit, and a representative from UNICEF. The Committee elected its own chairperson.

The grants were made to organisations that were:

- Members of LARC
- Membership subscription paid up
- Had submitted their quarterly reports to LARC
- Had a bank account
- Were judged by the Allocation Committee to be sound and able to meet the objectives of helping OVC

The evaluation of the applications was carried out in accordance with the policies and procedures set out in the implementation guide. The records of application assessment project visits, and Allocation Committee checklists were available in the LARC offices. The evaluations were complete and adequate within the scope envisioned by the project implementers.

The Allocation Committee considered 31 applications and awarded 15 grants in the first round, and considered 37 applications and awarded 17 grants in the second round as shown in the table below. Four grantees from the second round had received grants in the first round. Grants could be categorized as skills training (7), schools support (5), income generating activities (18, including farming (3), tailoring (4), fisheries(1), chickens (9) and a piggery(1)), one women's loan fund, and one sports facility dorm rehabilitation.

The grants received were considered to be those with the best adherence to the rules listed above, and in the consultant's view, the selections were the best of the applicants. However, these rules did not include sustainability/ sustainable impact of the programs over time, or the specific numbers or quality of services to OVC.

Additionally, the allocation was overly focused on income generation projects in response to requests, without ensuring that the applicants had diversified options to consider rather than focusing mainly on poultry production.

CASP Summary of Projects

Name of Organisation	Location	Contact with Evaluator ¹	Activity	Amount of Grant in Zambian Kwacha	Direct Beneficiaries and Sustainability
Copperbelt Rehabilitation Project	Ndola	F, FGD, V	Purchase of equipment for skills training	1. 17,750,000	1230 enrolees Sustainable
Wings of Needy Kids	Ndola	F, V	Poultry IGA, Loan fund for women.	1. 10,650,000 2. 4,484,500	265 Unsustainable
Women Federation for World Peace		F, FGD	Training	1. 6,930,000	120 Inherently Unsustainable
CINDI-Mufulira	Mufulira	F, V	School requisites for OVCs	1. 3,550,000	103 Inherently Unsustainable
CINDI-Kavu	Kavu, Ndola	F, FGD, V	Poultry IGA Fish Farm	1. 12,000,000 2. 5,000,000	900 Unsustainable
Ibenge Orphan Support	Ibenge, Ndola	F, FGD	Poultry IGA	1. 6,750,000	70 Unsustainable
Natwange		F	School Equipment	1. 9,585,000	431 Sustainable
Nissi Care Centre		F, FGD, V	Poultry IGA, Egg production IGA	1. 5,019,700 2. 5,000,000	49 Sustainable
UMMI- Mishikishi		F	Farming Inputs	1. 5,000,000	271 Inherently Unsustainable
ZOWA		F	Tailoring	1. 3,550,000	113 Unsustainable
Gospel Mission Sport Outreach	Kitwe	F, FGD, V	Rehabilitation of structures	1. 10,650,000	300 Sustainable
Bethel Christian Association		F	Desks and Benches	1. 4,000,000	50 Sustainable
Chinika House		F, FGD	Skills training in tailoring and IGA	1. 3,437,217 2. 4,025,000	30 Sustainable

¹ F=file reviewed, FGD=attended focus group discussion, V=visited

Name of Organisation	Location	Contact with Evaluator¹	Activity	Amount of Grant in Zambian Kwacha	Direct Beneficiaries and Sustainability
Marja Matern		F, V	Skills Training Equipment	1. 2,813,500	36 Unsustainable
Hosana Mapalo		F, FBD, V	School Equipment	1. 4,776,000	98 Unsustainable
CINDI-Kansenshi	Ndola	F, FBD, V	Support for farming village for OVC households	2. 6,700,000	947 Sustainable
Ndeke Orphan Project	Kitwe	F	IGA and skills training	2. 3,620,000	180 Uncertain
AROS		F	Egg Production IGA	2. 4,900,000	50 Unsustainable
Christian Response Foundation	Pamodzi, Ndola	F	Tailoring IGA	2. 5,000,000	127 Unsustainable
School for Orphans and Street Kids	Itawa	F	Poultry Project	2. 1,475,500	586 Unsustainable
AMOWA		F	Sewing machines for IGA	2. 2,700,000	199 Unsustainable
New Renato	Kashitu, Ndola	F	Desk for community school	2. 4,000,000	184 Sustainable
Labourers Union of Christ		F	IGA and skills training	2. 3,300,000	235 Unsustainable
Murundu Orphan Project	Murundu	F, FGD, V	Poultry IGA	2. 2,773,000	350 Sustainable
Zambia Chronicle Advocacy Campaign Foundation		F, FGD	Support for the planting of a maize field	2. 3,975,000	130 Inherently Unsustainable
Hope for Africa	Kabundi, Chingola	F	Poultry IGA	2. 3,921,500	250 Unsustainable
St. Martin's	Kitwe	F, V	Expansion of Piggery IGA	2. 5,000,000	35 Sustainable

Name of Organisation	Location	Contact with Evaluator¹	Activity	Amount of Grant in Zambian Kwacha	Direct Beneficiaries and Sustainability
Ipusukilo Women's Project	Kitwe	F, FGD, V	Skills training and IGA in knitting by hand and machine	2. 4,724,700	120 Uncertain

While the procedures were followed and the projects funded appeared to be of value, the allocation process did not adequately address governance, management structures and historical information on previous project implementation. Core funding for LARC member organisation management was often self help, small membership fees, or donated time by initiators of projects. Therefore the pre-project assessment did not offer a critical opinion of the ability of the applicant organisation to function independently outside of the grant.

Another weakness of the allocation process was the financial assessment. It appears that the LARC staff did not carefully assess whether the project was feasible under the budget provided, accounting for processing delays and unanticipated changes in the cost structures. LARC staffs were provided with training in how to make these assessments, but it appears that the pressure to provide a larger number of small grants encouraged an over-optimistic view of the budget process in grant applications.

Monitoring and Related Adherence to Programme and Financial Reporting

After grants allocation, LARC staff was required to visit projects to ensure that the funds were being used as intended, the grantee was succeeding in its goals, and the grantee was able to fulfil the financial and operational reporting obligations and ensure the maximum effectiveness of OVC interventions. LARC was also responsible for the consolidation of information collected from individual beneficiary organisations and its transmission to UNICEF. To ensure the agreed processes were implemented and were effective, UNICEF provided capacity building to LARC.

There are records of project visits that discuss the progress of the projects. All of the grantees did embark on the projects that they agreed on in the approved project documents. At the time of the project evaluation visits, those that were one-off grants -- for bursaries, agricultural inputs and training -- had completed project implementation.

Larger organisations with formal management structures have better-established record keeping procedures and practices. In IGA activities, records on the daily activities were not always available, as they were kept in the organiser's home or were generally not complete. In IGA poultry activities, generally some kind of record was available on number of eggs produced or number of broilers in the chicken run. This information was often kept by the overseer at the IGA site without management being aware of current production in the activity.

When visiting the projects the employee or volunteer in charge of the activity was generally able to answer questions about the progress of the project. Organisations do not generally have up-to-date, detailed, written information on the status of their projects. In smaller organisations one person takes care of banking, purchases, sales and the management of income. The lack of division of responsibility does not offer a system of checks and balances or transparency in the organisations.

.Files generally did not show records of grantee-written project progress reports or monitoring. In the FGD discussion, members spoke about the enhancement of organisational project implementation through the LARC workshop on grant implementation. Members said that “training must be followed-up with practical work”. Grantees didn’t see the connection between the training on grant implementation and monitoring, and the actual tasks of implementation and monitoring. A major concern was that the reporting process should be meaningful, timely, and simple in order to assist project implementation. Record keeping did not seem to be a priority— they assumed that when LARC visited them, the grantees then did not have to write a report as well, as “the LARC people were always with us”. There was strong evidence of very regular visits and attention in the field by LARC, and this is praiseworthy

There are a number of limitations in using the LARC visits as the primary documentation for project assessment. First, it puts the monitoring responsibility on LARC rather than on the organisation. Second, this transfer of responsibility for monitoring also moves the resolution of implementation problems to LARC. If there is no market for goods produced, if prices for inputs go up or if inputs are not delivered, LARC is seen to be the body to sort out the problems. This was borne out in a project that had received a grant for school desks. The desks produced by the supplier were substandard. LARC went to the supplier to negotiate better workmanship. While it would have taken LARC more time, if the grantee organisation had sorted the matter out itself with mentoring by LARC, then the next time the organisation negotiates goods and services it would be more skilled in ensuring a positive outcome.

The reporting protocols established in the agreement with UNICEF provides for LARC to amalgamate information from organisations and in turn present the information. In using this design the organisations have no consequence if they have not presented a report, as the grant has already been consumed, while LARC is highly vested in reporting as it is the basis of continued cooperation with its partner UNICEF.

In the case of IGA initiatives three major limitations were identified. First, organisations did not necessarily have experience in the IGA that was being undertaken, and this markedly increased the risk of failure. Second, market research was not undertaken in advance of implementation to ensure the success of an income-generating project. Third and most importantly, organisations did not have any methods of checking the status of a project in order to make changes if the economic environment changed or mistakes in implementation were discovered.

Some illustrative examples may prove instructive. At a fishpond project, pigs were being kept a few kilometres from the fishpond. At the second evaluator’s visit to the project the chairperson asked why the consultant was concerned that the piggery was not near the pond. He was not aware that the pigsty should be built over the pond so that the droppings fertilised the pond and provided feed for the fish. Another person on the committee suggested that, for security, it would not be safe to keep the pigs near a pond.

At another project a women's group was funded to make school jerseys, but upon producing samples they took them to the schools in the area only to find that suppliers had already been identified. As a result the women are now making baby clothes on orders and are finding a market for these goods.

In IGAs dealing with poultry (nine projects) the price of the feed went up so dramatically that it was not economical to continue to keep chickens. But because the organisations had committed to poultry they could not do anything else, nor did they seek advice/permission on changing the use of the funds from LARC. Except in two cases where the livestock project was part of a residential care project for 'orphans', all poultry projects had closed at the time of the visit. The organisational records showed that the monies were in the bank or had been used to assist children with for school requisites, farm inputs and food. In most cases the base capital had been consumed.

Financial reports were reviewed in some detail. In the examination of the financial records at LARC and project sites, all projects had presented receipts equal to the grants that they were given. . There did not appear to be any expenditure that was inconsistent with the objectives of any project reviewed. The reporting on finances was timely and complete.

Many of the organisations given grants under the CASP are small individual or community initiatives with little experience in comprehensive project planning and implementation. While budgets were presented with the best intentions, they often underestimated the real costs of implementation. This, coupled with lack of funding for core administrative costs, resulted in small organisations finding themselves unable to implement agreed projects, or shifting funds in order to implement at a lower level. Inadequate budgeting was exacerbated by the application guidelines that suggested that a smaller grant request was more likely to succeed. In the case of larger organisations, it was possible to amalgamate core costs for organisational activities. This enabled such institutions to meet project objectives, even if changes became necessary during the implementation process.

In the FGD, members openly discussed the difficulties in budgeting for projects. Some grantees mentioned that funds did not adequately address the running costs specific to project implementation, particularly funds necessary for transportation to visit the project sites or transport inputs. It was also said that the time lapse from preparing the budget to receiving the funds and then making purchases did not adequately address inflation or contingency. Another difficulty faced, particularly in poultry projects, was the unpredictable increase in chicks and chicken feed (over 100%) during project implementation.

The FGD spent some time discussing the limitations of one-time funding, especially in IGA, as they felt that one-off funding does not produce sustainable results. From these comments, it would appear that the organisations saw the grants as a long-term solution to running costs demands. Unfortunately this did not happen, as the projects that were embarked upon had too many competing demands on the income generated. With a mandate to provide support for children, it was perceived as imperative that the IGA keep going even when it was not economic to do so. In other cases the needs of the children being supported by the organisation were so

overwhelming that the income generating capital was consumed. This resulted in projects which had started off well fizzling out after three or four income generating cycles. This is a classic problem in income generation when connected to weak institutions with significant social demands.

Projects that were able to meet their goals as stated in the application were those with solid institutional structures, good management protocols and a history of project implementation. They were able to adjust their work if the conditions changed or an aspect of project implementation had not been anticipated, and if necessary, access additional funds to ensure project completion. In one project additional funding was necessary for a land survey. As this was not budgeted for, funds were found internally to meet this need. In a project where the CASP grant was the only source of organisational funding, the project would not have any way of accessing additional funds, resulting in the project being scaled down or not being completed.

Support to Beneficiaries and Impact on Children

From project records, visits and the FGD over eight thousand children have been reported to enjoy a direct or indirect benefit from the CASP. In projects where a specific number of children were targeted for a specific intervention, the number of direct beneficiaries can easily be counted as in the case of school bursaries. In projects where the intervention targets households and the organisation has a formal management structure and experience in impact analysis, numbers of beneficiaries were counted and matched with the project application. In smaller, less formal organisations (20 of the 32 funded), numbers of beneficiaries and children are not as precise and may reflect a wish to help as many children as possible. In the cases of the smaller organizations, it is common to count all of the vulnerable children in the catchment area, all the children enrolled in a community school or all the children that participate in the organisations activities.

The interpretation of what denotes successful interventions that impact positively on children does not appear to be the same by all the partners. Success or failure was defined in terms of the existence of the project inputs, record of the expenditures, and input use potentially by 'X' number of children. The quality of the programme offered was not generally used as an indicator of success.

While the organisation should define the beneficiaries and the impact on their lives, the skills necessary to make a determination of success that is understood by all partners is not evident. One community school was 'successful' as the renovations had been carried out, the desks were in place, and children were receiving lessons. The report did not consider that the rooms made were dark and dusty and the toilet facilities were makeshift. Livestock IGA projects implemented in urban areas are 'successful' as they provide much needed food for children in the community and in residential care, but what are the implications of raising domestic animals in urban areas. Will they be sustainable if the organisations are contravening local bylaws?

There is no doubt that a large number of children have benefited from the CASP initiative, with many examples at the community level to testify to the changes in children's lives. Even where IGA projects have not been sustainable, children in the communities did receive the benefits of the efforts put in by LARC and UNICEF. The

consultant visited children who are now going to school, either through advocacy or the provision of bursaries, children who have a blanket because of the sale of chickens, children in orphanages who are able to drink milk because the IGA provides money so that milk can be bought. A project that supported peri-urban women to have access to farmland has made it possible for fifty households to produce food for home consumption and for sale. This project has not only increased the food supply for these households, but also has given women and their children an opportunity to work together in the fields cooperatively. Adolescent children interviewed said they have eaten much more over the last year and have participated in food production on a regular basis.

On a visit to a school where children had received bursaries, the head and teachers openly welcomed the members of the CBO. It was clear that they had worked together for a long time as they spoke about several children's circumstances, demonstrating shared concerns for the children. One small boy was not in class during the visit. The teachers said that the child was often ill and away from school. The members of the CBO confirmed this saying that the parents of the child had both died. Even though the bursaries were not available for a second year, the organisation and the school continue to monitor and help the children. The children also appeared to have an open relationship with the members, as they greeted them and talked to them freely.

Sustainability

The question of sustainability of the activities undertaken by the grantees requires answers to three questions. First, is the activity undertaken by its nature sustainable? Second, does the grantee institution have the innate governance and resources to sustain the grant activity after completion? Third, are the institutional structures outside the grantee institution such that sustainability can be assured? Unfortunately these questions were not asked in the allocation process, and so the answers may be a source of contention.

Issues related to sustainability and sustainable impact are particularly difficult in projects implemented at community level, for two reasons. First, if the focus is on OVC needs, the projects requested may reflect the felt needs of the community at this time, but may well not be sustainable. For example, in one-off grants that support children going to school, there is the provision of education facilities that will be used by several groups of children. In this case the benefits are easily seen. In the case of a one off bursary grant, the project is inherently unsustainable, but it may reflect the most important perceived need in the community. Second, local institutions operate on the margin in terms of resources, so a project that is sustainable when a competent volunteer works there becomes unsustainable when that person leaves. Therefore, the focus has to be balanced between the felt needs of the community and the anticipated capacity of the grantee to carry on with the grant activity. This has to be carefully considered from the outset, and addressed using some of the Recommendations in the next section.

After careful consideration and review, the consultant found that of the 32 projects, 10 were sustainable, 2 were uncertain, 16 were unsustainable, and four were

inherently unsustainable. The sustainable projects were typically those with dedicated management, with larger, long-term institutions with national or international affiliation. The success stories were typified by good governance structures and strong implementation protocols. Interestingly the success stories included a number of orphanages.

Projects funded for IGA activities were successful at the beginning, but were unable to sustain the activity. This was the case for a number of reasons including the lack of appropriate, long-term accommodation for the IGA activities, and use of members' property for project implementation. The major cause for the collapse of projects was the diversion of base capital to non-productive activities as medicine, school uniforms and food for children. This is a common problem internationally, and argues against the undertaking of IGA for this type of grants scheme.

If the evidence of sustainability is the long term operation of an IGA, many of the projects have failed; over two-thirds of these are unsustainable. The success stories were in the piggery, in poultry connected to an orphanage, in urban plot cultivation, and one tailor. If we look at the experience gained in grant making by LARC, UNICEF, NGO and CBO we could anticipate that future initiatives would gain from the experiences here.

Interestingly, skills training was sustainable in only two out of seven cases, while contributions to schools were sustainable in three out of five cases. These latter were largely contributions of equipment that enabled training and studies to be more feasible and sustainable in existing structures. The same was true of skills training, enhancing existing arrangements that simply needed a small boost.

Now we address questions of the governance capacity of the institutions to create sustainability for their grants. From the discussions with partners it is evident that sustainability planning was not fully addressed in the project planning process. It is not sufficient to say that members will look after the chickens, that the committee will repair the school desks, or the gardens will be grown. A certain degree of rigor is critical.

Mechanisms were not in place to confirm or modify implementation, get help, or end an intervention when it was no longer appropriate or useful. Therefore, when projects had problems or were unable to continue, guilt and failure was felt by all concerned. The grantees didn't know how to check to see they were on track, and were unsure about how to fix problems or what to do when failure was imminent. This certainly affected the level of unsustainable projects. Given the initial experiences, the success rate is not unusual and should not poorly reflect on options for the future.

Regarding the enabling environment for the grantees and its effects on sustainability, the most important issue that emerged during the FGD was premises. The group members cited several implementation limitations related to used premises that are not owned by the organisation. Rental properties have been sold when a project is being implemented and the new landlords have asked that the project move. In cases where renovations have been done to a structure, the owners want the property back as the owners now perceive that they can do the same activity to earn personal income. In cases where the organisation was already renting, it was

thought that the new initiative could be housed at the same site, but the landlord did not agree. The problematic arrangement was said to be the use of individual member's premises. This causes a blurring of roles, as the person can be a landlord, member, benefactor, and principal administrator. This is particularly difficult in income generating projects where the owner of the premises is also running the business on behalf of the members.

The other important issue raised was the security of goods. This is one of the reasons that goods end up in individuals' homes – because they are unsafe in rented premises and they would have to employ someone to guard them. In many instances when they have rented premises, volunteers and members take turns sleeping there to ensure the safety of grant-funded goods. They even sleep in chicken houses!

Linkages of LARC, Beneficiary Organizations, and other Service Providers

LARC is primarily known as a networking organisation that shares information with its membership. LARC is known for this role within the community and nationally. It is often the entry point for the Copperbelt Province when outsiders want to develop partnerships and find out what interventions are taking place at the community level. The government also uses it as a focal point for the collection and dissemination of information on issues related to OCV to the members of LARC.

In the granting process, LARC uses its network to confirm the suitability of applications, soliciting advice from institutions and partners. When grantees have completed a training programme, LARC has referred the organisation to other member organizations for further activities. One of LARC's greatest advantages is with its membership on district and provincial advisory boards and task forces. They use this advantage to locate opportunities in the province and share information with their members. This includes referring institutions to government departments for services. LARC extensively uses district services such as agricultural extension.

Comparison with SCOPE-OVC

As part of the evaluation the consultant was requested to meet with the SCOPE-OVC offices in Kitwe to discuss their methodology and observations in the grant management within their programme. It was not possible to visit individual projects as the coordinator had just moved to Kitwe and was settling into the office.

SCOPE-OVC has three tiers of sub-grants for OVC interventions. In category 1 the range of grants is from US\$20,000 to US\$50,000. These grants are given to a primary recipient who in turn disburses grant to secondary recipients. Categories 2 (US\$6,000 to US\$19,000) and 3 (US\$500 to US\$5,000) are given to organisations directly implementing OVC interventions. In cases where organisations seek funding of less than US\$500 they are encouraged to partner with other organisations that can disburse a smaller grant.

In order to apply for the grants, the applicant organisation is supplied with an application format requesting information on the organisational structure, description

of the project, a work plan, monitoring and evaluation plan and budget, and details of the organisational financial management process. The SCOPE Community Mobilisation Officer (CMO) works with the District Orphans and Vulnerable Children Committee (DOVCC) to identify prospective applicants.² Upon reception of an application the CMO conducts a formal assessment of the application following a standard checklist. If the submission is seen to have value, but does not meet all of the requirements to warrant a grant, the CMO will offer technical support to assist the organisation to complete the application. This process takes the two parties an average of two months. At this point the application is sent through SCOPE-OVC to the DOVCC for review and recommended action.

The regional SCOPE Project Management Team then reviews the application.³ This committee can recommend the project for approval to the SCOPE Grants Management Committee in Lusaka.⁴ The average approval rate for projects presented at Lusaka meetings is ninety percent.

There are several challenges faced at community level in the granting process. A large portion of community initiatives are not registered, do not have formal management procedures and require substantial technical support to prepare and present a complete application. Assistance may include how to register a community organisation, how to manage an organisation and how to write a project proposal. The role of the CMO in providing technical support has a number of drawbacks. When the CMO has been instrumental in the submission of the application, the recipient organisation cannot understand if it is not approved when the advice of the SCOPE staff has been followed. This causes a breach in the relationship between SCOPE and the community. At the same time the CMO feels demoralised, having developed a relationship with an organisation and the community over as many as six months. The CMO feels that s/he has failed the community, and the organisation blames them for not telling the 'real' methodology or lying to them about the chances of receiving a grant.

A successful SCOPE initiative cited had the following attributes:

- The community, including the DOVCC, had a history of working together for the community.
- The DOVCC was strengthened long before grants were made available.
- The members of the DOVCC and the organisations were beneficiaries of the programmes and projects funded in the district.
- The procedures for the recommendation of projects were long standing and transparent.

² The DOVCC has representation from local NGOs, CBOs, Faith Based Organisations (FBO) and lead government ministries including district representatives from the ministries of Youth and Sport, Education, Health, Community Development and Social Welfare and Agriculture.

³ This team consists of the Regional Supervisor, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, the Organisational Development Specialist, the Grant Manager and the Microfinance Officer.

⁴ Committee membership comprises of the Grants Manager, the Project Manager, and the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. Representatives from the Zambia Integrated Health Project (ZIHP), United States International Development Agency (USAID), and Family Health International (FHI) also participate in the selection process.

- There was a perceived benefit to the implementers, for example, community schools benefit children, but if the teachers do not receive anything for their work, the school will fail.

It was said that the SCOPE model does not document the impact of project interventions in the community beyond the immediate implications. One of the areas that needs to be considered is the trickle down effect of grant resources, and how that affects the granting process and implementation. As a result, communities cannot see the long-term sustainable impact of the initiatives. This in turn results in wrangles over the resources. It was felt that if larger, long-term impact projects are to be given, there must be an effective organisational management structures in place or the project will fail. The application technical support process is not sufficiently long for this to occur.

The major obstacles that are barriers to successful implementation of projects include:

- Informal agreements on ownership and rental of premises for project operations
- Budget and expenditures do not match, usually because the organisation does not have a core fund to meet daily operational costs
- Diversion of funds to other programme activities than for which they were approved.⁵
- The use of group activity methodology does not auger well for success and sustainability.

So what does work? Projects where the community members receive a direct benefit seem to be successful. It can be material or information, training that is tied to a practical outcome, or advocacy and awareness raising. Even when an organisation is mentored through the planning and implementing processes, it is not enough to ensure sustainable impact of grants that are disbursed.

In comparing the implementation of the two granting processes, it is clear that each organisation has used a similar grants process, although the approval process for LARC is simpler and can be expected to be faster. The two institutions have also faced similar difficulties and enjoyed similar successes at the community level. It appears that the single most important factor in successful grant-making is funding initiatives for local organizations that already have in place governance structures and strong implementation management protocols.

To its advantage SCOPE-OVC has an international organisational structure that supports the implementation of all the programmes undertaken by SCOPE. It has a large budget for capacity building at both organisational and community level. It employs a substantial number of people to work with communities on grant implementation. The umbrella of CARE brings long-term experience in programme implementation and many years in local grants administration.

LARC is a small membership organisation with a small budget, little experience in project implementation, and a small staff with limited resources. It is a credit to LARC

⁵ This does not imply embezzlement.

that the financial integrity of the grants was preserved, and that the activities brought benefits to many OVCs. It may be that this is a more cost-efficient mechanism than SCOPE.

The application process is similar in both organisations. A key difference is that SCOPE requests more details about governance structures, internal controls, a detailed work plan, impact assessment and a detailed budget that includes how core costs will be met. These additional documents are important and significant in implementing grant projects. SCOPE provides detailed support through the application process that may take place over a number of months. LARC, while it assists organisations in the application process, spent less time and resources assisting applicants, which acts as a mechanism for measuring applicant capacity. Selection is simpler and faster in LARC, with fewer layers of review. The consultant is not able to comment on the selection process and its relative success levels as SCOPE has not yet evaluated this.

Both organisations monitor grantees through visits and written reports. The written reporting requirements are more stringent in SCOPE, with tranche payment of the grant dependent on SCOPE receiving the reports from grantees and ensuring that the reports are acceptable and accurate. In the LARC process there is little incentive to report regularly. SCOPE has not yet evaluated the results of the grants on beneficiaries. LARC has kept data on the numbers of beneficiaries reported by grantees, and regular visits help ensure projects are moving ahead.

Recommendations

1. LARC needs to review its policy and implementation strategy to reflect the change from networking and advocacy to a wider scope of activities. Providing grants is a specialized activity requiring unique skills and management. It is particularly demanding when grants are made to weak institutions that also need institutional strengthening of various types. The suggested method would be the development of a strategic plan to implement the change, particularly paying attention to the gaps in the current process: work plans and ongoing monitoring, and sustainability questions.
2. LARC is attempting to deal with a target group of beneficiaries that is very wide and has multiple needs. When they are doing programming for grants, they must very carefully define and adhere to their target and the anticipated number of grantees they may reach, and try not to extend themselves beyond their (and their grantees') capacity. While it is understood that this is difficult because so many need so much, lines need to be drawn to enable effectiveness and sustainability of the results. This is particularly true about the grant sizes, as LARC doubled the number of grantees and cut sizes, which diluted their results. This happened with LARC and with grantees.
3. Consideration should be given to allowing applicant institutions from those outside the LARC membership, to encourage a wider range of activities and support competition.
4. A simple functional work plan with benchmarks is an important addition to the forms, and should be developed in the simplest possible way in an interactive method between the applicant institution and LARC staff.
5. The applicants and LARC must ensure that the enabling environment is suitable for project success and sustainability if that is desired. This means that laws must be complied with (such as not having livestock in urban homes and submitting reports to the Registrar of Societies); that market research has been completed to ensure the likelihood of success in any income generation or related skills training activities; and that the management of the grantee is ready and able to take on the challenge of a grant. Premises is a huge issue and needs to be addressed up front before grants are provided.
6. Budgeting must be realistic, and should be confirmed by looking at other institutions or businesses that operate such programs. There must be a clear plan for managing assets after the grant is completed.
7. An observed weakness was the governance of grantees, particularly management, capacity to operate without other funds, and basic accounting and writing skills. LARC is well placed to strengthen its partners in management and governance, and should proceed accordingly.
8. As management costs are significant for small grants, attention should be paid to how the applicant will pay for its management requirements, and what might happen if key volunteers are not available to help.

9. Sustainability is a key issue, and in some cases sustainability is at odds with community requests and needs. The question of whether and how this important, and how Allocation Committees should judge and weigh this, is critical. LARC and UNICEF should set up criteria to determine selection in this regard.
10. Income generating activities are problematic around the world for people focused simply on poverty. When institutions do them it is often a recipe for disaster. If IGAs are desirable, it should be as a part of training for target clients, or a practical demonstration of an idea that adults responsible for OVCs can emulate. In rare cases, orphanages can also manage such programs, which provide needed income and educate orphans on life skills and income options as they grow older. Sustainability is important here, and should be carefully considered.
11. For other types of assistance such as skills training, renovation of buildings, and school assistance, a key determination should be whether the grant will cover an input to an existing arrangement that will enable it to work better or longer.
12. Grant types should be diversified in order to avoid mass failure, such as the poultry example for LARC. Additionally, government and private institutions should be linked to projects where appropriate for training, technical and supplies information.
13. While LARC has a good set of grant management tools, they need to be devolved more effectively to the grantee level. There needs to be additional clarity within grantees about their own monitoring role, and particularly what to do when things go wrong. This may include work with grantees to ensure that they complete reports and learn to self-monitor and alter their own grants as requirements emerge. A toolkit at community level, tranching of funds, LARC staff using grantee reports as a basis for field visits, and ultimately devolving of decisions to change grant allocations to experienced grantees would help.
14. Project completion should be defined in the grant, and a review and report with lessons learned be completed by the grantee with LARC review and comment. This should occur at the time the final liquidation documents are submitted.
15. The LARC staff visits should be retained as they are excellent in motivating and encouraging grantees.

Appendices

Terms of Reference for Consultancy

Work Plan for Consultancy

Project Evaluation Guide

Field Informants

Focus Group Discussion Attendance List

Terms of Reference for Consultancy

For the

Evaluation of the Link Association for the Relief of children (LARC) Cash Assistance Support Project

October 2002

In June 2000 UNICEF approached LARC with a view of requesting them to implement a Community Action Support Project (CASP) pilot project to distribute small grants to member organizations dealing directly with OVC on the Copperbelt. A series of meetings and workshops were held to refine and finalize the pilot arrangements and a first grant of \$30,000 from the \$50,000 allocated grant was distributed. 15 member organizations benefited from the first grants, which were based on the proposed budgets. In 2001 another allocation to 17 member organizations benefited from the last \$20,000 grant. UNICEF as agreed will like to assess management, disbursement and the impact of these funds on the lives of the orphans and other vulnerable children and their parents/guardians.

Objectives

The objectives of the CASP were as follows:

- To develop policies and instruments for grant making processes to be used for allocation of grants
- To distribute \$50,000 to 15 LARC member organizations with the first allocation of \$30,000 catering for 10 member organisations and the second allocation of \$20,000 catering for 5 member organisations.
- To enhance LARC's capacity to provide for evaluation of the grant applicants, monitoring and support of beneficiaries.

Preparation phase consisted of

- Reviewing and development of a grant making toolkit
- Holding of a workshop to determine and review the allocations policy
- Holding of meetings with applicants to appraise them on how to apply
- Reviewing adjudication of the first grants and the subsequent second grants

General Goal of the Assessment

To examine the actual achievements of the project in relation to objectives set out in the project proposal of the Community Action Support Programme in the Copperbelt with support from UNICEF. The assessment will document the process; experiences, number of beneficiaries (child and adult) and lessons learnt and identify issues and challenges faced during project implementation. Also of concern should be whether the project was cost effective and whether it can be sustained.

General Objective:

The primary objective is to assess how the regional small grants to OVC initiatives benefited NGO and CBO beneficiaries and assess how these grants have impacted directly on children.

Specific Objectives:

1. Assess the grant process under the project
2. Assess the policies and instruments developed and used for the grant making process
3. Assess the implementation of the evaluation of grant applications and monitoring and support to beneficiaries
4. Assess linkages of LARC, beneficiary organizations and other service providers.
5. Assess LARC and the beneficiary organizations adherence to programme and financial reporting.
6. Assess the actual impact the project beneficiary organizations have on children.
7. Assess the sustainability/-sustained impact of the individual granted projects.
8. Make comparison with similar initiatives such as those of SCOPE-OVC

Methodology:

- Document Review.
- Develop information tools to be used to collect information to meet the stated objectives.
- Hold 1 meeting, 3 discussions with stakeholders. (Ndola, Kitwe)
- Visit at least 10 beneficiary organizations using a stratified selection process to capture a sample of different types of organizations and different target groups.
- Collect, analyse and write up the findings of evaluation.

- Visit SCOPE-OVC projects in Kitwe or any other in the Copperbelt.

Contact Duration and Conditions:

The assessment will be carried out over a period of fifteen working days and shall be completed within 25 working calendar days from the signing of the contract.

The consultant will work with minimal supervision.

The consultant will develop a work plan and present it for approval before beginning the assignment.

Deliverables:

The consultant will submit an evaluation report to UNICEF.

The report will be presented in hard and soft copy.

The contents will include-

- An executive summary that is no longer than two pages.
- The objectives of the evaluation.
- Methodologies used in the evaluation.
- Findings
- Discussion of successes and challenges during project implementation.

The appendix shall include the terms of reference, evaluation tools, recommendations/way forward, list of informants and any other relevant documents.

UNICEF will provide transport costs and appropriate DSA to consultant to enable his/her from Lusaka to the Copperbelt and back:

Draft Budget for the Evaluation:

1.Consultant fee @ K440,000/ day x20 days	K8,800,000.00
2.DSA @ 230,000/day x8 days	K1,840,000.00
3.Stationary (pens and notebooks for FDG participants)	K 75,000.00
4.Use for personal vehicle 1200KM @ K440.50	K 528,600.00
5.Fuel @ 3,300/ litre x 120 litres (1200KM / 10KM per litre)	K 396,000.00
6.Transport reimbursement x30 persons x15000 average	K 600,000.00
7.Tea and lunch for meetings x30 persons x K20,000	K 600,000.00
TOTAL	K12,839,600.00

NB. The consultant will be paid 30% of the total fee upon signing of the contract. Another 30% will be paid on delivery of the first acceptable draft report. And the final fee of 40% will be paid when the final report has been submitted both in soft and hard copies.

In the event that UNICEF is not happy with the deliverables, UNICEF reserves the right to contract another person to finalize the report and use the remaining 40% to pay for the service.

Justification for Selection of Consultant

The consultant was referred to us by USAID and was highly recommended for her experience in the field of OVC and evaluation. She is also on of the consultants who worked on the Situation Analysis Study on OVC (1999).

Work Plan for the Consultancy

CASP Evaluation Work Plan

	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Review of Document	X																												
Prepare evaluation tool	X	X																											
Meeting with LARC	X							X																					
Project Visits	X	X	X	X	X	X		X																					
Write draft document											X	X			X	X	X												
Submit draft document																			X										
Discuss draft with UNICEF																									X				
Make changes on draft																													
Submit final document																										X	X		X

PROJECT EVALUATION GUIDE

1. Project Reference Number:
2. Project Title:
3. Sector of intervention:
4. Project File Assessment:

a.	Project Application
b.	Project Evaluation
c.	Payment Disbursement
d.	Letter of Understanding
e.	Payment Voucher
f.	Project Receipts and Financial Statements
g.	Retirement of Grant
h.	Monitoring Visit Reports

6. Recipient Organization:
7. Organization Address:
8. Location of the Project:
9. Intermediary Organization (if any):
10. Description of the project as given in the Project Document:
 - a. Project Objective:
 - b. Detailed Description:
 - c. Beneficiaries:
 - i. How many people were planned to directly benefit from this project? Specific numbers
 - ii. How many men?
 - iii. How many women?
 - iv.** How many children?
 - v. How many boys?
 - vi. How many girls?
 - vii. How many indirect beneficiaries? Who are they
 - viii. How did the project plan to contribute to poverty reduction in the targeted areas? Choose one - Provide employment opportunities, small business opportunities, improve quality of life through provision of health / education / nutrition / livelihood opportunities
 - ix. In what way was the community to benefit from this project? Has this happened
- X Has the project or its implementation changed since it was approved?

11. Organisational Structure, Legal Structure

- a. Does the organisation have a constitution?
- b. Registered with the Registrar of Societies
- c. Year of Registration:
- d. When was the most recent return sent to the Registrar of Societies?
- e. What is the current organisational structure?
 - i. Advisory board
 - ii. Board of Directors
 - iii. Community Committee
 - iv. Other
- f. When did you last have an annual general meeting? **Has the organisation secured the appropriate licences, permits or approvals for this project? Please name.**

g. Who makes the decisions about the about project implementation?

h. How many employees does the organisation have for this activity?

i. What is the source of funding for employees salaries?

j. Who will pay for the salaries when the funding is no long in place?

k. Who usually does the organisational accounts?

l. Does the organisation have an organigram? If yes please draw on overleaf.

12. Affiliations and Networking

- a. To which organisations are you affiliate or are members of? Include local governing bodies.
- b. With which organisations do you network?

13. Project Site

- a. Who owns, holds the land card or title deed for the property used by the organisation?
- b. If project site is rented or loaned is there a formal arrangement such as a lease or letter of agreement?
- c. Does the rented property belong to members of the organisation?

14. Project Budget:

- a. What goods or services was the grant to purchase for the project? Cost:
 - i. What were the original project costs?
 - ii. Unicef component:
 - iii. Contribution of recipients:
 - iv. Others (specify)
 - v. Does / did the project adhere to the original budget or has the project been completed within the limits of the anticipated costs? If not, how will/were the additional costs (be) met?
 - vi. Do the expenditure documents agree with the budget?
 - vii. Do the receipts and budget reconcile?
- viii. Are there any lessons regarding budgets and accounts that could be applied to other projects?
- ix. How did the recipients contribute to the project implementation and how will they be involved in the maintaining and assuming responsibility for the completed project?
- b. Is there a formal document where this plan is written down?
- c. Who will pay for recurring costs such as salaries and maintenance and replacement of equipment, buildings and furniture for this project?
- d. Is there a formal document where this plan is written down?

- A. Actual Beneficiaries – In what have the lives of the beneficiaries change as a result of this project? Exactly how many people directly benefited from this project?
- a. How many men?
 - b. How many women?
 - c. How many children?
 - d. How many boys?
 - e. How many girls?
 - f. In what way was the community to benefit from this project?

B. Comments/Observations:

- a. Is the activity funded sustainable?
- b. Does the project have a sustainable impact?
- c. Has this project been the impetus for other activities/ spin-offs?
- d. Did the project implementers have any specific guidelines in project implementation that address gender equity?
- e. Has there been a negative impact in the implementation of the project?
- f. Comments:

Field Informants List

Gospel Mission Sports Outreach

Yvonne Mulenga
Sampa Mansa
Boniface Chisala

Ipusukilo Women's Group

Theresa Mulenga
Peggy Chilufya
Margert Chabala
Diahia Sakala

CINDI – Kansenshi

Anne Musonda
Wellinton MukuskaB.
Mukaye
Boyde Etichita
Scholastica Sanduku
Mary Phiri
Catherine Banda
Mable Mwila
Eneka Chabala
Octavia Mutamfya
Mesina Kasisi
Astrida Chisala
Martha Nshinga
Sarafina Kabwe
Elizabeth Chabatama
Mary Manda
Eliva Mambwe
Miliasi Mulenga
Lizzy Kampula
Anna Mulubika
Ireen Mwebela
Feleshina Mwanaumbi
Queen Chikaba
Winfreda Mofya
Irene Malelelo
Regina Mukuka
Veronica Changufu
Edina Mambwe
Nora Liswaniso
Mambble Namelalu

Joyce Banda
Rhadya Chilumbu
Ioda Chungu
Mary Manda
Luida Chisangu
Prudence Kunda
David Ngambi
Phyllis Bwalya

Hosanna Mapalo

Mr. Munachomga
Victor Chisanga
Chasanga Chiwye
Odidi Chiwye
Dividka Lupupa
Helen Chileshe
Maureen Muchile

Diocese of Ndola

Chibuto Munshaya

LARC

Steven Ngulube
Kabutana Maleta
Edwin Thole
Melanie Mpenza

CINDI - Kavv

Florence Kalenga
Francis Kalenga
Natalia Mwango
Stephen Geru
Mercy Geru
Reuben Chola
Jacob Musulla
Joe Chiumbi
Spider Kupelembe
Aryel Sandslu
Esther Gondwe
Grace Ngulube
Ondria Kupelembe
Milika

Copperbelt Rehabilitation Project

Mrs. Rita Chola
Mrs. Mirriam Sakala
Mrs Pauline Musengo

Musonda
Berty. M. Luka
Diana Kazembe
James
Prisca Kantengume
Daisy Kantengume
Lucky Mununga
Muntlali
Bertha Mukunaku
Stephen Muiba
Hendrix Bungogro
Mwelwa Mukeile
Gilian Chipekesheni

CINDI - Mufulira

Beauty Mubula
Lucky Mutanga
Steven Mumba
Reuben Chola
Jacob Musonda
George Chikambi

Maro Basic School

Godfrey Mwanakayaya
Abigale Mwale
Solomon Mwangi
Emmanuel House
Clarence Sumaili
Mr. Lupiya

St. Martins Childrens Home

Sister Chanda

Marja Matern

No one present

Wings of Needy Kids

Annie Muhango
Chanda Kampamba

Ms. S. Mbalabani
Ms. Canne Chileshe
Ms. N. Nshindano
Margaret Tembo

CASP Evaluation Focus Group Discussion Attendance List

Organisation	Representative
AROS	Mutale Bwalya
AWOWA	Rev. Collins Kavuka
Bethel Christian Assemblies	Pastor Wilson Mumba
CBR	Charles Mwasa
Chinika House	Charles Mumba
Christian Response Foundation	Fredrick Katunaga
CINDI-Kansenshi	Phyllis Bwalya
CINDI-Kavu	Angel Sondashi
Gospel Mission Sports Outreach	Mwape Mbai
Hosana Mapalo	Patrick Muthanga
Ibenga Orphan Support	Maggie Musonda
Ipusukilo Women's Group	Theresa Mulenga
Labourers Union of Christ	Rev. J. Tente
Marja Martern	Joseph P. Kapenda
Murundu Orphan Support	Rosemary Lupiya
Natwange	Sister Gloria
Ndeke Orphan Support	Fred Penyengwe
Nissi Care Centre	Elizabeth Kabamba
WFWP	Maria Thindwa
ZCACF	Ben B. Nkausu
ZOWA	Rev. Kosomo Mwansa