



The International HIV/AIDS Alliance: Developing a country strategy for Uganda

In 2007, the Uganda country office of The International HIV/AIDS Alliance was a new and growing programme with great potential. In need of a country strategy, but with little time to spare on it, they called on =mc. Two years on, and the Uganda country office is ahead or on target for all of its strategic objectives. Find out how they used workshops to develop a powerful and realistic strategy.

The International HIV/AIDS Alliance

The **International HIV/AIDS Alliance** (the **Alliance**) is an international NGO that was set up to strengthen community-based responses to the AIDS pandemic in developing countries. It does this by improving access to HIV treatment, prevention and support; and by reducing the impact of HIV and AIDS worldwide, particularly among the most vulnerable and marginalised.

In 15 years, the **Alliance** has developed into a global partnership of 31 organisations with activities in over 40 countries. Its Secretariat is based in Brighton, UK.

Background

In 2006, the **Alliance** established a country office in Uganda. The country programme grew rapidly, with important financial support from the US Agency for International Development. It was a new, complex and rapidly growing programme that had the potential to make a major impact on the spread and impact of HIV and AIDS in Uganda.

The **Alliance** Secretariat's senior management team had already used **Management Centre (=mc)** consultants to help develop a new organisational strategy. From that experience, the Secretariat then suggested the Ugandan country office might also develop its strategy supported by =mc.

Challenge

The Uganda country office had identified two key areas that needed attention:

- developing a country strategy that would focus and grow the programme
- helping the country office team work more effectively together

The most time they could afford away from the programme was just one week.

Solution

The Ugandan Country office agreed with =mc that the most time and cost-effective way to meet the challenges they had identified was through three separate but linked workshops:

- a one-day workshop with their main donors and partners to establish the key drivers for the Uganda country strategy
- a two-day strategy workshop with the country team to develop a vision, mission, set of values and competencies, and a set of strategic objectives, with indicators and targets
- a two-day teambuilding workshop to improve the effectiveness of the country office team and enable it to implement the strategy

Result

Two years following the work, the Uganda country office has been highly successful at achieving its new strategy: it is either on schedule or ahead of target on all its strategic objectives. In particular, it has achieved the following results:

- the country programme has effectively scaled up its work from 14 districts to 40 in one project, significantly increasing its impact on combating HIV and AIDS in Uganda
- its track record of success means the country office is now being called on to provide technical support to other Alliance partners in East and Southern Africa
- the Alliance is perceived by its donors and partners as the *leading* organisation in Uganda advocating for civil society involvement in HIV and AIDS response
- the Uganda country office is set to become an independent partner organisation by 2010

According to Kondwani Mwangulube, the Alliance's Programme Manager for East and Central Africa, there were a number of elements to the workshop approach adopted by the Uganda country office that helped them to develop and implement a successful strategy:

- **=mc's facilitation** focused on helping the Alliance use its own knowledge and experience to create a relevant strategy, rather than imposing 'external' ideas about what the strategy should be
- **the process** was truly participatory – involving the country team, key Alliance Secretariat staff, as well as key stakeholders
- **=mc's experience and expertise** in helping not-for-profit organisations develop relevant strategies meant the consultant was able to provide appropriate challenge to the country team. And the team developed an ambitious, realistic strategy that has had a major impact on HIV and AIDS in Uganda

“=mc's facilitative and participatory approach drew on our own knowledge and experience, and yet challenged us to develop an ambitious strategy. In the end, they helped us create a strategy that was truly ours, which gave the Uganda team the confidence, and most importantly, the commitment to implement it.”

Kondwani Mwangulube, Programme Manager: East and Central Africa

Further help

Visit www.aidsalliance.org for the worldwide site.

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