



Review Report
Action for Social Change (ASC)
Malawi

May 2017

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Abbreviations:

ASC	Action for Social Change
ATI	Access to Information
CBG	Community Based Group
CDS	Community Dialogue Session
CFSC	Communication for Social Change
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IEC	Information, Education, Communication
MBC	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
PD	Programme Document
VSL	Village Savings and Loans Group

Executive summary

Theory of change and programme features

The Programme Document 2016-2018 presents ASC as an advocacy approach to development where local communities are enabled and capacitated to claim their rights, and where local issues through mass media are reflected at the national level for debate and advocacy. The Theory of Change builds on the premise that empowered local communities are able to recognize, claim and access their rights and hold duty bearers accountable. Reflect Circles and Community Dialogue Sessions are key structures and instruments in these processes, while radio and TV link the community level with the national level.

The overall goal is that “people living in poverty are empowered to participate and contribute to realize their rights to sustainable development”. This is elaborated in two Change Areas

- “To ensure community structures that permit community members to communicate their needs, concerns and rights” (Formal and informal community networking; and Media platforms)
- “To empower community members with knowledge and skills to claim and realize their rights and utilize livelihood opportunities.” (Structures and skills for livelihood opportunities; and Human rights based community empowerment and governance.)

This design constitutes the elements in the overall theory of change under the heading “Communication for Social Change”, an approach that deviates from earlier days’ service delivery.

ASC works with 145 Community Based Groups (CBGs) in Lilongwe, Mzuzu, and Machinga districts. The total population is a little less than 100,000 people in 164 villages. CBGs include women groups, youth groups, farmers clubs or other types of interest groups. They are interconnected via Community Dialogue Sessions (CDS) and Reflect Circles, radio clubs, and Village Savings and Loans Groups (VSL). Through the media platforms, however, a much higher number of people are targeted. The accurate reach is uncertain but is estimated at 4 million. Media platforms include “Tikuferanji” weekly TV and radio drama programmes and the weekly “Zatonse” radio debate program.

Community level findings

ASC selects and works with existing Community Based Groups, while Reflect Circles, Village Savings and Loans Groups (VSL) and Radio Clubs are generally established through ADRA facilitation. On average, a CBG has 30 members so the total direct reach at the community is in excess of 4,000. Through formal and informal networking, however, the actual reach is multiplied and the mass media component generates an overall much higher figure. CBG is a term covering a multitude of groups established for different purposes and there are generally many overlaps between groups. CBGs are clustered in the programme at the level of Traditional Authority areas, facilitating exchange and inter group communication as well as management and better utilization of ASC resources.

Reflect Circles include members from a variety of CBGs. The Reflect methodology is applied in all work with groups as a very relevant approach, amongst others because of the high rate of illiteracy, and literacy classes are always included in the Reflect circles. A handful Reflect Circles have reached a stage where they can be used as “champion groups” and agents of change.

There are many examples of CBGs not only identifying important issues of concern but also taking action to address these issues through interaction with duty bearers. A confrontational approach is generally avoided in preference of a softer community centred advocacy approach in harmony with traditional cultural norms and values. In addition, ASC facilitates or provides technical support to CBGs, e.g. related agricultural practices and marketing, and small scale business enterprises.

CBGs are nucleus in providing inputs and substance to the “Tikuferanji” and “Zatonse” mass media programmes produced by ASC. In this way issues of concern at community level are shared with other communities and are brought to attention at the district and national level.

National level findings

Programme work at the national level is centred on mass media, i.e. the “Tikuferanji” and “Zatonse” radio and TV programs. “Tikuferanji” is a drama program broadcast weekly both on radio and Television, and with repeats. These programs originally focused on HiV/AIDS issues, but other current and broader governance issues now feature prominently, too. Programmes build to a large extent on issues identified and addressed by CBGs, but other general development issues are also identified and aired by ASC in a way where national perspectives are linked to local examples. “Zatonse” is an interactive radio programme where listeners phone in and issues are debated by panels.

It is widely acknowledged that “Tikuferanji” and “Zatonse” voice issues of concern to the primary target groups and that the ASC mass media work is unique and powerful in tabling and promoting rights issues, and in seeking and supporting fair and just change. The media work has a clear element of critical engagement with the authorities and has not always been welcome in all quarters.

“Tikuferanji” and “Zatonse” were originally broadcast by Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) but eventually denied airtime as a result of government intervention. There is no doubt that the programmes are monitored closely by the authorities and that some would wish to better be able to control the content. However, the Review Team also obtained information indicating positive reactions from some of the political decision makers and highly placed officials.

“Tikuferanji” is now being broadcast by Times TV as the main broadcaster but in addition, programmes are broadcast for free by four other TV stations. Soft copies are available from all ADRA offices in the districts, and DVDs are distributed to cinema houses in the rural areas. There are mobile video shows in villages and the programmes are uploaded to You-Tube. “Zatonse” is broadcast weekly by Zodiak Radio and by community radio stations. Programmes are also uploaded to You-Tunes on the internet.

The media component has considerably strengthened the perception and understanding of ADRA as an important development actor. “Tikuferanji” is powerful and frequently referred to as the best TV program in Malawi – entertaining while building a population-wide critical thinking and engagement.

The same applies in many ways to “Zatonse”. Still, a clear strategy on the media component could be useful.

Expertise from other organisations is often included in the programmes but the opportunity to act through more strategic networking should be pursued.

Issues for consideration

The ASC programme is relevant and progressing well in the support to communities and in tabling pertinent development issues on the national agenda. Still, it is suggested to consider a few issues in the further development of ASC.

- To clarify the Theory of Change by explaining the key features of Communication for Social Change and how CFSC permeates all activities at the community level as well at the national level.
- To continue the current efforts to develop an advocacy strategy and to develop a networking strategy.
- The media work is quite unique but cannot easily be replicated in other ASC implementing countries but the media approaches and formats can certainly be applied in other environments. It is suggested to portray the media component in a video production and disseminate it to corresponding ASC programmes.
- More in-depth audience surveys should bring about more and necessary information on relevance, reach and effect.
- How to reduce the vulnerability of depending on a few persons in the media component.
- The Review Team has not been in a position to assess whether more focus on youth would be desirable in ASC. Youth are included and addressed in much of the community work but it is suggested to reflect on possible new initiatives targeting youth in particular.

1. INTRODUCTION

Supported by ADRA Denmark, ADRA Malawi is implementing the programme Action for Social Change (ASC), which aims to empower civil society groups to advocate for their rights. ASC applies a Communication for Social Change approach, involving the use of a variety of participatory communication techniques and media at the community level as well as the national level.

While community members engage in Reflect Circles and acquire new knowledge and skills they also get better organized in community groups and networks and take social action, striving to guide the change processes. As communication permeates all activities, participatory communication is combined with behavioural change communication, advocacy, and mass communication.

The ASC programme is implemented in a number of countries, but the mass media component is more prominent in Malawi, where the programme was initiated in 2011.

The review has been guided by three objectives:

1. To assess and document the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the ASC programme as well as the appropriateness of the approaches and methodologies applied
2. To assess the role of the media in the programme and the potential for replication in other contexts
3. To recommend on areas where the ASC programme design and implementation can be improved and suggest ways to strengthen programme documentation.

The scope of work included 9 issues related to the work at the community level and the national level, respectively. Terms of reference are appended as annex 1.

The methodology applied in the review includes (1) Perusal of programme documentation; (2) Interviews, meetings, and consultations with ADRA Malawi and partners, target groups, officials and other resource persons; (3) Field visits and observations; (4) a Mini workshop with ASC management and staff (SWOT/self-assessment), and (5) a debriefing session where preliminary findings and conclusions were presented and tested.

The review itinerary is appended as annex 2, and annex 3 includes a list of people met.

The Review Team wishes to thank all parties consulted for their valuable contributions, and we especially convey our thanks to ASC management and staff for their openness, participation and assistance, which highly facilitated the review.

Findings and conclusions presented in this report is the sole responsibility of the Review Team; and they are not necessarily shared by any of the parties consulted.

2. PROGRAMMING

The Programme Document 2016-2018 presents ASC as an advocacy approach to development where local communities are enabled and capacitated to claim their rights, and where local issues through mass media are reflected at the national level for debate and advocacy to claim and promote good governance and to influence policy change, particularly on issues of importance to people living in poverty.

The Theory of Change builds on the premise that local communities empowered with knowledge and skills and through organization in groups and networks are able to recognize, claim and access their rights participate and in this process hold duty bearers accountable. The realization of rights evolves in the interface between rights holders and duty bearers, facilitated and supported by ASC. In communities, Reflect Circles and Community Dialogue Sessions are key structures and instruments in these processes, while radio and TV link the community level with the national level in a consolidated advocacy approach, i.e. a paradigm shift from a service delivery approach.

The overall goal is that “people living in poverty are empowered to participate and contribute to realize their rights to sustainable development” and this is elaborated in two Change Areas (components), each underpinned by two “dimensions:

- ✓ “To ensure community structures that permit community members to communicate their needs, concerns and rights”
 - Formal and informal community networking
 - Media platforms

- ✓ “To empower community members with knowledge and skills to claim and realize their rights and utilize livelihood opportunities.”
 - Structures and skills for livelihood opportunities
 - Human rights based community empowerment and governance.

This design constitutes the elements in the overall theory of change under the heading “Communication for Social Change”, a concept that is generally well understood by ASC staff but could be better presented in the Programme Document and, not least, to the target groups and other stakeholders. This is particularly important, as the overall approach deviates from earlier days’ service delivery and thus, the initial expectations and understanding amongst intended beneficiaries: People living in poverty. In a wider context, and in full harmony with the CFSC concept, it is also of importance for ASC to present itself and be seen primarily as a rights defender rather than a duty bearer.

ASC works with 145 Community Based Groups (CBGs) in three districts of Malawi’s 28 districts, i.e. Lilongwe, Mzuzu, and Machinga. The total population is a little less than 100,000 people in 164 villages. CBGs are for instance women groups, youth groups, farmers clubs or

other types of interest groups. They are interconnected via Community Dialogue Sessions (CDS) and Reflect Circles, radio clubs and Village Savings and Loans Groups (VSL) established as part of the programme, and they are clustered in networks within the Traditional Authority Areas.

Through the media platforms, however, a much higher number of people in both rural and urban areas are targeted. The accurate reach figures are uncertain and estimates vary but it is assessed that around 4 million is a realistic figure.

Media platforms include “Tikuferanji” weekly TV and radio drama programmes broadcast nationally, and the weekly “Zatonse” radio debate program. The radio clubs produce spots for the national radio programmes. Community Dialogue Sessions, Reflect Circles and CBGs in general are platforms for community communication, feeding into the mass media platforms. Reflect Circles and Community Dialogue Sessions are the key structures and approaches to Human rights based community empowerment and governance. They are also the main instruments for local action for social change and, as mentioned, for feeding in to the media platforms.

Livelihood structures and skills are implicitly integrated in all community work in areas such as for example agriculture and small scale business management. A separate livelihood component was previously part of the programme but it was not clear to the Review Team whether the change in design entails a thematic focus change and whether this component is now more or less included in other ADRA Malawi projects.

3. IMPLEMENTATION FINDINGS

3.1 Community level

Programme work at the community level is centred around Community Based Groups, CBGs. On the one hand, ASC selects and works with existing CBGs in preference to forming new groups, i.e. developing parallel structures. On the other, however, Reflect Circles, Village Savings and Loans Groups (VSL) and Radio Clubs are generally established through ADRA facilitation. Around 300 CBGs were included in programmes preceding the ASC while the current figure is 145 CBGs in 3 districts, screened by ASC for inclusion in the programme.

On average, a CBG has 30 members so the total direct reach at the community level is in excess of 4,000 people. Through formal and informal networking, however, the actual reach is multiplied and the mass media component generates an overall much higher figure, possibly in the range of 4 million people. Still, there are no reliable figures on reach vis-à-vis people living in poverty and vis-à-vis secondary target groups and the population at large.

CBG is a term covering a multitude of groups established for different purposes and there are generally many overlaps between groups. CBGs are clustered in the programme at the level of Traditional Authority areas, facilitating exchange and inter group communication as well as management and better utilization of ASC resources. Reflect Circles include members from a variety of CBGs. The Reflect methodology is applied in all work with groups as a very relevant approach, amongst others because of the high rate of illiteracy, and literacy classes are always included in the Reflect circles. The methodology is key in promoting and supporting the understanding and application of Human Rights Based Approaches (HRBA) (knowing, claiming and accessing) - directly on own behalf or advocating the rights of others. At the same time, HRBA is a complex concept when working in an environment characterized by low levels of literacy, civic knowledge and skills, and traditional taboos.

A handful Reflect Circles have reached a stage where they can be use as “champion groups” and agents of change. The Reflect Circles are the key entities in the community based empowerment processes and social action for change. Here, important issues are identified and prioritized and often further promoted through Community Dialogue Sessions. The Champion Reflect Circles are also used in exchange activities to stimulate and give inspiration to other groups.

NANGONDO BOREHOLE

School children in Livonde Township had no access to potable water at the school since 2007 but had to drink dirty and muddy water. As a temporary measure, communities in surrounding villages took turns to ferry pails of drinking water to the school, while the issue was also taken up in the Nthundu Talandira Reflect Circle. At some stage, parents decided to boycott the school and kept their children at home to put pressure on the pertinent duty bearers. After some time, however, they realized that this strategy denied the children their right to education so the boycott was abandoned, but the efforts to “knock on the doors of the power holders was intensified”, as a parent from Kazembe village said.

The Nthundu Talandira Reflect Circle did not give up but kept pestering the local chief to take action, and eventually their efforts bore fruit. “These people did not let me sleep, they kept coming until I approached the District Council”, said Senior Chief Livonde. Records in the district showed that a borehole had already been made but the reality was different. Instead of speculating about this conundrum, the Reflect Circle and others in the communities kept advocating for action to remedy the situation.

In the end, the alliance between the Reflect Circle, parents, the school and the chief was successful: After persistent pressure and continuous advocacy over a long time, Nangondo Primary School finally got a borehole and potable drinking water is now available to the school children.

There are many examples of CBGs not only identifying important issues of concern but also taking action to address these issues through interaction with duty bearers.

Community based action will typically target and involve duty bearers within the traditional system as well as the Government system at a broader local level, including the district level. A confrontational approach is generally avoided in preference of a softer community centred advocacy approach in harmony with traditional cultural norms and values.

Thus, borderlines between social action for change and advocacy are often obliterated.

Community mobilization and actions have led to a number of tangible results at the local level. Examples include provision of better education, water and health facilities. Local policy change attributed to CBG initiatives target amongst others improved school attendance, delivery at clinics rather than by traditional midwives, and reduction of school girl pregnancies.

LOCAL PARTICIPATION INSPIRES MORE GIRLS TO BE IN SCHOOL

Many girls drop out of school before finishing primary level education. This is also the case in Tsabango Traditional Authority (TA), one of 18 TAs in Lilongwe. Indeed, statistics reveal that 9 girls out of 10 do not complete primary education. In the 2015/2016 academic year alone, 70 girls dropped out of school after being impregnated and the boys who impregnated them were forced to drop out as well.

It is against this background that male and female traditional counsellors from TA Tsabango decided to conduct a 'Go back to school' campaign with support from ASC. The traditional counsellors were trained in advocacy by ADRA Malawi and they used the skills and knowledge acquired during this training to advocate for girls to be kept in school. The campaign was conducted in August - September 2016.

The campaign was based on the premise that society must change their attitudes towards girl education. Community meetings and Focus Group Discussions were conducted across the area involving a variety of CBGs, Parents Teachers Associations, Village Development Committees, School Development Committees, Area Development Committee, Traditional Counselors, and others. Finally, an Open Day drew participants from district authorities, TA and local level stakeholders to discuss and agree on concerted efforts to address the issue.

As a result, the area has registered high retention of girls in school. By-laws to guide the community were formulated and reinforced by the TA, and measures have been introduced to regulate behavior and conduct in support of the girls' right to education.

In addition, CBG interviewees mentioned that ASC facilitated technical support to CBGs – to some extent provided directly by ASC – have strengthened VSL groups, promoted agricultural practices and marketing, and encouraged small scale business enterprises.

DOOR TO DOOR VENDING IS A THING OF THE PAST

Elifa Mwaungulu is 41 year old a married woman with two children. Elifa has been a horticultural farmer since she got married in 1995 and used to sell her vegetables door to door at Mzuzu city and to vendors until she started supplying vegetables at Shoprite super market. After receiving K15 000 payment from Shoprite, she decided to borrow another K15 000 from the VSL group to start a small restaurant, taking advantage of several companies with many workers near her house. Through the VSL groups she learnt about marketing and small business management. She baked doughnuts and made tea in the morning and nsima in the afternoon. She used vegetables from her own garden and milk from the dairy cattle.

“Thanks to the marketing school life is getting better and I am able to raise K150 000 a month. At first I had lots of debts but now I have cleared them all. The only credit I have is from the VSL”, she said. With the profits gained she has managed to buy iron sheets, renovate her house and pay school fees.

CBGs are nucleus in providing inputs and substance to the “Tufikeranji” and “Zatonse” mass media programmes produced by ASC. In this way, issues of concern at community level are shared with other communities and are brought to attention at the district and national level. Implicitly, the reach is vastly increased and wider elements of information, education and advocacy are introduced and integrated.

3.2 National level

Programme work at the national level is centred on mass media. The term “media platforms” is used quite broadly in the ASC programme, but here it defines the use of mass media, i.e. the “Tikuferanji” and “Zatonse” radio and TV programs.

“Tikuferanji” is a drama program broadcast weekly both on radio and Television, and with repeats. These programs originally focused on HiV/AIDS issues, hence the name “Tikuferanji”, meaning “why are we dying?” However, while this remains a recurrent theme, other current and broader governance issues now feature prominently. The radio and TV programmes build to a large extent on issues identified and addressed by CBGs, but other general development issues are also identified by ASC in a way where national perspectives are linked to local examples. Thus, TV and radio recordings from the communities are always part of the programmes.

COURT CASE on corruption

Malawi is plagued by untrustworthy and badly functioning public institutions like the police and judiciary. Even where anti-corruption laws are on the books, in practice they're often skirted or ignored. People frequently face situations of bribery and extortion, rely on basic services that have been undermined by the misappropriation of funds, and confront official indifference when seeking redress from authorities that are on the take. Malawi ranks 120 out of 176 countries in the latest Transparency International Corruption Perception Index.

A “Tikuferanji” drama exposed a case of the construction of a hospital that was never built despite the funds being allocated and spent by the contractor with the help of people in power. While the drama in itself portrayed real life issues, it was especially capturing and unique as it was performed and filmed in a real court room. Real judges and other court officials acted in their own roles, and the whole set and the procedures were true to real life. This programme did not only put large scale corruption on the agenda once again, it also gave an insight into what must appear to be a strange world to most people, and to flaws in the system and in the procedures.

Flashbacks to the community level emphasized the reality flavor, and quite many viewers were actually in doubt as to whether this was a play or for real. There is no doubt, however, that the issues are for real.

“Zatonse” is an interactive radio programme where listeners phone in and issues are debated by panels. It is estimated that some 75% of the population have no access to TV, so radio is obviously an efficient and effective way to reach widely. Only around 7% have access to electricity.

TREASURY REACTS TO THE ZATONSE PROGRAMME

In a series of four programmes on the shortage of drugs in public health facilities, people throughout Malawi confirmed that there was indeed a drug shortage in their areas, mainly because of lack of funds as most hospitals had exhausted their budget allocations.

Callers told that patients were being sent away to buy their own medicine in drug stores, and patients with malaria were given Panadol instead of anti-malaria drugs. Many people claimed that the shortage was the result of thefts by those in authority.

The Malawi Government finally confirmed the shortage in response and promised to allocate more funds by cutting elsewhere.

The real reason for the shortage was not uncovered but claims of theft and corruption persist...

The mass media programmes are first of all agenda setting (what are the important issues to address) and framing (guiding the debate, i.e. a preferred focus within these issues). The media platforms include all IEC elements (information, education, communication) and have both instrumental and transformational perspectives so that the chain of awareness, knowledge, skills building leads to tangible action for change, including advocacy.

The term “advocacy” is also used broadly in the ASC programme. A 2014 ASC review report makes a distinction between four different kinds of advocacy: *Public Interest Advocacy* aimed at defending larger public interests, mobilising widespread support for a cause across broader constituencies. *Political advocacy* undertaken by a few groups of experts and targeting policy and legal reforms. *Citizen centred advocacy* based on grassroots’ everyday needs and concerns and perceptions of what constitutes desirable social change. *Participatory advocacy* aiming at engaging population groups in larger policy discussions to ensure that advocacy claims raised are legitimate and representative of the concerns and interests of the population.

This categorization may be useful to consider in connection with the current initiative to review and revise the advocacy strategy. The social mobilisation and action at the community level and in the connected networks as well as the media programmes at the national level is seen as ASC’s overall approach to advocacy. It could be argued that elements from all four categories are included in ASC’s understanding, and that citizen centred advocacy with its strong capacity development ingredients is part and parcel of programme at community level, while participatory advocacy is included in the mass media programme at the national level.

It is understood that ADRA Malawi's advocacy is currently under review and the opportunity should be taken to better explain the definition of the pertinent concepts and approaches. For instance and as already pointed out, community demands and claims are often made in softer advocacy terms and approaches in harmony with traditional Malawian culture. Accordingly, this aspect is seen by ASC as a form of people centred advocacy, where confrontational demands are avoided.

It is widely acknowledged that "Tikuferanji" and "Zatonse" voice the issues of concern of the primary target groups, and that the ASC mass media work is unique and powerful in tabling and promoting rights issues, and in seeking and supporting fair and just change. While the national TV and radio programmes are rooted in the communities they also feature issues proposed by other stakeholders, both from civil society organisations and public institutions. The fact that the Office of the Vice President, the National AIDS Commission, and the Police – amongst others – use these channels is an acknowledgement and indication of their popularity and clout.

The media work has a clear element of critical engagement with the authorities and has not always been welcome in all quarters. "Tikuferanji" and "Zatonse" were originally broadcast by Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) but eventually denied airtime as a result of government intervention. This appears to have backfired, generating widespread anger and resentment amongst many people. It could also be seen as an yet another indicator of the relevance and strength of the programmes. The current use of commercial media outlets has in any event not impacted negatively on the reach or the cost-effectiveness. There is no doubt that the programmes are monitored closely by the authorities and that some would wish to better be able to control the content. However, the Review Team also obtained information indicating positive reactions from some of the political decision makers and highly placed officials.

"Tikuferanji" is now being broadcast by Times TV as the main broadcaster but in addition, programmes are broadcast for free by four other TV stations (Luntha, ATV, Matindi, Timveni). Soft copies of the TV programmes on USB sticks are available from all ADRA offices in the districts, and DVDs are distributed to randomly chosen cinema houses in the rural areas. There are mobile video shows in villages and the programmes are uploaded to You-Tube. The soundtrack is also broadcast by Times Radio. "Zatonse" is broadcast weekly by Zodiak Radio, produced in cooperation between ASC and Zodiak. In addition, the programmes are also broadcast by some community radios and they are uploaded to You-Tunes on the internet.

It is an overall impression that the media component has considerably strengthened the perception and understanding of ADRA as an important development actor in Malawi. A variety of development and behavioural change messages are blended into main thematic issues and the drama formats have a wide appeal. "Tikuferanji" is powerful and frequently referred to as the best TV program in Malawi – entertaining while building a population-wide critical thinking and engagement. Several informants accentuated the importance of "Tikuferanji" as a family program, watched by parents and their children, and afterwards talked about in and between families. The same applies, albeit to a lesser extent, to the Zatonse radio program.

A significant example of policy advocacy in the mass media is the work around the Access to Information (ATI) legislation where gaps and shortcomings were pointed out and eventually taken into account by the policy makers. Corruption issues have been put on the national agenda and pressure has evidently been put on the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to perform in accordance with its mandate. Indeed, a prominent case involving a government minister is currently in progress.

MAIZEGATE

Following pressure on the Anti-Corruption Bureau by Malawi Law Society, Opposition Members of Parliament, and – not least - civil society organisations, and issues raised by “Tikuferanji”, the Minister of Agriculture was recently fired by the President, the first top government figure to be pushed out to pave way for investigations into a controversial maize purchase from Zambia, a case now known as Maizegate.

The sack came after the Anti-Corruption Bureau raided the Minister’s residence in Lilongwe where large sums in local and foreign currency stashed in suitcases were seized.

Investigations are ongoing.

Still, a clear strategy on the media component could be useful, elaborating on how and when to see programmes as IEC interventions in their own right, and how and when they are progressively instruments for advocacy. The current review of the advocacy strategy provides an obvious opportunity to do this.

Elements of networking exist as part of the media programmes but they are typically related to particular issues and not as a general strategy to act in unison with likeminded organisations in promoting good governance. While it is commendable to involve expertise from other organisations the opportunity to act even more powerfully through more strategic networking should be pursued. This could also entail some cost-sharing in the media production and dissemination. Advocacy at the national level, in particular when targeting policy implementation or change, can also at times include campaigning, where partnerships with likeminded organisations could be beneficial. As long as such partnerships, alliances or networking are fostered around themes prioritised by ADRA, any risk of conflicting with ADRA’s integrity should not be an issue. The Programme Document contains a rather extensive section on stakeholder analysis, and some of these organisations would seem to be of interest to ADRA in this connection. Furthermore, a screening of other likeminded, potential partners could probably also uncover other opportunities. It should, in any event, be considered to develop a networking strategy as an important addendum to the Program Document.

4. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION

It is the Review Team's overall assessment that the ASC programme is relevant and progressing well in the support to communities and in tabling pertinent development issues on the national agenda. The Theory of Change is relevant in the context, and good results are shown both at community and national level. In sum: If it works, don't change it! Nevertheless, it is suggested to consider the issues listed below in the further development of ASC.

- To clarify the Theory of Change by explaining the key features of Communication for Social Change and how CFSC permeates all activities at the community level as well at the national level. Implicitly, ASC's understanding and use of advocacy concepts must be spelled out.
- To continue the current efforts to develop an advocacy strategy, cf. the point above. This includes the use and purpose of the media component and the inherent interface between IEC and advocacy.
- To develop a networking strategy. The PD contains a long list of stakeholders, outlining briefly their main features. While many of these stakeholders are partners in development who contribute to ASC's work – primarily at community level – their potential in networking is not addressed. Correspondingly, other likeminded actors and organisations could be relevant and valuable in a wider networking approach.
- The media work is quite unique but cannot easily be replicated in corresponding ASC programmes in other countries. This is partly because of the key person in the media component, the Programme Director, is a media celebrity in Malawi enjoying an enormous popularity. It should also be taken into consideration that the media landscape is often very different from one country to the next. Still, the media approaches linking local with national and the programme formats can certainly also be applied in other environments and be of inspiration to other ADRA programmes as well as other development organisations. It is suggested, therefore, to look into how the media component can be portrayed and disseminated using a variety of media. For instance, a video programme about the mass media component, including examples of advocacy efforts and achievements, should be considered.
- Biannual media surveys are carried out by ASC and some relevant data are collected. Still, more in-depth audience surveys could bring about more and necessary information on relevance, reach and effect. The current practice could be supplemented by the establishment and use of a network of focus groups, whereby also more qualitative aspects can be captured. It should also be considered to engage in joint audience surveys with the media partners.

- To make provisions to ensure the sustainability of the media component in terms of technical, financial and – not least – performance capacity, i.e. to reduce the vulnerability of depending on a few people and external funding.
- To clarify how what use to be a clearly defined livelihood component now is integrated into other programme components.
- To obtain more reliable information on the direct and indirect reach at the community level.
- The Review Team has not been in a position to assess whether more focus on youth would be desirable in ASC. Impressions from field visits are that youth are included in much of the community work but still constitutes an overall minority. On the other hand, a significant part of the community action is targeting issues of particular relevance and importance to youth. It is, in any event, suggested to reflect on the current balance between different target groups and whether new initiatives targeting youth in particular should be considered.

Terms of Reference for Review of the Programme Action for Social Change (ASC) in Malawi

Background

In cooperation with ADRA Denmark, ADRA Malawi is implementing the programme Action for Social Change (ASC), which aims to empower civil society groups to advocate for their rights. ASC applies a Communication for Social Change approach, which uses media, communication and community dialogue strategically in the development work. The ASC programme is implemented in a number of countries, but the media component is particularly visible in Malawi, where the programme started in 2011.

The ASC programme aims at building the capacity of Community Based Groups to identify and discuss issues of concern to them and take action to address these. This is done through REFLECT circles, which involve different Community Based Groups that focus on e.g. health, livelihood or saving schemes. Some issues can be addressed locally, while more general matters are taken up by ADRA Malawi's media platforms, which over the years have become very strong.

ADRA Malawi is now present in three different national media programmes: Their TV programme Tikuferanji (a weekly edutainment programme often with ADRA's Programme Director as the coordinating character) and radio programme also called Tikuferanji (a weekly debate programme). Furthermore, ADRA Malawi produces the weekly radio debate programme Zatonse, where different development issues are discussed in partnership with technocrats in relevant fields.

In addition, the ADRA Malawi Programme Director organises public lectures and other events that raise issues of public concern through a critical dialogue with the authorities, e.g. early marriages, harassment of albinos, corruption or poor governance at all levels. Hence, he and ADRA Malawi play a prominent role in the Malawian civil society as critical voices in the public debate.

In 2014 the ASC programme was part of an advocacy review carried out in Rwanda, Uganda and Malawi, which recommended to distinguish between awareness-raising and advocacy and focus more on citizen-centred advocacy.

This review is intended to assess and document the impact of the ASC programme and notably the role of the media in this. An important aspect would be to identify the potential for replicating elements of the programme in other countries.

Objectives of the Review

- ✓ To assess and document the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the ASC programme as well as the appropriateness of the approaches and methodologies applied
- ✓ To assess the role of the media in the programme and the potential for replication in other contexts

- ✓ To recommend on areas where the ASC programme design and implementation can be improved and suggest ways to strengthen programme documentation.

Scope of Work

The assignment will include, but not be limited to, the following tasks:

1. To assess the strategic relevance of the Community Based Groups included in the programme and the relevance of applying the REFLECT methodology vis-à-vis the different types of groups
2. To assess to what extent the ASC programme has enabled the different Community Based Groups to identify and address issues of concern and rights locally and at district level
3. To assess to what extent ADRA Malawi and its media platforms effectively voice issues of concern and rights identified by the Community Based Groups included in the programme – and to what extent these can be characterised as awareness or advocacy (rights) issues
4. To assess to what extent the advocacy work prompted by the ASC programme has influenced decisions and changes at local, district and national level
5. To assess to what extent the media work of ADRA Malawi is institutionalized in the organisation and to identify elements that can be replicated in other contexts
6. To recommend on methodologies to improve future documentation on the effectiveness of the media platforms
7. To discuss how ADRA Malawi can strengthen networking and alliances without compromising its integrity
8. To examine the current programme design and the relevance of the Theory of Change
9. To recommend on future avenues to pursue including whether it would be relevant to focus more on youth as a target group

Method of Work

The review will use triangulation as a key methodology for validation of information and evidence. It will follow a participatory and transparent approach with internal and external stakeholders throughout the process and consider both primary and secondary data sources. Data collection will take place through a combination of document review (as well as review of TV and radio programmes), individual interviews with key stakeholders (including authorities and other CSOs) and focus group discussions. ...

Outputs

The outputs of the assignment will be:

- ✓ A brief inception report describing in more detail the methodology to be applied, the time schedule for the review and the report outline. Deadline:

- ✓ A debriefing note with main conclusions and findings to be presented to ADRA prior to the departure of the review team
- ✓ A draft review report in English to be submitted to ADRA Malawi and ADRA DK not later than...
- ✓ A final review report to be submitted immediately after feedback has been received from ADRA Malawi and ADRA Denmark. The report will include an executive summary and reflect the scope of work of the TOR. It will be clear and concise and not exceed 30 pages excluding annexes.

Composition of team

The review will be carried out by an independent review team comprising international consultant NN and media expert NN... who will be responsible for...

The Malawi Programme Coordinator from ADRA Denmark will participate as a resource person. The Programme Director will participate in some of the field studies and the debriefing.

Timing

The review will take place from ... to ... A total of xx days are allocated for the assignment.

	No. of days
Preparation and document review	
Meetings in Blantyre/Lilongwe	
Field work in ...	
Debriefing etc.	
Report writing	

Background information

- Programme Documents
- Quarterly Reports
- End of year Report
- Advocacy review 2014
- The Right to Participate – strategic approach, theory of change and framework
- M&E Manual
- Articles from the media
- CFSC Malawi – the ADRA MW approach – incl. video

Itinerary 18 – 28 April 2017

Date	Activity Lilongwe	Activity Blantyre
18 Tue	Team meeting	
19 Wed	Inception meeting Field visit Tsabango	Brief meeting In Machinga Field Visit Mangamba Reflect Circle+ CRC
20 Thu	Field visit Chingira Reflect Circle & VSL group Meet partners & NGOs	Field visit Aisha VSL Mpapa Cooperative
21 Fri	Meet officials/Members of Parliament Meet partners & NGOs	Field visit Nangondo
Blantyre		
23 Sun	Team meeting	
24 Mon	Meet ASC management and staff Meet Media people Team meetings	
25 Tue	Individual ASC meetings Team meeting	
26 Wed	ASC workshop ASC Follow-up meetings	
27 Thu	Draft debriefing note	
28 Fri	Debriefing	

List of people met

Fryson Chodzi	Executive Director	CAYO
Lazarus Chimangeni	A & A specialist	
	Economist	National Governing Council
Master Mchande	Executve Director	NAPHAM
Paul Manyamba	Programs Manager	NAPHAM
Samuel Kawale	MP, Chairperson	Media, Information and Communications Committee
George Kasakula	Editor in Chief	Times Media Group
Edna Twaha	Chair	Aisha VSLC
Martin Kantande	District Manager-Machinga	ADRA-Malawi
Prisca Juma	Chair	Mpapa Producers & Marketing Cooperative
Senior TA Liwonde	Senior Chief	Machinga
Loveness Chikhoza	Asst Community Development Officer	Ministry of Community & Welfare
Senior Group Headman Thundu	Senior Group (Talandira Reflect Circle)	Traditional Chief
Michael Usi	Programs Director	ASC, ADRA Malawi
Edson Gunsalu	Media Technical Officer	ASC, ADRA Malawi
Emma Jakobo	Programs Manager	ASC, ADRA Malawi
Rexia Lipunga	Chief Accountant	ASC, ADRA Malawi
Andiyesa Mhango	Associate Programs Director	ASC, ADRA Malawi
Grace Hara	Advocacy and Communication Officer	ASC, ADRA Malawi
Gift Mwenda	Fiels Coordinator	ASC, ADRA Malawi
Bjørn Johansen	Programme Coordinator	ADRA Denmark

ASC REVIEW MINI WORKSHOP – 26TH APRIL, 2017

	NAME	DESIGNATION
1	Michael Usi	Program Director (Acting Country Director)
2	Emma Jakobo	Program Manager
3	Andiyesa Mhango	Associate Program Director
4	Angella Muula	Human Resource Manager
5	Dyson Mbengo	Regional Administrator
6	Edson Gunsalu	Media technician Officer
7	Patrick Khonje	Communication Assistant
8	Yankho Konyani	M&E Officer

9	Judith Kumwenda	HIV/AIDS Coordinator
10	George Million	FMS Manager
11	Martin Kantande	District Coordinator
12	Belinda Chimombo	Field facilitator
13	Jossam Chiwanga	Field Facilitator
14	Gertrude Kantumbiza	Field Facilitator
15	Gift Mwenda	Field Coordinator
16	Grace Hara	Advocacy and Communication Officer
17	Heatherwick Manda	Field Facilitator
18	Bertha Chapamba	Field Facilitator
19	James Masauko	Field Facilitator
20	Susan Chitaya	District Manager
21	Tingo Matupa	Field Facilitator
22	Pilirani Kaonga	Field Facilitator
23	Mathias Chitimbe	Program Accountant