



HOOC 2004 IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

INTEGRATING THE HOOC PROCESS AND WITH THE BAMBANANI CAMPAIGN

Introduction

The Hands off our Children (HOOC) campaign has succeeded at a public level in bringing the necessary attention and focus to the crimes against children in particular.

The necessary emphasis on the awareness of crimes against children in particular has succeeded in more people and indeed learners and children feeling free to report crimes perpetrated against themselves.

The campaign has as one of its major its objectives the publicity and awareness raising of child abuse and other crimes against children. An intended consequence is the reduction of crimes against children by people adopting the slogan of "Your child is my child"

Areas of operation

The communities that have been affected by violence against children in particular has had focussed campaigns at their schools to inform learners and educators of the signs of child abuse and this has engendered a preventative approach when it comes to dealing with child abuse issues.

The recent killing of children in Mitchell's Plain and Guguletu indicates that there is still a lot of work to be done to change the perceptions of children.

It is seen as a missed opportunity that there has been no real integration of the various campaigns run by the Department of Community Safety in this regard. While it has been mobilising the community through the Bambanani (Lets Join Hands) Campaign, there has been no real effort to unite the community and create one message when it comes to crimes against children.

Gaps

One of the shortcomings of the HOOC campaign has been the absence of community based structures to allow for the direct participation of the community at a local level.

Currently the structure of the HOOC campaign lends itself to an executive level intervention of referrals and negotiation with government departments. This has also included selected non-governmental organisations. It however does not have the necessary direct participation and support from the community members such as parents through structures of the campaign.

In order to make the campaign much more effective, there is a need to consider the efficacy of the structure in order to make the maximum impact.

Reducing crime against children then becomes not just the responsibility of government departments, but also the community where such structures exist.

The question is where and how could the HOOC campaign be integrated with current or existing campaigns that allows for maximum participation without losing focus from its original objective.

Community Police Forums

The HOOC campaign has been conspicuously absent from the deliberations of CPF meetings where the incidence of child abuse is high.

It remains the prerogative of the community police forum to raise issues of policing priorities with SAPS with regard to crime rates.

While the evaluation process has measured the manner in which crimes against children are taken up by the CPF's, it is a well known fact that the members of CPF's where there has been a high incidence of crimes against children, have raised their concerns with police.

Bambanani Campaign

The Bambanani Campaign have been conceptualised as a partnership policing project of the Department of Community Safety. Its objectives have been to:

- To develop an integrated and synergised crime prevention initiative which included the participation of the Department of Community Safety (DCS) ,SAPS, City Police, Law Enforcement, CPF's, business, other government departments, civil society organisations and communities for the festive season;
- To directly impact on the safety and security of those persons affected by crime; and
- To build momentum and to ensure that communities participate in identifying their problems and work towards participatory solutions.

The project worked with community structures in the same areas that HOOC was operating in and the following community structures stood out prominently:

- CPF Volunteers for community based activities
- Neighbourhood watch volunteers for control over shebeens
- Neighbourhood volunteers for safety on trains
- Neighbourhood watches for safety on beaches
- Concerned Parents of Missing Children and the Truancy Reduction Programme for safety of children
- Youth Peace Academy for the youth programme
- Community Volunteers for Arrive Alive
- Neighbourhood Watch for special events



All these structures contributed to the success of the Bamabanani Campaign against crime and this has been rolled out to the rural communities across the Province.

LINKING AND INTEGRATING THE HOOC AND BAMBANANI CAMPAIGNS

Integrating the HOOC campaign with that of Bamabanani has both benefits and drawbacks for both campaigns.

Firstly, the HOOC campaign will have the opportunity of activity involving parents and community members into its ambit and focus on crimes against children.

In view of the fact that Bamabanani is working with the Concerned Parents of Missing Children (CPMC) and the Truancy Reduction Programme (TRP), the opportunity for HOOC to refocus its work to include kidnapping of children is amplified.

Secondly it also provides the opportunity for HOOC to rebuild community structures around missing children, child murder and rape of children. This will also include an integrated approach to dealing with the effects of truancy and the crimes committed against children because they are not in school.

Thirdly, the Bamabanani Campaign will be intensified because it allows for the inclusion of all positive initiatives aimed at reducing crime together with maximum community participation.

Lastly, Bamabanani will create the space through which HOOC could become much more effective as a campaign as part of a broader strategy.

In considering the risks or drawbacks, there will be casualties as a result of this approach. It also means that as Bamabanani cannot mean everything to everyone; it will also have to undergo a repositioning exercise to refocus its objectives.

The HOOC campaign would lose its corporate identity in the process if it was to happen and it would have to be opened for a more inclusive board of management. There would be consequences for the HOOC campaign and it should be run as a separate business unit in the Bamabanani campaign if the model is going to display any concrete effective progress with regard to crimes against children.

Background

Members of the public must clearly know what physical, sexual and emotional child abuse is to be able to report child abuse. They must also know what signs to look for to identify the abused child and what to do if they suspect child abuse or if a child discloses abuse.

To be effective, approaches aimed at preventing child abuse must involve the society at large. The early detection of abusive situations depends upon the awareness and concern of the general public. It could be reasoned that the more aware and educated the public is of the negative impact of abuse on children, the more likely they will be to report child abuse or to personally act upon abusive situations.



It was clear from the survey findings that the media plays an important role in the formation of the public's opinion of child abuse. The majority (60%) of respondents stated that they gained their perception of child abuse from what they saw or heard through the media.

Because of its major influence on public perception, the media plays a vital role in informing and educating the public. Moreover, the way that the media portrays children has a profound impact on society's attitude towards children and childhood, which invariably affects the way adults behave towards children. This implies that the media has a clear responsibility to portray child abuse as accurately and honestly as possible and according to the principle of the best interests of the child(ren) concerned.

HOOC is built on a five (5) pillar strategy (all the other relevant departments having different pillars as their contribution to eradicate child abuse.)

1. An intensive Educational Schools Crime Prevention Campaign that is aimed at educating learners and teachers on their rights and responsibilities around abuse.
2. The Parental Guidance Programme which uses a UNISA developed training manual to help parents manage their own stress and anger and to learn how their behaviour impacts on their children.
3. The Victim Support Programme, which is all about victim empowerment
4. The Multi-disciplinary Training Programme to ensure better/joint case management between the different agencies dealing with the case.
5. The marketing and communication of the HOOC campaign.

The HOOC strategy aims to achieve the following broad objectives:

1. To sensitise the community on the epic proportions of child abuse.
2. To initiate projects focused on preventing crimes against children
3. To empower children with life skills to be able to prevent abusive situations
4. To educate the public about do's and don'ts regarding child protection.
5. To strengthen the state support structure dealing with child abuse
6. To project the Western Cape Government as a corporate citizen with compassion working towards affecting the lives of its citizens in a positive way and making a difference.
7. To position the Western Cape Government as the contributor and executor of child protection both financially and physically.
8. To increase the reporting rate of child abuse by at least 10 % over the next 12 months.
9. To institute training for the various disciplines involved in the child protection system.
10. To empower community structures to support the child protection system.



11. To ensure that the policies and procedures are in harmony with the reviewed legislative framework.
12. To investigate the feasibility of establishing a centralised database managed by the Department of Community Safety.
13. To commission research regarding the existing myths around HIV/AIDS.
14. To inform and train sangomas to help eradicate the myths around HIV/AIDS.

Specific Objectives:

The main objective of this project is to investigate whether the HOOC campaign has been a success or failure based on various outcomes including the following:

- The reporting rate of crimes against children to the police (statistics to be provided by the department)
- The decrease or increase in crimes against children in the province, and in particular the nine priority areas namely: Bishop Lavis, Elsiesriver, Manenberg, Michell's Plain, Philipi, Khayalitsha, Kuilsriver, Nyanga, Worcester;
- Evaluate the impact of the HOOC projects thus far implemented;
- Identity why certain objectives and projects were not implemented;
- Identify the shortcomings of the HOOC task team and assess whether they have been able to implement commitments made according to the broad deliverables as outlined in the HOOC Business Plan (2002);
- Examine the extent to which HOOC has been spread among their friend, peers and other children;
- Make programmatic as well as structural and policy recommendations.

SCOPE OF EVALUATION

The purpose of this research project is to:

- Evaluate whether the HOOC campaign was able to impact on the problem areas as identified in the problem statement of the amended HOOC Business Plan (2002);
- Establish whether the HOOC strategy as above mentioned has had any impact on the reduction of crimes affecting children (crimes as per HOOC Business Plan); albeit awareness leads to an increase in reporting)
- Identify weaknesses in the HOOC Campaign and Strategy and make programmatic and structural recommendations.

HOOC KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



- Reporting rate of crimes against children to the police, with special reference to nine listed police stations.
- HOOC projects impact evaluation;
- Strategic direction
- Operational and functional effectiveness
- Marketing reach and impact
- Integration, cooperation and collaboration amongst departments and relevant agencies.

Community Participation in HOOC-Community-based interventions: An Emerging Model

While each sexually abused child needs special and individual assessment and treatment, community-based interventions may offer an effective strategy for targeting at community level and at the ideological level. Sensitisation programmes must in addition to raising the issues, enable the community member to both identify vulnerable children and then assist them in developing the skills needed to offer psycho-social support to these children. Working at grassroots levels within communities identified as having high prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS, poverty and/or violence, the community members consistently identify child sexual abuse as one of the major factors creating vulnerability for children. In terms of both the frequency and severity of the problem, it is rated second as the factor that created major difficulties in the lives of children. Poverty is the factor identified as the highest vulnerability-inducing variable, and the death of parents or primary caregivers is rated third. Child sexual abuse is identified as a problem that has increased since the HIV/AIDS pandemic, but most community members identify it as a problem that pre-dated HIV/AIDS.

HOOC as a comprehensive, integrated, community empowerment approach seems well suited to addressing the needs of vulnerable children within communities, since this model acknowledges the inseparability of many problems involved and the need to focus on more adaptive and healthy outcomes. Indeed some of the factors associated with high child sexual abuse prevalence figures can only be adequately addressed at a community level. A cornerstone of these approaches is the recognition of the community as an equal co-worker in the amelioration of the impact of abuse.

The role of the professional involved must be one of a collaborative partnership, in which the community owns, mobilizes and aims to address the problem with some input from professional. The role of the professional therefore becomes one of guiding discussion, thinking and action in such a way that confidence is developed in community members to play a more powerfully active role in interceding for children. Access to more specialized services, however, will always be an important component of any community based intervention, since the complexity of child sexual abuse cases needs highly trained and dedicated professional direction.

In all the communities surveyed during this study, most members of the community are



eager and compelled by a sense of urgency to do something about the problem and want to be actively involved. Hence at local community level the readiness exist, as a prerequisite for HOOC to become rooted into existing community structures and evolve into a genuine mass based solution to the problem of child abuse. However, noting particular challenges that exist of levels of apathy and fear of exposure without help, fear of community sanction and victimization by either gangs and/or the male perpetrator in the household.

The first and most critical step in any community based-intervention is for the community to own a problem and determine that they wish to be involved in addressing it. This might appear as elementary, however, the fact that the community is not part of the HOOC Task team, and not visible and actively involved in shaping its activities. Thus a process of community mobilization, which is strongly community owned and driven, is critical in raising awareness of the nature of the problem. Arising from a community mobilization process, the establishment of a community-based structure or committee that prioritises the needs and rights of children can achieve a great deal at grassroots level. The HOOC Campaign has been most active in raising awareness through conventional media activities, with a good measure of success in raising the profile of child abuse and educating the public. The main mediums of spreading the message was through the print, radio and television. However, the strongest form of communication has been through word of mouth by the learners who benefited from the HOOC Schools Education Programme.

Community based interventions also need to adopt a strong focus on primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention and intervention. A comprehensive approach in this regard need to incorporate primary protection, preventative programmes for potential victims which focus primarily on improving self esteem and problem solving behaviours (as opposed to the older and less effective concepts of teaching children about good and bad secrets and private parts of their bodies over which they have control), as well as early identification of individuals at risk of becoming abusers.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

During the data collection stage, we found many people who had reservations about the sustainability of the project for the following reasons:

1. The project is seen by NGO's and community people as having lots of "bells and whistles" but no real content as it usually enters communities with much fanfare and publicity. Lack of aftercare and follow-up.
2. After it has raised awareness of child abuse, it tends to have "others" dealing with the treatment aspects. This can lead to serious damage if children are encouraged to speak out against abuse and are not given the necessary treatment, support and aftercare services.
3. HOOC's structural design need to ensure its sustainability and location in the community with a characterized by mass mobilization.



PROJECT INNOVATION

HOOC is an innovative project in that it has managed to bring a measure of integration between government departments, community and business to deal with child abuse. It has been able to, with a substantially reduced budget, raise awareness about the effects of child abuse. The fact that the campaign has initially been able to bring different government departments together to address the problems of child abuse was innovative to the ability of government to deliver services to abused children.

Since its inception, the project has also been able to generate sponsorship from the business community and partnered with non-governmental organizations to achieve its objectives. However, since its inception, the innovative approaches to the project have substantially dimmed as it has no more than fourteen objectives and this has limited its ability to frequently innovate.

PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

In terms of its objectives, HOOC has fourteen stated objectives. It by its own admission has only managed to concentrate on four of its stated objectives. To this end, it has not been effective in achieving the other objectives partly because government departments have competing priorities and not all have effectively integrated HOOC into its core business.

HOOC has been effective in reaching its objective of creating the necessary public awareness of child abuse and its effects. (This has been largely due to the commissioning of PROCARE and FOUKIDS and its foray into the schooling arena. The co-operation of the Department of Education has been critical in this regard to provide the required access to the project. It has also been able to effectively reach parents, educators and children through the use of different mediums.

It remains to be seen whether this public raising awareness has on its own resulted in a decrease in child abuse incidents. The research team is still in the process of obtaining a complete understanding of the effectiveness of the project by analyzing available statistics of the incidence of child abuse incidents over the period under review. On the other hand, a decrease in child abuse incidents cannot be directly attributed to HOOC campaign and there has to be a review of the reasons for the decrease (or increase in the statistics).

Many of the respondents that we have interviewed indicate that it's their perception that there has been a real increase in the incidence of child abuse over the last two years. However, as soon as the statistics becomes available, this view can be assessed.

WEAKNESSES OF THE PROJECT

The project has demonstrated several weaknesses which should be addressed if the project is going to be rolled out.

- Firstly, there is the nature of the work which makes this campaign in itself a difficult one for whichever public institution hosts it. This relates to the natural tension in the arena of child abuse of what constitutes identification of child abuse, medical and therapeutic treatment of the victims and after support services. Very little time was



available to research the topic thoroughly before it was launched in 2002.

- Currently, the HOOC campaign is raising awareness and this heightens the propensity of people to report it. It therefore increases the reporting burden on already overstretched state and private social workers.
- Secondly, HOOC has not defined a distinct role for itself in that its volunteers are attempting to treat victims and this often brings it into conflict with other social work and child abuse agencies such as PATCH in the Helderberg who claim that HOOC has been working in their area without informing them. HOOC raise awareness and do not have the aftercare infrastructure to deal with cases and this in turn cause further traumatisation of the victim. This is the crucial to the effectiveness of the project.
- Thirdly the project currently is not sufficiently focused around its stated objectives and even the task team members do not have the same vision of what HOOC is supposed to be dealing with. The fact that it has fourteen stated objectives indicates to what extent the project is meant to be “everything to everyone” and this often creates confusion.
- Fourthly, the project has a limited budget, mainly carried by the host Department of Community Safety and it is dependent on the sponsorship and support from business to be effective in terms of sending out its message.
- Fifthly the institutional housing of the project brings it into conflict with other initiatives such as the Children’s Platform which is housed by Social Services.
- Sixthly lack of active community ownership of the campaign. This represents a particular threat for the sustainability of the project and ultimate success. A solid community engagement platform is a prerequisite for HOOC’s continued success, given the magnitude and complexity of the problem of child abuse.
- The structural limitations of HOOC’s current design must be overcome by integrating HOOC’s operations into the functioning of the Bambanani Campaign, by locating HOOC in the Community Policing Forums.
- Lastly, there are very few parents and community members directly involved in the campaign. This should significantly increase if the campaign is to see any real success in the communities that it operates in.

CRIME PREVENTION IMPACT

At best, there is very little evidence of the crime prevention impact of the campaign. Generally, the campaign has been rather effective in its media strategy to raise awareness. It therefore should generally be effective as a crime prevention tool. We have however been unable to measure the impact as a result of absence of crime statistics. At a perception level of those interviewed however, we have realized the following results:

- A perceived level of increase in crime reporting as a result of HOOC awareness raising.
- A perceived level of public confidence in the criminal justice system.



- Increased community collaboration with police in crime fighting activities.
- Still high levels of perceived police corruption amongst youth and adults in communities.
- HOOC represents hope for more effective service delivery and community mobilization.

PARTNERSHIPS

In view of the fact that there are existing partnerships between the department and other role-players, (government, business and NGO partners), we believe that a review of partnerships should be undertaken with respect to the core business of HOOC.

From the interviews conducted and documents perused, we are not convinced that HOOC is achieving the best that it could from existing partnerships. Currently some of the partners are not contributing much to the campaign and these are chiefly government stakeholders. There is a good partnership base with business and the media in particular and the campaign runs the risk of alienating this support if it does not restructure the manner in which it works with partners.

LESSONS LEARNT (OBSERVATIONS)

There have been a number of lessons learnt from the HOOC experience in terms of the respondents interviewed.

- Firstly, the HOOC organizational structure is not suited to its objectives. There have to be a process to refine the HOOC objectives and organizational structure within the Department of Community Safety.
- Secondly, the partner's especially non governmental organizations must be brought on board earlier rather than later in terms of the conceptual design of the campaign. It cannot be expected of partner organizations to deal with child abuse cases opened and reported after awareness raising without the necessary support structures being put in place. It creates further damage to the abused child when he/she is encouraged to speak out and the support structures are not in place to deal with the effects of the abuse.
- Thirdly, it is clear that a funding strategy should be renegotiated with the current funders that allow for the various programmes of the campaign to be implemented effectively. There is no funding strategy and the management depend solely the goodwill of the partners to keep the campaign alive. This is not sustainable in the longer term.
- Lastly, the HOOC campaign needs to decide on the programmes that it needs and what it can deliver. It also has to decide on whether it will only do awareness raising as opposed to treatment and aftercare services.

