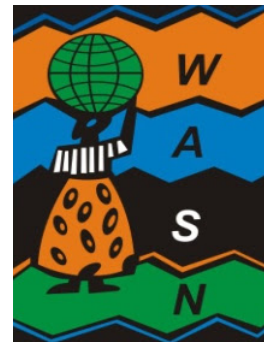


WOMEN AND AIDS SUPPORT NETWORK (WASN) ZIMBABWE



WASN 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASOs	AIDS Service Organisations
ARV	Antiretroviral
COVID-19	Coronavirus of 2019
CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanism
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPV	Human Papilloma Virus
ICC	Interagency Coordinating Committee
MoHCC	Ministry of Health and Child Care
MR	Measles Rubella
NAC	National AIDS Council
NANGO	National Association of Non Governmental Organisations
OI	Opportunistic Infection
OPIC	Olof Palme Center International
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV
REC	Reach Every Community
RED	Reach Every District
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
WAG	Women's Action Group
WASN	Women and AIDS Support Network
WCoZ	Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe

Foreword by WASN Board Chairperson

2020 brought a New World Order and was one challenging year globally including WASN despite the fact that it managed to secure funding from OPIC. The global pandemic of COVID-19 hit every country, organisation and people resulting in lockdowns being applied to lessen the effects of morbidity and mortality. It was difficult for the country as well as many AIDS Service Organisations to work in the communities with the beneficiaries. The economic meltdown experienced by the country had ripple effects on companies, organisations and hit hard on individuals. This was characterised by shortages of cash, fuel, basic commodities, high prices of medicines and charged in forex and with many people working from home except essential services like health workers, police, military and some shops to allow people to replenish foodstuff.

Notwithstanding COVID-19, WASN managed to carry out its activities in the remotest area of Gokwe South District in Chief Nemangwe's area of Svisvi. WASN trained community members to create support groups that enabled them to advance their right to health, ability to communicate and assert themselves, dialogues with various stakeholders and advocating for the voiceless in the community.

Gratitude to the Board of Trustees and WASN staff who have managed to work during the trying times under difficult circumstances. To the Trustees who are busy elsewhere, many thanks for actively participating in some Zoom meetings called by WASN.

I thank you all.

Moirira Ngaru



WASN Board Chairperson

Executive Director's Report

COVID-19 squashed our optimism for the future to continue to creating support groups during the beginning of 2020 as we only managed to disseminate information on the already created support groups in the communities we had worked in. With funding having dwindled, staff moved to greener pastures, WASN managed to continue operations during the long journey which was hard and long but the rewards were worthy the sweat. I thank the Board members and staff for their unwavering support and sound advise during the times of strife.

With support from Ministry of Health and Child Care and Olof Palme Center International, WASN achieved a lot in respect to human rights promotion and protection and capacitation of support group members on health issues. The year 2020 saw WASN capacitating women, girls, men and boys through dissemination of information through SMS, WhatsApp on COVID-19 information, dished out masks to support group members, taught them on hand washing or sanitizing and maintaining physical distancing.

I would like to appreciate our development partner namely Olof Palme International Center (OPIC) who supported WASN immensely to make women, girls, men and boys' health better in Zimbabwe. I wish you all a healthy and prosperous 2021.



Asante Sana! Iwe neni tine basa! Aluta Continua!

Anna-Colleto Penduka

Executive Director

WASN in Brief

Women and AIDS Support Network (WASN) is a women's organisation dedicated to the fight for women and girls' issues in the era of HIV, AIDS and beyond. WASN is a non governmental organisation founded in 1989 in Harare after the Society for Women Against AIDS held a meeting in Harare. Key to WASN's work is the promotion of women's and girls' Sexual, Reproductive Health and Rights by addressing issues through gender lenses.

From inception, WASN has advocated for women and girls' rights. Women and girls continue to bear the brunt of many epidemics like HIV, Cancers, Gender Based Violence, the global Pandemic COVID-19 and Poverty.

WASN's programs have been designed for women and girls by researches done by involving the women and girls who happen to bear the brunt of the issues. WASN draws its commitment, selflessness, strength and wisdom from the women and girls from diverse backgrounds who come from rural and urban communities.

WASN's programs are community driven as the organisation undertakes baseline surveys then tailor make the trainings to suit the needs of the different communities.

WASN values

WASN board and staff commit themselves to the following values, which become the guiding principles of the organisation.

Strategic values

1. WASN is a feminist organisation
2. WASN is gender specific and work to realize women and girls interests
3. WASN believes in and seeks to cultivate participation by women and girls in all its work.
4. WASN is committed to timely response to women and girls issues.

Cultural values

In pursuing the mission, WASN develops and strengthens a work culture among its Board and Staff that emphasizes the following values.

- ✓ Good governance
- ✓ Confidentiality
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Transparency
- ✓ Honesty
- ✓ Integrity
- ✓ Professionalism

In Zimbabwe, Health has been one of the most important concerns of women, girls, men and boys. In the early 80s major gains were achieved through joint and complementary responses among the health sector, NGOs and the communities. The gains were reversed due to the impact of AIDS, structural adjustments programmes and reductions in the budget allocations to health and household incomes. Currently the quality of care has declined, health workers have left for greener pastures and the ones remaining no longer provide good consistent service due to lack of or shortages of medicines, gloves and medical equipment. It is, however imperative that all stakeholders continue to put heads together and assist each other to attain Universal Health Coverage.

2020 has seen the global pandemic COVID-19 putting everything in disarray as the disgruntlement by health service providers as well as health consumers due to lack of Personal Protective Equipment was rampant. Many approaches to attain “health for all” seem bleak as most health institutions have dilapidated buildings, worn out equipment, poor morale within doctors and nurses, inadequate food and medicines. However, most NGOs working on health continue to advocate for provision of health for all in the era of many diseases and the population growing.

Advocacy and Sexual, Reproductive Health and Rights

Acknowledgements

WASN acknowledges the valuable support and contributions from our partner Olof Palme Center International which has made it possible for the organisation to continue functioning and carrying out its mandate of disseminating information to women, girls, men and boys.

WASN received lots of support from the Board of Trustees during the reporting period which cannot go unmentioned.

Furthermore, WASN extends its gratitude to Women's organisations, AIDS Service Organisations, Ministry of Health and Child Care, National AIDS Council, Ministry of Home Affairs and the communities where we have worked in.

Special mention to the Support Group members who attended the trainings right throughout the year and health workers for the unwavering support to the former. Some travelled long distances to attend 3 day trainings and some came even when they were not feeling very well. They did not tire but would be assisted at the Clinic.



SVISVI Support Group members doing group work.

Resources

a. Human

The harsh economic problems being experienced have not spared WASN. WASN scaled down staff as there were not enough funds to remunerate all officers. However WASN exceptionally managed to carry out activities lined up for the year. Despite the harsh political, economic environment and the limited funding situation the staff managed to soldier on with the work.

There is need to commend the Board and staff members who stood firm with the organisation, built good relationships, shared relationships and decision making during harsh times and still managed to fulfill WASN 2020 plans.

b. Funding

WASN managed to carry out the planned activities despite that the staff was poorly remunerated.

c. Networking

The New World Order that brought lockdowns left everyone being extra cautious resulting in many meetings being done over ZOOM. The ZOOM meetings meant there were no face to face meetings and staff worked from home meaning everybody needed data to work from home. Only essential services went to their work stations and the rest of the NGOs worked from home except when the lockdown was relaxed.

WASN has participated in the MoHCC workshops as one organisation which represents NGOs where issues of women, girls and children are concerned. Beginning of the year WASN partook in the 10 day planning meeting on HPV national roll out application of support for MR follow up campaign and proposal on Measles Campaign for 2020.

Again WASN participated in the Reach Every District (RED) and Reach Every Community (REC) Strategy held by MoHCC. This strategy is to improve access and utilisation of health services in order to increase immunisation coverage. Despite that EPI having made tremendous progress in Zimbabwe in raising the national immunisation coverage, there are still pockets of low coverage in some hard to reach areas.

Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ) held many meetings during the year with WASN attending to issues of Health as a lead organisation with WAG. The meetings were a platform for linking, sharing and learning from others their experiences in the different communities where they programmed.

Other meetings attended were called on by NANGO, NAC, ICC, CCM, Ministry of Women's Affairs and other stakeholders too many to mention by name.

Financial Systems and Accountability

During the period 2020, the Admin/Finance Officer made sure that all procedures covering financial matters were adhered to by WASN staff. The use of the WASN accounting manual guided every staff member on procedures that ensure consistency, transparency and integrity in handling of financial issues of the organisation.

Monitoring of the financial performance

Use of the consolidated budget formed the basis of the 2020 expenditure. The use of programmers raising a request for the activities, countersigned by Finance officer, Executive Director and Treasurer or Chairperson ensures transparency.

Wasn's financial conduct was monitored through the preparation and submission of monthly reports. The procurement procedures were conducted as per accounting manual like: use of 3 quotations, approved by the Director and selection of best quotation.

The Mid term audit was done and submitted to the donor and shared with the Board and Staff. End of December a final annual audit was done and had no problems arising from the recordings and quality of the financial reporting.

Activities from Programs in Summary

The activities carried out during the year were as follows:-

1. Clearance protocol:- Planning with the local leadership and various Service Providers to work in Chief Nemangwe's area at Svisvi in Gokwe South District.

2. Mobilizing women and girls living with HIV with the help of the local Clinic to create Support Groups.

2x1day baseline surveys on women and girls' challenges and needs

3. Assessment of Service Providers challenges in relationship to service provision.
. 2 x 1day baseline on service challenges being encountered by various Service Providers.

4. Training in Sexual, Reproductive Health, Rights and Leadership skills.
Pre and post tests. To check on knowledge levels before and after trainings.
2 x 3 day Training workshops on Rights Based Approaches and leadership skills, SRHR
Education on the Woman's Body and demonstration on how to insert the Female Condom

5. Training in Communication and Assertiveness skills
2 x 2day training workshops on communication and assertiveness
Role plays to make participants aware of importance of communication.

6. Training in Advocacy
2 x 3day training in Advocacy skills

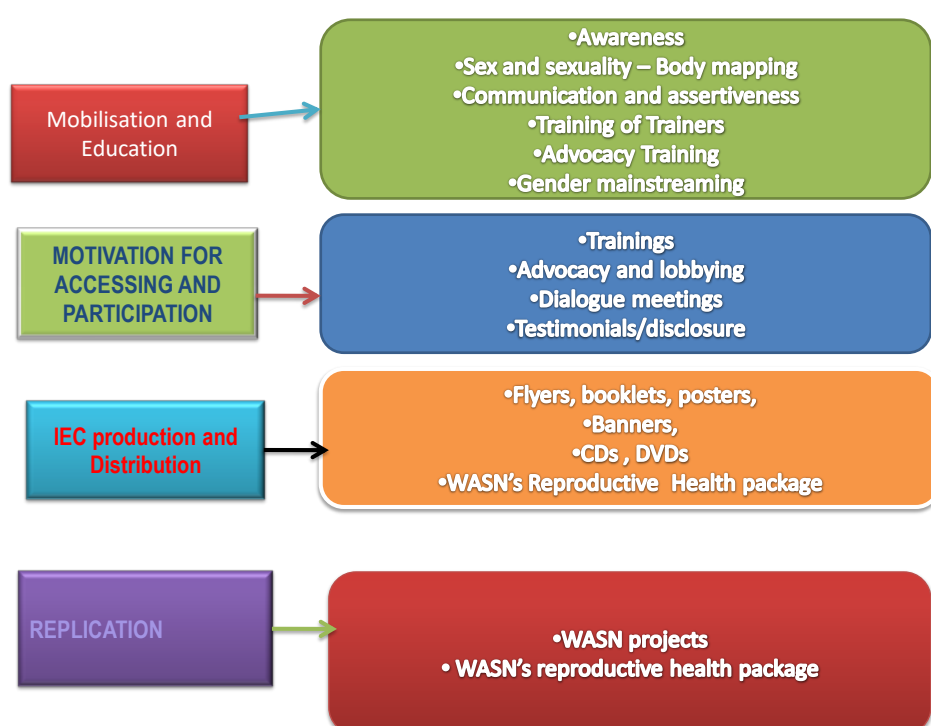
7. Advocacy campaigns-Dialogues : Stakeholders Meetings

2x1day dialogues with various stakeholders/service providers and Support Group members.

8. Networking locally and regionally for advocacy purposes:- .International Women's Day: World AIDS Day: 16 Days of Activism via ZOOM.

9. Materials production in relation to advocacy issues.

10. ZOOM meetings with OPIC, various stakeholders, other NGOs as well as beneficiaries.



Successes

- Dissemination of COVID-19 information through SMS, WhatsApp and distribution of fliers and masks to the various Support Groups in Chirumanzu and Gokwe South Districts.

- Creation and Resuscitation of Support Groups of women, girls, men and boys living with HIV at Svisvi Clinic under Chief Nemangwe.
- Women, girls, men and boys trained in: Rights Based Approaches, SRHR, communication and assertiveness skills, advocacy skills, Sex and sexuality – body and resource mapping
- Dialogues - Support Group members, Health Service Providers, Law enforcement agents, other Stakeholders working in the area, Traditional and Local leaders dialoguing on pertinent issues that affect them in the community.
- Produced materials like fliers used during the COVID-19 period and masks for the Support Group members.

Lessons Learnt

- Ability to adapt when a pandemic arises like COVID-19 that put most plans in disarray.
- Changing ways of communication to the hard to reach areas in times of strife by providing data bundles.
- Involvement of traditional leaders and other Service Providers enhances Community Based Programming.
- Service Providers and service recipients created rapport.
- Dialogue meetings among various Service Providers and Support Group members improved demand and access of services resulting in improved service delivery.
- Creation of consortiums in tackling issues in the same constituency assisted the poorest of the poor..
- More women and girls are still in need of empowerment and skills building.



Svisvi Support Group members during Cervical Cancer awareness and screening.



FHI360 officer showing Support Group members stages of Cervical Cancer.



Dialogue meeting at Svisvi Clinic with various stakeholders and Support Group members



Dialogue at Svisvi Clinic with DA, DAC, Chief's wife, Social Services, FHI360, VFU, Village Heads, Nurses and Support Group members.



Support Group members listening attentively at Svisvi Clinic.

Conclusion

WASN's ultimate vision is an atmosphere where women and girls enjoy their full Sexual, Reproductive Health and Rights, despite some funding challenges and constraints WASN achieved most of the set objectives.

WASN intended to scale up its activities with the provision of the Mobile Clinic but was unable to achieve that as the lockdown regulations did not allow more than 50 people to congregate at the Mobile Clinic which attracts more than 200 people at any outreach. The provision of Personal Protective Equipment for health workers was way out of reach for our budget. WASN however worked with what was feasible like the education on SRHR, Leadership, Communication and Assertiveness, Advocacy, Dialogues and ZOOM meetings.