



FINAL EVALUATION

LEVERAGING HUMAN RESOURCES FOR HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND CONTROL IN VIETNAM

EVALUATORS: INGA OLEKSY AND NGUYEN NGOC NAM - GREEN MANGO CONSULTING LLC
EVALUATION DATES: JUNE - OCTOBER 2023



COUNTRY:
VIETNAM



BUDGET:
€865 000



LEAD ORGANIZATIONS:
Hanoi University of Public Health (HUPH)

PARTNERS:
Vietnam
Administration of AIDS Prevention and Control



START DATE:
12/01/2019

END DATE:
31/07/2023

THE PROJECT

Background

Following Vietnam's commitment to achieve 90-90-90 targets in 2015, the country has been facing challenges in achieving those targets in terms of sustaining human resources, in the context of decreasing external funding for HIV response. Effective planning for adequate and qualified human resources became an increasingly urgent challenge that needed to be addressed. This project aims to strengthen the internal human resources (HR) processes within the existing subnational health units, tasked with HIV/AIDS programming, provincial Centers for Disease Control (CDCs). **The project developed the customized performance-based method (so-called CPB method)** and piloted two new HR management tools at the provincial level, focusing on three types of facilities that provide HIV/AIDS services: Out-Patient Clinics, Methadone Maintenance Therapy clinics and HIV Testing and Counseling centers. In addition, the project worked with the administrative units at Departments for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control of CDCs, performing administrative, management and prevention functions.

Project leads and implementation approach

This evaluation used mixed methods qualitative research methodology, collecting primary data through field visits and secondary data collection through program documents review. The bulk of primary data was collected through direct Key Informant Interviews with local project implementation teams, in face-to-face interviews at the project sites (visits to three provinces).

OBJECTIVES

Overall objective

Reinforce human resource management for effective HIV/AIDS prevention and control in the framework of the 90-90-90 targets in the transition phase by 2020 and beyond.

Specific objectives

- ▶ **SO1** : Design and establish human resource information tool(s) for the HIV/AIDS prevention and control departments, CDCs and facilities in 7 provinces.
- ▶ **SO2** : Strengthen the capacity of the CDCs and health facilities to operate and maintain HR information tool(s) for HIV/AIDS prevention and control area.
- ▶ **SO3** : Demonstrate the role and contribution of peer educators (PEs) in HIV/AIDS prevention and control system.
- ▶ **SO4** : Demonstrate evidence of benefits, lessons learned of applying the HR information tool(s) for scaling-up its use in other areas in CDCs and health system.
- ▶ **SO5** : Enable a secured transition to accelerate scale-up of the HR information tool(s).

EVALUATION RESULTS

Relevance

This project was highly relevant within Vietnam HIV response. It addressed an important functional gap within the government health system structures, through supporting one of the most essential element of health services, that of the Human Resources management. The project was highly consistent with the national and sub-national Vietnam government system structures, further facilitating the implementation of the new government HR policies and guidelines, by providing the very practical HR tools and processes for the health professionals and management teams to use. The project is fully aligned with two key external donors in Vietnam, that of Global Fund and PEPFAR.

Effectiveness

The project has delivered strongly on all of the five project objectives, fully achieving and over-achieving on all defined targets. This included developing two new HR tools, and deploying both of them in all 7 project provinces at the provincial CDCs and HIV service facilities. The project worked effectively with the provincial CDC teams and built staff capacity and local ownership at the respective CDCs and health facilities. Furthermore, the project introduced the new HR tools to local CBOs to support planning of their HR needs and to generate the evidence of the role and contributions of Peer Educators in HIV/AIDS programming.

Efficiency

The project has been using its limited resources very efficiently. With its very modest budget, the project represents excellent value for money, as it relies on using the existing organizational resources and the current staff within the system. The project implementation structure is fully embedded into the existing sub-national functional units, building capacity of the staff who are currently within the system.

Impact

Given the short duration of the project, it is not feasible to discuss its long-term impact, but the evaluation concludes that the project had a positive mid-term impact on the staff satisfaction with the new approach to managing and planning the HR activities within the existing service units. The tools have been integrated into the existing processes, and the evidence generated with the HR tools has been used by provinces to analyze the current staffing situations and propose solutions (either task shifting or request additional staff). The management recognized the positive impact of the HR tools and proposed to expand their use to other health services (in addition to the HIV/AIDS programs), and beyond.

Sustainability

The project management team worked well with the health authorities ensuring supportive environment for testing new solutions. The project introduced activities through the existing local health structures, encouraged group discussions to review task distribution and allocations among the staff within the functional teams. Both the tools and the interventions were deemed very useful and simple to use, and several provinces decided to incorporate them into their standard operating procedures. This approach generated strong local ownership and, coupled with careful supportive supervision, paved the way towards sustainability.



Conclusions and recommendations

- ▶ This is a very timely and valuable project that provided much needed structured HR solutions within the health system, to support rational management of the limited resources, while ensuring compliance with the new government regulations. Project established appropriate implementation and management structure pulling together a mix of relevant skills at each level, generating local ownership and forming a strong foundation for sustainability.
- ▶ Project generated strong body of knowledge about the Peer Educators' work and their important contributions to the effective HIV response at the local level. This work could benefit from further data collection and additional comparative analysis, and regional exchanges for cross-fertilization of innovative approaches.
- ▶ For its Phase 2 consider scaling up the project both thematically and geographically, expanding the new solutions to TB services and into 10 additional Global Fund provinces, while utilizing the key staff from the initial 7 provinces to form additional training teams. Consider allowing local flexibility for further innovations to generate most appropriate local adaptations that fit local needs and creative problem-solving. The project can benefit from continuation of generating the body of knowledge and promoting exchanges among multiple units to encourage effective sharing and dissemination.

FEBRUARY 2024