

HIV/AIDS, STIs and TB



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STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS OF THE VICTIM EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES IN CACADU DISTRICT OF THE EASTERN CAPE

HSRC Seminar Series

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HIV/AIDS Sexually Transmitted Infections & TB
Programme (HAST)

HSRC.

Purpose of the presentation

- Learn lessons from a study conducted in the Eastern Cape, Cacadu District about the Victim Empowerment Initiatives at local level
- (Strengths, Weaknesses, Critical Success Factors of the initiatives)

Introduction

- Government is accountable for the management of crime and requires policies, strategies and programmes to carry out this responsibility (Nel & Kruger, 1999).
- The National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) forms part of The National Growth and Development Strategy and is proof that government realizes its responsibility (NCPS VEP 1998).
- The NCPS was launched in 1996
- Objectives - To empower victims by offering support and effective services and engaging in proactive ways of preventing the recurrence of crimes (Makofane, 2007).
- Victim empowerment enables victims of crime to heal and move on with the least possible harm or loss” (Holtman & Kotze 1998).
- Commissioned by the Cacadu District Board

Objectives of the research

- Explore knowledge, attitudes and perception about the VEP as described in the NCPS VEP
- Providing a summary/recommendations of critical success factors

Methods

Design of study

- Exploratory descriptive study was conducted among victim empowerment service providers in the four selected areas of Cacadu District Municipality (**namely: Humansdorp, Graaff-Reinet, Grahamstown and Jeffrey's bays**)

Sample

- Service providers from victim empowerment initiatives in the **Welfare, Safety and Security, Correctional Services, Justice, Health, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), Community-Based Organizations (CBO) and Faith based organization** sectors.

Methods (cont...)

Data collection method

- Telephone interviews using a semi-structured questionnaire

Data Analysis

- The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.
- Data was thematically coded and entered on a statistical software programme (SPSS).
- Themes were identified.

Ethical considerations

- Ethical approval obtained from the HSRC's Research Ethics Committee (REC).
- No harmful procedures.
- Data was collected anonymously.
- Informed consent was given.

Findings: Perceived VEP Needs

- Counseling/emotional needs
- Developing crime prevention programmes
- Public education on crime prevention
- Medical assistance/ physical trauma
- Provision of information to victims
- Protection from victimization/ revenge

Findings: VEP Services Provided

- Visit from a volunteer
- Letter offering help
- Telephone hotline/counseling
- Accommodation and Shelter
- Practical support (food, clothing)
- Information about rights and compensation
- Assistance during investigation of crime
- Assistance during court proceedings
- Crime prevention advice

Findings: VEP Services Provided (Cont...)

- Legal advice
- Advocacy and lobbying
- Public Education services and awareness campaigns
- Training of criminal justice officials and allied professionals
- Medical assistance
- Referral to agencies
- Information regarding outcome of a court
- Financial assistance
- Professional Counseling
- Facilitation and networking

Findings: Type of violence suffered by victims

- Assault
- Domestic violence
- Child abuse
- Murder/attempted murder
- Rape/sexual assault
- Hijackings
- Robberies (other than hijackings)

Findings: Profile of victims

- Mainly lower income groups

Racial group

- Mainly Black

Findings: Marketing Methods

- Media
- Word of Mouth
- Referrals by other organizations
- Publications (pamphlets & newsletters)
- Workshops
- Public meetings

Findings: Utilization and accessibility of VEP services

- In general people utilize and access VEP services a great deal:
- Counseling services
- Khomanani stats reflect high participation of victims in the programme.
- Victim support centres are situated in police stations and are open 24 hours.
- Services are also in towns which is central to community members.
- VEP centres and social workers are available right in the communities. No need for transport.
- Home visits can be easily conducted.
- High numbers of crimes cases reported.

Findings: Perceived weaknesses of VEP

Monitoring

- Executive members are not working together.

Reporting

- Not all crimes are reported and followed up

Awareness

- In the Humansdorp, community involvement is a problem – no volunteers

Lack of resources

- Stipend, telephone and computers

Transport

- Emergency vehicles

Findings: Perceived weaknesses of VEP (Cont...)

Visibility

- Humansdorp area

High workload

- Good quality service - Volunteers

Other

- Funding- more stakeholders needed
- Lack of communication amongst stakeholders.
- Language barriers – Xhosa/Afrikaans

Findings: Critical Success Factors

Good management of VEP services

- Involvement of all the stakeholders.
- Transparency with all the stakeholders.
- Human and financial resources
- Expand management board.
- Staff is committed
- Management system and board in place (Police; NGO, education, social development and community members).

Findings: Critical Success Factors (Cont...)

Provision of adequate resources (human/material)

- Emergency transport.
- State budget for VEP services.
- More volunteers
- Overnight places, beds to sleep.
- Inter- Sectoral collaboration

Findings: Critical Success Factors (Cont...)

Capacity development

- Capacity development could improve VEP services. This would include:
 - Training of staff on the VEP services.
 - Provision of stipend to volunteers.
 - Stakeholders are informed by the National Council.
 - Victims - Income generating projects
 - Volunteers- Trained to educate community members.

Findings: Critical Success Factors (Cont...)

Communication and Information Dissemination

- Improvement on communication tools like faxes and photocopies.
- Sharing information and also for collaborating with them. This could be achieved by conducting monthly meetings with stakeholders.
- Talks at schools.
- National Campaign Strategy
- News letters
- Monthly and quarterly meetings

Findings: Critical Success Factors (Cont...)

Inter-sectoral intersection and collaboration

- Community involvement on public meetings.
- Regular stakeholders meetings
- Feedback meetings

Public awareness on VEP

- Public awareness could improve VEP services. This would include:
 - More media release.
 - Make the public aware of their rights.
 - Community involvement

Findings: Critical Success Factors (Cont...)

Community involvement on VEP

- Imbizos within the community
- Community volunteers.
- NGOs and churches

Monitoring and evaluation

- Timeous reporting dates
- Accurate statistics needed
- Regular meetings and regular evaluation sessions

Findings: Critical Success Factors (Cont...)

- Involvement of many service providers /more funding opportunities
- Victim support centres in all areas
- Reporting
- Payment of volunteers
- Funding

Recommendations

- Government to increase funding for sectors in order to be able to properly support victims of crime.
- Provision of space and resources is also crucial for the programme.
- There should be more campaigns on victims' rights and victim empowerment service.

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