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## *EVALUATION OF CHARITY- CAS.*



*Dear Reader,*

*Please receive the December issue of the newsletter of CAS with its main theme- Evaluation. Members of staff were busy with the evaluation during the entire year 2007. Discussions took place at departmental level. Topics on the agenda were:*

- Personnel guide*
- Work contract of employees and employer*
- Management of activities and financial management.*
- Functioning of Preparation Committee, change in target group*
- Future of CAS*
- Contacts with local authorities*

*These topics were discussed at monthly departmental meeting, and the results were re-discussed at Heads of Department meeting.*

*The Board of Advisors also spent a day with the members of staff to listen and discuss problems related to the arrangements with the employment, the contract and authority of the Heads of Departments. This day has been appreciated by all because it was an opportunity to know each-other better.*

*These meetings were part of the preparation of the internal evaluation. Through this, we arrived at The “Terms of Reference” (ToR). This ToR describes how the evaluation would be carried out practically, but also included the following:*

### **INTRODUCTION AND TEXT (BACKGROUND)**

*The issue of street children has assumed certain dimension in the Ghanaian society after fifteen years of work with the Ghanaian Street Child.*

*Today, the street of Accra is engulfed with a population of about 21,000 younger children who live and work in the streets of the capital. Quite a good number are termed the second generation products.*

*CAS initial intervention for street children was based on a total population of about 4,000 and what the system presented to us influenced CAS approach to work.*

*Presently, CAS runs six (6) departments as a way of working with the street child with a clear cut integrated activities to meet the needs of children.*

*The problem of street children as compared to what is being witnessed today presents to us as an organization a real challenge to handle; hence, the need to look again at our approach in terms of programs and activities. The question we are asking is where did we fail, where did we succeed? Hence the need to evaluate our work with the children.*

## **PARTNERS**

*We involved CAS' sister charities, the Press, government ministries and Town authorities.*

**Reasons why evaluation is needed:** *To help us to examine whether our approach are the best and measurable within the context of street work.*

## **2. Objectives of the Evaluation**

*Purpose: For policy development in our future work with the target groups (the children) and stake holders and the government.*

- i. *To gain more insight into whether we are doing right in terms of our work approach.*
- ii. *To assess capacities of donors in terms of interest, sustainability and role.*
- iii. *To redesign our intervention approach because of the new category of children we are meeting daily in the streets.*

#### **4. Methodology and approach**

*The evaluation methodology will look at references like:*

- i. *Existing documents*
- ii. *Desk study reports*
- iii. *Selection of cases*
- iv. *Administering of questionnaires, interviews with target groups, individual partners, staff etc.*
- v. *Field Observations and participation*

#### **Levels of intervention to be evaluated**

- i. *Evaluation would need to look at activities like;*
  - a. *The target groups – the real beneficiaries (children 5 – 18 years)*
  - b. *Department activities with respect to fieldwork with street children*
- ii. *Advocacy work and lobbying of government policies and social problems.*

*CORDAID, the donor for the Evaluation had to agree on this ToR as well as on the reasons of executing the evaluation.*

*CAS organized two evaluations before in 1996 and 1999. \*Embedded evaluation-Cambridge Partnership for Organisational Transformation, 26, Benian's Court, Storey's Way, Cambridge CB3 0DN UK 1996*

*This one became necessary because after 14 years of operating a fresh start had to be made. The target group street children*

*changed tremendously and CAS felt that the Charity was working too much in isolation.*

*Target group:*

*Why did the target group change? In 1995, CAS started the baby care program. Mothers of babies and children up to 5 years were assisted to take care of their children. In the year 2000, these children reached the age of 10 and above. CAS and SAID' hope was that the mothers could educate their children but unfortunately many could or did not. These children appeared on the streets as second generation street children.*

*These children do not belong to any culture except the culture of the street. They do not want to leave the streets, because it is their home. They have not learnt the basic rules of live, because nobody taught them.*

*CAS principle is not to assist Urban Poor Children. Often they have relatives who can take care of them. But now the gap between the street child and urban poor child has been narrowed.*

*It is clear that proper social surveys have to be conducted before a decision is made to assist the child.*

*Isolation:*

*CAS has been fortunate to have had very good public relations with government ministers, with AMA officials including the Mayor. CAS attended many major workshops which had the sole aim to consider the plight of street children. However, CAS did not want to be associated with political parties. Street children are not a political issue. Because of this, CAS became more and more isolated.*

*CAS is member of various coalitions and at times coordinates these coalitions, but unfortunately, these members are in the same position as CAS. NGOs are seen as organizations which have the*

*power of money. Many do not understand that some of these NGOs are Charities who have to beg for money as everyone else.*

*The issue of street children is not yet an issue of the society.*

#### **SISTER CHARITIES:**

*Charities such as Street Girls Aid, Salvation Army, Centre of Hope, Sisters of Charity, Salesians of Don Bosco, and AGREDS LIFELINE, try to achieve the same aim. They all work for and are with persons of the streets. Therefore we wanted to know from them their experiences.*

#### **The PRESS:**

*One of the key players could be the Press. The Press in all its forms could educate the public on the plight of street children in Ghana. We mentioned Ghana because it is of no use to mention street children problems of other countries. Interventions can only successful when constructed on the situations in the street. Education is a very important tool. The Press, when interested could educate the public on these issues.*

#### **PERSONS IN AUTHORITY:**

*CAS has been working with many persons in high authority. Monthly meeting were organized with the town authority. Ministers were all aware of the aims of Charities. However, these persons are often transferred after a short stay. Also, almost all are carrying out their work according to the wishes of the ruling political parties. Still CAS is of the opinion that the plight of street children can only change when certain policies are changed. CAS invited several key persons to the evaluation meeting.*

#### **THE ACTUAL EVALUATION.**

*The actual evaluation was done by the members of staff of CAS. They were guided by Mette Jacobsgaard.*

*Mette knows CAS well because she also assisted us in 1996 and 1999. But of course, Mette had to be brought up to date with to-days developments.*

*She spent one week visiting departments and interviewing persons. One week is rather short because CAS operates in the streets, at the House of Refuge at Hopeland and children are in workshops and schools.*

*Still many members of staff had the opportunity to meet her and told her their experiences.*

*The second week took place at a hotel in Accra, the Holiday hotel. CAS rented a conference room for one week. The room was rather small, but still most of the meetings could take place there. At times we moved to the veranda and garden.*

*The first day at the hotel, the sister Charities took part in the discussions. It became clear that they experience the same problems when dealing with persons in authority. The ideal response is not yet possible because persons in authority have also communication difficulties. We expect that ministers know what the town authorities have decided or that officers in the field work independently or with the authority of their bosses. We Charities have to constantly re-introduce ourselves to them.*

*The second day, the press was invited. We invited the managers of TV and radio stations as well as the written press. Some of them attended and we were all happy with the response. They advised us on several issues and some promised to assist us in the future.*

*The third day had been set aside for the authorities, both governments as well as town authorities. The Director and assistant of the ministry of woman and children affairs attended as well as an officer of the head office of the AMA (Accra Metropolitan assembly). We discussed again the communication issues but also current affairs such as the demolition of kiosks in*

*the city by the AMA to clean the city for the African Cup of Nations event. It was indeed an interesting discussion.*

*On the forth day the Heads and Assistants of the departments as well as other members of staff and volunteers attended. CAS members of staff reflected on what they had learnt. The discussions were free and frank. Members were not disturbed by the children and could concentrate on the discussions.*

*The last day was organized at the House of refuge at CAS. All members of staff were invited and it was a debriefing session. We also made use of the opportunity to thank Mette for all the work done.*

*A week later we received the draft report and we asked the various departments to read it and give their comments.*

*Many comments were gathered, but some of them concentrated too much on practical arrangement for the department. The Heads of departments met and we selected those comments which were relevant for the evaluation report.*

*These in turn were sent to Mette who tried to accommodate them into the report.*

### ***HERE WE SHARE SOME OBSERVATIONS OF THE FINAL REPORT.***

*The structure with departments seems relevant in the context of CAS work. It is however absolutely essential that communication and reporting between the departments is of such quality that it can feed into enhancement of the work of CAS. There is a risk that information held by one department may not be seen as relevant for another*



*department although all departments should be moving in the same direction, that of supporting the children.*

*It was very nice to see that CAS has been able to maintain the majority of the old and experienced staff, most of whom have been with the organisation since the beginning. This shows dedication and commitment to the cause and when asked about their motivation for working with CAS it was clearly the plight of the children that kept the staff there. Some also mentioned that CAS is like a family, which shows comfort and trust in the organisation.*

*The biggest outgoing expense for CAS is salaries and salaries are notoriously difficult to raise funds for. At the same time, CAS would not exist if it were not for the staff and in particular for the fieldworkers.*

*The capacity of CAS lies with the staff and their commitment and ability to carry out the work. Dealing with street children can be hard and stressful work and at times also discouraging. This is so in particular for the field staff who meet the children on the street and need to stay neutral and not get emotionally involved. There are times when this may be difficult and the fieldworkers want to attract children to come off the street by promoting the possibility of sponsorship. However, CAS's message remains very clear; the work is in the street and the child will need to make his or her own decisions with respect to visiting the refuge and from there possibly continue the path off the street.*

## **THE FUTURE**

*CAS is continuously challenged and has proven their capacity to move with the times and the changes in the street. My hope is that CAS will look at the*

*recommendations and observations in this report as an opportunity to look ahead, try new ways and “think out of the box” in order not to stay complacent and go stale.*

*The size of greater Accra is increasing and so will the number of street children including areas where they may be found. New shopping centres are coming up and it is quite possible that CAS will find children living around these areas where begging and “guarding cars” could be new activities as seen in other parts of Africa. The question is whether CAS will want to, and indeed has the capacity to spread into wider Accra. As earlier mentioned, the majority of the children who visit the refuge are those who work and sleep in an area relatively near CAS. Is CAS willing to accept that they can only assist a limited number of children and choose their operational area accordingly? Or will CAS want to increase its activities by additional staff?*

*As noted above under impact, clearly there will be a downward limit to the intensity of interaction beyond which it has no meaning. Even though some children may take to a social worker at the first point of interaction, others will need several days, months or even years of interaction to generate enough of a relationship where meaningful counselling can take place.*

*I recommend that CAS concentrate their efforts in areas closer to the refuge with more intense fieldwork and if it is found useful covers a few additional areas further away “on a research basis” in order to keep abreast with the changes in the street. However, the ultimate decision about changing the mode of fieldwork lies with CAS.*

*CAS is now facing the fact that they have to start from scratch with the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation street children and there is increased attention to these kids in the street. As I have already mentioned, CAS is unique and has a wealth of*

*experience and successes which they need to make use of and build on.*

*CAS was able to build their existing approach on the basis of careful and continuous interaction, in the same way, CAS now needs to think anew as the needs of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation street children may be quite different. The only way to find out is to interact, listen and observe.*

*CAS has a clear message and a lot of success to back their message. CAS should therefore not be shy to put forward this message. This is important not only maintain the working ethos and clarity within the organisation but also to the external relations and in particular the donors. The focus is in the street and CAS is run by events in the city. The fieldworkers are therefore the key to CAS' work and ethos. This also means that the whole operation depends on the fieldworkers who feed information into the organisation and invite children to the refuge. What follows is that CAS' biggest expenditure is necessarily on salaries.*

*The paradox is that salaries are the most difficult to raise funds for as it is difficult to get donors to understand that much time is needed for preparation of children from the first point of contact to the time when the child eventually maybe visit the refuge. Having said that, it is not impossible to put this message across, in particular when supported by real stories.*

*Relationships with donors, government and the press will have to be continuously cultivated. CAS has the knowledge and data to provide the real picture of the street and should use this knowledge to motivate those with the power to act at a national level to deal with the social problems of street children.*

*I believe that there is untapped potential for CAS both in terms of the resourcefulness of the staff as well as funding and it is my hope that CAS by making investments in the staff, mainly through training will be able to tap into this potential.*

*Mette Jacobsgaard.  
6<sup>th</sup> December 2007.*

*Many thanks to CORDAID who made it possible.  
Finally we want to give you some other news.*

*With the assistance of the Royal Dutch Embassy meetings were held between the National Health Insurance Scheme and Heads of Charities.*

*The aim was to make it possible to register street children into the Scheme. The Charities act as "Parents-Guardians". The Scheme managers agreed, but the Charities have to fulfil certain conditions. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of December we were able to sign agreements between the two parties. The Charities are very happy with this development and are grateful to the Dutch Embassy for their assistance.*

*We thank you again for your interest and support. A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

*Bro. Jos van Dinther*

*(Director CAS)*

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