



# The Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme (RHVP)

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## Scope of this presentation:

- What is RHVP?
- Why are we there?
- What do we do?
- How do we do it?
- How do we do our policy work?
- Did we have any success?
- What lessons learned did we learn?

## What is RHVP?

- ❑ A regional programme funded by DFID and AUSAID
- ❑ Regional hub in Johannesburg, but team of experts from all over the world
- ❑ First phase 2005 – 2008
- ❑ Second phase 2008 – 2010
  
- ❑ Supports policy makers and practitioners concerned with food security, hunger and vulnerability with a special focus on the role of social protection

## Why are we there?

- ❑ Poverty in southern Africa is chronic
- ❑ Therefore, hunger and vulnerability are predictable
- ❑ After two consecutive livelihood crisis in the region, need to start working towards a more predictable response to hunger and vulnerability
- ❑ Humanitarian aid is usually not provided long enough to lift people out of poverty, it saves lives not livelihoods
- ❑ Development and growth efforts are needed, but the poor and vulnerable are usually the last to benefit from growth
- ❑ Social protection is the link between humanitarian aid and economic growth

# What do we do? – three mutually reinforcing components

## Component one: hunger and vulnerability tools

- ❑ Vulnerability assessment and analysis, technical support to the RVAC and several NVACs, setting up new NVACs
- ❑ Ensuring better collection and utilisation of strategic information on vulnerability through information sharing, harmonisation of assessment and analysis methods and training
- ❑ Main Partner: SADC - RVAC

# What do we do? – three mutually reinforcing components

## Component two: hunger and vulnerability skills

- ❑ Design and development of a curriculum for hunger and vulnerability practitioners, with a focus on social protection
- ❑ Various training institutions across southern Africa are part of a training database and provide part(s) of the curriculum
- ❑ Administration of a training bursary fund
  
- ❑ Main Partner: Universities and training Institutes

# What do we do? – three mutually reinforcing components

## Component three: hunger and vulnerability knowledge

- Policy Dialogues for MPs on the role of social protection and social transfers
- provide a portal and online knowledge and information hub [www.wahenda.net](http://www.wahenda.net)
- Topical research on cutting edge issues (HIV and AIDS and Social Protection, food prices and Social Protection etc
- Media – training, films, documentaries, newspapers
  
- Main Partner: SADC-PF

## How do we do it?

- Work in SADC region and beyond
- Work in partnership at regional and national level
- Facilitate south-south cooperation sharing of lessons learned across continents
- Demand driven policy advice and training on social protection underpinned by a innovative research agenda
- Professional network of experts at its disposal
- Raise discussion on controversial issues
- Publish a variety of materials through [wahenga.net](http://wahenga.net)



## How do we do our policy work?

- ❑ RHVP aims to facilitate the development of national social protection policies and programmes at scale
- ❑ In phase I: working on collecting evidence - now working with the evidence to influence policy
- ❑ In phase II: focus on MPs and political parties – let SP become part of the political agenda
- ❑ MoU signed with SADC-PF to support them in organising and delivering a series of regional and national policy dialogue retreat
- ❑ Aimed at speakers of parliament and relevant portfolio committees

## Did we have any success?

- Yes!
- But, attribution is always a challenge
- RHVP has been intimately involved in Lesotho and their policy responses to increased food prices – now as part of the election to OAP is increased from R200 to R400
- In Mozambique, RHVP has an MoU with the Ministry of Social Action to provide policy advise on social protection
- In Swaziland, RHVP has influenced the decisions amongst the delivery mechanisms of the OAP

## Did we have any success?

- ❑ Publication of a series of short films and a synthesis documentary on social transfers and their impact, with an introduction by Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu
- ❑ SADC stronger in VAA work and PMU is the institutional home for channelling RHVP support
- ❑ In Malawi; created an environment to discuss several issues and hot topics related to social protection policy development

## What lessons did we learn?

To influence policy and policy makers one needs to:

- Show how it will win votes and an possibly an election
- Be prepared to pay the sitting allowances
- Start realising that in humanitarian aid and development efforts everything is political
- Work in partnership for effective advocacy
- Ensure that you have the evidence to back-up your statements
- Invest in getting to know the people behind the policy

## What lessons did we learn?

Eye openers:

- ❑ The World Bank is a Bank – loans important
- ❑ Policy makers are people:
  - What drives them? their personal commitment and interests
  - Professional background: food security, social policy, economics?
  - Level of experience plays a crucial role
  - Is their personality based on “beliefs” or on “evidence”?
- ❑ The double standards from “the West” – constant call for more evidence, yet home-grown very expensive welfare systems in place and no questions asked!

# www.wahenga.net



rhvp  
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