



Search for Common Ground



2003 SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND CENTRE LOKOLE BUKAVU: EVALUATION REPORT

Search for Common Ground in the DRC, known locally as Centre Lokole, was established in 2001 to support communications around the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, the cornerstone of the peace process that began in Lusaka in 1999. Its overarching goals are to support the peace process, to promote unity for the Democratic Republic of Congo, and to reinforce the capacity of local organizations to resolve local conflicts through the use of media, arts, dialogue, and training programs based in peacebuilding centres around the country.

This internally-led evaluation seeks to learn about the programmatic work of the Bukavu office of the Search for Common Ground (SFCG) Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Programme, for the 22 month operating period of January 2002 to the end of October 2003. Initiated in response to the SFCG biennial evaluation commitment, the evaluation focused on the programmatic level with two specific learning objectives: to determine the results in terms of outputs & outcomes of the programme and to ascertain whether the selected projects were the most appropriate to the achievement of the stated programmatic goals and objectives.

The evaluation methodology consisted of three stages conducted in sequence: document review, internal reflections with team and partners and external data collection and analysis. External data collection was a blend of questionnaires, focus groups and in-person structured interviews. Ultimately, the evaluation highlighted a number of positive, predominant impacts and observations of SFCG programming in DRC.

SFCG DRC SUPPORTS INDIGENOUS CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS

Centre Lokole work supported indigenous civil society, providing them with information and services that enabled them to be more effective and informed in their work. This is important as it reinforces the sustainability of indigenous agencies. Further consideration should be given to providing open and equal access for all local groups.

SFCG DRC UTILIZES RADIO AS AN EFFECTIVE MEDIUM

The radio soap opera *Jirani Ni Ndugu* is the jewel in the Centre Lokole crown. This radio programme is highly popular and effective, with what appears to be a dedicated listenership that takes to heart many of the messages of the programme. Two examples of the impact of radio programming:

- Of the Radio Club Heads that were surveyed fourteen of the sixteen (88%) responded that the radio programmes made them think about their beliefs about other groups/communities. Thirteen of which went on to indicate that this reflection resulted in changing their beliefs to be more accepting of other groups/communities.
- In terms of change in communities/quartiers, approximately 30% of listener respondents indicated that some form of reduction in discrimination between groups had occurred.

SFCG DRC PROGRAMMING HAD A MULTIPLIER EFFECT

The results of CL programming went beyond those directly engaged participants. Independent initiatives resulting from engagement in a CL activity or project were clearly visible. The evaluation team heard several examples of this multiplier effect in action. For instance, Radio Maendeleo distributed the CL published Transitional Constitution throughout its 86 Radio Clubs in Bukavu and near-by area. The team

also heard stories recounted by the Radio Club participants that after attending this training they assumed the role of ‘mediators’ within their communities

RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation underscores three broad categories of recommendations, with a sample of specified suggestions underneath:

1. Overall Direction

- a. Considering the limited resources of the Bukavu office, the evaluation team questions if all 4 current radio programmes are the most strategic and appropriate routes

2. Programme Design and Implementation

- a. It is recommended that a more structured programming approach be adopted, that seeks to analyse needs, identify desired changes, and designs appropriate strategies.
- b. Monitoring systems should be designed with more attention given to type of questions, regular engagement in the progress made, analysis and feedback into programming decision-making.
- c. Information distribution efforts should review the strategic nature of the groups that are supplied with information to insure that they are able to use the information in an on-going manner.

3. Programme Content Ideas

- a. A communication package around governance issues is still needed and appropriate in the current context. Consideration of developing an integrated programme around governance should take place.
- b. The overwhelming popularity of the radio soap opera warrants further consideration as to how to leverage this already successful medium into something greater
- c. Develop a strategy to promote gender parity in all programming.

Source: This document is a summary of, and taken directly from “Search for Common Ground Centre Lokole: Bukavu Evaluation Report” by Cheyanne Church, Mark Rogers, Adrien Sindyigaya. A copy of this document can be acquired at <http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/drc.html>, or by contacting Nick Oatley, Director Institutional Learning at Search for Common Ground at noatley@sfcg.org

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