



SAT

Southern African AIDS Trust

Supporting Community Responses to HIV and AIDS in Southern Africa

SOUTHERN AFRICAN AIDS TRUST

SWW BRIEFING NOTES: STUDY VISITS

HARARE: 2003

Introduction

SWW organises programmed site visits in which inexperienced organisations or those lacking exposure, visit more experienced ones to observe their programmes in action. The visiting and host organisations are carefully matched to ensure the maximum relevance and transfer of programme experience, concepts and skills. Study visits have proved to be effective because there is no substitute for seeing with one's own eyes, for the face-to-face sharing of experience. The best ways of carrying out effective AIDS action are being learned at the community level. Formal training cannot replicate the know-how which community AIDS organisations have built up; the necessary knowledge and experience cannot be quickly bundled up and given to novice AIDS workers; there are no classroom alternatives to learning by seeing and doing.

Objectives of Study Visits

- To learn and share information and experiences between the hosting and visiting organisation.
- Learn relevant approaches being used by the hosting organisations to improve implementation and programming skills. .
- To observe practical day to day activities of areas such as organisational administration; financial management; counselling; home care; peer education programmes; or providing services for people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.
- To establish a relationship for future mentoring support.

Length of attachment

- The length of the study visit is usually over a period of one week. This can be extended or reduced depending on the time and resources available.

Criteria for study visit hosting organisations

The organisation must:

- Have a thematic, geographic and institutional profile consistent with SAT plans and priorities;
- Demonstrated infrastructure and capacity development transfer capabilities.
- Have the desire, organisational stability and philosophy to share their knowledge and expertise.
- Have the ability to transfer knowledge to new or inexperienced organisations or those wishing to introduce new concepts into their programmes.
- Have detailed knowledge of their local community context; and have the confidence of their constituency.
- Work methodically & systematically and have a strong emphasis on accountability;

Agenda

The agenda will depend on the type and duration of the study visit. Different agendas can be developed depending on the length and objectives of the individual visit.

Organisation of the Study Visits

Responsibilities

National Level Study Visits

The **Country Programme Officer** is overall responsible for the success of the study visit by ensuring that:

- A SWW contract is developed with the visiting organisation to enable the activity to take place.
- Liaising with the SWW technical team for the development of the agenda and the briefing of the hosting organisation.
- The Terms of Reference are developed in consultation with both organisations, and with technical input from the SWW technical team. (example of TOR attached)

The **hosting organisation** is responsible for:

- The local arrangements at organisational level for the visit (accommodation reservations, site visits, meetings and community outreach activities).
- Development of the TOR and an agenda in consultation with the CPO and the visiting organisation and as required with the SWW technical team.
- A general report of the visit and a confidential report as appropriate, with recommendations for further capacity development as identified.

The **visiting organisation** is responsible for:

- All administration and logistical arrangements for travel.
- Compiling a budget for submission to the CPO
- Payment of all expenses that may be incurred by the hosting organisation.

Regional / Cross Border Study visits

The **Country Programme Officer** in the visiting organisation's country is overall responsible for the success of the study visit by ensuring that:

- The study visit takes place.
- The Terms of Reference are developed in consultation with both organisations, and as required with technical input from the SWW technical team. (example of TOR attached)
- The budget for the costs of the study visit is in the visiting partner's SWW contract.
- Assists with advice for the organisation and the logistical support for the study visit.

The **SWW technical team** is responsible for the:

- Consultations with the hosting organisation and logistical arrangements where necessary, in consultation with the CPOs in both countries.
- Checking the budget for the production of the SWW contract, agreeing on dates.
- Development of the agenda with the hosting organisation, in consultation with the two CPOs and the visiting organisation.

The **hosting organisation** is responsible for:

- The technical input and the development of a programme for the study visit in consultation with the SWW technical team and the CPO.
- Arrangements for local accommodation, meetings, site visits and other planned activities.
- A general report of the visit with recommendations for further capacity development that may be required. A facilitator's confidential report may be submitted if necessary.

The **visiting organisation** is responsible for:

- Compiling a budget for the activity and submission to the CPO
- Their travel and other logistical arrangements in liaison with the CPO.
- Payment for all expenses including any costs incurred by the hosting organisation.

The Budget (example of budget attached)

The budget for the study visit is included in a SWW contract with the visiting organisation. The SWW contract will include expenses for all related costs that could include travel, accommodation, per diems and materials. The budget must include any costs that may be incurred by the hosting organisation.

Participants

Gender – aim for an equal gender balance where possible.

Incidentals and Meal Allowances

No policy is currently in place to pay for self-sourced accommodation at a set rate where no receipts are required.

Travel

Travel arrangements for participants must ensure that the most cost effective route and mode of transport is used. Partner safety should also be high on the consideration when mode of transport identified.

Air travel reservations and payments are made by the respective country office.

Where participants use their own transport, they must be advised on SAT policy for reimbursement of travel expenses. SAT will not reimburse travel expenses per kilometre travelled, if own transport used but will pay a reasonable cost for fuel on production of a receipt. Ground travel is the preferred mode of transport to be used and all travel organised by the participant will be re-imbursed on production of receipts. This information must always be included in the TOR

Report

Reports of the study visits must be submitted by both the hosting and visiting organisations.

- ❑ The visiting organisations report should include the daily activities they have been exposed to during the study visit, both administration and programming; detailed information on activities participated in and lessons learned; and should include information on how the lessons learned can be adapted if necessary and applied in their own working environment. The report must be one to two pages long and submitted to SAT no later than 10 days after the completion of the study visit.
- ❑ The hosting organisation must submit a report on the study visit from their perspective. This should include the objectives and to what extent they were met, observed strengths of the visiting organisation and suggested areas for development. This report will assist the CPO and the SWW technical team to assess and plan further capacity development support and make recommendations for the way forward. Facilitators may also submit a confidential report' on sensitive issues arising during the study visit that may need to be addressed at management level. This information may not be appropriate to include in the general report. The confidential report must be submitted separately. A decision will be made by SAT on how to sensitively resolve the issues arising.

Evaluation

The SWW evaluation form is to be completed by all participants at the completion of all SWW activities.

For national study visits, the evaluation forms must be submitted to the CPO to be analysed. The CPO will retain and keep on file the completed forms and submit only the analysis to the Regional SWW team, Harare. The hosting partner may, if they so desire, make copies of the completed evaluation forms for their own records.