

“...from beneficiary to participant....”

## Report of Evaluation of Nyemo - Cambodia

### Summary

In 1995, Nyemo France visited Cambodia to assess the feasibility of developing a social and economic reintegration program for vulnerable women in Phnom Penh. Nyemo Cambodia was legally registered as a local NGO with the Ministry of Interior in 2004. NYEMO has signed MoUs with Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs Veterans and Youth, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, and Ministry of Education.

Nyemo Cambodia started in 1998 with an initial focus on specialized vocational training for vulnerable women in Phnom Penh. Simultaneously, Nyemo reinforced and expanded the social and technical network by engaging Government organizations, local civil society, international organizations and NGOs.

The ToR for this evaluation clearly framed the questions that the evaluation explored.

**Methodology:** The key concepts that provided the framework for the evaluation were of empowerment, sustainability, partnership and networking. The core approach of the evaluation was inclusive and participatory so that information was gathered from depths of experiences as well as the variety of stakeholders. Evaluators looked for the successes of the outcomes and also the gaps in achievements which are included in the recommendations. Appreciative Enquiry was the methodology of evaluation in combination with specific tools for assessing the organizational and business aspects of the project and tools from the Integrated Organization Model of MDF for assessing the influence on the institutions and vice versa. The conclusions are derived from the data collected through various methods and its analysis.

Nyemo achieved the following outcomes the during the project period:

**Overall outcomes:**

Women and girl children who were beneficiaries in the Nyemo project activities are happier and feel more confident and empowered than ever before. They were unanimous in saying that they have hope for the future after they joined the Nyemo programmes. Women who were earlier extremely vulnerable and are now able to analyse their situation to find solutions and have the capacity to improve their quality of life and that of their children.

Nyemo has expertise and practical experiences in the social and developmental approach in responding to HIV& AIDS, Therefore, Nyemo would be able to play an **advocacy role** in partnership with civil society in Cambodia and other Oxfam Novib supported partners, eg. the data from the utilization and the benefits from the Equity fund could give information on the utility of the fund and then an advocacy can be designed to make the

health providers more responsive and the Equity fund more easily accessible to the poor, thus reducing the economic burden of diseases on the poor.

**Nyemo's strategy to work with stakeholders through partnerships and networks was effective** in addressing the complex multi-dimensional and multi-layered aspects of improving the situation and condition of poor, vulnerable and marginalized women and children. In the scale up it will be the partnerships that will deliver the services.

The **transformation from beneficiary to participant**, to contributor and decision maker in the project and in Nyemo. The full involvement of the women who were beneficiaries of Nyemo's earlier efforts in the subsequent needs assessment, project design and managing of projects has been unique and has made Nyemo's efforts credible and sustainable.

### **Policy and practice changes:**

**Women's support group:** Based on experience and the belief that a person needed to be integrated into their community for their well being and psychological and emotional health Nyemo worked on organizing the Women's Support Group. After the initial rehabilitation and training inputs the beneficiaries move out of the programme and start a life as healthy and responsible community members. The Ministry of Health has modelled the MMM (centre for friends helping friends) on Women's Support Group concept, and has created the provision of a continuum of care for people living with HIV & AIDS.

There is less **stigmatization of people/children with HIV & AIDS** as can be seen in the willingness of children to go to school and the acceptance of children by their classmates and teachers. The products made and services provided by the beneficiaries/participants and the women support groups are in demand and are being used by general population.

There is evidence that general community has begun to recognise the vulnerability and make efforts to assist in improving the welfare of the women and their children. This can be concluded by the responses of community around the home of the women's support group, the reintegrated girl child and her HIV + brother, reported in the case study.

Women and children also report that they receive prompt and adequate attention when they go to the health facilities indentified by Nyemo and possessing a Nyemo card gives them an identity other than being an indigent person.

The **Nyemo Health Equity Fund** has been used by the beneficiaries and the hospitals appreciate the forms, the methods and the process thorough which the beneficiaries are screened and sent to the hospitals to seek treatments. Nyemo was invited to be a member of National Social Health Insurance fund. Nyemo contributed to the development of the common form that is now being used by the Equity Funds.

**The Medical Referral system** that Nyemo has established is the backbone of the health component of the project. The availability of medical attention at the health clinic at Nyemo also provides the opportunity for screening of the cases that need further attention. The cases referred by Nyemo get attention in the hospital. Another feature of the referral is that either a member of the women or a counsellor accompanies the patient to the hospital for the first time.

One of the unique characteristics of **the model is the emphasis on quality from the very beginning of the vocational training** since the products are sold in the market and the products of cooking and housekeeping are served in the restaurant and the guesthouse is serviced by the trainees.

### **Recommendations:**

**Innovative ways of marketing the skills by the beneficiaries:** It is recommended that the beneficiaries may also be trained in making a basic business plan so that they can join together to meet the market demands just as they are doing in the clothes and furnishing. For example, instead of individual employment they could form a company/group/team that offers housekeeping services or catering services to medium sized establishments. In addition, when they are a group then they may be more credit worthy.

**Health Equity Fund:** the experience of the successful utilization of the health equity fund by the beneficiaries must be used for advocacy by Nyemo and its partners. The objective of the advocacy, with other health service providers, would be to make available to the poor and needy Health Equity funds which are provided by state policy.

**Research and development:** becomes an integral part of the operations of Nyemo with the objective to improve, innovate and add to the products that are produced by Nyemo.

Improve and **redesign a data management system** which produces information for different uses like reporting, planning, review of implementation and progress, research and development, informing the partnerships of gains and bottlenecks, matching expenditures with achievements, planning scale up of the Nyemo concept, informing advocacy and so on;

It is recommended that an assessment of the performance requirements of the staff is conducted and prepare a plan for **capacity enhancement and of building new capacities**. While scaling up the next phase of the project Nyemo will need to enhance a few of the needs identified during this evaluation that are as follows: enhancing counselling skills, basic accounting and computer skills for all, report writing, time management, organizational management, financial management, monitoring and follow up, project cycle management, design of products and so on

At least **once a year there is a retreat** for reflection and learning which would also contribute to planning. A budget may be provided for this activity.

The **Board should be reconstituted** at the earliest and the responsibilities of the members of the Board should be re-designated with circumspection given the plans of Nyemo. A member **from the beneficiary groups could be invited as a board member**,

A **meeting** is organized **annually** for all the stakeholder agencies from the government and partners for sharing achievements and difficulties. This could be a profiling opportunity for Nyemo and the network.

Explore **alternate housing** for Nyemo by either getting its own premises or getting a government allotment.

Continue the focus **on the empowerment of women** approach.