



Salamander Trust
TRANSFORMING THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT HIV

Annual Report 2012–2013



www.salamandertrust.net



Welcome!

Welcome to the Salamander Trust Report for April 2012 to March 2013.

We are delighted to share with you once more the highs and lows of the past year. We are, as ever, indebted to our many great supporters, with whom it is always an absolute pleasure to work, despite the on-going challenges of funding cuts and strange policies that we and so many colleagues face around the world.

It still never ceases to amaze us how much can be done with so little by so few. One UN colleague at the International AIDS Conference in Washington D.C. asked us “Where are your offices?” and looked rather bewildered when we burst out laughing. “Our kitchen tables!” we replied. “Oh I am so sorry,” she apologised, “I thought with all your projects and publications you must have offices somewhere.” “Not at all” we responded: “we take that as a big compliment.” But we are indeed ‘Kitchen Table Productions’, working from home in many corners of the UK and beyond. This is how we manage to keep our overheads so small compared with those of the large international organisations with whom we also work.

We set huge store by wanting to remain small and light of foot, so that we may work more nimbly, flexibly, responsively and effectively to the global challenges that we all face in this area of work. Unfortunately, in the eyes of some donors, this works against us because they do not consider us big enough to fund: “*Your funding application was excellent – it’s just that you were not applying for enough funds from us and we haven’t funded you before...*” Hmm ...

We hope very much that you enjoy this latest Annual Report from our kitchen tables and would love to hear from you when you have read it.

With best regards and renewed thanks for all your ongoing support.

Alice Welbourn
Chair, Board of Trustees and Founding Director



Our annual report 2012–2013

At Salamander Trust we have three main components to our work.

1. Global advocacy work around various issues that affect the rights of women living with HIV. Since it is on-going, we have looked at it over the calendar year. The main themes we have focused on throughout the year include:

- ▶ Treatment issues for women living with HIV
- ▶ The Global Plan to address peri-natal transmission of HIV and how this can affect women's sexual and reproductive rights in the context of gender-based violence
- ▶ Funding for women's rights work and the meaningful involvement of women living with HIV in an effective response to the HIV pandemic
- ▶ The challenge of the 'evidence base' for women's rights work
- ▶ Showcasing the leadership and resilience of women living with HIV around the world
- ▶ The post-2015 agenda and what this means for women's rights

2. Training: mainly in relation to our Stepping Stones work. A large component of Salamander Trust's work is the Stepping Stones programme and our coordination of the International Stepping Stones Community of Practice Network. A report on the work of Stepping Stones for 2012–2013 can be found in Annex 1. Compiled by Salamander Trust Associate, Nell Osborne, the Annex describes the following programmes:

Development of new Stepping Stones adaptations

- ▶ Stepping Stones adaptation for use with children
- ▶ Stepping Stones for Peace And Prosperity in Karamoja, Uganda

Promoting Stepping Stones and advocacy

- ▶ International AIDS Conference 2012
- ▶ Video interviews
- ▶ Stepping Stones newsletters
- ▶ Strategies For Hope funding for free Stepping Stones materials

What we have learnt about users around the globe

- ▶ ACTWID, Cameroon
- ▶ COWLHA, Malawi
- ▶ Parcours Pilot Project in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo
- ▶ Stepping Stones and Creating Futures: a combined intervention

Digital communication strategy

- ▶ Developments and evaluation

3. On-going research, both on global issues and in relation to our training work at community level. It is our research that glues our global advocacy work and our grassroots training work together, so that one feeds into the other and vice versa.

The year in a blink

The table below provides an overview of our activities over 2012–2013.

2012–2013	TRAINING	RESEARCH	GLOBAL ADVOCACY	OPERATIONS
APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going Stepping Stones work (see note below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background research for <i>Stepping Stones with Children</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparations for the Women’s Networking Zone (WNZ) @ International AIDS Conference, Washington D.C. Development of promotional film for WNZ Civil Liberties and Public Policy (CLPP) Conference, Hampshire, USA British HIV Association (BHIVA) Conference, UK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts for consultants for <i>Stepping Stones with Children</i>
MAY		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background research for UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) presentation Collaborative work on articles for <i>Repro Health Matters Journal</i> and <i>Journal of the International AIDS Society</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation at World Health Organization (WHO) hormonal contraception meeting, Montreux, Switzerland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing Annual Report 2011-2012
JUNE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background research with Luisa Orza for UK Consortium statement for Department for International Development (DFID) ‘Golden Moment’ initiative on family planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation at UNAIDS PCB (governance board) meeting, Geneva, Switzerland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going correspondence
JULY		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research for script development of ‘Did you know’ UNAIDS film 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation and involvement in WNZ sessions; filming ‘I have a dream’ and human rights march to the White House Two Stepping Stones trainers filmed (Tanzania, Russia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going correspondence
AUGUST		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research for Robert Carr Fund application Research for editing UNAIDS thematic paper on women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article regarding Option B+ for openDemocracy Co-authored chapter for UNAIDS thematic paper on women Launched two Stepping Stones films from trainers in Tanzania and Russia Petition and poster sent to Global Fund Chair on the funding crisis and women’s rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Robert Carr Fund application to work with women with HIV in Namibia and India (unsuccessful)

Note: Throughout the year, our training arm has continued with on-going research and the writing of the new *Stepping Stones with Children* manual: we held regular conference calls and a UK-based team meeting to coordinate contributions; and provided on-going support for the Stepping Stones International Community of Practice. You can read more about this side of our work in Annex 1.

2012–2013	TRAINING	RESEARCH	GLOBAL ADVOCACY	OPERATIONS
SEPTEMBER		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacation
OCTOBER		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compassionate leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of film on the International AIDS Conference, Washington D.C. march 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compassionate leave
NOVEMBER		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research for Karamoja adaptation of Stepping Stones for Peace and Prosperity with NESSA, Uganda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to UNAIDS with costings research Launch of 'I have a dream' videos over '16 Days of Activism' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going correspondence
DECEMBER		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research for Karamoja adaptation of Stepping Stones for Peace and Prosperity with NESSA, Uganda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of 'I have a dream' videos over '16 Days of Activism' Advocacy workshop on gender equity, MIWA (meaningful involvement of women living with HIV) and engaging men and boys, Johannesburg, South Africa Article on gender-dimensions of funding challenges, for openDemocracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salamander Trust AGM
JANUARY		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research for Karamoja adaptation of Stepping Stones for Peace and Prosperity with NESSA, Uganda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution to Institute of Development Studies (IDS) three-day seminar on women and urbanisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund-raising proposal development with ATHENA (unsuccessful) Appointment of consultant Sue Holden to replace Fiona Hale
FEBRUARY		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background research for collaboration with COWLHA, Malawi, on participatory film-making Background research for New York City workshop on the post-2015 agenda with ATHENA, Gestos, International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC) 		
MARCH		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice to UNAIDS on Strategic Investment Plan and gender component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop on the post-2015 agenda, NYC Presentation at UN High-Level Event on this Article for openDemocracy on this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of consultant Kato Nkimba to replace Christine Nabiryo

The year in detail

APRIL 2012



As well as the on-going research with PASADA in Tanzania and the background literature review for the *Stepping Stones with Children* project in the UK, Salamander Trust Associate, Nell Osborne, developed a promotional video for ATHENA Network and its partners, for the Women's Networking Zone (WNZ) at the International AIDS Conference, Washington D.C. in July 2012. This promotional video can be viewed at: <http://vimeo.com/43237958>



Alice Welbourn was invited to speak about Salamander Trust's work on several panels at the annual international Civil Liberties and Public Policy Conference of young people at Hampshire College, Massachusetts, USA.¹



We also attended the British HIV Association (BHIVA) Annual Conference in Birmingham, UK. We joined with colleagues from Positively UK, Pozfem UK, Sophia Forum and WECARe+ to give a poster presentation on how gender-based violence affects women living with HIV in the UK.

MAY 2012



A study² published in 2012 raised concerns about the safety of hormonal contraceptive use by women, as a possible vehicle for increasing vulnerability to acquiring or transmitting HIV. In response to this, ATHENA Network coordinated a virtual consultation survey of women activists around the world, in order to ascertain civil society concerns around the potential effects of hormonal contraceptives. Salamander Trust contributed to the coordination of this virtual consultation. WHO, UNAIDS and UNFPA then hosted a meeting in Montreux, Switzerland, in May, in order to meet with civil society groups, to elicit our concerns about these issues and how the information to date should best be shared with women, especially women with HIV, globally. ATHENA's survey report was presented at this meeting. Alice Welbourn formed part of the civil society representation at the meeting. The key messages from the virtual consultation was that women should have the information and the power to make informed decisions; that governments and other service providers should hold themselves accountable to women; that all women should be enabled to make the choices regarding contraceptives that are best for them; and that there should be sustained investment, both in research to develop multiple options, and in women's networks, in order to enable us to increase our capacities for information sharing amongst ourselves.



Also in May, a group of women living with HIV developed an article for the *Journal of the International AIDS Society* regarding the politics of the language used in relation to women, HIV, pregnancy and transmission, this was published in July in a special edition on this topic.³

ATHENA's survey report 'Assessing community questions and priorities around hormonal contraceptive use and HIV risk' is available at: www.athenanetwork.org/assets/files/Hormonal%20contraceptive%20use%20and%20HIV%20.pdf

1. <http://clpp.hampshire.edu>

2. www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2012/JC2309_HIV_hormonal_contraception_en.pdf

3. Dilmitis et al, 'Language, identity and HIV: why do we keep talking about the responsible and responsive use of language? Language Matters, *Journal of the International AIDS Society*, 2012. Available at: www.jiasociety.org/index.php/jias/article/view/17990.



women's rights turn the tide

Women's Networking Zone
AIDS2012 Washington D.C.

Sessions at the WNZ included:

- ▶ Violence against women living with HIV: An international overview (coordination led by Development Connections)
- ▶ The Global Plan: What does it mean for women's rights? (coordinated by Salamander Trust)
- ▶ The pregnancy intentions of women living with HIV (coordinated by the Program on Global Health and Human Rights, Institute for Global Health, University of Southern California)
- ▶ Monitoring and evaluation: Shaping the evidence base: What does it mean for women's rights? (coordinated by Salamander Trust)



The Women's Networking Zone is an alternative space where community members, advocates, policy analysts, decision-makers, service providers, and researchers can share and learn together.

Our promotional video for the Women's Networking Zone at AIDS2012 is available here: <http://vimeo.com/43237958>

Some of the great women activists who took part in the 'I Have a Dream' film project.



Visit www.salamandertrust.net/index.php/News/Open_Democracy/ for a full archive of articles commissioned and written by Salamander Trust.

AT AIDS2012 Nell also conducted video interviews with two inspiring Stepping Stones trainers – Ellen Bajenja of ACORD, who is using Stepping Stones in Uganda, Tanzania and Angola, and Elena Veselovskaya of St. Petersburg, Russia about their use of Stepping Stones in Russia. These videos can be viewed online at: <http://vimeo.com/47712793> and <http://vimeo.com/51007109>

- ▶ Nell Osborne produced a newsletter about the conference for the Stepping Stones Community of Practice members, available at: <http://us2.campaign-archive1.com/?u=24d198c33ed45c3d1513bf5ff&id=bbc323b67d>
- ▶ Nell conducted a series of mini interviews with women living with HIV entitled 'I have a dream'. Almost fifty years earlier, in the same city, Martin Luther King gave his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech.⁵ During this public speech he imagined an end to racial inequality and discrimination. Martin Luther King's words had a powerful effect on the civil rights movement, mobilising mass public support and influencing government reform. Even today this speech remains one of the most memorable in history. Yet millions of people continue to experience the injustice and discrimination that he spoke about. This is especially true for women around the world living with HIV.

This series of short videos recognises the historical importance of the International AIDS conference 2012 and the incredible women activists that were present for it. We asked women living with HIV to tell us their dreams for the future and the videos show a powerful, collective representation of the dreams of women living with HIV in 2012, for a better future. Each video is accompanied by a collection of country specific resources. They have been chosen to demonstrate the wide range of challenges that continue to face people living with HIV in different parts of the world.

The films were launched over the '16 days of Activism' from 25 November to 10 December 2012.

- ▶ Nell also filmed the women's section of the human rights march that took place during the conference. We launched this film in October and you can view it at: <http://vimeo.com/51909531>.
- ▶ As in previous years, we commissioned several activists to write articles for the openDemocracy online newspaper, to provide coverage of key issues during and after the conference. The articles covered a range of issues pertinent to women living with HIV, including:
 - The Global Plan and its challenges for women's rights
 - Human rights abuses experienced by women with HIV in the Asia-Pacific region
 - US immigration restrictions facing people wishing to go to the conference.
 - The growing HIV epidemic for women in Italy
 - The challenges facing women with HIV in relation to hormonal contraceptives
 - Issues facing women sex workers in South Sudan
 - Gender-based violence as a consequence of HIV for women
 - HIV, women and abortion rights
 - The situation facing women living with HIV in the USA
 - The question of safety – or lack of it – for women with HIV in healthcare settings
 - The negative consequences of criminalisation laws in relation to the promotion of HIV testing
 - Challenges facing women with HIV in relation to global representation
 - The plans for the roll-out of Option B+ (treatment for life for women with HIV who are pregnant, from first diagnosis).

5. www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkhaveadream.htm

- ▶ As a follow-on from our engagement with Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS, over the 'Believe It. Do It' campaign, we had a meeting with him during the conference. Michel Sidibé kindly offered to produce a report, to be written by women living with HIV with regard to all the different aspects of UNAIDS work on an effective HIV response. Michel Sidibé also offered to set up a dialogue platform made up of women living with HIV from around the world, to advise UNAIDS on issues relating to the rights of women with HIV. Both of these have since materialised and more information about them is below.
- ▶ Another consequence of our concerns about the 'Believe It. Do It' video was a suggestion from UNAIDS that we produce another film, scripted by ourselves and filmed by UNAIDS at the conference. This film, entitled 'Did You Know' highlights the points that we felt were missing from the previous film. It is now available online in several languages at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ju2grqLKjM
- ▶ Salamander Trust took part in an informal meeting, organised by the UK Consortium on AIDS and International Development, with Simon Bland of DFID (the then Chair of the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria) in which we expressed concerns about the on-going lack of funding for women's rights work. For more about this issue, please see below.

AUGUST 2012

 We spent most of August collaborating with Jenifer Gatsi of the Namibian Women's Health Network, Angelina Namiba of Positively UK and Anandi Yuvaraj of ICW Asia Pacific to submit a joint application for funding a shared training programme for young women living with HIV in these countries to the newly launched Robert Carr Fund. Unfortunately, this submission later proved to be unsuccessful.

 In August, an article about the new Option B+ treatment regime proposed by WHO, UNICEF and others was published by openDemocracy. Written by Alice Welbourn, this article highlighted concerns voiced by many women around the world at the idea that all pregnant women living with HIV should be placed on treatment for life, irrespective of their CD4 count. Whilst some women with HIV in resource-poor settings have, understandably, seen this as a welcome opportunity to 'jump the queue' to access treatment, a more nuanced reflection has seen the huge challenges inherent in such a public health policy, which is not, in fact, an option for women at all, but only for their ministries of health. Concerns around the policy include: potential coercion by health staff to only offer services if women accept treatment; women's fears of violence from partners if found to be taking HIV medication; need to hide medications leading to irregular adherence; resistance-build up to treatment and no availability of second- or third-line therapies. Salamander Trust has continued to work on this issue and there is more information about this below.

 At the end of August, the UK Consortium held a meeting in London with Simon Bland of DFID (the then Chair of the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria). At this meeting a poster and petition signed by nearly 1,000 individuals from around the world, was presented to Simon Bland to highlight the concerns of women's rights organisations regarding the lack of funding for their work. The poster (designed by Jane Shepherd) and the petition were created by Salamander Trust in response to the on-going concerns about this lack of funding for women's rights work and the assumption by many policy-makers and donors that funding of programmes to stop transmission of HIV peri-natally is equivalent to funding of women's rights.

Alice's article, 'An HIV-free generation: human sciences vs plumbing' is available at: www.opendemocracy.net/5050/alice-welbourn/hiv-free-generation-human-sciences-vs-plumbing

The poster can be downloaded here: www.womeneurope.net/resources/globalfund_whatnextforwomen_2012.pdf

SURVIVING THE GLOBAL FUND CRISIS: WHAT NEXT FOR WOMEN?

SAVE THE GLOBAL FUND: HOLD DONORS TO ACCOUNT. CLICK HERE TO SIGN THE PETITION*

A decade after the creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria we have real hope about bringing an end to the world's three most deadly infectious diseases. The tragic irony is that just as a generation free of HIV is within our grasp, donors are forcing the Global Fund to stall its progress. Are we really going to let this possibility of hope and life that the Global Fund has given to millions just vanish, thanks to the limited world view of financiers and governments? Where are the options for continued and expanded funding for women, girls, gender equality and HIV?

The Global Fund made a commitment to encourage a positive bias towards women, girls and gender equality in their grant portfolio. We need to ensure that this happens despite the recent setbacks.

To help mitigate the impact of the suspension of Round 13 on gender equality interventions, country level partners and governments, should ensure that reprogramming of existing grants includes and maintains a focus on women and girls living with and affected by HIV. Networks of women living with HIV and women's groups must continue to be supported to advocate for gender transformative HIV responses that accelerate social change for women and girls. Women's groups and NGOs should be supported to engage with the iterative process of programme development in future rounds. Increase the presence of women, including women living with HIV, within high level decision-making process at national level, on Country Coordinating Mechanisms and on the Global Fund Board.

SOURCE: *Donor brief: The GFRM: Leveraging the commitment to gender equality in a time of change and austerity, The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS (forthcoming).

50% of people with HIV globally are women?

59% of people with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa are women?

48% of all people on HIV treatment depend on the Global Fund to receive their medication?

3 days of the US defence budget would plug the Global Fund's funding gap.*

I became involved with the Global Fund because I wanted to help make it a different funding source – created, managed and served by those most affected by HIV – the people. Driven by the people and not by donors, businesses, political and religious interests, but by and for the people. It has not turned out the way I thought. It would or should, yet, it has truly accomplished a lot and these gains should not be reversed.

PHILIPPA LAWSON, USA FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES LIVING WITH HIV, TB AND MALARIA, 2002–2009.

The Global Fund crisis poses a huge threat to Romania's HIV population, not only because over the last years the country has been experiencing ongoing shortages of antiretrovirals (ARVs), but also because new TB and HIV numbers have dramatically risen. So, without funding those are on treatment or newly diagnosed will soon have no access to their life-saving medication whatsoever, whilst any preventative methods and programmes will be simply unaffordable. The situation will be disastrous.

ANCA NITULESCU, ROMANIA

I want to have a baby and there would be no better time than now ... my health is better than ever. But I live in Bolivia, a developing country that has not made the HIV epidemic a national priority. My government has not allocated resources for medication – instead we have ARVs donated by the Global Fund. ... Since the Global Fund was implemented in Bolivia (2004), I stopped going to the cemetery as often as before. If the Global Fund stops funding in countries like Bolivia, there is no hope for people living with HIV in these countries. How can I have a baby if the future seems so uncertain and bleak? What possibility of planning a life can I have if there are no medications for HIV?

MAYBE MY CHILD WILL HELP BRING HOPE FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV? MAYBE MY BABY WILL GROW UP TO INVENT THE CURE FOR HIV?

GRACIA VIOLETA ROSS, BOLIVIA

I am alive and well because of the Global Fund grant to Jamaica, which is now excluded as an upper-middle income country ... and transitional funds seem to be fading from the light at the end of the tunnel. My self-serving desire is to have the Global Fund back to its glory days and to have more understanding of the realities of people in countries that are excluded from receiving grants.

OLIVE EDWARDS, JAMAICA

The Global Fund is not a lifeline because most donors either did not redeem their pledge or cancelled their funding. So while existing programmes will continue, not one new person will get the extended life I have gotten through access to treatment. Not one new baby will be saved, no new HIV averted and no new child prevented from being an orphan, all at a time when we are trying to 'Get to Zero'. I feel like we're at the wake of the AIDS movement and it breaks my heart to imagine what this means for African women. Our five minutes of fame is over and now we all must go wait on the side for a curtain call!

MOROLAKE ODETUNGBIN, NIGERIA

Care and support for women living with HIV in Tajikistan is minimal. The country cannot provide ART to 2020. Women do not have access to quality health care services because they do not have their own money. Support is aimed at injecting drug users – mainly men – and many women are denied. Women with HIV are in a difficult situation ... if the Global Fund will not support people living with HIV, women in particular will suffer and the death rate from AIDS will be even higher. ... If there is no support for lobbying the interests of women and children and especially pregnant women, the rate of babies born with HIV will be higher year on year. We need support in training and employment ... we need ARVs, PMTCT, advocacy and lobbying for the rights of women with HIV.

WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV GROUP TAJIKISTAN

... If the Global Fund reduces its support then there is no other option for women to continue their treatment in Nepal. Most of the women living with HIV are single mothers with children with and affected by HIV and they have no source of income to buy medicine, improve nutrition and get medical tests. It will reverse the work that has been done to make life longer and prevent HIV in new people. The Millennium Development Goal will remain on the agenda. It will revert to how it was in the early stages of HIV. Programmes are not focused exclusively on women ... although ART is free, many women here are not accessing treatment due to transport costs and dependence on their family incomes.

SITA SHAHI, NEPAL

Many services, including funding resources for positive women's networks, are slowly diminishing because the Global Fund can no longer support positive women communities. Just when many of us are living longer to see our children grow up or have a family, we are back to where we started. ... If there are stock-outs of ARVs, many of our positive women, including children, will develop resistance to the drugs. Stigma and discrimination will intensify ... women will have to travel again for days because the district 'treatment hubs' will have no more funding support. Donors are failing us, they need to keep their promises and stop playing God by deciding who should live and who shouldn't.

WAPN+, SOUTH EAST ASIA

The Global Fund must continue to invest in women's health because women still bear the brunt of the HIV epidemic. They take care of the sick and the percentage of women and girls getting HIV is still very high. Women still do not have access to information and services – some are forced to walk long distances to go to a health centre. The girl-child is still disadvantaged over the boy-child as her needs are given second priority. In Zimbabwe, poverty and other socio-economic factors prevent significant numbers of women and children living with HIV from accessing treatment. Problems with purchasing ARVs, drug stock-outs and user fees prevent more women from accessing treatment. 51.6% of adults and children are still in need of treatment and women account for half of those.

TENDAYI WESTERHOF ZIMBABWE

Just when everyone is working together to help – not only us HIV positive women but also the men and children – this is dawning on us. Just when people are starting to get their lives back on track, watching their children and their grandchildren grow, this is happening. Us – the mothers, wives, sisters and grandmothers – who are living with HIV and have not missed the birthdays, weddings, graduations, promotions of our loved ones so far. Now that the Global Fund is contemplating the withdrawal from providing our ARV treatments, we are not so sure that we might be around for the next birthday.

JOANNA DENEZERE TABUJA, FIJI NETWORK FOR POSITIVE PEOPLE

1. http://www.womenonparade.net/index.php?page=Global_Fund_Petition_36_GFRM
2. Global HIV/AIDS Response: Progress Report 2011. WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF (2011).
3. The Global Fund 2011.
4. Sisonke Mwanang, 'Disadvantaged Women Going Bust' (2012), www.project-syndicate.org/world-map-shows-the-global-fund-grant-potential-for-women-in-hiv-treatment.
<http://project-syndicate.org/any/home/index>. Accessed 04.10.2012.

Produced by networks of women living with HIV from around the world (for full list see www.womenonparade.net/resources/Poll%20briefing_EN%20%2011.pdf). Designed by Jane Shepherd. Funded by Salamander Trust. Many thanks to AFJNA Network, The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS and all the contributors (most that we could fit on this postcard).

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 2012

 Whilst all the Stepping Stones support and research work continued during these two months, our advocacy section took a late summer break and there were a few weeks of compassionate leave owing to a family bereavement. However, we marked World Development Information Day on 24th October, by releasing the film of the women's march in Washington D.C.

NOVEMBER 2012

 November saw the beginning of our research on adapting the original Stepping Stones manual for use in the region of Karamoja in north east Uganda.

This area of Uganda has been beset by small arms proliferation for many years, largely thanks to the production of small arms and ammunition by multinational companies, which largely goes un-regulated. Small arms proliferation has had an enormous impact on the whole of the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes regions and the livelihoods and safety of communities in Karamoja have experienced hugely negative effects.⁶ As a consequence there has been a drift of Nkaramajong women and children to the city in search of an income as an alternative to the poverty of their home communities.⁷

In these communities, high levels of gender-based violence exist alongside other forms of violence.⁸ As a result, there are high levels of vulnerability to HIV because intimate partner violence increases vulnerability of women and girls to HIV.

6. www.afjn.org/focus-campaigns/militarization-us-africa-policy/105-commentary/648-impact-of-small-arms-proliferation-on-africa.html

7. www.youtube.com/watch?v=vT9kQjbw0wk

8. www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAU00IEgXNO

Therefore, Salamander Trust welcomed the opportunity to become involved in an adaptation of Stepping Stones for this community which, although traditionally pastoralist, has become increasingly settled over recent years.

The Karamoja initiative, entitled 'Engaging Male Youth in Karamoja, Uganda', was started by the World Bank LOGICA⁹ (Learning on Gender and Conflict in Africa) Programme, who have liaised with the Feinstein International Center at Tufts University¹⁰ and our long-term partner, the Network of Stepping Stones Approaches¹¹, led by Stepping Stones trainer, Baron Oron, who has considerable experience in post-conflict settings. Although the project title suggests that it is only working with young men, the programme collaborators recognised the importance of working simultaneously with men and women, elders and young people and this is why they have been especially interested in adapting the original Stepping Stones. Alice Welbourn, co-authors Baron Oron and another long-term Stepping Stones trainer, Germina Sebuwufu, collaborated from November to February to adapt the original manual for the Karamoja context.

We will be reporting more on this programme and how it has fared in next year's annual report.

 In November, we also supported UNAIDS with costings research for gender-transformative initiatives. We have over the years gathered data from different organisations using Stepping Stones, regarding the costs per capita of rolling out the programme. This kind of data is scarce, yet in a world where value for money is increasingly important it is invaluable. Research in Chicago published in the early 1900s showed that investment in early childcare provision saved millions of dollars in responding to teenage street crime 15 years later.¹² Although we don't have the capacity to measure such long-term change, we believe strongly that the old adage 'a stitch in time saves nine' is still very true.

 Annually, at the end of November, the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence' begins.¹³ This event starts on 25 November – the International Day Against Violence Against Women – and runs through World AIDS Day (1 December) to 10 December (International Human Rights Day) in order symbolically to link violence against women and human rights and to emphasise that such violence is a violation of human rights. This year, Salamander Trust marked the 16 days by launching the 'I Have A Dream' films (see page 8). Each film features a woman living with HIV who is a leading activist in her own country and internationally, describing her dream for a more just future. Each woman also provided us with a list of materials relevant to the issues that she touches on in her film. These films and links to supporting documents can be viewed here: www.salamandertrust.net/index.php/Resources/I_Have_a_Dream/

DECEMBER 2012

 Alice Welbourn was invited to write a thought-piece for the AVERT website for World AIDS Day on 1 December, entitled 'Why Involve Women with HIV?' Available at: www.avert.org/why-involve-women-hiv.htm



The 'I have a dream' project is available at: www.salamandertrust.net/index.php/Resources/I_Have_a_Dream/

9. <http://logica-wb.net/home.php>

10. <http://sites.tufts.edu/feinstein/program/karamoja>

11. <http://logica-wb.net/Eng/Uganda.php#project4>

12. www.imaginechicago.org/history.html

13. <http://16dayscwg.rutgers.edu>

 The start of December also saw the result, at last, of the court case in Namibia, brought by women living with HIV against the Namibian Ministry of Health, whose healthcare staff have coercively sterilised many of them directly after childbirth. Nell's article on this issue is available on openDemocracy at: www.opendemocracy.net/5050/nell-osborne/against-coerced-sterilisation-resounding-victory-in-namibia

 Salamander Trust was involved in organising a key workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa, together with our long-term partner ATHENA Network and others. This was the third in an annual series of workshops, which have previously taken place in Nairobi, Kenya and Istanbul, Turkey. Each workshop, entitled 'Integrating strategies to address gender-based violence and engage men and boys to advance gender equality through national HIV plans and strategies' involved staff from National AIDS Control Programmes (NACPs), NGOs and UN agencies, and women living with HIV who met (often for the first time) and worked together to address these issues, whilst also ensuring the meaningful involvement of women living with HIV (MIWA).



This workshop was the first to be convened on a regional basis with participants coming from countries in Southern Africa: Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Once more, we hosted the workshop documentation on our website, as well as contributing to sessions on MIWA, the use of Stepping Stones in the region, and the overall project structure. A full report of the workshop and all the presentations made there can be found at: www.salamandertrust.net/index.php/Projects/GBV_Workshop_Johannesburg_Dec_2012/

There were two key experiences to emerge from the workshop:

- ▶ On describing the rights abuses faced by women living with HIV in healthcare settings when trying to access peri-natal services, one NACP staff member said: *"This is the first time I have realised that we should be asking women whether or not they want to have an HIV test, rather than making them do so before they can access our services. Before now, we have always just told women what they must do."*
- ▶ Another revelation came in response to the questions 'What would life in our countries look like beyond gender-based violence? What kind of work would you all be doing?' The response was that most participants would be out of a job if gender-based violence was history. This is an alarming response in that it indicates that there may be an unintentional and unconscious vested interest in not ending gender-based violence. It suggested to us that ending gender-based violence is not a enough of a goal. Instead, we should look beyond the gender-based violence agenda in order to focus on shaping a world of safety and security and defining how we want that world to be. It reinforces our belief in the importance of creating new training materials that support communities to think together creatively about building a positive safe new future for themselves.

 December saw the publication of another article in openDemocracy, this time about the gender politics of funding human rights defenders. This article elicited a strong response from some quarters – the comments posted about the article are an interesting indicator of different viewpoints on this issue.

The gender politics of funding women human rights defenders is available at: www.opendemocracy.net/5050/alice-welbourn/gender-politics-of-funding-women-human-rights-defenders

 Lastly, in December UNAIDS published 'Women Out Loud' written largely by women living with HIV from around the world. Ten chapters focused on reaching each of the 10 targets set by the 2011 UN General Assembly Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS. Alice Welbourn, co-author of one of the chapters, was also one of the five women on the overall editorial group for the publication. This report, the first of its kind, was published by UNAIDS and another product of the meeting with Michel Sidibé in July 2012 in Washington. It can be accessed at: www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2012/20121211_Women_Out_Loud_en.pdf



JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2013

 In January, we continued to work on the adaptation of the Stepping Stones programme for Karamoja in Uganda. We also developed, with ATHENA Network and key leading women in HIV advocacy, a funding proposal for a global mentorship and training programme for young women living with HIV (subsequently rejected). Salamander Trust also contributed to a three-day online workshop hosted by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in Sussex, which focused on urbanisation and women's and girls' health, in particular, life in informal settlements.¹⁴

MARCH 2013

 In early March, Salamander Trust together with the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), Gestos and ATHENA Network co-hosted¹⁵ a workshop in New York City to brainstorm the post-2015 development agenda. This two-day think-tank of 45 civil society women's rights activists, which took place as the 57th Commission on the Status of Women was meeting, convened to learn from and share with one another our knowledge of the post-2015 process to date and to brainstorm how best to engage with it, specifically with reference to building bridges across different movements working on women's sexual and reproductive rights, HIV and overcoming gender-based violence. We established that we *all* needed clarification on the process to date, while discovering that much had already happened with the momentum continuing throughout the year. Salamander published an article about this process in openDemocracy, which can be accessed at: www.opendemocracy.net/5050/alice-welbourn/women-and-post-2015-agenda-are-you-on-board-ark

 Alice Welbourn also presented summary findings from the first day of the workshop at a high-level consultation during the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), convened by UNAIDS and UN Women. The presentation can be viewed at: www.salamandertrust.net/resources/ForUNAIDSCSThinkTankHeadlines8thMarch2013.ppt.pdf

14. <http://interactions.eldis.org/urbanisation-and-health/research-process>

15. www.iwhc.org, www.gestos.org and www.athenanetwork.org

Ideas for 2013

In the next working year, we want:

- ▶ to get better at documenting what is happening in terms of the global policy environment.
- ▶ to continue training others and supporting training processes at grassroots levels.
- ▶ to go on doing research, which we see as the glue to stick these two together.
- ▶ especially, to do further research into thinking creatively and developing training materials to support people to shape a positive future beyond violence: building resilience, reaching and assuring safety and security for all.
- ▶ as stated in the presentation at the high-level consultation during the 57th session of the CSW in March 2013, to support local actions to shape global policies and we want to see global policies that reflect local realities. This meeting of local and global in the word 'glocal' reflects most aptly the work we seek to do at Salamander Trust.

Our donors

This year the following generous donors have supported our work. They are listed in alphabetical order:

Anonymous
Badley Geoscience Ltd.
CAFOD
Comic Relief
Cordaid
Mrs L. Lees
UNAIDS Global Coalition on Women and AIDS

Our associates

Salamander Trust would be totally lost without our amazing Associates. They are paid very modestly as independent consultants. It continues to be an absolute pleasure to collaborate with them all. They are listed in alphabetical order:

Gill Gordon
Fiona Hale (until December 2012)
Sue Holden (from January 2013)
Florence Kilonzo
Dr Christine Nabiryo (until October 2012)
Dr Kato Nkimba (from March 2013)
Luisa Orza
Nell Osborne
Silvia Petretti
Marijo Vazquez

Richard Dodds, Working Finance
Website design and professional IT support: Daniel Fletcher

Our core partners

We are also deeply indebted to our core partners for their ongoing support and collaboration. They are listed in alphabetical order:

Tyler Crone, Coordinator, ATHENA Network
Baron Oron and colleagues, Network of Stepping Stones Approaches (NESSA),
Uganda
PASADA, Tanzania
Positively UK
Glen and Alison Williams, Strategies for Hope

Our trustees

Professor Jill Lewis
Dr Nigel Padfield
Ms Jane Tewson CBE
Dr Alice Welbourn

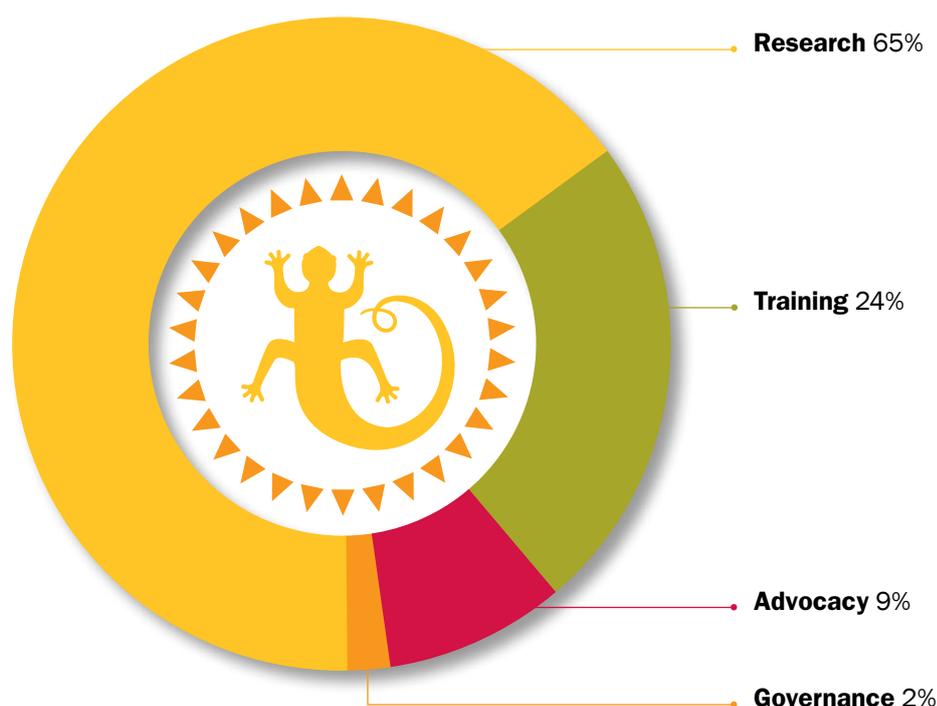
Our accounts 2012–2013

1 April 2012–31 March 2013	£
Funds at beginning of year	<u>17,511</u>
Total income during the year	
Grant income	
Comic Relief	269,353
UNAIDS	8,789
CORDAID	1,500
Donations	16,971
Bank interest	4,055
Activities for generating funds	3,293
Total	<u>303,961</u>
Total expenditure during the year	
Research	51,955
Training	19,124
Advocacy	7,641
Governance	1,465
Total	<u>80,185</u>
Funds at end of year	<u>241,287</u>

Opposite is a summary of our accounts, showing approximate breakdowns for our advocacy, research and training work. We keep our overheads so low largely through all our consultants working from home. We also have one desk space at Positively UK, at whose offices Salamander Trust is registered. We pay rent for this desk space and through this we also have access to use of meeting space and photocopier, phones and internet when we need them. We also have very friendly welcoming faces whenever we visit London for other meetings! The Director, as Chair of the Trustees, works for the Trust on an unpaid basis. It is just her Trust-related expenses which are covered by the Trust. The book-keeping for the Trust is also undertaken on a voluntary basis by Dr Nigel Padfield, another Trustee.

For full details of our accounts please refer to the UK Charity Commission website.

Salamander Trust Expenses 2012–2013



Annex 1

Stepping Stones Activities 2012–2013

Stepping Stones has now been in circulation for over **17** years. It is the **longest-running** and most **widely used** gender-transformative social change programme of its kind. It is recognised by the World Health Organization (WHO)ⁱ, whatworksforwomenⁱⁱ and others as one of the few key tools that can strengthen the enabling environment, reduce gender-based violence and transform gender norms.

Since the publication of the Stepping Stones manual in December 1995 and up to 31 March 2013, we know that at least **28,819** copies of the manual (in 20 languages) and **9,004** copies of the workshop video had been distributed, through our publisher and close collaborator, Strategies for Hope, and its partners around the world. Of the 13,505 manuals and 5,208 videos distributed from the UK, about **42%** were sold and about **58%** were distributed free in sub-Saharan Africa, thanks partly to income from these sales. We pride ourselves on our commitment to free distribution of Stepping Stones from our income from sales.

In total, **38 new organisations** have joined the Stepping Stones Community of Practice (CoP). This Community of Practice has grown to include **1,052** unique member organisations or individuals

- ▶ A total of 2,921 emails have been sent to members of our CoP since April 2012, of which 2,798 were successfully received (and didn't bounce back). This means that nearly 96% of our database is current and up-to-date, which is a great achievement.
- ▶ Of these 2,798, analytical data show us that these emails have been opened a total of 3,714 times
- ▶ Stepping Stones Feedback has also disseminated three core newsletters, which were opened a total of 2,243 times
- ▶ Total number of opens of our Stepping Stones With Children Special Newsletter is 1,624
- ▶ Mean open % rate for our post-International AIDS Conference Information Newsletter is 30.7% (the industry standard for the NGO sector is 21.4%)
- ▶ During the month of February 2013, the Stepping Stones Feedback website received a record 798 visitors
- ▶ And our Ning platform – which needs better access to the internet than emails – now has 121 active members.

i. Available at: www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/activities/intimate/en/

ii. Available at: www.whatworksforwomen.org/chapters/21-Strengthening-the-Enabling-Environment/sections/59-Addressing-Violence-Against-Women/evidence#s-441

Welcome!



This picture was taken by Martin Obwar Opondo during a Stepping Stones Training Workshop with members of the Maasai ethnic group in Kenya. It was shared with us via the Stepping Stones Ning platform.



Drawings from 'Program 15' – the Russian version of Stepping Stones in Siberia.

This year, April 2012–March 2013, Salamander Trust, which coordinates support for the Stepping Stones programme worldwide, has seen a diverse and exciting range of Stepping Stones projects, from digital advocacy to new adaptations of the original Stepping Stones materials.

The Stepping Stones Feedback Project monitors and supports the development of the Stepping Stones Community of Practice. In total, this year has seen 38 new organisations incorporated into the Stepping Stones Feedback database that constitutes the Stepping Stones CoP.

Summary of the year

Broadly speaking, the outcomes of our work can be grouped into three areas:

1. Development of Stepping Stones

- ▶ Stepping Stones With Children
- ▶ Stepping Stones for Peace and Prosperity in Karamoja, Uganda
- ▶ Stepping Stones and Creating Futures

2. Promoting Stepping Stones and advocacy

- ▶ International AIDS Conference 2012
- ▶ Stepping Stones newsletters
- ▶ Strategies For Hope funding for the distribution of free Stepping Stones materials

3. What we have learnt about users around the globe

- ▶ ACTWID, Cameroon
- ▶ COWLHA, Malawi
- ▶ Parcours Pilot Project, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

4. Digital communication strategy

- ▶ Developments and evaluation



1. Development of Stepping Stones

STEPPING STONES WITH CHILDREN

Salamander Trust has been awarded a three-year grant from Comic Relief to adapt our Stepping Stones training programme for use with children aged from 5–14, their carers and their service providers.



This picture was taken by Stepping Stones With Children consultant, Florence Kilonzo, during three weeks spent with PASADA in Tanzania. The young people were asked to dream of how life will be after their communities participate in Stepping Stones

Why adapt Stepping Stones for use with children?

“Communities are unsafe places for all with HIV because of stigma, violence and abuse. Guardians and parents may lack the sufficient skills needed to disclose or communicate about HIV, sexuality and death for children with, or affected by, HIV. Few children or guardians feel able to express grief and anxieties, few access HIV services. Treatment is thus limited. Children lack comprehensive sexuality and life-skills education. Poverty affects all aspects of lives.”

Stepping Stones With Children: Programme outline, 2012

This three-year programme is being piloted in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. Salamander Trust are working in partnership with PASADA, a Tanzanian organisation that has been using the Stepping Stones programme with older children and adults for several years now. One inspiring example of PASADA's use of Stepping Stones has been seen in a group of young people in an informal urban community in Dar es Salaam. (See our Annual Report 2011–12ⁱⁱⁱ to see more about the work of PASADA with Stepping Stones.)

We are hoping to roll out Stepping Stones With Children in other locations in East and Southern Africa for early 2014. Our hope is that the new programme will then spread around the world, following in the footsteps of its parent manuals (Stepping Stones and Stepping Stones Plus). The programme outline, including information about how the funding application was developed is available at:

www.salamandertrust.net/resources/StStWCProgrammeOutlineMar2012.pdf

Stepping Stones With Children progress report

Our first year's progress was hampered by illness among two Salamander Associates and by another leaving us to take up the post of Executive Director of TASO. We worked extensively with affected children and their carers during the stakeholders' meetings and materials development workshops, which took place at the beginning of the year and as described in last year's report. Since then our lead writer, Gill Gordon, has been undertaking the complex process of writing a manual that contains different activities on the same topics, for our three groups: young children, older children and their carers. As that process draws to an end we look forward to training Tanzanian trainers and facilitators in using the new manual, and trying out the new workshop activities during 2013.

iii. Available at: http://salamandertrust.net/resources/SalamanderTrust_AnnualReport_2011-12FINAL.pdf

STEPPING STONES PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN KARAMOJA, UGANDA

Context

Karamoja, in Eastern Uganda, is an area beset by many years of small arms proliferation, resulting in insecurity, poverty and high vulnerability to periods of drought and floods. Despite great resilience of people in the communities there, the endemic violence precipitated by the availability of guns and ammunition has made for challenging times. Salamander Trust was approached by the World Bank Logica Project to see if we might consider adapting Stepping Stones to try to address the conflicts experienced by communities living in the area.

Project

Experienced Ugandan Stepping Stones trainers Baron Oron and Germina Sebuwufu from the Network of Stepping Stones Approaches in East Africa (NESSA), together with Alice Welbourn, have been adapting the original Stepping Stones Manual for communities in Karamoja, Eastern Uganda. The project is funded by the World Bank Logica Project. Salamander has been working with Tufts University, USA, and NESSA to develop the new adaptation. The package is designed to help facilitators run workshops within communities to improve communication and relationship skills so as to promote peace and prosperity and reduce conflict and violence in this area. Since gender-based violence is one manifestation of the endemic conflict in the area, and since Stepping Stones is known to reduce gender-based violence, it is hoped that an adapted version of Stepping Stones will support these efforts.

Research in Karamoja was conducted by Baron and Germina of NESSA during the end of 2012 and early 2013 and a draft version of the adapted manual is currently being trialled with a newly appointed facilitation team in Karamoja. Preliminary reports of the initial training of trainers workshop are encouraging.

“In my past experiences of working in the field of conflict mitigation, no program has been as entertaining, and at the same time educating, as this one. I have no doubts of a positive response from the community peer groups.”

Evaline Ilukol – Trainer

“This is a very practical manual. The communication section is very important because it's addressing the initial and core origin of conflict – Individual – Family – Community”

Akongo Mary Lilly – Trainer

STEPPING STONES AND CREATING FUTURES

This is a combined behavioural and structural pilot intervention aimed at young people in informal settlements in South Africa. It is being led by HEARD at the University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, Project Empower, and the South African Medical Research Council. The livelihoods intervention, 'Creating Futures' has been added onto the South African adaptation of the Stepping Stones Training Manual, as ten additional sessions. 'Creating Futures' seeks to encourage reflection and action among young people on possibilities for improving their livelihoods options, through participatory activities. The Salamander team were asked to contribute comments to the initial programme proposal. We are also in discussion with the team regarding future trialling and roll-out of the programme.

Preliminary outcome results

Preliminary outcome results, established three months after the intervention, show highly promising results, although these must be treated with caution. Final data collection is scheduled for May 2013. The preliminary report can be read here: www.stepsstonesfeedback.org/resources/7/SS_CreatingFutures_Evaluation_3MonthOutcomes_2012.pdf



Summary of results

1. Women searched for and attempted livelihood activities at a greater rate than at baseline
2. Men and women's levels of work and earnings increased
3. Increased access to social grants by men and women
4. There was an increased focus from men and women on their main sexual partner, with a 23% reduction in transactional sex in the past three months for men
5. Men's mental health improved

Having demonstrated the potential benefit of a combined intervention that can address both livelihood insecurities and gender inequalities the MRC, HEARD and Project Empower hope to gain funding for further research and to pilot this intervention in a variety of different settings.



2. Promoting Stepping Stones and advocacy

INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE 2012

Nell Osborne and Alice Welbourn from Salamander Trust were fortunate enough to attend the International AIDS 2012 Conference in Washington, D.C. This provided an excellent opportunity to learn and share among other community members, advocates, policy-analysts, decision-makers, service-providers, and researchers.

Salamander Trust contributed a promotional video and three sessions to the Women's Networking Zone programme – a dedicated space at the conference in the Global Village. (See the Salamander Trust Annual Report for more information.)

Stepping Stones' profile during the conference

A copy of the Stepping Stones PLUS manual was available throughout the conference as part of a display of resources at the UK AIDS Consortium stand (and eventually disappeared). Our Stepping Stones leaflets on display at the WNZ were all snapped up too. These leaflets were designed for the conference and included concise information about Stepping Stones.

One WNZ session was explicitly scheduled to talk about the Stepping Stones methodology. Called 'Achieving Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for Women and Girls Living with HIV through Innovative Gender-Based Community Approaches' it was based on the results of a UNAIDS publication^{iv} of the same name. The session presented pioneering community approaches that have advanced women's sexual and reproductive health and rights through the HIV response.

The Coalition of Women living with HIV and AIDS in Malawi (COWLHA) has been using Stepping Stones to challenge gender norms and tackle gender based violence. Unfortunately, the grass roots Malawian speaker from COWLHA, who was planning to talk about their use of Stepping Stones, could not make the session. This was disappointing but audience members were still glad to access Stepping Stones materials from us.

iv. Available at: www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/document/2011/07/20110719_Community%20innovation.pdf

The WNZ programme is available at:
http://www.athenanetwork.org/assets/files/WNZ%20program%202012_Women's%20Rights%20Turn%20The%20Tide.pdf



Stepping Stones trainers Ellen Bajenja (top) and Elena Veselovskaya (bottom) were interviewed about their experiences with Stepping Stones.

This newsletter is available here: <http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=24d198c33ed45c3d1513bf5ff&id=11ead774ab>

Meeting members of the global Stepping Stones community

Whilst many people were unable to attend the International AIDS Conference due to a lack of funding, we were able to meet up with several key members from the Stepping Stones global community and to interview a couple of leading practitioners. Both these films were created by Nell Osborne.

The interview with Elena Veselovskaya, Independent HIV/AIDS consultant and Project Manager can be accessed here: <http://vimeo.com/51007109> She talks to us about the roll-out of the Russian adaptation of Stepping Stones in Siberia. She explains how it has become a successful programme despite some initial problems.

The interview with Ellen Bajenja, the HIV/AIDS Thematic Manager with ACORD can be accessed here: <http://vimeo.com/47712793> Ellen talks to us about her experiences of implementing the Stepping Stones training package in Angola, Tanzania and Uganda.

STEPPING STONES NEWSLETTERS

A total number of **2,798** emails were successfully delivered to members of our Stepping Stones Community of Practice (CoP) database since the 1st April 2012. Of these, analytical data show us that they have been opened a total of 3,714 times. This suggests that the Stepping Stones CoP members are returning to newsletters on various occasions to use them as resources.

During this last year, we have disseminated a variety of digital materials, including three newsletters on varied key themes. Taken together, these three newsletter editions were opened a total **2,243** times. Each newsletter focused on a different subject, relevant to the Stepping Stones global Community of Practice. These were as follows:

1. Stepping Stones With Children Special Newsletter, June, 2012

The Stepping Stones With Children project has created a great interest from the whole Stepping Stones community. We received several requests from members for further information about its development.

"I have always wondered what to do with children during Stepping Stones sessions. I am truly interested in this programme."

Martin Opondo Obwar, Stepping Stones trainer, Kenya

As a result we wanted to create a newsletter that updated the Stepping Stones community on how we were progressing. It explains some of the key problems that face children affected by HIV that this project aims to benefit. You can read the entire 'Stepping Stones With Children newsletter special' by clicking here.

Newsletter evaluation

This newsletter had the greatest readership of any email campaign to date, illustrating the desire among the community to know about this adaptation.

- ▶ Total number of opens from Stepping Stones With Children special newsletter = **1,624**
- ▶ Open % rate for IAC 2012 Newsletter Campaign = 30.7% (the industry standard for NGO sector is 21.4%)

Email feedback

"I find this newsletter useful to what we are doing here at a Therapy Centre with children that are HIV-positive I just don't know how we can access some of these material to use to our children."

Gilbert Momora, Kwatukumbuchire Community Mobilization for Social and Economic Development (KCOMSED), Malawi

"Thank you very much for this mail. I will go through as I am very much interested in Stepping Stones with this target group. Will get back to you soon."

Conteh Momodou, UK

2. Post-International AIDS Conference 2012 Newsletter, October, 2012

This newsletter was created after the AIDS2012 conference, to disseminate learning and ideas. For those that couldn't be there in person, we wanted to use the newsletter to offer a summary of the biggest themes on the HIV and AIDS agenda at this year's International AIDS conference. These focused on three core areas:

- ▶ Global Plan and its consequences for the global women's rights agenda.
- ▶ Criminalisation of HIV
- ▶ Problems with 'Treatment as prevention', including Option B+

'Treatment as prevention' was the buzzword of the conference. However, it concerned some who believe the importance of women's rights are being overlooked.

Newsletter evaluation

The Newsletter was read by a global audience – including people from a diverse range of countries: Namibia, South Africa, China, Russia, UK, Germany, Namibia, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Australia, India and many more.

- ▶ Total number of opens from IAC, 2012 newsletter = 544
- ▶ Open % rate for IAC 2012 newsletter campaign = 28.3% (the industry standard for NGO sector is 21.4%)

However, the success of this campaign was constrained by it only being available in English, owing to funding limitations. This meant that Spanish speaking and Francophone countries were excluded. This is most notable in the context of Central and Latin America.

Email feedback

"Thanks for feeding the absent friends with key info from the conference."

Joyce Larko, Ghana

"I think it is an EXCELLENT newsletter and very informative... I certainly learnt lots reading it (well most of it). Brilliantly written – very clear and to the point AND practical with the offering of Stepping Stones ... I am in shock by a lot of what I have learnt and am going to pass the newsletter on as I feel we all need to be more aware. I am a proud Salamander Trustee"

Jane Tewson, Australia

This newsletter is available here: <http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=24d198c33ed45c3d1513bf5ff&id=bbc323b67d>

“Hi there! If I could request for the new newsletter on Stepping Stone. We are the Stepping Stone from Northern Pacific in Guam. Hope to get more update on how success of stepping stone in other countries. Thank you!”

Martina O. Otoko, Guam

This newsletter is available here: <http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=24d198c33ed45c3d1513bf5ff&id=5c0d331af1>

3. What is Stepping Stones: How to get the best from the Stepping Stones training programme, January, 2013

This newsletter is dedicated to understanding how we can all get the most from the Stepping Stones training programme. The success of Stepping Stones depends on the quality of the training and implementation in order to have a lasting impact on communities. Implementing Stepping Stones is not an easy process and whilst the rewards can be great, there are many pitfalls and challenges along the way – so we should try to plan for them as best we can.

Much of the advice is taken from ACORD’s excellent document *Implementing Stepping Stones: A Practical and Strategic Guide for Implementers, Planners and Policy Makers*.^v This is intended to be a resource that people can keep coming back to.

Newsletter evaluation

This newsletter was also intended as a resource that Stepping Stones users could keep coming back to. As such, we expect the numbers of people accessing the newsletter will continue to grow. It had a diverse readership; including 31 recipients in Côte d’Ivoire, 15 in Switzerland and 17 in Kenya.

- ▶ Total number of opens from Stepping Stones With Children special newsletter = 775
- ▶ Open % rate for IAC 2012 newsletter campaign = 23.8% (the industry standard for NGO sector is 21.4%)

Email feedback

“Wonderful document and useful”

Mutale Bowa, Afya Mzuri, Zambia

“Thank you very much for sending me this document. Just now I am preparing to the working meeting of Russian trainers on “Program 15” (Russian version of Stepping Stones) in Siberia. The meeting will be held in mid of February in Novosibirsk and the trainers from different cities and towns will take part in it. We are going to discuss our future two year project on further developing of “Program 15”. So that, I will use this new document for this meeting.”

Elena Veselovskaya, Independent HIV Consultant, Russia

“Thank you for the Newsletter and I am going to circulate to team members in PASADA and others.”

Nelson Chiziza, PASADA, Tanzania

“Dear colleagues, Thank you very much for the information on Stepping Stones. I love the critical literacy part more. As a teacher I find this one closer home because we are drifting away from teacher centered approaches to[wards] learner centered approach. The image you have posted here [within the newsletter] is very relevant to what I am saying.”

Bolele Monyau, Lesotho

STRATEGIES FOR HOPE: FUNDING FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF FREE COPIES OF STEPPING STONES MATERIALS

Strategies For Hope and Salamander Trust received funding from Cordaid to re-print and distribute free copies of Stepping Stones materials to organisations in Southern Africa and to go towards our coordination of the CoP. It is hoped that these free copies will help organisations that cannot access foreign currency or who cannot afford to buy the materials to experience Stepping Stones. Strategies For Hope have prioritised countries that have received relatively few copies to date such as Cape Verde, Congo (Brazzaville), Lesotho, Liberia, Guinea and South Sudan.

The Stepping Stones Feedback programme will remain instrumental in helping to link up experienced users of Stepping Stones and those new to the methodology to facilitate supportive and collaborative relationships. This will promote a beneficial sharing of local expertise and knowledge.



3. What we have learnt about users around the globe

GLOBAL NEWS ABOUT STEPPING STONES ACTIVITIES

ACTWID, Cameroon

We learnt, this year, of a new organisation utilising Stepping Stones with an NGO called ACTWID-KONGADZEM in Cameroon. We are impressed with the activities they have conducted with communities.

“We would briefly like to let you know that we have used your Stepping Stones lessons to train our local communities who are clustered in 48 village groups of more than 50 per group and also a few Catholic Church groups too, eight in number in the North West Region of Cameroon. Youths can now use these training manual of yours to run their HIV activities together with local women groups here.”

Mrs Wendi Losh

COWLHA, Malawi

COWLHA were awarded the 2012 AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa (ARASA) Human Rights, HIV and TB Award at a ceremony hosted in Johannesburg, South Africa on 15 November 2012. Michaela Clayton, ARASA Director, praised COWLHA for being an agent of change to enhance the protection and promotion of rights of women and girls living with HIV and AIDS. Annie Banda, the National Coordinator of COWLHA, spoke about the work that they have been doing:

“Our work has focused on community engagement, working closely with traditional leaders to help communities acquire skills on sexual negotiation, resolving domestic violence as well as community challenges in relation to gender roles or perceptions of masculinity and culture in relation to HIV and AIDS ... We have also focused on promoting communication and dialogue among couples and communities to lower levels of concurrent sexual partnerships and address incidents of violence.”

Annie Banda, National Coordinator, COWLHA, Malawi

“ Communication has to be from the bedroom to every room in the house”

Annie Banda, COWLHA, Malawi

COWLHA recently published a newsletter about how they use Stepping Stones in communities to tackle gender-based violence, available at:

www.steppingstonesfeedback.org/resources/25/SS_COWLHA_NEWSLETTER_2012.pdf

At a workshop co-hosted by Salamander partner ATHENA Network, UNDP, HEARD and others, in Johannesburg in December 2012, Annie Banda from COWLHA in Malawi gave a talk about COWLHA's use of Stepping Stones in Malawi. This talk was entitled 'Strengthening attention to gender-based violence in National HIV Strategies and Plans: COWLHA's experience'. You can watch a video of her speaking at: <http://vimeo.com/57691606>

Parcours Pilot Project in Kinshasa, DRC

Last year saw the end of the UNDP pilot project Parcours in the DRC. It was implemented in four communities in South Kivu and in Bas-Congo with 39 trained facilitators as part of their 2008–2012 programmatic cycle against poverty. Stepping Stones was originally chosen for this context to help to achieve the stated objective of reducing the vulnerability of rural communities to HIV and AIDS, especially of women due to its proven ability to transform gender norms.

Reported results

- ▶ **17,547** condoms distributed
- ▶ **245** people living with HIV 'out of hiding'
- ▶ **73** volunteers know their HIV status
- ▶ Almost every evaluation or supervision missions reported an improvement in communication in general between spouses (between spouses in the home or between children and parents, following the Parcours training)
- ▶ The findings on behaviour change were solid, such as increased condom use, more respect for women and less domestic violence
- ▶ An increasingly strong involvement of administrative, ecclesiastical groups and the military in the implementation and monitoring of the approach, indicating a greater sense of ownership in the programme

Reported constraints

Despite an overall positive feeling regarding the pilot Stepping Stones project, the UNDP-DRC expressed concern over the following issues:

- ▶ Weak monitoring and evaluation systems
- ▶ Lack of support services (such as healthcare, testing sites)
- ▶ Insecurity (presence of non-state armed groups)
- ▶ Insufficient budget for prevention
- ▶ Lack of resource persons to conduct M&E
- ▶ Lack of experienced Stepping Stones trainers

2013–2017 UNDP-RDC programme

One of the challenges they experienced was a lack of suitable Stepping Stones trainers. We have since been in contact with the Project Director, Erik Ngoie, to advise him of the contact details for other experienced Stepping Stones trainers. We also shared some of the documents that we have created between 2011–2012 to support organisations to implement Stepping Stones effectively. This was Erick Ngoie’s response to receiving these documents:

Having completed a pilot implementation of Parcours in the DRC, the UNDP-RDC are in consultations to decide whether to roll out Parcours further, perhaps even at a national level.



4. Digital communication strategy

DEVELOPMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

Following on from the developments made to the digital communications strategy in 2011, Stepping Stones’ online presence has continued to grow and develop in innovative and exciting ways throughout 2012 and into 2013.

Stepping Stones Feedback website

Stepping Stones Feedback hosts a tri-lingual website and access to a wide range of relevant resources, evaluations and documents. Figure 1 below shows the numbers of visitors to the Stepping Stones website between April 2012 and March 2013. Despite the fluctuation in visitor numbers, there has been a marked increase in overall numbers this year compared with last year. During February 2013, the website received a record **798** visitors in one month.

Mailchimp email marketing software

The Stepping Stones Community of Practice has grown to include **1,052** unique member organisations or individuals. A total of **2,921** emails have been sent to recipients since April 2012, of which **2,798** were successfully received. As with previous evaluations, the open rate of different newsletters varies between demographics, however it remains higher than the industry standard open rate of 21.4%.

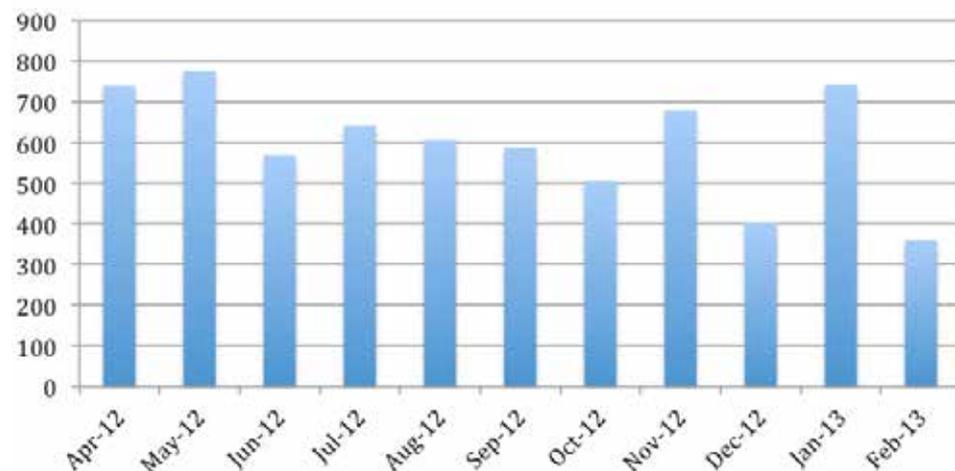


Figure 1: Total number of visitors to www.stepsstonesfeedback.org

For French speakers, this is Project Director, Erik Ngoie’s response to receiving our documents:

“ Je suis content de tes réactions et des liens dans le soucis de voir notre travail s’améliorer. S’il y a des groupes de discussion, des forums et autres infos utiles en termes de formations de formateurs, conférences, séminaires, n’hésites pas de partager avec nous. Déjà j’exploite les liens, les documents que tu partages avec moi et je trouve des nouvelles idées. I have a dream lors de AIDS 2012: I like it!”

The Mailchimp software facilitates free, mass email distribution. It continues to function well for the Stepping Stones contact database because it provides analytical data about the success of different newsletter campaigns, telling us who has and who hasn't opened specific newsletter campaigns.

Ning social platform software

The Ning platform now has 120 active members. In particular it has proved a valuable tool for Stepping Stones members to share photographs of their work. We are currently using the Ning platform to launch a Stepping Stones Photo Competition. With the winning entries, we will make a Stepping Stones calendar for 2014.

Although membership numbers on the Ning platform are still relatively low compared with the total number of members on the Stepping Stones database, we have seen a marked increase since the start of 2013, with 11 new members requests. Clearly, problems concerning the international digital divide, such as accessibility and availability of reliable Internet services in some countries, continue to effect membership participation of this online community.

The platform has hosted discussions about a range of topics and events, from Stepping Stones for Use with Children to the Stepping Stones and Livelihoods Project. However, there is still scope for development. We hope that members of the community will feel a greater sense of ownership of the community forum over the coming months. The forum now has a 'membership map' that allows users to place themselves onto a collaborative, global map. We hope this will help to connect organisations that work in close proximity, but that may not currently be aware of each other's work.

Stepping Stones Feedback twitter account

A unique twitter account for Stepping Stones Feedback (@StStFeedback) was created in January 2013. Although many Stepping Stones users are not currently using twitter, it is a useful and popular way to network with colleagues, NGOs, policy makers and funding bodies. It also allows Stepping Stones to highlight and promote its work and evaluation findings among these sectors.





Salamander Trust

TRANSFORMING THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT HIV

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