



Salamander Trust
TRANSFORMING THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT HIV

Stepping Stones Annual Report 2012–2013



www.stepsstonesfeedback.org



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%.

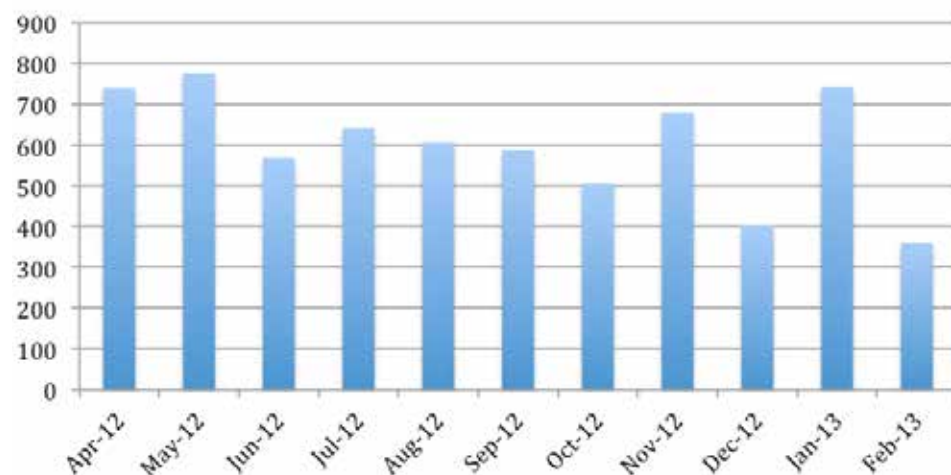


Figure 1: Total number of visitors to www.stepsstonesfeedback.org

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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Ning: <http://steppingstonesfeedback.ning.com>