The Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women and Children

Ilse Ahrends

Resumen del Proyecto

Resumen conciso: Ayúdenos a presentar esta solución! Proporcione una explicación en 3 o 4 frases cortas.

The Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women and Children is a multi-disciplinary (one-stop) centre for women, youth and children who have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence in their lives. The Centre is situated in Manenberg, a Cape Town township on the Cape Flats, an area with extremely high rates of crime, gangsterism, child abuse, unemployment, substance abuse and domestic violence. Furthermore, there are few resources available in Manenberg and the surrounding areas and as a result the Centre provides services to a wide range of constituencies: neighbouring townships, farming communities, and ‘informal’ settlements. Working in partnership with other non-profit organisations and government departments, the Centre provides an integrated range of services for these women, youth and children in order to reduce secondary traumatisation and facilitate a recovery and healing process. It does this by providing direct services such as safe accommodation in a shelter (three to four months) and second-stage (transitional) houses (six to twelve months), legal advice and assistance and job skills training. It also coordinates specialised, on-site counselling (rape, trauma, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS) and economic empowerment services by partner organisations. Other activities include research, community outreach and prevention projects.

Our primary beneficiaries are women, youth and children who have been abused. Most are from the surrounding communities, but the shelter residents come from all over South Africa, and from other countries (abused and exploited refugees, as well as trafficked women).

Sobre ti

- Project Street Address
- Project City
- Project Province/State
- Project Postal/Zip Code
- Project Country

Tu idea

- Focus of activity
- Direct Support
- Year the initiative began
- 1999

- Posiciona tu iniciativa en el mosaico de soluciones
  - Which of these barriers is the primary focus of your work?
    - Women’s Low Status
  - Which of the insights is the primary focus of your work?
    - Create Paths to Prevention or Remediation
  - If you believe some other barrier or insight should be included in the mosaic, please describe it and how it would affect the positioning of your initiative in the mosaic

Innovación

Description of Initiative

The Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women and Children is a multi-disciplinary (one-stop) centre for women, youth and children who have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence in their lives. The Centre is situated in Manenberg, a Cape Town township on the Cape Flats, an area with extremely high rates of crime, gangsterism, child abuse, unemployment, substance abuse and domestic violence. Furthermore, there are few resources available in Manenberg and the surrounding areas and as a result the Centre provides services to a wide range of constituencies: neighbouring townships, farming communities, and ‘informal’ settlements. Working in partnership with other non-profit organisations and government departments, the Centre provides an integrated range of services for these women, youth and children in order to reduce secondary traumatisation and facilitate a recovery and healing process. It does this by providing direct services such as safe accommodation in a shelter (three to four months) and second-stage (transitional) houses (six to twelve months), legal advice and assistance and job skills training. It also coordinates specialised, on-site counselling (rape, trauma, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS) and economic empowerment services by partner organisations. Other activities include research, community outreach and prevention projects.
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Innovación

The Centre was opened in 1999 as the first one-stop centre for abused women and children in the country, providing services to the very wide and diverse constituency mentioned above. The experience of full engagement in the issues faced by the women and children in these communities has rooted the Centre in creative, practical and innovative approaches to the problems faced by abused women and children throughout the country.

Having on-site partner organisations that provide a range of services is proving to be an effective service delivery model for the holistic management, treatment and prevention of violence against women and children. These services include specialised counselling (rape, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, trauma), economic empowerment, legal assistance, safe accommodation and community education and awareness programmes. The Centre has since evolved to be the prime learning site nationally for providing integrated services to survivors of domestic violence.

Delivery Model

We network with other organisations working in the gender-based violence sector, as well as with police and court officials, and with the primary health sector, thus ensuring that referrals are made to the Centre. We also do regular radio and other media interviews, as well as presentations to employees in the corporate world, to students at the local universities and to various community groups. We have found that there is always an increase in the number of women seeking help at the Centre after media coverage. Word of mouth is also an effective way of reaching target populations - women who have been helped go back to their communities and spread the word.

The Centre also has strong links with the surrounding communities through outreach programmes in schools and with community- and faith-based organisations. Most of our partner organisations work in the communities; a number of our staff members live in the neighbourhood; community organisations use the Centre’s training halls for workshops, and other meetings.

Key Operational Partnerships

We would not be a “one-stop” centre without our partner organisations who provide most of the services at the Centre. Most are NGOs, who provide specialised counselling services (trauma, rape, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse), or job skills training. We work closely with neighbouring schools, and with local community- and faith-based organisations. We also have off-site partnerships with the Community Law Centre at the University of the Western Cape, the African Gender Institute at the University of Cape Town, the International Organisation for Migration (involved with trafficked women back to their home countries) and the Western Cape Provincial Department of Social Development (govt). We have also partnered more informally with a number of women’s businesses, that have helped us fundraise.

Impacto

Financial Model

The counselling and legal services, as well as the shelter (residential care and related services) are free as most of our clients are from economically deprived communities. Job skills training courses are subsidised or free, especially for shelter residents. Hiring of the Centre’s training halls is on a sliding-scale for community organisations.

What percentage, if any, of the total operating costs does earned income (from products, services, or other fees) represent?

20%

How is the initiative financed? Is it financially self-sustainable or profitable? How much do beneficiaries contribute?

We are largely dependent on donor funding. We receive a small subsidy from the Provincial Dept of Social Development; our projects (Shelter, legal service, job skills training coordination, research) are or have been funded by South African and (two) international donors (Foundations, the corporate world, individuals) usually as a once-off donation or on a yearly application basis. Beneficiaries contribute where possible to training, but mostly they are not in a financial position to contribute. The partners contribute financially and the training halls are hired out to other organisations, but while these contributions help, they are not sufficient for self-sustainability. Together with our partners, we are always looking for ways to achieve greater sustainability.

Effectiveness

We are in the process with our partners of compiling a database of all Centre clients, so we don’t have a total number of clients who have made use of the various services available here. We probably see on average 200 clients who pass through the Centre each month, and another 600-800 people per month in our outreach programmes and training courses. This would give an approximate total of 10,000 – 11,000 beneficiaries over the year.

Two of our partners (the Western Cape Network on Violence Against Women, and Rape Crisis) and our Legal Advice and Training Project have made submissions to government on the Sexual Offences Bill, in order to change the way rape and sexual assault are defined and legislated against. The Legal Advice and Training Project is also involved in research and advocacy about special needs housing. A positive outcome would mean houses for women who have been forced to leave their homes because of domestic violence.

How many people have benefited from your program over the last year? Which element of the program proved itself most effective?

Some specific statistics from 2006 include: the Shelter provided accommodation to 122 women and 95 children; of these 107 women went through the life skills, job skills and income generation programmes. Legal advice and assistance was provided to 210 women and 174 people attended training workshops on the Domestic Violence Act and Maintenance Act.

It would be hard to single out the most effective element of our programmes; however it is the coordinated efforts of the Shelter, the legal advice and training project and the job skills training programme that are proving very effective in helping our clients break the cycle of violence and poverty by becoming empowered both in terms of knowing their rights and gaining skills that help them find employment.

Scaling up Strategy
1. Implement a relevant system for monitoring and evaluating the partnership and our own projects (shelter, legal project, job skills training). We need to have a better idea of the impact our services are having on our beneficiaries and communities, although the impact of direct services such as counselling is not easy to measure.

2. Continuing to develop and strengthen existing programmes in the areas of HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and job skills training. The increase of HIV/AIDS, especially among the youth, is linked to the high prevalence of gender-based violence, drug abuse and poverty in the surrounding communities. Job skills training offers a way out of poverty and associated social problems.

3. Explore the possibility of joint fundraising among the partners to strengthen programmes and improve sustainability. The funding climate for individual NGOs continues to look stormy; together, partner organisations may influence donors more positively.

**Stage of the Initiative**

| 1 |

**Origin of the Initiative**

In 1999 the Western Cape Provincial Department of Social Development invited member organisations of the Western Cape Network on Violence Against Women to establish a women’s centre that would provide an effective and comprehensive community programme for women experiencing violence in their lives. Carehaven, an already existing shelter for women survivors of domestic violence, was tasked with developing a one-stop centre in partnership with relevant organisations. The Centre director quickly opened another shelter at the Saartjie Baartman Centre and within a few months was on the way to fulfilling the Centre’s dream of having an integrated partnership of on-site organisations to provide different services for domestic and sexual violence survivors. When she was transferred out of Cape Town by her own organisation, the Saartjie Baartman Centre decided to separate from its sister shelter and registered as a non-profit organisation (NPO) in 2001. The new (and current) director has continued to build on and consolidate the original vision of a one-stop centre. The high level of violence in the country, much of it against women and children, continues to necessitate a multi-layered response, and the Centre now houses 10 partner organisations, as well as the Shelter and Legal Advice and Training Project. The one driving force, that unites all who work at the Centre, is the desire to put the women and children who come to the Centre first and to work out with them ways in which to meet their needs.

**Sostenibilidad**

**How did you hear about this contest and what is your main incentive to participate?**

Our director received an email from Susan Bazilli alerting her to the competition. Our main incentive for participating is to share our model for addressing abuse with others working in the same field. It also offers us the opportunity to dialogue with other organisations, to learn more about them and hopefully, more about ourselves through their comments. Of course, being one of the winners would be nice!

**Main Obstacles to Scaling Up**

The two main obstacles to scaling up are

1. Space – we are running out of space for new partners and are already renovating storage space to use as offices!

2. Financial sustainability; although we are constantly working with our partners towards greater sustainability, this is likely to be a recurring obstacle for non-profit organisations (which is how NGOs are registered in South Africa). As we have said before, the funding climate for NGOs, especially women’s organisations, doesn’t look healthy, with donors making more demands on how the money should be spent and monitored. Not that monitoring and evaluation, and transparency, are not important, but perhaps corporate methods of m & e are not always best suited to NGOs providing direct services and trying to change attitudes.

**Main Financial Challenges**

Main challenges:

1. Finding donors who are prepared to fund more than just basic project costs. What is needed is consistent multi-year funding that will factor in operating costs.

2. Partner organisations’ own funding difficulties. NGOs face an increasingly difficult funding climate, especially for work in the violence against women sector.

We are interested in all ‘above-board’ donors. (We recently had an offer of a donation from a ‘gentlemen’s revue bar’ that is suspected of using trafficked women and of money laundering. We didn’t accept it.) These donors include the South African government – they are committed to the welfare of all South Africans; we are helping them do their work and should be more adequately supported financially by them.

**Main Partnership Challenges**

Our main challenge with our on-site partners is once again their ability as NGOs to secure sufficient funding. Lack of funding impacts on the amount of work they can and want to do at the Centre. Another challenge is the shifting needs of our clients; for example, skills training offered by a particular partner may no longer be wanted or needed by the clients. Because of our lack of space, do we ask that partner to leave the Centre?

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