FAMILIES SOUTH AFRICA DAY CARE CENTRE

LIMPOPO PROVINCE

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

BY

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PART A
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. BACKGROUND
FAMSA National is a Non-Profit Organisation committed to support the establishment of FAMSA organisations to provide accessible FAMSA services to all communities in South Africa. The established FAMSA organizations are affiliated to FAMSA National movement but are autonomous. FAMSA Vhembe is one of FAMSA National movement affiliates. FAMSA Vhembe operates in four Local Municipalities of Vhembe district namely, Thulamela, Makhado, Mutale and Musina.

The Mhinga Victory Day Care Centre was previously funded by the NDA in 2012. The money was used for the procurement of outdoor equipments, furniture, ECD training and for managerial skills training. The building for the multipurpose centre was not budgeted for, therefore, there is a need for an appropriate ECD structure since approximately 58 children are utilizing an RDP structure that is too small to accommodate all these children as the Drop-in centre was also accommodated. FAMSA Vhembe is the lead organisation and project management and oversight for this intervention.

2. OBJECTIVES
The purpose of this evaluation was to:
2.1 provide a comprehensive performance overview of the entire project;
2.2 highlight the lessons learned so that the conclusions and recommendations arrived at can assist the organization in moving forward and be sustainable; and
2.3 highlight project alignment with the municipality IDPs and relevant government sector departments’ programmes.

3. METHOD / APPROACH
The evaluation involved a review of the project documentation, field visits and structured interviews with the relevant project stakeholders. These included the following:
• In-depth literature review of the documentation detailing the project, with a focus on the specific objectives of the project;
• Conducting interviews with the NDA Development Managers of the project, project staff involved in the project, etc;
• Review of the evaluation outputs and evidence of each stated objective in the project documents in order to determine the outputs and outcomes;
• Conducting records and documents reviews on planning, reporting and outputs achieved during the life cycle of the project;
• Review management structure / systems both administrative, financial and human resources, to ascertain the programme’s viability and sustainability after cessation of funding from the NDA.

4. KEY FINDINGS

The new ECD & OVC building has not yet been completed. The centre is not yet equipped or functioning. The one wing of the building has been roofed, whilst the second wing has recently only had roof trusses installed. The alternations to building plans as well as the torrential rains have caused much of the delay in the construction.

Project members have been offered training in project management and basic counseling skills. ECD and OVC project team members were given a copy of the ECD/OVC Project Funding Agreement entered into between FAMSA Vhembe and the NDA to enable them to familiarize themselves with project objectives, activities and budget. They were motivated to share contents of the document with other members (Board and staff). Project activities are discussed and evaluated during Project Team meetings. 10 staff members (ECD and OVC) were trained in Project management and were given tasks to practice knowledge gained, and to involve others who didn’t attend training as the budget targeted only 10 people.

The project has not been able to adhere to the original timeframes as there were certain delays encountered during the implementation of the project. The construction process was delayed by a period of approximately four months from May to August 2013 whilst FAMSA Vhembe was awaiting transfer of the second tranche from the NDA. Another delay affecting the construction was the December 2013 holiday break as well as torrential rains since January 2014.
The creation of a more suitable environment for learning is tied to the completion of the new and more suitable teaching centre. Once the construction process is completed, this objective will be achieved.

5. KEY LESSONS

- It is important to ensure that grant recipients do not deviate from major agreements such as unilaterally changing approved building plans. Particularly when such a change means that a key infrastructure (which makes up more than 70% of the entire project budget) may not be successfully completed. Thereby affecting the prospects of the entire intervention.

- FAMSA Vhembe has managed to effectively mobilise both political and community support at local levels through which they were able to secure more land for the food security programme.

6. CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS

- The NDA support towards construction of a new and more suitable facility for the ECD and OVC centre has raised the hope and commitment of the project members and the community, who are now optimistic about the future prospects of the centre.

- The project has served to ensure that the current employment opportunities for members of the ECD and OVC centres are secured.

- Despite the slight delays at the beginning of the project, FAMSA Vhembe has managed to stay on course towards achievement of the project objectives.

- In terms of the Grant Application, the two CBOs (ECD Centre and the OVC centre) will sign a memorandum of understanding which outlined the collaboration between the parties in relation to the use if the new building once completed. It our recommendation that since additional funds are required to complete the building, there two parties should develop a plan to raise the outstanding funds jointly. Also it is important to begin the discussions
concerning the terms of the MOU now prior to completion of the structure. Any disagreements must be resolved in advance so that once the building is complete, it can be immediately utilized.

PART B
CLOSEOUT EVALUATION REPORT

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1. **BACKGROUND**

The South African National Council for Marriage Guidance and Counselling was established in October 1954 after a National Family and Welfare Conference was held in 1954. Over the years the name changed to The Family and Marriage Society of South Africa and is currently known as Families South Africa (FAMSA). FAMSA believes that healthy families create healthy communities and are the foundation of our society. FAMSA therefore strives to address challenges such as relationship breakdown in families, marriages and in communities, abusive relationships, poverty, HIV & AIDS, community violence and trauma.

FAMSA National is a Non-Profit Organisation committed to support the establishment of FAMSA organisations to provide accessible FAMSA services to all communities in South Africa. The established FAMSA organizations are affiliated to FAMSA National movement but are autonomous. FAMSA Vhembe is one of FAMSA National movement affiliates. FAMSA Vhembe operates in four municipalities of Vhembe district namely, Thulamela, Makhado, Mutale and Musina.

FAMSA National Directorate initiated the establishment of FAMSA Vhembe in 2006. FAMSA Vhembe steering committee was established in 2006 and constitution was then adopted on the 9th of July 2006. The Executive Committee was then elected and worked on registration as Non-profit organisation with the Department of Social Development and affiliation with FAMSA National. NPO registration was attained on the 28th of April 2010. Lack of finance led to difficulty in appointing a Social worker thus delaying affiliation with FAMSA National Movement. FAMSA Vhembe finally affiliated with FAMSA National Movement on the 17th of February 2011 after appointing a Social Worker in November 2010.

The Mhinga Victory Day Care Centre was previously funded by the NDA in 2012. The money was used for the procurement of outdoor equipments, furniture, ECD training and for managerial skills training. The ECD structure was not budgeted for by Mhinga Victory Day Care Centre, therefore, there is a need for an appropriate ECD structure since approximately 58 children are utilizing an RDP structure that is too small to accommodate all these children as the Drop-in centre was also accommodated.
Overall objective of the programme

The overall objective of this programme is:

To contribute towards the strengthening of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) sector and Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Mhinga area.

Specific objectives of the programme

The project aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

I. To establish a multi purpose structure for 166 children by 2013 for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC).

II. To equip the centre and provide educational materials and toys for OVC and ECD children.

III. To provide a conducive learning environment for 166 OVC and ECD children.

IV. To increase the capacity of the food garden by 2013.

V. To provide capacity building in project management and basic counselling skills for 10 staff members (ECD and OVC).

VI. To transfer skills based on the FAMSA Vhembe programmes (Counselling skills, HIV/AIDS, Gender-based violence, parenting and life skills).

2. EVALUATION AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this evaluation was to:

2.1 provide a comprehensive performance overview of the entire project;

2.2 highlight the lessons learned so that the conclusions and recommendations arrived at can assist the organization in moving forward and be sustainable; and

2.3 highlight project alignment with the municipality IDPs and relevant government sector Departments’ programmes.
3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation involved a review of the project documentation, field visits and structured interviews with the relevant project stakeholders. These included the following:

- In-depth literature review of the documentation detailing the project, with a focus on the specific objectives of the project;
- Conducting interviews with the NDA Development Managers of the project, project staff involved in the project, etc;
- Review of the evaluation outputs and evidence of each stated objective in the project documents in order to determine the outputs and outcomes;
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4. RESULTS

4.1 Project Design

4.1.1 Community involvement

The ECD children and the OVC participants come from the Mhingaville local community. Therefore, the community members were aware of this project. The planning for the project has involved the tribal authority, thus expediting the process of sharing information and getting community buy-in throughout the project implementation process. All participants in the project workshops were drawn from community structures, namely, youths, religious groups, traditional leadership and women. The planning of all project workshops was also conducted in close consultation with the traditional leadership. Partnerships with the local Mhingaville Civic Association and collaboration with the local Assembly of God Church, are but some of the indications of the level of community involvement in the project.
4.1.2 Project Activities

The project Implementation Plan outlined the specific activities aligned to each of the specific objectives. There are specific outcomes linked to the project activities. These outcomes are discussed individually below. The activity schedule also provides details pertaining to the duration of each key activity as well as the party responsible for the implementation of the activity.

4.1.2.1 Project Monitoring

According to the Grant Application, the FAMSA Vhembe monitoring and evaluation process included the following components which will make up the project monitoring process:

Baseline and Endline Survey and comparative analysis.
Formal and Informal feedback from participants (through use of client feedback forms, questionnaires, suggestion box, evaluation forms during workshops)
Statistical data collected under FAMSA Vhembe supervision by the two partners.
The project was continuously measured against the work plan, objectives and indicators presented in this proposal through performance-based activity reports (weekly and monthly progress reports, monthly management meetings between all partners and quarterly stakeholder meetings).
Project documentation shows that this process of project monitoring was actually followed. In addition, the project monitoring visits and reporting of the NDA DM ensured that the project implementation team adhered to the monitoring process and provided the required progress reports.

4.1.4 Project Implementation

The Grant Application spells out the following outcomes that are to be achieved through the project:

4.1.4.1 A multipurpose structure for 166 ECD and OVC children established

The new ECD & OVC building has not yet been completed. The centre is not yet equipped or functioning. The one wing of the building has been roofed, whilst the second wing has recently only had roof trusses installed. The alternations to building plans as well as the torrential rains
have caused much of the delay in the construction. Despite these disturbances the construction process is still underway.

4.1.4.2 Centre fully equipped and educational materials and toys provided

The equipment, educational materials and toys have been procured, but delivery of these has not yet been taken as there is no proper storage space for them. It is anticipated that once the new building is completed these items will be collected and stored there. The equipment being procured and installed include computer equipment, tables, chairs, cabinets, a stove and a freezer.

4.1.4.3 Increased capacity of the food garden

The traditional authority has increased the allotted land for the vegetable garden by a hectare. A borehole to be used for watering the vegetable garden and in the construction process has also been drilled. This enables the project to expand the capacity of the food security programme. The vegetable gardens have been revived. There is still a need to consolidate a collaborative relationship with the Department of Agriculture to help improve the quality and efficiency of the vegetable production activities.

4.1.4.4 A conducive learning environment for the ECD and OVC children

As already indicated, the building is presently at roof level. A completed new structure is at the centre of the creation of a conducive learning environment. The current situation is rather untenable with over 50 children accommodated in an RDP house. The two Mhingaville CBOs are part of the Mhingaville ECD/OVC Project team. A Memorandum of Understanding regarding sharing of the learning environment will be signed as soon as the building is completed.

4.1.4.5 Capacity building in project management and basic counseling for staff provided

Project members have been offered training in project management and basic counseling skills. ECD and OVC project team members were given a copy of the ECD/OVC Project Funding Agreement entered into between FAMSA Vhembe and the NDA to enable them to familiarize themselves with project objectives, activities and budget. They were motivated to share contents of the document with other members (Board and staff). Project activities are discussed and evaluated during Project Team meetings. 10 staff members (ECD and OVC) were trained in
Project management and were given tasks to practice knowledge gained, and to involve others who didn’t attend training as the budget targeted only 10 people.

4.1.4.6 Skills transfer on FAMSA Vhembe programmes provided

10 ECD and OVC staff members received 2 day Basic Counseling Skills training provided by FAMSA Vhembe. KAP (knowledge, attitudes, practices) baseline survey on HIV/AIDS and life skills; Violence Awareness and life skills; and parenting skills was conducted successfully by the Outreach Worker targeting 400 young people and adults in Mhingaville. Workshops targeting children, youth and adults were conducted over 10 days. When the workshops were completed, an end line survey was done. Comparative analysis is still outstanding.

4.1.5 Capacity of FAMSA to implement the project

FAMSA Vhembe forms part of a part of a national network, FAMSA SA, which has been in operation for over a decade. The organisation has implemented a wide range of projects over the years. There is sufficient capacity within the organization to provide project oversight. FAMSA Vhembe has set aside a staff compliment of four people for this project. FAMSA Vhembe board comprises of members with a wide range of expertise, including legal, administrative, financial, community development and health.

FAMSA has established an internal project team comprising of the Executive Director, Project Manager, Administrator and the Outreach Worker. A bookkeeper was also added to the team, though there were some performance related challenges experienced in that regard. This team meets with the NDA DM regularly to assess the performance of the project in terms of the project implementation plan. An assessment of the expenditure patterns as well progress in achieving project milestones is also conducted during these meetings.

4.2 Implementation Process

4.2.1 Implementation of activities

4.2.1.1 Timeframes
The project has not been able to adhere to the original timeframes as there were certain delays encountered during the implementation of the project. The construction process was delayed by a period of approximately four months from May to August 2013 whilst FAMSA Vhembe was awaiting transfer of the second tranche from the NDA. Another delay affecting the construction was the December 2013 holiday break as well as torrential rains since January 2014. There is a clear need to discuss the effects of these delays on the projected end date of the project. An extension of the project end date is clearly inevitable.

4.2.1.2 Adherence to Implementation Plan

FAMSA Vhembe has taken the effort to makes sure that the two CBOs are familiarized with the project plan and the financing agreement so that there is clarity concerning what activities are included in the grant agreement and which are not. This was to ensure that there is adherence to the implementation plan. Despite this, there were certain deviations from the original plan. The project committee at the local level (i.e. the representatives of the ECD and OVC programmes) decided to change the approved building plans, because in their opinion the building would be too small for their needs. As a result a new plan for a bigger structure was procured. This was done without first securing additional funds as a result there is a short-fall in the budget. Apart from this and the delays outlined above, there project adhered to the implementation of activities as outlined in the Grant Application. AN extension of the project end date will be the necessary outcome of these delays as already pointed out.

4.2.2 Skills Capacity

FAMSA Vhembe has the requisite skills capacity to successfully undertake project oversight, whilst enhancing the skills capacity at the local level. Skills development has already been undertaken in terms of the Implementation Plan. Training on project management and basic counseling skills has already been offered to both the ECD and OVC project members. There are positive effects on the project participants emanating from the training. There is a deeper sense of clarity on the project design and implementation modalities which has the effect of improving decision making and implementation.

4.2.3 Support from the NDA
The NDA provided the project with ongoing support and advised the project through its Development Manager (DM), who met with the project management committee regularly. The findings of the NDA DM concerning the project progress and experiences, form part of the data upon which this evaluation is based. The NDA DM met with the FAMSA Vhembe project management team and the ECD / OVC Management Committee periodically and offered her advice and guidance to the project in line with the grant agreement. Apart from the delay in the transfer of the second tranche, the project members were generally satisfied with the support they have received from the NDA so far.

4.2.4 Receipt of Resources
The first tranche was received a month after signing of the contract and the second tranche was delayed by about four months.

4.3 Project Management

4.3.1 Structure
The project management structure at the local level is made of a management committee comprising of members both the ECD and OVC structures. The FAMSA Vhembe internal project management structure is as follows:

4.3.2 Systems
Whilst FAMSA Vhembe has very good systems for implementing and administering training programmes and providing overall project management oversight, there was a need to effect some improvement in financial record keeping and administration. For instance, collection and filing of invoices was initially not attended to in a satisfactory manner. The NDA DM assisted the project in identifying and correcting this gap. A bookkeeper had to be enlisted on the project team to attend to these matters on an ongoing basis.

4.3.3 Governance

FAMSA Vhembe has a twelve member board, comprising various expertise and experience, particularly in education, law, public administration, human resources, religion, health and social work, finance, youth and community development. FAMSA Vhembe operates in four municipalities of Vhembe district namely, Thulamela, Makhado, Mutale and Musina. The Mhingaville Management Committee has received training in project management and counseling skills, as well as general orientation with the project financing agreement, which has helped them to undertake their responsibilities in this project effectively. There is a need however, to provide them with training is skills such as good governance to complement their current governance capacity.

4.3.4 Sustainability

Institutional sustainability refers to the extent to which an organisation is capable of continuing to offer the same level of products and services without complete reliance on external support. It refers to how long the organisation can continue to operate at optimal levels if external support where to be withdrawn. In order for any social sector organisation to achieve this level of sustainability it must have the necessary internal, human, material and financial resource capacity to do this. This will generally require a healthy and reliable source of own income, complimented by multiple sources of top-up funding. Neither FAMSA Vhembe nor Mhingaville Day Care Centre has developed this capacity as yet. Nonetheless the potential for this exists. The combination of child subsidies and monthly fees paid in by parents can help establish a sound operation, at least at break-even levels, ensuring that the necessities are always covered without the need for additional funding. So that additional funding will only be brought in to effect improvements in the programme.

4.4 Resources
4.4.1 Resources mobilization

The resources for implementation of this project have so far been mobilized through the National Development Agency (in the amount of R 1 310 488.00) and own in-kind contributions (estimated at R107 700.00).

4.4.2 Utilization of resources

The resources that have been mobilized have so far been applied to the process of procuring the services of a contractor and to the commencement of the construction of the centre. The other areas where resources have been allocated to is the capacitation of the committee in project management, basic counseling skills and procurement of toys and equipment, travel and stipends.

4.5 Achievement of Overall Goals

Overall Objective

- To contribute towards the strengthening of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) sector and Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Mhinga area.

The overall objective of the project is dependent upon the achievement of the specific objectives for it to be successfully accomplished. The extent to which specific objectives are achieved is generally also the extent to which the overall objective will be achieved.

Specific Objectives

The project aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To establish a multi purpose structure for 166 children by 2013 for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC).
The construction of the multipurpose structure is presently at roof level. There is still risk that this objective may not be fully achieved beyond the completion of the NDA intervention, because the Mhingaville Management Committee has rejected the approved building plans, opting instead to go for a bigger and more expensive structure which they do not have the funds to complete.

II. To equip the centre and provide educational materials and toys for OVC and ECD children.

The procurement of the educational materials and toys, as well as the rest of the equipment has been put on hold until the building is completed.

III. To provide a conducive learning environment for 166 OVC and ECD children.

This objective has only been partly achieved as the construction of a more suitable structure has commenced and relevant skills training as well as procurement of educational materials and toys have been initiated.

IV. To increase the capacity of the food garden by 2013.

This objective has also been partly achieved, as additional land has been allotted to the centre by the traditional authorities and a borehole for watering the gardens has been drilled. The vegetable garden project has been revived. The outstanding step is the creation of a collaborative relationship with the Department of Agriculture.

V. To provide capacity building in project management and basic counselling skills for 10 staff members (ECD and OVC).

This objective has been fully achieved. The training in project management and basic counselling skills have been completed. Project members were also trained in Financial Management.

VI. To transfer skills based on the FAMSA Vhembe programmes (Counselling skills,
HIV/AIDS, Gender-based violence, parenting and life skills).

This objective has also been fully achieved as the ten day training has been completed.

5. **CONCLUSIONS OF THE EVALUATION**

5.1 **Major conclusions of the evaluation**

- The NDA support towards construction of a new and more suitable facility for the ECD and OVC centre has raised the hope and commitment of the project members and the community, who are now optimistic about the future prospects of the centre.
- The project has served to ensure that the current employment opportunities for members of the ECD and OVC centres are secured.
- Despite the slight delays at the beginning of the project, FAMSA Vhembe has managed to stay on course towards achievement of the project objectives.

5.2 **Benefits associated with the programme**

The programme has generated the following benefits both for the project members and the community in general:

- A bigger and more suitable ECD and OVC centre.
- Increased skills capacity in project management, financial management and basic counseling skills.
- Expanded vegetable production on a bigger site.
- The NDA intervention has ensured that the services of the ECD / OVC centre will not only continue to be provided, but that the quality is improved substantially through skills development and institutional capacity development.
• The programme has created temporary employment for local people through the construction process, and has facilitated the securing of existing jobs for the project members both within FAMSA Vhembe and the ECD and OVC centres.

5.3 Unexpected benefits from the programme

• This project has so far not resulted in any unexpected benefits. All the benefits of this project are those expected to flow directly from implementation of the planned activities.

6. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Recommendations regarding the programme as a whole

These recommendations if implemented together will produce the desired effect of achieving organization wide improvement:

a) Organizational Planning

There is a need for an organizational plan (a business plan or strategic plan) which clearly outlines how the Mhingaville Management Committee will leverage the positive inputs of this intervention (the skills training, the new centre, the equipment and educational materials, etc.) moving forward to sustain the benefits of this intervention. This plan must outline the nature of the multipurpose centre, including the compliment of services to be offered. Particular attention should be paid to the following areas:

• ECD / OVC Centre

In terms of the Grant Application, the two CBOs (ECD Centre and the OVC centre) will sign a memorandum of understanding which outlined the collaboration between the parties in relation to the use of the new building once completed. It is our recommendation that since additional funds are required to complete the building, these two parties should develop a plan to raise the outstanding funds jointly. Also it is important to begin the discussions concerning the terms of the MOU now prior to completion of the structure. Any disagreements must be resolved in advance so that once the building is complete, it can be immediately utilized.
• **Financial Sustainability**  
  Income generation is an important aspect of sustainability. Particular attention should be paid to methods of collecting monthly payments from parents, and ensuring that compliance with requirements for subsidies for the children are met. The sale of fresh produce from the vegetable garden should also be explored.

• **Administration**  
  The procurement of a computer and computer equipment will assist with the process of moving to electronic modes of information management within the multipurpose centre.

• **Internal monitoring and evaluation**  
  Improved methods of monitoring and evaluating progress in all key areas of the centre operations should be introduced. Instruments for periodic monitoring and reporting are required for this purpose.

b) **Ongoing Support**

In the immediate to long-term, it is going to be absolutely essential for FAMSA Vhembe to provide ongoing support to Mhingaville Management Committee. Assistance with programme planning and implementation, with a focus on structuring services to be rendered at the multipurpose centre should be paramount. So is assistance with development of funding strategies.

6.2 **Predictions about the future of the programme**

• The Mhingaville ECD / OVC multipurpose centre has a sound future. It has the potential to become financially stable. Once more effective methods of collecting monthly payments as well as the accreditation for subsidies for all children can be attained. This of course has to be preceded by the successful completion of the building of the multipurpose structure.

• The collaborative efforts of the all the parties involved in this project has so far produced very good results. It can be expected that the ongoing collaboration of the ECD and OVC centres will enhance the future prospects of this project.