

# Meta Analysis of Theatre for a Change

## Contents

	Page
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	2
<b>Introduction</b>	2
<b>Methodology for Meta-analysis</b>	3
<b>Key Learning Themes</b>	4
<b>1) Methodology</b>	4
1.1) Innovative, effective and focused approach to programme delivery	4
1.2) Flexibility	8
1.3) Partnership working	10
1.4) Advocacy	11
1.5) Sustainability	11
1.6) Federation Structure	12
Opportunities/ Next Steps	13
<b>2) Programme Cycle Management</b>	15
2.1) Programme design, implementation, replication and scale-up	15
2.2) Target Groups	16
2.3) Monitoring, evaluation and learning	16
Opportunities/ Next Steps	20
<b>3) Organisational Capacity</b>	21
3.1) Staff capacity retention and management	21
3.2) Fundraising and communications capacity	22
3.3) Cost effectiveness	24
Opportunities/ Next Steps	25
<b>Recommendations/ Way Forward</b>	26

# Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to Patrick Young for his time and support and to TfaC staff members in Ghana and Malawi who took the time to complete the questionnaire and provide other insights and documentation and the TfaC Trustees for their questionnaire responses. Also thanks to Beth Mbaka from Comic Relief and Leris Harfield from Medicor.

# Introduction

This meta analysis provides an opportunity for Theatre for a Change (TfaC) to reflect on its eight years of experience, reviewing the key lessons, successes and challenges in order to inform its future development and focus. TfaC has shown considerable commitment to continuously learning from its work, it employs members of staff to focus on monitoring and evaluation; undertakes rigorous baseline and endline surveys focused on the HIV knowledge, attitudes and practices of its beneficiaries and on beneficiary knowledge of, and ability to assert, their gender and sexual rights and their understanding of child rights. It also ensures that its programmes undergo a final external evaluation, to provide insights on overall achievement of programme objectives, the challenges encountered, the unintended benefits of the programme and the quality of TfaC's strategies for project management, monitoring and evaluation.

TfaC's work to date has been very focused in terms of methodology. TfaC operates on the belief that education and social change can be effectively achieved and sustained through the active and physical participation of individuals in the learning process. TfaC adopts a unique transformational approach, using interactive theatre – both a physical and experiential process, as a way of changing behaviour and creating innovative advocacy opportunities, thereby enabling its beneficiaries to access and influence decision makers. Through this approach people understand that they have choices and they acquire the confidence and communication skills to exercise these choices. These skills are also essential in enabling participants both to facilitate change in others and to advocate for their gender and sexual rights in interactive performances.

TfaC began working in Ghana, building the capacity of other NGOs in its participant centred approaches to HIV prevention and from this experience they learned that their work with student teachers at the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) in Ghana was a particularly sustainable strategy, since trainee teachers then go on to teach others, increasing the impact of the programme exponentially.

Based on its experiences in Ghana, TfaC has been working closely with trainee teachers in Malawi for the last 5 years, where the HIV prevalence rate of teachers is 23%; almost double the national rate of 12% (National AIDS Commission 2009). Through its programme in 10 TTCs, it provides training, through its of participatory learning methodology, to core groups of trainee teachers to reduce their risk of HIV infection through equipping them with the confidence, skills and knowledge they need to positively change their behaviour in relation to HIV, reproductive health and gender and to be able to run peer groups through which they can pass on their learning to, and facilitate behaviour change in, others. Trainee teachers also have the opportunity to gain accreditation for the HIV facilitation training course component through the Open College Network (OCN) and St. Mary's University in London. TfaC has also begun working in primary schools with teachers and learners on HIV prevention. In its work with female sex workers (since 2007), the organisation adopts some similar approaches to those it implements in its work in the TTCs, enabling sex workers to acquire knowledge and skills to change their behaviour and negotiate safe sex, facilitating their access to vocational training/ micro-finance opportunities to provide them with economic alternatives to sex work and building their capacity to be able to facilitate change in groups of their peers.

For the past 5 years, the organisation has been guided by its 2007 – 2012 Strategy, which prioritised behaviour change, advocacy, training and partner capacity building. The primary target groups prioritised in this strategy included fisher folk, street children and sex workers or girls susceptible to sex work in specific areas of Ghana and street children, orphans and other vulnerable children and teachers and children in schools in specific areas of Malawi. However, in reality, the organisation has focused on a narrower range of target groups than suggested in the Strategy, in response to the needs and opportunities which have arisen in both countries. TfaC implements three programmes in Malawi with the following main target groups: pre-

service or trainee teachers; primary school teachers and learners; sex workers. In Ghana TfaC are implementing four projects in three regions, targeting out of school youth. TfaC-Ghana also builds the capacities of partners working on HIV and AIDS and it works in secondary schools to build life skills and financial literacy for children.

A decision was made to give greater focus to developing TfaC's work in Malawi since 2007 because of the greater need for HIV prevention work here, thereby resulting in a shift in attention from the work in Ghana. Alongside this scenario, the funding environment for HIV and AIDS programmes has changed in Ghana and although TfaC Ghana has broadened its focus to that of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) in that country, it has struggled to determine future direction and secure long term funding. TfaC Ghana has accessed funds from specific donors on an annual basis or has been contracted to undertake certain activities as part of larger programmes coordinated by other organisations/ donors. This has not allowed it to plan and implement its own integrated programme of change and perhaps has necessitated following donor interests regarding beneficiary groups and areas of operation. Learning from the experiences of TfaC Ghana will be further explored in later sections, as it is important that as TfaC changes and grows in the future and as TfaC UK develops its role, that the capacity and development of federation members is not de-prioritised.

TfaC's founder Director has recently re-located to the UK from Malawi, to continue working as the Executive Director of TfaC in the UK, which presents an opportunity to shape and develop TfaC's role in the UK and the relationships between TfaC in the UK, Ghana and Malawi. In addition, TfaC UK is in the process of developing a 3 year strategic plan for 2012 – 2014 for the TfaC federation, which in the light of changes to the organisation's structure, offers an opportune moment for it to review strengths and weaknesses across the TfaC federation, consider the opportunities for it to replicate and scale-up its existing work in its current countries of operation and/ or broaden the thematic and geographical focus of its work and explore the potential for it to increase its work with local and international organisations to build their capacity to integrate its participatory learning techniques into their work.

## Methodology for meta analysis

The objective of this analysis was to review TfaC's work over the last eight years, drawing out lessons and key successes and challenges to inform its future strategy and support its development and growth.

The documentation which was reviewed included: baseline and endline evaluations of the TTC Programme in Malawi for 2009, 2010, 2011, the endline of the radio pilot programme, Evaluation of ABC Programme 2009, Evaluation of the TTC Programme 2011, Primary school baseline 2011, Child Protection situational analysis, August 2011, Strategic Plan of TfaC Federation 2012 – 2014 (draft), draft Advocacy Strategy, Ghana TfaC report for 2010, Malawi Annual Report and Programme Summary 2010 – 2011, Medicor Report 2011 TfaC Malawi, Seeding Project Impact Assessment, TfaC Trip Report by Beth Mbaka March 2011, CR project start-up form and budget.

Two questionnaires were designed, one directed at Trustees and the other for staff in Malawi and Ghana. The numbers of questionnaires completed were as follows:

- 3 from Trustees in the UK
- 10 from a range of staff in Malawi
- 3 from staff in Ghana

This analysis explores learning on specific crossing cutting themes which have emerged through the analysis, summarising their strengths, challenges and opportunities. These issues are informed through review of the source documents and by the questionnaires completed by the staff and Trustees, interviews with the TfaC Executive Director and two representatives from donor agencies (Comic Relief and Medicor). In addition, the particular successes, challenges and learning identified in the documentation of specific TfaC programmes, will also be highlighted as they relate to the different themes.

**Limitations of the meta-analysis** -The documentation available for TfaC's work in Ghana was extremely limited and as a result, many of the examples which are cited in this document relate to learning from the

work in Malawi.

The questionnaires had to be designed at the beginning of the analysis in order to allow time for response within the timeframe of the meta-analysis. This means that some of the questions which were asked in relation to staff's existing understanding of the work and preferences for future direction, would perhaps have been different if they had been developed after the Consultant had gained a greater understanding of TfaC's work. The completed questionnaires contained a considerable amount of information, all of which it was not possible to include in the body of this report but which offers insights into specific challenges and opportunities in both countries, ways of improving the work and the kind of support staff receive and how this impacts on their work. A compilation of information relating to specific questions in the staff questionnaire is therefore included in a separate *Appendix*.

While the parameters of this report did not include an organisational assessment, some aspects of TfaC's organisational capacity are highlighted in this report. As TfaC refines its strategy for the next three years, it will be important for it to continue to strengthen its organisational capacity which is dependent on a sound management structure, effective leadership, relevant knowledge and practices, accountability to beneficiaries and stakeholders, as well as being underpinned by appropriate financial and human resources.

## Key learning themes

### 1) METHODOLOGY

#### *1.1) Innovative, effective and focused approach to programme delivery*

##### **Strengths**

The evaluations of TfaC programmes and several questionnaire respondents highlight TfaC's participatory learning methodology as being a major strength of the organisation. Different aspects of the methodology have been positively highlighted in the source documents and by staff and Trustees including its innovative nature, dynamism, effectiveness, particularly in enabling behaviour change, its clear focus, flexibility, openness to learning and change. A selection of these aspects of TfaC's methodology, are explored in greater detail below.

##### **Innovation**

The core of TfaC's participatory learning approach is based on learning through experience in workshops and performances, in which participants develop physical and social skills and the confidence to use them to change behaviour and attitudes. Its use of 'interactive or legislative theatre', is based on an ethos of innovation, and promotes creativity, exploration and audience involvement. This encourages the audience to become active participants in the performance; 'touch tagging' allows people to touch a performer who has highlighted a challenge and to temporarily replace the performer in order to act out their own, alternative solution or behaviour in that given situation. It allows people to explore different ways in which to approach a dilemma and enables performers and participants to practice acting out those alternatives, so that the experience of making those alternative decisions is lived and felt, which is far more powerful than only being thought through or suggested. It is also innovative in that it can be used to bring performers into contact with audiences that may be difficult to access in other contexts.

##### **Stakeholder views:**

*"The methodology around 'legislative theatre' has proved to be exceptionally empowering for those involved and has given sex workers a voice and an opportunity to represent their experiences to people with little understanding of their situations."*  
(Comic Relief HIV Programme Manager)

*"TfaC's unique, innovative approach is proven to be highly effective and not available from other organisations"*  
(Current Trustee and former TfaC employee in Malawi, seconded from British Council)

*"The methodology is proven but should always be under review, improved and adapted where necessary and appropriate. We describe ourselves as an innovative organisation and should stand by that statement and constantly be looking to improve things (small and large)"*  
(Current Trustee)

TfaC's participatory learning approach has been noted for its innovative qualities, both in its programme evaluations and by its Trustees, donors and collaborators, the views of some of whom are included in the box opposite.

The endline evaluation of its interactive radio pilot project (March – June 2011) noted the following:

*“TfaC experimented with some innovative and imaginative ways of promoting audience participation, so that the behaviour change and advocacy impact of the programme could be maximized. This included an interactive radio drama, where audience members are invited to call in, and change the behaviour of characters by shouting Tisinthe! (Let's Change!) at the moment when they want to become the character they feel needs help. The actors are all in the studio, and they recreate the scene, so that the listeners are challenged to really feel what it's like to be the character and test the reality of their proposed behaviour change.”*

The endline evaluations of the Malawi TTC Programme also indicate that TfaC's participatory teaching methodology is one of the organisation's core strengths. Linked to this is another innovative element of TfaC's work, which is its collaboration with the Open College Network (OCN) and St. Mary's University College in London which together accredit TfaC's behaviour change facilitation course offered to the core group of trainee teachers targeted in TfaC's TTC programme every year. Facilitators are awarded a certificate in Workshop Leadership and Facilitation. This training is given to a selected group of students who are required to pass on the training to the learners in primary schools. TfaC in the UK is exploring links with other bodies such as the City and Guilds with a view to offering teachers a vocational skills qualification which could be facilitated through the British Council in TfaC's countries of operation.

### **Effective**

Five questionnaire respondents were passionate about the strength of the TfaC methodology in enabling behaviour change and others highlighted the effectiveness of the methodology for achieving programme objectives and outcomes. Leris Harfield from the Medicor Foundation particularly emphasised the effectiveness of the 'virtuous circle' – educating educators who then go into schools to educate others.

The quality of the work can be understood more fully through reviewing the yearly endline evaluations for the Malawi TTC programme which is the longest running of TfaC programmes in Malawi. The three endline evaluations studied highlight a number of common strengths and some recurring challenges in relation to the desired changes amongst core and peer beneficiaries and in addition, in the past two years, amongst life skills students. *Core beneficiaries* are trainee teachers in the TTCs who meet weekly for workshops over a 10 month period, to complete TfaC's behaviour change curriculum and their course work for the HIV facilitation course through the OCN. After the core group members have participated in the TTC Programme for 8 months, they form *peer groups*. *Peer groups* meet bi-weekly for 2 months and complete a modified version of the TfaC behaviour change curriculum. Finally, the TfaC TTC training team provides TTC lecturers with support in delivering *Life Skills*, an examinable course that aims to improve the ability of students to participate in their socioeconomic environment by exploring issues such as health, personal relationships, sanitation, and entrepreneurship.

Each year the areas assessed in the endline evaluations appear to have been modified/added to, reflecting the baseline for that year. This has resulted in a greater analysis for some years such as the 2010 endline evaluation and to a slightly lesser extent the 2011 endline survey and considerably less in 2009.

It is clear from the endline evaluations that year on year, TfaC have brought about significant improvements in several areas, although challenges persist in some of these. The learning reported in these evaluations is summarised in the box overleaf.

## **Summary of learning from endline evaluations of TfaC-Malawi TTC Programme (2009, 2010, 2011)**

- **HIV Knowledge** – TfaC have been successful in enhancing the knowledge of the participants in the areas of HIV, gender and sexual rights, and rights of people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA). For each year (2009, 2010, 2011), there is a clear increase in knowledge levels compared to the baseline values for core and peer groups, with a greater improvement for core groups.
- **HIV Attitudes** - A change in attitudes has been another area of success for the TfaC programme. Participants in the core group and peer group both showed a change in their attitudes regarding PLWHA. However in 2010, the report noted that interviews revealed that some participants still held stigmatizing views about PWLHA. Unfortunately, this area was not assessed in the 2011 endline.
- **Sexual health practice** - In 2009, men in the core and peer groups, on average, reported an increase of 2 percentage points from the baseline in the frequency which they reported to “always use condoms”. The lack of reported change in men was highlighted as an area of concern in the evaluation, as was the fact that 43% of men and women, on average, report inconsistent condom use. In 2010, the endline revealed that challenges persist around improving condom use in this high-risk population. However, in 2011, the endline report noted that there were also modest gains in condom use by respondents (0-9 percentage points); however the evaluator added that condom use in general seems to have increased noticeably since TfaC began the TTC programme, suggesting there might be an attitudinal shift towards condoms in Malawi more generally.
- **Gender, sexual and child rights** - The 2009 endline report highlighted that rights was a strong area of improvement compared to the baseline. Women and men demonstrated an improvement in knowledge of and their ability to advocate for their sexual and gender rights. Also, the endline survey and workshop observations showed an improvement in the core group members’ ability to identify and report child abuse. In 2010, the endline evaluation found that a good proportion of all respondents (from core groups, peer groups and life skills) had improved levels of knowledge of their gender and sexual rights at the end of TfaC’s intervention. In addition to having better knowledge, interviews revealed that TfaC intervention participants, especially core group members, have practiced assertiveness in their personal relationships. Despite these successes, interviews revealed that gender roles are deeply rooted and there is opportunity here for TfaC interventions to further influence knowledge and attitude on gender and sexual rights. In relation to child rights the evaluation identified a gap between knowledge and the application of knowledge to examples of real life situations, which the evaluators recommended should be given careful programme attention.
- **Facilitation skills** – In 2009, the endline reported that 355 trainee teachers became accredited facilitators through the OCN. In 2010, the endline noted that knowledge of facilitation skills and of participatory learning activities across all groups showed significant improvement with the core group showing greatest improvement in knowledge and demonstrated ability, followed by peer beneficiaries followed by the life skills group.

### **Overall trends**

In all years, for the most part, the core groups demonstrated positive change in all the indicators and are the biggest beneficiaries of the interventions, followed by peer groups, with small improvements in the life skills groups.

In 2009, it was noted that women started at lower levels than men at the baseline indicators. By the endline, women, most often caught up to their male group counterparts – and sometimes even surpassed them. However, in contrast, in 2011, the following gender differentiation was noted: peer group women consistently lag behind male peer group members suggesting that gendered group dynamics continue to limit the uptake of new ideas and behaviours by women.

## Focus

TfaC's methodology is extremely focused, particularly in Malawi, using its participatory learning methodology as its primary approach to changing knowledge attitudes and practices relating to HIV and AIDS and gender and sexual rights with the different target groups with which it works. This represents an important and unique strength for the organisation, and as one questionnaire respondent emphasised – “it is a comprehensive approach that addresses multiple prevention strategies.” Very few INGOs are known for promoting a particular way of working, instead adopting a range of methodologies in different contexts. On the other hand, organisations using interactive and forum<sup>1</sup> theatre approaches often use these techniques for a number of different purposes, which may include HIV and AIDS awareness and prevention, amongst other thematic areas and therefore they have not necessarily prioritised in-depth learning in the same way as TfaC, about the effectiveness of using interactive theatre and its impact on HIV and AIDS prevention and gender and sexual rights.

The endline evaluations TfaC has undertaken in relation to its TTC programme in Malawi give clear information regarding progress achieved in relation to changes in core and peer beneficiary knowledge, attitudes and behaviour and all confirm the effectiveness of TfaC's methodology. This is substantiated by the views of TfaC staff, trustees and key stakeholders, who emphasise that TfaC's use of participatory learning approaches is an extremely powerful methodology and one of the key strengths of the organisation.

TfaC's focused way of working has enabled it to continually strengthen and consolidate its methodology over the years to the point where it has the potential to take this approach into new areas and increase its impact, such as the possibility of incorporating participatory learning approaches into the life skills teaching curriculum in Malawi or broadening its focus to address the sexual and gender rights of vulnerable groups such as women and girls who are sexually abused and exploited, the children of sex workers and girls vulnerable to gender and sexual violence in primary schools.

## Areas for Improvement/ Challenges

**Gender equality** - The evidence generated by TfaC's work has particularly highlighted the power of the methodology concerning HIV knowledge and behaviour change in relation to HIV and AIDS. However, given the organisation's interest in broadening its focus to sexual and gender rights, it is worth noting that there is less information in relation to its impact on gender related behaviour more broadly. Its approach has mainly been on improving gender equality in relationships - measuring increases in confidence amongst men and women in the context of relationships. It would therefore be interesting to explore how it can adapt its methodology to address gender inequality in groups and in relation to institutional behaviour, which could lead to greater empowerment of female teachers and girls within school settings, tackle gender violence and discrimination in communities and strengthen the development of its strategies for working with the police and armed forces.

**Changes in peer and life skills groups in the TTC programme** - The other weaker area in relation to the methodology which is reported in the endline evaluations of the TTC programme, relates to the effectiveness in bringing about changes in the peer group and the life skills group. TfaC Malawi is already trying to address challenges around the life skills work through targeting Domasi College for life skills lecturers. In addition it could consider other options for providing follow-on support such as through mentors, and the use of radio shows which it has already piloted and has been shown to be effective in engaging teachers and learners.

**Strengthening the ABC programme (TfaC's programme targeting women involved in sex work)** - The ABC programme evaluation made a number of recommendations for strengthening the effectiveness of the work, including embedding stronger psycho-social support to participants, strengthening the consistency and quality of facilitation and a greater focus on challenging mis-information by facilitators. It was reported that many of the recommendations made by the Evaluator of the ABC programme have been acted on by TfaC in the last two years, (guided by an action plan listing 22 points of action to be addressed

---

<sup>1</sup> Forum Theatre (also known as Boal's Theatre, 'Theatre of the Oppressed', 'Theatre for Development') is an interactive theatre form invented (or discovered) in the early 1970s by Augusto Boal who wanted to empower the audience of his plays.

<sup>2</sup> However the questions asked of students in relation to 'safety' at schools were fairly limited and the Meta analysis consultant's view

as a result of the evaluation), and others are in the process of being addressed. It was not been possible during this analysis, to identify if there are any specific remaining issues which should be prioritised.

**Strengthening expertise on the methodology** - A number of respondents, including the Executive Director have highlighted that TfaC's methodology is dependent on a small number of individuals and there is a need to strengthen knowledge management systems and enable new staff to gain an understanding of and confidence in using the methodology.

**Focus of Ghana work** - This focused approach of TfaC's work in Malawi is evident from programme evaluation reports and respondent feedback. However in Ghana, there appears to have been less focus in the last few years. One questionnaire respondent noted: *"The main purpose of the TfaC programme in Ghana is to contribute to the reduction of new HIV infections among vulnerable groups."* However the same individual goes on to say that: *"TfaC Ghana does not have a programme but implements various projects with diverse objectives and sometimes no performance targets and it should as a matter of urgency develop specific programmes with common objectives and performance targets to facilitate evaluation of its activities."* The respondent also added: *"TfaC has a unique methodology, but it needs the right people with the right skills, experience, attitudes, resources, and motivation to make TfaC-Ghana's programme the first choice of funders. Without these elements, TfaC Ghana's programme is likely to come to an end in the coming years."* Other inputs from staff in Ghana and the Executive Director suggest that TfaC-Ghana has become donor led, being sub-contracted by larger organisations or donors themselves, rather than identifying its strategic focus areas and target groups and creating programmes to promote to donors.

**Improved understanding of and clarity of programme objectives** - Another challenge common to many NGO programmes is that of clarity and shared understanding of programme objectives amongst different staff and stakeholders, often due to the fact that the same programme is funded by a range of donors, resulting in changes in emphasis in programme documents to better meet donor requirements. The evaluation of the ABC programme in 2009, highlighted that there is a core clarity about the aims and objectives, and they are integrated well into the ABC programme, yet slight differences in articulation of objectives in different donor proposals and logframes are magnified, and sometimes confused, in the interpretation of the goals by different people involved in the programme. There are both policy and practice implications if 'stopping sex workers engaging in sex work' is the driving interpretation of the ABC goal, as opposed to 'reducing the risk of transmission of HIV/AIDS'. This also has implications with regard to programme monitoring. It is therefore important to regularly explore the interpretation of the goals with stakeholders to guard against slippage in interpretation.

## 1.2) Flexibility

### Strengths

In addition to having been focused in its work, TfaC has also demonstrated flexibility, which allows it to be pro-active, as well as responsive to opportunities which arise. TfaC was originally founded in the UK in 2003 by Patrick Young, however due to Patrick being based in Ghana and starting TfaC's work there, the development of the work has been able to respond with flexibility to the situation in Ghana and latterly to that in Malawi, where Patrick re-located to in 2007. Patrick has been able to concentrate on developing the work in Malawi for the last five years, without facing the challenges of negotiating an agenda imposed by an office in the UK, (something many country offices of international alliances and networks face). For example, in 2007, TfaC met with the Ministry of Education, DFID, the UN, the National AIDS Commission, GIZ (then GTZ) and others to see if their programme in Ghana was of interest to anyone in Malawi. Key stakeholders indicated that there was a training gap for pre-service teachers since the GIZ's 'friend to friend' peer education programme was finishing. This led to GIZ and TfaC collaborating on a successful 'seeding project' funded by the Guardian Newspaper and ArtAction, which was later expanded and scaled up into the TTC programme.

With the support of Trustees, the organisation has grown financially, increasing its programmes in Ghana, then moving into and expanding its work in Malawi. Patrick has been instrumental in developing TfaC's unique participatory learning methodology, ensuring that programme staff are fully trained in TfaC's

approaches and understand the value of and own the programme monitoring processes. He has also facilitated important links to build programme capacity such as the relationship with St. Mary's College in the UK, established strategic relationships with partners and funders, responding to opportunities for TfaC staff to build the capacity of other organisations in Africa, with the result that the organisation's reputation for high quality work has gradually been established.

TfaC's methodology is also extremely flexible as it involves reflection and response to issues emerging in the workshops and performances and by its nature it is easily adaptable to different cultural contexts. It is clear that the methodology's flexibility enables TfaC staff to actively respond to challenges which have been highlighted in previous endline evaluations. The methodology has also proved to be flexible and adaptable in relation to tackling other development and rights issues where unequal power relationships and 'uninformed' behaviour lead to the abuse of human rights and/or vulnerability. TfaC have demonstrated the potential for adapting their approaches through the work with women involved in sex work in the Malawi ABC programme, which continues to use interactive and legislative theatre to change understanding and behaviour and it is currently exploring how it can strengthen its work on child protection and child rights in primary schools.

Flexibility in approach has been particularly important in the ABC programme in which the initial intention was to make sex work safe, but the response to other pressing needs (such as food and the protection of children at risk through exploitation or exposure to sex work) was later incorporated into the programme design. In the evaluation of the ABC Programme in 2009, the Programme Director described the programme as becoming more proactive rather than reactive, leading to, for example, the development of a vocational training programme that is linked to microfinance institutions, in order to respond to the livelihood needs of women involved in sex work - both to meet their day to day needs - but also to present alternative options to sex work. This reflects the need to address the underlying cause of poverty - a recent survey conducted by TfaC indicated that most women went into sex work because of poverty.

### ***Areas for Improvement/ Challenges***

**Ensuring flexibility and responsiveness are accompanied by strong systems and appropriate levels of support** - One of the risks of being very flexible and responding to different opportunities can be that the organisation grows too rapidly, that its objectives become diluted, the quality of the work suffers and the expansion of the reach and focus of the work is not backed up by the development and implementation of appropriate organisational policies and systems such as HR, financial management, M&E systems. It may also mean that organisational strategies are no longer relevant but are not updated and that the financial resources required to invest in core costs, in addition to new programme areas, are not secured. This pattern seems to have occurred to a certain extent in relation to TfaC Ghana, following the establishment of TfaC in Malawi and has contributed to the current situation which sees the work in Malawi continuing to grow, while the work in Ghana is decreasing and has less clear direction.

Meanwhile, there was concern expressed by a few respondents about the expansion of the work in Malawi. One respondent cautioned against broadening the organisation's focus either thematically or geographically because they felt that TfaC Malawi is stretched enough already, struggling to capture the resources required for its existing programmes and to improve the professional development opportunities and organizational culture, and adding that in relation to the Education programme, time is needed for the programme's documentation and structure to catch up with the implementation.

**Determination of organisational direction** – One respondent recommended that TfaC-Malawi start determining its own organizational direction and pursues funding to support that. Up until now, funding from donors has been accessed to support existing projects, but the respondent adds that in the process they have had to start new projects again, which increases the demands on staff.

### 1.3) Partnership working

#### Strengths

It is clear from its programme evaluations and reports from Malawi that TfaC engages in a range of strategic partnerships in order to improve its programme delivery and achieve its advocacy objectives. In addition, it has developed a number of funding partnerships with international NGOs and donors, which have funded specific programmes or components of programmes, either directly in Ghana and Malawi or through TfaC UK.

To undertake the TTC programme in Malawi, it is evident from a number of the source documents that TfaC depends on strong relationships with multiple stakeholders including the OCN, the TTCs themselves, underpinned by an MoU with the Ministry of Education. It also relies on developing individual relationships with the TTC lecturers to improve the delivery of Life Skills education, although there are challenges with this, which are discussed further below. The Malawi ABC Programme evaluation (2009), noted that the success of the work has led to partnerships with Malawian government departments and agencies, local and international agencies. A visit to the current phase of this programme by the Comic Relief HIV Programme Manager in March 2011 reported that partnerships with key stakeholders such as the National AIDS Commission (NAC), the Police, UNICEF and the Family Planning Association, among others, had been established and MoUs were in the process of being signed with the Ministry of Gender. She noted that during the visit, there was a well attended stakeholders' meeting at the TfaC office.

*“TfaC’s strength lies in its identifying its niche and then collaborating with other partners for the development of a comprehensive fully integrated programme.”*  
(Comic Relief HIV Programme Manager)

The HIV Programme Manager added during an interview as part of the meta-analysis, that TfaC-Malawi has a broad spectrum of funders and the donated use of a building by the Ministry of Gender to the ABC programme, shows that the organisation has strong partnerships.

In the report of the situational analysis for the child protection programme, the following recommendation was included: that TfaC ensures multi-agency co-operation on the protection of children; continues their development of links with fundamental services, including Health, Education, Police and Social Welfare and that all agencies should guarantee co-operation and dedication in the development of a child-centred referral process. It is essential that all communication between agencies is open, and roles are clear.

In Ghana, TfaC collaborates closely with peer educators, the Ghana Health Service, Metropolitan and Municipal authorities, District Assemblies and traditional leaders in the three regions where TfaC works, supported by a number of donors.

#### Areas for Improvement/ Challenges

**Partnership strategy or guidelines** - TfaC has not documented its approach to partnership and has not produced guidance on developing partnerships. It would be useful for the TfaC federation as a whole to discuss this issue, exploring the different kinds of relationships it already has and would like to have with partners at different levels (community based organisations, NGOs, government agencies, international NGOs etc.), in order to increase its effectiveness and impact and build the capacity of other organisations to implement its methodologies. Forming effective and smooth partnerships is a challenging process, however the fact that TfaC has very defined experience, expertise and a specific way of working, managing its programmes and learning, should help it to be very clear about what it can contribute to partnerships. At the same time, its interest in and potential to strengthen its approach to research, needs assessment and stakeholder mapping and consultation, as highlighted by some of the questionnaire respondents, could enable it to identify organisations which can address certain areas in its interventions and play a significant role in strengthening them.

These discussions around its partnership ethos and strategies should aim to help TfaC identify the key steps in developing partnerships and to think through the detail of what implementing programmes with partners involves. This process will ultimately enable the organisation to be more strategic in relation to its partnership priorities and improve its partnership development and management of partner relations.

## **1.4) Advocacy**

### **Strengths**

TfaC have a powerful set of tools, which can be used in advocacy work to influence the hearts and minds of the groups it chooses to target. Their approach to working on human rights which is centred on the personal discovery of human rights, rather than imposing human rights because they are universally recognised has proved to be effective. The Executive Director highlighted this aspect of the work in relation to gender equality, noting that they have found through their work on relationships, that in most examples, men and women want balance and security in their relationships with one another, which denotes equality.

### **Areas for Improvement/ Challenges**

**Deepening TfaC advocacy work** - TfaC's advocacy work to date has focused on beneficiaries' capacity for self advocacy and advocacy with specific groups in terms of raising awareness on certain issues, for example, in the Malawi ABC programme women involved in sex work have been able to raise awareness of their situation with politicians and the police. If TfaC hopes to include advocacy to bring about specific changes in policy and practice in its programmes, it needs to include clear targets and timeframes in relation to programmatic advocacy objectives and ensure that resources are allocated to this work and that it collaborates with other stakeholders working towards the same objectives, where possible. It should also explore how its programme level advocacy can inform international work on advocacy on specific issues with which it could engage and include these priorities and related actions in its draft Advocacy Strategy.

## **1.5) Sustainability**

### **Strengths**

A central approach to the TfaC programmes is that of a core beneficiary group, organising groups of their peers and facilitating changes in their peers either directly or through other strategies such as radio, which is an intervention approach which TfaC-Malawi has recently piloted. The use of radio has the potential to strengthen the outcomes of TfaC Malawi's work in the TTC and the Primary school programmes in the long term, thereby leading to sustainable changes in behaviour as well as the potential radio has for rolling out education and behaviour change in relation to specific issues to a large audience of listeners.

The approach of working with a core group who commit to facilitating the same processes in their peers is particularly sustainable where the organisation is working with professionals such as teachers who will continue to use what they have learned through TfaC in their work with children and young people.

### **Areas for Improvement/ Challenges**

**Explore strategies for mobilising community volunteers to participate in programmes** - TfaC's ABC Programme adopts a less sustainable strategy in that it employs a group of its beneficiaries (15 women involved in sex work) to lead on areas of the programme. This issue was also noted by the Comic Relief HIV Programme Manager who reported that the use of "employed" peer educators and facilitators rather than volunteers, limits the model's potential to be scaled up and replicated. She suggested that greater effort needs to be made to mobilise and build the capacity of 'volunteer community members' to augment awareness raising and peer education in the community, in order to balance the service delivery model with community rooted action that will be more sustainable over time. This approach could be extended to

TfaC's work in schools, establishing student run anti-AIDS or gender equality clubs (run by girls) in which students organise events and raise awareness on specific issues with their peers.

**Strengthening civil society organisations to deliver programme outcomes** - One way of improving the sustainability of TfaC's interventions is to develop more strategic relationships with partners, which involve both capacity development of partners and a transfer of responsibility for the programme outcomes to partners. In the absence of appropriate partners, it may be necessary to establish community groups such as former sex worker support groups or women's savings and credit groups which enable the members to diversify their income and undertake awareness raising with their peers on a voluntary basis.

## **1.6) Federation Structure**

### **Strengths**

TfaC UK, TfaC Ghana and TfaC Malawi are all independent organisations. A federation structure was established in 2008 as it was felt that this was the best way of ensuring autonomy but at the same time guarding against a loss of focus. Therefore TfaC UK is taking the lead on the development of the overall strategy for the federation but TfaC Ghana and TfaC Malawi will develop their own strategies, which should reflect the overall objectives of the federation strategy. The following benefits of the federation structure were highlighted by Trustees:

- Isolates financial and legal risk within specific offices. Allows transfer of skills and resources.
- Credibility with funders (breadth of operations)

Certain funders, will not fund country offices of international NGOs, therefore the autonomy of TfaC Ghana and TfaC Malawi means that TfaC UK will have more chance of accessing funds from funders such as the Big Lottery Fund and Comic Relief for the work in Ghana or Malawi.

### **Areas for Improvement/ Challenges**

**Defining the role of TfaC UK in supporting TfaC Ghana and TfaC Malawi** - The absence of staff in TfaC UK until very recently, has perhaps meant that the level of support needed by TfaC Ghana in relation to its strategic direction, programme development and funding applications, has not been available. Two respondents from Ghana felt that there has been a much greater focus on programme development in Malawi following the Executive Director's shift from Ghana to Malawi. The Executive Director's recent move to the UK will take his attention to strengthening the overall strategic direction of the federation, the need to increase funding relationships with UK and European based funders and building relationships with other stakeholders, including research and educational institutions, while the new Country Director in Malawi will take the lead in taking forward the work in Malawi. Given this change, it will be important to define the extent to which TfaC UK should support the programme development and fundraising activities of TfaC Ghana and Malawi and that the risks associated with existing or emerging capacity and resource challenges in TfaC in Ghana and Malawi are assessed and addressed at the federation level.

Feedback from one questionnaire respondent raised the concern that the federation structure could lead to dilution of funding and management resources, so it is worth exploring whether this could be the case and if so, how to mitigate against this.

The Comic Relief HIV Programme Manager noted in an interview, that it is important that there is clarity regarding the autonomy of the federation members. She also reflected that there is currently perhaps a bias towards non-Malawian staff at senior level in TfaC Malawi and that in this context, where an organisation is working towards being fully locally staffed, it is important to have a strong Malawian Board.

It is outside the scope of this analysis to explore governance issues in relation to the federation members and therefore it was not possible to assess the role and effectiveness of the Boards of TfaC Ghana and Malawi and their impact on the organisations, nor to analyse in depth, the detailed nature of the federation structure.

## Opportunities/ Next steps

### Approach - Innovative/ effective/ focus:

- **Strategy** - TfaC is determining its Strategic plan for the next 3 years, a process which involves TfaC in Ghana and Malawi developing Country Strategies to guide their work. This offers a useful moment for TfaC in both countries to re-assess their focus areas and priorities and determine strategies for strengthening their methodologies, embedding and disseminating learning relating to the effectiveness and impact of their methodologies, so that the resource requirements for these activities can be included in future programme funding proposals.
- **TfaC Ghana Strategy** – TfaC Ghana in particular, should prioritise a strategic planning process which clarifies its focus and key target groups, taking into account donor interests in Ghana and then develop programmes which tackle the underlying barriers to these groups achieving their sexual and gender rights and create relevant funding proposals which reflect these programmes. If the expertise is not available to lead on this within TfaC Ghana, then it should discuss with TfaC UK whether they can provide the necessary support or consider if external support is required through a consultant or possibly a volunteer.
- **Malawi programme priorities** - Feedback from staff in TfaC Malawi suggests the organisation should continue to prioritise the following areas:
  - What it is doing at the moment in terms of finding different ways of increasing its reach e.g. through radio and through staff already placed in TTCs and schools.
  - Further develop its work on child protection and interventions in primary schools - interesting learning from the primary school baseline reveals that students talk about school as a safe place<sup>2</sup> and that a lot of violence and disregard for their rights occurs in their homes and communities. This suggests that work in schools should be closely linked to communities in order to better sustain changes in both the treatment of children and their behaviour.
  - Capacity build partners and stakeholders.

At the same time, there was a strong sense from questionnaire respondents that TfaC Malawi should carefully manage its growth. Human resources need prioritising in terms of strengthened systems, terms and conditions and securing the financial resources to enable sustained investment in HR. According to some respondents, M&E, learning and documentation systems also need strengthening.
- **Strengthening the life skills work in Malawi** - The trends outlined in the endlines summarised above suggest that the intensive level of contact with the core beneficiaries is critical and the lower levels of contact received by the peer groups and life skills groups, indicate that alternative strategies should be considered in order to improve the levels of and sustain behaviour change amongst peer groups and in particular, life skills trainee teachers. The management response to the 2010 endline evaluation outlined some of the challenges related to influencing the life skills teaching in the TTCs, partly to do with the reality that there is a greater number of newly qualified Life Skills lecturers in TTCs, and consequently there is less space for TfaC staff to fill any vacancies left by absent members of staff, as has been the case in the past. This situation is also reflected by two questionnaire respondents. This situation presents a number of opportunities for TfaC Malawi such as to target Domasi College of Education which is a college which trains Life skills tutors for TTCs. If TfaC could influence the curriculum and teaching of life skills in this college, through placing one or two staff members in the college and embedding its teaching methods into the curriculum and training the lecturers, this would be a more cost effective and efficient strategy.
- **Documentation/ refining materials** – TfaC UK should take the lead on documenting the organisation's approaches and consolidating and refining tools and materials. It should consider

<sup>2</sup> However the questions asked of students in relation to 'safety' at schools were fairly limited and the Meta analysis consultant's view is that further questions were needed around treatment of students by teachers, the kinds of punishments given to students etc.

producing a handbook or training toolkit which can be used both by TfaC Malawi and Ghana in their work but also by other organisations who are interested in implementing the same approaches either with or without mentoring support from TfaC.

- **Strengthening links with educational/ training institutions** – TfaC UK should continue to explore links with Universities and educational/training establishments in the UK such as the City and Guilds and University College London, which may enable it to link its training courses to recognised qualifications and could enhance any work around incorporating participatory learning techniques in national education curriculums in Malawi and Ghana and elsewhere.

### Flexibility

- **Analyse opportunities for TfaC to offer training and support to others** - The organisation's ability to be flexible to respond to requests from other organisations for training and support as well as developing, raising funding for and implementing its own programmes, provides a useful starting point from which to plan more strategically for its future development. If it intends to provide consultancy services to others, alongside the implementation of its own programmes, it will need to do so pro-actively, ensuring it has the skills and staff time to take this area of work forward, without compromising the quality of its programmes. This will involve developing an action plan which includes the following:
  - Mapping the opportunities and interest amongst stakeholders and identifying potential funders.
  - Strengthening and packaging its services, tools and approaches.
  - Developing a clear pricing structure.
  - Investing in staff and staff capacity development.
  - Building relationships with and marketing itself to potential clients.

### Partnership

- **Clarify approaches to partnership working** - It may be an opportune moment to explore different ideas and thinking on partnership amongst TfaC federation members and agree steps for developing partnership guidelines and strategies. There may be certain areas of TfaC's work where working with or through local partners could achieve greater impact. For example, TfaC Malawi could consider undertaking a pilot initiative of developing and implementing a project with local partners and government agencies working on child protection.

### Advocacy

- **Defining advocacy objectives at country and federation level** - Within its current Advocacy Strategy, the organisation needs to consider carefully what its advocacy objectives are over the short, medium and longer term and the role of the different TfaC offices in determining advocacy priorities and working together on advocacy initiatives as well as who is responsible for advocacy work and the skills and training requirements associated with it.
- **Advocacy on gender and sexual rights** - If TfaC is broadening its focus to work on gender and sexual rights, then this will require it to be clear about what it aims to achieve, how and in what ways it intends to do this, which organisations it can ally itself with and who it will target in its advocacy work. It should be clear about the specific experience and value it is bringing to this kind of work in order to determine its niche.

### Sustainability

- **Resource development** - The Executive Director's return to the UK offers a suitable moment for TfaC to develop/ refine its materials, curriculum, radio modules, web-based learning tools, which can be used as resources for work in building capacity in TfaC methodologies with partners and stakeholders but can also be used to link with organisations such as the City and Guilds who may be able to offer training/ qualifications to staff of NGOs internationally.

## 2) PROGRAMME CYCLE MANAGEMENT

### 2.1) Programme design, implementation, replication and scale-up

#### Strengths

TfaC has tried to be focused and measured in its approach to programme planning, implementation and replication/ scale-up. It aims to develop programmes through first undertaking research and implementing a small-scale pilot initiative, after which it develops larger and longer term programmes, building on the pilot experience, thereby consolidating its methodology and learning what works before expansion and replication. This pattern can be seen in Malawi where it undertook two preparatory visits, followed by a pilot project in 2006, and after consultation with The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Department of Teacher Education and Development, Education Methods Advisory Service and the HIV and AIDS Desk Officer), DFID, the British Council and GTZ, it developed its one year Seeding Project (2007 – 2008), which was subsequently further expanded and developed into its current TTC programme (2008 – 2011), working in 10 TTCs.

Similarly, TfaC Malawi has recently undertaken a situational analysis to explore in depth, the experiences of sexually exploited girls and boys, the underlying causal factors of their situation, the challenges they face, as well as possible interventions to combat these issues, in order to inform the development of a child protection programme. This process of research, programme design involving stakeholders, implementation of pilot initiatives, followed by scaled-up interventions which are informed by learning from TfaC's internal monitoring procedures and external evaluations in the form of yearly endline surveys and final programme evaluations, make it well placed to reflect on the challenges encountered, assess the capacity requirements for scale-up, identify possible funding opportunities and develop proposals to donors, informed by practical experience.

#### Areas for Improvement/ Challenges

**Participation in programme design** - In the literature surveyed there is little mention of the extent to which different levels of TfaC staff and beneficiaries are involved in programme design. Feedback from a questionnaire respondent in TfaC Ghana reported that there is low involvement of stakeholders in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, whilst a questionnaire respondent from TfaC Malawi stressed the need for more evidence based planning and documentation at the programme design stage – “A Needs Assessment was conducted at the beginning of the TTC programme, but not for the ABC programme which has led to a less integrated programme in the case of the ABC programme. Although, the TTC Programme did a Needs Assessment, programme planning was mainly done through the development of a logframe, which was not accompanied by written strategies or documentation.” Feedback from another respondent in Malawi recommends: “developing projects from identified problems and not just focussing on what we want to do.” Other views from Malawi, recommended that feedback should be sought from implementing staff before entering into agreements with donors and partners.

The Executive Director recognised the need to be more participatory and strategic about stakeholder and beneficiary involvement both in programme planning and implementation but also in M&E activities and in sharing the learning from programmes. For example, he felt the TTC programme would benefit from greater involvement of the local communities around the TTCs and closer collaboration with the District Education Managers.

**Rigorous planning** - The evaluation of the ABC programme (2009) emphasised the importance of efficient and effective planning. The report states that the implementation of the programme is innovative, flexible and relevant to the objectives. Yet planning appeared to happen in a sometimes confused, last minute manner. Personal observation plus feedback from a variety of people who participated in or observed various elements of the programme, indicated that individual workshops, sessions and performances tended to work well. Yet the sense of a specific programme of work, scheduled and phased through a set period of time was weak. One consequence is that workshops did not appear to build upon each other, could

sometimes be repetitive and sometimes leave gaps in the learning and in the implementation of certain ideas and content areas. There was also a considerable amount of last minute workshop planning evident in many aspects of the ABC work. Key staff and facilitators sometimes were finishing off workshop plans just before they were held and late substitution of facilitators sometimes contributed to last minute workshop planning. Since this evaluation, these areas have been targeted by the management team. It is also important to ensure that learning from improvements in this area are also reflected on in relation to TfaC Malawi's other programmes.

## **2.2) Target groups**

### **Strengths**

Linked to the importance of focus in its approach to programme development and its methodology, TfaC has also demonstrated a focused approach in its choice of target groups, particularly in Malawi. Although its Strategy (2007 – 2011) identified a wider range of target groups, TfaC has prioritised working with the following groups – trainee teachers and their peers, primary teachers and learners and women involved in sex work and is now expanding into working with sexually abused and exploited children, the police and the army, maintaining the same focus of reducing the risk of HIV infection. This has enabled it to continue to learn from, modify and refine its interventions with these groups, as well as giving it time to develop and consolidate key relationships with significant stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, Teacher Training Colleges, UNFPA, the Family Planning Association of Malawi etc. and to identify other stakeholders with which it needs to collaborate in order to improve the quality of its interventions and better achieve its objectives. One questionnaire respondent noted that TfaC Malawi's work with teachers is based on a compelling rationale, since teachers are a high HIV risk group by occupation and have the ability to reach thousands of students in their lifetime.

The continued focus on these target groups, has been important for creating a niche for the organisation in Malawi, allowing it to build up a body of knowledge and experience, which in turn enables it to demonstrate good practice in its work around reducing the risk of HIV infection with these core groups and equipping these groups to promote change amongst their peers. This also enhances TfaC's opportunities to attract funding for its work and to be able to influence the policy and practice of specific institutions. For example, the evaluation of the ABC programme (2009), reports that the success of the advocacy component of the programme is evidenced in the support given to the ABC programme by previously hostile local police officers and by community influencers such as the local traditional Chief. This indicates that TfaC Malawi is well placed to facilitate changes in police treatment of women involved in sex work and sexually abused and exploited girls and advocate for relevant policy frameworks to guide police practice and to explore opportunities for engaging with police training institutes.

### **Areas for Improvement/ Challenges**

The rationale for target groups is less clear in the context of Ghana and as mentioned above, feedback suggests that the organisation has responded to donor opportunities but has not developed its own strategy and programmes for which it is seeking funding. One respondent from Ghana identified the potential for working with women involved in sex work, in a similar way to the work in Malawi but this idea has not been taken forward to date.

## **2.3) Monitoring, evaluation and learning**

### **Strengths**

One of the core strengths of TfaC's work so far, is its emphasis on monitoring and evaluation and learning, with a particular focus on impact assessment of each of its beneficiary cohorts. It stresses the importance of gathering monitoring data through a range of tools, including questionnaires, interviews and observation – the latter being crucial to really seeing behaviour change in practice.

The organisation's commitment to learning was highlighted as one of its strengths by Leris Harfield from the Medicor Foundation, which funds the Malawi TTC programme. She noted that TfaC had applied its learning from the first year to the second year.

The TfaC TTC programme in Malawi targets a new cohort of core trainee teachers each year and in line with its commitment to learning from its work, TfaC has undertaken baseline and endline evaluations at the beginning and end of each year of its teacher training sessions, which analyse progress according to the targets outlined in the logframe, namely the changes in beneficiary (core beneficiaries, peer beneficiaries and trainee teachers in life skills classes) HIV knowledge, attitudes and sexual practice as well as changes in understanding and application of beneficiaries' understanding in relation to gender and sexual rights and children's rights. The endline surveys also assess knowledge regarding facilitation and participatory learning skills of the core beneficiaries.

The endline surveys for the Malawi TTC programme were reviewed for 2009, 2010 and 2011. There is evidence that the level of analysis undertaken in these surveys changes from year to year, which will be discussed further in the section on Areas for Improvement/ Challenges. Nevertheless, the endline evaluations have helped to highlight areas of the TfaC training programme which have required modification or greater emphasis and have identified differences in the outcomes between the core beneficiaries and peer groups and life skills groups. The management response section included at the end of the 2010 endline evaluation report, suggests that the evaluation is taken seriously by the organisation and a number of actions were prioritised in response to the areas of concern highlighted in the evaluation.

In addition, TfaC has commissioned programme evaluations which have provided a fuller analysis of the successes and challenges of TfaC's programmes and its way of working, for example, the 2011 evaluation of the Malawi TTC programme identified some of the unintended outcomes of the programme and reflected on approaches to project management, M&E and learning. The evaluation of the ABC programme (2009) reflects that much of the monitoring work the ABC programme undertook was impressive: "*The Monitoring coordinator displays a passion for learning and programme improvement and is in the process of organising and strengthening the monitoring processes within the ABC programme*".

TfaC is pro-active in communicating and sharing its learning. Trustees receive copies of evaluations and learning reports and baselines and evaluations are loaded onto TfaC's website. Key donors and stakeholders also receive copies of the evaluations.

A number of project reports to donors were reviewed as part of this study and the standard of the reports from TfaC Malawi is relatively high, with both quantitative and qualitative information being used to illustrate changes brought about by the interventions including information from baselines, endlines and evaluations. The Medicor representative noted that reports from TfaC Malawi were of a good standard. Further learning on documentation is discussed below.

**Organisational learning** – responses to the questionnaires indicate that TfaC adopts a range of approaches to organisational learning both formal and informal. Respondents were asked - HOW do you and your colleagues reflect on learning from your work (list the different ways)? A range of responses are included below:

- We hold monthly and quarterly review and planning meetings share experiences from different communities and lessons learnt. (Ghana)
- Journal reflection, documenting of best practices and through reports (Ghana)
- Journal keeping, reflecting on each and every activity, one on one talks with a colleague, individual reflections in a workshop, workshop/activity evaluations. (Malawi)
- Workshops, meetings, presentations, report writing, TfaC talks, emails. (Malawi)
- One to one meetings, journals, meetings. (Malawi)
- We look at the challenges and successes and formulate a way forward from that, we also usually ask the question 'what could we do differently or better'. (Malawi)

- Through management meetings; programme management meetings; programme meetings; feedback sessions; ad hoc meetings; I-Is, reports, emails, responses to reports; learning sessions (we do a lot of reflection but don't always act on it). (Malawi)
- Journal writing and sharing, and reflection sessions after workshops/rehearsals/broadcasts. (Malawi)

Respondents were also asked how learning is shared and with who and again this question resulted in a range of responses, which indicates that learning is shared to a variety of audiences in a number of different ways including through workshops, meetings, reports, the website etc. Finally, staff were asked how they learn from TfaC in other countries which is discussed further under Areas for Improvement/ Challenges.

### **Areas for Improvement/ Challenges**

TfaC is very committed to monitoring and evaluating its work and there is clearly an organisational culture which recognises the need for strong monitoring systems. This was reflected in the questionnaire responses, many of which included suggestions related to strengthening M&E systems.

**Participant involvement in M&E processes** - Feedback from a questionnaire respondent in Malawi, noted that the organisation adopts relatively expensive M&E systems which do not explore the overall outcomes of projects and which are focussed on an external assessor looking in, rather than on the perceptions of the participants and that TfaC should ensure indicators and M&E cover the life of a project, investigate methods of participant self-assessment recognising that often if a participant feels they are in a better place because of an intervention then they will probably cope better (and vice versa).

**Greater ownership and use of M&E information** - Another respondent from Malawi highlighted a significant issue – learning from monitoring and evaluation should be used to make programmatic decisions to improve the impact and quality of the work, however, it is often perceived as a separate 'department' and results do not seem to be used to improve the programme. This is echoed by another respondent who noted that there is a need to make information generated through M&E activities more accessible – *“currently it does not filter through the organization as well as it could, but tends to stick at the senior levels.”*

**Strengthen overall M&E quality at different levels** - The HIV Programme Manager from Comic Relief made the following observation in relation to M&E in the ABC programme – *“In spite of the excellent M&E tools that exist, there are challenges, not in the least due to the fact that people are operating in different languages (meaning that the check lists have to be translated before data can be analysed, stored and used for programme planning). Another challenge was the fact that many of facilitators and supervisors are not computer literate. It would also seem that the M&E system and plan are not sufficiently developed. This means that much of the data which is painstakingly collected by facilitators/field workers is not properly stored and remained unused, thus limiting the chances for maximising programme learning. TfaC needs to review its M&E needs and develop a strong M&E framework and plan to support programme implementation”*

Two other respondents from Malawi reflected on the quality of the monitoring at field level noting that field level monitoring is not comprehensive, hence some students do not work hard at the teaching practice, therefore, TfaC should coordinate with teaching practice coordinators to include TfaC field work during their supervision tours. Feedback from TfaC Malawi also highlighted that there is a lack of capacity to complete M&E activities among staff members and the time it takes to train people is a constraint. Areas of weakness emphasized were data analysis and report writing.

**Explore different approaches to endline evaluations** - The review of the endline evaluations of the TTC programmes reveals differences in the quality of these evaluations, the strongest evaluation being the 2010 evaluation in terms of the depth of analysis. However as noted above, the methodology common to all the endline evaluations undertaken to date, is that of external measurement of specific changes and there is little understanding of the voices and views of staff or participants and how individual differences and experiences may have influenced the outcomes measured. The 2011 endline evaluation of the TTC, reflects on the qualitative interviews undertaken and surmised that although the results of the endline indicate that knowledge, attitudes and sexual behaviour have changed, the motivation for these changes may not always be related to HIV prevention. The interviews indicated that, for many the motivation to abstain, or be

faithful, or use a condom at this stage in their life was that they want to finish school rather than “I don’t want to die”. Therefore the evaluator concluded that transition to paid employment may alter a respondent’s sexual behaviour once their educational goals have been achieved. Whilst this conclusion is unsubstantiated, it would nevertheless be interesting to further analyse underlying motivations for behaviour change within the endline evaluations and enable greater involvement of beneficiaries in determining the questions that the baselines and endlines should be asking.

**M&E challenges in Ghana** - A challenge for the work of TfaC Ghana has been that due to the nature of the funding secured, TfaC have not been part of programme design and establishing M&E systems in the same way as in the past. This means that they have faced difficulties undertaking endline evaluations, because they are implementing programme activities as part of a broader programme (ie. activities funded by the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana and the Global Fund), so there is less freedom to determine the outcomes and limited resources allocated to M&E. TfaC Ghana also noted in its 2010 Annual report, that the monitoring and evaluation budget was inadequate for the implementation and data collection activities. In spite of this, a questionnaire respondent from TfaC in Ghana noted that there is strong monitoring at the community level and continuous evaluation of processes through monthly and quarterly review and planning meetings.

Nevertheless, it is clear that fewer baselines and endlines are available for TfaC’s work in Ghana and it was not clear if there had been any end of project evaluations. The endline of the ICCO funded project in 2011 was conducted by TfaC staff and whilst it used much of the same tools and questions as endline evaluations in Malawi, the findings do not clearly establish the impact of the work undertaken on the outcomes measured, further analysis would be needed in order to determine this. TfaC should also consider whether the endline survey is as relevant a tool for programmes where there they are not working so intensively with a core group of beneficiaries. Given the current context of the work in Ghana it may be more appropriate to focus its efforts on documenting the findings from its community level monitoring work.

**Simplify data collection** - A common challenge for organisations undertaking M&E is to ensure that there is not an over-collection of data and that the rationale and methodology for data collection are understood and owned by all. TfaC clearly prioritises monitoring and evaluation of its work but also needs to guard against these pitfalls. The Evaluation of the ABC programme makes a number of useful recommendations with regard to how TfaC could strengthen its monitoring processes in a number of areas some of which are summarised in the box below.

**Documentation** – This is an important element of M&E. Feedback from questionnaire respondents in Malawi noted the following areas of weakness in relation to documentation:

- Weak programmatic and operational documentation (including finance).
- Education programme documentation: no written curriculum / poorly written curriculum, workshop plans have a lot of mistakes in them, methodology documents are non-existent and there is no uniform document explaining approaches to use in grant writing.
- ABC programme documentation: the monitoring system databases have fallen into disuse and are currently being updated; report writing is poor with lots of grammatical mistakes and inconsistency in numbers.

The annual report reviewed for Ghana, did not clearly represent the different

#### **Strengthen monitoring in ABC Programme**

- The monitoring framework’s inclusion of different types of monitoring (self, peer, in house, external) works well and provides information from a variety of sources and viewpoints. However, it is essential to ensure that the different people involved in such monitoring are clear about both the content and the boundaries of the information.
- There is a comprehensive collection of data and a variety of different types of reports, however, the end use of it was not always evident in the programme. Simplification would enable the available data to be used more effectively. TfaC therefore should decide what kind of M&E it needs and wants – i.e. consider whether it is monitoring, implementation of the programme, whether it wants to assess and analyse processes, outcomes and/or impact and in relation to who and what. A clearer idea of the priority use of information collected might help simplify processes, target and reduce the amount of data collected.
- TFAC’s inclusive approach should make it possible to work with facilitators and focus group members on ways to incorporate owned and accepted indicators into core group workshops and planning materials that include peer assessments, without threatening group cohesion or encouraging division thereby leading to improved quality and consistency of facilitation. Consider the use of activities with which TfaC is well experienced as part of M&E, such as games, discussions, theatre and dance.

programmes being implemented by TfaC Ghana so it is difficult to get a clear picture of the work from this document.

**Organisational learning** – It is interesting to note that the use of journals as a way of capturing learning was noted by five questionnaire respondents. Attention was drawn to this method of learning in the evaluation of the ABC programme in 2009. The evaluator, reported that while journals can be an empowering method of participant self assessment and ownership of activity and progress, many of the participants observed during workshops or other activities clearly found writing a challenge, which would at the very least discourage the most effective use of journals. The evaluator therefore recommended that TfaC consider additional ways of assisting participants in journal keeping. It would be useful to assess whether the difficulties experienced in journal writing have subsequently been addressed.

It was also notable from the questionnaires, that the opportunities for learning exchange between TfaC in Ghana and Malawi has been relatively limited. Six respondents said that they do not really know what other TfaCs are doing. Four respondents mentioned that they can find this out through the internet or quarterly newsletters. However it was pointed out by a respondent from Ghana that there is very little information on the TfaC website about its work in Ghana.

Review of the documents revealed little information on TfaC's approach to organisational learning. Follow-up discussion with the Executive Director confirmed that less priority has been given to learning from other organisations and exchanging learning with others. An interesting observation made by a questionnaire respondent in Malawi, reported that sometimes there is an unquestioning assumption that what TfaC is doing is the best solution to tackle problems and thus it ignores possible learning from internal evaluations and from external sources. To address this, the respondent recommended that the organisation should be self-critical, develop an effective local Board willing to question suggestions and ideas, join networks to learn from others, recognise and appreciate learning amongst staff.

Another respondent gave the following advice: *“Keep the work fresh – openness to new forms of research, new practices, new approaches to learning. TfaC was successful a few years ago and was deemed as ‘innovative’, but currently I feel we do not move ahead in the TTC programme and the way that we work.”*

### **Opportunities/ Next steps**

#### **Programme Design:**

- **Participatory programme design** - As suggested by TfaC staff in both Ghana and Malawi, there is a need to assess what the organisation can achieve strategically in order to develop good quality programmes and funding applications and the quality of assessment undertaken will be improved by greater involvement of beneficiaries and stakeholders and ensuring that the experience of field level staff is included. This process would fit well alongside the development of the strategic plans for TfaC as it will influence the allocation of resources to programme research, design and development.

#### **Target Groups:**

- **Demonstrate relevance of methodology to other target groups** – TfaC's focused way of working and striving to understand the underlying causes leading to the vulnerability of its target groups, also makes it well placed to offer technical support and guidance in a number of areas such as to other government and non-government organisations working on HIV and AIDS prevention, gender and sexual rights, or to agencies working with similar target groups on different issues, as well as having sufficient experience and evidence to advocate for the institutionalisation of its approaches.

### **M&E and Learning:**

- **Strengthen internal M&E systems** - There is clearly recognition from senior management and field level staff in TfaC Malawi that there is a need to strengthen M&E systems and link monitoring and evaluation work more closely to programme implementation, improving both the quality and communication of monitoring data internally in order to inform changes to implementation. This issue should be prioritised within programme funding applications so as not to lose organisational commitment to M&E and avoid staff de-motivation, particularly amongst staff responsible for M&E.
- **Learning exchange** - The inclusion of learning exchange events within programme funding applications will enable staff to learn from other organisations undertaking similar or complementary work (either in the same country or in another country), as well as provide an opportunity for TfaC to host visitors from other organisations keen to learn from their experiences. These kind of events will also enable TfaC to make strategic connections with other organisations.

## **3) ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY**

### **3.1) Staff capacity, retention and management**

#### **Strengths**

TfaC has invested in training and engaging staff in the TfaC approach and culture and considers its staff as an important asset. In its draft Strategy for 2012-2014, it highlights the following values for its staff: service; social justice; commitment; openness; participation; honesty; responsibility. A questionnaire respondent in TfaC Ghana reported that staff in TfaC always work towards quality and display standard professionalism in all they do. The questionnaires indicate that the organisation utilises a range of approaches to managing, supporting and providing feedback to staff, however there seems to be quite a degree of variation in individuals' experiences of and opinions of the support received.

In the past, it was noted by a Trustee and the Executive Director, TfaC Malawi suffered from high turnover which meant that a great deal of staff investment was lost as individuals moved on, so it is important that the staff development programme and terms and conditions which were subsequently introduced continue to be maintained. TfaC Ghana has not benefited from the same changes, partly due to a lack of resources for staff capacity building and maybe due to the need for increased capacity for human resource management at country level. Therefore there is now a small team in Ghana consisting of 6 full time staff and 11 part time staff.

The evaluation of the ABC programme in Malawi, reported that the key staff (Senior Training and Monitoring Officer, and Training and Monitoring Officer in particular) are committed and enthusiastic, clearly able to interact constructively, with both core and focus group members – *“they work hard and put great effort into implementing the programme, designing and running workshops and following through on activities. The TMO in particular has a seemingly effortless, very positive but strong and disciplined relationship with both core and focus group members – which brings great strengths to the workshops she runs”*. The evaluation also offered the following insights on effective staff management: there were issues related to the management of time, both for workshops and in terms of individual, personal timekeeping that should be addressed. The management of areas of responsibility within the programme and the management of human resources issues in regard to the core group facilitators and community link workers is also important. The evaluator concluded that the ABC facilitators have been well trained in facilitation skills, and that these are continuously updated through the core group workshops. However, she noted that many of the current facilitators had not been employed in full time, 'professional' roles before and therefore recommended training in time management, workload management, communications and professional interactions. The Executive Director reported that these issues continue to be addressed through staff training and the staffing structure has been clarified and the TMO is now the Programme officer.

## Areas for Improvement/ Challenges

A common challenge in small organisations which have experienced growth and development, is to ensure growth is accompanied by the development of the relevant management policies and procedures, that there are sufficient senior management posts, that existing staff do not become stretched and overworked and that staff terms and conditions are institutionalised, that salary scales are attractive enough to ensure staff retention and competitiveness within the NGO sector and that funds are allocated to staff development for all staff. Some of these areas were identified in the strategic planning away day. Recommendations included the following:

- The need to increase the number of staff at different levels of the organisation and to improve staff retention.
- TfaC UK should begin to attract the next tier of expertise and talent to join TfaC

**Staff remuneration, retention and capacity development of staff** – These were common issues which generated significant mention by questionnaire respondents – some of the areas for attention highlighted by respondents relate to issues that were not within the remit of this analysis to investigate further but are worth following up. Detailed responses to the questionnaires are collated in the separate Appendix to this report.

Suggestions from respondents in Ghana on how to address some of the issues raised included, ensuring that a budget for staff training is included in the organisational budget and that TfaC Ghana should strengthen its recruitment practices, provide training opportunities for the staff, and implement fair reward management practices in order to motivate the staff to give their best.

Recommendations from respondents in Malawi included: TfaC should review its staff retention policy; ensure greater involvement of the HR team in programmatic decisions; management and senior management training for staff on HR; increase staff accountability; continue to offer competitive terms and conditions for staff. There were a couple of references to the challenges which arise from promoting a specific organisational culture and ensuring that this is equally respected and owned by all staff, given that in certain instances, there may be friction between the TfaC culture and that of the wider NGO sector and Malawian cultural norms. As an organisation which currently consists of both ex-patriot and Malawian staff, TfaC Malawi should continue to reflect on and learn from these challenges relating to organisational culture and endeavour to strengthen cross cultural awareness amongst all staff, in addition to promoting diversity and equal opportunities.

The feedback on the need for better staff training is interesting, given that answers to the question about the kind of support staff receive in relation to their work revealed that a range of informal development opportunities are adopted by the organisation which many respondents clearly appreciated (*as detailed in the separate Appendix*) and the recommendations expressed above reflect a broad range of views with regards to how to make improvements. Nevertheless, overall, the feedback could suggest that staff morale is low amongst a few staff in TfaC Malawi and Ghana and it is clear that some respondents feel that addressing these issues should be an organisational priority.

**Finance and administration capacity** – This area was also highlighted as a weak area at country level, with a need for the development of standard controls and procedures, instead of dependence on expertise of key staff.

## 3.2) Fundraising and communications capacity

### Strengths

**Fundraising capacity** - TfaC has secured funding from a range of funders both in Ghana and Malawi and in the UK as noted elsewhere in this document. It secured Comic Relief funding in 2010 towards its ABC Programme. The Comic Relief HIV Programme Manager reflected in an interview that TfaC is clearly a growing organisation which wants to do more and has plans which seem to be well thought through. She has also found the organisation to be very responsive to suggestions and advice.

**Communications** - TfaC has a dynamic and informative website, with an interesting mix of interactive media, written information, contributions by visitors to its work etc. Its website home page includes numbers of beneficiaries reached and advocacy initiatives with which it is involved, including a powerful film promoting gender equality. There is further information on its work in Malawi and Ghana (although to a lesser extent) and it is impressive that many of its baseline surveys and endline evaluations are available on its website.

### **Areas for Improvement/ Challenges**

**Prioritise longer term funding opportunities** - TfaC benefits from relationships with a range of donors, many of which continue to support the organisation in successive funding applications, although there are difficulties in terms of the nature and availability of funding. For example, many donors, particularly those in Ghana offer short-term funds, meaning that the organisation has to make funding applications on a yearly basis to some funders. This not only provides an uncertain environment for project staff, affecting both staff retention and morale but also affects partnership working and inhibits options for longer term planning. In spite of this, TfaC has increased its overall fundraising income in both Ghana and Malawi over the past few years and it has expanded its staff team in Malawi significantly during this time. In Malawi, TfaC relies on a number of funders contributing to its different programmes and has not been able to secure a large grant to cover a whole programme. Whilst it is important to maintain a diverse funding base, this creates a larger workload in terms of donor management, particularly the narrative and financial reporting elements and there are funding shortfalls in some of its programmes, including the TTC programme in Malawi, which means that experienced and valued staff are likely to lose their jobs.

**Fundraising staff** - Another challenge is accessing sufficient resources to allow for dedicated fundraising staff and to be able to recruit staff with the relevant fundraising skills, which the Executive Director noted is difficult. For example, in Malawi, TfaC has staff with more appropriate fundraising skills but this is not the case in Ghana. In the UK, TfaC has just lost a recently recruited fundraiser to a large international NGO. The recruitment of specialised fundraising staff was also identified by the three Trustee respondents as a priority. However, TfaC should consider carefully what type and how many fundraising staff it should recruit and where they should be based, taking a measured approach to expanding its fundraising personnel, ensuring that expenditure on staff is matched by the increase in funding generated. It may be that a UK based fundraiser would be able to manage a portfolio with UK donors as well as researching and applying for in-country funds in the countries where TfaC works. Or it may be more strategic to employ a Programme Manager who would be responsible for institutional funding and for facilitating programme design and development processes with TfaC Ghana and Malawi and accompany programme implementation, facilitate capacity building in specific areas and undertake monitoring visits and a part-time fundraiser to pursue other areas of fundraising in the UK ie. Trusts and Foundations, direct marketing, individual donors. On the other hand, if TfaC Ghana and TfaC Malawi had their own fundraising staff, then this would strengthen their role as independent organisations and enable them to have more control over their own fundraising and development.

**Communication of M&E learning and internal communications** – Feedback in questionnaires as mentioned in relation to M&E, highlighted the need to improve communication of the learning from programmes both with stakeholders as well as internally amongst staff. A few respondents also noted the need for more transparent and effective communication between different sections of the organisation.

**External profile raising** - A challenge related to external communications noted by the Executive Director, is that due to its name, at times TfaC is not taken seriously as a development organisation but is perceived as a theatre for development organisation and its reputation is little known outside of Ghana and Malawi. This is surprising given that the website contains a variety of testimonials regarding the benefits of TfaC's way of working such as:

*"I am convinced that your methodology is the best for the prevention of HIV"*(Ame David, HIV Co-ordinator, Save the Children, West Africa).

One of the reasons that less is known about the organisation outside Ghana and Malawi, could be due to the

fact that it has not had staff in TfaC UK until very recently, so participation in international development dialogue and networks and meetings with development actors in the North and internationally has not been prioritised. A respondent from TfaC Malawi also recognised the importance of joining networks and attending external meetings in order to learn from others and share learning.

A questionnaire respondent from TfaC Malawi voiced a concern that TfaC is perceived as an 'HIV-prevention' organisation, i.e. there is a failure to recognize the 'transferability' of TfaC's methodology/what it can offer other areas of education and society.

The information on the programmes in Ghana on the website does not appear to be very recent and is lacking in data on achievements.

### **3.3) Cost effectiveness/ value for money**

It was not possible to fully explore the cost effectiveness of the different programmes undertaken by TfaC. Different groups (of direct and indirect beneficiaries) are targeted through a range of programme activities and finding the level of budget and expenditure detail related to each beneficiary group would require access to a lot more information and involve staff in discussions related to financial issues, along with more time to fully analyse the information.

It would be interesting to explore the cost and time involved in training a teacher in the TTC programme, particularly because two questionnaire respondents highlighted the challenge of trying to access the trainee teachers, given that they are involved in classroom work from 7am to 4pm so cannot meet TfaC staff until afterwards, when they are tired and lacking in motivation. Another consequence highlighted by a respondent is that this situation means there is little time in which to find the trainee teachers whom they are working with. This not only reduces the time available for project staff to undertake some of the key TTC programme activities, but it may also not be the most efficient use of staff time. This also suggests that building staff to capacity to manage workload remains an important issue for TfaC Malawi.

An aspect of cost effectiveness considered by donors relates to the proportion of spending on different types of programme expenditure. The categories used by Comic Relief are listed below and the percentage of expenditure by TfaC Malawi in its ABC programme on these different categories, according to the 3 year budget, is included:

<b>Expenditure Type</b>	<b>Percentage of total</b>
Physical & capital project inputs	6%
Recurrent project costs	58%
Management and administration in the South	18%
Monitoring and evaluation in the South	7%
Organisational development for local organisations	1%
Organisational development for the applicant organisation	0
Management, administration and provision of technical support by the applicant organisation	11%
	100%

As can be seen from the table, the bulk of expenditure on implementing direct programme activities accounts for 58% of the total. The management and administration costs in the South of 18% are fairly low compared to many similar programmes that the Consultant has reviewed in the past.

There was a lack of information on project expenditure and beneficiary numbers from TfaC Ghana so it was not possible to review the cost effectiveness of the work, however the fact that staff salaries and running costs tend to be higher in Ghana than in many African countries, generally means that the cost per beneficiary is relatively high for international development programmes in Ghana.

## Opportunities/ Next Steps

### Staff capacity, retention and management:

- **Improvement in staff terms and conditions** - TfaC members should clarify what steps it can take to improve staff terms and conditions and opportunities for staff training, given current organisational and programme budgets and clarify the funding shortfalls for this work. It should then explore options for acquiring funding/ technical support in this area, including the option of pro-bono advice. Corporate donors will sometimes consider funding HR support and it is often possible to revise programme budgets with funders such as Comic Relief and the Big Lottery to at least address staff training requirements. A TfaC Trustee recommended the following: *“Initiate a Champions programme to instil a great sense of pride in working for TfaC. A passionate behaviour change organisation resulting in changing/saving lives and one of the most progressive organisations in Africa.”*

### Fundraising and communications:

- **Fundraising and communications strategy** - TfaC is in the process of developing a fundraising and communications strategy, which is an important development as this should be closely linked to the organisational strategy, which is also being drafted. The fundraising and communications strategy should reflect the priorities for growth and investment outlined in the organisational strategy. It should include an action plan of different fundraising activities, the methodologies, skills, costs and timing associated with these, which will also serve to prioritise the recruitment of relevant staff/ delegation of specific activities, training and support inputs needed, as well as guide the development of programme funding applications to include specific fundraising costs where possible. Securing longer term funding for 3 – 5 year interventions would enable the organisation to provide follow-up to core beneficiaries, strengthen behaviour change in peer groups, deepen its learning and develop and implement multi-level advocacy work, aimed both at awareness raising and longer term changes in specific policies and practice.
- **Options for TfaC UK** – The Executive Director’s move to the UK is seen by two of the Trustees who responded to the questionnaire as an important opportunity as it makes him well placed to take the lead on a number of areas such as:
  - Use Patrick’s return to the UK to maximise the potential of fundraising and networking.
  - Develop the existing communications and fundraising strategies with a clearly defined timeline and targets, backed up by the available resources in mind.
  - We need to mobilise and exploit the high level connections and supporters TfaC has.
  - We need to prioritise fundraising at the right level and then manage growth if successful.
  - Expand funding relationships with major in-country donors EU and USAID in particular.
- **Accessing new funding opportunities and raising TfaC’s profile** - Increased size and capacity means access to larger donors, more money and therefore greater scope for the work. If it is the case that the organisation is being perceived as an organisation focusing on theatre rather than using interactive theatre to achieve its objectives, then this is partly an issue about being clear about who the organisation wants to influence and why and developing a communication strategy which sets out communication objectives and details how, what and to who, the organisation will disseminate its achievements and learning. Secondly it is important to participate in relevant international development dialogues, networks (i.e. the Gender and Development Network) and learning fora both to share learning from TfaC, learn from others, connect with wider development debates and form strategic alliances.
- **Communicate TfaC’s ‘value added’** - One of TfaC’s Trustees made the following comment: *“Other HIV prevention approaches are rarely successful, despite massive demand within region.”* TfaC therefore needs to exploit this opportunity and communicate clearly in what ways its approach is successful compared to other strategies. For example, can TfaC show that it is more successful in bringing about sustained behaviour change over a shorter time period than other approaches? Is it a more cost effective approach than that adopted by other organisations? Can its methodology be as effective on a large scale i.e. if adopted by teacher training institutes/ police training institutes etc? Can its approaches be rolled out through training and supporting community volunteers rather than paid staff?

- **Gender and Sexual Rights focus** - If TfaC decides within its forthcoming strategy to focus more broadly on gender and sexual rights then its communication work needs to reflect this shift. It should make clear how it is addressing gender and sexual rights, what aspects of these rights it is focusing on and with which target groups, how it is collaborating with others to address the root causes of sexual and gender inequality and what unique value it adds to this kind of work.

#### **Cost effectiveness/ value for money:**

- **Strengthening financial planning and management** – TfaC should explore possible options for analysing and improving the cost effectiveness of its different programmes and also identify where it could make improvements in its organisational costs. For example, it could explore possibilities for support in this area from corporate donors such as Price Waterhouse Coopers, who run a scheme through which their employees offer their services to partners of UK NGOs in relation to auditing and advice on financial systems.
- **Communicating cost effectiveness** - TfaC could also strengthen its website through providing simple quantitative information, not only regarding the numbers of beneficiaries reached but the cost of providing different kinds of support to different kinds of beneficiaries in a given timescale. This may also serve to attract individual donors who can see what their contribution is able to achieve.

## **Recommendations/ Ways Forward**

TfaC is at an interesting point in its development. It has been innovative, dynamic, creative and responsive and has developed a unique and proven approach to reducing the risk of HIV infection through its work in Ghana and Malawi. The challenge is to maintain these qualities, seeking out and being open to opportunities to embed its participatory learning methodology, whilst at the same time strengthening its work in key areas and achieving a reputation for high quality work. TfaC's forthcoming three year Strategy should therefore enable it both to consolidate and strengthen its existing work and to explore new opportunities for promoting its participatory learning approaches and implementing programmes relating to its core objectives, without reducing its focus on quality. Internal consultation is crucial to ensure that open and transparent communication channels are established, enabling all voices to contribute to the organisation's development.

It is also worth considering further, how much of TfaC's efforts should be focused on mainstreaming its learning methodology into educational institutions in Malawi, Ghana and possibly elsewhere, which has the potential to have a huge impact on the quality and transformative power of education (i.e. with the inclusion of modules on HIV and AIDS, gender equality and gender and sexual rights), but which could mean the organisation moves away from project based international development initiatives.

Many of the opportunities and next steps which could be considered by TfaC are included in the sections above. Some of the priority areas are discussed further below.

**Exploring new thematic focus and target groups** - It is clear that TfaC has developed a powerful methodology for behaviour change in relation to HIV and AIDS and that this methodology has potential for addressing other kinds of negative behaviours particularly those which perpetuate violence, discrimination and unequal treatment of women and girls. There is certainly interest in broadening its focus into these areas, expressed by staff in Malawi, Ghana, the UK and amongst the Trustees. However, it is important that TfaC gain a deeper understanding of on-going child protection work in their countries of operation and internationally as well as work on gender issues, in order to be clear how they should address these areas and identify if and how they can enhance existing initiatives. There are many examples of good practice of work in schools and communities on child protection and organisations implementing interesting work on gender equality and gender based violence, in east and southern Africa which would provide useful learning.

**Expansion to other countries** – There was an interest amongst some questionnaire respondents regarding geographical expansion whereas others stressed the need to consolidate and strengthen existing work. Whilst the development of TfaC’s new three year Strategy is a useful point at which to consider the viability of continuing in its existing countries of operation as well as geographical expansion, the findings from this analysis would suggest that currently this is not the best time for geographical expansion, particularly as TfaC is already expanding its work thematically and this is leading to, and may lead to other, new opportunities for expanding its work in Malawi and could open up options in Ghana. There is also clearly a need to strengthen TfaC’s work in areas such as programme design and planning, beneficiary participation in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes as well as strengthening monitoring and evaluation and learning, addressing staff capacity and staff morale issues. However this does not preclude TfaC from being paid for its capacity building services to organisations in other countries and using these kinds of experiences to explore options for working in other countries in the future.

**Strengthening human resources** - As with many organisations established by a founder-Director and as highlighted by some questionnaire respondents, the organisation is very dependent on Patrick who has played a significant leadership role in developing the organisation in the last 8 years and manages a large workload. A common challenge in such scenarios is that most of the institutional knowledge remains with one or two people as reflected by one of the questionnaire respondents as an area of weakness: *“Organisational knowledge and culture focused on too few people, risk of disintegration if they leave.”* In order to embed institutional knowledge, opportunities for staff training and reflection on learning are crucial along with staff retention. As organisations grow and develop, staff structures and roles and responsibilities of individuals may change to reflect the demands of growth but it is important to ensure that changes are clearly understood by all and that workloads are continuously monitored and addressed. This area has emerged as a priority from this analysis, with clear suggestions for strengthening management and decision making systems in both TfaC Malawi and TfaC Ghana and supporting this process with adequate resources, both through programme funding applications and unrestricted funding proposals.

**Clarify the role of TfaC UK** - The TfaC Executive Director is now based in the UK and Country Directors are managing TfaC in Malawi and Ghana. This has led to greater autonomy of each federation member and has involved a shift in the focus of the Executive Director’s work, with a greater proportion of his time being taken up with leading the organisational strategy for growth, building up a funding base from UK donors, raising the profile of the organisation, strengthening the organisational capacity of TfaC UK, refining the methodology and packaging it (working on a curriculum). He is also working on an advocacy strategy, fundraising and communications strategy and ensuring campaigns are promoted (eg. the gender equality campaign) and overseeing the functioning of the TfaC Federation. Whilst greater autonomy can bring risks and these should be carefully explored, this shift also offers several opportunities for the TfaC Federation such as, to strengthen its relationship with UK based donors and partners, to access new funding streams, to determine funding priorities for TfaC Ghana and TfaC Malawi and the role of TfaC UK in relation to the funding needs in these countries. Clarity about the division of responsibility for fundraising between federation members is important in order to ensure that existing programmes are fully financed and avoid the current situation in which the TTC programme is short of funds.

Issues such as how much TfaC UK should focus on strengthening and promoting TfaC’s participatory learning methodologies and how much it should prioritise programme development with TfaC Ghana and Malawi and/ or other partners which it identifies, and the corresponding skills and resources required, warrant further discussion in order to develop a phased strategy for TfaC UK, which reflects the federation Strategy.

**Strengthen fundraising capacity** - Prioritising funding for existing programmes should take precedence over developing new programmes. It is essential that there is the capacity in TfaC UK to develop high quality funding proposals and accompany and monitor the implementation of programmes in Ghana and Malawi – the latter is not only expected by institutional funders such as DFID, BIG and Comic Relief in terms of accountability for expenditure of donor funds, but also offers the opportunity to facilitate spaces for reflection with staff in TfaC Ghana and Malawi and identify support and capacity building needs and link TfaC Ghana and Malawi with policy, learning and networking opportunities internationally. As highlighted earlier, this could be provided through recruiting a Programme Manager who can take the lead on working with TfaC Ghana and Malawi to develop programmes and shape these into institutional funding proposals. At the

same time, expenditure on strengthening fundraising capacity should be included in the organisational budgets for Malawi and Ghana, which will mean that all funding applications should include budget lines on fundraising capacity and ensure that TfaC Ghana and Malawi are able to access relevant in-country funding opportunities and continue to diversify their funding base.

**Determine a partnership strategy for work with local and international NGOs** – There is an interest in working with partners expressed by staff in Malawi and amongst Trustees. Discussions on different types of relationships and approaches to partnership should be undertaken, with a review of the local context and an analysis of the pros and cons of implementing programmes through local government and non-government partners in Ghana and Malawi, as well as the options for working with international NGOs. Also it is worth exploring the experience of other UK based international NGOs which work with local partners (a number of small to medium UK based NGOs which work on child rights and/or gender issues and have undertaken a lot of work on partnership include Womankind Worldwide, ChildHope UK, EveryChild). As well as challenges in relation to quality control and influence on programme impact, it is important to consider the financial implications of working through partners, particularly if funding is channelled through TfaC UK and then through TfaC in Malawi or Ghana to other partners. In situations where TfaC is moving into a new area of work, such as that of child protection, working with partners may be a good starting point for TfaC to establish its experience and learn from the experience of others.