



RAPID FUNDING ENVELOPE FOR HIV/AIDS: TANZANIA



FIGHTING AIDS BY BUILDING FUTURES



When Jacob was 17, he suddenly found himself the head of the household. His father had died and his mother passed away a short time later—both succumbing to AIDS. The oldest of four children, Jacob became responsible for his three sisters. “We had nothing,” he reflects, “we have other family who helped as much as they could, but they are poor themselves.” With no income, nothing but a crumbling wood-framed thatch-roofed house in a tiny village along the edge of Mt. Kilimanjaro, Jacob and his sisters had to drop out of school, unable to pay the fees. The four children were left with no money, no way of getting food or medicine, no promise of any future they couldn’t make for themselves.

As hope all but disappeared, a woman living nearby directed Jacob to KIWAKKUKI (Kikundi cha Wanawake Kupambana na UKIMWI, “Kilimanjaro Women’s Group Against AIDS”). In 1990, with “Women & AIDS” as the World AIDS Day theme, women from all walks of life in the Kilimanjaro region of northwestern Tanzania came together in the fight against the epidemic. When World AIDS Day events ended, this group of women who had worked to raise awareness about AIDS in local communities realized what they were doing was far too important to stop. From humble beginnings and an initial group of 42 members, KIWAKKUKI has grown to a grass-roots network of more than 5,000 women.

With its foundation in awareness raising, the organisation has expanded its mission to include home-based care, voluntary care and testing, and orphan support (including education, vocational training, meals, and general support). This last mission, support to orphans and vulnerable children, started off small but has grown rapidly. In 1998, KIWAKKUKI set out to provide a small number of children with an education by paying their school fees, buying their uniforms and necessary supplies, and offering a small allowance. For a few years, they continued to offer this service, matching children with sponsors, to get 15–20 children into primary, secondary, or vocational school each year. As word got out that this service was being offered, more and more children came to KIWAKKUKI to ask for help. “When we began offering care and support services, so many people came,” explained Ms. Lema, a staff person at KIWAKKUKI, “we didn’t have the resources. We did what we could: we got



Jacob demonstrating some of the electrical installation skills he has learned at the Uraa Vocational Training Centre.

their names, where to find them when something opened up, and asked them to write about their story. Then we’d at least give them a hot meal, and then all we could do was hope. At that time it was all we could do.” While a number of donors have provided grants to KIWAKKUKI for orphan support, the waiting list continued to grow. One of the orphans on the list was Jacob. Then, in 2004, KIWAKKUKI received notice of a special opportunity from the Rapid Funding Envelope to expand its orphan support programme.

The Rapid Funding Envelope (RFE) for HIV/AIDS is a unique partnership between the Tanzania Commission for AIDS, the Zanzibar AIDS Commission, and 10 international donors (see list below). The RFE enables civil society organisations in Tanzania to participate in the national response to AIDS by providing grants to local organisations

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and partnerships for short-term projects that contribute to the overall national AIDS strategy. One priority area of this strategy is support to orphans and vulnerable children. The Leadership, Management and Sustainability Program of Management Sciences for Health provides technical oversight and application screening for the RFE, while the international accounting firm, Deloitte & Touche, provides grant management and financial oversight. Typically, the RFE accepts applications for grants on a schedule set by its Steering Committee.

In 2004, one of the donor members was in the planning process for its own (separate) initiative of support for orphans and vulnerable children in Tanzania. Using the grant system of the RFE, the donor was able to privately support a special round of funding to which KIWAKKUKI applied. KIWAKKUKI's application sought to scale up its orphans and vulnerable children programme by providing vocational training to 250 "out of home" youths (defined as a person aged 13–30 living without any parents), providing financial support to the youths, and counseling them on HIV/AIDS issues. KIWAKKUKI was awarded a one-year grant in early 2005. Because KIWAKKUKI maintained a waiting list of youths, including Jacob, seeking vocational training, implementation of the scale up began almost immediately.

Today, Jacob is in good health and learning skills that will enable him to offer support to his sisters. He is nearing completion of his first year of vocational training in electrical installation at the Uraa Vocational Training Centre. Most days, he arrives at the school to learn skills that will enable him to find a steady job and earn a living. On weekends, he has already managed to take on some small jobs to fund repairs to his house. In preparation for next year and with support from staff at KIWAKKUKI, Jacob has completed a letter of application for sponsorship to return to secondary school for his degree. "I have learned a lot that will help me in the future, but I need to continue my education—if I can complete secondary school I'll be able to earn more and have a better life," Jacob explains.

Of the 250 out-of-home youths KIWAKKUKI's RFE programme was sponsoring, 14 are attending Uraa Vocational Training Centre. This small educational compound, set between rift valleys and banana plantations along the base of Kilimanjaro, is only reachable by a winding dirt road cut into the steep slope of the mountain. In addition to electrical installation, Uraa provides training in carpentry, sewing and tailoring, and computer applications. "We are very grateful for Mama Lema and this [RFE] project for this chance to work together," Uraa's principal responds when asked about working with KIWAKKUKI, "these children are getting training for their future and our school is growing. We all win." Other youths participate in apprenticeships



Susanna, 17, training to become a seamstress through KIWAKKUKI's vocational training programme.

coordinated by KIWAKKUKI with local businesses—garages to teach auto repair and driving, local tailors for sewing, and hotels and restaurants for work in the tourist industry. While the young people learn new skills, gain experience, and build a foundation that will enable them to earn a quality living, staff at KIWAKKUKI also provides them with other "life skills"—advice on arranging housing, the dangers of HIV/AIDS, help to support dependent relatives, and guidance in seeking employment. One girl who recently completed her studies to become a seamstress has already been asked by her school to stay, free of charge and with room and board, to complete her training in exchange for providing assistance and tutoring to new girls.

The initial results of KIWAKKUKI's programme are promising. Only one of the 250 targeted youths has left the programme. Each of the 14 students at the Uraa Vocational Training Centre is expected to complete the year of training, with most, including Jacob, receiving high marks. In total, more than 75 percent of the youths are exploring options or have already secured options for an additional year of education or training. KIWAKKUKI is also in the application process with several donors to continue scaling up this critical work.

Despite the challenges that lie ahead, what is certain is that as a result of this programme, 250 orphans and vulnerable youths have benefited from a fruitful year in which to build their futures, a year to build hope.

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