



RAPID FUNDING ENVELOPE FOR HIV/AIDS: TANZANIA



VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR HIV/AIDS ORPHANS IN MARA REGION



The rugged landscape of Mara Region in northern Tanzania is an impressive sight. Narrow towers of stone dot the arid terrain like small cities. The small, dusty city of Musoma, the capital of this predominantly rural region, sits along the southeastern shore of Lake Victoria. However, behind its rugged beauty is a harsh truth. The affects of HIV/AIDS on the welfare of youth in Mara has been severe. Father Pendel of the Catholic Diocese of Musoma leads three charity homes which he founded nearly 20 years ago, providing care for approximately 200 of the most vulnerable population: orphans, chronically ill, mentally impaired, and the destitute. "We don't know exactly how many children have been orphaned by AIDS," he explains. "But, whenever I go into town I am always swarmed by children asking me to take them in. There are just so many."

Ten years ago, Nazia was six years old and spent her days and nights alone in her home. Her sister Sarah, then eight, stayed at the hospital caring for their mother, dying from AIDS. Abandoned by their father, Nazia and Sarah had nowhere to turn.

After receiving a call from a neighbor, Father Pendel found out about the family. He brought the girls and their mother to one of his charity homes. After the mother died a short time later, Nazia and Sarah stayed and were raised by the diocese. "We provide for everyone as best we can," explained Father Pendel, a slim man with gray hair and an amicable smile. "We put them through school, and do our best to get them on their own feet. When they can stand on their own that opens up room for us to take in someone else." Just as Nazia and Sarah were completing their exams for school, a project began that could do just that.

The Environmental, Human Rights Care and Gender Organisation (Envirocare) is a nonprofit organisation that works in mitigating three cross-cutting issues: poverty, degradation of the environment, and human rights abuses. Founded in 1993 in Dar es Salaam, many of Envirocare's activities are related to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, a root cause of many social ills.



Michael Paydos, MSH, 2007

Sarah presenting a roll of fabric she dyed, a skill she learned through Envirocare's project.

As a result of Envirocare's RFE-funded project, nearly 200 youth orphaned by HIV/AIDS have received the education, financial support, and ongoing supervision needed to support themselves as adults. The project also supplied the youth with the basic tools necessary to work in their trades. Eighty percent of the beneficiaries have secured employment less than a year after starting the program.

Support provided by: Bernard van Leer Foundation, Canadian International Development Agency, Embassy of Finland, Irish Aid, Royal Danish Embassy, Royal Netherlands Embassy, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, United Kingdom's Department for International Development, U.S. Agency for International Development.

In September 2005, Envirocare began a project aimed at providing youth orphaned by HIV/AIDS with vocational training and support in four districts of Musoma. Two hundred youth aged 14–20 were invited to participate. The project was designed with six months of in-class vocational training followed by a process of getting the youth on their feet and with the capacity to support themselves—both through further instruction and some startup resources. Of the 200 enrolled in the project, only three did not complete the program. “We approached local governments and agencies to provide ongoing supervision,” explains Nollasko Mgimba, the project coordinator. “That way there would be a sustainable safety net, something to ensure the youth receive ongoing support as needed.”

As many of the youth were orphaned at a young age and had been “street children” nearly all their lives, additional support was given to them, aimed at teaching how to live in the community. Youth also gained experience working in groups and interacting with others, while also learning about HIV/AIDS.

At the start of the program, Envirocare needed to identify the 200 orphans they would support. They approached Father Pendel to ask who at his centers would be a good choice for vocational training. “I remember that day, Mr. Mgimba called me and told me about this new program. I didn’t believe it! That someone would pay their school fees, provide them with skills, and even give them the needed tools once they were done—it was like a dream come true!”

The vocational programme included training in food preparation and processing, chalk making, bamboo furniture making, auto repair, welding, carpentry, cloth dying and tailoring, and the making of other products from local resources, all common and useful professions in the region. Two local vocational schools were used. At the St. Anthony Vocational Training Centre, affiliated with the Diocese of Musoma, carpentry students were taught by building such things as wardrobes, desks, chairs, and by renovating buildings. The buildings became new dormitories to allow the school to expand and the furniture was put to use in classrooms and dorm rooms.

As the programme ended in December 2006, more than 80% of the participating youth had secured employment. Others have chosen to continue with secondary school. Additionally the children have been filled with a sense of hope. “I feel ready to be on my own,” 21-year-old Habi shares, “I can work and know how to support myself.”

“What really made this programme a success,” explains Mr. Mgimba, “is the dedication of the children, as well as their willingness to put in their every effort and their readiness to adapt to change. With them, I don’t feel the need to worry.”



Michael Paydos, MSH, 2007

Joyce, Nama, and Farista—all 15—received training in food preparation through Envirocare’s project. During the final six months they were placed in this restaurant. The owner decided to hire the three girls once the programme ended. “I now make enough to support my household,” says Nama, “and we’re now able to start our own business some day.”

“What really made this programme a success, is the dedication of the children, as well as their willingness to put in their every effort and their readiness to adapt to change. With them, I don’t feel the need to worry.”

—Nollasko Mgimba

PROJECT OUTPUTS:

- 197 OVCs completed vocational training;
- More than 80% of participating orphans secured employment by the end of the project;
- 100 orphans identified as “head of household” received financial support for the duration of the programme.
- Two regional vocational schools, SIDO/Mara Region and St. Anthony Vocational School, strengthened with increased enrollment.

Story and Photographs by Michael Paydos, Management Sciences for Health, mpaydos@msh.org, February 2007.



For more information on the Rapid Funding Envelope, please contact:

Grants Manager, Deloitte & Touche • 10th Floor, PPF Tower, PO Box 1559 • Dar es Salaam, Tanzania • rfe@deloitte.co.tz

www.rapidfundingenvelope.org