



# RAPID FUNDING ENVELOPE FOR HIV/AIDS: TANZANIA



## BRINGING HIV/AIDS TRAINING TO WOMEN IN ZANZIBAR



Founded in 1991 as a donor-funded project, the Women Entrepreneurial Development Trust Fund (WEDTF) develops the entrepreneurial and technical skills of Zanzibari women by providing training and resources, including small loans. Following the program's conclusion, WEDTF continued on as an independent NGO and now serves a network of approximately 2,600 women and men. In 2004, WEDTF received a grant from the Rapid Funding Envelope (RFE) to provide its membership with training in properly caring for persons living with HIV/AIDS, as well as general information concerning the disease.

In Zanzibar, women represent the overwhelming majority of those who care for the sick, and with little knowledge of how HIV is spread they can be at risk. One woman who attended one of WEDTF's training sessions describes her reaction: "I cried because I was caring for someone with AIDS and didn't take any precautions. Thankfully, I am not infected and because of what I know now I won't ever be."

WEDTF manages its own accounts for its loan activities, and uses a peer-enforced loan programme that results in virtually all loans being repaid in a timely fashion. Members belong to groups and if one member of a group receives a loan, it is the group's responsibility that it get repaid, otherwise, getting loans in the future will be difficult. This has produced strong networks within the membership.

With the existing network in place, the RFE-funded project had an established audience to reach and was able to quickly plant a seed of information through several training sessions for the group. From that, the information spread and the number of members gaining knowledge increased quickly. "The first thing we noticed was a breakdown in ignorance," the acting Executive Director of WEDTF, Alama Jumbe, describes. "Now we see women speaking openly



Michael Paydos, MSH, 2007

The loans WEDTF provides its members are used for such economic activities as weaving, seaweed farming, and other small agriculture-based businesses.

*WEDTF oversees a network of more than 2,600 women working together to improve their economic status. Using a grant from the RFE, WEDTF equipped its members with knowledge about HIV/AIDS, including prevention, home-based care for someone living with AIDS, and testing. The women's groups have mobilized to get their communities to agree to increased testing, particularly for those about to marry.*

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about sexual behavior and their relatives who have AIDS—something you'd never see before.”

As part of the programme, all WEDTF staff and some partner organisations received an intensive training in HIV/AIDS care and prevention. As part of the training, three “VCT kits” were assembled with the help of consultants and given to local hospitals. The kits include equipment and materials, accompanied by training for hospital staff. The programme directly trained 450 WEDTF members, and an additional 56 members were trained to provide further education. By the end of 2005, every one of the 2,600 members of WEDTF had attended at least one informational session run independently by network members, with more planned to strengthen their knowledge. As a result of the programme, a grass-roots policy has sprung up in the communities of trained members to encourage everyone getting married to get tested at least twice. “What we’ve received so far is just the foundation,” explains Fatima, a women trained to educate other members. “Now, we must build it up further.”



Michael Paydos, MSH, 2007

Of WEDTF's 2,600 members, 56 were trained to provide home-based care training for members caring for relatives living with HIV/AIDS.

*“Now we see women speaking openly about sexual behavior and their relatives who have AIDS—something you'd never see before.”*

—Alama Jumbe, acting executive director of WEDTF



Many of WEDTF's members, such as those shown above, are providing some form of home-based care to sick relatives.

*“What we’ve received so far is just the foundation. Now, we must build it up further.”*

—Fatima, WEDTF member

## THE RFE IN ZANZIBAR

Since 2003, the RFE has awarded 13 grants for projects that support the Zanzibar AIDS Commission's priorities.

## PROJECT OUTPUTS:

- HIV/AIDS programming mainstreamed into the organisation;
- 2,600 people sensitized on HIV/AIDS;
- 450 members directly trained in proper caring for persons living with HIV/AIDS in their homes;
- 56 local facilitators trained to provide Home Based Care training;
- 12 members infected or affected with HIV/AIDS provided direct assistance;
- “VCT kits” assembled and delivered to three hospitals.

Story and Photographs by Michael Paydos, Management Sciences for Health, [mpaydos@msh.org](mailto: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](mailto:rfe@deloitte.co.tz)

[www.rapidfundingenvelope.org](http://www.rapidfundingenvelope.org)