



# RAPID FUNDING ENVELOPE FOR HIV/AIDS: TANZANIA



## PUTTING A SMILE ON FACES OF ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN



In the hilly Ihombe Village of Utengule-Usongwe Ward in Mbozi District lives Sera George, an orphaned young man forced out school to become his family's breadwinner. Sera, now 20 years old, lost his mother in 2002 when he was in lower primary school, and later his father in 2007 when he was in standard seven. He has two brothers, Adam (17 years old) and Daniel (14 years old). "My dad's health started deteriorating in 2005 when I was in standard five. It was a struggle for me balancing between school and domestic responsibilities since I was the one taking care of him. I missed so many classes and this cost me dearly in my final standard seven national examinations. I have been unable to continue with my education since then", he says. After the dad passed away, Sera took over full responsibility for the family. He had to think of ways of generating income to cater for various needs of the family. With a donation of just Tsh.10,000 from a well-wisher, he started a small business selling karanga (roasted peanuts). In early 2009, his brother Adam also dropped out of school in standard six to find something to do to supplement the family income. He managed to get a job as a herds-boy near Mbozi Urban where he is paid a monthly salary of Tsh.6,000 (US\$4.20). Only Daniel, the youngest, still attends school.

*The MIICO HIV Impact Mitigation Project has succeeded in putting a smile on the faces of orphans and vulnerable children in Mbeya Region by providing them with school uniforms, blankets, bed sheets, and insecticide treated bed nets. It has also linked some of the children to social welfare schemes for free medical care and education, and enhanced the capacity of caregivers to respond to the needs of the children through entrepreneurship skills training, linkage with microfinance institutions and support to establish income generating activities.*

In February 2009, Sera got a surprise visit from Mbozi, Ileje and Isangati Consortium (MIICO), a non-governmental organization working in Mbeya Region. They came to witness the conditions in which they were living and to share their experiences. A month later, MIICO invited him to a three-day workshop in Mbeya which focused on care and support for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and poultry keeping as a potential income generating activity. Thereafter, he was given an exotic hen (layer), a cock, and some feed to start his poultry project. He later bought three indigenous hens and added them to flock, hoping to breed hybrid chicks (which grow relatively faster) and earn him quick returns on his investment.

That was not all. "What touched me most was that apart from the training and support I got to start the poultry project,



Sera George and his younger brother Daniel George.

Ogango Komolo, MediaNet Ltd 2010

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MIICO provided my brother Daniel with a full school uniform including two pairs of shirts, shorts, underwear and socks, as well as a sweater and a pair of shoes,” Sera added. Daniel also received a blanket, two bed sheets and an insecticide treated bed net—all thanks to the Rapid Funding Envelope (RFE) grant of Tsh.183,881,426 for MIICO’s HIV Impact Mitigation Project to reach underprivileged children like Daniel. Given that Sera sleeps together with Daniel, both share the blanket, bed sheets, and bed nets donated by the project, and can now enjoy a good night’s sleep free from mosquito bites. Sera further observes that since Daniel got the uniform he is more excited about school. He thinks this will translate in good academic performance.

The MIICO HIV Impact Mitigation Project managed to reach Sera and Daniel through the Utengule-Usongwe Ward OVC Committee. Apart from collaborating with village and ward OVC committees, the project also worked closely with District Councils to identify and channel support to OVCs and their caregivers. Mr. Ikungasya Mwakatumbula, the Project Coordinator, notes that the OVC committees have been very helpful in following up with the households to ensure that the material support given to the children is not diverted to non-intended users. With the support from RFE, the project has been able to cover four most-affected districts of Mbeya Region namely Mbeya City, Mbeya Rural, Mbozi, and Ileje. The objective is to mitigate the impact of HIV on OVCs and their caregivers through direct material support to the children, as well as developing entrepreneurship skills and giving support to the caregivers to establish income generating activities. The project has also made a significant attempt to link up the OVC to social welfare schemes for free medical care and education, and caregivers to microfinance institutions to enhance their access to liquidity.



Ogango K’omolo, MediaNet Ltd 2010

This is where Daniel George sleeps in the comfort of the blanket, bed sheets and mosquito net donated by the MIICO project.

#### KEY PROJECT OUTPUTS:

- A rapid assessment conducted to update basic needs of the targeted OVC
- 994 OVC provided with full school uniforms
- 1,000 OVC provided with blankets, bed sheets and insecticide treated bed nets
- 1,000 OVC linked to the Community Health Fund for free access to health care services
- 1,000 OVC linked to Community Development Department for school fees exemption
- 232 caregivers trained on home budgeting, gender, savings and credit practices
- 240 caregivers supported to start income generating activities (IGAs)
- 238 caregivers trained on how to run IGAs profitably
- 240 caregivers linked to 2 microfinance institutions through representation by 14 caregivers



“What touched me most was that apart from the training and support I got to start my poultry project, MIICO provided my brother Daniel with full school uniform, a blanket, bed sheets and an insecticide treated bed net.”

—Sera George, OVC Caregiver

Story and Photographs by Ogango K’omolo, MediaNet Ltd, [komolo@medianettz.com](mailto:komolo@medianettz.com), June 2010.



**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)