

MERCY ORPHANS SUPPORT GROUP PROGRAM

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OVC Project

ANNUAL REPORT

January - December 2006

We care for OVCs. Hospitality and good service to the poor is our aim

INTRODUCTION

The program strives to reach the poorest of the poor orphans in the society and provide them with spiritual, social, medical and material support. Although the project is Catholic Church sponsored, the services are offered to the orphans in the community without any kind of discrimination. The program believes and recognizes that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary support so that it can assume its responsibilities within the community. Despite the negative attitude of the community and the social stigma associated with HIV/AIDS, the project still believes that the community has a role to play in the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and hence reduction in the number of orphans in the community.

The impact of HIV/AIDS is most significantly manifested in the loss of young adults aged between 20-40 years, and the consequent increase in the number of children who are orphaned. These children has special physical, medical and psychological needs which may not be adequately met by the community in which they live. While the extended family traditionally takes in orphaned children, the traditional care structures are increasingly burdened by the growing number of children needing care as a result of the growing incidences of HIV/AIDS. In many cases, the grandparents or other relatives are caring for young children or they are taken care of by their ailing parents. Due to the current breakdown in the social support system and widespread poverty in the community, most people are not willing to address the growing issue of the increasing number of orphans living amidst them.

Aiming to improve the quality of life for the OVCs and their households, Mercy Orphans Support Group Program implement its activities in four locations of Karungu Division in Migori District. The goal of the project is **“To reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS among Karungu community in Migori District”** . The goal is being addressed through the following five core objectives:-

1. 3000 OVC and their family members demonstrate enhanced medical and psychological well-being
2. Targeted local community prioritizes the needs of OVC households and carries out activities to care for and support them.
3. 50% of the targeted households and their families demonstrate improved quality of life
4. 3000 OVC and their family members in the targeted area gain skills necessary to reduce their risk of HIV infection
5. Strengthen the capacity of the project to deliver quality care and support to 3000 OVC and their families

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE YEAR

- Pre enrolment assessment for OVC households
- Medical care and treatment of OVCs/Caregivers
- Home visits
- Recruitment of additional two staffs
- Facilitate formation of PLWHAs support group
- Establishment of VCT site
- School visits

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- Recruitment and enrolment of additional CHPs into the program
- Facilitate formation of caregivers support groups
- Facilitate formation of school based HIV/AIDS prevention clubs
- Support for educational expenses
- Nutritional education and nutritional supplement
- Household needs assessments
- Community mobilization and sensitization
- Participate in World AIDS Day

PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES TO DATE

The following activities have been undertaken in the last one year covering (January 2006 to December 2006)

Care and Support Activities

- Clinical and nursing care
- Provision of anti retroviral therapy
- Guidance and counseling
- Home and school visits
- Provision of ITNs to supported households

Social Support Activities

- Payment of educational expenses
- Provision of school uniforms
- Food support
- Shelter improvement
- Bedding and clothing support

HIV/AIDS Prevention Activities

- Training of teachers in Life skills
- Caregiver education
- Community awareness campaigns
- Participation in World AIDS Day
- PLWHAs support group meetings

Community /Institutional Capacity Building Activities

- Training of community health promoters (CHPs) and Caregivers
- On-site monitoring and supportive supervision
- Monthly planning meetings for both CHPs and Implementation committees
- Recruiting additional staff (One social worker and Agricultural Extension Officer)
- Identification of additional 16 CHPs
- Recruitment of additional 1000 OVCs

Below is a table summarizing the number of beneficiaries who have received the services between January to December 2006

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Objective 1: 3,000 OVCs and their family members demonstrate enhanced medical and psychological well being

Achievements

- 1,563 OVCs treated
- 420 caregivers treated
- 99 CHPs treated
- 29 caregivers joined ART program during the year
- 3,100 home visits were conducted during the year

Objective 2: Targeted local communities prioritize the needs of OVC households and carry out activities to care and support them.

- 16 new CHPs identified and enrolled in the program
- 84 caregivers support group meetings were conducted in the year
- 55 dilapidated houses were improved in the year

Objective 3: 50% of the targeted households and their families demonstrate improved quality of life.

- 154 households under ART program received nutritional supplement (15 Kgs of maize and 15 Kgs of beans)
- 189 needy households received food supplement (15 Kgs of maize)
- ECD levies were paid for 286 OVCs
- Post-primary school levies were paid for 44 OVC
- 1,288 OVC provided with uniforms
- 136 OVCs in standard eight received KCPE enrolment fee

Objective 4: 3,000 OVCs and their family members in the targeted areas gain skills necessary to reduce their risk of HIV infection

- 58 caregivers accessed VCT services at Karungu VCT center
- 239 other community members accessed VCT services at Karungu VCT center
- 12 PLWHA group therapy meetings were held
- 33 teachers trained in ToT life skills
- During the reporting period, 4 technical staffs were trained on life skills TOT for one week.
- 100 T-shirts printed for World AIDS day

Objective 5: Strengthen the capacity of the program to deliver quality care and support to OVCs and their families

- 2 new staffs were recruited
- 12 implementation committee meetings were held

- Held 12 CHPs monthly meetings
- 32 CHPs trained in Community Based Health Care
- 2 nurses were trained on community based IMCI held in Matuu.
- 2 technical staff, an accountant and the project manager also attended a one weeks training on Silc (Small internal lending community)

CHALLENGES FACED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

- ❑ Increased demand for household food support
- ❑ Most clients on ARVs are getting pregnant hence increased burden for care and protection
- ❑ Complexity of diseases affecting some supported OVCs which have to be referred for specialized treatment beyond the project referral point
- ❑ **5** OVCs and **8** caregivers died while undergoing treatment at our referral hospital
- ❑ During the recruitment exercise of additional OVCs into the program, it was realized that the number of OVCs in the community is overwhelming hence increased demand for project support services
- ❑ Migration of OVCs from one home to another also affects them emotionally

LESSONS LEARNT:

- Integration of Silc in the program will motivate the caregivers to become self reliant to help address sustainability
- Caregivers who are parents and infected by HIV/AIDS often do not make care arrangements for the children about the future hence memory book writing needs to be integral component of the program activities

ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE YEAR 2007

- ❑ Provision of clinical and nursing care to both OVCs and caregivers
- ❑ Carry out 4000 home visits to supported households
- ❑ Provision of food supplement to 250 most needy households
- ❑ Shelter improvement to 10 dilapidated houses monthly (120 houses)
- ❑ Conduct 4 quarterly review meetings
- ❑ Hold 12 CHPs monthly meetings
- ❑ Hold 12 PLWHAs support group meetings
- ❑ Hold 12 Implementation committee meetings
- ❑ Nutritional supplement to 150 households with either OVC or caregiver on ART
- ❑ Payment of school fees for OVCs in secondary
- ❑ Vocational training support for OVCs
- ❑ Provision of school uniforms to 2000 OVCs
- ❑ Payment of nursery/ KCPE enrolment and other school levies
- ❑ Training of caregivers on orphan care and nutrition
- ❑ Training of CHPs on PHC and Silc
- ❑ Conduct mobile VCT services
- ❑ Establishment of a VCT center
- ❑ Development and distribution of BCC/IEC materials
- ❑ Exchange visits

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- ❑ Mobilization of caregivers support groups for agricultural activities
- ❑ Conduct school visits to supervise initiation of peer clubs



Children performing during 2006 World AIDS Day



Bicycle riding competition during World AIDS Day

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