MERCY ORPHANS SUPPORT GROUP PROGRAM

C/O ST.CAMILLUS DALA KIYE CHILDREN WELFARE HOME
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OVC Project

ANNUAL REPORT

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

INTRODUCTION

Mercy orphans support Program is a community based program working within Karungu division of Migori District. The program has been working in the community since the year 2000 when it was initiated. The activities implemented by the project are aimed at promoting the well being of the orphans and vulnerable children in Karungu division. The project has been aiming at improving the quality of life for the targeted households with some spill over to the members of the community through promotion of sustainable agriculture to help address food security.

Due to increase in the number of orphans in the area, this year we managed to recruit 1,500 more orphans into the project making the total number of orphans being supported 3,500 from the 2000 supported last year

During the last one year the project agricultural department initiated through the common interest groups cassava bulking sites which will in turn act as income generating activity for the CIGs to help improve the resource base of the groups which will in turn promote improvement of life in the targeted households.

The provision of sanitary towels for girls in primary schools has proved to promote the education of girl child in the division. Our survey has proved that previously before the implementation of the provision of sanitary towels to schools, girls used to absent themselves from school during there monthly periods due to fear of getting embarrassed both in class and school. But this has changed in the recent past as now most girls can stay in school during this period. So we expect improved academic performance among girls this time.

The introduction of Silc is another aspect of promotion of self sustainability among the caregivers support groups. It has proved to be working very well and most of the silc groups have picked up very well and have started loaning and savings among themselves. The process has been adopted by most caregivers support groups and as at the time of report, we have 47 silc groups and out of the groups, 40 have received silc boxes and have intensified their savings and loaning scheme.

It is also worth noting that during the year, one of the supported orphans aged 15 years old was sexually abused, impregnated and infected by HIV virus by an elderly person. The project referred the case to the children's office in the district and the culprit was arrested and arraigned in court for punishment. This was a very sad situation for the little girl who was only in class five. We have also experienced early marriages among teenage girls but through collaboration with the Children's officer in the district. Most of the girls have been taken back to school.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE YEAR

Objective 1: 3,500 OVC and their families demonstrate enhanced medical and psychological well being.	
PLANNED ACTIVITIES	**ACHIEVEMENTS**
1.0 Refer OVC for treatment	1,830 caregivers were referred for treatment. Out of the total number 930 were male and 900 were female.
1.1 Refer caregivers for treatment.	A total of 739 caregivers were referred for treatment. 86 were male whereas 653 were female.
1.2 Refer CHPs for treatment.	103 CHPs were treated. 47 were male and 56 female.
1.3 Conduct 12,240 home visits.	9,018 home visits carried out by both staff and CHPs
1.4 Provision of ITNS to 1,118 households	415 households were provided with insecticide treated nets.
1.5 Refer PLWHAs to the ART clinic	61 PLWHAs referred to the ART clinic
1.6 Training caregivers on Nutrition	791 caregivers were trained on nutrition
1.7 Training caregivers on safe water system	1140 caregivers trained on safe water system
1.8 Provision of water guard to all supported households.	1118 households were provided with water guard on a monthly basis.
1.9 Provision of sanitary towels to 1,380 girls in 20 schools.	1,380 girls provided with sanitary towels. This was done every month.
Objective 2:- Targeted local communities prioritize the needs of OVC households and carry out activities to care for and support them.	
2.0 Identification and enrollment of 16 new CHPs	16 new CHPs were identified and recruited.
2.1 Conduct 360 caregiver support group meetings.	533 caregiver support group meetings were conducted.
2.2 Training of field agents on Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC).	8 field agents and 7 CHPS trained on SILC.
2.3 Introduction of silc to caregiver support groups.	47 caregiver support groups introduced to silc.
2.4 Supervisory visits to silc groups.	Visits to silc groups are done continuously a total of 95 visits were made to various silc groups.
2.5 Conduct 12 silc agents' monthly meetings.	11 silc agents' monthly meetings were held.

2.6 Cassava bulking for 23 groups.	Cassava bulking was done by 17 different groups.
2.7 Provision of certified seeds to 1118 households.	1,118 households received certified seeds.
2.8 Training caregiver (farmers) on cassava management and poultry disease.	30 farmers were trained on cassava management and poultry disease.
2.9 Training of CHPs on Primary health Care.	32 Community Health Promoters trained.
3.0 Training of CHPs on safe water system.	67 CHPs were trained.
Objective 3:- 50% of the targeted households demonstrate improved quality of life	
3.1 Shelter improvement to 120 dilapidated house	112 dilapidated houses were improved.
3.2 Provision of school uniforms to 2,500 OVC in school.	1.078 pupils were provided with school uniforms.
3.3 350 most needy households received food support.	350 needy households were provided with 15kg of maize every month.
3.4 Nutritional supplement to 200 households with either OVC or caregiver under ART program.	200 households provided with 15kg of maize and 15kg of beans every month.
3.5 Vocational training support.	31 vocational training students were supported.
3.6 Payment of nursery school levies to OVC in school.	294 OVC in nursery were paid for nursery levies.
3.7 Payment of school fees to OVC in secondary school.	90 OVC in secondary school were supported with school fees.
3.8 Provision of blankets to 1,118 households.	Blankets were distributed to 720 households. Each household received 2 blankets.
3.9 Payment of K.C.P.E enrolment fee to OVC in standard eight.	216 OVC were supported.
4.0 Payment of school fees to 3 children in Nyangweso school for the deaf.	3 children were supported. These are children in a special school.
Objective 4:- 3,500 OVC and their families gain skills necessary to reduce their risk of HIV infection.	
4.1 Refer caregivers for VCT services	191 caregivers were referred.
4.2 Conduct 12 PLWHAs group therapy meetings.	12 meetings were conducted.
4.3 Training teachers in Life Skills ToT	73 teachers were trained in Life Skills.
4.4 Participate in marking World Aids Day.	1 meeting held.

4.5 Conduct 24 mobile VCT services.	7 mobile VCT visits was conducted
4.6 Strengthening of 33 school peer clubs.	10 visits were made to schools to follow up on school peer clubs.
Objective 5:- To improve the capacity of the project and the community members to provide quality care and support to 3,500 OVC and their families.	
4.7 Hold 12 CHPs monthly meeting.	12 meetings were held.
4.8 Hold 12 implementation committee meetings.	12 meetings were held.
4.9 Participate in the Day of the African Child.	Participated in 1 meeting.
5.0 Hold 3 quarterly review meetings.	2 meetings were held.
5.1 Recruitment of 2 new staff.	2 new staff were recruited. One Social Worker and one Agricultural Extension Officer
5.2 Provision of 24 bicycles to 16 CHPs and 8 field agents.	24 community resource persons were provided with bicycles.
5.3 Training 2 staffs on silc	2 staffs were trained on silc.

STRENGTHS

- Targeted households are able to access quality health care services at our referral hospital (St.Camillus Mission hospital)
- Existing caregivers support groups made it easy to form silc groups hence easy implementation silc
- Introduction of agriculture as a component of OVC program has helped to increase household food production due to the technical support they get from agricultural officer
- Introduction of mobile VCT has taken the service closer to the people hence increased number of people seeking the service.
- Continuous technical assistance from the CRS team has helped in improved service deliver to project beneficiaries
- Funding from CRS
- Support from St.Camillus community

CHALLENGES

- Complexity of some diseases that need to be referred beyond our referral hospital
- Reluctance by the MOH personnel in carrying our VCT activities
- High death rate among caregivers hence continuous demand for placement of OVCs
- Increasing number of ART clients getting pregnant hence increased demand for care and support

- Way forward for OVCs completing secondary education

WAY FORWARD TO ADDRESS THE CHALLANGES.

- Train additional staff on VCT to help in carrying out mobile VCT
- Incorporate post secondary support into the OVC activities
- Strengthen caregivers support groups to increase their resource base to help them cope with the high number of OVCs
- Collaboration and networking with other agencies working in the community
- Strengthen PLWHAs support groups to ensure openness among in discussing sexuality among the PLWHAs

LESSONS LEARNED

- Strengthening SILC groups will help improve household resource base
- Caregiver support groups has proved to be very instrumental in provision of care and support to OVCs
- Strengthening agricultural activities helps in improving household food security
- Continuous supervisory visit to the project by CRS staff helps in identification of gaps hence improved service delivery to the beneficiaries

ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE NEXT YEAR

Objective 1 3,500 OVC and their family members demonstrate enhanced medical and psychological well being.

- .Home visits
- Assessing health needs of OVCs
- Referring OVCs and their caregivers for medical care
- Safe water system training for caregivers
- Promotion of personal hygiene and sanitation
- Provision of water guard
- Referral of PLWHAs to the ART clinic
- Provision of ITNs
- Deworming exercise

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

- Training of CHPs on primary health care
- Provision of certified seeds to households
- Facilitate the CIGs to identify viable and implement able agricultural activities
- Training of common interest groups on storage and livestock chemicals
- Training of school PTAs
- Agricultural field day
- Tree nursery construction

- Provision of horticultural seeds to households
- Fumigation of the store
- Renovation of a cattle dip

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

- Secondary school fees support
- Shelter improvement
- Vocational training support
- Support for school uniforms
- Payment of nursery levies
- Payment of KCPE enrolment fees
- Provision of clothing and bedding
- Supplementary food support
- Nutritional supplement to ART clients
- Nutritional education
- Provision of tool kits to vocational training graduates
- Post primary education support

Objective 4: 3,500 OVC and their family members gain skills necessary to reduce their risk of HIV infection.

- PLWHAs support group meetings
- Promotion of mobile VCT
- Participate in World AIDS Day
- Development and distribution of IEC/BCC materials
- Strengthening school peer clubs
- Inter school peer club competition
- Developing T-shirts for school peer clubs
- Quarterly life skills training for OVCs

Objective 5: Strengthen the capacity of the project to deliver quality care and support to 3,500 OVC and their families.

- Staff training on proposal writing
- Training caregivers on child rights
- Quarterly review meetings
- Participate on the day of African child
- Exchange visit
- Training of VCT counselors
- Training on project management

Caregivers receiving certified seeds from Agricultural officer

An OVC practicing skills he has acquired from a vocational training

PLWAs monthly support group meeting

A group of OVCs who had just received school uniforms

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

CHPs receiving bicycles for community work

Bicycle competition during 2006 World AIDS Day

A dilapidated house which was improved