



Kanengo AIDS Support Organization

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IMPROVING MATERNAL AND CHILDHEALTH AT THE HOUSEHOLD AND COMMUNITY LEVELS THROUGH IMPROVED ACCESS TO NUTRITION AND STRUCTURAL ALLEVIATION OF POVERTY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kanengo AIDS Support Organization-KASO is a registered charitable Organization working in Central Malawi. Our main focus is improving the maternal and child health in the impoverished and marginalized villages where due to poverty and ignorance

children and women are the most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, diseases and premature death.

KASO is working towards reducing the burden of infections diseases by strengthening the capabilities of the community to keep children and their families healthy.

OUR MISSION: The mission of Kanengo AIDS Support Organization is empowerment of people living with HIV/AIDS, especially women, girls and children, with information, knowledge and skills for them to be able to advocate for their human rights to basic healthcare and medical needs and create a conducive environment where their human rights, human dignity and needs will be respected and secured and where they are able to live in dignity, prosperity, peace and justice

IN MALAWI IMPROVING ACCESS TO NUTRITION SAVES LIFE!



THE CHALLENGES WE ARE DEALING WITH

Malnutrition is one of the most important health and welfare problems among infants and mothers in Malawi. It is a result of both inadequate food intake and illness. Inadequate food intake is a consequence of insufficient food available at the household level, improper feeding practices, or both. Improper feeding practices include both the quality and quantity of foods offered to young children as well as the timing of their introduction. Poor sanitation puts young children at increased risk of illness, in particular diarrheal disease, which adversely affects their nutritional status. Both inadequate food intakes and poor environmental sanitation reflects underlying social and economic conditions. 8% of mothers of children under age five in Malawi are undernourished. The highest level of maternal under nutrition in the southern region is (10%). From: African Nutrition chart books: Findings from the 2008 Malawi demographic and health survey.

“Severe malnutrition is alarmingly on the increase among under-five children in Malawi....The numbers of malnourished children are many times higher than the normal emergency threshold,” said UNICEF Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa Per Engebak. Immediate and urgent action is needed to save lives,” according to a recent UNICEF Press Release.” UNICEF also reports that many mothers in Malawi are able to feed their children only maize which does not contain the nutrients those children need. University of Malawi professor Dr. Blessings Chinsinga argues in a recent paper that “Malawi must diversity away from maize.” Researchers published a paper in the Oxford Journals Health Policy and Planning on the success of Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM).

Landlocked Malawi ranks among the world's most densely populated and least developed countries. The economy is predominately agricultural with about 80% of the population living in rural areas. The Malawi government developed a strategic plan to respond to childhood and maternal malnutrition but implementation of the program has been delayed due to continuing economic problems in the country.

In many villages, HIV/AIDS, poverty and ignorance have made many children to live in unsafe environments and 49% of children are suffering from severe and prolonged malnutrition, physically stunted cognitively impaired and emotionally unstable. This is the second highest prevalence in sub-Saharan Africa after Ethiopia with 51%. Malawi's under-one mortality rate (76 deaths per 1,000 births) indicates that 7 percent of children born in Malawi will die before their first birthday. Malawi's under-five mortality rate (133 deaths per 1,000 births) indicates that 13 percent of children born in Malawi will die before their fifth birthday. From: African Nutrition chart books: Findings from the 2006 Malawi demographic and health survey. Under nutrition is an important factor in the death of many young children. Even if a child is only mildly malnourished, the mortality risk is increased. Under-five mortality is largely a result of infectious diseases and neonatal deaths in developing countries. Respiratory infections, diarrhea, malaria, measles, and other infectious diseases are taking their toll on children in these villages. In Malawi, 34% of all deaths that occur before age five are related to malnutrition (severe and moderate malnutrition). Because of its extensive prevalence, moderate malnutrition (30 percent) contributes to more deaths than does severe malnutrition (4%). Moderate malnutrition is implicated in 87% of the deaths associated with malnutrition.

It is well established, also, that malnourished children and adults are less likely to respond well to anti-retroviral treatment, increasing AIDS-related mortality needlessly

OUR GOAL:

The main goal of our projects is to improve maternal and child health through bringing and improving access to good nutrition to children and their families in a sustainable way. By using cost effective and practical entrepreneurship approaches; this Project will reduce the burden of infectious diseases and improve the community health outcomes by strengthening the abilities of the community to keep children and families healthy and advance maternal and child health over the long term.



OUR OPERATING PHILOSOPHY

Kanengo AIDS Support Organization deeply believes in the universal human rights of all humanity regardless of social position, gender, race or HIV status. KASO strongly believes that all human beings are entitled to respect of their human dignity and human rights and that indeed they are also responsible not only to treat others in the same manner but also to advocate and promote the universal human rights of all people.

KASO also believes that poverty is not merely caused by material lack of resources but also by unfair circumstances in society and politics. For KASO, alleviating poverty goes hand in hand with fighting these unfair balances of power by giving poor and marginalized people a chance to have a greater say in political, economic and cultural matters.

KASO works at the structural alleviation of poverty, ignorance and injustice. This means that KASO does not only focus on improving the immediate needs of the people but it also aims at removing the root causes of poverty, oppression, injustice and human rights abuses against women, girls and children.

KASO believes in the unlimited potential of the people and we do realize that alone, without real and sustainable empowerment of the people we can never easily meet everyone's needs nor can we bring the desired change. This is why; we are working directly with the people, involving and empowering them. We are committed to creating permanent structural changes in society in relation to these problems and challenges which will in turn help people to become self-sufficient and able improve their own living conditions over the long term.

KASO strongly believes that that the vicious cycle of poverty, human rights abuses and exclusion will only be broken if marginalized people have equal access to the materials and non-material resources and tools to effective participation and decision making processes these problems by creating a condition of sustainable and effective improvement the direct and indirect of the interest, needs and aspirations of these people being stigmatized and marginalized in our communities and society.

At KASO, we also strongly believe that decent health care is basic human right to all people regardless of their position in society or gender. We believe that decent and quality healthcare

should both be available and made accessible to everyone but also that decent health care must be affordable and of good quality for both poor and rich people in our society.

To ensure that this is accomplished at the community, local and national levels, KASO is working directly with the people at the community level and is fulfilling its roles as a Civil Society Organization through the following interventions and strategies:

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A.Promotion of human rights and addressing the needs for women, girls and children living with HIV/AIDS

Women and girls are the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in Malawi. They have little or no information on SRH, ART, nutrition, PMTCT and ART. Their human rights are often violated due to the wrong and dangerous prejudices and beliefs held about them in the community.

There are a lot of harmful cultural practices and customs that are still putting women and girls at greater risk to dire poverty, property grabbing and other forms of violence against women and girls. Women and girls are as a result made more vulnerable to HIV and other diseases.

KASO is creating structural changes permanently improving the lives of women and girls through creation of structural poverty alleviation changes at the household and community levels.

B. Economic empowerment for women living with HIV/AIDS and grandmothers

KASO knows it cannot never easily meet everyone's needs. This is why we are committed to creating permanent structural changes in society in relation to these problems and challenges which will in turn help people to become self-sufficient over the long term.

KASO envisages communities where poverty no longer exists and where people live in prosperity and sustainable human dignity. To contribute to the achievement of this vision, KASO is providing economic empowerment to poor and marginalized women, widows and grandmothers as one sure way to ensure they are provided with the skills, tools and resources to stand on their own sustainably and improve their living conditions.

KASO realizes the direct link between poverty and HIV/AIDS. We know that poverty is an ideal breeding ground for the quick spread of HIV in the community and more especially among the most vulnerable members of our community the women, girls and children. We also know that the disease itself puts sufferers and caregivers into deep and dire poverty as they use all their already scarce resources and energy to support themselves or sick members of the family or community.

This is why economic empowerment of the people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS is crucial to combating malnutrition and the spread of HIV.

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