

**SINGIDA MUNICIPALITY- TANZANIA**

**Interim report from June 2019 to May 2020**

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*Project to support children affected by HIV/AIDS to access education in school year 2019/20.*



**Report version: 4**

01 June 2020

## PROJECT DETAILS

Item	Details
Name of Organization	FARAJA CENTRE CBHC
Address	P.O BOX 510
Project Location	Singida Municipality
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Status	Non-Profit Organization(Platform)
Project Costs	
Project Duration	12 Months
Submitted to	

## **1. DESCRIPTION OF THE ORGANIZATION**

### **Our Vision**

FARAJA envisions a society that is healthy, educated and democratic with a strong and sustainable economic base.

### **Our Mission**

Faraja is a faith based organization (FBO) striving to improve the Health status of women, men, children and youth, especially the most Vulnerable by working in conjunction with government, non-government (NGO) and Faith Based Organization (FBO) in the Singida region.

### **Our Values**

- Commitment to high quality care.
- Compassion
- Creative Fidelity
- Interconnectedness
- Integrity
- Hospitality

### **Brief History and Current Programme Outline**

FARAJA is a non-profit Faith Based Organisation (FBO) based in Singida town. It was registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs on 12 September 2005 with the registration number SO 13255. In August 2017 FARAJA was identified with a formal letter from Singida Municipality under the Ministry of Health, Development, Elderly and Children. FARAJA works in partnership with the Singida Municipality and the Catholic Diocese of Singida and is administered by the Medical Missionaries of Mary.

The programme has the following main components namely, Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT), Awareness Raising (IEC), Most Vulnerable Children and Orphans (MVCO), Income Generating Activities (IGA), Pastoral care and Complimentary medicine, Palliative Home based care and Anti-Human Trafficking programme (AHT). The direct beneficiaries are people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), **Most Vulnerable Children and Orphans (MVCO)**, now more recently those with end of life-threatening conditions and victims of human trafficking.

Faraja also undertakes awareness rising about how HIV/AIDS is transmitted and how it can be prevented through behavior change. In addition, Faraja aims to reduce the stigma and discrimination that people living with HIV face in society. Our target communities are in Singida Municipality and 18 adjacent wards. Each ward has 2-4 villages.

Faraja uses a participatory approach in a bid to secure increased community capacity and sense of ownership, thus granting continuity. The participatory approach includes promoting establishment of community support, planning and monitoring structures, skills training of community resource persons/workers and linking communities to opportunities. Furthermore, organisation capacity building of the Faraja staff and the centre is always predominant.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Over the last years, Faraja Centre CBHC has increased the scope and scale of its Home based Care, VCT<sup>1</sup> and Awareness Raising Programmes to include Palliative Home based care and counter human trafficking in the Singida Municipality. As a result, we have encountered rapidly increasing numbers of MVC<sup>1</sup>. We have been unable to increase our resources to match this accelerating rate of new contacts. In September 2012, a new programme of Palliative home based care was established. Since then many clients have died of cancer – many leaving behind one caregiver and many children of school age. Recently, education program included some of these deserving children in the funding for school needs. In July 2017, a new programme against Human Trafficking commenced. Children (school age) are the most affected group because they are usually promised employment (forced labour in domestic service). Others are sexually exploited, forced into marriage and early pregnancies. After finishing standard seven and form four, most of the students do not want to continue with their studies because of this trafficking. The programme makes initiatives to combat the problem by creating awareness and sensitizing the community.

Many MVC are orphans with single parents who are unable to provide due to illness. Others are being cared for by elderly grandparents and relatives. Caregivers are often unable to work to their full earning capacity due to age, illness or time constraints caused by their caring role. Without support, such households often fall into poverty and dependency. Basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing and basic rights e.g. education, respect and protection are lacking. MVC who have inadequate access to nutrition, education, respect and protection are denied the opportunity of adequate livelihoods in later years.

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<sup>1</sup> VCT = Voluntary counseling and testing (of HIV)

Children (students) who are living with HIV/AIDS attend regularly to CTC clinics for treatment and check up especially their viral load. Adherence of ARVs and counselling is a major role of Faraja team to make sure that all of them are taking their ARVs correctly and avoid stigma.

HIV infection brings much personal suffering, but also threatens the Singida community and erodes the progress the country has made in increasing life expectancy, school enrolment and economic productivity.

Except the services provided by Faraja, there are very few facilities for the proper care and support of MVC in Singida Municipality. Faraja works to reduce the vulnerability of children in its target community and ensures that all children receive their rights. Faraja targets MVC and their caregivers through programmes addressing nutrition, health and education issues for MVC and through Home based care and support for IGAs<sup>2</sup> for caregivers.

### **3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The overall objective of the project is:

To ensure that MVCs in Singida Municipality receive their rights to education, health, protection, nutrition and respect. Poverty, divorce/separation of parents and children orphaned by HIV/AIDS are still powerful barriers associated with children not getting the opportunity to access education. Based on the Faraja needs assessment report done in 2015, it showed that there is still a problem of MVCs in Singida municipally due to the existing HIV/AIDS transmission, divorce, poor parental care to many families which results into children losing their fundamental rights and recommended continued support of the MVC.

**The specific objectives are:**

- To reduce stigma and discrimination, abuse and neglect suffered by MVC and their care givers
- To improve the mental well-being of MVC and their care givers
- To improve the livelihoods of about 100 households supporting about 500 MVC
- To ensure that MVC and their caregivers have adequate access to nutrition and food by linking them to the particular institutions e.g. children and community centre.
- To provide innovative sources for educational support for MVC
- To ensure access to health care services and health education services for MVC and their

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<sup>2</sup> IGA = Income generating activity

Caregivers.

### **Target Number of MVC**

Our target number of MVC in 2019/20 was 100 students. Among them 95 received the intended support, the other four left the project for different reasons [2 students quit school and left the region, 1 transferred to the village and another 1 was disqualified in his annual examination]. One student was mistakenly included in the budget but he already graduated form four in November 2019 and he passed well.

### **Geographic Reach**

Our target communities are in Singida municipality with its 18 adjacent wards.

### **Innovative strategies being used to support the MVC**

Faraja was proposed to strategically update its service delivery approach as follows:

- Special efforts were made to enhance positive prevention information, education and services for MVC and their household members. This involved awareness creation on Human Trafficking, counselling and life skills to teachers, parents, carers and local government leaders. School progress of students is usually discussed at the carers and parents meeting biannually.
- Use of physically stable PLHIV/MVCO as educators and sources of information to Faraja about family situations. We hope to seek funding from another donor for this part of programme. In 2019, we received funds from Malta for food (lunch) which was successful. Before that, friends of Faraja helped our students and their families in other aspects that are currently not touched by the project.
- Enhanced linkages of MVC families to form effective income generating initiatives and activities with the government.

### **Essential services conducted to reach the target population**

- **Provision of school materials and other essential needs-** school fees, school materials like exercise books, mathematical sets, rulers, pens and pencils. School uniforms, shoes and bicycles. Organization of school activities, provision of nutritional support, counselling, education, and promotion of healthy eating habits using locally available foods. Referrals of HIV+ clients to VCT or Care and Treatment Centre for further care, treatment and support and setting up MVC committees as needed.

- **Coordination and support for MVC-Students:** Currently, there are two social workers working to coordinate and run all aspects of the project to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability.

### **Project plan for sustainability**

Faraja is constantly and consciously keeping sustainability in its plans. We link with other NGO's and the government to keep abreast of new ideas and issues. New initiatives for income generating and economic support for MVC are looked into. Linking with village leaders and volunteers is considered a sustainable way forward. This programme is involving the village leaders, community health workers and volunteers and is really geared for the MVC and so it will make it easier to sustain after funding has ceased. The caregivers are the people requesting the work and development plans so we are quite certain that they will take ownership not only during the period of the execution of the plans but afterwards also. We also hope to have a fundraising event to raise funds for the on-going work in Faraja centre CBHC.

### **Project experience and achievements**

#### **Students' good performance**

In June 2019 to May 2020 the project succeeded to support 95 students where by 77 are from Primary and Secondary schools and 18 are from private schools, advanced level and University. They were supported with writing materials, school uniforms, tuition fees and other essential contributions that solidified their performance which was cemented by the assurance of the provision of mentioned essential school requirements that they would otherwise never been able to afford.

In light of this, in September 2019, all 14 standard seven students being supported by the project graduated with good distinctions. Furthermore, in November 2019, six out of seven form four students being supported by the project performed their exams well and are due to continue to the advanced level.

#### **Good attendance at school**

Most students from poor families are unable to attend school due to failure in acquiring basic school requirements such as tuition fees, uniforms and writing materials. The project has ensured that the MVC

receive quality education by providing all essential school requirements that will enable children to be able to attend school freely.

The project has furthermore provided bicycles to students who lived far from school areas and were having difficulties in attending school. This will not only increase their attendance at school but also their performance since they will have more time to attend to their studies as well.

### **Monitoring and supervision**

Monitoring and supervision together with home visits has significantly improved the wellbeing of the MVC and their general upkeep. Children were observed to be well behaved, and they had good attendance and good performance at school as well.

The programme succeeded to change the behaviours of students who were misbehaving at school or at home through counselling and psychosocial support. The programme built strong relationship, love and happiness with the Singida community especially Parents teachers at the schools, colleges and even government leaders like local government leaders in the ward we work with.

### **Project challenges and solutions**

#### **Challenge 1**

Four students supported by the project quit school between 2019 and 2020. Three students (from primary and secondary schools) have left the region all together and one student failed his exams and was discontinued.

#### **Solution**

We plan to recruit more MVC to replace the ones that have left the program so as to reach more MVC who would benefit from the project.

#### **Challenge 2**

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, most activities were halted following government's restrictions and regulations. Schools have been shut down by the government and public gatherings are prohibited. Due to this, most activities were stopped pending government's instructions.

#### **Solution**



Some activities that do not require direct contact with students or gatherings are still going on, such as school fees payments and purchase of school materials. When the schools re-open all activities will ultimately resume.