



PROJECT SUMMARY

Home Based Care Programme, Bondo and Siaya

Background:

Bondo and Siaya are large districts in Nyanza province on the edge of Lake Victoria which total an area of 3,500km². They are intensively populated with small farm holdings that provide only a subsistence existence, consequently 61% of people live below the poverty line. Many men go to the city to secure work and this has led to the rapid rise in HIV; when people fall ill they usually return to their rural communities for support. Currently 27% of the population is believed to be infected, amongst the highest prevalence rates in Kenya. Frequently several people in one household can be infected, creating huge problems for the family and raising the issue of orphans and vulnerable children.



Bondo and Siaya District Facts

	Bondo	Siaya
Population	239,000	480,000
Tribe	Luo	Luo
Household Size	4.2	4.1
Geographic Area	1,000km ²	1,500km ²
People per km ²	240	320
HIV/AIDS prevalence	27%	27%
Average Income p.a.	US\$ 420	US\$ 570
% in Paid Employment	20%	14%
% Below poverty line	61%	61%
Infant mortality	4.2%	4.3%
Primary income source	Agriculture	Agriculture

Source: Regional Government Statistics, AIDS in Kenya 2001
Note: HIV prevalence is of pop aged 10+. % in paid employment is % of economically active population

ICROSS Role:

At the request of the Ministry of Health (MOH) and local communities, ICROSS has been implementing a home based care programme in Bondo and Siaya since 1999. The project involved the training of trainers (usually local nurses provided by the MOH) who train and support volunteer community health workers (CHWs) who care for the sick and dying in their homes. Most of the sick are terminally ill with AIDS. In the process the trainer of

trainers and community health workers support orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) and HIV positive women, providing them with information and ensuring they gain access to support networks.

The funding for the first round of this project, which covered three years with Ksh 14.5 million (US\$215,000), was provided by the Embassy of Japan, Elton John AIDS Foundation, Mercury Trust, Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation and ICROSS' fundraising arms in Ireland and Canada. The second round is covered by Global Fund who secured funding until November 2006

Albert & Karen

Albert is 58 and Karen is 40, both are HIV positive and look much older. They have four children; the youngest is also HIV positive and is frequently sick. They are both emaciated but make a bit of money. He weaves traditional baskets and she moulds clay pots. Their second son Andrew, who is 16, looks after them. He has had to leave school due to lack of money. The ICROSS community health worker visits them weekly to check their health and look at ways to support them. The community health worker, who lives locally, has encouraged neighbours to help with water and firewood and tilling their small plot of land. The community health worker works with the Christian Children's Fund to support village focus groups which raise awareness about AIDS and build community support for the sick. Together they are trying to discourage the practice of wife inheritance (when a widow must marry another family member) by educating on how it can lead to the spread of HIV.

ICROSS Project:

The programme has crucially secured access to drugs. Local hospitals and dispensaries frequently do not have even basic drugs and most of ICROSS' clients are not in a position to buy from private dispensaries. Drugs which are regularly distributed include painkillers, re-hydrants (for those with diarrhoea), anti-histamine (for rashes) and antibiotics. Even simple medicines such as Vaseline (which can reduce itching and the danger of infection from dried and cracked skin) are not readily available. In addition, ICROSS provides basic support like mattresses, blankets and mosquito nets.

Most ICROSS clients live in basic accommodation, usually one or two room huts made of mud or wood with no amenities. Light is provided by oil lamps, water has to be collected from wells and cooking is done in open fires. Most food is grown on the plots and diets consist primarily of maize based ugali and beans, fruit (like banana's and mangoes) with occasional chicken or egg. As a result, many clients have poor diets and suffer from malnutrition and are effectively prone to disease (regardless of their HIV status) and drugs, such as those for TB, are not very effective as constitutions are weak.

Pamela and Victor	Pamela and Victor are both HIV positive and are suffering from TB. The ICROSS team helped to diagnose the illness and ensures they receive drugs from the ministry of health. Victor used to be a brick maker in Nairobi. Neither of them can work now. Their three children are all in school and one is sponsored by the Christian Children's Fund. At the weekend the children work in a local garden to earn a bit of money. The nearest dispensary is 15km away but the ICROSS team bring their TB drugs to them so they do not need to do the walk under the baking sun. Victor has an abyss on his leg which makes it difficult to walk. Pamela gets exhausted talking, but still relishes the chance to share her problems and to joke with the ICROSS health worker each week.
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In Bondo and Siaya ICROSS is working closely with other local NGOs and community based organisations. This ensures that the home based care support that is being provided is linked into broader programmes (such as awareness raising and child education) maximising effectiveness. The complementary networks of local volunteers ensure that clients can be referred to other services with will provide necessary support. Likewise, as the ICROSS teams work to ease the suffering of clients during their last months they identify potential orphans and can ensure that support networks are identified to help them.

Impact:

To date, the Bondo and Siaya programme has trained 60 trainers of trainers and has 600 community health workers working in the field. 8,490 people dying of AIDS have been supported in their last months. 10,800 carers of people dying of AIDS have received training and support in nutrition and health management. 18,000 children of people dying of AIDS have received support and referred to either extended family, the department of social services or collaborating NGOs and CBOs. The support of the ICROSS team helps to reduce the number of opportunistic infections that a client suffers from and also helps to improve the psychological well being.

Eunice and George	Eunice and George live by Lake Victoria in a one roomed hut. They have been ICROSS clients for 12 months. Both have AIDS and are now bedridden. George is frequently incoherent. There is no room for Eunice to sleep in the house so she lies the wood shed propped up on two old cushions, ICROSS is getting her a mattress. Eunice is in constant pain, she has sores all across her body. Before her HIV status was known she has an operation on her abdomen; 18 months later, because of the AIDS, it has still not healed. They are looked after by their 13 year old daughter, Clementine, who has left school to care for them. The ICROSS team has shown her how to wash and dress her parents' wounds and have taught her to clean the sheets every day as her parents are incontinent. The team is helping Eunice to plan for the future, ensuring her brother, who provides some money, is kept informed and identifying networks that will support the children once the parents are dead.
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