

YOUNG MOTHERS KENYA

QUARTERLY PROGRAMME REPORT

JANUARY – APRIL 2011

BACKGROUND

From the scratch of things in a tiny round roofed open structure where a clutch of 8 **professional** community personnel have been bringing their heads together to churn out a strategy for a noble idea for the last one and half years finally came the 'baby' called Young Mothers in January 2011.

The strenuous moments and long hours burning the midnight oil to bring into actualization the model blending the different modules and straps paid off when the first staff of 9 people met on 2nd January 2011 to start developing the background of the project Young Mothers Kenya. The roles of the 8 member team were specific with each member having a defined role to prop up the development and success of the organization.

The initial staff background was divided into 2 categories comprising of the management level staff and the support level team, the management team comprised of the Director, the Project Manager and the Field Officer whose roles were defined to oversee the day to day operations of the project activities and controlling the components of the project schedule.

The support staff comprised of the security personnel, garden caretakers, social skills developers, kitchen attendants and stewards as well as general compound hygiene staffers.

Work to this effect commenced officially on 4th January 2011 and it was all systems go for the project.

WORK PLAN ROLL OUT

With the magnitude of the work taking the centre stage in work plan development, the management decided to come out with a model of work plan development roll out for the year 2011 to be able to accomplish the required results and achieve the objectives of the project on a timely basis. The work plan roll out schedule had been slated to run on a quarterly basis and the thesis of it was based on a result based orientation.

Importance was given to the development of programmes that will ensure the young mothers undergoes the requisite and stipulated program and career of choice at the earliest stage possible but important of this was the whole aspect of consciousness whereby the young mother's past had to be dealt with first through a counseling and holistic trauma management intervention.

The Field Officer was left with the task of developing a thorough field work program that will see into the recruitment of the young mother's into the programme , The envisioned plan of admitting 20 young mothers at one given time was quite ambitious , simple on paper but challenging in practice .

It took the Management time to draw a strategy of locating, identifying and recruiting the desired clients into the programme lest we end up with an undesirable client.

THE FIELD MOBILIZATION STRATEGIES

A number of strategies were laid on the table to enable the field work department move with eccentric speed because this speed was what was desirable to achieve the results.

While demonstrating the strategies, several factors were considered to realize these strategies e.g. The local administrative parameters, where the involvement of the local administration involvement was considered vital due to the chain of protocol and liability process between the organization and the client's background. Without the involvement of the local leaders , It would have been challenging to penetrate the villages and the communities where the girls were living because of the suspicions and uncertainties unfolding about such an organization that only wants to deal with pregnant young girls. It is through the local leaders that it was possible to mobilize the community members and have an assurance and complicity to work with the local community who very much trusts and believes in their own people.

The other factor that had to be considered was the 'ground to break', while assuming that there were pregnant young girls out there, the question was how do we reach them? Through networking with the local institutions of public health and education, it was possible to identify cases like this and so it was one factor that was considered to develop a working relationship with the convenient institutions because these were the points common to always find these cases.

Partnering with other organizations and like minded agencies were as well factors to consider, this was especially considered for the purpose of referrals should it necessitate because not all cases can be handled by one specific organization.

Workshops and seminars to enlighten the community on the right models of reproductive health and what Young Mothers Kenya was doing on the ground is another strategy that had been considered to enable the project reach its target whereby through this perspective it would be possible to mobilize, educate and propagate the concept of Young Mothers Kenya.

Other factors considered were linkages with individual community members, community contact points or persons, the Government department dealing with children and gender welfare programmes and through forums.

RESULTANTS

From the above designated strategies, a considerable number of results have been achieved, by the end of the first quarter, **6 young mothers** had been enlisted into the program, **2 babies** have been born within the same period and the health and social perspective of the young mothers have drastically improved.

The first quarter also saw the development of diverse programs that were mainly focused on the basic capacity building of the young mothers, developing a curriculum for a formal school based education programme is our long term goal, however, an informal curriculum initiated by the program to facilitate the process of capacity building is in the process and currently forms the foundation of the capacity building strength. Within the curriculum, the following modules or perspectives have been tailor made to fit to the requirements of the young mother's interests, i.e. **communication skills, child care and child rights, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and substance abuse, home nursing, micro credit and entrepreneurship, House keeping, Information and communication Technology (ICT), career and talent development etc.**

The other programme that has kicked off is the tailoring training which forms part of the skills development, already 2 of the girls have propped up to another level of the trade, this has indeed given motivation to the rest to work hard and up to another level.

So far this quarter, the project has been able to purchase 2 desktop computers, a 3 in 1 printer, 2 UPS systems, a sewing machine, upholstery, garment materials necessary for the prevention of hostile windy season inside the young mothers units, a beamer device has also been installed in the social hall for the girls entertainment and information lessons, so far 6 units of the young mothers housing has been furnished with high density mattresses among other essential requirements that has been acquired by the project. The process of acquiring more is ongoing as the need arises and also working with the priority.

The management has for all times reviewed the programme development process if its really running according to schedule and has to adjust always where need be.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Running a project of immense status and nature like Young Mothers Kenya requires a significant amount of resources, currently the resources allocated to the project which in monetary level sometimes raises a challenge in terms of expense capacity and requirements.

The monthly budget designated to Young Mothers Kenya by its funding partners has elapsed with a considerable amount the expense situation due to the rise in commodity goods and high cost of life, however, it has been a good lesson of financial management for the management in the sense that it has been possible to go only for the most essential and priority requirements. With the signing of the tripartite agreement between Africachild Village, EFA and Young Mothers Kenya in January 2011, it is fundamental that resource allocation will be ensured within the timeline of the project life.

A big chunk of resource allocation goes to the purchase of food and feedstuff, while other commodities are a one-time purchase order, the purchase of food is a perpetual order and the dynamics in it is that the price of food seems to escalate with every other day purchase.

Medical also takes a considerable allocation because it is what determines the nature of what Young Mothers Kenya is all about, the sporadic cases of health complications and the eventual labor and delivery instances consumes about 35% of the financial allocations to the project.

Other essential expenses goes into, staff salaries, stationeries, fuel, overhead contingencies like security and maintenances.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

Within the first quarter of the project inception, we boast of a number of developments that has taken place so far, the admission of 6 girls and delivery of 2 babies is a plus to Young Mothers, that they are able to be sustained and taken care of effectively through effective management is a development of its own.

The completion of the main kitchen house, housing a major kitchen area, washing area for the young mothers, 6 modern and state of the art bathrooms and a dining area (restaurant) is a step forward that will now provide a new level of managing affairs within the compound.

The development of a vibrant kitchen garden from a hitherto unused land is exciting for us , quite for a while , the produce from the garden has supplemented to the dietary and foodstuff needs of the young mothers , the garden attendant, Helena Wakio says ‘ it’s the blessing of her lifetime ‘ because she has been able to transform the initially dry, parched and rocky grounds into a bubbling spring of ‘milk and honey’

The compounds of the young mothers Kenya has taken a beautiful shape, the planting of grass and flowers surrounding the units of accommodation for the young mothers has added beauty, either the beautification process is still ongoing with more grass and flowers still being planted. ‘in the words of the Mr. Raimund Marz, the President of Africachild, that ‘ It may not be possible for those inside to see the inside beauty but only those who are outside appreciates how beauty this place is’ .

THE OFFICIAL INAUGURATION.

On 27th April 2011, Young Mothers Kenya successfully held its official inauguration ceremony; a ceremony attended by over 100 people from all walks of life reinforced our commitment to the mission and vision to the community in reiterating our core values and dual purpose to warrant our establishment in the community.

Among those in attendance was **the Msambweni constituency** member of Parliament **Hon. Omar Zonga, the District gender and social welfare officer, the District officer, the local area councilor** among other dignitaries. The main purpose of holding the function was to show case

our initiatives and role in the community. All those in attendance hailed it a success and the dignitaries in their speeches hailed the project as a unique one in the region

During the occasion, the young mothers were able to move the audience with a play entitled 'the plight of a young mother' showcased in Swahili as 'masaibu ya mama mchanga'

They also did a song extolling the work of our local leaders and expressing their joy to the occasion.

WHO ARE OUR 'CLIENTS'?

This has always been the big question whenever someone hears about Young Mothers Kenya.

The answer to the above question is relative, relative to the concept and ideals of the organization as well as the nature and status of the persons under its umbrella.

Ideally, our clients are pregnant young girls who fall below the age of 18 years and from the most vulnerable or high risk background as mandated and stipulated in our project profile and proposal, however in certain circumstances adjustments might be made to accommodate a more pressing situation that is outside the above indicated bracket.

So far in this first quarter as had been indicated earlier, we have registered 6 below the age girls at different times of the first four months. Their situations and backgrounds vary just like their destinies seemingly differ. Each has a story to narrate about how and when it all started and below is the captions and narratives of the **6 cases** so far assessed by the project.

Timberly

The first case to be admitted to the Young Mothers Kenya programmes while 6 months pregnant, a **Standard 7 drop out** and **17 years of age**, her case is as chilling as her background. She was rescued while in the process of being trafficked to a neighboring country, an orphan and since left under the care of her uncle, the uncle decided to play deal with a witchdoctor from the coast region of Kenya to traffic her for marriage to another person in exchange for his curative abilities to the uncle.

While on the way to the witch doctor's home, she enquired about where she was being taken , but the witchdoctor remained adamant after which on arriving at the witchdoctor's home , she was given into marriage to a local religious teacher, when her case was reported to the local authorities, she was rescued from the marriage and taken to a remand home for children and as the information goes, this is where a prison guard who was assigned the duty of guarding the delinquents persuaded her into having sex with him, thereafter before long she realized that she was pregnant and as the law requires , she could no longer be sustained in the remand home due to her condition and so had to be transferred to another children facility where also she could not fit in given her age and condition and finally she was referred to YMK on **11th February 2011**.

Her plight is before the courts of law through the department of children's welfare.

She eventually gave birth to Liz, a pretty bouncing baby girl on **30th .March 2011** .

She aspires to complete her primary education and pursue her high school. She is currently taking her classes keenly and scores well in mathematics and communication skills. She is also taking the tailoring classes training.

Everlyne

The second case to be admitted to the Young Mothers Kenya program on the **14th February 2011** and **17 years of age**. She was admitted to the programme while 9 months pregnant and delivered on the same day she was admitted to the programme to a bouncing baby boy, Juma Kenga.

She is a Standard seven drop out and comes from a **family of 7** and is the last born in the family

While she was still a pupil in the local primary school, her mother realized how weak the standards of education was in the school, she decided to transfer her to another school about **80 Kms** away from home where she lived with her eldest sister , in the event of schooling there, she was lured by a teacher from the same school who eventually had carnal knowledge of her several times and eventually became pregnant, the teacher took her as a second wife but the sister became furious over the matter and reported to the authorities , she was later rescued from the early marriage plan with a six month pregnancy and brought back home to her parents.

She is a good learner, keen and wants to complete her primary level education in the coming year and enroll for a housekeeping course or beauty therapy training and later finds work in the hospitality industry. She is good in Theatre and music (performing arts).

Helena

Goes down as the third girl to be admitted at 14 years old and the youngest of the six shy and less talkative, she is also a Standard seven dropout. Her pregnancy was as a result of 'peer pressure' according to her, she is reportedly to have been impregnated by a schoolmate, a boy of 17years of age whom she can't recall his whereabouts at the moment.

Her mother separated from her father a few years now and went to a neighboring country, she was left under the care of her uncle after the father went into deep alcoholism, she is the only child in the family, and her interests are in entrepreneurship and tailoring skills. She is 5 months pregnant at the moment having been admitted while carrying a 2 month pregnancy; she also likes singing and poetry.

Naomi

It took 10 days to convince her that Young Mothers Kenya is a project that 'carries other people's burdens'.

Asha Ali Mwajoji better known as 'BIBI' is a symbol of 'delicate justice' her case is as traumatic as is her situation , she confides that she is **17 years of age** and that having entered the last quarter of her Standard Seven class, she met a boy slightly older than her who according to

her is also a student during a sports meeting day for community schools , the boy allured her with niceties and persuaded her into having sex, she would later find herself making it a habit to visit the boy's home more often only to realize that she had conceived **2 months** later.

Her father didn't want to hear of that and decided to send her away from home; she escaped to her closest of the relatives where her father followed her again with an intention of disengaging her from the relatives in order to escape the shame her daughter had brought to the family, Asha later escaped in the night before the father caught up with her and decided to seek refuge in the compounds of a man unknown to her , the man welcomed her for the night to rescue her from the hostile night environment and as she narrated her ordeal to her rescuer , the man took advantage of her situation and with time proposed to her the idea of marriage, she had no choice given her situation and condition, she easily and readily accepted.

A short while late after about 2 weeks, the father got wind of the marriage and decided to report the matter to the police, thereafter the man was arrested for subjecting a minor to marriage and Asha was rescued from the early marriage, the case is currently in court because the father insists that it is the man who impregnated her daughter, while Asha vehemently denies saying that her first boyfriend is responsible. A DNA test has been ordered after her delivery by the court to ascertain the real father to the baby.

She is the 5th born in a family of seven and was admitted to the YMK programme on **25th March 2011**.

Asha is soft spoken, jocular (Likes making jokes) and has interest in micro entrepreneurship, she loves cooking and is an average pupil and has keen interests in Mathematics. She delivered her baby boy on **8th of May 2011** and is in perfect health.

Jennifer

17 years of age and currently in her 8th month of pregnancy, Janet is a Standard 8 leaver after having completed her primary education successfully.

She is the 2nd born in a family of 6, the mother separated from her father while she was still young and cannot explain of her father's whereabouts , what she knows is that her mother married another man who did not have a positive outlook towards Janet and the other siblings.

The pregnancy is from her boyfriend who at the nick of time' denied 'her the chance to proceed to high school because of the pregnancy. Her feelings at the moment are that of rejection and solitude. She is a quite and seemingly focused girl who knows what she really wants for her future.

She is interested in training as a dressmaker, a trade she says she wants to pursue because she wants to develop an independent mind of self sustainability thro micro entrepreneurship. She was admitted to the programmes on **29th March 2011**.

Elisabeth

She is **16 years of age** and has gone through some most horrifying experience in life. She was involved in an incestuous affair with her step brother that resulted into a pregnancy.

MwanaHamisi is a Standard 4 drop out and also has other health issues that have affected her study life. She narrates that while she was not attending school, her step brother whose mother separated from their father a while ago made advances to her in a manner that elicited a sexual interest, then one day under pressure, she found herself falling prey to her brother's demands and started having sex with her, it became a habit which eventually led to the pregnancy.

She is now **6 months** pregnant and jovial in heart , her other side of health reveals that she suffers from seizures and is asthmatic , these are the worrying conditions concerning her status but in the meantime a combination of drug prophylaxis has been prescribed to take care of her condition. While it was not the easiest thing for her father to believe that she was pregnant , it took a great deal of pressure to find out how she got the pregnancy. She revealed to the family that she had been lured by the step brother into sex which is an abomination within the African family context, the father was furious about it and sent away the step brother from the family while also reprimanding the mother to Mwanahamisi of having known all the happenings but keeping quite about, he was on the verge of sending the mother away when they got wind of the activities of Young mothers Kenya and eventually sought help but not before Mwanahamisi had been sent away from home to live with her aunt and in the course of time she went into a live in arrangement with a man after which her mother later rescued her and took her to stay with her grandmother until she was admitted to the Young Mothers Kenya program on **9/04/2011**.

She is religious and aspires to be a religion teacher of the Islamic faith.

So far, this first quarter has seen the birth **of 2 babies** perfect in their health with their mothers as well exuberating in good conditions. There are **2 court** cases pending so far that involve our clients and this will be subject to legal perspectives which are beyond our parameters of decisions.

FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

With more admissions of young mothers still expected, we aspire to fully furnish the remaining housing units with all the necessary accessories required.

We are also looking forward to establishing a tailoring house that will be specifically for use by the young mothers for tailoring training.

Within the next quarter, we expect to start having community workshops and sensitization seminars to educate people on the importance of reproductive health awareness and to improve on our public relations with the communities.

We are also looking forward to establishing strong network and partnership liaisons with other like minded agencies to forge a harmonious working relationship in the community.

Sooner than later, the new expansive and state of the art kitchen house will start operating, through this, it will be convenient even to start training the young mothers on the perspectives of cookery.

We are also looking forward to open more chances for recruitment of professional personnel to enhance our programme development course.

The establishment of a Home based care intervention and mitigation programme for young mother with children not more than 2 in number and below **21 years of age** is the next big thing in our programme line up. This plan better known in our 'circles' as the phase 2 project seeks to reach out to young mothers who have given birth but cannot be sustained in the current programme schedule such that care and support provided to the young mothers in the compound is applied likewise to those residing at home.

This might take some time to actualize depending on the availability of resources and streamlining of the current operations.

Our aspirations and future perspective is to meet the demands of our vision and mission and to reach the target in order to bring our aims and goals into realization, this will be realized through enhanced recruitment of more vulnerable young mothers while developing more programmes to fit to the needs of the young mothers capacity building roles.

FORESEEN AND UNFORESEEN CHALLENGES

Community Dynamics

The perception of the community about the project is still wanting, the suspicion by which some members of the community hold on the project desires a lot of public relations enhancement settings because culture and traditions plays a big role in determining the lifestyle of the community under which the programme operates.

Mobility and Field Work Entrenchment

Penetrating the interior villages in search for vulnerable girls requires considerable facilitation, this can only be facilitated by providing the ease of transportation and more professional personnel to meet the overwhelming demands of the field work.

Resource Allocation and Rising High Cost Of Life

While the project operates on a designated budget, the occasional adjustments in the overall spending due to inflation and rising high cost of life has greatly strained the current budget allocation.

There is need to review with time the current allocations to cushion the spending expenses that has overshoot its expectation as initially planned.

Other overhead and contingency challenges have been leveled to give priority to the most pressing needs at the moment.

We look forward to an enabling environment to meet the demands of the work and be in a position to achieve our mission in the next quarter.