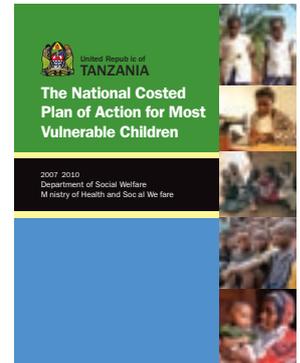




# An Update on Tanzania's National Costed Plan of Action for Most Vulnerable Children, 2007–2010

## Background

Tanzania's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare began to develop its National Costed Plan of Action for Most Vulnerable Children in 2006, with funding from the US Agency for International Development and technical assistance from Family Health International. The four-year action plan, published in 2008, is being implemented by the government and used as a reference tool by stakeholders working to improve the lives and promote the rights of the country's most vulnerable children. All implementing partners and local government areas have received copies, and its simplified version in Kiswahili is awaiting printing approval.



## Plan Implementation to March 2009

Since 2008, considerable progress has been made in many areas, including in identifying the most vulnerable children, coordinating the efforts of the NGOs who are implementing partners, mobilizing resources, and rolling out a national data management system.

- **Most vulnerable children identified and supported**

In 81 councils across the country (61%), more than 611,000 most vulnerable children—317,798 males and 293,352 females—have been identified. 1,059 wards and 5,346 villages were covered. In each of these villages, a Most Vulnerable Children Committee (MVCC) has been formed.

Among children who have been identified as most vulnerable, 561,823 are registered as receiving basic support from various donors and organizations: 290,341 from PEPFAR-funded partners; 210,755 from Global Fund-funded partners; 56,109 from UNICEF-supported councils; and 4,618 from 69 orphanages. Many of the most vulnerable children who receive support from local governments, faith-based organisations, and community-based organisations are not included in these totals.

- **Information shared among implementing partners**

To share information and coordinate activities, a national Implementing Partners Group (IPG) meets every month, and several council-level implementing partners meet regularly. US Government-funded implementing partners met in November 2008, as did the National Technical Committee, which has now met twice. The first issue of the implementing partners' newsletter was published and disseminated in mid-2008.

- **Resources mobilized**

Several councils have allocated funds for most vulnerable children in their recent budgets. The central government allocated TZS 500 million for the rollout of the National Costed Plan of Action in 2008–09, and its budgeting guidelines for 2009–10 include most vulnerable children. Care and support for most vulnerable children is also a priority in the Round 9 national proposal to the Global Fund.

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- **National data management system rolled out**

The new national data management system (DMS) has been rolled out to 56 of the 81 councils where most vulnerable children have been identified, and 39 of them have sent in their electronic reports to the Department of Social Welfare. Each of these councils received a computer with the DMS installed, and 208 persons were trained in its use. Those trained included the data entry and M&E staff of the NGOs, as well as council staff who focus on most vulnerable children. Names and other information relating to 155,460 most vulnerable children have been entered in the DMS and 17,389 were linked to services. (Most service providers are not yet reporting to councils.)

Efforts are being made to harmonize the DMS with the Tanzania Output Monitoring System for HIV and AIDS, with other national reporting systems, and with reporting systems used by councils. More than 60 M&E officers and program managers have been oriented to the M&E plan for the National Costed Plan of Action.

- **Monitoring and evaluation strengthened**

A data management specialist and an M&E officer have been seconded to the M&E unit of the Department of Social Welfare by Family Health International. The department's IT infrastructure has been strengthened, and nine computers and a server have been installed at the department's headquarters.

Councils have received copies of the 12,000 identification registers printed and distributed, and the printing of service-provider monitoring registers is underway. The finalized M&E framework will soon be printed, as will newly developed reporting forms. A new National M&E Officers Network is strengthening coordination and information sharing.

- **Personnel trained in identifying and taking care of the most vulnerable children**

More than 25,000 community-justice facilitators have been trained to provide paralegal support for vulnerable children and households. In total, 46 national facilitators have been trained on identifying children who are most vulnerable, as were 1,480 district facilitators and 15,105 ward and village facilitators. Training in caretaking skills has also been delivered to 47 national-level facilitators, 213 council-level facilitators, and 1,225 caretakers. Twenty national psychosocial support facilitators have also been trained.

- **Service quality assured**

A national framework on quality standards has been finalized. Consensus has been built among key stakeholders on draft national guidelines for improving the quality of care, support, and protection of most vulnerable children; the children themselves were engaged in this process.

## Challenges

Though considerable progress has been made in implementing the National Costed Plan of Action, some implementing partners are not regularly reporting to their respective councils. More advocacy is also needed at all levels to create supportive environments for most vulnerable children and to get local councils to "own" the plan.