

PEPFAR/NPI

Sustainable reintegration of orphans and vulnerable children into family and community life in Uganda and Ethiopia

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II. Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
FY09	US government fiscal year 2009 (1 st October 2008 to 30 th September 2009)
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IGA	Income Generating Activity
JSI-Nupita	John Snow International-Nupita (technical support for Retrak)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

III. Executive Summary / Overview

General overview of activities, approaches and objectives

Retrak is a Christian social work NGO working with OVC on the street in eastern Africa and committed to providing each child with an individual route back to family and community. Retrak's project in Uganda has been operating for over 10 years and the lessons learnt have been successfully transferred to a new project in Ethiopia which opened in June 2007. Both Retrak projects aim to enable OVC living on the streets to return to a stable and caring family setting. This is achieved through reunification with their own relatives or through placement with local foster care families and with support to build the capacity of these families to meet the needs of their children.

Over the next 3 years Retrak's goal through PEPFAR is to further strengthen and grow these programs in both countries in order to provide short-term quality care and protection to OVC on the street and to strengthen families to meet the needs of these OVC in the long-term.

The 3 year strategic objectives are:

1. Enable over 1000 OVC to begin the transition from street life through meeting their psychosocial, health and education needs
2. Enable over 360 OVC to be reintegrated into a sustainable family context
3. Build the capacity of Retrak projects to improve quality and efficiency
4. Strengthen partnerships, both locally and internationally

The targets for the 3-year period are:

- Over 1000 OVC on the street able to access counseling, basic needs, life skills, medical care and HIV/AIDS peer education
- Over 500 OVC on the street participating in catch-up education
- Over 360 OVC resettled or placed in foster care
- Nearly 3000 family members benefiting from increased capacity, of which over 2000 will be women and children.

The focus during FY09 (10 months from December 1st, 2008 to September 30th, 2009) will be on project set-up and strengthening, such as curriculum development and formalization of policies and procedures. Beginning from April 2009, Retrak will implement activities directly targeting OVC on the street and assisting them to transition away from street life and be reintegrated into family and community life (some OVC will have been registered and begun participating at Retrak prior to this date). During FY09 Retrak expects to enable:

- 650 OVC to access counseling and basic needs
- 650 OVC to access life skills and HIV/AIDS peer education
- 148 OVC to receive catch-up education
- 81 OVC to be resettled or placed in foster care
- 638 family members to benefit from increased capacity

General Summary of results and successes

This period focused on start-up activities including: induction of staff team about this project; recruitment of new staff; undertaking of organizational capacity assessment (OCA) and review of project plans and targets.

In both Uganda and Ethiopia most of these activities were carried out. Key members of staff attended the NPI round 3 launch in Kampala and the rest of the staff teams were fully briefed afterwards. Two new staff members have been appointed: Tegistu Petros as social worker in Ethiopia and Cherrie Agabalinda as M&E Officer in Uganda. Further appointments are still in process for nurse, social worker and M&E officer in Ethiopia and a social worker, teacher and sport coordinator in Uganda.

The OCA has been postponed jointly by Retrak and JSI-Nupita to April-May.

A review of the project plans and targets has seen the FY09 workplan submitted with a revised version of targets for Ethiopia allowing for the project to start at a lower level in year 1 and build up more gradually to

meet the targets by the end of the project period. Indicators and data collections methods have also been reviewed in order to meet the reporting requirements.

Major Challenges, Constraints and Lessons Learned

The main challenge has been finding suitable staff to fill the positions, but the search continues.

The OCA has been postponed in order to find convenient dates for both Retrak and Nupita staff. Dates have been set for April in UK and May in Uganda, but none set yet for Ethiopia.

With a growing team in place to focus on M&E the activities are being reviewed and improved to ensure that children can be tracked through the different programs, that the quality of information gathered is consistently accurate and reliable and that the different information needs within the project and outside are met.

Brief summary of activities planned for the next 6 months (to be reported on in the next report).

The next 6 months (April-September 2009) will see the beginning of OVC activities under PEPFAR funding, these will fall under the following strategic objectives:

1. Enable OVC to begin the transition from street life through meeting their psychosocial, health and education needs

Retrak will provide counseling and basic commodities to OVC on the streets, through street outreach visits and activities at the drop-in centers including sports, counseling, basic medical care and referral and night shelter. This will lead to OVC participating in life skills classes, health and hygiene classes and HIV/Aids peer education and VCT as appropriate. OVC will also be able to attend catch-up education classes (for which a curriculum is being developed).

2. Enable OVC to be reintegrated into a sustainable family context

Together with social workers each child will determine the best way forward. Some children in Uganda will pass through the Tudabujja Halfway home is the social workers determine that they need a more intensive period of preparation. Some OVC will be assisted to unify with their families, others will be placed in foster care. The social workers will continue to follow-up these children and families to ensure they are progressing well. If the family is assessed to be needy they may be enabled to access an IGA grant.

3. Build the capacity of Retrak projects to improve quality and efficiency

Retrak will work closely with Nupita to consolidate Retrak's policies and procedures (including HR and finance) and to undertake the OCA (April-May). Staff will attend relevant training workshops. Retrak's M&E system will continue to be developed, including a database.

4. Strengthen partnerships, both locally and internationally

Retrak will continue to build close relationships with local authorities as well as relevant MPs in whose brief OVC lie. Retrak will also continue to link with like-minded NGOs, especially through the Kampala Inter-NGO Forum or Addis Ababa network. Retrak will also explore closer collaboration with Grassroots soccer and the local Kampala Kids League to develop its sports program and with the Consortium for Street Children around issues of advocacy and research.

Budget: Estimated budget and actual expenditure for reporting period

This is at Zero as we were incorrectly working on the assumption that we couldn't draw down any of the obligation amount of \$100,000 until the workplan was approved.

IV. Summary Table of PEPFAR Indicators including numbers targeted and results

Since implementation of OVC programs has not yet begun there are no results to report for the PEPFAR indicators.

V. Project Implementation by Strategic Objective

All activities during this period were part of start-up

Retrak Uganda

Results of activities

During the period from December 2008 to March 2009, Retrak Uganda was focusing on program start-up activities to provide a solid base for the entire project. Retrak planned to;

1. Undertake an initial induction with the entire staff team about this project to ensure thorough understanding of benefits and responsibilities.
2. Recruit 3 new staff that is a teacher, sports coordinator and social worker and transfer M&E responsibilities to one staff member in Uganda. These appointments and the M&E elements of this project will be complemented by a project running concurrently during this first 10 month period (funded by Comic Relief) with the aim of building a robust M&E and Information Communication Technology system for Retrak Uganda, which can then be transferred and adjusted for Retrak Ethiopia.
3. Undertake an Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA), with JSI-Nupita, to assist Retrak to understand areas of strengths and weaknesses, identify gaps and put in place capacity building plan.
4. Review project plans and targets and prepare for intake of children under PEPFAR funding from 1st April.

To this end, Retrak Uganda has so far

1. Key members of the Retrak Uganda team, plus others from Ethiopia and UK attended the PEPFAR NPI launch from 9-12 February 2009. This enabled the team to get a thorough understanding of PEPFAR and the workings of the NPI grant. Following this the Retrak Uganda staff were made aware of the PEPFAR program thorough presentations in staff meetings and in-depth discussions with key staff members such as the social workers.
2. A Monitoring and Evaluation officer has been appointed. Cherrie Agabalinda was formerly the Administrator for Retrak Uganda. She has a wealth of knowledge and experience of Retrak's work and of NGO management and M&E. Cherrie will take the lead in M&E and reporting for PEPFAR at Retrak Uganda.
3. OCA postponed jointly by Nupita and Retrak to April-May 2009.
4. To prepare for the start of PEPFAR activities a Retrak, a review of the Baaba project (HIV/AIDS prevention through peer education on the streets) has been undertaken in terms of drawing a work plan for this program to identifying the key activities and the key outreach areas. Preparation is also underway to hire a Sports Coordinator and a Social Worker. The Sports coordinator will be the line manager for the Baaba outreach program. A new teacher has been hired to lead the catch-up education activities at the drop-in centre who will start in June 2009. Selection and identification of OVC to join the various programs has also begun along with the Identification of foster care families.

Challenges in achieving targets

Retrak has been able to successfully carry out most of the start-up activities. The OCA has been postponed in order to find convenient dates for both Retrak and Nupita staff. It will be carried out in Uganda in the first week of May.

Brief listing of activities planned for next reporting period or year

In Uganda the next 6 months (April-September 2009) will see the beginning of OVC activities under PEPFAR funding, these will fall under the following strategic objectives:

5. Enable OVC to begin the transition from street life through meeting their psychosocial, health and education needs

Retrak will provide counseling and basic commodities to OVC on the streets, through activities at the drop-in centers including sports, counseling, basic medical care and referral and night shelter. This will lead to OVC participating in life skills classes, health and hygiene classes and HIV/Aids peer education (Baaba) and VCT as appropriate. OVC will also be able to attend catch-up education classes.

6. Enable OVC to be reintegrated into a sustainable family context

Together with social workers each child will determine the best way forward. Some children will pass through the Tudabujja Halfway home is the social workers determine that they need a more intensive period of preparation. Some OVC will be assisted to unify with their families, others will be placed in foster care. The social workers will continue to follow-up these children and families to ensure they are progressing well. If the family is assessed to be needy they may be enabled to access an IGA grant.

7. Build the capacity of Retrak projects to improve quality and efficiency

Retrak will work closely with Nupita to consolidate Retrak's policies and procedures (including HR and finance) and to undertake the OCA (April-May). Staff will attend relevant training workshops. Retrak's M&E system will continue to be developed, including a database.

8. Strengthen partnerships, both locally and internationally

Retrak will continue to build close relationships with local authorities as well as relevant MPs in whose brief OVC lie. Retrak will also continue to link with like-minded NGOs, especially through the Inter-NGO Forum and its work at the Kampiringisa National Rehabilitation Centre. Retrak will also explore closer collaboration with Grassroots soccer and the local Kampala Kids League to develop its sports program and with the Consortium for Street Children around issues of advocacy and research.

Retrak Ethiopia

Results of activities

During the period from December 2008 to March 2009, Retrak Ethiopia was focusing on program start-up activities to provide a solid base for the entire project. Retrak planned to;

1. Undertake an initial induction with the entire staff team about this project to ensure thorough understanding of benefits and responsibilities.
2. Recruit new staff including nurse and M&E Officer. These appointments and the M&E elements of this project will be complemented by a project running concurrently during this first 10 month period (funded by Comic Relief) with the aim of building a robust M&E and Information Communication Technology system for Retrak Uganda, which can then be transferred and adjusted for Retrak Ethiopia.
3. Undertake an Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA), with JSI-Nupita, to assist Retrak to understand areas of strengths and weaknesses, identify gaps and put in place capacity building plan.
4. Review project plans and targets and prepare for intake of children under PEPFAR funding from 1st April.

To this end, Retrak Ethiopia has so far

1. The country director from RETRAK Ethiopia attended the PEPFAR launch in Kampala in February 2009. Following this key staff members have been briefed about the PEPFAR grant and this has been discussed at staff meetings and also 1:1 with key staff. A workshop was held in March on Retrak's 3 year strategic plan that will incorporate the PEPFAR activities and this was a great time of re-energizing the staff and helping them to understand the aims, goals and vision of the project over the coming 3 years. There were very positive responses from staff on this workshop. Sessions have been held with staff to introduce them to the concept of timesheets and various changes in accounting practices. Time

sheets are currently being prepared in both Amharic and English so non-English speakers can have a better understanding of their obligations in this area.

2. In the next 6 month period Retrak will seek to recruit a PEPFAR program manager, they will most likely be based in Addis Ababa and the role would also incorporate responsibilities for M&E in Ethiopia. As we wait for this appointment and the outcome of M&E activities in Uganda, some simple monitoring tools such as work registers have been updated to ensure that the counting of beneficiaries is more accurate and efficient. January 2009 saw a new social worker, Tegistu Petros, begin work (replacing Eden Afewerk in a key personnel position). He is working well and playing a significant role in the life-skills curriculum development. His orientation also includes covering the aspects of counseling and of family reunifications that will play a key part in our future PEPFAR activities. We are looking to recruit a nurse and another social worker to increase our capacity in both the medical and social work/counseling areas.
3. OCA postponed jointly by Nupita and Retrak to April-May 2009
4. The PEPFAR project plans have been reviewed, especially in Ethiopia since the original plans were written before our work in Ethiopia was fully up and running. The targets for Ethiopia have been revised to reduce the numbers in Y1 and make up in later years. We aim to still reach the same number of beneficiaries. To prepare for the start of PEPFAR activities our social workers are currently working to improve and update our life-skills curriculum and programs which also includes sexual health and HIV/AIDS awareness. A recent count of the 54 newly registered beneficiaries into the project revealed that nearly half of them had not even heard of HIV/AIDS. Classes for these boys have already begun!

Challenges in achieving targets

We have successfully carried out most of the planned activities. We have been constrained in areas of recruitment by the lack of suitable staff, however we are continuing with the search and in the very near future should fill the position.

The OCA has been postponed in order to find convenient dates for both Retrak and Nupita staff. Dates have been set for April in UK and May in Uganda, but none set yet for Ethiopia.

Brief listing of activities planned for next reporting period or year

In Ethiopia the next 6 months (April-September 2009) will see the beginning of OVC activities under PEPFAR funding, these will fall under the following strategic objectives:

1. Enable OVC to begin the transition from street life through meeting their psychosocial, health and education needs

Retrak will provide counseling and basic commodities to OVC on the streets, through street outreach visits and activities at the drop-in centers including sports, counseling, basic medical care and referral and night shelter. This will lead to OVC participating in life skills classes, health and hygiene classes and HIV/Aids peer education and VCT as appropriate. OVC will also be able to attend literacy and catch-up education classes.

2. Enable OVC to be reintegrated into a sustainable family context

Together with social workers each child will determine the best way forward to enable them to be reunified with their families. The social workers will continue to follow-up these children and families to ensure they are progressing well. If the family is assessed to be needy they may be enabled to access an IGA grant.

3. Build the capacity of Retrak projects to improve quality and efficiency

Retrak will work closely with Nupita to consolidate Retrak's policies and procedures (including HR and finance) and to undertake the OCA (April-May). Staff will attend relevant training workshops. Retrak's M&E system will continue to be developed, including a database.

4. Strengthen partnerships, both locally and internationally

Retrak will continue to build close relationships with local authorities as well as relevant senators in whose brief OVC lie. Retrak will also continue to link with like-minded NGOs, especially through the new network. Retrak will also explore closer collaboration with Grassroots soccer to develop its sports program and with the Consortium for Street Children around issues of advocacy and research.

VI. Monitoring and Evaluation

Overview of M&E activities challenges and lessons learned

This period marked the beginning of a review and development of Retrak's M&E system, especially in Uganda (funded by Comic Relief). The M&E system will involve a variety of tools and mechanisms, including a specially designed database, to track progress in activities and changes.

To date Retrak has:

- Held an initial workshop with staff in Uganda with the aim of reviewing and thinking critically about our M&E activities
- Appointed Cherrie Agabalinda as M&E Officer for Retrak Uganda and enabled her to attend a M&E training with Joanna Wakia, Regional Support Development Officer
- Begun an assessment of information needs
- Begun the development of a Retrak database, building on an existing system developed for a similar project in Malawi
- Reviewed the PEPFAR indicators and how these link to Retrak's own indicators and data collection methods.¹

Major lessons learnt from these activities include:

- There is a need to develop a robust system to ensure that each individual boy's involvement can be tracked throughout the program in order to avoid double counting. This will initially be addressed through better use of registers and children's files, but ultimately will be addressed through the database.
- The staff workshop revealed that in Uganda Retrak is already doing a lot of activities which collect information. However we are challenged by poor quality and inconsistency, and poor documentation and systems and a lack of a manager. We also lack clarity around and the tools to analyze and use information for sharing and learning. Some of these issues have already been addressed, such as the appointment of an M&E Officer. The recognition of areas of weaknesses will be key focuses as the M&E system is developed.
- The assessment of information needs is clearly showing the different needs at different levels of management and with different roles. This is complemented by the review of PEPFAR indicators which has shown how donors and partners will require certain information and presentation in certain formats which our M&E system must be able to adjust to.

Results of any surveys, studies or evaluations conducted during reporting period

No studies have been completed during this period, but a needs assessment and project assessment in Kampala have been planned, consultants contracted and initial research begun. The field work and reports will be completed in April and May. A capacity assessment focusing on expansion and scale-up will also be undertaken in May.

Descriptions of new monitoring tools and methods created by program

The Regional Support Development Officer and Uganda M&E Officer are working on a series of new tools based on Outcome Mapping (developed by International Development Research Centre in Canada), Child Status Index (designed by MEASURE Evaluation) and Step-by-Step (designed by Oasis) to especially help track the qualitative outcomes in OVC's and their families' lives as a result of Retrak's interventions.

¹ The staff workshop, M&E training, database development and information needs assessment are all funded by Comic Relief

M&E table of indicators

Since implementation of OVC programs has not yet begun there are no results to report for the PEPFAR indicators.

VII. Program Management

- Include all major management-related activities planned/completed, including: staff hiring or changes in key personnel or their level of effort, other significant changes in staffing, staff training, changes in organizational structure, major challenges/constraints, responses and lessons learned

The most notable change to key personnel is detailed above as Tegistu Petros.

During February after the Country Directors returned from the launch even in Kampala we delivered training for the staff around the PEPFAR program and also the use of timesheets.

In March we had a 'roadshow,' which launched the new Retrak strategic Plan for 2009 – 2012. During this we carried out interactive activities with staff, it was a hugely positive and beneficial time for the organization. We also took this time to deliver training for staff around supervision and personal objectives, which are now being rolled out across the organization for the first time.

VIII. Budget

- Overview of expenditures for the six months (were they as planned for the activities planned, were there additional expenditures incurred, what are the implications of spending for this FY)

This is \$nil as running the start of the project and working (as stated above) incorrectly on the assumption we could not draw down any monies from the obligation amount until the workplan was approved. The next semi-annual report will document the spending here.

In terms of a pipeline analysis it is \$100,000, i.e. the amount obligated as a result of the cooperative agreement signed in December.

IX. Other Issues

- We have begun examining two avenues for sustainability to support Retrak to continue activity after PEPFAR funding ends. Further reports will follow.
- In Uganda we have met with GOAL and the NuPita team. In Ethiopia we have met with the USAID staff and also have brought in Save the Children to deliver training on child safeguarding in the field. We are also beginning discussions with Grassroots soccer to identify how we can better work together.

X. Success Stories

Although Retrak has not started working with OVC under this PEPFAR initiative there are some boys who have already been registered and will be benefiting from 1st April. These include the boys in the story from Retrak Ethiopia.

Recently Retrak's social worker, Fekadu, came upon 3 small boys staring up at him from the bushes by the entrance to his church. He got talking to them and discovered that Yohannas, Petros and Matios² had all come to the city from a town about 4 hours away. They all lived in the same poor neighbourhood of this town and all three of them had recently lost their dads. Scared and wondering what would become of their lives in the future they decided to run away to the city together to see if they could make a new life.

Thinking they had arrived in the city of Addis Ababa, they got off of the truck they had begged a lift on, only to discover they were just on the outskirts of the city - near to where Fekadu lives. For one month they had been sleeping on shop verandas and begging for food. They were hungry and dirty and quickly told Fekadu that they hated Addis Ababa and were desperate to return back to their mums. But they did not know how.

Retrak was able to bring all three boys into the drop-in centre where they received counselling as well as a safe place to stay as the Retrak team organized for their return home.

In the past few days another Retrak social worker, Tegistu, has taken the boys back home. As their families are all known to each other and all live close together, Tegistu brought the three widows together and discussed with them some possible alternatives for income generation activities. He also was able to introduce them to the local council (kebele). Together with some support from the council, Retrak will enable these 3 mums to collaborate together to make a small business and increase their ability to look after their young families. With this support and follow-up we hope that these families can stay together and the children will not be tempted to run away again.

² name changed to protect children's identity