



COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMS
FOR PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC DISEASES INCLUDING HIV/AIDS

2014 St. Lucia Newsletter



Message from the Executive Director

Our excitement of starting the year 2014 faded when we lost a child who lived in the Home. However, we are still spirited as we face the challenges and opportunities available to fight HIV/AIDS pandemic and cancer in our local region.

We believe that our efforts to combat HIV/AIDS will contribute to the path of achieving the National Vision of “3 zero” aimed at combating HIV/AIDS infection. The aim is “**Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths**” while supporting children and their families to be able to live their lives to the best of their ability for as long as possible. Our activities in the year 2014 will focus on three thematic areas of public palliative care preventive services which include:

- prevention of mother to child transmission
- early referral of children with signs and symptoms of cancer
- training to caregivers on prevention of cross infections at family level (sick children who are at risk of contacting diseases, such as TB, from their family members)

Our activities at the community level are growing. This past quarter, we have reached more than 250 beneficiaries to offer our care and support: referral services to health care settings for cancer and TB interventions; prevention of HIV/AIDS from mother to child to 8 children; and numerous trainings to caregivers.

I am so grateful to everyone locally and internationally who worked with us in so many ways to achieve our goals. It is hard to mention everyone in this paragraph, but I always thank my colleagues who work tirelessly to achieve our goals. And a huge thanks to community health workers at the grassroots level who have been the major link in the continuum of care of St. Lucia from the community to various health care settings and vice versa.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our donors, Jackie and Patrick Wilson, of Lausanne, Switzerland for their immeasurable commitment and their huge ongoing support of our projects.

THE NEED IS GREAT. OUR WORK GOES ON. WITHOUT ALL OF YOU WE COULD NOT CONTINUE OUR MISSION.

THANK YOU

Watch us Grow at St. Lucia!

- **School Enrollment**

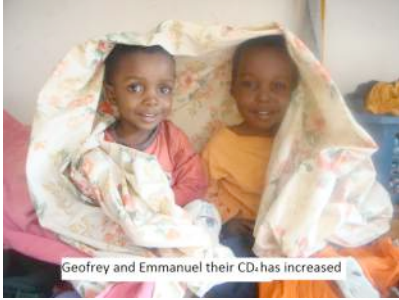
School Enrollment for Winner and John Bosco to Kindergatten and Teddy and Shamimu to Grade One!

Being compromised by the HIV/AIDS virus is not easy. Despite frequent hospitalisations, fighting TB infection, and various other opportunistic infections, our children have thrived and are now enrolled in school! They like it and Teddy was the first one in her class in the first term! For those of you who remember John Bosco when he was admitted, dying, to St.Lucia, he truly is a living example of what good nutrition and early medical/nursing interventions can accomplish.

Going to school is so much fun, they so much enjoy the company of other students and it fights the stigma of AIDS to be interated into a regular school. . They feel so proud in their school uniforms. Don't they look wonderful!!!!



Congratulation Teddy For Being the First in Class First Term 2014!



Child Growth And Development



- **Behaviour Board**

Raising children in the home, all of whom came from different social backgrounds, is very challenging. When their health stabilizes, we realised that some of them have bad behaviors. After the death of their parents, these children have been in various adverse settings. Most have been stigmatised by their extended family members; bullied at school for having HIV/AIDS; neglected and punished because of their illness, for example, frequent vomiting and diarrhea which disturbed family members. Some of these little children have also been living in the street before coming to St.Lucia!

The purpose of the “behaviour board” is to encourage positive behaviours. There is a mark on the board every time the child does positive as well as negative things according to guidelines developed by the children themselves. It has worked out very well and children are now motivated to do many good behaviours as there is award for those who have done the most good.





We are very proud that Amanda, a 9 year old girl, who was terminally ill last quarter, has recovered and is now learning how to walk properly, as she has weakness on her left side, and she is also learning how to speak. She has been devastated by the AIDS virus, but we are very happy, that due to care given in the Home, she has improved.

AND TO ALL OUR DONORS, WE HOPE THAT FROM TELLING YOU SOME OF THESE STORIES YOU WILL BETTER UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF YOUR DONATIONS – YOU ARE SAVING LIVES –

Sustainability at St. Lucia Home

We are striving to sustain ourselves with crop production. This past quarter, we have taken advantage of the rainy season and have planted maize for food consumption.



INTERGRATING PALLIATIVE CARE INTO HOME BASED CARE SERVICES

Our work in the Community

- **Psychosocial impact of children Infected with HIV/AIDS**



Among the MANY negative impactS of HIV/AIDS, is the sad fact that many children are infected with THE HIV/AIDS virus and, having lost their parents to the disease, they are now being cared for by elderly grandparent(s). It becomes even more challenging when these grandparents themselves become sick.

In the picture above, the child, Omary, is cooking for his grandmother and young sister, Zulpha, who is also infected with HIV/AIDS and has an eye infection. The community health worker mobilised the community to support this family as grandmother (above picture) is currently bed ridden due to a hip fracture. But it is not always the case that the neighbours will support families in need due to their own challenges and to fear and stigma. This leads to children becoming weak due to their HIV/AIDS status, they drop out of school and they have to become beggers in order to feed themselves and their sick grandmother.

- **Training for caregivers on caring for sick children at home**

Both father and son are HIV positive



This quarter we have facilitated trainings to caregivers, responsible for caring for children living with HIV/AIDS, about the importance of proper nutrition, prevention of cross infection at family level and drug adherence for patients with TB and for those on an antiretroviral treatment regimen.

- **Training to community health workers on detection of early symptoms of cancer in children**

Most of childhood cancer is treated in early stages. However, according to the survey done in Tanzania among patients admitted to hospital, it takes on average 2.9 months from when a sick child is first taken to see a health professional until they are referred to the cancer treatment institution.

This has extreme negative effects on survival. Edward, pictured here, is one of the children in the program who was referred and diagnosed with leukemia at Ocean Road Cancer Hospital. Another child died within two days of admission as it was explained that it was too late to save his life.



Through our community health workers, St. Lucia has strongly advocated for and encouraged community members to learn that early detection of childhood cancer can save lives. We teach the early symptoms and where to take the children for medical check-ups.

- **Training to community health workers on prevention of malnutrition**

Food insecurity is the major cause of malnutrition for children living with HIV/AIDS. They have to take daily HIV drugs without food causing them to become weak and decreasing their CD4 cell count.

200 children with HIV/AIDS in the rural Arusha villages of Mlangarini and Manyire have been verified to be at risk of becoming malnourished and could therefore benefit from receiving a chicken and a roster.

The first part of this project was going into the villages accompanied by respected community leaders and community health workers to identify potential beneficiaries. The 200 children ranged in age from 3 to 12 years old. The team ensured that the beneficiaries were able to raise and properly care for the chickens.

Verifying the beneficiaries was a challenging part of the project both physically and emotionally. The geographical location of the beneficiaries made it difficult to gather the necessary data in a timely manner. In some instances, the potential beneficiaries lived a considerable walking distance from one another.

The emotionally difficult part was that the need for assistance was painfully apparent. In most cases, patients had more problems than just nutritional needs. Examples include: lack of mattresses and mosquito nets; and learning that the children were not attending school because they lacked the basic requirements - a school uniform, paper and pencils.

That said, the chicken project will support these children and their families with nutrition and, also, potentially as income generative assistance to help them with other basic needs like having funds to send their children to hospital to get routine check for HIV/AIDS and receive their monthly medication for HIV/AIDS.

The pictures below are some of the children and families who benefitted from receiving chickens and roosters



- **Preventing transmission of HIV/AIDS from mother to child (PMTCT)**

The baby in the picture below, Neema, is 8 months old. She was not breast feed to prevent getting HIV/AIDS infection from her mother. She is now in the care of her grandmother as her mother died a month ago from AIDS. Her father was unknown.

In addition to ending HIV infections in children, PMTCT programs provide other significant benefits: they offer an opportunity to save the lives of mothers by improving the coverage of HIV-positive women on antiretroviral drugs and they significantly decrease the risk of transmitting the virus to uninfected partners.



- **Prevention of Tuberculosis**

TB is curable. But with the development of Multi Drug Resistant (MDR), a life threatening condition that is difficult to treat, the need is more urgent for these patients to receive palliative care when they are co-infected with HIV.

THE NEED IS GREAT. OUR WORK GOES ON. WITHOUT YOU WE COULD NOT CONTINUE OUR MISSION. HEARTFELT THANKS.

