

## Interim Report III

Adopt a Village – Osenetoi

Submitted To:

SVQF

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Free The Children has seen a lot of change take place in 2011 on the ground in Kenya. Highlights include collaboration between special partners, passionate young people and resilient community members that resulted in the building of a brand new medical clinic, one of the regions first all girls secondary schools and the creation of an innovative Village Savings and Loans Association. These achievements are a testament to Free The Children's focus on sustainability and innovation, two tenets that are critical to making positive change possible in the world. Sustainability is intertwined into every project Free The Children implements. Free The Children has included a special focus section on sustainability in this report to highlight its importance to the organization.

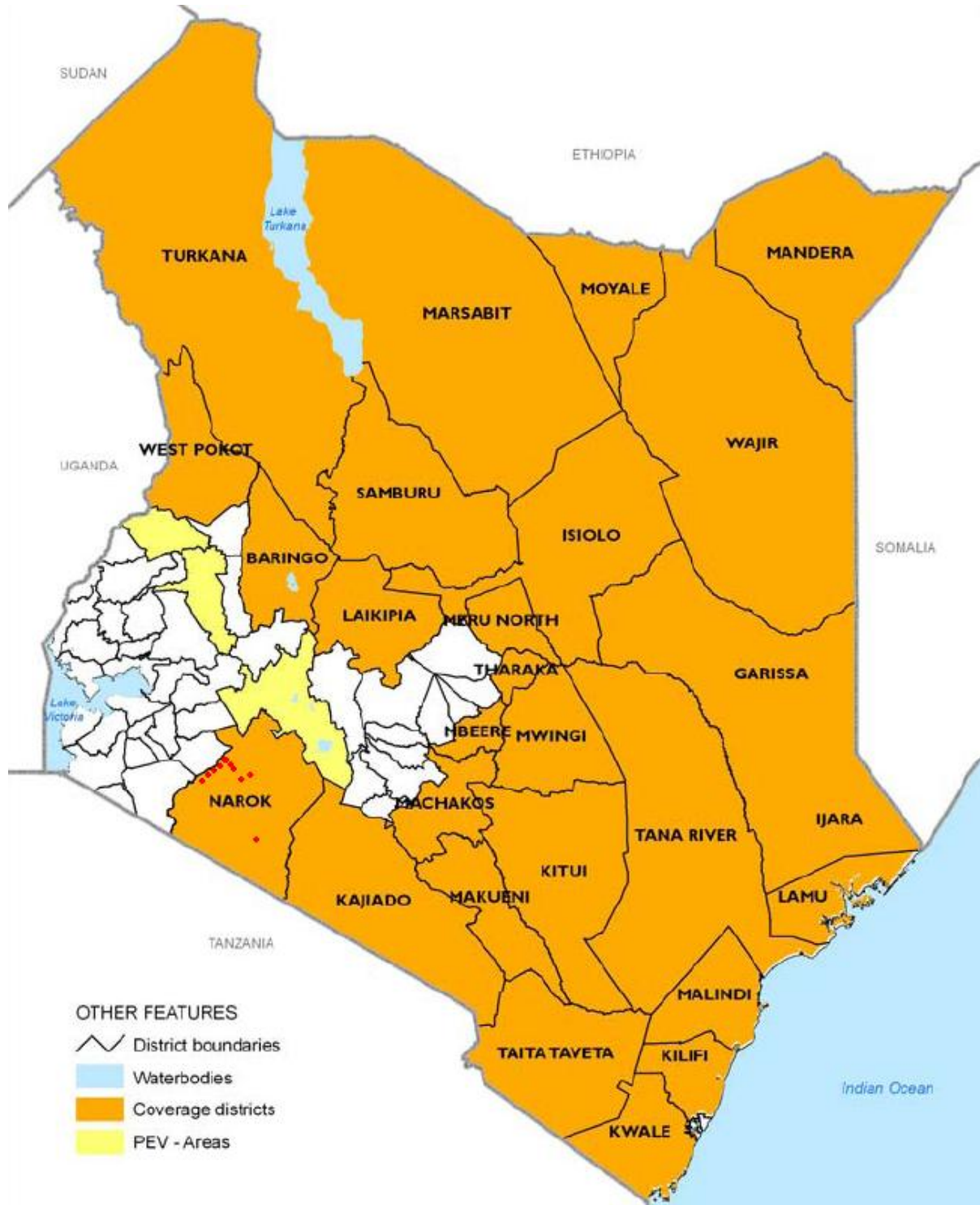
This spring, we are especially pleased to report back to Sanam Vaziri Quraishi Foundation (SVQF) on the progress it has helped make in Osenetoi, Kenya. Thanks in large part to SVQF's benevolent support, Adopt a Village programs continue to move forward and reach out to thousands of people every day, offering them the opportunity to play a critical role in their community's development and sustainable growth.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<b>Program</b>	<b>Adopt a Village</b>
Country	Kenya
Program Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide access to quality primary education</li> <li>• Provide access to clean and safe water for all community members</li> <li>• Provide access to standard health care facilities and medical resources.</li> <li>• Increase empowerment and independence of women</li> <li>• Increase base family income through sustainable and diversified income generating activities</li> </ul>
Sectors of Focus	Education, Water and Sanitation, Health, Alternative Income
Operational Area	Osenetoi, Narok South District, Kenya
Program Start Date	December 2010
Funding Partner	Sanam Vaziri Quraishi Foundation (SVQF)
Total Budget	\$250,000
Funds Disbursed to Date	\$75,000
Predicted Number of Beneficiaries	2,000 (Direct and Indirect)
Free The Children Contact	Alexandra Martin, Program Manager

## MAPS

### Kenya District Level Map





## Communities



## ADOPT A VILLAGE - OSENETOI

In recent months, Free The Children has celebrated many successes in Kenya. Free The Children has continued to build primary schools, drill new clean water wells and engage hundreds of mamas in beekeeping and beading programs. And on top of all that, we are excited to announce that we will begin working with three new communities in 2011.

Through SVQF's continued support, Free The Children's Kenyan programming is experiencing an unprecedented level of growth—providing health care to over 40,000 people, making higher education accessible to young women from many different communities in the Mara and providing primary education to thousands of children who otherwise would not have had the opportunity to go to school.

## EDUCATION

### Impacts at a Glance

Number of school-aged children	325
Number of students enrolled and regularly attending	260
Number of boys enrolled	134
Number of girls enrolled	126
Total number of classrooms needed to accommodate the students	8
Number of pre-existing permanent classrooms	3
Number of pre-existing semi-permanent classrooms needing to be repaired or rebuilt	2
Number of new classrooms to be built through SVQF	5
Number of classrooms currently under construction	1
Total number of teachers needed to instruct classes	8
Number of teachers currently employed	7
Number of teachers (from surrounding regions) participating in Free The Children's professional development opportunities	58

The illiteracy rate in Osenetoi is 80 per cent amongst men and 90 per cent amongst women. Approximately 20 per cent of the village's primary school-age children are not in school. There are only five classrooms currently accommodating the 260 children who do attend school in Osenetoi Primary. Of the five classrooms, only three are permanent structures, while the other two are semi-permanent. The semi-permanent structures need to be repaired and rebuilt regularly in order to keep them in working condition. There are five educators leading classes in Osenetoi for the students.

There are 134 boys and 126 girls currently enrolled at Osenetoi Primary. There are several factors that limit the education potential of children in this community. The most common reasons include a high burden of household labour on children, such as herding cattle, early marriage and unwanted and early pregnancies. These factors in turn result in some primary school dropout. January marked the beginning of a new school year in Osenetoi. Though registration and enrolment is typically low at the start of an academic year in rural communities, Free The Children is proud to say that registration numbers were consistent with the total number of school-age children that were attending by the end of the last

school year. There were 254 students who registered for semester one at Osenetoi Primary. A vast improvement from last year is the increased number of educators now present at Osenetoi Primary.

Whereas there were only five teachers to lead classes for 260 students last academic year, there are now seven teachers who instruct grades one through to seven. By having more teachers on staff, we can ensure that students receive a quality education at the appropriate level for their age. By next year, Free The Children will have enough resources in place to ensure that students who complete grade seven as of December 2011 can complete a full course of primary education through the addition of grade eight. The grade eight teacher will play a vital role in ensuring the students are prepared to write the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education exams, enabling students to apply to secondary school.

Both the students and the teachers at Osenetoi Primary have had a very busy past month, as they have been preparing for end of term one examinations. School closes during the month of April and reopens in May. During this period, Free The Children and a team of community members are actively working on the new school build site. To date, the team has begun digging the trenches for the foundation to be poured for classroom one.

The head teacher at Osenetoi Primary, Mr. Stanley Nabala, was elected as the Chairman of the Head Teachers' focus group. The selection took place during the first Head Teachers' focus group meeting which was held at Enelera community hall. The meeting was Nabala's first experience participating in such a forum, however, his exceptional leadership qualities, fresh perspective, and the respect his fellow teachers' showed toward him, earned him the position through a competitive election process. His colleagues conveyed that they chose him because he represents one of the core values that they have grown to admire, humility in all endeavours at the same time as speaking with authority.

Over the next month, school-building activities will continue on the school site while the students remain on holidays. Construction activities will remain ongoing, particularly over the summer months.

## **WATER AND SANITATION**

Ill health amongst the villagers is most often a result of poor water and sanitation facilities and practices. None of the households have access to safe drinking water or proper sanitation facilities. The main sources of water for this community include rain water, shallow dams that collect water only during the rainy season, and a semi-protected spring which is a three hour walk from the village. The shallow dams are dug by the community members directly outside their homes in preparation for the rains. In the dry season, women and girls have very little time to commit toward their normal activities including beadwork, weaving and school in order to cover the long walk to collect water.

Waste management is another area for improvement amongst the villagers. There is only one latrine for the community which is owned by the chief. At the school site, there are two permanent and one semi-permanent latrine, however these are all in disrepair. Community-based water and sanitation activities have not yet commenced. School-based water and sanitation education has begun amongst the students.

The community of Osenetoi looks forward to a wide range of new water and sanitation programs to meet their health needs in the near future including latrine construction, placement of new hand-washing stations, community-based education and a large scale water project.

## HEALTH CARE

### Impacts at a Glance

Number of students receiving lunch	254
Number of students participating in school based environment programs	40
Number of children participating in de-worming program	140

Health care is a significant concern for the community members in Osenetoi. The most common health problems include exposure illness while herding cattle due to dust and rain, waterborne illness due to poor waste management and hygiene including typhoid, and respiratory tract infections as a result of poor ventilation in homes. Other illnesses affecting the villagers include malaria, dysentery, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and diarrhoea. Drought conditions in the village lead to poor nutrition among children and adults.

The infant mortality rate in Osenetoi is 15 per cent and there is a high incidence of miscarriage. Child under-five mortality is 10 per cent. Maternal mortality is relatively low; however the most common complication resulting in death is placenta retention. This is because most women give birth at home and do not visit a hospital for a check-up after delivery. There are no health care facilities within a 10km radius of the village, nor are there any private practitioners.

With the start of a new school year, the students of Osenetoi are benefitting from the school-based nutrition program. The nutrition program ensures that each student attending primary school receives a hot midday meal for lunch. The meal typically consists of maize, beans, or rice, with an increasing focus on diversifying the students' diets to include more nutrient-rich foods, such as cabbage, collard greens, onions, spinach, carrots and several other vegetables. Supplementing the lunch program with healthier food is done through the school garden or farm project. Each school is assigned a plot of land up to one acre that is used as a demonstration garden. Here, the students learn about agriculture best practices, small-scale irrigation, crop production, nutrition and the benefits of consuming a variety of fruits and vegetables. The students use the lessons they learn in the demonstration garden plots to implement at home.

Beyond the nutrition program, next steps have taken place to establish a strong presence for the new environment club at Osenetoi Primary School. An environmental patron was identified who will serve as the main point of contact for the 40 environment club members over the course of the school year. The environmental patron participated in a one-day training workshop in Enelerai to build their capacity to speak knowledgeably about environment issues. The environmental patron's role is first to adequately articulate environment issues to the student population by teaching the environment club members about topics relating to environment and conservation, empowering them to act as ambassadors within the school and secondly to ensure the maintenance of a healthy environment at the school site.

The training topics covered during the full-day workshop include:

- Environmental Education
- Presentation Skills & Educational Implementation Planning
- Action Planning

## ALTERNATIVE INCOME

### Impacts at a Glance

Number of Alternative Income beneficiaries	210 (Direct and Indirect)
Number of women's groups formed	2 (groups range in size from 15-30 women)
Number of training sessions/month	2
Number of women actively participating in program	46
Total funds invested to date by community members	13,900 KSH
Merry-go-round cycle	1
Length of cycle 1	Approximately 22 to 24 weeks (subject to change based on participation and area of individual investment)
Traditional areas of investment for cycle 1	Housing improvements, clean water storage tanks, kitchen chimney, kitchen utensils, school costs for children, investment in small business (on occasion)
Increase in average yearly income (since program inception)	0.2 USD to 0.5 USD

The average income for men in the community is \$40 USD per month, whereas it is only \$20 USD per month for women. Approximately 70 per cent of the villagers live on less than \$1 or \$2 USD per day. The main occupations for men are animal husbandry, and small-scale agriculture. Women mostly take up small businesses based on skilled crafts such as beadwork and weaving. Only seven per cent of the villagers operate a savings account, and 34 per cent of the villagers are in debt.

The main reasons for the debt burdens include loans taken out to expand small businesses, personal household development, school fees, and the cost of livestock rearing. The main source of food for the community members comes from livestock, household farming, and some purchase of food items at the market. Limitations to agricultural yield are the result of poor rainfall and drought. The drought in turn has led to a high incidence of livestock death. On average, 60 per cent of livestock are unable to survive drought. The only mitigation measure is to move to areas with greener pasture.

Over the past few months, women from Osenetoi began their formation of several new women's groups. These new groups represent their entry into phase one of the traditional three-phase merry-go-round Free The Children implements in Kenya. Enemeyan women's group is the first group to be formed in Osenetoi. The group is comprised of 22 members. The mamas meet every Wednesday. Notable accomplishments for Enemeyan include a successful election for their group's executive team, namely the chairlady, treasurer and secretary.

Each of the 22 members contributed 3,500 shillings for group registration with the ministry of social services. The members of the group have also begun their first merry-go-round cycle. In the first cycle, each member has agreed to contribute 200 shillings. The activity undertaken by each member using the shared funds, will be at the discretion of the individual withdrawing the merry-go-round's pooled money, but will also be vetted by the rest of the members.

Naredoi women's group is comprised of 24 members and is the second group to be formed in Osenetoi. The members have so far been able to complete registration with the ministry of social services through a joint collection of 1,200 shillings. The mamas from Naredoi women's group have also begun their first merry-go-round. In their first cycle, the women are also investing 200 shillings each and also have the ability to choose their own pilot project at the approval of the other members.

## **VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION**

Free The Children introduced a new alternative income strategy to its programming in Kenya in 2011 to provide additional opportunities for families to earn a sustainable income. The Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) is an association that provides simple savings and loans in a community that does not have access to formal financial services.

The VSLA is a self-selected group that voluntarily forms to save money, through purchasing Shares. The savings are invested in a loan fund, from which members can borrow, repaying with a service charge added. VSLA is a form of an Accumulating Savings and Credit Association (ASCA), a generic term that describes this type of small-scale community-managed financial institution.

### **Modules**

Members are taken through 10 modules during the implementation of VSLA. The 9 Modules are:

- Groups, leadership and elections
- Development of policies and rules for social fund, share-purchase/savings and credit activities
- Development of association constitution
- Record keeping and how to manage a share purchase/savings meetings
- First share-purchase/savings meetings
- First share loan disbursement meeting
- First loan repayment meeting
- Daily slot savings
- Share out/action audit and graduation
- Sustainability

Other topics will be covered throughout trainings as well. These topics include:

- Purpose of the VSLA loan
- Factors to consider when deciding the amount of loan
- Leadership and members roles
- Farm and firm management
- Marketing and marketing skills
- Value addition initiatives
- Enterprise selection
- Farm budgeting/firm budgeting
- Credit/loan management skills
- Team work
- Time management as a resource
- Selection of common interest business/farm enterprises

- Enterprise skills

## Schedule

ACTIVITY NUMBER	ACTIVITY/STAGES
Stage 1	Identification of groups to carry out the project
Stage 2	Training on the 10 Modules
Stage 3	Resource mobilization
Stage 4	Monitoring

The introduction of the VSLA is an important step towards the development of a strong economic foundation for communities in Kenya. Through this association, families will not only have access to a secure savings method, but will have the opportunity to build strong bonds across familial and cultural lines, have a positive impact on community relations and feel an increased sense of self-worth.

## SUSTAINABILITY

All elements of Free The Children's Adopt a Village model are designed to be community owned and maintained, and self-sustained, ideally within five years after project implementation is completed. All programs are structured in partnership with community members and local governments. The purpose of these partnerships is to ensure the sustainability of the programs. By actively engaging all relevant stakeholders, Free The Children ensures that the ownership and responsibility of our projects remain with the community. This active engagement is integral to the sustainability of the programs, as the success of all initiatives becomes a shared responsibility between the community and Free The Children.

Sustainability is based on four key tenets that are incorporated in all programming:

- Capacity building
- Local engagement
- Cost sharing partnerships
- Environmental and cultural preservation

Whether it is in education, water and sanitation, health or alternative income projects, these tenets are applied to each Adopt a Village pillar. At this point in the Adopt a Village program in Osenetoi, major activities have begun in education and in alternative income; therefore, Free The Children is pleased to share the sustainability strategies for those pillars. In the coming months, Free The Children will highlight the health care and water and sanitation strategies as well.

## EDUCATION PROGRAMMING SUSTAINABILITY

**Capacity building:** During the school building process, whenever possible, Free The Children hires locally to support partner communities. In addition, job shadowing opportunities are created through which

chosen community members can job-shadow community workers. Through this initiative community members learn a new set of employable skills gaining access to greater job opportunities.

**Local engagement:** All community members are fully engaged from the inception and at each step of the project. In most communities, it is the parents, leaders and students who determine the location of the school. All must contribute during the construction process through various tasks such as carrying water to the construction site. In addition, the maintenance of the school becomes the community's responsibility; a task for which our staff helps them plan ahead.

**Cost sharing partnerships:** To ensure that the ownership and responsibility of the projects is truly shared with the local communities, both community members and the local government contribute financially to the projects in various degrees.

**Environmental and cultural preservation:** We work hard to ensure that we preserve the natural resources, minimize our environmental impact, and preserve the culture of the regions where we work.

## **ALTERNATIVE INCOME PROGRAMMING SUSTAINABILITY**

**Capacity building:** Through our alternative income programs we develop and build the capacity of community members to assume leadership and management of the projects. We provide families (especially women) with opportunities to participate in alternative income and micro-credit programs, and equipping them with the skills and tools to be successful entrepreneurs and give back to their community- financial literacy training, business planning workshops and leadership seminars.

**Cost sharing partnerships:** Free The Children helps to ensure the financial viability of the projects through merry go rounds (or other similar indigenous lending and savings circles), which enable community groups to make a significant investment in improving their own livelihood, while also contributing up to 25 per cent of their savings towards a sustainability and maintenance fund for the development projects. In Kenya, for a merry go round to work, participants determine an amount of money that they can regularly contribute (i.e. weekly) to a communal pot, an overall savings goal, and set a goal for a specific investment that they want to make. The communal pot, minus the savings amount, is then gifted to one participant one week at a time and they can use the funds to finance their personal project. The members of the group continue contributing week by week until all have received the pot and then they can decide to dissolve the group and use the savings for school maintenance or enter into a second stage of lending and savings.

**Local engagement:** Activities such as the merry go rounds, which are organized based on local community networks, ensure that by year five of the project, the community has full ownership and Free The Children provides continued support through regular visits and ongoing monitoring by indigenous outreach workers. In addition, Free The Children staff, at the local and international level, will provide any technical support to the community when invited to do so.

**Environmental and cultural preservation:** Some alternative income programs include environmentally friendly activities such as bee keeping. By encouraging local women to start their own bee keeping business we contribute to the pollination and preservation of the region's flora. To further preserve cultural knowledge, Free The Children has started artisan groups where women join together to make traditional jewellery that can then be resold in local markets.

## **CONCLUSION**

Free The Children sincerely thanks SVQF for the continued support and feedback you continue to provide. While there have been a number of successes to already come from this partnership, Free The Children is looking forward to the year ahead when it can begin to scale up alternative income programming and bring the Village Savings and Loan Association to more women, benefitting even more families in Kenya. With an eye to the future, Free The Children continues to be guided by the four components of its sustainability model, and hope that this can be one for others to follow. By supporting the provision of health care, clean water and sanitation and alternative income in Osenetoi, SVQF is helping hundreds of community members break free from the cycle of poverty. Thank you to SVQF for your commitment and passion to improving the lives of children around the world.