



Stichting Kasulu

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STICHTING KASULU ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Summary

Projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Improving Safe Delivery Among Pregnant Women in Pastoralists Maasai Communities in Longido and Monduli Districts: Support for Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) Training.2. Enhance Employment Opportunities for Youths, Young Women, and Mothers (aged between 15 and 24) by supporting Vocational Skills and Entrepreneurship (VSE) at Mother-ODA Vocational Training College, Monduli District, Arusha, Tanzania.
Period of the report	January 2024 – December 2024
Implementation	Stichting Kasulu, Maisha Pamoja Foundation (Arusha)
Funding	€ 10,200
Sources of funds	Stichting Kasulu Maisha Pamoja Foundation
Correspondence	Paul Wabike, Chairperson, Stichting Kasulu

Introduction

The Kasulu Foundation is a non-profit organisation that aims to give children from low-income families in Tanzania the opportunity to attend school. The foundation has initiated many different education/training programmes for young adults to learn a skill they can use to make a living. The foundation operates on different projects relating to education and health. We work through four distinctive programmes:

1. Sponsorship programmes – where children and young adults are sponsored to attend an education
2. Sponsor-a-skill programme – where a sponsored person learns a specific skill (such as tailoring, masonry, mechanics and electricians)
3. Training centres—We have built a training centre in the Kasulu district so that the local population can acquire basic skills. We are working with the Maisha Pamoja Foundation to realise another centre at Mto wa Mbu, Monduli district, Arusha.
4. Building cooperatives—We have built small groups of people who work together. These groups typically focus on one or two business activities. We support these groups with initial funds to start a business. Examples are Muzinga Women Development Group (Muleba district, Kagera region), Rehema Group (Mwanza city), and Maisha Pamoja (Monduli district, Arusha).

Thanks to donors and sponsors, the Kasulu Foundation has helped more than 200 children access education; 83 young adults are now clothes makers, electricians, mechanics and masons; 4 women groups are currently working together for their development; and the training centres in both Kasulu and Monduli are almost operational. We welcome you to our World, where every little help significantly impacts individuals and their communities.

About this report

This report presents the overall progress achieved from January 1st, 2024, to December 31st, 2024. During this period, Stichting Kasulu supported two projects in Northern Tanzania that our partner, Maisha Pamoja Foundation, is implementing. The following activities were implemented during this financial year, and the financial report is annexed to this report.

1. Improving Health Services in Longido District

1.1 Introduction

The training of TBAs in Longido is meant to address some of the health challenges faced by the Maasai people, who have a stubborn cultural heritage and traditional way of life in healthcare. The remoteness of their communities, coupled with limited infrastructure and resources, has historically hindered their access to comprehensive and formal medical services.

For this pastoralist Maasai community, reliance and dependency on TBAs for expecting mothers is enormous. As such, the expectant mothers' first help is from the TBA, which uses hot water, hot drinks, sheep oil (for massaging), and traditional herb concoctions during labour to help and support the expectant mothers. These are the standard practices applied by TBAs in managing birth complications at home, a practice which has been used historically. This is why most expectant women from this community prefer and trust them for all delivery cases.

However, this kind of practice has shown that TBAs are highly exposed to a very high-risk health situation that necessitates easy transmission of infectious diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis. This project, therefore, aims to support training for the TBAs, specifically from the Maasai community in Longido District, on safe delivery-support practices that will help them reduce the risks associated with helping and supporting expectant mothers who can not reach formal health facilities.

1.2 About Longido district/Maasai life:

Longido District is located in Tanzania's northeastern zone. It is one of seven districts that comprise Tanzania's Arusha Region.

It is home to the nomadic and semi-nomadic Maasai community. They are wandering pastoralists who keep cows, goats, donkeys, and sheep. The Maasai language is the

primary language spoken. A considerable percentage of the population engages in livestock keeping or some form of small-scale farming, and some still live in mud huts. The district experiences an acute shortage of health services, poor accessibility to health services, remoteness, seasonal earth roads, and long distances to health facilities.

The social nomadic life of the Maasai community, which involves commuting from one place to another in search of good pasture for their cattle, makes it difficult to access and use available health facilities at times of need. However, most of their lives still embrace traditional and cultural norms and practices.

Lack of reliable means of transport (such as cars and motorbikes) makes it more challenging during emergencies for critical cases, especially for delivering mothers; therefore, reliance on TBAs becomes the only option, as of the recent wave of youth migration (especially male youth) to larger towns has been shared. Modern lifestyle and globalisation trends are luring them.

As they move to bigger cities such as Arusha, Nairobi, and Dare es-salaam, they engage in tourism, braiding (women's hair), and guarding jobs, which offer them an assured monthly income. This tendency is becoming a real social problem, causing social inequity and disrupting the ancestral family cohesion that the Maasai community has sustained for decades.

1.3 About delivery/health services

The training of TBAs in the Longido district addresses some of the health challenges the Maasai people face in general healthcare. The training will allow this group of TBAs to learn skills and acquire safe and healthy delivery practices. Longido district experiences an acute shortage of health services, poor accessibility to health services, remoteness, seasonal earth roads, and long distances to health facilities.

The need for safe delivery (free of infectious diseases such as HIV and STDs) for TBAs will considerably offer them and women of Longido skills and means for a healthy, convenient and safe environment during the delivery process. Elementary healthcare is not readily available in rural Tanzania. Therefore, the need for training will enable a small health camp where minor health problems can be solved without needing a doctor, who is also not readily available.

The expectant rural women from this district are attended mainly by this cadre of health practitioners, as the average distance to reach the health centre is 15 km. The district has no public health centre, with only 22 dispensaries unevenly distributed in the vast 175,000 km² area. The training targets, especially pregnant mothers and will offer advice and counselling on health issues, including AIDS, safe labour-complications management, early pregnancies and hygiene.

1.4. Progress/Achievements:

1.4.1. Conduct inception meetings at District/Ward/Village levels:

The objective of this activity was to formally introduce the projects to government and political officials so as to secure their support and collaboration throughout the implementation period. All stakeholders (as identified during development) were invited.

Therefore, an inception meeting was held at Maisha Pamoja's offices on 2nd January 2024, attended by key and sectorial leaders from the local government.

A total of 20 participants (9 females and 11 males) attended this meeting, which was crucial for setting goals and building consensus to garner support.



Photo 1: Participants in discussion inception at Maisha Pamoja offices session

(Photo by Maisha Pamoja, Jan. 2024)

The inception meeting had the following objectives:

- Get stakeholders to understand the project and the team
- Create enthusiasm and understanding about the vision, goals and expectations of the work
- Build credibility within the team
- Promote communication
- Set expectations and get the project started

Participants in this meeting agreed that the situation in the two Districts is very challenging for TBAs, that technical and vocational training for the Maasai community is needed urgently, and that the TBAs need to be reviewed.

1.4.2 Mapping of TBAs from two Districts

This activity aimed to identify, locate and understand all essential information regarding the TBAs before the training was executed. The TBAs are challenging to locate or know, mainly due to the non-recognition of their services by the formal health system. Therefore, SKF, in collaboration with Maisha Pamoja and local partners, undertook a rapid mapping exercise, which was able to know the number, distribution and systems of their work (with expectant mothers).

This mapping was only done for Longido District during this reporting year; the same will be done for Monduli for the forthcoming year. A total of 67 TBAs were mapped, a number that is considered far less because, given the topography and size, it was not possible to cover the whole District area.

1.4.3. Development of Training modules and guidelines:

Before the training was executed, selected facilitators were asked to develop guidelines that should reflect the national frameworks for maternal health and practices in the country. The modules were set so that the TBAs are considered facilitators and key supporters for expectant mothers and are always expected to guide them to nearby health facilities for safe and guided delivery.

1.4.4. Conducting the trainings

TBAs training was a core component of the project. During the year-end, 40 TBAs were trained from the Olmolog Ward, Longido District. The training was hosted at Catholic Church Health Center Olmolog, facilitated by trainers from the District Health Center, and coordinated by Maisha Pamoja Organization.

1.4.5. Establish a formalised network/forum of the trained TBAs (ToTs):

Training a pool of TBAs within the Ward made a formal group of trained TBAs readily available. To use their training and knowledge effectively, a formalised network was established, whereby they will communicate and share challenges and any other complications as they engage with expectant mothers. This network/forum is official, and the District Medical Officer (DMO) is the patron.

1.4.6. Preparation and production of multimedia/promotional materials

In collaboration with SKF and Maisha Pamoja, the facilitators facilitated the production of high-quality promotional materials targeting young mothers, safe delivery and child care in general. The materials were distributed at marketplaces, churches, dispensaries and for individuals. They have been a source of education for many community members.

1.4.7. Organizing a possible study visit for best practices

To learn by seeing, a study visit was arranged for the trained TBAs to increase their exposure. The study visit also aimed to enable the TBAs to experience the practice from colleagues. One visit was made this year to the Pangani District, Tanga Region.

1.5 General challenges:

The above results were achieved amid some challenging environments:

1.5.1. Difficult to reach beneficiaries

Most TBAs and targeted youths for vocational education are remotely found. It requires time and patience to reach all, and at times, they do not show interest because of a lack of knowledge and/or exposure

1.5.2. Culture, norms and traditions

These critical factors seriously hinder the target beneficiaries from accessing the services. A pastoralist community of Maasai still practices and strictly follows their cultures, but some issues are complex to accept. However, working with traditional leaders and local NGOs has helped to address this problem

1.5.3. Topography, road network

The district size and topography are real challenges to reaching out to the beneficiaries. The road network consists mainly of gullies, bushy, and undulating land that is difficult to cruise. The government is, however, working hard to undertake periodic and spot maintenance.

1.6. Way Forward

Stichting Kasulu, in collaboration with Maisha Pamoja and their partners, is looking forward to extending the already started initiatives and escalating to new areas of the project's geographical location. Specifically, the following will be of due priority:

1.6.1. Monitoring and backstopping for initiated initiatives

SKF, in collaboration with Maisha Pamoja, will continue to monitor and follow up on all established activities and programs. This will include continuing with after-training technical support for TBA training in partnership with District and private partners. The after-training is crucial as it will give feedback and help plan for the second phase of training for the year 2025.

2. Equipping VCT class at Mother ODA VTC:

2.1. Introduction

Stichting Kasulu Foundation extended support for its already-started initiatives by supporting the donation of sewing machines to the VTC. The Foundation donated 10 sewing machines and their accessories, which not only enabled the tailoring class to fully provide each student with their machine to use while in class, which allows for practicality and flexibility for each student but has helped the centre to make it as an income generating activity and source (IGA), enabling it to fund some of its operational costs.

This support will significantly help the youths, especially the young women who are in danger of early marriages, FGM and other forms of gender-based violence from their cultural Maasai backgrounds. This support will enable them to start their own enterprises and business projects, where they will practice and attain practical life skills, which are highly needed to mitigate the lack of formal employment opportunities. The support will allow the SKF and Mother ODA, in collaboration, to achieve their desired and envisioned dual objectives of supporting the youths in becoming self-employed through practical skills and support to start-up businesses.

2.1.2. About Monduli district/Masai life

The Monduli District is among the seven districts that make up Tanzania's Arusha Region. It is situated in the country's northeastern region. The neighbouring districts are Longido to the north, Arusha Rural to the east, Manyara Region to the south, and Ngorongoro and Karatu Districts to the west. The district's administrative centre is Monduli Town. As per the Tanzanian National Census of 2022, Monduli District had a

population of 185,237 people. It is the home to the nomadic and semi-nomadic Maasai community. They are wandering pastoralists who keep cows, goats, donkeys, and sheep. The Maasai language is the primary language spoken. A considerable percentage of the population engages in livestock keeping and some form of small-scale farming; some still live in mud huts.

A considerable percentage of the population engages in some form of farming besides pastoralism, and some still live in mud huts. Maasai are generally considered kind people who live in harmony with one another. During the day, men and teenagers wander the fields with the animals while the women take care of the children and home chores. Maasai dancing is essential to the district's culture and its dwellers. The district's men have a higher authority over their families. The district has around 4.6 million animals, most of which are cattle.

2.1.3. About Mother ODA VTC

Located in Monduli district, Arusha Region of Tanzania, and 115 km from Arusha town, the Mother Oda Vocational Training Centre near Manyara National Park was officially opened in August 1997 in the Mto wa Mbu area. It is housed inside the vicinity of the Mto-wa-Mbu Catholic Parish. The Centre is accredited by the Vocational Education Training Authority (VETA), a government agency mandated by an Act of Parliament. The Centre provides vocational education for communities around and beyond the Monduli District.

It is currently being run and managed by The Little Sisters of St. Joseph (LSSJ-J) nuns, a Catholic women Franciscan religious congregation started by Msgr. Peter Joseph Savelberg in Heerlen, Netherlands, in 1872. The congregation arrived in the East African region in the 1960s and established its first base in Kilgoris, Kenya, in 1963, where it is based to this day. It has expanded to Northern Tanzania and is based at Mto-wa-Mbu Parish, Arusha.

Initially, this VCT was established to enrol only pastoralist girls between the ages of 16 and 22 who could not continue with secondary education due to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) practices, early marriages, lack of school fees for secondary education, fled young girls from their homes due to harsh and aggression behaviours restricting them from not joining secondary education. However, over time, the VTC has accepted students from all over the country due to the ever-increasing demand for such centres to accommodate more youths and young mothers. The centre (VTC)

currently provides vocational education and skills to young adults from the area and beyond to enable them to gain practical experience and skills to prepare them for life careers.

3. Progress/Achievements:

3.1. Training for young people on skills and entrepreneurship

This is the key activity towards preparing young students for formal vocational education and the environment. The foundation has been working on equipping the Mother Oda Training |College with equipment and knowledge to enhance their provision of sewing skills and tour guiding education.

The objectives of this task were to ensure that a conducive learning environment is in place before the actual training starts. Under this activity, the following were sub-activities:

3.1.2. Procuring and equipping the VTC with modern sewing machines, cutting tools and other accessories: With generous support from friends and organisations in the Netherlands, SKF, in collaboration with Maisha Pamoja, secured and donated 10 sewing machines to Mother Oda VTC to equip the tailoring class. The donation significantly impacted the centre, enabling it to restart enrollment, which had been stacked for the past two years, and enabling students to use their self-machine to combine theory and practical lessons.



Donated new sewing machines, 2024

3.1.3. Training for the use of equipments:

After the sewing machines were donated, the college and the supplier jointly conducted a trouble-shooting tailor-made course for the trainees so that they could familiarise themselves with and understand the basics of modern machines. This was done so the trainees could use, manage/fix minor technical defects and make simple repairs.



3.1.4. Outreach programs to neighbouring villages:

During this reporting period, the Nuns at Mother Oda VTC, in collaboration with the Catholic parish in the Mto-wa-Mbu area, conducted monthly outreach sessions in surrounding villages aimed at raising awareness and encouraging parents and youths (aged 12-15) to enrol at the centre immediately after primary schools' education. During this year, 25 visits were made to churches, households, and office villages and specific groups (especially women) were all reached. This program also aimed to reach and uncover any young girls who are in danger of forced early marriages and any other form of violence (such as FGM).

This program has been successful, as two young girls, aged 13 years old, have been rescued and permanently moved to settle at Mother Oda Center. SKF, in collaboration with Maisha Pamoja and other well-wishers, have supported one of the students by mobilising and sponsoring her tuition, accommodation and living costs for the one-year sponsorship. SKF is looking forward to extending efforts to cover other life-skills courses, such as tour guiding, which offer youths immediate employment so they can carry their lives.

3.2. General Challenges:

3.2.1. High demand with less capacity:

The Mother Oda VTC is overwhelmed by many aspiring and interested young girls seeking to enrol in the tailoring class. This has been a critical challenge because the current class capacity and equipment can only accommodate a specific number. The centre looks forward to expanding the classes to a new nearby site, constructing a medium-sized class, and equipping it.

3.2.2. Lack of tuition fees

Most aspiring students are often young girls seeking refuge in escape from acts of violence at home, such as forced early marriages and GFM. Therefore, most of them are still young, residing in low-income families and unable to fund their studies. The centre has, however, been striving to seek sponsors to support any number possible, giving them hope and a new life. So far, one girl, aged 13, is currently sponsored by one family from the Netherlands.

3.3. Future Plans:

The centre will work to continue its mission of supporting and sheltering young youths, especially girls, in achieving their lifelong dreams. It is in this sense that it is planning to:

3.3.1. Continue sourcing funding: This will enable more sponsorship for the youths to join the centre and acquire the skills that will enable them to carry on in their lives.

3.3.2. Continue efforts to equip the classes: This will help the trainees to acquire modern equipment and technology.

3.3.3. Continue to increase skills coverage and enrollment in other fields: The centre has learned that the tour guide course is also preferred, especially for youths of both genders, as it guarantees immediate employment.

3.3.4. Increase outreach programs: This program has proved crucial in reaching out to the community and helping them learn and understand real life in the villages. Through this, many young girls have been exposed to and rescued from harsh environments caused by strict traditional and cultural norms. The VTC will intensify the number of visits and meet different groups within the villages.