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# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

## Dear KV-HELP Friends and Supporters,

Without new project funding for its integrated approach, the KV-HELP team explored possible health interventions with partners in Ifakara. At the same time, team members decided to gain practical experience in poultry farming, an area of much interest to many women. With a small grant, the team was able to conduct a village tour to touch base with all women's self-help groups in its network. Team members also contributed to publications on the Saving4Health project implemented from 2018-2020.

We thank you for your encouragement and support and look forward to further joint initiatives.

Iddy Mayumana, Executive Director of KV-HELP

## The Organization

Kilombero Valley Health and Livelihood Promotion (KV-HELP) is a local NGO working in Southern Tanzania. Its history reaches back to 2008, when a malaria intervention project started to support women self-help groups in their livelihood activities, in order to improve their access to health care. The NGO was registered in 2012 to continue and expand these activities. Today, KV-HELP works with a vast network of women groups to improve knowledge and skills for sustaining and promoting healthy livelihoods in their families and communities.

## Modules



## The Approach

The KV-HELP office in Ifakara is a reliable and permanent contact point for women. As an outreach program, staff members offer a Mobile Village Academy and provide hands-on-training and practical support to women self-help groups.

The KV-HELP Mobile Village Academy has developed a unique modular approach integrating three key components of healthy livelihoods: 1) Saving & Lending, 2) Food Security & Microenterprise, and 3) Health Protection & Health Promotion.

## Activities

Without new project funding, the KV-HELP team continued to face financial constraints. During the first six months of 2022, a small grant allowed the staff to develop new project ideas and search for partners and funders, assisted by three volunteers, and to conduct the July village tour. The team then had to work without salary and engage in farming to earn an income. Team members decided to set up a small poultry farm in the home compound of the Executive Director of the NGO. The aim was to gain practical experience in poultry farming, an area of much interest to many women groups. In July, a small grant enabled the team to conduct a village tour to touch base with all women's self-help groups in its network. Team members further contributed to a publication on the Saving4Health project implemented from 2018-2020.

### Exploring health interventions

Responding to health care challenges seen in the field, KV-HELP joined forces with partners at the St. Francis University College of Health and Applied Sciences (SFUCHAS) in Ifakara and the Tanzania Training Centre for International Health (TTCIH).

The first challenge was related to community participation in health service management. Decentralization of health service management to local government authorities aimed at improving transparency, accountability and quality of health services through community participation in decision making. However, lack of technical knowledge on planning, budgeting, service delivery process and power relations have led to weak participation of the community representatives in these structures. On the one hand, this limits possibilities for the community to give feedback on their experience of care and provide views on the expectations they have. On the other hand, this affects the chance of health workers and managers to either respond to the concerns raised by their clients or share the relevant health information that could help to empower the respective communities. The project idea was that digital technologies, might help to close the participation gap. KV-HELP thus developed a project proposal titled "Community e-Participation for Improving Accountability and Health System Strengthening: Experience from the Implementation of Maternal and Child Health Services in the Kilombero Valley". After several weeks of idea development and draft writing, the proposal had moved far away from the key competencies of KV-HELP and the team decided to stop its engagement.

The second challenge emerged from our practical experience showing that many young people who contracted sexually transmitted diseases were not able to afford its treatment and/or were ashamed to visit health facilities for proper management. The problem seemed to be more complicated for girls than boys. Assuming that digital technology opens up new communication channels, KV-HELP developed a project proposal with an inbuilt impact evaluation. The draft title of the project idea was "*Partnership of the Private Laboratories, an-Online Doctor and Drug Outlets for Improving Adolescent and Youth Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights: experience from the Kilombero Valley*". After several discussions with the potential partners, the KV-HELP team decided to drop the idea and refocus on the expertise within the organization.

### Touching base with women groups

The aim of the village tour in June/July 2022 was to touch base with all the 18 groups that were active network members during the last visit in late 2020. The team spent two days with each group and reviewed activities in all three modules of the integrated KV-HELP approach.

Some of the groups showed remarkable resilience to the livelihood threats they had encountered, while others only slowly recovered. Overall, groups with a previous record of good performance continued to do well, while those with low performance in the past showed some signs of improvements.

Three groups reported to continue their activities as planned. Group members were satisfied with how things worked and motivated to participate in group initiatives. One group even secured agricultural support from a partner who taught them how to plant rice in farrows, provided financial support for purchasing land and

made arrangements to later buy the harvest. The new partner thus built on previous activities of KV-HELP in the frame of the Saving4Health project, and the team is keen to see the outcome of this initiative.

The leaders of six other groups have made a special effort to spur loan repayments and to revive saving activities. Their initiative has attracted new members, which is positive. On the other hand, these groups lost some older members who could not cope with the new group spirit. Although the KV-HELP team was impressed by efforts of the leaders and the new members, it also showed concern about losing weaker members. This issue was discussed with the groups and will have to be closely monitored.

Two groups that used to be very successful showed clear signs of stress. In both groups, the leaders did not comply with loan repayment rules, but the reasons differed. In one group, the leaders had faced serious and costly family problems. In the other group, leaders refused to pay without obvious reasons. After KV-HELP intervened through their ward councilor and ward executive officer, the loan defaulters agreed to pay back their loans. By December 2022, loan repayments had started. The team will have to continue monitoring these difficulties in organizational development.

During the village tour, KV-HELP further assessed family poultry. The team noted a high yet unmet local demand for village chicken. Women keep local chicken (*kuku wa kienyeji*) for subsistence, as a gift or as a reserve for unforeseen expenses. During the festive season following the rice harvest and up to Christmas (i.e. July-December), village consumption of chicken is high, but even during the rice growing season, when most farmers move to their farms, chicken are in demand at restaurants and food stalls in market and urban centers. However, local breeds grow slowly, produce few eggs and often die from common chicken diseases. Hybrid layers and broilers brought by politicians and projects have not survived under village conditions. Women have heard about improved breeds of local chicken but do not have access to them and lack the knowledge about their proper management.

### **Contributing to publications on Saving4Health**

KV-HELP contributed with its monitoring data base and its deep understanding of local livelihoods to the conception and writing of two papers on the 2018-2020 Saving4Health project.

“Savings Groups for Social Health Protection: A Social Resilience Study in Rural Tanzania”. This paper argues that women’s participation in self-help groups increased their capacities individually and as a group to access, combine and transform the different forms of assets to achieve a certain level of social health protection. The introduction of a special Savings Fund strengthened women’s capacity to overcome threats to a healthy livelihood. Groups funds enabled members to access loans for paying health insurance premiums and various health-related costs not covered by health insurance (<https://www.mdpi.com/2079-9721/10/3/63>).

“Linking the Community Health Fund with Accredited Drugs Dispensing Outlets in Tanzania: exploring potentials, pitfalls and modalities”.

In spite of improvements in the availability of medicines in public health facilities, rural communities still face drug shortages and turn to private outlets called ADDOs for medicine. Discussions with women self-help groups and the broader communities showed that they wish to see a link between the improved Community Health Fund (iCHF) and ADDOs. If there is no medicine at a public health facility, members of the iCHF should be entitled to get the respective medicines from the nearest ADDO. The idea of linking iCHF and ADDOs come from the community’s experience with the link between the ADDOs/pharmacies and National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF). The paper presents various modalities and discusses obstacles of creating this link. (<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40545-022-00507-y>).

## **KV HELP Profile**

### **Vision**

To see a Tanzanian society living a health promoting lifestyle in a context of a rapidly increasing double burden of infectious and non-communicable diseases, with KV-HELP being one of the pioneering Organizations contributing to this achievement.

### **Mission**

To work toward the goal of healthy livelihoods in Tanzania through an innovative approach that integrates development actions across health, education, agriculture/livestock and financial/entrepreneurial sectors.

### **Goal and objectives**

KV-HELP aims to promote and test development methodologies that empower individuals and self-help-groups in the communities to promote healthy livelihoods. Specific objectives are:

1. To enhance organizational and financial capacity of self-help groups through approaches like Accumulated Saving and Credit Associations (ASCAs).
2. To improve livelihoods of self-help groups members through farm and non-farm microenterprises, using methodologies like Selection, Planning and Management (SPM).
3. To strengthen health promotion with regard to infectious and non-communicable diseases using approaches like health literacy.

### **Governing Board**

Dr. Emmy Metta (Acting Chairperson), Mr. Said Mpasuka (Treasurer), Dr. Dominic Mboya, Mr. Christopher Mshana, Mr. Honorathy Urassa, Mr. Alto Mbikiye and Mr. Iddy Mayumana (Board Secretary and Executive Director). Prof. Dr. Brigit Obrist is an invited member of the Board. All of them (except the Board Secretary) work on a voluntary basis.

### **Location, address, contact**

The head office of the organization is in Ifakara town, Kilombero district in Morogoro Region, Mainland Tanzania. Its physical address is:

Along the Compound of former CCM District Headquarters

P. O. Box 43

Ifakara – Kilombero Morogoro, Tanzania

Email: [kilomberovalleyhelp@gmail.com](mailto:kilomberovalleyhelp@gmail.com)

Contact person: Iddy Mayumana, mobile: +255 684 491 866, email: [imayumana@yahoo.com](mailto:imayumana@yahoo.com).

### **Partners and funding**

KV-HELP operates within a social learning network formed by local, regional, national and international NGOs and collaborates with authorities on the village, ward and district levels. In addition to voluntary work and financial contributions from the Board members, KV-HELP obtained a small grant in 2022 from the R. Geigy-Foundation, Basel, Switzerland (Total USD nearly 23,000).