



USAID 4TheChild QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Issue 2: October – December 2021

USAID 4TheChild is a five-year (2021-2026) United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded project implemented by Moi University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) -- through the Academic Model Providing Access to Healthcare (AMPATH), and in partnership with Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) and Make Me Smile Kenya (MMS-K) -- to increase the use of quality county-led health and social services in five counties of western Kenya. Specifically, the project seeks to (i) increase access and demand to quality HIV prevention services for adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in Kisumu County as well as (ii) increase access to quality health and social services for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and their families in Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, and Siaya counties.

Tuongane Tulinde Tuwekeze Tuboreshe Afya na Elimu ya Mtoto

Remarks from the Principal, Moi University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) – Prof. Robert Tenge



In this 2nd issue of our quarterly newsletter, Moi University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) is pleased to present highlights on USAID 4TheChild implementation progress to our partners and stakeholders. During the period under review (October – December 2021), MUCHS continued to enhance engagements with the county governments of Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, and Siaya in support of our community work in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable families.

I am glad to note that following the joint evaluation of technical and cost applications in response to the MUCHS Request for Proposals in mid-2021 to support implementation of USAID 4TheChild, MUCHS managed to secure USAID approval to sub-grant an additional eight (8) local organizations across the five counties. Working with the local organizations at the grassroots level serves to further the mission of Moi University to work with stakeholders for the betterment of society, by increasing access to quality county-led health and social services to OVC households and AGYW.

In addition, the project collaborated with government departments in the counties to convene County Project Delivery Committee (CPDC) – sub-committee of County Area Advisory Council (AAC) – meetings. The CPDC provides a unique platform to deepen involvement of the county governments and the national government department of children services in the implementation and monitoring of USAID 4TheChild project.

MUCHS, and its partners under USAID 4TheChild, is keen to strengthen collaborations with various stakeholders to enhance reach and service uptake for USAID 4TheChild beneficiaries whilst supporting county-led, county-owned, and county-managed programming.

Remarks from the Acting Chief of Party (Ag. CoP), USAID 4TheChild – Kenneth Otieno



This 2nd Issue of USAID 4TheChild quarterly newsletter covers October to December 2021, the first quarter (Q1) of implementation in our second year of operations (FY2022). In this Issue, USAID 4TheChild

successfully enrolled 13,686 Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) in Kisumu County (translating to 95% of target) and managed to serve 10,898 AGYW. The AGYW interventions are implemented in 13 wards in Kisumu East, Kisumu Central, Nyando, and Muhoroni sub-counties. In addition, the project reached 145,457 Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) across the catchment (Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, and Siaya counties) with services based on need.

During the period, USAID 4TheChild conducted Market Assessment in regard to household economic strengthening interventions. The report will be disseminated to various partners and stakeholders in the next quarter and will be used to guide project interventions in support of beneficiary households. USAID 4TheChild initiated discussions with various HIV service delivery partners to develop Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to strengthen Clinical-OVC collaboration towards improving health outcomes for priority beneficiary sub-populations. The MoUs will be signed in Q2 FY2022.

USAID 4TheChild hosted teams from USAID during support supervision sessions. The USAID support supervision helped the project to identify implementation gaps and provided a platform for the project team to receive technical support in improving service delivery to our beneficiaries. The USAID teams also engaged county departments of health (CDoH) and national government directorate of children services (DCS) in Kakamega and Kisumu counties, towards co-implementation and co-monitoring of USAID 4TheChild activities.



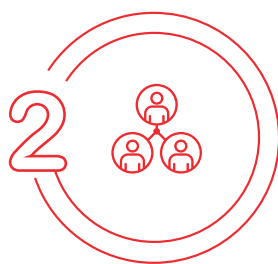
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



OVC_SERV

Number of beneficiaries served by USAID 4TheChild for children and families affected by HIV

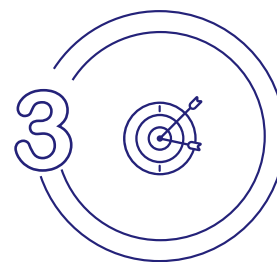
COP21 Target – 132,771 OVC
COP21 Results – 145,457 OVC
Achievement – 110%



OVC_HIVSTAT

Percentage of OVC (below 18 years old) with HIV status reported to USAID 4TheChild

COP21 Target – 102,289 OVC
COP21 Results – 117,629 OVC
Achievement – 115%



AGYW_PREV

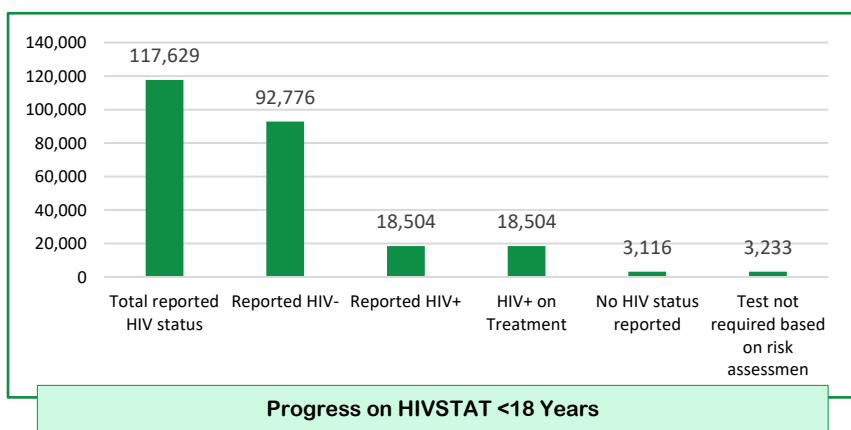
Number of AGYW who have completed the primary package of prevention according to Kenya DREAMS Layering Table

COP21 Target – 14,337 AGYW
COP21 Results – 936 AGYW
Achievement – 9%

1. Support to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and their Families

County	COP '21 Targets	OVC Case Load as at Q1			OVC Served as at Q1 (Oct-Dec 21)			% Achieved against COP '21 Target
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
		Bungoma	10,696	5,823	5,989	11,812	5,850	
Busia	18,336	9,580	10,132	19,712	9,541	10,085	19,626	107%
Kakamega	16,810	9,904	10,528	20,432	9,608	9,677	19,285	115%
Kisumu	63,521	30,088	32,356	62,444	29,464	39,719	69,183	109%
Siaya	23,408	13,278	13,814	27,092	12,497	13,061	25,558	109%
Total	132,771	68,673	72,819	141,492	66,960	78,497	145,457	110%

USAID 4TheChild reached 145,457 orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) (66,960m; 78,497f) – 126,242 aged below 18 years – with an array of services; a 110% achievement against the COP target of 132,771 OVC. 1,202 OVC were newly enrolled and served; 340 being children and adolescents living with HIV (CALHIV). Of the OVC served, 136,854 received comprehensive services across Healthy, Stable, Safe, and Schooled domains, 658 received preventive services, while 7,945 AGYW received OVC eligible services under the project’s DREAMS component.



USAID 4TheChild served 117,629 OVC aged below 18 years, including 97.4% of OVC with known HIV status. 18,504 OVC (15.7%) aged below 18 years were reported HIV positive, 92,776 (78.9%) were HIV negative, 3,116 (2.6%) had no HIV status reported, while 3,233 (2.7%) did not require a test based on risk screening. Of the 3,116 OVC with unknown HIV status, 1,552 (49.8 %) were HIV-Exposed Infants (HEI), 1,564 were either newly recruited and not yet subjected to risk screening or had been targeted for risk screening but not yet done.

Market Assessments to Improve Access to Livelihood Opportunities by OVC



OVC in TVETs participate in a focus group discussion conducted by USAID 4TheChild during market assessments to explore vocational education, training, and career opportunities.

USAID4TheChild conducted market assessments to explore the main sources of employment & livelihood in the counties, map out market opportunities for technical and vocational education training (TVET), identify opportunities available for household economic strengthening (HES) interventions, and explore gaps in HES and TVET opportunities in the five project counties. The exercise engaged 192 respondents through key informant interviews (KIIs); 74 being government and civil society representatives and 118 being local traders across the five project counties. USAID 4TheChild is analyzing the findings to inform the technical direction of programs meant to improve the livelihood of OVC. The project will then identify eligible OVC and caregivers and link them to skill transfers, coaching, and mentoring for employment opportunities in the formal and informal sectors. Such skills will be transferred through collaboration with TVET institutions.

Enhanced Retention and Performance of OVC Schools and TVETs



OVC supported by USAID 4TheChild in St. Marks ECDC, Kisumu, in class during a monitoring visit held by the project to ensure that children attend school regularly and track their performance.

USAID 4TheChild held close monitoring of 30,659 OVC (14,924m;15,735f) to ensure that they attended school regularly, and tracked their performance through their report forms. 70 OVC (25m;45f) were supported with school fees to enhance their retention in school while 3,150 OVC (1,540m;1,610f) in early childhood development centers (ECDC) and primary schools who had missed school due to lack of educational materials were offered scholastic materials. 4,917 school-going girls of reproductive age were supported with sanitary towels to have them retained in school during their cycles while 433 OVC (207m;226f) in primary schools received school uniforms. 8 OVC (3m;5f) in ECDC were supported with school levies while 97 OVC (56m;41f) aged 15-17 years were enrolled in technical and vocational education training (TVET) institutions. An adolescent who had completed vocational training received a start-up kit to start a career.

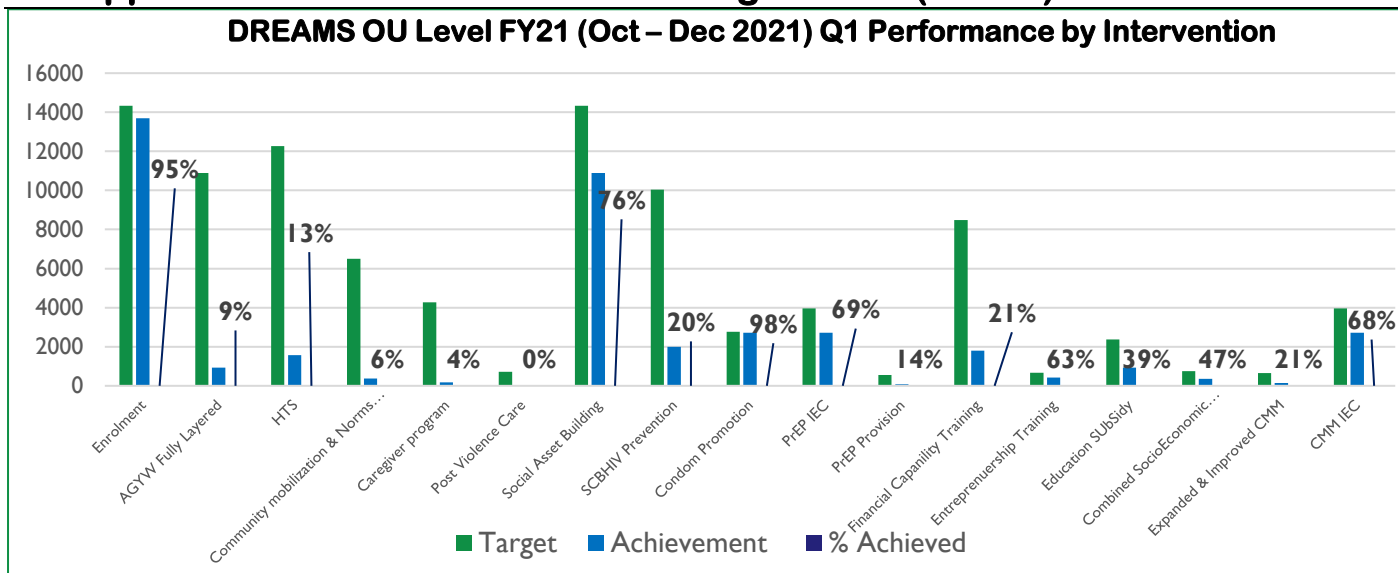
Vulnerable Households Uplifted with USAID 4TheChild Emergency Fund



A widowed caregiver of 3 OVC from Busia County renovated her collapsed home with USAID 4TheChild Emergency Support Fund.

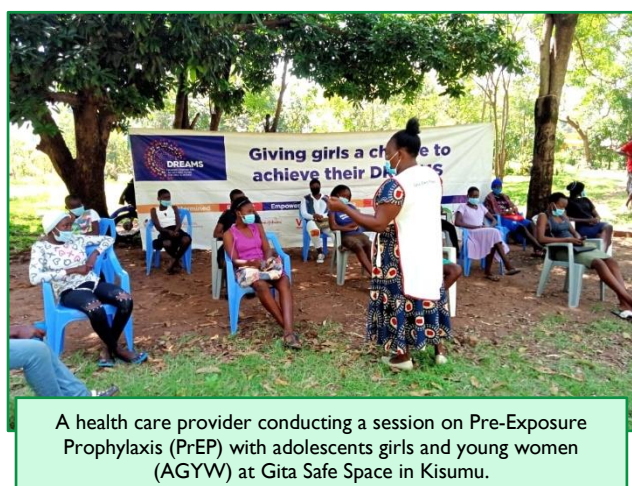
USAID 4TheChild Emergency Fund has surpassed just meeting the immediate needs of households to supporting caregivers create income-generating activities (IGAs) to address the food and nutrition challenges of OVC households. The project supported six caregivers in Busia County with emergency funds (EFs) who set up small grocery stores. The EF has also supported caregivers to renovate their houses. A widowed caregiver in Busia whose house had previously collapsed used the EF of Kshs. 12,000 to renovate her house. A caregiver in Kakamega used the money to purchase household consumption items and invested Kshs. 1,000 in vegetables, fish, tomatoes, and *omena* business at Nambacha market.

2. Support to Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW)



USAID 4TheChild enrolled 13,686 AGYW in line with the *DREAMS HIV Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Tool*; 95% achievement against the COP21 target of 14,337 AGYW.

USAID 4TheChild DREAMS Interventions Expanded into New Sub-National Units



A health care provider conducting a session on Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) with adolescents girls and young women (AGYW) at Gita Safe Space in Kisumu.

USAID 4TheChild has been implementing its DREAMS interventions that target adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) across eight wards (*Ahero, Kajulu, Kolwa Central, Kolwa East, Kondele, Manyatta B, Nyalenda A, and Railways*) in Kisumu East, Kisumu Central, and Nyando sub-counties. To achieve 75% coverage of the Sub-National Units (SNU), the DREAMS program expanded into Muhoroni Sub-County (*Koru-Muhoroni, Chemelil, and Miwani wards*) and two new wards (*Kobura and Nyalenda B*) in Nyando and Kisumu Central sub-counties respectively. The process involved entry meetings with stakeholders at the sub-county level, including sub-county Ministry of Health, sub-county commissioners, and local administration to take them through the DREAMS initiative as well as the role of each stakeholder in ensuring that the project achieves its mandate. The stakeholders welcomed the program into their areas and promised support to ensure the project succeeds.

USAID 4TheChild DREAMS Girls Celebrate World AIDS Day (WAD) 2021



USAID 4TheChild DREAMS Girls joins the World in celebrating World AIDS Day 2021 in Ahero, Nyando Sub-County, Kisumu, themed "Komesha Mimba za Utotoni".

USAID 4TheChild supported and participated in the commemoration of World AIDS Day (WAD) 2021 across the five project counties on 1st December 2021. With the day's national theme being "Komesha Mimba za Utotoni" – "End Teenage Pregnancies Towards Eliminating Inequalities and New HIV Infections" – the project mobilized community members and leaders to sensitize them on the linkages between teenage pregnancies and the increasing rates of new HIV infections. The project held mobilization drives through roadshows with banners on ending teenage pregnancies, edutainment, and speeches. In Kisumu County, the project held two adolescents' forums where 68 adolescents (31m;37f) were reached with life skills training and messages on Operation Triple Zero (OTZ), while 89 (46m;43f) children and adolescents living with HIV (CALHIV) in support groups shared their experience with their peers on adherence and stigma and discrimination.

3. Capacity Building/Systems Strengthening to Support OVC/AGYW Programs



Influencing County Budgets

26 organizations trained to influence development priorities, promote collaboration, and established two Communities of Practice in Kisumu and Kakamega counties



Advocacy and Lobbying

LIPs in Bungoma (1), Busia (2) and Kakamega (2) counties and 14 CSOs trained, mentorship and coaching ongoing



Local Resource Fundraising

LIPs in Kisumu (3) and Siaya (1) and 12 CSOs trained and mentorship and coaching ongoing
Creating linkages for funding LIPs through Grant Matching to incentivize local giving

Strengthened Capacity of Government Structures in OVC/AGYW Care/Support



Dr. James Odiga, Kisumu County Director of Health Planning, Policy, and Partnership addressing participants of the Kisumu County Health Management Team (CHMT) breakfast meeting.

USAID 4TheChild held meetings with national and county government officials in the project areas, reaching officials from key departments, including the Directorate of Children Services (DCS), County Department of Health (CDoH), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), etc. While some forums sought to sensitize the government officials on the project and obtain goodwill, others invited the government to play a lead role in the project management structure, thereby increasing their capacity to influence the county governments to plan and budget for OVC services in the county budgets. USAID 4TheChild also commenced redefining the relationships with the governments by developing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with each county, with clearly defined roles & responsibilities of the governments in ensuring incremental self-reliance in OVC and AGYW support through agreed-upon milestones, such county assembly legislation, and budgetary allocations.

Strengthened Capacity of Local Partners to Implement OVC/AGYW Programs

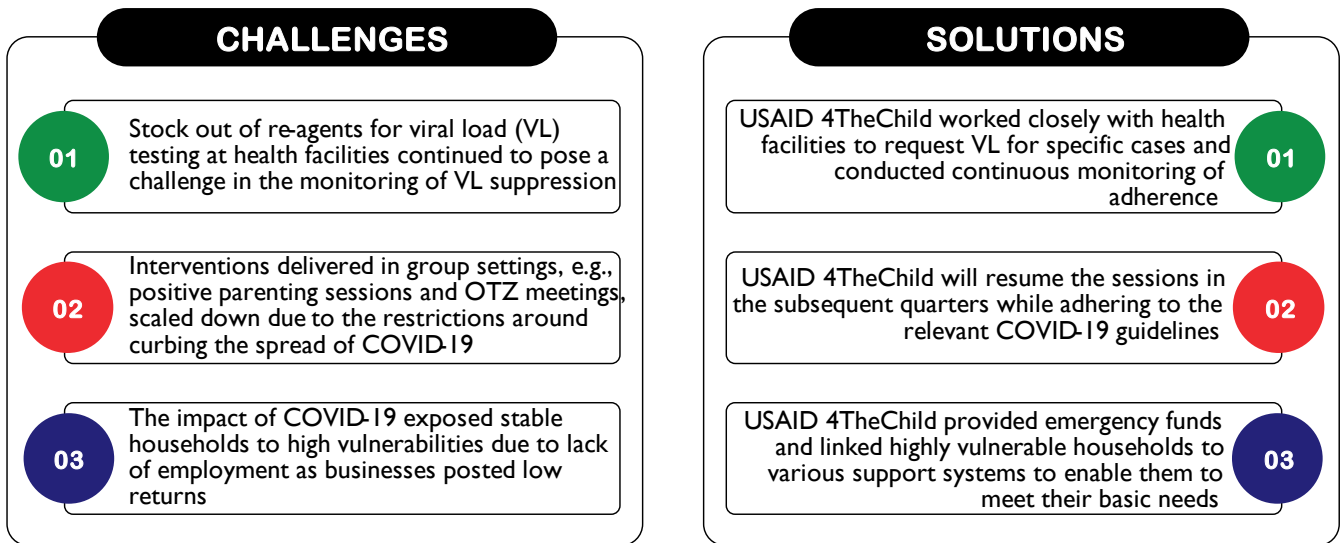


USAID 4TheChild conducting a training for local implementing partners from Kisumu and Siaya counties on local fundraising, influencing county budgets, and mobilizing support.

USAID 4TheChild strengthened capacity of local implementing partners (LIPs) on local fundraising, influencing county budgets, and mobilizing support to implement OVC/AGYW programs.

- **Influencing County Budgets:** The project partnered with IPFK through 'Sauti ya Bajeti Mashinani' to strengthen the capacity of 52 leaders from 26 CSOs to (i) engage the county government in county budget process to influence development priorities, (ii) enhance collaboration with the county government, and (ii) improve their capacity to conduct social audits, lobbying, and advocacy so as to promote accountability in service delivery.
- **Mobilizing Support:** USAID 4TheChild equipped 29 leaders of 15 CSOs in Kakamega County with knowledge, skills and attitudes on advocacy and mobilizing support to achieve priority activities in their sectors. The leaders sharpened their communication, networking, and negotiation skills to enable them to effectively mobilize support.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS



KEY ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER



USAID 4TheChild Brings Light, Joy and Hope to Vulnerable Families with Solar Lamps



Mama Lucia's children delight at a solar lamp which they received from USAID 4TheChild, that has enabled them to further their studies beyond school hours, while at home.

Mama Lucia's hatred for kerosene lamps was never in doubt. The 49-year-old physically impaired mother of four squealed with delight upon receiving new solar lamps from USAID 4TheChild; a testament to her detest for the kerosene-powered "koroboi" and the dangers that come with using the smoky *jua kali* lamp.

Mama Lucia's family has no access to main grid electricity or money to purchase renewable energy sources. This poor family that resides in Busia County has been using a kerosene lamp to light their house at night and, on several occasions, cooked, ate, and slept before sunset. The family survived a near-death experience when a big mouse toppled their kerosene lamp, spilling kerosene over their rags, which caught fire and set their one-roomed grass-thatched hut ablaze. Since then, the poor woman has cautiously, yet rarely, used *koroboi*. This situation has also derailed her children's schooling; her third-born son, 14, the only one that goes to school, has had to finish his homework before sunset or use light from firewood while cooking or by the moonlight.

In November, Mama Lucia met Francis Lukoye, a community health volunteer attached to Busia Parish Family Life Education Program (FLEP) who linked her family with FLEP's Case Manager, Yonah Okado, where they got enrolled in USAID 4TheChild OVC program. Since then, Mama Lucia's household has benefited from the project's OVC comprehensive and preventive services and a monthly emergency fund support of Kshs. 2,000 (USD 20).

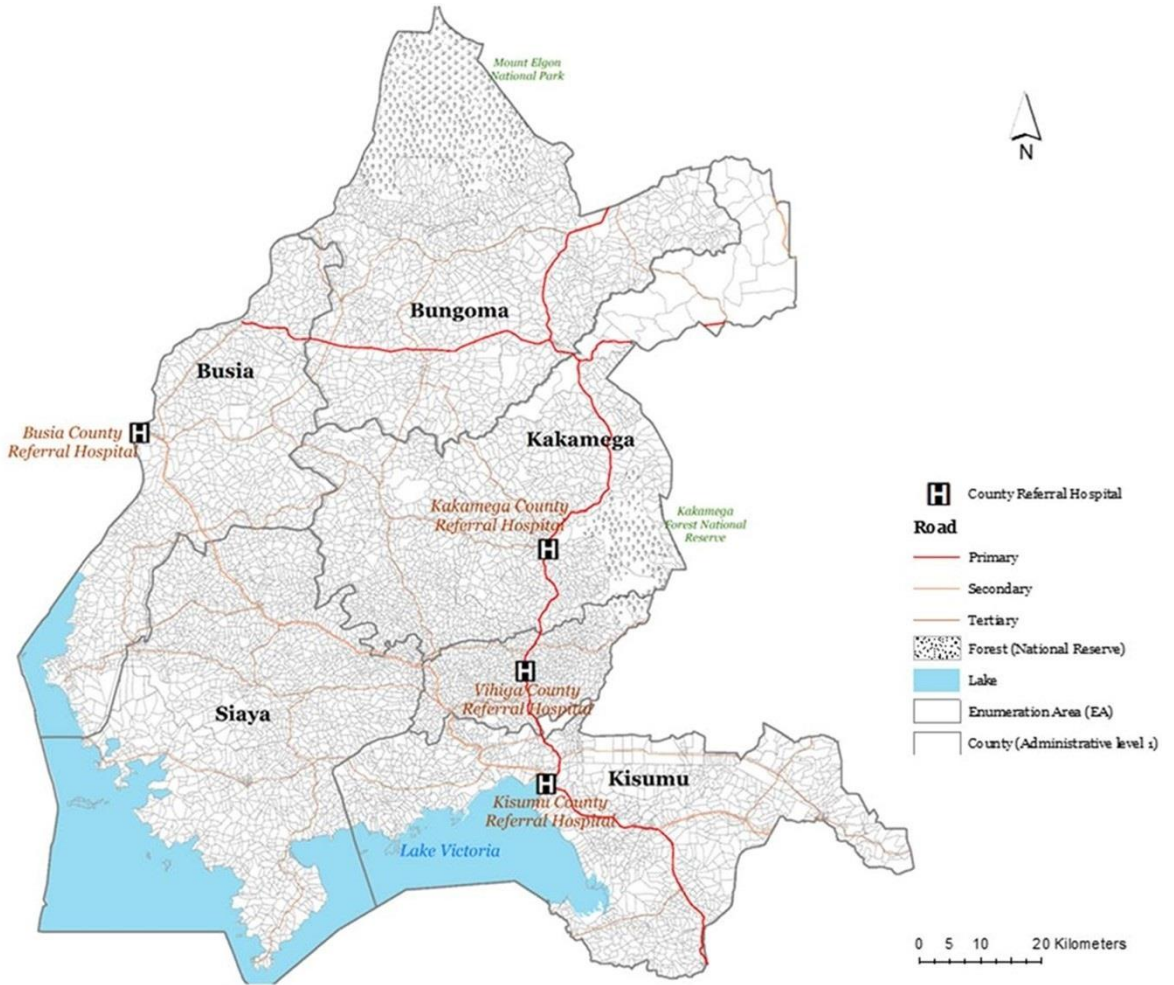


Mama Lucia displaying her new solar package

Upon receiving solar-powered lamps on 21st December 2021, she rang USAID 4TheChild to share her joy and express her gratitude for the support. "I have asked everyone for a solar lamp for a very long time without success. Now, thanks to USAID 4TheChild and the American people, our fear of the night and darkness has been swept away," she said. Mama Lucia now bills her neighbors who charge their phones from her solar lamp Kshs. 20 (USD 0.2). "I can now provide my family with at least a meal every day," Mama Lucia added.

With no access to main grid electricity or money to purchase renewable energy sources, approximately 60% (536,208) of the people in Busia County rely on kerosene as their main source of lighting. (Kenya Electricity System Improvement Project (KESIP), 2019) Since December 2021, USAID 4TheChild has changed the lives of 159 orphans and vulnerable children living in 70 poor households in Busia County with solar lights. This small sustainable light has enlightened households like Mama Lucia and her family.

USAID 4TheChild COVERAGE



“OVC and AGYW stakeholders coming together to protect, invest in, and improve the health and education of the child with the generous support of the American People through the United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)”



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