

Update Report

Prepared for Lara's Foundation

Reporting period: April – September 2016

Project name: Didia ECD

Agency: Raleigh International

Year of grant: 2015

Value of grant received: £28,875

Didia Early Childhood Development Centre



Headlines

- With support from Lara's Foundation, the Early Childhood Development Centre has been a great success.
- There has been excellent attendance, with over 200 children reached between the ages of 3-6.
- The local primary school and ECD Centre have developed a close and supporting relationship, and the ECD committee are active, present and run the centre well alongside three trained teachers.
- The community of Didia have a positive perception of the ECD Centre, and realise its relevance to the development of the community.
- The support of the community, primary school and teachers, means that the Didia ECD Centre looks to have a bright future and should continue to thrive.

1. Project Summary

Didia's ECD Centre is a testament to the credibility of the ECD projects set up by Raleigh Tanzania in collaboration with Save the Children, funded by Lara's Foundation. The centre helps to give the most vulnerable children in Didia a chance to access crucial educational facilities.

Classes are run by three teachers, two of which were already primary school teachers, with the third being newly trained for the ECD Centre. The teachers receive

training from Save the Children, and although the majority of the support is delivered by telephone, it is working well. At present there is no established curriculum to follow, but the ECD lessons involve numbers, letters, socialising, and learning how to write.



"I am very happy working in the ECD and with the children because it keeps me close to my society, and gives me pride in being part of a social service. "

MWL Anna James, ECD Teacher

The community of Didia have a positive perception of the ECD Centre and realise its relevance to the development of the young population in their village. The community contribute funds to pay for the porridge, the wood for cooking, utilities (electricity and water bills), books and stationary, and the security of the ECD in the form of a night watchman. The positive contributions being made by parents further reinstate the recognition of the ECD Centre as an important part of their community.

The young children in Didia will now have much better education and development opportunities than they would have had without access to the ECD Centre. It will give the children:

- 1) an opportunity to learn and develop socially with peers
- 2) a conducive environment for cognitive, psychological and physical development
- 3) access to other services including health, nutrition and child protection

They now have a much stronger chance of progressing successfully into primary school and beyond. These new facilities mean that children are much less likely to miss lessons, and therefore much more likely to perform well in class. Providing this type of quality access to education for children of this age is proven to make them more resilient - children are less likely to drop out of school and on average earn more in later life.

2. Achievements

Outcome	Report
1. The ECD is reaching a large number of children in the local community who otherwise did not have access to early education.	Attendance is very good. Attendance of the ECD began in April/May of 2016, following the 16S Raleigh ICS project (February – April). The children that were attending nursery classes in the primary school moved next door to the ECD, as well as newly registered nursery children from the community.
2. Children enter the primary school at a greater level of understanding and literacy.	There is an excellent relationship between the ECD and the primary school, with children eventually progressing from the ECD into Standard 1 when they are old enough. Children have attended an ECD Centre are able to thrive at school as they can communicate better and already have a basic knowledge of numbers and writing.
3. The local community see the long-term benefits of the project.	The building is well maintained and serves its purpose. The ECD and the surrounding area is clean, large, and appropriately kept for the development of children in Didia. The community contribute towards the running of the ECD.
4. The ECD committee have taken full responsibility for the running of the centre and manage the ECD well.	The primary school committee also oversees management of the ECD, resulting in a close relationship between the ECD and the primary school, and a strong level of leadership from an already well established, and recognised local body of representatives. There are 17 members that meet regularly. They have responsibility for the budget, food, building maintenance, and general day to day running of the ECD.

2.1 Beneficiary reach

Beneficiary group	Notes	
	Girls	Boys
Age Range 3-4 ECD	52	83
Age Range 4-6 ECD	40	46
Totals	92	129

The highly popular and hugely influential new Tanzanian President has prioritised primary school education as one of his key policies. He has vowed that there should be no barriers to access. Therefore, both primary school and ECD enrolment has increased significantly in the new school year. The ECD Centre is already at capacity so the committee has been encouraged to consider options for getting further support from local government to expand the available classroom space in both the primary school and ECD Centre to accommodate the growing population of Didia.

2.2 Community contributions

- **The local village, parents and government**

The local community and authorities are in support of the ECD Centre. The Village Executive Officer is particularly helpful in mobilising the community and raising awareness.

As part of new Government of Tanzania's education policy, it is no longer permitted for pre-primary schools or primary schools to charge fees. However, the ECD Centre is still dependent of

contributions to support running costs, which come from the pupils' parents (these are not considered to be fees).

"After having children attend the centre and take part in classes, it is having the added effect of bringing greater awareness to the parents, both in terms of education and an increased support for the ECD."

Mageb Jonas, Head Teacher

- **The local primary school**

There is a very good relationship between the ECD Centre and the primary school. Their close proximity allows them to share the same teachers, and the ECD Centre and primary school have the same committee. The children will feed directly into standard 1 when they leave the ECD Centre. This way, the children are already comfortable in their environment and have developed friendships with other pupils. The teachers already believe this is having an impact on childrens' development in Didia and their preparedness for primary school.

When asked if the relationship would be the same if the ECD was further away, the Head Teacher believed it would be much more difficult. The local people can see the benefits that the building of an ECD Centre in Didia is having on the children and are thankful for the support of Lara's Foundation.

"I encourage the community to volunteer to take care of the centre because of the many benefits it brings to their own children, and next generation of the community. What the centre has managed to do is bring sustainable benefits to the whole community, not just the children."

MWL Maria Masabuda, ECD Teacher

3. Challenges and ongoing developments

- **Porridge availability**

Each child gets porridge every day. The porridge is made in the school kitchen right next to the ECD Centre for convenience (rather than having two cooks, two pots etc.). The cook is paid 30,000 shillings per month to make the porridge and this money is contributed by the community.

Providing porridge has its challenges as the cook uses the traditional method of cooking using wood or charcoal. The primary school children are given responsibility for this. They collect it from the nearby forest which is not sustainable or a beneficial use of their time.

The head teacher of the school believes gas would be a better solution and would be something he would like to see in the future. Funding for gas would increase the cost of contributions. However, he believes there is a possibility the community would contribute and pay for it on a monthly basis. This will continue to be discussed at committee meetings.

- **Quantity of teachers**

There are three full time teachers at the ECD Centre. Two of the teachers were already working at the local primary school and have taken on teaching the ECD children, and the third is a new teacher who has been recruited due to the high levels of attendance at the ECD Centre. If there were more teachers, even more children could enroll in the ECD Centre and the teacher-pupil ration would also be better. However, this is a wider issue within the Tanzanian education system with high demands on teachers being a challenge at national level.

4. Sustainability and next steps

To ensure the sustainability of the Didia ECD Centre, there are a few areas of improvement for the committee to consider. Three main next steps are outlined below:

1. With the identification that the use of wood to fuel the cooking is unsustainable and expensive, the committee is in discussions over the purchase of a gas stove.
2. The process of registering and accepting children into the ECD will be monitored over the next registration period to account for the growing popularity of the centre within the community. It is important that although the centre should be as inclusive to all as possible, there has to be a limit on the number of children that can be accommodated and effectively taught in the space provided.
3. The ECD committee will discuss the idea of implementing a curriculum to ensure that the transition from the ECD Centre to Primary School is seamless, and the children are all prepared to enter standard 1.

The ECD committee are aware of all the challenges and are determined to ensure they are overcome.

Raleigh International and the community of Didia thank you for your continued support.



