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SUCCESS STORY: TANZANIA

First Lady Laura Bush Rallies Support for Tanzanian HIV/AIDS Clinic

PASADA targets the urban poor, offering comprehensive care to people living with AIDS, regardless of religious affiliation.



USAID/Tanzania, Marc Douglas

First Lady Laura Bush meets four PASADA clients who are living with HIV/AIDS.

“I am inspired by the work being done at PASADA— lifesaving work, life-changing work. Here, people with HIV/AIDS can get the treatment they need to fight the disease. And they can also get the love and support they need to live a happy and full life.”

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UNDER BRIGHT BLUE SKIES, United States First Lady Laura Bush and her daughter Jenna visited Pastoral Activities and Services for People with AIDS in Dar es Salaam Archdiocese (PASADA), a Tanzania clinic that provides care and treatment for persons with HIV and AIDS and children orphaned by AIDS. The U.S. Government has supported PASADA since 1995, most recently through funding from President Bush’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief through USAID. To the joy and surprise of those assembled, Mrs. Bush indicated that support from the American people would continue as she pledged an additional \$500,000 to PASADA. Operated under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam, PASADA targets the urban poor, offering comprehensive care to people living with AIDS, regardless of religious affiliation.

Thanks in part to Emergency Plan support, PASADA now consists of several buildings, including three new HIV/AIDS counseling rooms, three offices for counseling orphans and vulnerable children, a training room, a storeroom for medical supplies, and staff offices. The recently inaugurated buildings surround an open-air courtyard and a burgeoning tropical garden that create the illusion of a quiet park rather than a capital city clinic.

Hosted by Tanzania’s First Lady, Mrs. Mkapa—or Mama Mkapa, as most Tanzanians lovingly call her—Mrs. Bush toured the clinic with His Eminence Polycarp Cardinal Pengo of Tanzania, PASADA Executive Director Mary Ash, and other dignitaries and visited the main clinic where individuals are tested for HIV or treated for opportunistic infections brought on by HIV/AIDS. Mrs. Bush sat with children orphaned by AIDS and listened as they discussed how they cope with family loss. Mrs. Bush also talked with adult patients and learned their appreciation for a clinic that provides not only excellent medical care but also counseling support, home-based care, and even economic assistance for those in need. Some pregnant women receive potentially lifesaving treatment for their unborn children through a clinic program to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission, while others receive antiretroviral drugs to treat and minimize the AIDS complications.

Mrs. Bush, Mrs. Mkapa, and Cardinal Pengo later addressed PASADA staff and volunteers. Amidst clicking camera shutters, Mrs. Bush commended the staff for their exceptional and valued HIV/AIDS work and noted, “Here, people with HIV/AIDS can get the treatment they need to fight the disease. And they can also get the love and support they need to live a happy and full life.” Referring to faith-based support for people with HIV/AIDS, Mrs. Bush commented, “President Bush is a strong supporter of faith-based groups that bring help and healing to people who need it. We appreciate the work of people who are affiliated with churches or mosques and other faith groups. When our government can work together with faith-based organizations, we will.”