



**USAID | ETHIOPIA**  
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## INVESTING IN PEOPLE: CARING FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

### Challenges

The consequences of the HIV epidemic in Ethiopia are seen in the eyes of children who have lost one or both of their parents, traumatized by events beyond their control and understanding. These children are often stigmatized by relatives and rejected by communities which tend to think that caring for a child orphaned by AIDS is a lost investment. Millions of children have lost their childhood. They live on the streets and are forced to endure countless humiliations in order to meet their basic needs like clothing and food. Other children are forced to become heads of households; yet without the necessary resources, they abandon school and the opportunities that come with it.

It is estimated that there are 5.5 million orphans in Ethiopia, which is around 15% of the total child population. Of these, 16 % were orphaned due to HIV/AIDS. Overall, girls suffer more than boys by not being able to attend school, having to care for others, and being forced into early marriage. Ethiopia has an estimated 77,000 child-headed households. All orphans and vulnerable children are at increased risk for neglect, abuse, malnutrition, poverty, illness and discrimination and – as they get older, are much more vulnerable to HIV infection.

#### FACTS

5.5 million orphans -  
15% of the total child population  
  
16% orphaned due to HIV/AIDS  
  
77,000 child-headed households

Yet, there is hope. Children are resilient. Despite incredible hardships and countless difficulties, many overcome unimaginable difficulties and grow up to lead productive lives. Communities do respond. Numerous local organizations, government bodies and local populations across Ethiopia reach out to children and families affected by disease and poverty. People do care. Caring individuals across Ethiopia donate time and money to make a difference in children's lives.

Furthermore, there are ongoing efforts to improve monitoring systems that will enable the government and other stakeholders to track the wellbeing of vulnerable children, leading to informed service provision. There is strong momentum for improved coordination of services provided through a strengthened multi-sector response. This is coupled with efforts to train increased numbers of professional and para-professional social workers for placement within government structures.

#### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**TIME FRAME:** 5 years

**LOCATION:** 9 regions and 2 city administrations in over 300 Woredas

**TARGETED BENEFICIARIES:** 500,000 highly vulnerable children in each year of the five year program

**FUNDING:** approximately \$100 million

#### Program

The Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MoWCYA), the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA), and other key stakeholders need support and technical assistance to strengthen the social welfare system. This includes (a) the development of a trained and professional social welfare workforce, (b) delivery of and access to basic social welfare services for vulnerable children and families and (c) the development of a comprehensive continuum of care that prioritizes family- based options.

Through generous funding from the US President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Ethiopia and its partners, Pact and UNICEF, in partnership with the Government of Ethiopia and Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations, will work across nine administrative regions and two city administrations in over 300 woredas (districts) to provide comprehensive and coordinated quality services for 500,000 highly vulnerable children in each year of the five year program.

*"Through this new and comprehensive five-year, \$100 million program, the U.S. Government will make significant contributions to achieving the goal of strengthening and expanding Ethiopia's safety nets for highly vulnerable children. The program will be one of the largest of its kind in the world."*  
U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Donald E. Booth

The overall goal of the program is to provide orphans and vulnerable children and their families' access quality and appropriate services and empower them to lead healthy, productive and fulfilling lives through the existing child-focused social welfare framework in the country.

The program has three primary components: (1) strength social welfare systems, (2) improve access to social services for orphans and vulnerable children and their families, and (3) manage data on the wellbeing of vulnerable children.

The specific objective are to: (1) build capacities of stakeholders to effectively use improved data management systems and employ a national orphans and vulnerable children supervisory system; (2) employ effective and efficient family-centered and inclusive orphan and vulnerable child care management; (3) enhance the capability of communities for coordinated and improved responsiveness towards the care of orphans and vulnerable children; and, (4) establish effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation, and reporting and learning systems, ensuring evidence-based programming and policy making.

### Expected Results

The identified results for the program include:

- Social welfare policy framework in place;
- Leadership and technical capacities of Government strengthened to maintain a social welfare system;
- National management information system in place to better track wellbeing of children and improve monitoring of service delivery to vulnerable children;
- Vulnerable children and their families have increased access to social services.



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### HEALTH SECTOR PARTNERS

- Government of Ethiopia: Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MoWCYA), the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education
- HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO)
- Ethiopian civil society organisations and community-based organizations

### USAID PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Program: Pact, 2011 - 2016
- Strengthening the Federal Level Response to Highly Vulnerable Ethiopian Children through the Development of a Child-Focused Social Welfare System: UNICEF, 2011 - 2016

