



CULTURE INFORMATION AND PASTORALIST DEVELOPMENT

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## **OBBITU CHILDREN'S HOME SOLOLO.**

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### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Sololo district in Moyale sub County of Marsabit County lies about 160 KM to the north of Marsabit and 86KM west of Moyale. The community is majorly pastoralist while semi urban centres practice farming along the Ethiopian border. About 10% are conduct business.

The traditional social structure for care and support of OVC, destitute families in the community have been replaced by the new life style and new leadership structures. Children who belong to the community now are said to belong the state and the nuclear family therefore the role of care and support has been left to the state and NGOs. In the absence of the nuclear family they become OVC, vulnerable that they do not access the basic right for every child and live in desperate social economic conditions.

Poverty level among the community stands about 90%, the rate of divorce and single motherhood have increased that those charged with responsibility of upbringing have less to provide for adequately.

HIV and AIDS has made children orphaned living them without care and protection, PLWHIV live in stigmatization, they hid their status hence do not seek care and treatment their children are exposed to infection through mother to child transmission

OVC become vulnerable and are exposed to many risks like sleeping under veranda, Makeshift house and become street children. They are influenced by their peers and introduced to drugs prostitution, rape, and criminal activities.

They lack access to basic needs like shelter, food, clothing, health care, education and psychosocial support. If this situation will not be addressed through care and protection of OVC and Vulnerable children their basic right will continue to be violated

### **INTRODUCTION TO OBBITU**

Obbitu children home got its name Obbitu from the traditional name meaning all that lowland lying between Ethiopian highland to Moyale and Golbo rangeland. The main Goal of Obbitu children home is to bridge the gap and prevent OVC and vulnerable children from becoming street children thus Prevention is better than cure and less expensive. The idea to bring up a children home was first muted by local leaders who shared with Dr. pino Bollini who has been working in the community since the year 2000.

Dr. Pino understood the situation and the magnitude of the plight of OVC in the absence of parental care. The desire to establish a foster home based on traditional set up was borne. He fund raised to have the children home constructed with an objective to provide basic needs for OVC and vulnerable children. Two residential homes were constructed ready to admit children by 2010.

Obbitu village was established on the model of Borana cultural values to help children learn, appreciate and be touch with their cultural values, kinsmen and relatives. The home address two aspect of OVC, the residential home and community based care where OVC was supported while in the care of relatives

Obbitu children home is not a private home but community owned and opened on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2010. The home has 2 houses for accommodation, father's house children are taken care by mother caretakers and house helpers.

Management structure of Obbitu was linked to the community through OVC management committee

Currently the village provides accommodation for 23 children and 378 OVCs supported at home through the home based support program. One household of 12 children is cared for by a mother care taker and one house helper.

Children who live in Obbitu children village are mostly HIV/AIDS orphans. Some have no guardians, rejected by relatives, left to very elderly grandparents who are poor and weak to provide adequate care and protection, children who are borne to single mothers (taboo) are often disowned by families and the community and children rescued from the street.

The village is appreciated and accepted by the community and regarded as one of the 21 village of Sololo sub location or town.

Obbitu children are provided with nutritional support, education, health care services both curative and preventive, accommodation, clothing's, and recreational facilities and play materials.

They are also protected from all forms of abuses through the adherence to all laws governing the welfare of children.

The ratio of boys to girls is 1:1. Boys and girls sleep in separate houses and each child has his/her separate bed and beddings and lockers.

Children attend schools with other children who are not OVC. Children who are under age are.

Obbitu children village link to the community through OVC management committee whose members were drawn from all the institutions in the community which includes chiefs, village elders, women group's representatives, youth group's representatives, religious leaders, education officers, representatives of the guardians, and NGOs dealing with welfare of children.

## **VISION OF OBBITU CHILDREN**

Orphans and vulnerable children become responsible members of the society

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide a foster home for orphans and vulnerable children where they can access quality care and protection to grow, develop and realize their full potential in life in partnership with the community and development partners.

### **OUR VALUES**

1. Children first
2. Children's right is human right
3. Nondiscrimination on gender, religion, tribe and non-partisan
4. Collaboration and partnership with stakeholders
5. Children's dream are valid and respected
6. Children service is our responsibility

### **PROJECT GOAL**

To provide care and protection for orphans and vulnerable children and improve their social wellbeing to realize their full potential and become responsible members of the community

### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

1. Provide access to basic needs for OVC in Sololo district
2. strengthen the community social structures for OVC support at community level
3. lobby and advocate against child abuse and discrimination in the community
4. provide counseling and re-integration of rescued children to their natural families once the threat are removed
5. prevention of new infection of HIV and AIDS and provide care and support for PLWHIV

### **CRITERIA FOR REGISTRATION**

The criteria for vetting the OVC who can be enrolled and supported which include

1. Lost one or both parents
2. Abandoned children
3. Children born to parents suffering from chronic illness and or elderly parents
4. Destitute families
5. Children rescued from harmful environment and cultural practices

### **MANAGEMENT OF OBBITU CHILDREN**

Obbitu children home is managed through the board of directors, the day to day management is carried out by chairman/manager. There are employees who provide services like security, home care services shelter, food, health and education to children. The home is linked to the community through OVC management committee.

## LEGAL REQUIREMENT

Obbitu children home is duly registered with the department of children's services and have strong collaboration and partnership with sub county children officer and the county director of children service

## FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN OBBITU CHILDREN

Facilities and services provided in Obbitu children home are tabulated below

No.	Services provided	No.	Current status	Remarks	Recommendation
1	Shelter and care residential houses with clothing ,beds and beddings	3	2 houses are occupied with 23 children living in different houses according to gender Children have individual beds and beddings, with locker 2 mothers care takers and 2 house helpers do housekeeping for the children daily	1house complete but not utilized. No electrical wiring and appliances fitted. Lack of Fund for operationalization	To partner with GOK to open this building to accommodate more children as a rescue Centre. Support in human resources to provide basic services for the children
2	Food	36 children	23 children are provided with adequate well balanced meals. Children get 4 meals per day	Lack of adequate fund to meet food requirement due to reduced donor funding.	Request for monthly food provision from government food relief and WFP
3	Health care	400 OVC	110 families enrolled into NHIF. Government health care services free Dispensary available in Obbitu. Monthly nutritional and health assessment	Supported through the donor fund	
4	Education	260 enrolled into school	Free primary education. Support 30 children for secondary school fees	Donor supported	
5	water	50 people	Water tanks for roof harvest to meet water	Donor supported	Request for supplementation with water boozer during

			demand		dry periods
6	Electricity	Obbitu children	Solar and generator used for power	Donor supported	Support for house no 3. For wiring and diesel
7	Security day and night	7	Donor supported but reduced funding due to donor fatigue	Support human resources directly serving welfare of children	Support for salary for 5 security people
8	Obbitu farm	4 green houses in use	Various vegetables, fruits trees cultivated. Land provided by the community	Donor funded	Request for Technical assistance.
9	Vocational training	1 mechanical workshop completed	For OVC completed class 8 and form 4. Not yet operationalized	Donor funded	Request for equipment and tools for the workshop
10	Transport	2 vehicles and 3 motorbikes	The vehicles are serviceable, take children to school hospital, visits, transport of goods	Donor supported	

## CONCLUSION

Obbitu children home is not a private institution but own by the community, Obbitu children exist for the last 5 years, the project is currently experiencing financial support from donor. The home is a big asset to serve the children of Marsabit County. Without support from the government running the home will not be sustainable. When the donor effort will supported though partnership then Obbitu children will continue serving the needy children.

The children in need of care and protection always increase and space available has never been enough. It is our request that the county government and director of children service to operationalize the children house 3

## COMPILED BY

**GUFU GUYO - CHAIRMAN/ MANAGER**