

**Enhancing community participation to support most vulnerable  
children: a case study of Kisarawe district, Tanzania**

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This study investigated factors responsible for increased numbers of Most Vulnerable Children (MVC) and initiatives taken by the community in addressing the problem. It also examined the challenges faced by the community in supporting the MVC, in 6 villages of Kisarawe District. The respondents were 84 including MVC, Caretakers, NGOs, CBOs and Community leaders who were selected using simple randomly and purposely sampling technique. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation. The study found out factors that contributed to the increasing number of MVC, which included inter alia, HIV/AIDS pandemic, poverty, malaria, child neglect, and divorce. Initiatives taken by communities to support the MVC were such as setting up of MVC committees, soliciting funds to support MVC, sensitizing society and provision of basic needs. Likewise supporting MVC was confronted by factors such as increasing levels of poverty, inadequate awareness on the plight of the MVC, inadequate assistance from the Government and donors. It is recommended that, there should be an improvement of the welfare of the MVC by increasing the level of community conscientisation to make them aware of the plight of MVC, promoting efforts towards combating HIV/AIDS and poverty, and seeking further donor support. It emphasized strengthening of traditional structure for care and support to children, and that district councils should expand the capacity for vocational training so that MVC could attain skills. Finally, the Government should put forward policies and strategies for service delivery to MVC through community social support systems.