

Integrated Development in Action: Empowerment and Sustainability in Pamoja Tuwalee

WHAT IS INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT?

Global shifts in the economy, technology, and demographics are forcing the development community to rethink the way we address today's complex interrelated challenges. Our response must reflect the multifaceted reality of people's lives and experiences.

FHI 360 defines integration as **an intentional approach that links the design, delivery, and evaluation of programs across sectors to produce an amplified, lasting impact on people's lives**. Integrating development programs has the potential to make a deeper, more enduring difference in people's lives, not only through multisector activities, but through collaboration, partnerships, and coordination. FHI 360 is working to improve the evidence and advance the global conversation on integrated development, as well as collaborate with other organizations interested in the approach.

Integrated Development Resource Package: From Learning to Action offers collective lessons learned, tools, and other resources from a diverse array of FHI 360's program and research efforts.

In an effort to better understand the effectiveness of multisector, integrated approaches, FHI 360 systematically aggregated information from 68 integrated development (ID) programs that we have delivered or are currently implementing. Rarely are distinct programs, even from the same sectors, offered the opportunity to combine their lessons. By packaging and sharing this body of knowledge, we aim to inform and improve the design, delivery, and evaluation of integrated development approaches. This series of case studies — on select FHI 360 programs in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania — is one product of that collected knowledge. The perspectives in each study are based on desk reviews of project materials and in-person interviews with the project staff, partners, and community members. Each case study provides three common challenges documented by the 68 integrated projects examined through this review, and illustrates how each project approached those challenges.



Tessa Abner-McHaffie/FHI 360
Most Vulnerable Children Committee (MVCC) meeting in Galagaza, Tanzania

PAMOJA TUWALEE OVERVIEW

Pamoja Tuwalee, which means “Let’s Bring up Children Together” in Kiswahili, is a USAID-funded project in Tanzania focused on improving the health and wellbeing of vulnerable children and youth — referred to as most-vulnerable children (MVC) in Tanzania — and their households. With empowerment and integration as its guiding principles, Pamoja Tuwalee’s activities are centered on three groups that work to improve the lives of MVC and their households, while increasing the capacity of the community to care for them. First, the Savings and Internal Lending Community (SILC) groups are established to promote economic growth among caregivers and community members by offering very low-interest loans. Second, representatives from the community serve as members of the Most Vulnerable Children Committees (MVCCs) to provide guidance and coordinate all MVC support services and activities for children in their respective neighborhoods. Third, the project partners with community members, local schools, and MVCCs to start children’s clubs, which provide extra support, protection, and education for children. Through these clubs, children and their families also receive home visits by volunteers who provide health, nutrition, livelihoods, and social support. This integrated package of activities provides communities with tools to aid MVC and their households in the many areas where they need support.

COMMON ID CHALLENGE

Integrated development approaches are widespread, but remain ad hoc and uncoordinated beyond a program level because harmonized or clear guidance at the policy and funding level is rare.

PAMOJA TUWALEE APPROACH

The project emphasizes capacity building and empowerment as strategies to enable integration, while still providing some guidance for project design and implementation.



ADVOCACY &
ENGAGEMENT

Even though guidance is not always available for integrated models of development, many projects have used cross-cutting approaches to organize multiple sectors. Pamoja Tuwalee focuses on empowerment to build the three central groups — SILC groups, MVCCs, and children's clubs — within a united system that empowers communities to provide support and advocate for children.

The SILC groups provide an opportunity for caregivers and households to strengthen their economic wellbeing by contributing to, and taking loans from, a shared fund. Each member's contribution is recorded as a share and then deposited in a common account. From this account, SILC members receive low-interest loans, which they can use for almost anything — from purchasing livestock to making improvements on their homes. Members also contribute a small amount of money each week to a second fund that helps to pay for children's school fees, food, and medical expenses. After the first year, SILC groups become completely self-sufficient and continue to provide loans and opportunities for community members to develop their own businesses. For example, before joining a SILC group, Flora lived in a one-room house and struggled to provide for her children. Flora is now a SILC group leader and after 4 years of participation has a flourishing lodging business. She now owns two homes, with a total of 12 rooms that she rents. She also farms three acres and has been able to support her children through university.

These coordinated activities encourage greater involvement by the community members in the short-term and introduces groups and structures that can be sustained without external support

To complement the work of SILC groups, the MVCCs at the community-level mobilize, coordinate, and manage resources for MVC care and support (including directing the resources gathered from SILC groups within the community). Operating under the local government structure, MVCCs include representatives from the local government, the educational system, and community leaders. Pamoja Tuwalee helps to organize the committees and trains members on children's rights, their roles and responsibilities, fund management, and resource mobilization. Although the MVCCs are designed to be sustainable because they operate within existing government structures, some MVCCs have established businesses (e.g., livestock breeding, chicken keeping) to ensure that the committees meet a variety of needs and will continue to thrive after the Pamoja Tuwalee project.

The project also partners with local community volunteers — trained by project staff members — who operate under MVCCs to start children's clubs within the school system. Volunteers are community members who are involved in children's issues, are caregivers, or who work in relevant settings, such as schools. The clubs serve as a platform to provide children with multisector services in a supportive environment that boosts their self-esteem and helps them set goals for their future. Through the clubs, children learn how to advocate for themselves now and as they transition to adulthood. They are provided with psychosocial support, and they learn about reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, and other life skills. The children's clubs also include non-MVC in an effort to prevent any stigma with participation. Aside from running the clubs, volunteers also visit homes to ensure that children and their families have access to other services in the community, such as SILC groups.

Each activity represents an integrated endeavor that uses short- and long-term development strategies to address specific issues from multiple angles. These coordinated activities encourage greater involvement by the community members in the short-term and introduces groups and structures that can be sustained without external support. Even though guidance on integration

is limited, the focus on community empowerment and capacity building encourages project unity to overcome the problems the community identifies as most important.

COMMON ID CHALLENGE

Unclear or uneven promotion of a multisector program can confuse beneficiaries and reduce uptake.

PAMOJA TUWALEE APPROACH

The project linked different sectors to address a single challenge and population group — vulnerable children — which clarified the conversation and reduced confusion in the community.



PROGRAM
IMPLEMENTATION &
MULTI-STAKEHOLDER
COORDINATION

Integrated projects sometimes struggle to unify their messages and activities when they are providing a diverse array of services. Pamoja Tuwalee uses an integrated, but focused, approach by linking different sectors to target a single population: most-vulnerable children. This clear focus allows the project to present a unified purpose. During the design and early implementation of the program, staff and community members discussed how to clearly link all aspects of the project to ensure unity and cohesiveness for the user. That consciousness is apparent in the project's design.

To provide a cohesive approach, each volunteer serves as a point of contact for specific households. He or she offers services that address a child's immediate problems (education, health services) while also offering services that address the child's long-term wellbeing by improving their family's economic status. "There are many different challenges — complex needs in education, health, nutrition, livelihoods," one staff member said, "[and] we try to address all of these needs through Pamoja Tuwalee." Volunteers are responsible for connecting households and vulnerable children to different services based on their identified needs, which improves the clarity of the project from a user's perspective. Building the capacity of all people in the household to address the complex needs of MVC prevents the project from being disjointed. In addition, disparate services and the three groups are clearly linked through project messaging and reinforced by the volunteer. When interviewed, community members speak to the importance of, and clearly communicate, the project's structure in its entirety.

To further unite the project, the inclusion of diverse community members and stakeholders adds various perspectives while remaining focused on the needs of MVC. District implementing partner groups connected government services and NGOs from a broad range of sectors — health services, education, vocational training, and child protection. Through these measures, project staff members were able to maintain the project's integrity and focus by linking everything very clearly to the vulnerable children and their households.

COMMON ID CHALLENGE

Multisector programs can require more sophisticated management, coordination, communication, finance, and other support systems because of the diversity or number of stakeholders involved.

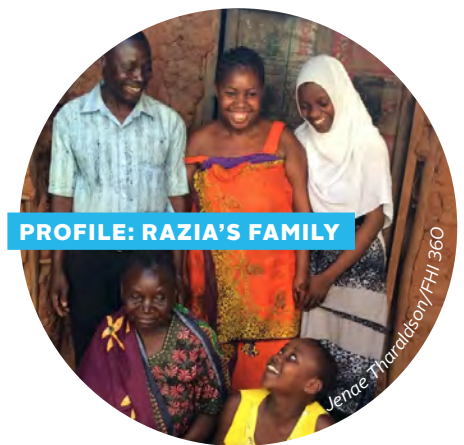
PAMOJA TUWALEE APPROACH

Pamoja Tuwalee leverages the broad range of stakeholders and partners by involving the private sector and the government in the project to improve sustainability and community participation.



PROGRAM
IMPLEMENTATION &
MULTI-STAKEHOLDER
COORDINATION

Some integrated projects find that the diversity of partners complicates implementation. By contrast, Pamoja Tuwalee made partnerships a cornerstone of its efforts by strategically



PROFILE: RAZIA'S FAMILY

Razia (front row, right) with her grandparents (back row, left and middle), and other family members

After Razia was orphaned as a young child, she came to live with her grandfather, Musa, the patriarch of a 12-person household. Razia was identified as a vulnerable child and her family became involved in Pamoja Tuwalee. When he is not repairing bicycles (5 to 10 per week) Musa serves as a volunteer for the project, visiting households with MVC in his community. He is also saving money to expand their home so they can rent rooms. Musa's wife, Saouda, is in a SILC group and owns a business selling snacks and bed sheets. She also has a talent for styling hair, and works part-time as a hairdresser for women in her community, earning up to \$1 USD per style. With further investment, she hopes to expand her business and own her own shop in the future.

Razia participates in a children's club and has gained access to education and health services through Pamoja Tuwalee. When she gets older, she will be able to participate in vocational training and other economic strengthening activities. Pamoja Tuwalee provides both short-term services for Razia, as well as long-term services that improve the stability of her family and her community. The support has helped Razia to blossom and become more open than she was when she joined the family a few years ago. Musa hopes that Razia will finish her education and have a better life — and he now sees a path for her with the changes he has seen in his household because of the project. Razia likes school, but she is not sure what profession she wants to pursue. She is sure, however, that someday she wants to be a community volunteer like her grandfather.

About FHI 360: FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender, youth, research, technology, communication and social marketing — creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today's interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 70 countries and all U.S. states and territories.

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choosing a wide variety of partners. Then, starting in the project planning stage, staff members set up structures to help coordination and communication, which allowed staff to draw on the partners' diverse strengths throughout the project. Pamoja Tuwalee recognized that having multiple perspectives encourages innovation and creative thinking.

The first stakeholders that the project engaged were government ministries responsible for the needs and protection of vulnerable children: the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children; the Ministry of Education and Vocational training; the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs; and the Ministry of Home Affairs. Project staff members encouraged ownership of the different project initiatives by district level government officials. The MVCCs, for example, are located within the local government structure. District officials, social welfare officers, community development officers, and extension officers were also involved during trainings and capacity building for the MVCCs, and they provided joint supervision to ensure district-level ownership of the project. Program advocates within district councils have supported the allocation of funds towards further MVC activities. All of the targeted district councils have allocated funds for MVC support and most budgets have increased yearly. Further, the government's involvement in MVC projects has increased in response to continued advocacy efforts by the project's staff members.

Pamoja Tuwalee also focused on stakeholders in the private sector. Staff members used their connections with district councils to identify district-specific entities in the private sector that were already involved with children and their households. The project included district businesses in several livelihood activities (e.g., vocational training), to build relationships in the community and to provide avenues to sustain the activities after the project closed. These connections allowed the companies to invest in the local community while improving the job prospects for young people and their families. For instance, small businesses such as garages, carpenters, and tailors provided apprenticeships to MVC.

Finally, other programs that support vulnerable households, such as Heifer International, offered livestock and agricultural training to households in Pamoja Tuwalee. This inspired more partnerships, including with local businesses, which supported vulnerable children and their families by providing livestock, educational support, and supplemental food rations. Organizations and businesses donated and invested funds through the MVCCs to establish income-generating activities for vulnerable households and older MVC. The project also helped to establish District Implementing Partners Groups, which enhance the coordination and integration of MVC activities in the district and among partners. These groups inform stakeholders of coordinated and co-located services, and they strengthen networking, linkages, and referrals for further MVC services and support. This combination of diverse partnerships enabled a wide array of economic strengthening activities.

CONCLUSION

Pamoja Tuwalee reveals the power of using cross-sectoral approaches with a diverse group of stakeholders to focus on a specific population to achieve success. However, these are not the only lessons that emerged from Pamoja Tuwalee, nor are they the only approaches that could have been used. Other briefs in the FHI 360 Case Study Series describe additional approaches used by other successfully integrated projects. FHI 360 has also developed a resource package with additional guidance and tools that can be used to explore unique multisector models and improve approaches for more effective, meaningful development practice.

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