Colors to Save Hearts

Quarter 1 Report

August to October 2026









Progress against annual targets

16% — **800 of 5,000** children reached with RHD education

10% — **20 of 200** teachers reached

30% — **15 of 50** healthcare workers reached

Rheumatic Heart Disease awareness, screening and referral for school children in Mbeya and Rukwa Regions, Tanzania. Implemented by The One New Heart Tanzania with funding from the World Heart Federation.

MEMBER OF WORLD HEART FEDERATION

About Colors to Save Hearts

Colors to Save Hearts is a 12 month project implemented by The One New Heart Tanzania with funding from the World Heart Federation. It works to reduce Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) among school aged children through awareness, early identification, screening, referral and stronger links between schools and health facilities.

Schools are the entry point. They make it possible to reach children, teachers and families with basic information about sore throat, rheumatic fever and RHD. The project also works with healthcare workers and health facilities so that children identified during screening can receive further assessment and treatment where required.

Main activities

- RHD awareness and education
- Teacher and healthcare worker engagement
- School and community screening
- Educational colouring books
- Referral and follow up of children requiring further assessment
- Stronger connections between schools and health facilities

Contents

1	Executive summary	3
2	Quarter 1 at a glance	4
3	Progress against annual targets	5
4	What did children learn?	6
5	Quarter 1 activity map	7
6	Makongolosi, Chunya District	8
7	Sisimba Ward, Mbeya City	9
8	Rukwa Region	10
9	Educational colouring books	11
10	Screening and referral pathway	12
11	Teachers and healthcare workers	13
12	Working with health facilities	14
13	Challenges	16
14	Lessons learned	17
15	Improvements after Quarter 1	18
16	Quarter 2 priorities	19
17	Bugando surgical camp plan	20
18	Quarter 2 map	21
19	Conclusion	22

Photographs The One New Heart Tanzania, used with consent. No child is identified by name.

Funding This project has been funded, in full or in part, by a grant from the World Heart Federation. The views, findings, and statements expressed in all associated materials or publications are solely those of the authors and contributors. They should not be construed as representing the official policies or positions of the World Heart Federation.

Section 1

Executive summary

During Quarter 1, Colors to Save Hearts activities were conducted in Mbeya Region and Rukwa Region.



School activities were conducted in Makongolosi in Chunya District and Sisimba Ward in Mbeya City. Community and health facility activities were conducted at Dr Atiman Memorial Hospital in Sumbawanga and Namanyere Hospital in Nkasi District.

A sample of 260 children was used to assess knowledge before and after the school education and colouring book activities. The results showed improvement across three basic RHD prevention messages: the connection between some untreated throat infections and heart problems, the need to seek help when a sore throat persists and the importance of early treatment.

Quarter 1 also identified areas that need more attention. These include school permissions, referral follow up, road access, weather conditions and more consistent recording of screening and referral outcomes.

Quarter 2 will continue school and health facility activities with stronger attention to referral follow up. The plans for Quarter 2 are on pages 19 to 21, together with a paediatric cardiac surgical camp at Bugando Medical Centre to which children can be referred.

The main public health message

A sore throat can damage a child's heart if left untreated. Early treatment saves lives.

Supporting education explains that some untreated streptococcal throat infections can lead to rheumatic fever which can later cause Rheumatic Heart Disease.

Section 2

Quarter 1 at a glance

The first three months of implementation, August to October 2026, in numbers.

800
School children reached

390
Echocardiograms performed

516
Children screened, 390 in schools and 126 at health facilities

20
Teachers reached

15
Healthcare workers reached

800
Children engaged with educational colouring materials

2
Schools linked to health facilities

2
Health facilities directly involved

2
Regions reached

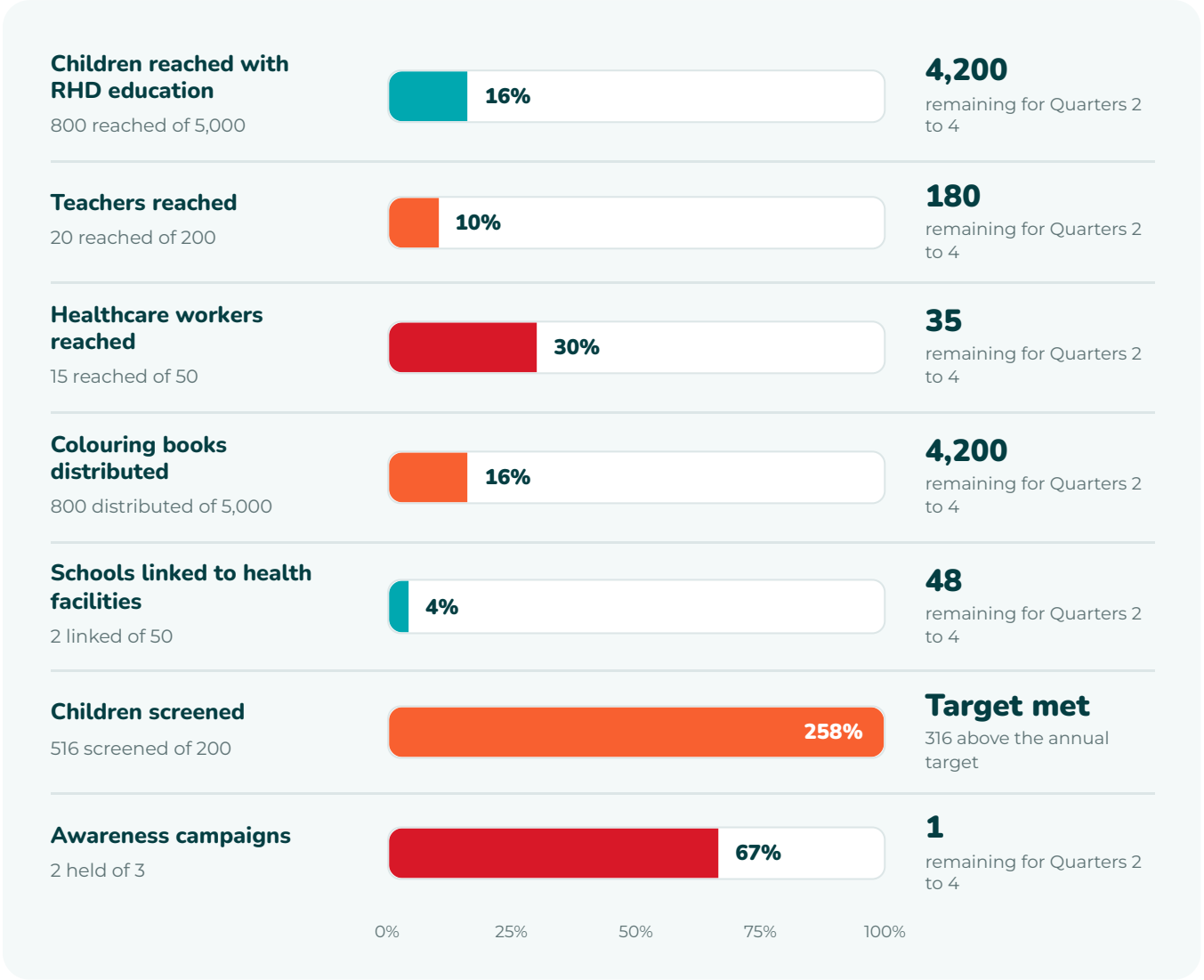




Section 3

Progress against annual targets

Quarter 1 began implementation against the main annual targets of the project. Each bar shows the Quarter 1 result against the target for the full project year.



The screening and referral pathway is set out on page 12.





Section 4

What did children learn?

The project assessed basic RHD prevention knowledge among a sample of 260 children selected from the 800 school children reached during Quarter 1. The same three messages were assessed before and after the education and colouring book activities.

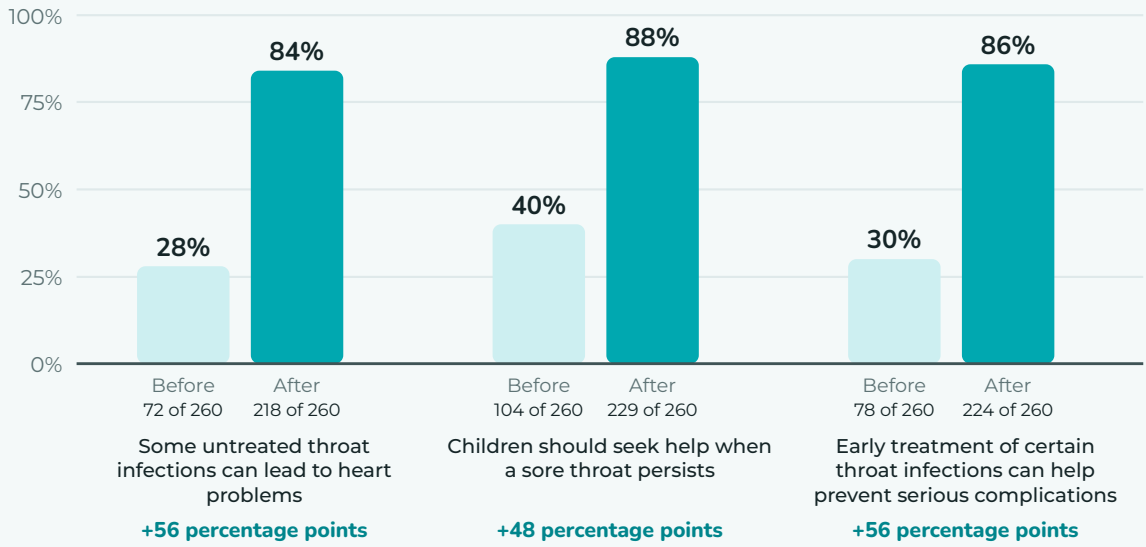


Figure 1. Knowledge before and after the Colors to Save Hearts education and colouring book sessions, 260 children.





Section 5

Quarter 1 activity map

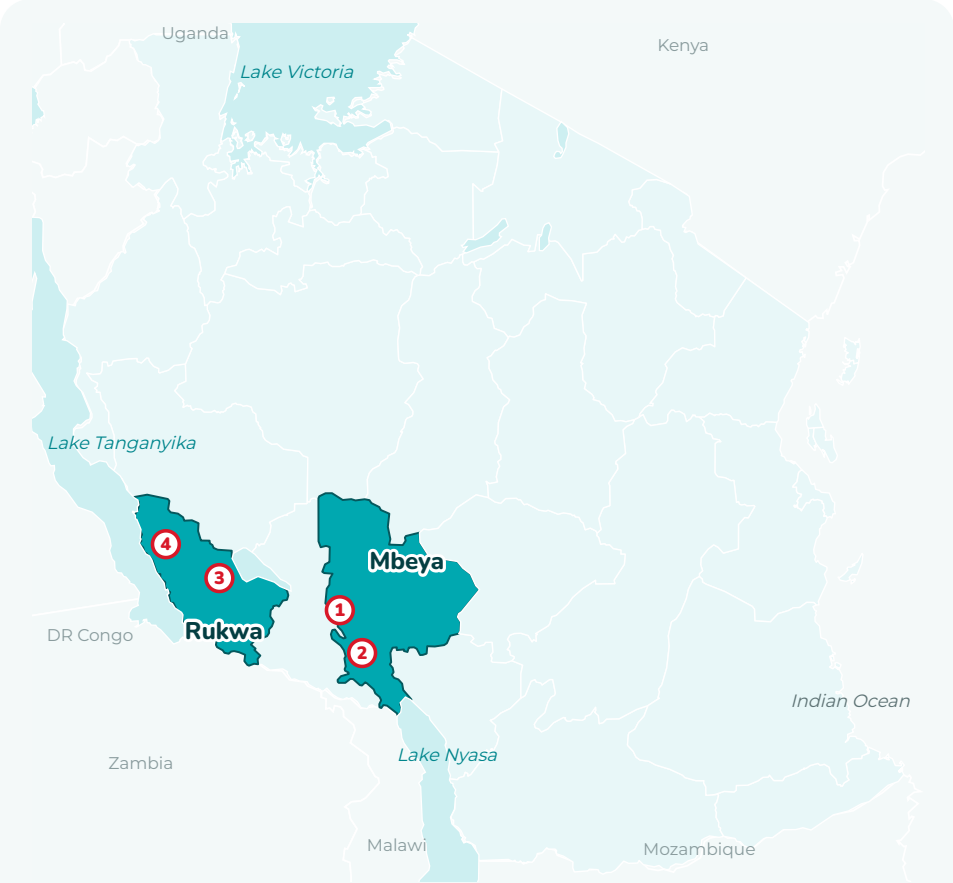


Figure 2. Quarter 1 implementation locations in Mbeya and Rukwa Regions.

Quarter 1 activities were conducted in two regions of the Southern Highlands of Tanzania.

- Quarter 1 implementation regions: Mbeya and Rukwa
- Quarter 1 activity sites, numbered 1 to 4
- 1 Makongolosi, Chunya District
- 2 Sisimba Ward, Mbeya City
- 3 Sumbawanga (Dr Atiman Memorial Hospital)
- 4 Namanyere (Namanyere Hospital)

Quarter 2 locations are shown on page 21.





Section 6

Makongolosi, Chunya District

700
children reached

350
echocardiograms performed





The project conducted school based RHD awareness and screening activities in Makongolosi in Chunya District, Mbeya Region.

Children received education about sore throat, rheumatic fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease. The sessions explained why a persistent sore throat should not be ignored and why children should tell their parents, teachers or healthcare workers when they are unwell.

Educational colouring books were used to support learning. Children participated in colouring, questions and discussions about the messages presented in the books.

A number of children were also identified with symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections. Children who required further assessment were referred for further diagnosis.







Section 7

Sisimba Ward, Mbeya City

100
students reached

40
echocardiograms performed

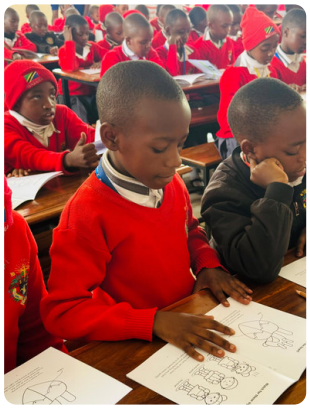


Colors to Save Hearts also conducted school based awareness and screening activities in Sisimba Ward in Mbeya City.

Students received basic education about sore throat, rheumatic fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease. They were encouraged to seek help when a sore throat persists and to report health problems to parents, teachers or healthcare workers.

Teachers also participated in the activities and supported the delivery of the health messages. Children requiring further assessment were linked to appropriate health services.







Section 8

Community screening and awareness in Rukwa

126
children screened

15
healthcare workers reached



Community screening and awareness activities were conducted at Dr Atiman Memorial Hospital in Sumbawanga and Namanyere Hospital in Nkasi District.

Sore throat symptoms were commonly observed among children attending the activities. Children were assessed by healthcare workers and received treatment according to their clinical needs.

The activities also included education for nurses and other healthcare workers. The discussions focused on persistent sore throat, appropriate assessment, early treatment and the relationship between untreated streptococcal throat infections, rheumatic fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease.



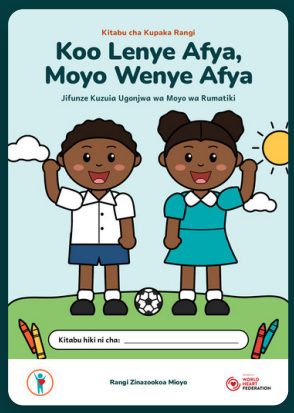


Section 9

Educational colouring books



English



Kiswahili

The RHD colouring book

Healthy Throat, Healthy Heart

Koo Lenye Afya, Moyo Wenye Afya

The Colors to Save Hearts RHD colouring book, in English and Kiswahili. Simple illustrations, colouring activities and questions introduce children to sore throat, rheumatic fever, Rheumatic Heart Disease and the importance of seeking treatment early.

800 children engaged with educational colouring materials in Quarter 1

Educational colouring books are one of the main learning tools used by Colors to Save Hearts. The colouring activities were combined with discussion and questions so that children participated directly in the learning process.

The project has also started discussions with relevant education authorities regarding review and possible wider use of the RHD educational materials in schools. These discussions are ongoing and no formal approval for wider school use is being reported at this stage.

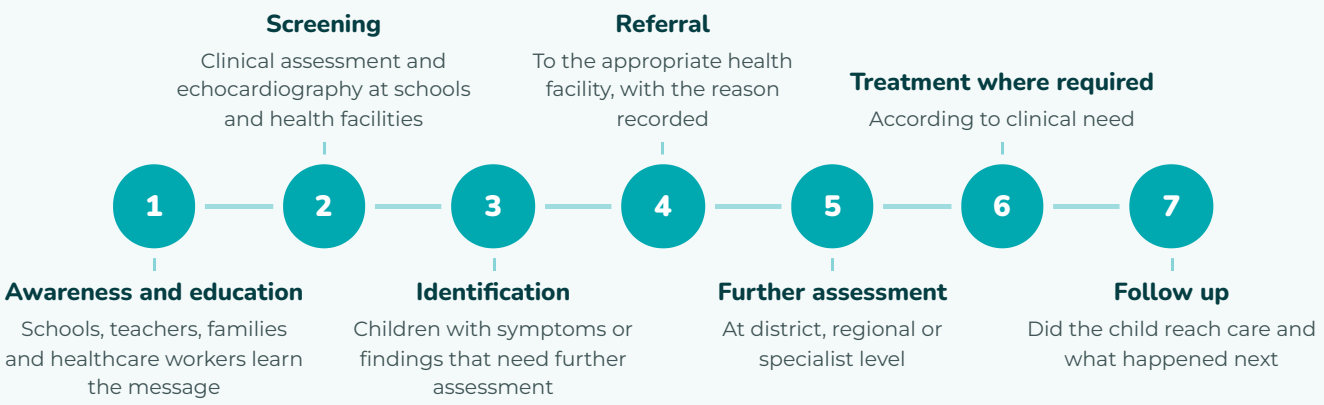


Section 10

Screening, referral and follow up

Screening is intended to identify children who may require further assessment. Children with symptoms or findings requiring further assessment were referred to appropriate health facilities.

The Colors to Save Hearts care pathway





Recording referrals

During Quarter 2 the project will record the reason for referral, the referral destination, completion of referral, diagnosis and treatment where this information is available.

The aim is to know what happens after a child is identified as needing further care.

Section 11

Teachers and healthcare workers

20

teachers reached in Quarter 1

15

healthcare workers reached in Quarter 1

Working with teachers

Teachers are important to Colors to Save Hearts because they interact with children regularly and can help reinforce health messages after project activities have ended.

Teachers received information about persistent sore throat, rheumatic fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease. They were encouraged to support children who repeatedly report sore throat or other health concerns and to communicate with parents when medical assessment is needed.

The project plans to strengthen teacher engagement so that basic RHD prevention messages can continue after individual project visits.

Working with healthcare workers

Nurses and other healthcare workers at Dr Atiman Memorial Hospital and Namanyere Hospital took part in education sessions during the Rukwa activities (page 10).

Healthcare workers are the link between screening and care. They assess children referred from schools and communities and provide treatment according to clinical need.





Section 12

Working with health facilities

Colors to Save Hearts is designed to connect school and community awareness with the health system. Children identified during screening may require further assessment at local hospitals or specialist cardiac centres.

Rukwa Region, Quarter 1 partner

Dr Atiman Memorial Hospital, Sumbawanga

Serves communities in Sumbawanga and surrounding areas of Rukwa Region. The hospital provides a local point for assessment and referral for children identified through community activities.

Rukwa Region, Quarter 1 partner

Namanyere Hospital, Nkasi District

Serves Nkasi District and surrounding communities. Many families live far from specialist cardiac services, so the hospital gives children initial assessment closer to home before referral where required.

Dodoma, specialist referral option

Benjamin Mkapa Hospital, Dodoma

A public tertiary referral and teaching hospital in Dodoma with specialised cardiac services. The One New Heart Tanzania has worked with Benjamin Mkapa Hospital since 2019 to support the development of paediatric cardiac services. Children identified through previous outreach activities have been referred to the hospital and some have received surgery through programmes involving The One New Heart Tanzania and its partners. These previous surgical activities are not counted as Quarter 1 Colors to Save Hearts results.





Mwanza, Lake Zone, specialist referral centre

Bugando Medical Centre, Mwanza

Bugando Medical Centre is a major tertiary referral and teaching hospital in Mwanza. It is an important referral centre for children in the Lake Zone and surrounding areas where access to specialised paediatric cardiac services remains limited. The One New Heart Tanzania is working with Bugando Medical Centre and other partners to strengthen paediatric cardiac care at the hospital.

900+
beds

23 million
people in its catchment population, close to one third of Tanzania's population

A paediatric cardiac surgical camp is planned here for the end of November 2026, funded outside this grant (page 20).

Levels of care in the Colors to Save Hearts pathway

1 Schools and communities
Awareness, education, screening and identification.

Referral

2 District and regional hospitals
Initial assessment, treatment according to clinical need and onward referral.

Onward referral

3 Specialist cardiac centres
Specialist assessment, case selection and surgery where appropriate.



Section 13

Challenges during Quarter 1

The first three months showed where the project needs to plan differently. None of these challenges stopped implementation, but each affected timing or the quality of the data collected.

School permissions

Obtaining the required permissions to conduct activities in some primary schools took longer than expected. This affected the timing of some planned school visits. The project learned that engagement with education authorities and local government needs to start earlier before school activities are scheduled.

Distance and road access

Some schools with greater need are located far from major towns. Reaching these communities required additional travel time and transport planning. Road conditions also made access difficult in some areas. This remains important because children living far from urban centres may also have more difficulty accessing specialist health services.



Weather

Heavy rainfall affected access to some schools. Some planned sessions had to be postponed because of weather conditions and changes in school schedules. Future planning will include more flexibility when activities are scheduled during periods of heavy rainfall.

Referral documentation

Quarter 1 showed that referral information needs stronger documentation. It is important to know whether children referred from screening activities reached the health facility and what happened after referral.

Section 14

What we learned

Schools are a practical entry point

School activities made it possible to reach many children with health information at the same time. Teachers also provided an opportunity to continue reinforcing the messages after the project team left. Schools will remain an important setting for RHD education and early identification.

Interactive education supports learning

Children participated actively when colouring books, questions and discussions were combined. The project will continue using participatory approaches rather than relying only on health talks.

Screening needs a strong referral pathway

Finding a child who requires further assessment is only the beginning. The programme also needs to know whether the child reaches the health facility, receives further assessment and receives treatment where needed.

Questions about other childhood heart conditions

Children and teachers also raised questions about heart conditions that children can be born with. This showed a wider knowledge gap around childhood heart disease.

Congenital heart defects are different from Rheumatic Heart Disease and are not part of the main objective of Colors to Save Hearts.

The One New Heart Tanzania is considering separate educational materials about congenital heart defects through its wider paediatric cardiac programme. This work will remain separate from the core RHD activities funded through Colors to Save Hearts.

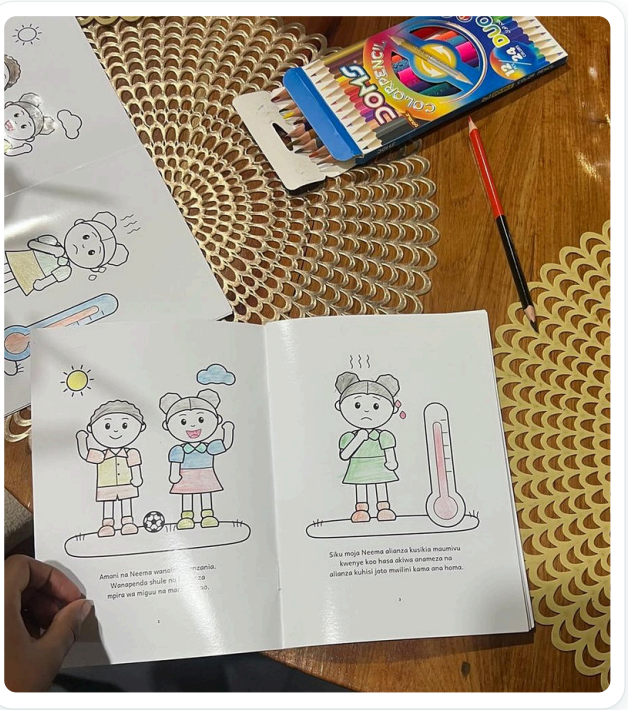


Section 15

Improvements following Quarter 1

Several changes will be made following the first three months of implementation. The project will:

1. Engage education authorities earlier when planning school visits
2. Strengthen referral documentation
3. Improve follow up with health facilities
4. Use a more structured approach to teacher engagement
5. Continue using pre and post knowledge questions during school education sessions
6. Continue discussions about the review and use of RHD educational materials in schools



> **These changes will support clearer reporting and better tracking of children who require further care.**

Monitoring priorities for Quarter 2

Each indicator will be recorded separately to reduce double counting.

- Children reached through RHD education
- Children completing pre and post knowledge assessments
- Teachers reached
- Healthcare workers reached
- Children screened
- Echocardiograms performed
- Abnormal screening findings
- Children referred
- Reasons for referral
- Referral completion
- Confirmed diagnoses
- Treatment provided
- Follow up outcomes
- Educational materials used

Section 16

Quarter 2 priorities

Quarter 2 will cover November 2026 to January 2027. The project will continue school and health facility activities with greater attention to referral follow up.

Planned activities

- School based RHD awareness and education
- Teacher engagement
- Healthcare worker education
- Heart screening
- Referral of children requiring further assessment
- Continued use of RHD educational colouring books

Planned, Quarter 2

Iringa Region, with Dodoma Region as the alternative

Quarter 2 will extend school and health facility activities to a new region named in the project proposal. Iringa Region is the first choice because it borders Mbeya Region. Dodoma Region is the alternative. The final choice depends on permissions from regional and district authorities.

Continuing

Mbeya and Rukwa Regions

Follow up of children referred during Quarter 1 continues in both regions.

Quarter 2 timeline

November 2026 — **Quarter 2 begins**

End of November 2026 — **Surgical camp at Bugando Medical Centre**
A referral destination for children who need surgery, funded outside this grant. The plan is on page 20.

January 2027 — **Quarter 2 ends**

Section 17

Bugando paediatric cardiac surgical camp plan

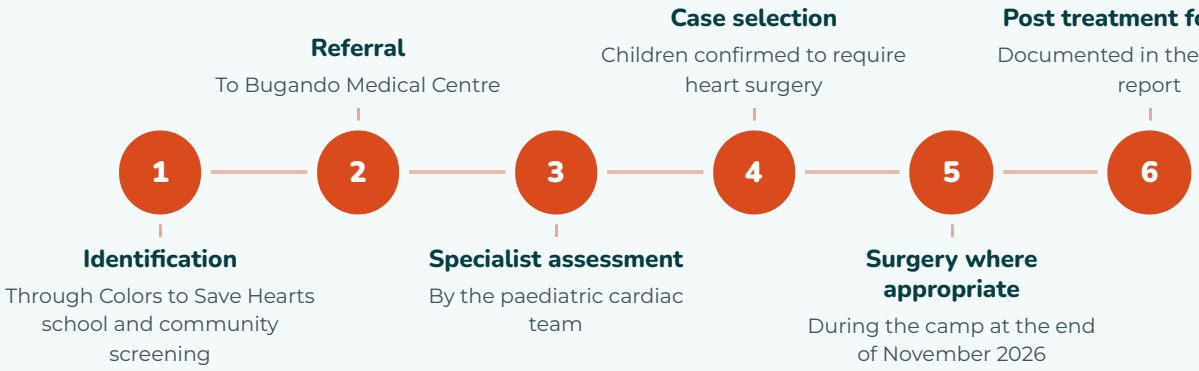
> **Linked activity, funded outside this grant.** The camp is not a Colors to Save Hearts grant activity. For children identified through the project, it is a referral destination for specialist care. It does not change the main RHD prevention objective of Colors to Save Hearts.

At the end of November 2026, The One New Heart Tanzania and its partners plan to conduct a paediatric cardiac surgical camp at Bugando Medical Centre.

The camp will include children identified through Colors to Save Hearts school and community screening activities who have undergone further assessment and have been confirmed to require heart surgery. Children will undergo specialist assessment and case selection before surgery.

The camp will also allow the project to assess how effectively the pathway from community identification to specialist care is working. Quarter 2 reporting will document the number of children assessed, selected, treated and followed after treatment.

Pathway for the surgical camp



Section 18

Quarter 2 map

Quarter 2 will extend activities to a new project region, with Iringa Region as the first choice and Dodoma Region as the alternative. Bugando Medical Centre in Mwanza is shown as a specialist referral destination.



Figure 3. Quarter 1 regions (solid), the planned Quarter 2 region (hatched), the alternative region (dashed outline) and the specialist referral destination.

- Quarter 1 implementation regions: Mbeya and Rukwa
- Quarter 1 activity sites, numbered 1 to 4
- Quarter 2 planned region: Iringa
- Alternative region: Dodoma
- Specialist referral destination: Bugando Medical Centre, Mwanza

1. Makongolosi, Chunya District
2. Sisimba Ward, Mbeya City
3. Sumbawanga (Dr Atiman Memorial Hospital)
4. Namanyere (Namanyere Hospital)

Section 19

Conclusion

Quarter 1 established the first phase of Colors to Save Hearts activities in Mbeya and Rukwa Regions.

Results

The results of the quarter are summarised on page 4 and the knowledge assessment on page 6.

Further work

The quarter identified areas that require further work including school permissions, access to remote areas, referral tracking and more consistent programme data.

Quarter 2

Quarter 2 will continue awareness and screening activities while giving greater attention to follow up and connection to care.



MEMBER OF WORLD HEART FEDERATION

Global Heart Hub Affiliate

#ColorsToSaveHearts

Registered office

Plot No. 994 Block CC
Iyumbu West
P.O. Box 2259
Dodoma

Physical location

C/O Ark Associates Limited
11th Floor, Exchange Tower
Morocco Square
Dar es Salaam 14112

Phone and email

+255 759 881 080
+255 745 595 692
info@onenewhearttz.org
onenewhearttz.org

Social media

Facebook @onenewhearttz
Instagram @onenewhearttz
YouTube @onenewhearttz
LinkedIn onenewheart