

PITCH KENYA - Newsletter

January-June 2019

Our July issue brings updates on activities since January 2019. It gives you a glimpse of our work in collaboration with our esteemed partners. The undoubted commitment of PITCH continues to inspire hope to the various vulnerable groups we aspire to serve.

This work is undertaken against a background of retrogressive cultural practices, discriminatory practices among other hurdles. The July edition seeks to highlight incredible milestones that demonstrate the determination of our partners as change agents.

RESTRICTIVE JUNE 2018 GUIDELINES OUTSTED



AYARHEP with the support of PITCH organized a procession in which a group of 500 young women of reproductive age matched in solidarity demanding access to equitable HIV based treatment. The state department of health issued the June 2018 guidelines that restricted use of DTG based regimens for Women of reproductive age living with HIV.

As a result of the procession, two remarkable gains were made. Firstly, the state department of health reinstated the guidelines. Secondly, AYARHEP alongside other stakeholders were

invited by the government to jointly work towards improving access to treatment and health care for everyone.

NOTHING FOR US WITHOUT US

PITCH funded advocacy activities that culminated in the integration of health service Gay men, Bisexuals and Men having sex with Men (GBMSM) within Kisumu County Hospital (public health facilities).

Initially, the integration process was met with a lot of resistance from facility affiliated health service providers who did not necessarily comprehend MSM programming. However, with increased engagement of key stakeholders through MAYYGO, service provision to Gays, Bisexual and other Men who have Sex with other Men(GBMSM) improved to notable levels.

Further, the Railways Dispensary management team in collaboration with the county department of health in Kisumu agreed to provide space for MSM DIC establishment within the dispensary. This work in progress will serve to further integrate GBMSM health provision within the mainstream health facility. This success was as a result of advocacy supported by PITCH.



IDADA MARKED

In marking this year's IDADA ("Support, don't Punish" day), KENPUD brought together police officers and People who use drugs (PUDs) to have a dialogue.

Invitation to the police officers was a deliberate effort made against a background of insensitivity and violence towards PUDs. PUDs on the material day participated in a cleanup activity around the police station.

KENPUD appreciates PITCH for supporting sensitization of police officers on harm reduction. Harm reduction refers to policies, programmes and practices that aim primarily to reduce the adverse consequences of drug use without necessarily stopping drug consumption itself.



SAY NO TO VIOLENCE

KELIN carefully selected stakeholders on the basis of their role in prevention of violence and improving access to health care services for key populations. Furthermore, violence response teams who would be the first responders in cases of violence against key populations were established.

KELIN in partnership with PITCH conducted two sets of meetings on 22nd March and on 26-27 April 2019 following reports by "Eagles for life" indicating that there had been in 2018, 39 cases of harassment, 70 of physical abuse, 7 of sexual assault and 12 of illegal arrest against MSMs and Sex workers. It is in these forums that participants were informed on the linkage between violence prevention, HIV and human rights; and that collaboration among stakeholders in violence prevention and access to health can be fostered.

Thanks to the deliberations, law enforcement officers committed to follow up on all cases of violence reported. County AIDS and STIs Coordinator (CASCO) pledged to continue building capacities of health care workers on the rights of key populations; County legislators on their part undertook to formulate a county bill on violence prevention so as to reduce the incidence of gender based violence in Kisii County as a result of the sensitization.

DECRIMINALIZE PETTY OFFENCES

VOCAL Kenya in support of PITCH held three successful meetings with members of the Kenya National Assembly i.e. the parliamentary caucus on sustainable development goals and business and the parliamentary Health Committee.

The object of the meetings was to sensitize members of parliament on harm reduction and the effect of discriminatory drug laws and policies enacted by parliament. Owing to the

deliberations, some members of parliament volunteered to be drug policy champions in parliament.

Vocal- Kenya also sought audience with Nyali MP, Mohamed Ali, author of the proposed Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances Control Act Amendment Bill. This was to dissuade the member from his earlier stance which sought to criminalize drug use among other negative implications on people who use drugs. In the meeting, vocal –Kenya raised with the member issues emerging from the proposed amendment to the Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances Control Act of 1994.



DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD

WOFAK took part in marking the Day of the African Child on 14th June. This year's theme was, 'Humanitarian Action in Africa: #Children's Right first.'

The celebrations which took place in Ndhiwa Sub County allowed an opportunity to sensitize participants on sexual reproductive and health rights. WOFAK advocated for comprehensive health services for the adolescent and young girls.

Following the advocacy, five schools in Homabay established corners to provide responsive reproductive health services to AGYW. So far, over 30,000 children are beneficiaries of the

project that offers health, education and psychosocial support.



TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH

HOYMAS actively participated in TWG quarterly meetings at sub-county and county levels. At the meetings, HOYMAS' clinics were popularized and as a result registered by Medical and Dentist and Practitioner's Board.

Increased referrals for MSM in Nyeri county to county hospitals and most especially MSW on ART are attributable to TWG meetings. On the other hand, PITCH supported HOYMAS push for a mental health package for KP.

HIV PREVENTION FOR AGYW

Through the support of PITCH, BHESP undertook successful monthly and quarterly integrated advocacy on HIV prevention and sexual and reproductive health targeting AGYW aged 15-24 Years.

Notably, reports from peer educators and BHESP' health care providers indicate that AGYW are increasingly seeking life-saving reproductive health care such as Voluntary HIV prevention options, antenatal service at BHESP facilities.



BEYOND IMPLEMENTING, MONITOR AND EVALUATE

KESWA undertook a monitoring and evaluation training for KESWA's member networks in order to streamline their methods of project management. This training benefited greatly from PITCH funding.

Emphasis was also put on the importance of having a clear pathway of planning and implementing Sex Work programmes. This aimed at getting Sex Workers (SW) be in a position to identify areas where the programme is not working well, and/or where they are successful.

Report writing was identified as a good practice of documenting progress.

COLLECTIVE VOICES IN KEY POPULATION FUNDING FOR KENYA

Key populations i.e. Men Who have Sex with Men (MSM), Sex Workers (SW), People Who Use Drugs (PWUD) and Transgender people took part in the PEPFAR deliberations on funding and programming for COP19.

KP consortium drafted campaign letters that merged ideas to increase voices of KP's in the PEPFAR funding discussions.

This was followed by increased in funding of PEPFAR grant for KPs from USD 5.9 million to USD 18.4 million.

KP Consortium, is in the process of improving its coalitions of partners and allies for improved programming. This will enhance its contribution to various agendas such as working with People Living with HIV/AIDS, working with Legal providers, working with the Ministry of Health, NASCOP and NACC as they continue to devolve the health care system in Kenya.

CLIENT CENTRED SERVICE FOR MSM

Together with NASCOP, Ishtar MSM developed a protocol to assist baseline survey for DSD for MSM.

A national Differentiated Service Delivery (DSD) for MSM meeting was held on 11th April 2019. Differentiated service delivery (DSD) puts the client at the centre of HIV services. DSD improves the client experience by adapting HIV service provision according to the heterogeneous needs, preferences and expectations of different groups of people living with HIV, while facilitating service scale-up by reducing the burden on health systems and increasing efficiency.

STIGMA IS NOTED AS A KEY HINDRANCE TO HIV AND SRH SERVICES UPTAKE.

PITCH supported training of young advocates within youth advisory council (YAC) who continue to mobilize their peers to get the above mentioned services. In addition YAC undertook advocacy across 5 counties to ensure sustainability of HIV and SRH services with a special focus on public health facilities.

Plausibly, some counties like Mombasa are set to establish youth friendly centers in each sub-county. As it stands, the containers have been

received and with close involvement of YAC locations assessed for ultimate set up.

YAC joined the county health management team during supervision and provided feedback during the technical working group meetings on the quality and comprehensiveness of services for young people.

YAC have also been holding radio talks to sensitize communities on the importance of supporting AGYW to access HIV and SRH services.

So far, YAC have been able to hold two counties accountable in implementation of adolescent and young people (AYP) strategy addressing HIV and SRH needs. Mombasa and Kisumu counties developed the strategies in 2018. AGYW took part in the AYP TWG and raised gaps and contributed to discussion of how to improve HIV and SRH services.

PITCH facilitated AGYW to participate in TWGs and conferences to present best practices and challenges faced by AGYW in accessing services. LVCT Health is grateful for PITCH support that facilitated capacity development of YAC and mentorship for AGYW to engage in decision making forums.

THE FIRST WIN

NGLHRC celebrated the decision by the Court of Appeal to uphold the ruling that allowed registration of NGLHRC.

On March, 22nd 2019, the Court of Appeal in Nairobi, affirmed NGLHRC's win at a lower court challenging the NGO Coordination Board decision not to officially register as a non -profit organization.

This judgment has since been appealed at the Supreme Court of Kenya.

In April 2019, a three judge bench of the Constitutional Division of the High Court in Nairobi unanimously ruled that the government agency had no authentic reason to deny NGLHRC official registration status as an NGO. The Board immediately appealed the ruling which has since been dismissed by the Court of Appeal. Heard by a five judge bench, three upheld the High Court's ruling, while two dismissed the ruling.

The government agency appealed the supreme courts' decision and NGLHRC is prepared to appear on the same court.

Forum on the National Transgender Discrimination Survey (NTDS).

For the first time, PITCH-Kenya supported a National cross-regional information sharing, learning and action Stakeholders' Forum on the National Transgender Discrimination Survey (NTDS).

The convening brought together 9 Transgender networks in Kenya and over 45 state and non-state actors engaged in this process.

This is an all important milestone towards the realization of gender affirming healthcare policies and guidelines in Kenya including the development of National health strategy (HIV/AIDS) for Transgender, gender diverse and intersex movements' in Kenya. The forum also provided an avenue to discuss the way forward on commitments of actions on matters health and rights.

JOINED PITCH ACTIVITIES....

PITCH has sustained the call for a responsive and inclusive universal health coverage (UHC) that puts into perspective unique needs and priorities of the respective communities it works with.

In line with this, PITCH convened a multi-

stakeholder workshop in January. The workshop that brought together Key Populations, Adolescent and Young People affiliated CSOs endeavored to equip members with knowledge on Universal Health Coverage. Most importantly, the stakeholders discussed what they considered the best practices of advocating for a non-discriminatory universal health coverage. PITCH partners continued to engage with UHC in different spaces.

PITCH engaged in the consolidation of the mid-term UPR report for Kenya. Through this process PITCH advanced the HIV agenda that conspicuously missed in the last two UPR cycles. Participating in the process laid a foundation for future engagement in the third UPR cycle.

Similarly, PITCH through the UPR process familiarized KPs and AGYW with conventional human rights organizations. This is an important step in the interest of promotion of human rights. Consequently, PITCH and other SRHR alliances submitted two shadow reports in June to the UN human rights council in readiness for Kenya review January 2020. KESWA, a PITCH partner also submitted a UPR report to Geneva.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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| August - | PITCH 2019 Review and 2020 planning |
| September - | UHC HLM |
| October - | International Workshop on HIV and Adolescence |
| November - | ICPD25+ UPR embassy engagements ahead of Kenya Review in Feb 2020 |
| | 16 Days of activism |
| December - | World Aids Day ICASA 2019 |