

## COMPASS AFRICA MID- TERM NEWSLETTER 2022

ISSUE NO. 02 JULY 2022



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# COMPASS AFRICA

“A PEEK INTO OUR ADVOCACY JOURNEY;  
WINS, SETBACKS AND LESSONS”

## Malawi Launches the T=T Campaign

On 19th June 2022, the Malawi government launched the Tizirombo tochepa=Thanzi (T=T) Campaign Strategy (2022-2026) at the 2022 International AIDS Candlelight Memorial held in Balaka District.

The T=T campaign strategy is a locally adapted and contextualized global Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U) campaign which aims to reduce the annual new HIV transmission rate from 33,000 to 11,000 by 2026. The T=T campaign was inceptioned in 2018 using learnings from the global U=U campaign, and the launch of the strategy represents a key milestone in the fight against HIV in Malawi.

The strategy was developed through the collaboration of the national HIV response funders, Ministry of Health (MoH) and Civil Society Advocacy Forum (CSAF). The campaign strategy is expected to guide the implementation of interventions aimed at reducing new HIV infections.

Specifically, the interventions are expected contribute to increasing viral suppression rates, reducing viral load testing result turnaround time, and improving treatment retention through improved treatment literacy. The Ministry of Health reinforced their commitment to this campaign and pledged to continue supporting the cause towards reduced HIV transmission in Malawi.



*Fig 1-3: Highlights from the T=T Campaign Launch at the 2022 International AIDS Candlelight Memorial in Malawi*

# TANZANIA

## Tanzania approves PrEP implementation framework

After five years of waiting, Tanzania through the Ministry of Health has finally approved PrEP Implementation Framework to guide the scale up of PrEP services as a country wide HIV prevention program starting 2022. This heart-warming milestone was achieved via efforts done by COMPASS Partners and the civil society in Tanzania who collectively gathered evidence to showcase PrEP demand in the communities hence the need to finalize PrEP implementation Framework. Approval of the framework is a fundamental condition towards scale up of PrEP in Tanzania.

After consistent advocacy efforts, the PrEP Framework was eventually signed in mid-2021 and publicised for CSO access in January 2022. This milestone is very significant as it improves access to PrEP services for communities in need. Over the years, PrEP was only accessible to some few community councils and specific groups under implementation science. Approval of this document has thus unlocked the potential scale up of PrEP services across Tanzania.

This process was a success via various COMPASS efforts invested through:

- Review of 2017-2020 PrEP implementation science reports to familiarize with lessons learned for incorporation in the finalization of implementation framework. Some of the Key barriers to PrEP implementation framework finalization included a lack of demand creation materials and stakeholder concerns around PrEP use such as promotion of promiscuity. COMPASS Partners engaged in strategic meetings and in person follow ups with Government officials, Implementing Partners and existing PrEP beneficiaries.
- Advocating the development and finalization of KVP specific IEC materials for community demand creation materials with the Ministry of Health. COMPASS Partners additionally participated in the review and follow up processes of the designed PrEP IEC materials.
- Addressing concerns raised by multi-sectoral stakeholders on AGYW's PrEP use via planned community dialogues, consultations and shared these opinions in ministerial level consultative meetings held in Morogoro and Bagamoyo.
- Advocating the finalization of PrEP implementation framework as one of the key priority areas via COP21 processes.



*Fig 4 and 5: Image of the Cover page and Acknowledgements page in the PrEP Implementation Framework*



# ZIMBABWE

## Zimbabwe brings ART treatment closer to home

The Zimbabwe Ministry of Health and Child Care has approved out-of-facility community ART distribution (OFCAD) in rural communities in Mwenzezi through Village Health Workers. As a result, People living with HIV are now able to access ART services closer to their home. Prior to this decision PLHIV used to walk for more than 60 kilometres to collect their ART medication and this was resulting in high rates of defaulting and unexpected cost in accessing ART medication. Following up and rescheduling missed appointments contributed to a higher workload on healthcare workers leading to poor quality service provision and exacerbated stigma and discrimination of PLHIV at health facilities and in community.

To address this challenge, BHASO collaborated with MOHCC to setup 2 outreach sites which support 11 out of facility community ART distribution sites manned by village health centres and community HIV support agents. Through technical and financial support from COMPASS BHASO successfully advocated the increase in OFCADs in other hard to reach areas. The model has also been adopted in other districts by implementing partners such JF Kapnek and OPHID.



*Fig 6: BHASO officer preparing for outreach service in Mwenzezi*



*Fig 7: BHASO Outreach team at work*



*Fig 8: VHW and CHAs collecting ART at outreach sites.*

# 2022 MERL ROADSHOW

The COMPASS MERL hosted 3 in-country MERL Roadshows in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Tanzania in May and June 2022, reaching a total of 67 participants from across the 3 countries. The trainings were co-facilitated by MERL Champions, and participants were drawn from diverse stakeholders at country level; including policy makers and COMPASS Africa collaborators and allies. A Pre-roadshow webinar was recorded and shared with COMPASS Africa partners to set the tone for the in-country MERL roadshows. Content of the webinar focused on an overview of MERL, unpacking the MERL roadshow concept, laying out expectations and generating demand for the in-person meetings. The webinar also encouraged partners to begin engaging with the MERL Handbook for Advocacy Champions in preparation for the in-depth training.

Last held in 2019, the roadshow features capacity strengthening workshops facilitated by MERL Team. The 2022 MERL Roadshow was mainly centred on practical application of the **MERL Handbook for Advocacy Champions** which was launched in March 2022. Participatory techniques were utilised throughout including group discussions, drawing, reflection exercises, music and games.

Overall, participants reported satisfaction with the MERL roadshow agenda, facilitation and methodology. However, there were some concerns cited about the duration of the meeting, some participants felt that additional time would have optimised the experience. The majority (81%) of participants reported that they strongly agreed that the training had improved their understanding of how to use the tools, how to monitor their campaigns and how to document their progress. C-CAAT and SPARC sessions were cited by more than half of the participants as being the two most important things they had learnt in the MERL training.

Some of the participants stated the following as their key highlights:

*“Learning on how to develop SPARC will help us in crafting stories that we share with the public on social media platforms, communicating on work being done.”*

*“If you are not fully involved in M&E, you would think that M & E is done to please the donor, yet it is for my empowerment and emancipation, helps to upscale individual’s skills and produce meaningful results.”*

*“The session was informative as we used to leave all M & E responsibility to the MERL team. Now I have realized it requires teamwork to contribute to the desired outcomes.”*

*“Learnt about a tool in identifying and understanding a problem which is fish bone, learnt how to write success stories and providing pictures for my story which helps in and learnt how to come up with goals and objectives for a project by using SMART tool.”*

Aside from capacity strengthening, one of the key outputs of the MERL roadshows was development of country level SPARC stories to showcase the most significant outcomes from the last 6 months. A major outcome of the roadshows to date is new requests to become MERL champions in all 3 countries. Since the trainings, the MERL team has been receiving applications to become MERL champions which is an indication of strengthened MERL capacity and involvement at country level for sustained results-focused advocacy.

**Next steps:**

- **Address the MERL learning needs raised during roadshow via webinars and in-country support provided by MERL Champions**
- **Accept and orient new MERL champions across the coalition; provide mentorship and tailored MERL support- with strong involvement and leadership of existing champions**
- **Dissemination of The MERL Handbook Reference booklet to support learnings from MERL Handbook for Advocacy Champions**

# MERL ROADSHOW

## *in Pictures*





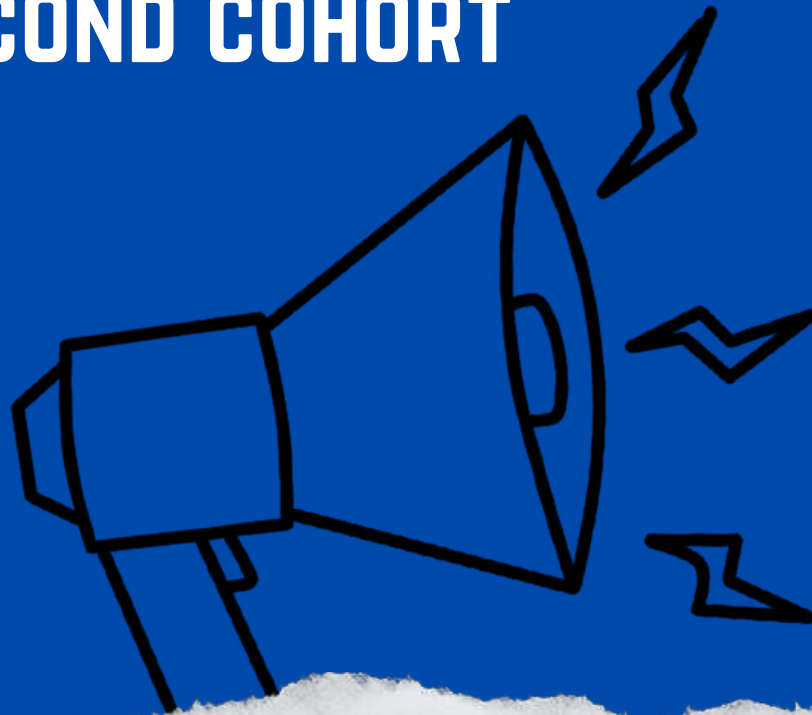




# JOIN US!

COMPASS  
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS FOR PROMOTING AFRICAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## CALL FOR COMPASS AFRICA MERL CHAMPIONS - SECOND COHORT



### APPLY NOW

**How:** To apply, send an email to the MERL Team [compassmerlins@gmail.com](mailto:compassmerlins@gmail.com) highlighting your interest in becoming a MERL Champion.

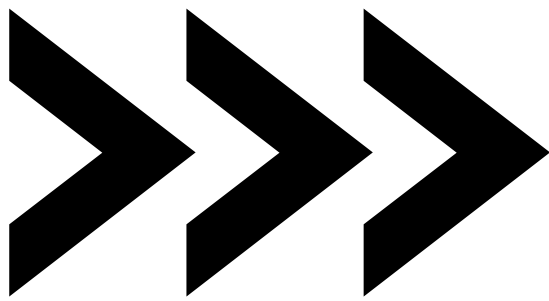
**Who is eligible:** COMPASS Country Partners who have been trained on COMPASS MERL concepts and tools.

Deadline

# 31ST

July 2022

*For more information, get in touch with the COMPASS MERL Team and MERL Champions.*



***UP NEXT IN THE SECOND HALF OF 2022:***

- **Lessons Learned Webinar Series**
- **Coalition Health Scorecard**
- **Data Champions**
- **Governance Manual**
- **In-country Strategy Labs**

*Stay  
Fearless*

We want to hear from you! This newsletter was developed by the COMPASS Africa MERL Team. Have comments, queries or suggestions?... Email the MERL Team here:

[compassmerlins@gmail.com](mailto:compassmerlins@gmail.com)

# COMPASS

THE COALITION TO BUILD MOMENTUM, POWER, ACTIVISM, STRATEGY & SOLIDARITY IN AFRICA

