APHIA II EASTERN Newsletter

Message from APHIA II Eastern Project Director, Dr. Kenneth Chebet

I extend a warm greeting to all. The third issue of the APHIA II Eastern (A2E) Newsletter, thanks to the editorial team, highlights the project activities for the period April to June, 2007. The period was characterized by accelerated implementation of field activities and networking with key stakeholders in the province. The Project’s activities are aimed at enhancing the quality of health care services for the communities we serve, and I am proud to say that A2E is making great progress toward this objective. As with the earlier two issues, I want to acknowledge the contributions of many people who share in the Project’s successes: the Government of Kenya staff, USAID and PEPFAR, communities across Eastern Province, partners and the technical officers’ teams. Together, we will continue to make a difference in the health and wellbeing of Kenyans. Enjoy this issue of the newsletter; please contact me with any questions or comments.

Special Events

Technical Advisory Group Visit
The Technical Advisory Group which comprises of Country Directors of A2E partners visited Eastern province in April to observe some of the activities carried out by the project. The team visited the voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) and comprehensive care centre (CCC) centres at Chuka hospital; attended a Village Health Conference (VHC) meeting; and visited the ACK Gichehe Nuru ya Yesu home-based care (HBC) givers at Runyenges. The team were pleased with the activities carried out by the project and applauded the A2E team for the good work.

A2E Retreat
APHIA II Eastern team organized and attended a 4-day workplanning and team-building retreat in Shaba, Samburu. The main purpose of the retreat was to develop the A2E year 2 workplan which was achieved. In addition, the team was taken through a team building process which pulled the strengths of all team members for the success of the project and also for collaboration among all three result areas. The retreat was a great success; the A2E team is re-energized and ready for a successful second year.

Highlights of A2E Project: Numbers at a Glance
- 47,000 people were reached through HIV prevention activities, primarily Magnet Theatre and Community Agency.
- A total of 2,788 OVCs reached with direct primary support.
- A total of 610 care givers and 42 service providers were trained.
- 2,296 clients reached with palliative care (HBC) through A2E-trained and supported community health workers and direct care givers.
- 9,274 clients accessed counseling and testing services at the VCT static sites.
- 2,540 patients (2,304 adults and 236 children) are currently receiving treatment in 17 ART sites and 6538 patients are receiving palliative care.
- 4459 patients including 712 TB patients were offered PITC services.
- A2E rolled out Inplanon insertion in Eastern province, therefore 2,153 women received implants.
- Refresher training for 20 youth group leaders on FP/RH, TB and Adherence to treatment for both TB and ARVs.
Stuart Merkel’s Visit
Stuart Merkel, Program Officer, JHPIEGO/Baltimore, visited A2E in May 2007. Stuart was privileged to visit several activities managed by the project. He attended a VHC meeting in Siakago, a trainer of trainers (ToT) OVC training in Thuci, and visited the VCT site in Timau, CCC clinic at Meru district hospital, and an adherence training in Meru. He commended the great work being done by the team in ensuring that services reached as many people as possible in the province.

APHIA II Nyanza’s Visit
A2E was pleased to host their APHIA II Nyanza counterparts from the 17 - 20 June, 2007 on an exchange learning program. The APHIA II Nyanza team visited activities and sites supported by A2E. They applauded the work done by the A2E team and plans to adopt some of A2E’s best practices into their project in Nyanza.

Reproductive Health
Long-Term Contraceptive Method Use
A2E support has been geared to improve uptake of long term contraceptive methods. Health care workers were trained by district ToTs who had been trained in March 2007 on IUD/Implanon insertion and removal. Between April and June 2007, 150 health care workers in 5 districts were trained. A total of 161 women received Implanon during the training period.

Cervical Cancer Screening
A team of consultants from Western Province contracted by A2E, trained 29 health care workers as ToTs in VIA/VILLI. During the training, a total of 295 women were screened; 12 were VIA/VILLI positive and 2 required further tests for follow-up to determine their status. The ToTs trained are expected to roll out training in their respective districts during the second year of the project. In addition, A2E will explore the linkage between cervical cancer screening and HIV screening in all district hospitals and high volume sub-district hospitals.

Care and Treatment
Trauma Counselling
The project held it’s first-ever trauma counselling in Eastern province. The training objective was to equip participants with skills in helping survivors of sexual violence. Participants were drawn from selected health facilities in Eastern province and trainees underwent a second phase of the course which focused on trauma counselling to actual clients. This training also forms the basis for the establishment of post rape care services in selected sites in Eastern province.

Moonlight VCT takes Embu by Storm
Saturday 30 June 2007 presented a unique opportunity whereby APHIA II Eastern and LVCT, in joint collaboration with the Ministry of Health, organized for moonlight VCT at the heart of Embu town.
Most of the community members who visited the site traversed the chilly July cold with one resolve: “to know their HIV status.” The commitment was so strong that as late as 2am at night some still kept vigil waiting for their chance to get tested.
The night similarly presented opportunities for a class that has often missed the chance to know their HIV status. A number of men who work in the garages, carpentry shops and other menial jobs admitted that it is difficult for them to get time during the day to get tested and they appreciated the revolutionary night time services. Similarly the location was very strategic next to the Makutini club as it was able to capture most of the commercial sex workers. They specifically lauded the concept of bringing moonlight VCT as it provided them an opportunity to know their status as they went about with their business.
The young people too felt more confident to access the service at night. A number admitted that they were scared of accessing such services from the established sites during the day for fear of being seen going to the VCT. At the end of the day, a total of 95 clients had been attended to in that one day with many requesting that moonlight VCT be made a regular service.
**Mobile VCT**
During the last quarter, 23 mobile VCTs were conducted. These mobile VCTs consisted of one-day and five-day mobile VCTs, which were held in Embu, Mbeere, Maua, Tharaka and Meru Central. The demand for VCT in Kenya has been very high especially in places where no static or integrated VCT sites exist. 1244 clients accessed VCT services during the mobile VCT outreaches conducted.

**Provider Initiated Testing and Counselling (PITC)**
A total of 29 ToTs were trained from 11 districts and from 3 medical training institutions. With A2E’s continued support it is expected that in the second year of the project the service will be rolled out in all major departments within the institutions. Through further training of service providers by the ToTs, it is also expected that 80% of TB patients will be counselled and tested.

**Pediatric HIV Care Rapid Result Initiative**
A2E supported the Pediatric Rapid Result Initiative (RRI) within Eastern South by having one pediatric HIV care training and an ART commodity management. These two trainings targeted the sub-district and health centers, and were done to strengthen their abilities in the current Pediatric RRI. A2E is currently supporting the Provincial AIDS and STI Coordinators to perform Pediatric RRI supportive supervision to all the performing sites including Marsabit and Moyale. A2E will at the end of the RRI also support an RRI review meeting within Eastern province.

**HIV care and treatment**
Approximately 2540 patients (2304 adults and 236 children) are currently receiving treatment in the 17 ART sites. Among the adults, 39% of those on care have been put on treatment, (the national recommended percentage - 50% of those on care need treatment). 9.3% of those on treatment are children. A total of 6538 patients are receiving HIV care and support.

**Pediatric HIV Care Rapid Result Initiative**
A2E supported the Pediatric Rapid Result Initiative (RRI) within Eastern South by having one pediatric HIV care training and an ART commodity management. These two trainings targeted the sub-district and health centers, and were done to strengthen their abilities in the current Pediatric RRI. A2E is currently supporting the PASCOS to perform Pediatric RRI supportive supervision to all the performing sites including Marsabit and Moyale. A2E will at the end of the RRI also support an RRI review meeting within Eastern province.

**HIV Orientation Workshops**
A HIV orientation workshop was carried out at the TB Manyatta hospital on 17 May, 2007 for 25 health workers from the facility, including the provincial TB and Leprosy Coordinator (PTLC), District TB and Leprosy Coordinator (DITLC) and head of the CCC of the Isiolo district hospital. In addition, another HIV orientation workshop was held at Miatheke SDH on 12 June 2007. Approximately 26 health workers attended the one-day workshop; participants included clinical officers, nurses from the TB clinic, CCC and VCT, and the laboratory staff. Both workshops were intended to orient staff on HIV care aspects in order to prepare them for activities as ART sites.

**Behaviour Change Communication and Community Mobilization**
Abstinence and be faithful (AB) activities reached a total of 24,845 people through magnet theatre and community agency activities. Each of the 10 drama groups conducted two community drama outreach activities targeting the community with AB messages.

Condom and other prevention activities reached 23,705 people through magnet theatre and community agency activities. This was achieved through drama outreach activities and community health workers sessions with community groups.

Two local implementing partners were subcontracted. Tumaini Awareness Group Kenya was sub-contracted to undertake Magnet Theatre activities while HOPE Worldwide Kenya was subcontracted to undertake the Workplace Guidance and counselling teachers during a training session

Programme with workers in flower farms, military barracks and with commercial sex workers.

Guidance and counselling teachers during a training session

A total of 276 Guidance and Counseling teachers were trained on AB to enable them to train youth peers in their schools. The training was funded by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST) and conducted by Population Council and A2E together with the MOEST.

The management of the Project by ADAP was transitioned to Population Council and A2E together with the MOEST and 10 community mobilization groups. A series of Inter-ministerial meetings and activities were organized by both Pop Council and A2E for orientation of A2E and the community about the integration of KARHP into A2E.
Care and Support

Number of clients served in A2E’s OVC program

To achieve the above results, A2E engaged in various activities including: (i) disbursement of small grants while carrying out an intensive review of the financial management and accountability systems according to the Contract Agreements, (ii) capacity building in the technical area of OVC, (iii) system strengthening in programming and management and (iv) intensive continuous technical mentoring and monitoring through visits for supportive supervision.

A ToT on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) care targeting the sub-grantee staff and Children Area Advisory Council (AAC) members was conducted and resulted in 42 service providers trained as trainers. Main topics featured were: legal policy frameworks, guiding principals in OVC programming, child rights & child abuse, child protection, addressing psychosocial needs of OVC, addressing physical needs of OVC, equipping OVC for the future, OVC participation, birth registration issues, gender mainstreaming, networking in OVC programming and monitoring and evaluation of OVC programmes. The 42 ToTs carried out the community level care givers trainings to reach a total of 610 care givers.

The number of clients under palliative care rose dramatically from zero to 2,298 between April – June 2007. Areas of support included psychosocial support, treatment literacy, basic management of opportunistic infections, ART and TB treatment adherence, nutrition and nutrition literacy, home hygiene and nursing care, malaria prevention and treatment sensitization and identification and referral of clients to health facility for services in the areas of HIV, TB, RH/FP and other related care issues.

Stories from the People We Serve

The Story of Irene Muthoni a member of Pepo La Tumaini CBO

My name is Irene Muthoni. I am a member of Pepo La Tumaini. I wish to thank APHIA II for the support they have given to Tumaini to enable the community to live positively. I am a person living with HIV/AIDS. I was abandoned by my family and after that I started to become very sick. My children went onto the street. I have two living children my older girl died of AIDS related complications when she was 13. Since I have been in Tumaini things have improved, although until recently the organization could not meet most of my needs; but today I have a care giver who visits me, a shelter, I have a home kit and I get vegetables from the “shamba”. I am able to take ART without any problems. On my appointment days I am taken by an ambulance to the hospital. There is also a strong support group here of PLWHAs.

The story of Beth Nyambura

“My name is Beth Nyambura Njue and I am 15 years old. I dropped out of school in 2005 at 13 years of age when both my parents died and therefore I never managed to go to secondary school. I am an elder sister to Caroline Nyagathii who is 11 years and James Kariuki Njue who is 13 years. Both are at St Mark’s Primary School. When our parents died we were left under the care of our grandmother who is 89 years old and poor and who could not therefore manage to cater for our needs, especially our education. Because of this, I was later employed as a house girl in a relatives’ home. Through the help of a volunteer working for ACK Embu Diocese APHIA II Program, I managed to know about the program and sought for help. The program has now sponsored me for training in hairdressing, as that has been my ambition and dream. I am now a happy girl as I see a better future and ability to help my younger siblings when I complete the training and open my own salon or get a job. APHIA II has also enabled my siblings to stay in school through support of uniforms, counseling and takes care of our health needs. Our life has greatly changed for now and the future. Thanks to APHIA II program.”

The partners of the A2E consortium are: JHPIEGO, AMREF, EGPAF, FHI, LVCT and PATH, and supported by USAID under award contract number 623-A-00-06-00023-00.