

Quarterly Newsletter

Habari

March 2021

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Congratulations to HE President Samia Suluhu Hassan



Tanzania health and Promotion Support's Founders, Board of Directors, Management and Staff join all Tanzanians to congratulate HE Mama Samia Suluhu Hassan for her appointment as the 6th President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

We wish you all the best as you take your new responsibility to lead us all.

HONGERA SANA MAMA, TUKO NYUMA YAKO

THPS reaches out to community during 2020 World AIDS Day commemoration

In late November, 2020, THPS through support from PEPFAR, CDC, USAID, and the Global Fund joined other national Stakeholders to commemorate the International World AIDS Day week marked at Mandela grounds in Moshi Municipality, Kilimanjaro Region, with the theme: Global solidarity; shared responsibility. THPS booth was visited by over 130



Visitors reading information on THPS implemented activities

community members who were informed on the importance of accessing HIV testing services, behavior change especially among vulnerable populations, adhering to HIV care and treatment services for people living with HIV and the need for HIV positive women to timely access cervical cancer screening services.

Three peer educators supported under the THPS Mlango project funded through Global Fund AMREF gave testimonies on how their behaviors have been transformed through biomedical, behavioral interventions as well as economic empowerment.

The Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, Hon Kassim Majaliwa who was the Guest of Honor on the World AIDS Day event visited THPS stall and commended THPS efforts in supporting behavioral changes among vulnerable populations in Tanzania.



The Prime Minister, Hon. Kassim Majaliwa listening to a testimony from THPS- Global Fund AMREF Mlango Project's beneficiary

“Congratulations for a job well done in behavioral change support to vulnerable populations in Tanzania.” Hon Kassim Majaliwa said.

Other Guests that visited THPS booth included Kilimanjaro’s Regional Administrative Secretary Mr. Khatib, M. Kazungu, Hai Constituency’s Member of Parliament, Hon. Saashisha Mafuwe and Tanzania Commission for AIDS’s(TACAIDS) Executive Director Dr. Leonard Maboko. Others were Director of Preventive Services (DPS) Dr Leonard Subi, Officials from Government offices, NGOs, Diplomatic Missions and community members also visited THPS booth.

USAID Police and Prisons Activity is introduced to Police Medical and Prisons Health and Nutrition Services Unit



Health authorities from Tanzania Police Force medical Unit Dar es Salaam meeting

On December 8th 2020, THPS through support from USAID/Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) conducted USAID Police and Prisons Activity's introductory meetings to officials from Police Medical Unit (PMU) in Dar es Salaam; and Tanzania Prisons Health and Nutrition Unit on December 17th 2020 in Dodoma City. In both meetings, the Year 1 Activity Implementation plan was jointly reviewed with the Police and Prisons health authorities that included their zonal representatives.

The two meetings were attended by 82 participants including officials from Tanzania Prisons Services, officials from Police Medical Unit, and THPS staff led by THPS Executive Director.

The head of Police Medical Unit, ACP Dr. Hussein Yahaya asserted their commitment and expectations stating: "The Police Medical Unit is expecting to get good cooperation and transparency from THPS while implementing this Activity."

On his opening remarks at the meeting in Dodoma, the Deputy Commissioner of Prisons Administration and Human Resources Management Division, DCP Jeremiah Katungu pledged full support and collaboration to THPS from Tanzania Prison Services during implementation of USAID Police and Prisons Activity.

THPS Executive Director, Dr. Redempta Mbatia introduced THPS implemented Programs and Activities' overview; while also acknowledging



Dr. Redempta Mbatia presenting an overview of THPS work to participants from Tanzania Prisons Services at Dodoma

the good cooperation and support offered by Tanzania Prison Services and Tanzania Police Force during the Activity's introduction at the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Speaking at the meeting, the USAID Police and Prisons Activity Chief of Party Dr. Joseph Chintowa explained that the award is meant to support comprehensive HIV and TB prevention, care and treatment services at 64 police and prisons' health facilities in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar.

"THPS is committed to collaborate with Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Health Community Development Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDEG) and the President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG) to ensure health status of Tanzanians are improved through provision of appropriate interventions and sustainable delivery of health services to Police and Prisons staff, their families, and surrounding communities." He added.

Prior to the introductory meetings for Police and Prisons, on 9th October 2020, THPS had an introductory meeting with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Dr. Christopher Kadio, which was also attended by senior officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs as well as senior officials from Police and Prisons. During the meeting, THPS and MoHA jointly reviewed the roles and responsibilities of each actor as included in the draft Memorandum of Understanding for the Activity.

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The USAID Police and Prisons Activity is a 5 years Activity implemented in 35 districts of Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar with a goal to improve access, quality and strengthen HIV and TB prevention, care and treatment services in 64 supported health facilities.

The Activity will also work to strengthen systems including capacity building to improve ownership and ensure future program sustainability, and ensure delivery of integrated, person- centred health services in line with Government of Tanzania and PEPFAR guidance.

This activity was made possible through support from the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, through USAID.

Quality Improvement Initiatives expands HIV viral load testing at Kasulu Town Center hospital

Application of quality improvement (QI) initiatives at Kasulu Town Center (TC) hospital has helped in improving the hospital's HIV viral load (HVL) coverage from 91% in July 2020 to 97% in December, 2020.

Kasulu TC had been facing suboptimal HVL coverage due to missed opportunities in covering HVL eligible clients contributed by various gaps that were identified by the hospital's care and treatment clinic's (CTC) management in collaboration with THPS.

Identified gaps included multi-month ARV prescription and dispensing in which client's visits were not matching with their HVL eligible months; clients missing their appointments due to high movement and unorganized ART refill that lead to clients missing HVL sample taking at ART refill sites.

Kasulu TC's CTC in charge Dr. Omary Mohamed explained that, to tackle these challenges, the hospital in collaboration with THPS applied various QI approaches that led to improved HVL coverage. This included sharing of the list of HVL eligible clients on monthly basis for follow up and involvement of peer educators and clinical trackers to trace HVL eligible clients and remind them to visit the clinic for HVL test.

"Collection of HVL samples for missed clients as well as monthly triangulation of HVL results between registers, CTC2 database and testing lab excel was also done", He said. Additionally, the CTC rescheduled clients' appointment to coincide with HVL eligibility months and shared the clients HVL progress in the monthly QI meetings.

The above QI efforts resulted in:

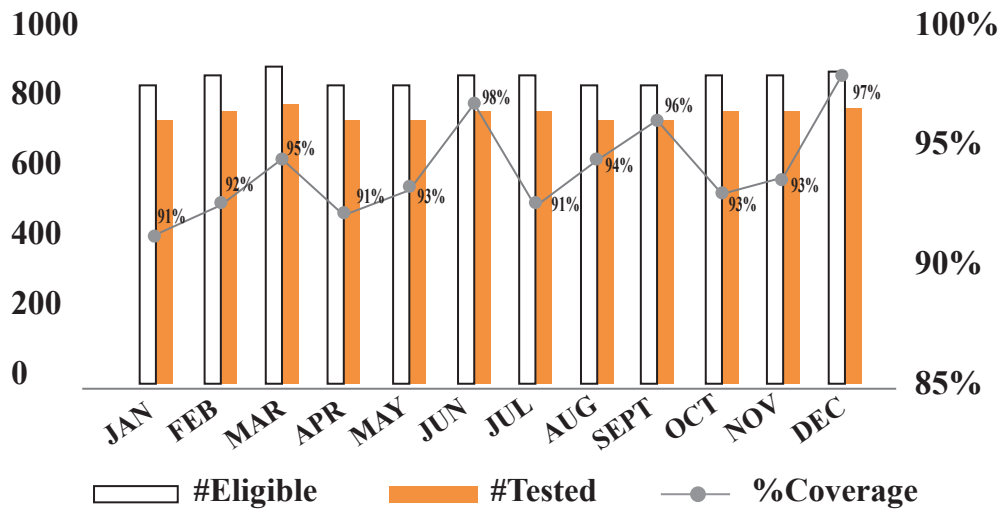
- Increased HVL coverage from 91% in July 2020 to 97% in December 2020
- Achieved quarterly average HVL coverage of 94% throughout
- The unsteady trend on HVL percent was observed with contributed delay HVL testing from testing labs.



Dr. Omary Mohamed collecting HVL sample from a client

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Kasulu DH QI Project on improving HVL Coverage



Dr. Omary added that to maintain this standard of high HVL coverage, the CTC agreed to ensure all clients appointment coincides with HVL eligible months and perform weekly review of HVL eligible list to ensure no missed opportunities for HVL testing.

Implementation of this initiative has been done by Afya Kwanza project funded by the American People through the US President’s Emergency Fund for AIDS relief/CDC. THPS is implementing this project in partnership with Management for Health and Development (MDH).

Uvinza Health Center attains clients’ HVL suppression

Supported by Afya Kwanza project, Uvinza Health Center has improved HIV viral load (HVL) suppression among its clients from 92% in June 2020 to 97% in December 2020. Uvinza Health Center's CTC in charge, Mr. Desiderius January clarified that this was achieved through the CTC team’s commitment in addressing the barriers that contributed to persistent clients' higher HVL.

Mr. Desiderius January further explained that Uvinza health center’s CTC team in collaboration with THPS staff recognized the gaps contributing to high HVL among clients to be

- Forgetfulness in taking medication
- Missing scheduled appointments and
- lack of skills to set reminders using technology

Mr. Desiderius added that, the CTC team also continued with provision of health education addressing adherence to appointment and ARV uptake. The clients with persistent high HVL received Enhanced Adherence Counselling (EAC) through multi-disciplinary team.

To tackle these challenges, our CTC team started providing health education on importance of adhering to clinic appointments and timely consumption of ARTs. Also, the peer educators and clinical trackers assisted clients to set alarm reminders on their mobile phones.

“ This helped them not to miss their ARV medication refill appointments; attendance for HVL sample collection and daily consumption of their medication at home. For clients with no mobile phones, we used their treatment supporters' mobile phones to set reminders." He said.

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SB Pausing at her house

“After receiving a higher HIV viral load results in June 2020, I was so disappointed and confused. Thanks to the nurses at Uvinza health center who tirelessly counselled and encouraged me on timely taking of medication. They went further to setting an alarm reminder on my mobile phone that continuously reminded me to take medications. Three months later, when I was tested for viral load, the results were HVL suppressed to target not detected. I was so impressed by these results, I even provided a testimony at my church, thanking God for making me healthier again through good counselling of Uvinza health center’s nurses.” Said SB, from Kibaoni street of Uvinza District Council. 2020.

The above initiatives have contributed to reduction of unscheduled appointments from 26% in June to 4% in December, 2020. HVL coverage have raised from 87% in June to 92% in December, 2020 while HVL suppression raised from 92% in June, to 99% in December,

Results: Clinic appointments & VL suppression

