



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Updated January 2013

TECHNICAL
BRIEF 10

Community Strategy

Clinical Services

Health Communication

Monitoring & Evaluation

HIV education and health services for sex workers

Sex workers are disproportionately at higher risk for acquiring or transmitting HIV due to increased frequency of high risk sex such as unprotected anal and vaginal sex, multiple partners and frequency of partners. Sex workers also experience barriers to accessing services because their behaviors are criminalized and stigmatized making them marginalized and hard to reach.

Although HIV transmission among sex workers and their clients has reduced over the years in Kenya, it remains much higher than in the general population. Sex workers account for 14 % of all new infections, according to recent estimates.

In order to check the spread of HIV, there is need for education and outreach programs for sex workers and their clients.

In line with international best practice, Kenya's National AIDS and STI Control Program (NAS COP) recommends comprehensive HIV prevention, care and treatment programs that are tailored to the needs of sex workers and their clients.

APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde is working with NAS COP and other partners to implement a comprehensive, integrated HIV and reproductive health program for sex workers in Rift Valley region. The program is designed to address the specific needs of this population and to reduce their vulnerability to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

All interventions are informed by evidence and guided by the national *Minimum Package of Services for Sex Workers*.

Program objectives

1. To improve the health of sex workers by providing health education and linking them to an integrated package of HIV, STIs) and reproductive health services.
2. To promote safer sexual behaviours for sex workers and clients to reduce the risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV and STIs.
3. To create a supportive environment for behaviour change by addressing underlying social factors that increase vulnerability such as poverty, gender-based violence and marginalisation.
4. Build the capacity of community organisations to implement comprehensive HIV prevention and health promotion interventions.

Guiding principles

- Evidence Informed
- Client-centred
- Results-oriented
- Benefit-oriented
- Quality Improvement
- Cost effectiveness

Program strategies

APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde interventions for sex workers combine different but complementary strategies for maximum impact. Some of the key strategies are listed below:

1. **Assessments:** Assessments are conducted to collect in-depth information on the number and situation of sex workers, including high-risk behaviours as well as social, cultural and economic factors that hinder or support adoption of safer behaviours.
2. **Strategic behavioural communication:** APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde implements strategic behavioural Communication interventions informed by theory and combines different evidence-informed approaches that meet minimum standards to promote healthy behaviours with regard to HIV, STIs, family planning and other health issues. This component includes peer education, risk assessment, risk reduction planning, skills training and condom promotion.
3. **100% Condom Use:** APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde promotes condom use to prevent sexual transmission of HIV and other STIs among sex workers and the general population. Peer educators empower sex workers to negotiate for condom use with clients. The project works with the Public Health Department and other stakeholders to ensure the following:
 - Provision of information on male and female condoms
 - Collaboration with establishment owners, law enforcement officers and other influencers to create an enabling environment to promote 100% condom use
 - Easy access to a reliable supply of free or affordable condoms and water-based lubricants for sex workers and their clients
 - Effective behaviour change communication interventions to promote condom use.
4. **Provision of health services:** Drop-in centres have been established to provide health care services responsive to the needs of the sex workers. Regular outreaches are organized in hotspots and sex workers referred to the drop-in centres and health facilities for services that include the following:
 - HIV testing and counselling
 - STI screening and treatment
 - TB screening and referral to treatment
 - HIV care and treatment
 - Emergency contraception
 - Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)
 - Substance-abuse assessment and treatment
 - Reproductive health services (family planning, post-abortion care services, cervical cancer screening)
5. **Orientation training and dissemination of guidelines:** Working with NASCOP, APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde conducts short, focused and thematic orientation training and sensitization for service providers, enabling them to provide acceptable services that address the needs of sex workers while respecting their health and human rights. Service providers are mentored to improve their skills in interacting, counselling, and treating sex workers with compassion and care. The project also disseminates national guidelines for sex workers HIV and STI interventions.
6. **Addressing social determinants of health:** The project addresses social issues affecting women in sex work, including giving them skills and opportunities for alternative livelihoods. Other activities include psycho-social support, family and social services and support to mitigate sexual violence.
7. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** A comprehensive and participatory monitoring system has been put in place to promote the use of data for decision-making to improve services and project implementation.

APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde is a decentralised program with the head office in Nakuru and regional offices in Narok, Baringo, Nanyuki and Ngong.

The APHIAplus Rift Valley Project is implemented by FHI 360 together with partners that include African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Liverpool VCT, Care and Treatment (LVCT), the National Organization for Peer Educators (NOPE), and Gold Star Kenya. The project started in 2011 and runs until December 2015.



The Chief of Party

APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde
kenya-info@aphiarift.org,
P.O. Box 13208-20100 Nakuru;
kenya-aphianews@aphiarift.org



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

