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MCC News

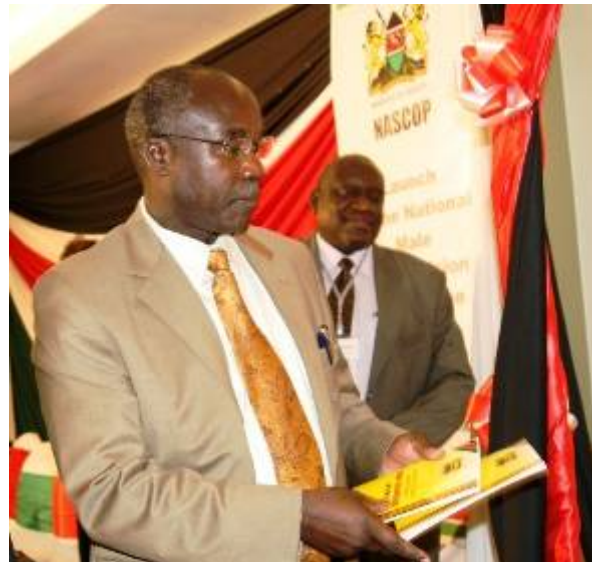
An e-newsletter about male circumcision for HIV prevention in Kenya

In this issue:

**GOK Launches Voluntary
Male Circumcision for HIV
Prevention**

**Male Circumcision
Consortium to Support
GOK Initiative**

**Male Circumcision for HIV
Prevention in the News**



Assistant Minister for Public Health and Sanitation James Gesami unveils new guidance documents on voluntary male circumcision in Kenya as Peter Mwarogo, country director, Family Health International, looks on.

GOK Launches Voluntary Male Circumcision for HIV Prevention

The Government of Kenya pledged to invest 1 billion Kenyan shillings over the next two years in a national initiative to make safe and voluntary male circumcision an integral part of its HIV prevention strategy.

Speaking at the 24 November launch of the initiative in Nairobi, **Assistant Minister for Public Health and Sanitation James Gesami** said that the government aims to reduce HIV rates by providing male circumcision along with other HIV prevention services in health facilities. Research conducted in Kisumu

as well as in South Africa and Uganda showed conclusively that male circumcision dramatically reduces a man's risk of HIV infection.

Dr. Gesami emphasized that voluntary circumcisions must be performed safely under sanitary conditions. That is why the Ministry of Health has developed national guidelines and a clinical manual to guide the integration of male circumcision and other HIV prevention services.

Dr. Nicholas Muraguri, head of the **National AIDS and STI Control Programme** (NASCOP), said that the government is eager to adopt new interventions that will prevent HIV transmission. The government has established a national task force headed by **Dr. Peter Cherutich** to coordinate the activities of local and international organisations working with the Ministry of Health to introduce male circumcision for HIV prevention in Kenya.

Representing these partners, **Dr. Mores Loolpapit** of **Family Health International** explained that their focus is on supporting the government. "We want to help the government reduce the rates of HIV in Kenya by supporting the provision of male circumcision services as well as conducting research to inform policies and programmes," he said.

Dr. Rebecca Bunnell, director of the Global AIDS Program of the **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** in Kenya, said that the U.S. Government has committed to supporting this initiative through the **President's Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief**.

Under the national initiative, specially trained health staff will provide male circumcision services along with HIV counseling and testing for couples and individuals, education about HIV prevention, condom promotion and supplies, and diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of sexually transmitted infections.

After congratulating the government for its pace-setting progress in integrating male circumcision, **Dr. David Okello**, **country representative for the World Health Organization** in Kenya, emphasized the need for such a comprehensive approach to HIV prevention. "Circumcision should be promoted along with other HIV prevention strategies, including safer sex, reduction in the number of sexual partners, plus the correct and consistent use of condoms," he said.

Male Circumcision Consortium to Support GOK Initiative

A five-year, US\$18-million partnership funded by a grant from the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** will support the **Government of Kenya's** initiative

on male circumcision for HIV prevention. The 24 November news release about the Male Circumcision Consortium is excerpted below:

\$18.5 Million Grant Makes Male Circumcision a Top-Tier HIV Prevention Strategy -- November 24, 2008

NAIROBI, Kenya — Male circumcision is gaining recognition as a fundamental practice for limiting the spread of HIV across sub-Saharan Africa. Three conclusive studies conducted in African countries, including Kenya, have shown that becoming circumcised dramatically reduces a man's chances of acquiring HIV from an infected woman. The challenge now is to transform this clinical knowledge into a public-health strategy that can save millions of lives.

Family Health International (FHI), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Government of Kenya have come together to address this challenge. FHI has received a five-year, US\$18.5 million grant from the Gates Foundation to establish the **Male Circumcision Consortium** (MCC), a partnership with the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and EngenderHealth.

The Consortium will work within the framework of the National Guidance for Voluntary Male Circumcision in Kenya and with a range of health care providers to improve and expand voluntary male circumcision services in Kenya. In consultation with the Government of Kenya, it will conduct research and training activities to determine the safest and most effective ways to provide voluntary male circumcision services. The Consortium will also help Kenya provide comprehensive and accessible HIV prevention in areas with the lowest levels of male circumcision and the highest prevalence of HIV.

The Consortium will focus primarily on Nyanza Province, but the impact will be national, says Dr. Mores Loolpapit of Family Health International, who is senior manager of the Male Circumcision Consortium in Kenya. "This initiative advances the Government of Kenya's national strategic plan to reduce transmission of HIV in Kenya," he adds. "It will generate knowledge that the government can use to implement its national guidance for voluntary male circumcision in Kenya and will likely influence voluntary adult male circumcision programs worldwide."

To read the entire news release, [click here](#).

Male Circumcision for HIV Prevention in the News

To read a sample of the news coverage following the 24 November launch of both the Government of Kenya's initiative on male circumcision for HIV prevention and the Male Circumcision Consortium, click on the following links:

Govt launches male cut as HIV preventive measure

Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, 24 November 2008

Male circumcision made easier

Capital FM, 24 November 2008

Women to promote male cut

Daily Nation, 24 November 2008

Kenya launches male circumcision program

Kaiser Network Daily Report, 25 November 2008

Gates Foundation funds circumcision

News & Observer, 25 November 2008

Male cut campaign gets Sh1.4bn boost

Daily Nation, 25 November 2008

Cut, the new tool in an old fight

Daily Nation, 3 December 2008

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