

# THE ICWEA BULLETIN

June 2015



The International Community of Women Living with HIV&AIDS Eastern Africa (ICWEA)

## Improving & increasing access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and eMTCT services for women living with HIV in Wakiso, Mukono, Kanungu and Ntungamo districts of Uganda



**A**ccess to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) for women living with HIV is a critical enabler for the realization of towards an HIV free generation. The International Community of Women Living with HIV&AIDS Eastern Africa (ICWEA) has for the last six months been carrying out activities aimed at improving and increasing access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and elimination of Mother to Child Transmission (eMTCT) services for women living with HIV (WLHIV) through a Gender transformative approach.

This has been done in Western Uganda

in Ntungamo and Kanungu districts as well as Central Uganda in Wakiso and Mukono district in partnership with partnership with Uganda Network on Law, Ethics and HIV&AIDS (UGANET) with funding support from UNAIDS.

Funding of these programmes which are core to ICWEA has facilitated work towards contributing to the national goal to eliminate transmission of HIV from mothers to their children and to keep mothers alive through improving and increasing access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights SRHR services.

## Key activities

- Capacity building training of seven national networks of women living with HIV in policy analysis, Sexual Reproductive Health, gender and human rights in the context of eMTCT. Fourteen staff acquired skills to advocate for quality elimination of Mother to Child Transmission (eMTCT) programmes.
- Radio talk shows to educate and create awareness about eMTCT and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) for women living with HIV was held.
- An educative skit was developed and will run for two months on the most popular radio station in South Western region of Uganda for continued education.
- Two position papers on SRHR and EMTCT from the perspective of WLHIV were also developed.
- One policy brief on eMTCT from the perspective of WLHIV were also developed.

## The numbers >

- 1.6 million is the number of people living with HIV in Uganda in 2012. 93% of them are adults aged 15 years and above and women make up the majority number of people living with HIV at 56%.
- While 71.7 percent of the positive mothers received ARVs for eMTCT; only 36.7 percent of the exposed infants received ARVs for eMTCT.

# Partnership with women living with HIV in improving health service delivery, access & accountability



## Project coverage:

Implementation will be in 14 districts in Uganda selected across the four regions of the country. These include; Kanungu, Sheema, Kasese Kampala, Wakiso, Mukono, Lira, Gulu, Busia, Tororo, Iganga, Masaka, Mityana and Mubende Districts

There are only a few months to the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) deadline but Uganda is still lagging behind with the MDG 4, 5 and 6. To date, 16 mothers die every day while giving birth, infant mortality is at 54 per 1,000 births, under five mortality is at 90 per 1000 live births, contraceptive prevalence rate is at 30%, the unmet family planning needs are at 34% and there was a rise in HIV prevalence from 6.4% in 2009 to 7.3% in 2011. Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission is also below the target.

With all indicators below the Health

Sector Strategic Investment Plan (HS-SIP), there is need to involve Women Living With HIV (WLHIV) to contribute to addressing the gaps.

The International Community of women living with HIV Eastern Africa (ICWEA) with financial support from The Common Wealth Foundation is implementing a three year project *Partnership with Women Living with HIV in improving Health Service Delivery, Access & Accountability*.

This project seeks to build institutional and technical capacity of women living with HIV in Uganda so that they can influence policies, pro-

grammes and budgets for improved quality health service delivery by October 2017.

To kick start this, a three days training was held and brought together 28 women living with HIV from fourteen districts of Uganda. All were equipped with knowledge and skills in budget planning, analysis and advocacy.

Our hope is that in time women living with HIV will influence budgets and plans so that they include priorities of women living with HIV including young women.



## ICW Tanzania

The International Community of women living with HIV (ICW Tanzania) is currently under the leadership of the country board and with technical support from ZAPHA+ finalizing the development of their constitution and getting ready for registration. We anticipate that by August 2015, ICW Tanzania will be a legal entity. Before this, in November 2014, Women living with HIV&AIDS in Tanzania held their General Assembly and during this meeting a new Board was elected into office.

## List of the board members

Chairperson: John Consolata  
Vice Chairperson: Joan Chamungu  
Treasurer: Mwigulu Nsima  
Secretary: Veronica Nakatude  
Board member : Flora Mkiwa  
Board member: Mariam Yarumba  
Board Member: Aziza Issa Abdalla  
Board Member: Salama Nassoro Ali

## up dates > Rwanda

ICW Rwanda board is finalising their constitution so that they can fully register the Rwanda ICWEA Country Chapter. Earlier in December 2014, Women living with HIV&AIDS in Rwanda held their General Assembly and during this meeting a new Board was elected into office. Here is a list of office bearers:

Chairperson: Rose Uwabasinga  
Vice Chairperson: Isabelle Nizeyimana  
Treasurer: Marie Therese Mukarurema  
Secretary: Marie Claire Uwineza  
Young women representative:  
Pacifique Umuhoza  
Advisor: Mediatrice Kantengwa  
Advisor: Bellie Uwamahoro  
Advisor: Philomene Cyulinyana



### Monitoring Emtct/PMTCT programmes by Women Living with HIV in East Africa

ICWEA working in conjunction with its membership has scheduled to carry out the Monitoring of the implementation of the eMTCT/PMTCT programs in Rwanda, Kenya, Burundi and Uganda

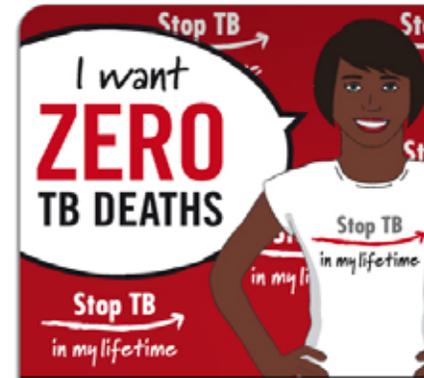
ICWEA, working in conjunction with its membership plans to implement a Project on increasing participation and accountability by WLHIV in eMTCT, with the overall goal of improving and increasing access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and eMTCT services. This project will be implemented in the 4 East African countries of Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, which are heavily burdened by HIV and also face numerous challenges in eMTCT

This work started in Uganda and soon will be done in Kenya, Tanzania, and finally Burundi when the country gains back its political stability.

### Get involved: Stop TB

The Stop TB Partnership has launched an online consultation process to engage a wide group of stakeholders in developing the Global Plan to Stop TB between 2016 and 2020.

The consultation process will run till August 10, 2015 and participants are encouraged to provide comments based on top line questions. This is an opportunity for the TB affected community to raise their issues. You can join the online consultations via <http://stoptbplan2020.org/>



## We stand with our members in Burundi

All is not well in the Republic of Burundi which is going through a period of political unrest.

This political instability has made it difficult to implement programmes and activities in Burundi during this period. The reported violence has a negative impact on its citizens, women living with HIV and the HIV&AIDS response.

A situation like this comes with tension and fear for one's life, fear of not being able to have one's basic needs and uncertainty about the future. For women living with HIV&AIDS in Burundi, life will only get more complicated because in addition to the general challenges and problems that the Burundians are facing, they will have no or limited access to HIV care and treatment including antiretroviral drugs.

Our member in Burundi narrates, "We are living in insecurity and some people have had to flee their households. Others live in the total fear. Accessing HIV care and treatment is



not easy for people living with HIV and mothers and children under the elimination of Mother to Child Transmission (eMTCT) programme. This situation is compromising the response to HIV and the eMTCT in particular."

The board, management, staff and members of the International Community of Women Living with HIV&AIDS Eastern Africa (ICWEA), stand with our members in Burundi and all women and people living with HIV&AIDS during this period of unrest. We condemn violence of any nature.

As women living with HIV&AIDS, we understand the possible effects of skipping antiretroviral treatment to an individual and HIV response in general. We worry about the mothers under the elimination of Mother to Child Transmission (eMTCT) programme, and their unborn babies.

We call upon the International Community to intervene and help restore peace in the Republic of Burundi.

# Up Coming

- > ICWEA 10th anniversary celebrations
- > A leadership training for the board members of Tanzania Chapter in this quarter.
- > Uganda Teso region eMTCT launch June 30.
- > General assembly in Kenya.
- > Activities to support Women living with HIV in understanding and participating in Global Fund Processes in Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.
- > The 18th International Conference on AIDS and STIs (ICASA) will be held in Tunisia in November 2015.



## An opportunity to become an AVAC fellow

There is a call for applications for 2016 Advocacy Fellows by AVAC (Global Advocacy for HIV prevention). The goal of AVAC's Advocacy Fellows program is to expand the capacity of advocates and organizations to monitor, support and help shape biomedical HIV prevention research and implementation of proven interventions worldwide. The submission deadline for Advocacy Fellows applications is Monday, 10 August 2015. Download application materials at [www.avac.org/fellows-application-materials](http://www.avac.org/fellows-application-materials).

**APPLY NOW!**

## A call for FP2020 working group members

There is a call for working group members for Family Planning 2020 (FP2020). FP2020 is a global partnership that supports the rights of women and girls to decide, freely, and for themselves, whether, when, and how many children they want to have. There is urgent need for women from the countries where the HC-HIV question is of most relevance to help shape these discussions. The deadline for applications is June 30.

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