

## Case on coerced sterilization delays to start in Kenya

KENYA - Five Women seeking justice from a Kenyan Court on forced and coerced sterilization will have to wait a little longer for justice to be served. The case popularly known as Petition No. 606 of 2014 challenging the forced and coerced tubal ligation of woman living with HIV failed to take off on 9th October 2017 because the advocate for Marura Nursing home was unavailable to attend court and had applied for adjournment.

The advocate for the County Government of Nairobi was also not ready to proceed with the hearing. He sought for more time to file his response to the Petition. Accordingly, the nursing home is the place where the act of forced and/or coerced sterilization is said to have taken place, while the Nairobi county government is sued for having no policies in place to safeguard the rights of women.

Justice E.C Muita who is handling the matter granted the advocate for Marura Nursing home seven days within which to file his response. The judge further directed the case be heard on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017. Parties were also directed by the court to agree on the statement of issues arising for determination and file the same in court before the hearing date.



This petition was filed on 10 December 2014 challenging the unconstitutional sterilization by way of tubal ligation of the five women living with HIV. Similar cases have been reported in Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa and Uganda.

The five women were mobilized by ICWEA in a bid to protect their sexual reproductive health rights. The case was later handed to KELIN for litigation. ICWEA however continues to get updates from KELIN on the progress of this case, but also offers psychosocial support to the women.

**16 Days of  
activism  
against  
Violence on  
women**

16 Days of Activism against Violence on women is an international campaign to challenge violence against women and girls. The campaign runs

every year from 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day

# DREAMs: Motivating VHTs while bringing services closer to the communities

UGANDA: In 2013, Rose Niyigyenabyose, sat for her senior 4 examinations. Like any other candidate she had hopes and dreams for a better future. But it turned out that her family could not afford to push her to the next level of education.

Being a resilient girl, she immediately took up a job as a matron in a school in Kasambya Sub County in Mubende District hoping that she would make some money and save for her A level. But the salary was very little and irregular.

“I decided to come back home, but the situation was wanting. My mum who is a pensioner could not take care of us and look after our needs. She used to get her little pension once in three months,” says Rose.

Coming back home, did not solve much. So in July 2014, Rose decided to get married with the hope that marriage

would be the perfect bullet to solving her challenges. Unfortunately, the marriage did not last long since she was exposed to violence. Again, home gave her the much needed refuge from the violence her partner was subjecting her to.

In April 2017, the ICWEA mobiliser for Bageza sub county Imelda Sentongo was mobilizing Village Health Team members to take part in the Health Entrepreneurs module which is part of the Sparked Women project under the DREAMS Innovation Challenge; a USAID project. Rose got interested, so she joined the training which took place in Mubende Town.”

The Health Entrepreneur module allows one to improve their income while providing information and good quality health products to their community. The project targets adolescent girls and young women aged between 15 – 24 years in Mityana and Mubende



***Brendafacy Azizuyo from ICWEA shares information contained in the tablet with a group of women at Banda Subcounty in Mityana District***

districts. The products given to the VHTs come along with a tablet full of information on different topics which enables VHTs to do community sensitization on various issues. Additionally it has movies and information on health including Sexual Reproductive health information and local enterprise solutions that one can adopt to improve their incomes. This attracts youth and allows everybody, illiterate or young, access to vital information that improves their health and income.

For Rose, now aged 22, the four days training set her on a path to financial freedom. She is now able to support her two siblings' education but most importantly to bring services closer to her community. From having no income and depending on her mother

who is a pensioner, she now makes at least 30,000/= per week from her work as a health entrepreneur.

To diversify her income, Rose also got interested in the local solution arm of the Sparked Women project. She particularly focused on learning to bake cakes. Today, at 22, she has great hopes for the future, she looks forward to doing a course in nursing and to start a bakery to make cakes in her community. In the meantime her priority is supporting her two siblings to stay in school.

The health Entrepreneur module is being implemented by ICWEA, NAFOPHANU in partnership with the Health Entrepreneurs in Mubende, and Mityana districts. The project is being supported by Aidsfonds.



# Religious leaders address “faith-healing only” practices

By Uwase Nadege

**KIGALI – RWANDA: Religious leaders from different faith communities in French Speaking Africa gathered in Kigali, Rwanda on 25th-29th September 2017 to dialogue on “faith-healing only” practices, where some faith communities encourage people living with HIV to abandon taking their anti-retroviral medication, claiming they can be healed by faith alone.**

Convened by the World Council of Churches Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy (WCC-EHAIA) and UNAIDS the dialogue aimed at developing strategies that would ensure that faith communities offer healing while advocating for HIV treatment adherence. The meeting was part of the two-year PEPFAR-UNAIDS Faith Initiative.

Sara Test, deputy coordinator at the US President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) says PEPFAR and UNAIDS support faith-based organizations and work with them to ensure a sustainable response to HIV by supporting them give factual information in communities bearing in mind that in the context of

HIV, treatment is prevention.”

Hendrew Lusey, the WCC-EHAIA regional coordinator for Central Africa said the consultation was able to build bridges between religious leaders, health professionals and other stakeholders working in the field of HIV.”

Rev. Dr Nyambura Njoroge, WCC-EHAIA coordinator added that the engagement demonstrated an urgent need to listen and learn from people living with HIV, including young people born HIV-positive, regarding their experiences of self- and social stigma, the fear of stigma and discrimination in faith communities, and the in-depth meaning of faith healing in the absence of a cure for HIV.”

Moving forward, participants identified the need to support theological study and bible training schools so that future pastors enter into service equipped to address the problem of “faith-healing only. It was noted that there is need to do more to involve “revival churches” in such dialogues and reflection, as these tend to be the main promoters of “faith-healing only”.

## Privileged to have hosted aidsfonds



*Leon Essink (left) from aidsfond recently paid ICWEA a visit. During the visit, he was able to meet with a few of ourf advocates*

## Stop TB to fund Bright, innovative ideas to end TB

The Stop TB Partnership has launched its TB REACH initiative’s sixth wave of funding for innovative and out of the box ideas, strategies, initiatives, and technologies which aim to increase the number of people diagnosed and treated for TB, to decrease the time to appropriate treatment and to improve treatment success rates.

All details about this call for proposals can be found on the Stop TB Partnership website. Please submit your Stage 1 Application online by Tuesday 28 November 2017 at 23:59 Geneva time.

Stage 2 application is expected in February / March 2018. Final funding decisions are expected in May 2018. Good luck!

## Buganda Kingdom focus on GBV on youth day

Buganda Kingdom through Buganda Youth Council is organizing a week-long activities to mark this year’s Buganda Youth Day. Part of the week long activities will focus on the fight against Gender Based Violence and HIV. ICWEA supported by TASO/Global Fund has worked with the 18 cultural institutions and including Buganda Kingdom on a Gender Based Violence and HIV project.

The celebrations will take place on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at Kyaggwe Ssaza Headquarters in Mukono Municipality. The Kabaka of Buganda Ronald Muwenda Mutebi is expected to grace the occasion.

# Seeking opportunities to advance SRHR through EACJ

By Maridadi Gift K Benard

ARUSHA, TANZANIA - CSOs across the East African Community met between October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> 2017, to discuss opportunities of working with the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) to advance Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights in the region.

EACJ was established under Article 9 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (the Treaty) and is a sub-regional court mandated to interpret and enforce the Treaty and resolve issues involving the East Africa Community and its member States. The dialogue was organized by

KELIN, in recognition of the important role the EACJ can play in the protection of human rights within the East African Community (EAC) and cognizant of growing interests to protect sexual and reproductive health and rights through legislation, as has been seen through the enactment of the EAC HIV and AIDS Prevention and Management Act and the proposed Sexual and Reproductive Health Bill.

The dialogue focused on introducing participants to the constitutive documents of the East African Community and the East African Court of Justice; contextualizing sexual and reproductive health and



*Participants who attended the dialogue on advancing SRHR in Arusha*

rights within the East African context; and deliberating on the opportunities available to civil society organizations to engage the Court for the advancement of SRHR.

## ICWEA Secretariat hosts the Burundi Coordinator

ICWEA hosted the Country Coordinator for the Burundi chapter, Seconde Nsibimana for three weeks in September 2017. During her stay at the secretariat, Seconde participated in key advocacy and programmatic activities aimed at building her capacity to do advocacy work back in Burundi.

“Being at the secretariat, I’ve learnt to be more engaged and to advocate for all women/girls living with HIV in our region and have a unified voice in advocating for issues that concern women and girls living with HIV,” Seconde says.

She adds, “I have learnt the importance of networking, involving beneficiaries and target groups in advocacy,



involvement of young people in the implementation of activities among others.”

No doubt that when Seconde went back to Burundi, she

and the team in Burundi immediately made a courtesy call to the UNAIDS Directors office. We can only wish Seconde and team the best in all their endeavors!

### CSOs meet UNAIDS Country Director

**Kampala** - The new UNAIDS Country Director Dr. Karusa Kiragu recently met CSOs at the WHO boardroom in Kampala. This is the first meeting Dr Karusa has had with CSOs who are in the HIV thematic area. She said the meeting was a good starting point for her to interface with the CSOs and to set the ground for her upcoming visit to each CSO to get to know what they do.

During the meeting, CSOs presented some of the issues they are engaged in advocating for. These include issues of Human Resources for Health, Low priority in financing issues on HIV, stock outs of ARVs, and low uptake of biomedical HIV prevention among others.

ICWEA welcomes Dr Karusa to Uganda and certainly looks forward to working with her.



# ICASA 2017 is about delivering differently, Human rights

The 19TH International Conference on Aids and STIs in Africa will be taking place in Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire from December 4th - 9th, 2017. This year, conference theme "Africa: Ending AIDS-delivering differently" but with a strong focus on reaching the UNAIDS 90, 90, 90 with human rights as priority. Human rights has always been key in the response to HIV. People living with and affected by HIV and the civil society groups working on their behalf both have fought for human rights, and their efforts have led to many of the major successes of the HIV response such as their rights

to participation, non discrimination, information and treatment among others.

ICWEA however notes that while there have been gains, there are still inequities for example in reaching populations that are deeply marginalized and criminalized. Being able to reach such populations will require human rights work to overcome legal and social barriers, and to empower affected communities. There is hope that 19th ICASA is an opportunity to re-strategize and come up with innovative ideas to reach such populations.



*Lillian Mworeko will hold a session*

**On December 8th, 2017, Lillian Mworeko the Executive Director of ICWEA will be speaking at a session on Young Adolescents, women and girls: The hidden face of the Epidemic. Look out for this session!**

## EVA plans an all Africa SRHR advocacy strategy

Education as a Vaccine (EVA) organized a 4-day advocacy strategy development meeting from November 1-4th in Abuja Nigeria with a team of 20 feminists. This core group identified challenges and opportunities in advancing SRHR issues in Africa. These are meant to feed into an advocacy strategy.

EVA is coordinating the implementation of the African Young Women Leadership

and Advocacy Project which seeks to work with existing policies and frameworks to amplify the voices of young African women at key regional spaces with the aim of advancing the SRHR agenda on the continent. The project will strategize and implement a coordinated advocacy effort to influence regional institutions and frameworks on the African Continent. ICWEA's Hajjarah Nagadya attended this meeting.



*Participants at the DEVA meeting in Abuja Nigeria*

# ICWEA partners with the media to promote DSDM

ICWEA has partnered with the media to promote and advocate for the Differentiated Service Delivery Model (DSDM) in Uganda. DSDM is part of The Uganda national consolidated HIV prevention, care and treatment guidelines 2016 that among other things recommends 'Test and Treat' for all people living with HIV regardless of clinical stage or CD4 as a critical strategy to enable Uganda to achieve the UNAIDS 90-90-90 strategy.

The partnership included a talk about the DSDM at the 23<sup>RD</sup> Science Café held by Health Journalists Network in Uganda 6th September 2017.

The Cafes' are a monthly forum where journalists come to share topics that are not easily understood in order for them to be able to share the information with their audiences. HEJNU is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to increasing awareness about health care issues and improving health literacy among Africans.

The Journalists sought to how the Differential Service Delivery Model will be rolled out, concerns of the CSOs and how the media can play a role in promoting DSDM.

Shortly after, ICWEA took a group of journalists to Mityana district for a media tour for them to be able to appreciate the need for DSDM and issues around absorption of PEPFAR funded contract health workers that ICWEA has been advocating for with support from the Advocacy for Better Health project under PATH.



*ICWEA had a media tour focused on DSDM and Human Resources for Health in Mityana District*



*The team of journalists listening to health workers at Mityana Hospital during the media tour*

## ICWEA Secretariat

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