



COMMITMENT TO DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON HEALTH, HIV AND AIDS

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CATEGORY: SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS; HEALTH AND HIV AND AIDS
INSTITUTION: LIVINGSTONE CITY COUNCIL

COUNTRY SADC GENDER PROTOCOL SUMMIT

25th – 26th March

Cresta Golf View Hotel

GENDER EQUALITY BY 2015, YES WE MUST!

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

- The Livingstone City council, in line with its HIV and AIDS policy operates a health corner in the Library committed to providing information on HIV and AIDS, reproductive health and other health related topics such as TB and Malaria.
- The corner houses books and reading materials such as posters, fliers and brochures on behavior change, family planning, malaria, Tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS.
- The major organization that has been helpful in the supply of materials is Afya Mzuri others are, National AIDS council, Central Statistical Office and UNAIDS.
- Other materials in the corner are male and female condoms and DVD videos on HIV and AIDS.
- The condoms, fliers, brochures and posters are given to organizations involved in HIV/AIDS and health care and sensitisation work.
- This service has proved to be a useful channel through which the local authority can contribute to the well being of the community and the fight against HIV and AIDS.



WHAT IS THE PROBLEM BEING ADDRESSED? WHY?

- The programme was born out of a desire to play a part in the creation of awareness on health issues and mitigating the impacts of HIV/AIDS and other life threatening illnesses.
- An avenue such as the library was thought of because some people do not like the idea of visiting a hospital or health centre where they would have to ask a third party to get the answers they are looking for, especially when it comes to HIV/AIDS because of the stigma society has tended to associate with it.



HOW IS THE PROJECT CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE 28 TARGETS OF THE SADC PROTOCOL?

| PROTOCOL TARGET | ACTIONS |
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| Ensure universal access to HIV and AIDS treatment for infected women, men, boys and girls. | Provision of directories about organizations providing treatment of people infected with HIV and AIDS. |
| Develop gender sensitive strategies to prevent new infections. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •provision of detailed gender sensitive information in books, posters, brochures and fliers on family planning, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis. •Distribution of Male and Female condoms. |
| Develop and implement policies and programmes to ensure the appropriate recognition, of the work carried out by care givers, the majority of whom are women; the allocation of resources and psychological support for care-givers as well as promote the involvement of men in the care and support of People Living with Aids. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provision of condoms and IEC materials to organisations involved in HIV/AIDS work. •Provision of condoms, books and IEC materials to the Livingstone City Council Community Section to use as they teach on care work and other issues in the community. |
| Ensure the provision of hygiene and sanitary facilities and nutritional needs of women, including women in prison. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reaching out to women in prison , encouraging them to embrace literacy and whenever possible provide them with pads and toilet cleaning materials. |

GENDER EQUALITY BY 2015, YES WE MUST!

DESCRIBE YOUR TARGET GROUP

- The general public. At least eight hundred and ten (810) male and six hundred (600) females per month. With partners 910 male , 700 female.
- Youths especially girls as they tend to be more vulnerable to unwanted pregnancies.
- People living with HIV and AIDS (some of whom had come to the library to find out if there were any materials to shed more light on how to take care of themselves especially pertaining to what type of food they should and should not eat as people living with HIV).
- Health workers and care givers.
- Taxi and mini bus drivers.
- Employees of Livingstone City Council.
- Overtime this has come to include women in prison



OBJECTIVES



The Livingstone City Council, Public Library Health Corner set out to:

- Provide reading space, books and reading materials for people to learn more about health issues, with a bias towards reproductive health, HIV and AIDS.
- To provide people living with HIV and AIDS and the general public with the information they need to lead healthy and informed lives.
- To complement the work of hospitals, clinics and health centres in addressing health issues especially those pertaining to reproductive health and HIV/AIDS.
- To add a voice to the fight against HIV and AIDS.
- To prevent maternal mortality.

PROCESS

- Having noticed an information need and gap, efforts were made to source and make a collection of materials on different health topics including family planning, malaria, Tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS. A Number of organizations were requested to donate books and reading materials on health. Among the first to respond favourably were UNAIDS, National AIDS council and the Network of Zambian People Living with HIV/AIDS.
- Overtime, Afya Mzuri came on board to provide a larger part of the materials in the health corner. They not only provided books and reading materials but also condoms, DVDs on different health topics in vernacular and English and a computer. Central Statistical office also donated books on the Zambia Health and Demographic Survey.



WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN SUCCESSES?

- Involvement of the Livingstone City Council Community Section by way of supplying them with Condoms and IEC materials for use in their community work and sensitisations.
- The fact that girls and other youths are coming in numbers to read and collect brochures and other IEC materials is a good sign and will go a long way in preventing new HIV infections.
- In addition, this will contribute to reduction in unwanted and teen pregnancies which will in turn lead to reduction in maternal mortality.
- The help that the health corner has rendered to organisations such as PPAZ
- Reaching out to women in prison.



KEY OUTPUTS (MATERIALS ETC.)

- Distribution of fliers, brochures, posters and condoms to organizations involved in behavior change and health care work.
- Provision of books and other reading materials for library clients and researchers to refer to for their different information needs.
- Placing of condoms in toilets at civic centre and other council public toilets.
- Distribution of information, education communication materials and condoms to the community section of the Livingstone City Council to use as they do community outreach and sensitisation.
- Showing available DVD videos to library users and allowing them to watch and learn from the stories and messages therein. A computer and headsets have been set aside for this purpose.
- Display of posters within the health corner on, family planning, positive living, abstinence condom use and rape among others.



KEY OUTCOMES (MAIN RESULTS)

- There has been good response from organizations such as National AIDS council from as far as the neighboring Kazungula District through the office of the District HIV and AIDS Coordinating advisor, Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia and the Network of Zambian People Living with HIV/AIDS. These have found the materials they have collected from the library useful and helpful in their work.
- School girls have come in numbers to collect brochures such as girls and growing up.
- Whereas the general public has shown interest in fliers and brochures such as Most frequently asked questions about HIV and AIDS, most frequently asked questions about STIs, Our Family Choice on family planning among others. Other than that people always read through the posters displayed in the health corner on abstinence, condom use, family planning, positive living and rape among others.
- People are picking condoms at a good rate and testimony given is that they find them useful and helpful.



CHANGING LIVES

Mr Limba Phiri, far left on the photograph, an employee at PPAZ says the IEC materials collected from the health corner have been very useful in outreach programmes to youths.

In addition, there are times when they have solely depended on the library health corner for supply of condoms to be used at their centre.

Mary Semba an employee of Livingstone City Council , a woman living with HIV has appreciated the materials she collects from the health corner such as 'The Positive Living Handbook', adding that these resources have added value to her life and day to day work.

Mary who is a Community Development assistant also reaches out to the community using the IEC materials she collects from the health corner.



LESSONS LEARNT

- Among the lessons learnt is the fact that the service that Livingstone City Council is providing through the health corner would not have been possible without the involvement of the various stakeholders. This has driven the point home that these relationships need to be harnessed and more stakeholders brought on board to ensure continuity and innovativeness in the health corner.
- Furthermore, upon realisation that some people were just getting to know about the health corner, more needed to be done to ensure that more people out there come to know about the existence of the health corner. This is being addressed through intensified distribution of fliers, during which period people are also told about the health corner.
- It has also been realized that health is dynamic and more avenues need to be explored if people's needs are going to be met and the fight against HIV/AIDS and maternal mortality won. This will be addressed by daily finding ways of improving lives especially those of the vulnerable women such as those in prison and this is already being done. New partnerships will also be sought in an effort to address these.
- In times past books were donated to Livingstone and Mazabuka prisons, it's time to go back there and focus on health and personal development for female inmates
- More sensitisation needed for women on condom use.



WAY FORWARD

- Health is a concern of every race and ethnic group. Every nation is concerned about reproductive health and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. With that in mind, it must also be noted that there are many organizations across the globe concerned with or whose work borders on provision of materials to address HIV/AIDS and reproductive health among other health issues. Therefore, as long as there is interest, zeal and genuine concern, a lot of similar partnerships can be formed to meet similar and more needs in not only libraries and information centres but any organization that has capacity and willingness to handle such an undertaking. Besides, health is dynamic and will remain a concern as long as human kind exists.
- For the project to continue beyond its current life span, existing relationships with stakeholders will be nurtured and other stakeholders brought on board to encourage the birth of new ideas and better ways of doing things for the purpose of keeping people interested in the service. More so, beneficiaries and intended recipients will be asked on how best the corner can serve them. In other words, emphasis will be placed on feedback to ensure that the services being provided are relevant and needed by the intended recipients.
- The other/next step is to continue working with women in prison to help make their lives easier by looking into their health and sanitation needs. They will also be encouraged to further their studies by going back to school whilst in prison. One of the female inmates has expressed interest in learning how to read. Adding that for now she cannot even read the IEC materials Livingstone City Council has taken to the Prison.
- Continue reaching out to pupils in schools with incorporation of those with special challenges such as those with hearing and speech impairment .
- Reaching out to the illiterate in society by ensuring that information is packaged and shared in ways they can understand.