

At a Glance

Ciheb-Kenya

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County Transition Roadmaps Launched in Four Counties



Government to Government Training for Counties

Collaborative Commitment: Strengthening HIV Services Delivery in Makeni County

Mentor mother training for the Ciheb Connect Program



Ciheb-Kenya signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Migori, Kisumu, Machakos and Makueni County Governments to Strengthen Healthcare Delivery

To enhance efforts towards a sustainable health response, and in line with the PEPFAR transition strategy, Ciheb-Kenya through its Health Systems Strengthening agenda has overseen the finalization and signing of roadmaps towards transition in Migori, Makueni, Machakos, and Kitui counties—documents that aim to ensure resilient and domestically-funded HIV and TB programs. Kenya's transition from low to middle-income status, necessitates critical plans to incrementally transition the donor-funded HIV and TB services. The PEPFAR transition strategy is part of the Country Operational Plan (COP-23) which envisions country programs' engagement towards increasing leadership and management of the HIV response; accelerating the integration of vertical HIV service delivery and systems into local health and social systems, including sharing costs across service delivery functions; measurably increasing the underlying capacities and capabilities of local and regional institutions to lead and manage the HIV response; and engaging in integrated national planning across donors to ensure resources are allocated strategically and complementarily in support of sustained HIV impact and synergies with global health security goals.

The endorsement of the 2023-2027 roadmaps in the four counties in the last quarter, signifies a transition towards sustainable resource investment, gradually shifting reliance on international donors to increased domestic funding. Guided by the pressing need for sustainability in the HIV and TB response, these counties recognize the need for stable and predictable resources to provide these critical services. Oscar Olima, Migori County County Secretary, expressed his enthusiasm for this transition, stating, "I am excited to be involved in this process, and look forward to expanding our collaborations to benefit the people of Migori."

The transition roadmap thus aims to maintain and elevate effective health service coverage even amidst changes in funding sources, safeguarding previous development gains and aligns closely with the county-specific HIV and TB Implementation Plans (CHTIP) and the County Integrated Development Plans (CIDP). Developed in collaboration with all stakeholders, it stands as a comprehensive framework, ensuring a phased transfer of services and inclusivity in the process.





Supporting Government-to-Government Funding through Capacity Building

Ciheb-Kenya, in alignment with the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), direction towards Government-to-Government (G2G) training supported the training of Nairobi and Central cluster of counties on managing donor funding. The first day of this significant training focused on establishing robust financial management practices to support financial resource utilization efficiently and effectively.

This training is integral to the ongoing capacity-building initiatives to facilitate the transition of HIV and TB services from donor support to county-owned, county-driven, and county-funded programs. By enhancing financial management practices, Ciheb-Kenya and other stakeholders ensure the seamless and sustainable transfer of responsibilities to county levels.

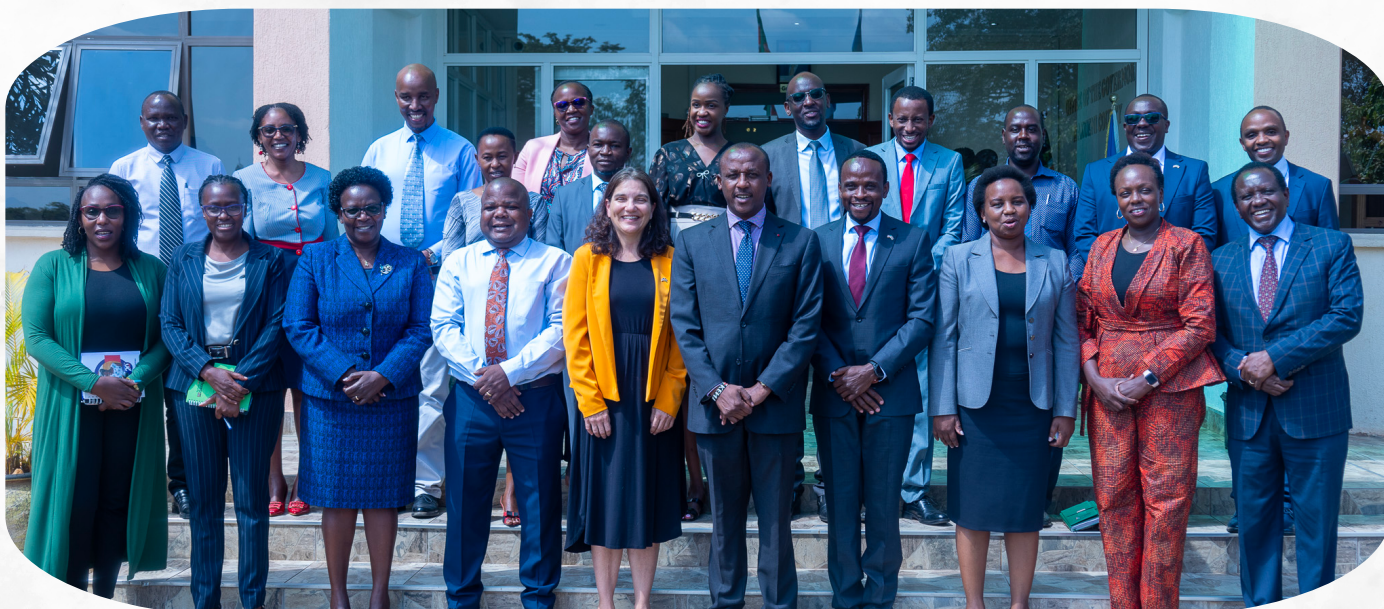
The commitment of Ciheb-Kenya and its partners to strengthen county financial management skills underscores our dedication to navigating the transition process effectively. Ultimately, this transition aims to empower counties to independently manage and fund their HIV services, contributing to a sustainable healthcare model for HIV/AIDS and related programs.



Collaborative Commitment: Strengthening HIV Services in Makueni County

Ciheb-Kenya, in collaboration with CDC Kenya and other health implementing partners, met in August 2023 with Makueni County Governor, H.E. Mutula Kilonzo Junior, and the County Health Management Team. The meeting focused on fortifying HIV services within the county and implementing a structured transition plan from donor to partners for sustainability. During this meeting, the team unveiled the HIV services transition roadmap. This collaborative initiative, supported by the CDC, underscores the dedication to enhancing the well-being of the Makueni County community, especially those individuals living with HIV.

During this meeting, H.E. Mutula Kilonzo Junior, the Makueni County Governor, emphasized the importance of joint efforts in battling HIV and improving healthcare within the county. He stated, "We recognize the importance of partnerships and collaborative initiatives. Together, we are determined to enhance HIV services, eliminate Mother to Child Transmission, and ultimately, achieve a healthier and HIV-free community."



During a tour of Makueni Country Referral Hospital's Comprehensive Care Center (CCC), H.E. Mutula Kilonzo Junior showcased the ongoing efforts to provide comprehensive care and support to individuals living with HIV. Ciheb Kenya's PACT Imara Program, with support from CDC, has been instrumental in bolstering the hospital's and county's HIV services providing HIV prevention services including creating awareness on and providing gender based violence services and pre-exposure prophylaxis, for general and key populations, prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV and care for HIV-exposed infants providing HIV testing and linking HIV positive individuals to treatment and supporting their continuity on treatment.





An outstanding achievement was also celebrated during the gathering—the graduation of 40 remarkable HIV Exposed Infants (HEIs) who were HIV negative. These infants were part of a larger cohort of over 350 children who have successfully tested negative for HIV during the year, a significant milestone in the journey to eliminate mother-to-child transmission within Makueni County. Dr. Emily Koech, CEO of Ciheb-Kenya, expressed her pride and gratitude, stating, "This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our healthcare professionals, parents, and mentor mothers who have supported these young lives on their journey to a healthier future."

The graduation event was graced by notable guests, including Dr. Jennifer Galbraith, Director of the Division of Global HIV & TB (DGHT) at CDC Kenya, and the leadership of the PACT Imara program led by the Program Director, Dr. Peter Kyalo and Makueni County Team Lead, George Kitheka.

As a united front, strides are being made in the battle against HIV, showcasing the unwavering commitment of healthcare heroes within Makueni County. These HIV-negative young lives stand as symbols of resilience and hope, driving the community towards a healthier, HIV-free tomorrow.





Ciheb-Kenya Elevates HIV Testing Services through Comprehensive Training

In a proactive and dedicated effort to enhance healthcare services, Ciheb-Kenya, through the Connect program, held a series of training programs for HIV Testing Services (HTS) providers in Nairobi County. The training was a cornerstone of Ciheb-Kenya's mission to ensure their HTS providers remain well-versed with the latest guidelines and advancements in the field.

The training program was designed to address three primary objectives, each of which are significant in advancing the quality and effectiveness of HIV Testing Services.

1. Staying Current with Evolving Standards of Testing

"Our core commitment is to ensure our HTS providers remain up-to-date with the latest developments in HTS," The fast-paced evolution of healthcare demands an ongoing effort to stay current with guidelines and practices. Hence, this training program was tailor-made to orient the team with the most recent updates in HIV Testing Services. It aimed to empower providers with the knowledge and understanding they need to deliver the best care possible.

The participants collectively worked towards refining and enhancing communication strategies by sharing experiences, best practices, and lessons learned.

Staying current ensures that the services provided align with the latest standards and protocols, enhancing the overall effectiveness and impact of the program.

2. Expanding Knowledge and Skills

Empowering HTS providers with an expansive range of knowledge and skills is a fundamental aspect of Ciheb-Kenya's approach. "We believe in equipping our HTS providers with a broad spectrum of knowledge and skills," noted Connect's Program Director, Dr. Rebecca Wangusi.

The topics covered included Assisted Partner Notification Services (aPNS), Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), HIV Self-Testing (HIVST), Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT), Dual Testing, and TB Screening. By enriching the team's understanding of these crucial services, Ciheb-Kenya aims to ensure that HTS providers are proficient in offering their clients comprehensive care.

The Training

3. Enhancing Quality for Improved Services

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is a core value at Ciheb-Kenya, and this ethos is extended to their healthcare services. The training encompassed orientation on Routine Testing and Counseling Quality Improvement (RTCQI) and Recency Surveillance, key elements in their pursuit of quality enhancement in HTS.

"Enhancing quality is essential for us at Ciheb-Kenya. We are dedicated to continuous improvement,". Routine Testing and Counseling Quality Improvement (RTCQI) is a strategic approach that ensures the quality of services provided, optimizing counseling and testing procedures for the best outcomes. Recency Surveillance, on the other hand, helps in identifying recent HIV infections, allowing for timely interventions and appropriate care.

A Glimpse into the Future: HTS Services Redefined

The knowledge gained through this training program is anticipated to redefine HTS services at Ciheb-Kenya-supported facilities and beyond. We are optimistic about this initiative's impact on their HIV Testing Services program, setting a new benchmark for comprehensive and quality healthcare provision.

Ciheb-Kenya's dedication to continuous improvement and its commitment to staying at the forefront of healthcare practices shine through in this initiative. The training program reflects our aspiration to provide the best possible care to the community by ensuring that their healthcare team is equipped with the latest knowledge, skills, and tools needed to make a difference in the lives of those they serve.

The training program's success is envisaged to have a ripple effect, reaching far beyond the confines of the training rooms. It will empower the HTS providers to be pillars of information and support for their communities.



Empowering Mentor Mothers: Strengthening Support and Care for Communities

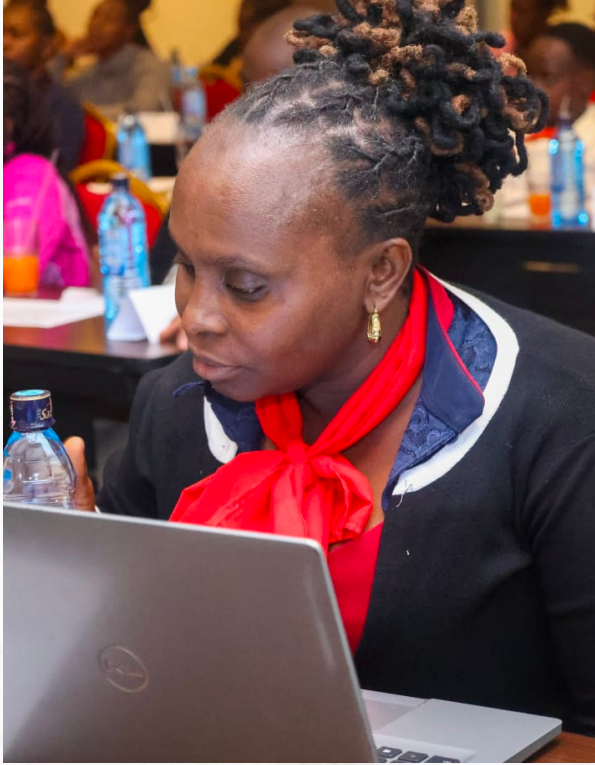
Connect project in Nairobi County, a best practice forum for mentor mothers supporting HIV-infected pregnant and breastfeeding women in the 76 facilities supported by the program to access quality HIV care and adhere to recommended treatment. The mentor mothers shared their experiences, what has worked for them, the challenges they have faced, and the support they need from the program to better serve the people in their communities and deliver on their mandate.



Mary*, a mentor mother, shared her experiences. "Being a mentor mother has shown me the transformative power of compassion and understanding," she noted. "We discussed our journeys today, and it was inspiring to witness how we've collectively made a difference in countless lives."

The meeting showcased these women's challenges and served as a platform to seek solutions and improvements. Anne*, another mentor mother, expressed her enthusiasm for the program enhancement discussions. "This meeting has provided us with a valuable opportunity to address challenges and identify solutions," she stated. "We've come together to share our experiences and work collaboratively towards a stronger and more efficient support system."





One of the highlights of the meeting was the updates shared on understanding the elements of case management and appointment booking. Emmy*, another mentor mother with several years of experience, said, "Staying updated with the latest practices is crucial in our line of work. These updates will streamline our processes, allowing us to offer even better care to those in need."

The session encouraged knowledge sharing and collaboration, as mentor mothers openly shared their best practices and success stories. Sarah*, another mentor mother, shared her thoughts. "It was heartening to hear success stories from fellow mentor mothers," she said, with a sense of pride. "We inspire and learn from each other, and that's what sets our community apart."

As the mentor mothers continue to forge ahead, with renewed passion and a wealth of knowledge, their collective dedication promises a brighter future for the communities they serve selflessly. Their stories and steadfast commitment illuminate the path to a healthier, more compassionate world.

