

Sub – Project Title: *HIV&AIDS prevention among youth out of school in Malindi district.*
FCO Number: *FCO# 603057*
Implementing Agency: *Malindi Education Development Association (MEDA)*
Report Prepared By: *Project Manager*
Quarterly Narrative Report: *April – June 2008*

I.BACK GROUND

MEDA is a Community Based Organization started by Muslims in Malindi to work with young people in uplifting the levels of formal education and address issues affecting the youth in the district. MEDA as a local implementing partner in APHIA II Coast and is mandated to target youth out of school aged between 14 to 25 years. They are about 80,000 youths in the district (Malindi District Strategic Plan 2004/2005). The youth will be reached through Peer education, Peer counseling, FOY's and Community Outreaches (Puppeteers, Mahewa, Magnet theatre, MWAFO, Video projector, & Acrobats).

Goal

To reduce the risk of HIV & AIDS infection among youth out of school between ages 14 to 25 years.

Current status and progress.

II. HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS.

A. Planned activities.

The planned activities during this quarter were;

1. Monthly meetings for AOC's & Zonal Leaders.
2. Magnet Theater /Community outreaches.
3. Stigma reduction outreaches with Mwafo.
4. Peer Education sessions.
5. Peer counseling sessions.
6. Field follows ups for quality assurance and quality improvement (QA/QI).
7. Friends of youth quarterly meeting.
8. Basic Counseling Skills Training.
9. AOC's training.
10. Organizational Capacity Building Workshop.
11. FOY's quarterly meeting.

B. The following activities were undertaken.

1. Monthly meetings.

A total of 6 meetings were held during the quarter, 3 with the AOC's and 3 with the zonal leaders respectively. In the AOC's meetings, talks were delivered to the AOC's by resource persons from Liverpool VCT center on the importance of registering with post test club since 80% of the AOC's know their status. The coordinator of Omari project on drug and substance abuse, and K-Rep Development Agency on the importance of the AOC's to invest in microfinance. The talks were meant to build peer socio-economic support mechanisms.

Experience sharing and entertainment were as usual. The zonal leaders meetings were for coordination. The quarterly zonal meetings provide technical backstopping, experience sharing and documentation of case studies. The Zonal leaders meetings were conducted at Malindi General Hospital maternity shelter, healthy talks and updates were delivered to the leaders. This exercise strengthened the linkage of result area one and two in relation to scaling up referrals.

Major resolution from the quarterly was to influence their peers to form registered groups so as to benefit from K-Rep microfinance. The quarterly meetings have provided the youth a platform to exhibit and develop their talents, capacity build them on facilitation skills among other skills and provide crucial information beyond health issues.

2. Magnet theatre/Community outreaches.

18,726 contacts (9,764 males and 8,962 females) were attained while a total of 10,808 people (5,801 males and 5,007 females) were reached through 105 outreaches. The community was stimulated by the outreaches to discuss issues presented by the characters in the plays. It was noted that the community continue with the discussion among themselves after the outreaches and also whenever, the youth who took part in the play are seen and referred to by the character that they took and discussion emerges.

The number of people reached during the quarter has increased because of the inclusion of Acrobats as an innovative tool for mobilization during community outreaches. In existence tools are; Magnet theatre, Puppeteers, Mahewa, MWAFO, and Video projector. The Magnet theatre group was divided into two groups. This move increased the number of outreaches by 10 in June.

a) Integrated community outreaches.

5 integrated community outreaches were conducted in May where a total of 2,404 people (1,302 males and 1,102 females) were reached. VCT services were provided and 436 people (198 males and 238 females) were tested for HIV. The outreaches were called for by DASCOS as one way of contributing towards testing 5000 people in the quarter of May08 and June 08. The 5000 target was the district deficit in the government financial year 2007/2008. MEDA conducted the outreaches in collaboration with Liverpool VCT & Omari project. MEDA contributed youth for mobilization (Puppeteers, Magnet theatre, Mahewa, Acrobats, & MWAFO) Liverpool VCT and Omari project contributed counseling & testing services.

Outreaches have been instrumental in dissemination of information beyond health issues, condom distribution, and provision of services such as VCT as well as mobilizing the community towards health centers.

3. Peer education sessions.

10,437 contacts (6,338 males and 4,099 females) were attained while a total of 4,356 people (1,701 males and 2,655 females) were reached through 1,055 group sessions. The group sessions have been used to pass knowledge among the peers through participatory methodologies. The peer group sessions have been observed to provide an opportunity of nurturing and facilitating positive behavior change among peers. Through the peer group sessions, youth are mobilized for community outreaches and referred for services beyond health.

3,094 contacts (1,646 males and 1,448 females) were attained while a total of 3,094 people (1,646 males and 1,448 females) were reached through 3,385 one on one sessions. One on one sessions have

been very useful in the program as a get way for objective referrals beyond health services. In cases where peers need more attention AOC's refer the cases to the peer counselors or FOY's for more support. Hence, have increased the number of referrals for appropriate services.

Number of people reached through one on one and group sessions have increased as a result of the immediate impact of the 64 AOC's who were trained on April 08.

4. Stigma reduction Community outreaches with Mwafo.

A total of 7,772 people (4,470 males and 3,302 females) were reached through 30 community outreaches that promote HIV and AIDS prevention through other behavior change beyond abstinence and/or being faithful. The public testimony of MWAFO on positive living with HIV/AIDS as well as its supplement of video projector has been effective in stigma reduction.

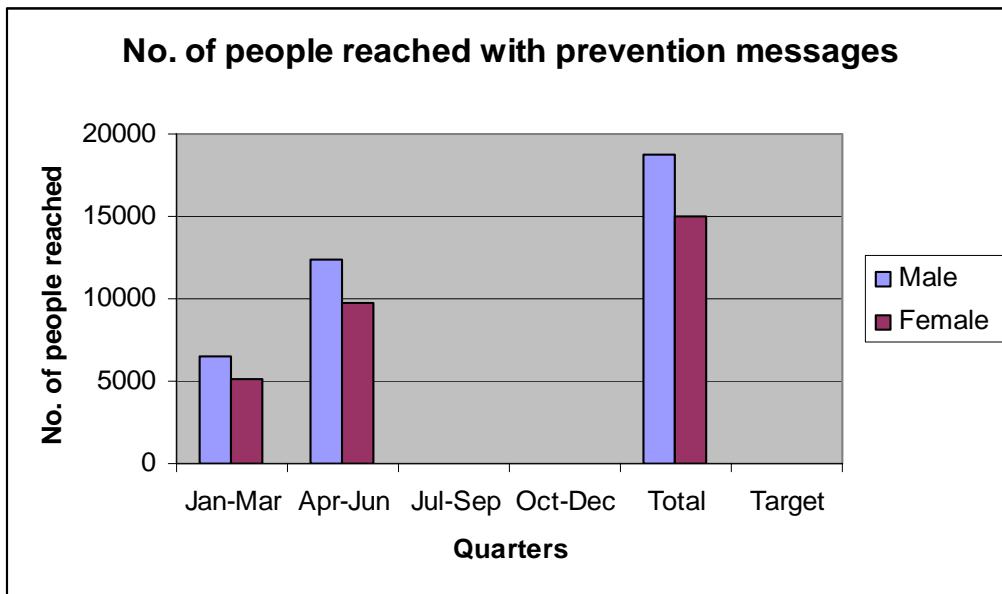
It has been noticed that during these outreaches, the audience enquire for more detailed information on how to cope up with the HIV virus than in other outreaches where MWAFO members are not there.

5. Peer counseling sessions.

A total of 168 counseling session were held during the quarter where a total of 168 people (89 males and 79 females) were reached. Opening up among peers has scaled up since many youth were noted to come to the office as a dropping center to seek counseling services mostly on issues of relationships, career, sexuality, and abstinence. As a result, appropriate and objective referrals for more specialized services have been done on top of one on one peer session. The effect is now rolling down to the maskans, they are enquiring for more information from the counselors on matters of behavior change.

During the reporting quarter the number of youth reached through counseling has increased as a result of 24 AOC's who were trained on April 08 on Basic peer counseling skills.

Figure 1. A comparative graph on people reached



6. Field follow ups for quality assurance and quality improvement (QA/QI).

a) Peer education sessions.

Three field coordinators and 24 TOT's conducted 172 regular field visits to peer education group sessions for QA/QI of peers in the maskans and the impact it has created in 8 zones. The involvement of TOT's has strengthened the participation of the AOC's in conducting sessions in maskans. The result of involving more TOT's during the quarter in field monitoring has contributed to the increase of one on one and group sessions. The reporting quarter is the first to involve 24 TOT's after their training on March 08.

b) Peer counseling supervision meetings.

7 counseling supervision meetings were carried out during the quarter. The supervisions were facilitated by six professional counselors from the MOH. The peer counselors have been divided into 3 groups of 12 each and supervised by 2 counselors in each group. The 3 groups meet once every month. The meeting provided avenues for the counselors to share their clientele's work. The supervisors from the MOH provide capacity building to the counselors, and technical support. A psychological growth and behavioral change was noted among the counselors. Peer counselors were linked with VCT counselors from the health facility and were issued with codes from DASCO. This exercise has strengthened the linkage of result area one and Two.

c) Zonal meetings.

12 zonal meetings were held during the quarter. The participants of these meetings were AOC's of the respective zones, FOY's, & other invited guests. The meetings are carried out at the zonal level and chaired by the zonal leaders. Each zone is supposed to hold one meeting every quarter. The meetings provide a space for the zonal members to address their problems and support to be extended by the FOY's or APHIA II staff.

In Majengo zone the FOY's invited the area councilor to the meeting and they were able to be linked with the council of elders of Majengo zone.

7. Friends of youth quarterly meeting.

The meeting was attended by 46 persons; 25 females and 21 males. The meeting was done at Sir Ali primary school on 12th April 08. Present were FOYs, APHIA II staff and TOTs. The objectives of the meeting were;

- To know each other since they were two groups that had been trained on different quarters.
- Experience sharing on life transformation, and
- Program overview.

One of the FOY known as Mzee Shee shared that at Majengo 3 mosque Imams & him had started a behavior change summons at the pulpit. In addition; they had gone as far as playing football with the youth and give them an opportunity to discuss a few issues on health after the activity. On reproductive health matters the FOYs were advised to refer the cases to Malindi General Hospital, Muye Clinic and Gede dispensary.

8. Basic Counseling skills training.

a) Recruitment.

Advertisement for the training was pinned on MEDA's notice board and 24 youths; 14 males & 10 females' successful candidates were short listed for the training, after passing an interview. The key criteria for the training were that the candidate should be an active AOC and able to communicate in both English & Kiswahili.

b) Training.

24 youth comprising 14 males & 10 females were trained on basic counseling skills for seven days at Sir Ali primary school. The training was facilitated by four trainers from the MOH through the office of Malindi DASCO. They used a basic counseling skills manual for the training. After the training the councilors were expected to practice counseling sessions at MEDA centre as a dropping centre as well as at their maskans.

A Refresher course for the counselors would be convened in case of new emerging issues concerning new approaches on peer counseling among other emerging issues which need to be addressed in a form of a refresher course.

According to the sub-agreement MEDA was to train 36 youths on basic peer counseling in the second year, 24 have been trained and 12 are remaining.

9. Ambassadors of change training (AOC's).

a) Recruitment.

Advertisement for the training was pinned on MEDA's notice board, FOYs and active AOCs collected application forms from the office and distributed them to the potential candidates who were to fill the forms, return them to the office and avail themselves during auditioning day. The criteria was that the candidate should be aged between 14 – 24 years, be a youth out of school, have a talent, & be able to communicate in both English & Kiswahili among other things.

b) Auditioning.

The event was done at Municipal Stadium of Malindi on 19th April 08 and more than one hundred youths turned up. APHIA II staff and TOTs facilitated the event. Reputable members from the public & FOYs graced the event. Singers, dancers, acrobats, footballers among others were given an opportunity to expose their talent. 64 potential candidates were short listed, comprising of 43 males and 21 females.

c) Training.

64 youth were trained 43 males and 21 females as AOCs for 5 days at Sir Ali primary school from 21st -26th April 08. TOTs facilitated the training with assistance from APHIA II staff. APHIA II comprehensive draft curriculum was used during the training. After the training the AOCs are required to conduct Maskan peer education on one on one, group sessions and community outreach.

A Refresher course for the AOCs would be convened in case of new emerging issues concerning new approaches on peer education among other emerging issues which need to be addressed in a form of a refresher course.

d) Commissioning.

The event was done on 26th April 2008 with a procession from MEDA Sea Breeze office to Municipal stadium of Malindi. AOC's took their oath accompanied by their parents/guardians. Present were AOCs, their parents, FOYs, Reputable members from the community, APHIA II staff's, TOTs, and

APHIA II partners. Entertainment and speeches graced the occasion. Asked about how he feels after the event, Simba, a new AOC said, 'nasikia raha na nitajitolea kivyovyote vile nihakikishe wenzangu nao wamefaidika na masomo niliyoyapata.' He said that he feels happy and he will work hard and make sure that his colleagues at Maskans will benefit from the training. VCT services were available from Tawfiq Hospital and 28 AOC's were tested 13 males and 15 females.

According to the sub-agreement MEDA was to train 60 youths in the second year and has trained 64.

10. Organizational capacity building workshop.

a) Strategic plan workshop.

The workshop was conducted on 17th & 18th April 08 at Kivulini Hotel Malindi. Present were APHIA II staff & board members from MEDA facilitated by APHIA II staff from Social Impact & a consultant on strategic plan development. A review on the draft strategic plan developed by MEDA was done and a comprehensive strategic plan was developed after the training. MEDA will adopt its new strategic plan as soon as it passes through a proof reading session by all of its staff and board members. The document would enable the organization to realize its vision, and expand in a controlled manner to avert conflict which would bring down efforts cultivated for years.

b) Resource mobilization workshop.

The workshop was done on 29th & 30th April 08 at Milele hotel Mombasa. Present were APHIA II staff & board members from MEDA, SCOPE, PCCS & SOLWODI facilitated by APHIA II staff from SOCIAL IMPACT & a consultant on resource mobilization. The goal of the training was for the organizations to be imparted with knowledge on the process and practices of resource mobilization for institutional development. At the end of the workshop contacts with Barclays bank was established as a practice on resource mobilization.

11. Important events.

a) Managers planning meeting.

The above meeting was held at Mombasa APHIA II Coast offices and it was attended by all LIP's project managers and one coordinator. The resolution of the meeting was that MEDA incurred a deficit of 30% during the quarter of Jan-March 08 on people reached with prevention messages. In the current quarter MEDA is expected to repay the deficit and meet the quarter's target of 100%. In response to this MEDA in partnership with Omari project and Liverpool VCT carried out 5 full day integrated outreaches. MEDA adopted Acrobats as an innovative tool of mobilization during community outreaches and divided the Magnet theatre group into two. The move has increased the outreaches by 10 each quarter.

b) Malaria day.

MEDA participated in this activity in the capacity of community mobilization aspect. MEDA mobilized the community using magnet theatre, dances, acrobats and songs. The community was educated on malaria control aspects. Present were APHIA II staff, KEMRI, PUMMA (Punguza Mbu Malindi) among other partners.

c) World Drugs Day.

MEDA participated in this activity in the capacity of community mobilization aspect. MEDA mobilized the community using magnet theatre, poems and songs. The community was educated on drugs prevention aspects. Present were APHIA II staff, Omari project, Malindi MP, among other dignitaries and partners.

d) 3rd NOPE Conference 2008

During the quarter, 4 peer educators and a field coordinator attended a 3 day National Conference on the theme ‘**Stigma Reduction, Act Now**’ organized by NOPE at Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC). The conference was very informative and provided an opportunity to the participants for self assessment where they identified areas of strength and those that require improvement. In a nutshell, the youth out of school programme in Malindi has a national significant that can be a learning point for most of youth out of school programme stakeholders.

C. SUCCESS STORY.

a) Innovation.

MEDA has involved an Acrobat group as a new tool in community outreaches apart from the other existing tools such as Magnet theatre, Pupeteers, MWAFO (Ambassadors of Hope). Video Projector and Mahewa. Two of the six Acrobats members are trained AOC’s. They have been attracting a good number of audience in mobilization since they are acting as a facelift to the whole process of mobilization.



Acrobats involved in community out reach as a mobilization strategy

b) Development of a peer counselor’s tool.

MEDA has developed a tool of tracing the activities of peer counselors. The tool is meant to keep record of the activities of peer counselors and to strengthen their participation.

c) High turn out of people for counseling and testing.

During the five integrated outreaches conducted in the reporting quarter, high turn –up of clients seeking counseling & testing services was observed and this is an indication of reduction on stigma in the community. MEDA through it’s various peer education approaches practiced in the community over time is associating itself to have contributed to this success.

d) Referrals to MOH for Youth Friendly Services (YFS).

MEDA AOC's have been manning the YFS at the MOH. One of the AOC through the YFS was assisted medically and has undergone an operation on late May 08. When asked about the YFS, Kalama said, '*nilikuwa nikipitishwa pitishwa kuanzia December mwaka jana (2007) lakini kutokana na hii YFS sasa nimeweza kufanyiwa upasuaji.*' He said that since last year December he had been in and out of the hospital but from the assistance of YFS he has been able to undergo an operation.

e) Linkage with result area three.

Through the linkage of MEDA with result area three one of the AOC benefited from training on hair dressing skills. He has already commenced studies, and when asked how he feels about it, Toni Kadenge replied, '*Saa hii nashukuru baada ya mafunzo nitatafuta kazi nijangalie maana sina mtu wa kuniangalia.*' He said that he is very much thankful and after the training he will seek for a job since he has no one to look after him.

D. CHALLENGES.

1. Inadequate VCT counselors during community outreaches.

MEDA has observed a shortage of VCT counselors during the 5 integrated outreaches it conducted in collaboration with Omari project and Liverpool VCT. Many clients were unattended to and instead referred to other VCT sites. Hence, MEDA is looking forward to reduce the shortage by training its own VCT counselors from among the long serving peer educators as a long term sustainable solution and a motivation for the peer educators. Meanwhile; MEDA is strengthening networks and referral strategies.

E. LESSONS LEARNT.

1. Existence of other programs as sustainability of youth in the program.

The linkage of peer educators to other MEDA programmes such as youth economic and leadership empowerment, early childhood development among others has increased sustainability of the youth in the youth out of school programme and the programme itself. Therefore, there is need of integrating peer education with other existing programmes in order to add value and reduce ban out of peer educators.

2. Basic counseling skills as catalyst of behaviour change.

Behaviour change is a process that requires both intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. Comparative analysis that has been observed between youth who have gone peer education alone and those who did both peer education and basic counseling skills indicate that, basic counseling skills facilitated faster behaviour change than peer education alone. The peer counselors have demonstrated a greater behaviour change noticed immediately during the second day of the training. Their capacity in influencing and facilitating behaviour change of their peer has been invaluable.

Hence, peer educators after going through the peer education training and having tangible experience on carrying out peer education sessions, there is a need to be taken through basic counseling skills training to promote behaviour change to reduce stigma and discrimination.

3. Rationale of VCT counselors in peer educators' effort

Peer education is anticipated to contribute towards HIV&AIDS stigma reduction that can be measured through VCT uptake among others. Likewise; peer educators effort is greatly affected by VCT counselors directly proportionally. Availability of VCT counsellors increases motivation and efficiency of peer educators in maskans as the peers mobilized during group sessions and one –one and the community access VCT services during community out reaches at their respective zones.

Hence, there is need to ensure availability of enough VCT counselors during community out reaches and MEDA centre where over 100 youth make a visit. This can be addressed through; strengthening collaboration between the youth out of school programme with the organizations/institutions having VCT counselors for commitment. The other option is capacity building the already existing basic peer counselors on VCT skills.

F. COLLABORATION.

MEDA recognizes and appreciates the invaluable linkages with various collaborators during the quarter to highlight only a few areas of collaboration.

1. SOLWODI in community outreaches where MEDA Magnet theatre troupe stimulated the audience through plays and comedies that are both educative and entertaining.
2. Malindi District Hospital has been of great support in providing Youth Friendly Services to the youth, giving health talks to the youth, providing facilitators during youth trainings and professional counselors during peer counselor's quarterly supervision meetings.
3. The Omari project as a referral centre for more information on drug abuse related issues as well as provision of VCT counselors during the integrated outreaches.
4. Last but not least is the recommendable and acknowledged youth friendly services of Liverpool Stand Alone VCT centre as heard from the peer educators. It's for their VCT services and the post Test Club where the youth get support.

G; July-September 2008 quarter planned activities.

1. Monthly meetings of AOC'S, and Zonal leaders.
2. Magnet Theatre / Community outreaches.
3. Stigma reduction outreaches with MWAFO.
4. Peer educators sessions.
5. Peer counselors sessions.
6. Organizational Capacity Building workshop.
7. FOY's quarterly meeting.
8. Field follow up for Quality Assurance & Quality improvement (QA/QI).