

ANNUAL REPORT 2008



HIV/AIDS PREVENTION, PROTECTION & EMPOWERMENT NETWORK
(HAPPEN)

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PROJECT SUMMARY

ORGANISATION:	CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF HOMA BAY & ST. CAMILLUS MISSION HOSPITAL
PROJECT TITLE:	HAPPEN
FOCUS AREA:	HIV/AIDS PREVENTION EDUCATION
TARGET CLIENT:	YOUTH IN SCHOOLS
PROJECT LOCATION:	RONGO
AREA COVERED:	CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF HOMA- BAY (Suba, Kuria, Homa Bay, Migori, Rachuonyo and Rongo districts)
NATURE OF REPORT:	3 RD ANNUAL REPORT
PERIOD COVERED:	JAN – DEC 2008

INTRODUCTION

By far the most severely affected region, Sub-Saharan Africa is home to 29.4 million people living with HIV and AIDS. Approximately 3.7 million new infections occurred there in 2006; while the epidemic claimed lives of an estimated 2.4 million Africans in the past year. Ten million young people (aged 15- 24) and almost 3 million children under 15 are living with HIV.

A tiny fraction of the millions of Africans in need of antiretroviral treatment are able to receive it. Many millions are not receiving medicine to treat opportunistic infections, either. These figures reflect the world's continuing failure, despite progress of recent years; to mount a response which will scale back the severity of the global HIV/AIDS epidemic.

In Kenya, AIDS is a tragedy of devastating proportions, seven hundred people die every day from the disease and, since the epidemic started, more than 1.9 million Kenyans have died of AIDS. Deaths often occur between the ages of 25 and 35 in men and 20 and 30 in Women. Thus, it is believed that most infection occurs in the teenage years and early 20s. The country is faced with more than 2.8 million HIV positive individual and half of the beds in government hospitals are occupied by people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA). National HIV prevalence rose from 5.3% to 13. /% in 1999 and shows signs of stabilizing at around 17%. Sero prevalence among pregnant women ranges from 8-22% in low prevalence areas to 35 -40% in higher prevalence areas (Kenya National HIV and AIDS strategic plan, 2000). Following the November 1999 presidential address declaring AIDS 'A National Disaster', a National AIDS control council (NACC) was created by presidential decree with the objective of coordinating the efforts of the government and NGO Consortium (KANCO). Its mission is providing and promoting leadership, solidarity and collaboration among members for collective action. Despite so many efforts, the prevalenc rate of new HIV infections is still very high among the youth and married couples aged 15- 35.

Recent studies have indicated that the health system is being overstretched by the number of AIDS patients and that there is a large funding need to scale up prevention programmes (UNAIDS 2006). AIDS has also brought to the forefront many weaknesses in the social system and other economic issues with which society previously had little concern. The epidemic has placed unprecedented demands on the limited social services, and it is estimated that more than one million children orphaned by the epidemic in Kenya have already overwhelmed existing systems of adoption.

The region covered by the project which is the catholic Diocese of Homa-Bay, is still the leading region with the highest new infection and prevalence rates all of Kenya, the reason could be factors favorable to infection which are different from other areas. One powerful influence may be the presence of the lake that runs to the western and southwestern areas of the region. Unlike in town, where learned people search for job opportunities, the individuals who flood into lakeshore locales to earn their living include many uneducated and drug addicted individuals while others are widows and widowers from various Kenyan provinces..

With the high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate of 35%-40% of which $\frac{3}{4}$ are young people, especially young women, the Catholic diocese of Homa-Bay under Bishop Philip A. S. Anyolo and in collaboration with St. Camillus Mission Hospital under the administration of Fr. Emilio Balliana are making strong efforts to see to it that the entire community, especially the youth in schools are empowered to make good decisions regarding daily living and sexual health. These joint efforts have adopted the name of the HAPPEN PROJECT which is implementing its activities in all the Eight Districts that fall under this diocese. These Districts include; Migori, Rachuonyo, Rongo, Suba, Homa-Bay, Kuria East, Kuria West and Ndhiwa. The programme has placed emphasis on

providing accurate information to a community which continues to receive mixed information from the mass media and other sources.

The community as a whole has come to accept that the virus exists, although the stigma and discrimination which accompanies positive HIV status often paralyzes people with denial and fear. Moreover, some information being promoted to individuals is not in accord with their beliefs and attitudes thus making behavior change an obstacle. In the Homa-Bay Diocese, fear, ignorance and lack of open dialogue about HIV and AIDS has placed tremendous pressure on family cohesiveness. Gender biases are exacerbated as infected women very often bear more rejection than their male counterparts. Women are also disproportionately responsible for the care of those infected with HIV/AIDS, often without sufficient information, medication or support.

ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

Activities within the HAPPEN PROJECT included recruitments and trainings of new field volunteers, contacts and sensitization in schools, recruitment and trainings of the youth (peer educators), follow up/program evaluations, and the development and subsequent distribution of IEC materials. These activities were carried out over three quarters, and the youth in school were visited mostly during the school days apart from two trainings (one by the HAPPEN facilitators but organized by the Medical Mission Sisters of Angiya Parish).

1. Recruitment and training of volunteers (Tots).

During this reporting period, 10 new volunteers were mobilized and trained in July in the new parish Kakrigu in Asumbi deanery. Another 5 new volunteers were trained during the capacity building workshop done in the third quarter of the year; this was held at Golgotha in Karungu for 36 field volunteers from all over the Diocese.

Target group

The Programme is designed specifically to target youth who are both in and out of school. The youth are also an easily accessible population, especially those who attend school. It is more challenging to draw together older adults in the community for a discussion. Furthermore, they are at a crucial age where behavior trends are set. The youth are more vulnerable as they frequently carry out experimental behaviors which put them at higher risk of infection. There are indications that in the lake region, many of the youth become sexually active as early as age ten. The programme is therefore designed to delay adolescents sexual encounters by giving them appropriate information, along with values and skills which foster responsibility and decrease sexually transmitted infections, unexpected pregnancies, and early school dropout.

2. Contacts and sensitizations.

There were **88** schools contacted and sensitized to take part in the prevention programme this year. Among these were **12** secondary schools and **76** primary schools. The contacts were made to schools in the 1st quarter, **20** in the second quarter and **18** in the third quarter. The project activities and plans were first shared with teachers after which action plans were developed on how the programme was to be initiated in their schools. The youth were then met and educated as a group. Simultaneously, select youth were chosen for further training as peer educators who can act as a resource for fellow students.

3. Training of youth peer educators.

During the training the volunteers are greatly encouraged to use education methods which promote youth participation. The youth are involved in the peer trainings through health clubs and advised to advocate for behavior change and total abstinence among their peers. The training curriculum used by the Field volunteers covered material ranging from knowing oneself, identification of values/attitudes, and assertive decision making. Following the trainings, the peer educators were expected to use the same style of participatory education with their classmates. Through group discussion of key issues, the youth voice their thoughts and feel valued for their input..

4. Training of youth peer educators.

Most schools started training very late, and in several schools the teachers were already very busy trying to accomplish their own school syllabus. This affected HAPPEN programmes in almost all schools because of the limited time allocated for the activities. Nonetheless, the field facilitators tried very hard to implement and most schools reached the fifth session of the curriculum. Throughout this year, the volunteers managed to offer trainings in 194 out of the 227 contacted schools. This resulted to 4,850 youth trained as peer educators throughout the diocese. The youth trained as peer educators are those who have good relations with the others. They are always recruited by the help of the patrons and a gender balance is expected. The trainings take place during game times, though it becomes difficult during practices when the pupils are preparing for sports.

Before training, the volunteers evaluate the youth to determine their knowledge. The youth are given information about HIV/AIDS and the human body/reproduction. Life skills include communication, decision-making, negotiation, and self-awareness.

During the training it was discovered that about 80-95% of the youth knew the initials HIV and AIDS though they could not differentiate the two. A reasonable percentage knew that there is no difference. Many pupils had very negative attitudes towards those who are infected and thought of their sickness being a result of their behaviors. It was discovered that the youth have been receiving mixed information from different sources including their peers, friends, family, and the mass media. The HAPPEN training aim to dispel myths and reduce confusion. After the trainings, the youth are evaluated again to assess how much they have gained during the trainings. They are expected to show good communication, negotiation and decision making skills, which can be demonstrated through case studies or role-plays.

They will often draw action plans with the help of their volunteer facilitators to single out which activities the youth themselves can continue doing to help peers achieve the same information and skills to change their attitudes and behaviors. These may take the form of dramas, songs, debates, discussions or role-plays.

5. Follow up /Evaluations

Program evaluation is essential. Monitoring the progress of the activities implemented by visiting the schools in the programme takes place throughout the Diocese by program officers, deanery co-ordinators, and parish representatives who are chosen to lead a particular parish under each Deanery. The area under coverage is quite immense; therefore a deanery coordinator from each deanery is required to meet with the executive office each month to assess the progress of the programme and address problems encountered by each parish.

The head office also goes out to the community frequently to evaluate what the volunteers are doing in schools to discover where the volunteer is having difficulties in facilitation of the programme's activities and what long term solutions may be attempted. The head office also organizes refresher trainings/capacity building workshops for the same. These resolutions are reached after holding regular meetings with the volunteers from different parishes at parish levels and joining them as they train in schools.

6. Capacity building

Capacity building was done with 11 volunteers, 10 new volunteers and one previously trained volunteer. The new were recruited and trained for four days in June from a new parish called Kakrigu under Asumbi deanery. The other 5 new volunteers were trained during the capacity building workshop done in the third quarter of the year; this was held at Golgotha in Karungu for 36 field volunteers from all over the Deanery on December 15th -19th 2008. All the parishes sent at least two representatives to the training with an exception Maberu and Homa-Bay parishes. The Deanery coordinators also had a capacity building workshop for five days in the same place on December 8th to 12th. The capacity building was quite important because the project members had the opportunity of learning more about male circumcision which is now one of the preventive procedures being taught to the youth, particularly in Nyanza province.

7. Development and distribution of IEC materials

The office, as before, over the past years tried amidst constraints to make some IEC materials for the whole Diocese. It did manage to produce the program brochures which were sent to the youth through the volunteers and Deanery Coordinators. Additional brochures were distributed during World AIDS Day and others have been distributed to schools where the activities have been implemented. We also produced some T- shirts with the HAPPEN project logo. These shirts were distributed to our volunteers and deanery coordinators to use during the sensitization programme in the field.

8. Collaboration and Networking

Just like in the previous years, the project has not been working in isolation but in collaboration with other organizations. This time we have been collaborating with other stakeholders in implementing activities similar to ours. We have collaborated with the Ministry of Health (MOH) to obtain the statistics of the HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in various districts within the Diocese. The Ministry of Education has also been working with us hand in hand to ensure our volunteers have ample opportunities to share the information they have with the pupils at school. The church, especially the clergy, have also been assisting to see that activities are carried out and trainings are conducted at deanery and parish levels. It is a blessing the program continues to experience the warm support that the Camillian community is giving the project through St. Camillus projects. The District Department of Gender And Children Affairs (Social Services) Rongo and Homa-Bay is also collaborating with HAPPEN in linking the PLWHA groups existing within the Districts to the head office. WAFNET is another organization that collaborates with HAPPEN in training the officials in various fields (i.e. training project officers on Result Oriented Learning Planning and Accountability).

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The project has managed to train 205 volunteers across the diocese who are expected to facilitate the project's activities in the community.
- The project volunteers have managed to contact and sensitize teachers and pupils from 13 secondary and 213 primary schools.
- Trainings have been conducted in 194 schools, which include 13 secondary and 181 primary schools.
- 4,850 peer educators (youth) have been trained from the schools mentioned above and are continuing to educate others in different ways making prevention education an ongoing process.
- The head office has managed to conduct two capacity building/refresher trainings to our volunteers at different levels to prepare them for efficient performance.
- We have been holding monthly meetings to plan and evaluate our work.
- There are more reports of behavior change seen in the youth from several schools where the project is operating its activities compared to the previous years.
- We produced some HAPPEN Project T-shirts and distributed them to our volunteers and deanery coordinators.
- Two bicycles were given to Asumbi and Rapogi Deanery.

CHALLENGES

- **Finance:** - Many activities cannot be carried out effectively due to financial constraints. These include: volunteers trainings which only occurred twice due to lack of facilities and inadequate resources, less materials for the volunteers to effectively conduct their trainings to the youth, lack of motivation for the volunteers in form of tokens or incentives, lack of resources to facilitate the transportation of volunteers from their homes to distant schools.
- **Personnel:** - Many volunteers have been trained but we find that many of them are leaving for urban centers or continuing their education in distant colleges. This has led to the deterioration in the project's progress as we continue to recruit new people who need to be trained afresh each time.
- **Transport:** - The office is using public transport, which is quite unreliable, tiresome, and unavailable in some places. Most of the parishes are in the interior parts of the country and cannot be accessed easily by public transport, thus forcing the head office officials to either use *boda boda* or walk long distances on foot. This has slowed their ability to conduct follow ups in the implementation of the project activities.

- **Lack of cooperation:** - In some places, head teachers are not welcoming of the project due to the fact that they want to continue with their regular lessons even during the time for games. This has compelled the volunteers to move long distances to work with the schools which *have* embraced the programme. Some people have also viewed it purely from a denominational aspect and believe it to be only a project for Catholics. Others have thought of it as a project which exists to give material support to schools and the pupils in the programme.
- **Office equipment:** - The office owns only one computer, which is not enough for all the reporting and development of other assorted materials for trainings and IEC materials. Moreover, we use a lot of money in producing copies since we lack a photocopier in the office.
- **Time:** - The time allotted in most of the schools is short and forces the volunteers to take too long before finishing with a particular school. This has also made the work go slowly.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The few volunteers whom have struggled since the beginning of the project should be further motivated.
- Exchange visits for the youth in the programme are encouraged for further strengthening of clubs in schools.
- The deanery coordinators are to improve on their visits to other parishes to motivate the volunteers at parish levels
- Deanery coordinators and parish representatives to further mobilize the community to find more volunteer to make the work easier at ground level.

11. Plans for 2009

- ❖ To reach 100 more schools with the prevention training by December 2009.
- ❖ Strengthen the groups which were formed in schools this past year.
- ❖ Organize evaluator meetings with all volunteers at deanery levels on a quarterly basis.
- ❖ Produce more IEC materials to send to the youth for their correspondence learning.
- ❖ To have the Head Office be as mobile as possible to see that the activities are implemented without difficulty.
- ❖ Prepare for the World AIDS Day (in respective Districts) activities in time to reach many people with the information.
- ❖ Strengthen monthly meetings with the deanery coordinators.

LESSONS LEARNED

As the Diocese continues to grow, the need for funds, vehicles, motor-bikes and other facilities is great but inaccessible due to the ever increasing poverty level in the region coupled with the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

NB. The tables over leaf contains the names of all the schools where the project activities were implemented throughout the year

DEANERY	PARISH	SCHOOL	Contacts	Sensitization	Peer group	Training	Follow ups	Retraining
1.ASUMBI	1. ASUMBI	1.Asumbi primary mixed day	*	*	*	X	X	-
		2.Omoche primary school	*	*	X	X	X	-
		3.Orero primary school	*	*	X	*	X	X
	2. RONGO	1. Tukjowi Primary School	*	*	X	X	X	-
		2. Kanyadgiro Primary school	*	*	X	X	X	-
		3 St Bonaventure secondary school	*	*	*	X	X	X
	3. NYALIENGA	1. Ongoro primary school	*	*	*	*	-	-
		2. God Bondo primary	X	X	X	X	-	-
		3. Kwoyo primary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
		4. Kwoyo Kaura Primary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
	4. HOMA BAY	1. Wandiji	*	*	*	X	-	-
		2. Got kochungo	*	*	*	X	-	-
		3. Makongeni	X	X	X	X	-	X
	5. KAKRIGU	1. Lianda primary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
		2. Kakrigu primary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
		3. Kamayoge primary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
		4. Uya primary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
		5. Kamgera primary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
	6. MFANGANO	1. Wakiangata primary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
		2. Wamai primary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
	7.MBITA	1. Kirambo primary school	*	*	*	*	X	-
		2 Mbita primary school	*	*	*	*	X	-
	2.ISEBANIA	1. ISEBANIA	1.St. Anne's primary	*	*	*	X	-
2.Chacha Academy			*	*	*	X	-	-
2.MIGORI		1.Migori Day Sec. school	*	*	X	X	-	-
		2.Pesoda Complex	X	X	X	X	-	-
3. KEHANCHA		1.Komotobo primary school	*	*	*	*	X	-
		2.Komotobo mixed sec. school	*	*	*	*	X	-
4.MABERA		1.Kugisingisi primary	*	*	*	X	-	-
		2.Mabera primary school	*	*	*	X	-	-
5. NTIMARU		1.Seronga primary school	*	*	*	X	X	-
		2.Gwitembe mixed sec. school	*	*	*	X	X	-
		3.Gwitembe primary school	*	*	*	X	X	-

3.RAPOGI	1.ULANDA	1.Ulanda primary school	*	*	*	X	-	-
		2.Nyakurkuma primary school	*	*	*	X	-	-
	2.RAKWARO	1.Kanga primary school	*	*	*	*	X	X
		2.Rakwaro primary school	*	*	*	*	X	X
		3. Mitwe primary school	X	X	X	-	X	-
	3.KADEM	1.St. Michael Nyandema primary	*	*	*	X	X	X
		2.Ndemra primary school	*	*	*	X	X	X
		3.Magacha Primary school	*	*	*	X	X	-
		4.Nyakurungoto Primary School	*	*	*	X	X	X
	4. RAPOGI	1.Koduogo primary school	*	*	*	*	X	-
2.St. John's Kokelo primary school		X	X	X	X	-	-	
4.MAWEGO	1.MAWEGO	1.St. Douglas Weta Primary school	*	*	X	X	-	-
	2. OYUGIS	2.Mawego girls Primary boarding	*	*	X	X	X	-
		3.St. Dislaus Nyawango Secondary School	X	X	X	X	X	-
		4. Konyach primary school	*	*	*	X	-	-
		1.Ojwando primary school	*	X	X	X	X	-
		2.Kotieno primary school	*	X	X	X	-	-
		3. Bwoye mixed secondary school	X	X	-	-	-	-
		5.MIROGI	1. KARUNGU	1. Nyamaga primary school	X	X	X	X
		2. Gunga secondary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
		3. Orore primary school	*	*	*	*	X	-
		4. Obware primary school	*	*	*	*	X	-
		2.ANGIYA	1. Aluor primary school	*	*	*	X	-
		2. Kongoo primary school`	*	*	-	X	X	-
	3.NYARONGI	1.Mariwa primary school	*	*	*	X	-	-
		2.Minya primary school	*	*	*	-	-	-
		3.Ratang'a primary school	*	*	*	-	-	-
		4. Oridi primary school	*	*	*	X	-	-
		5.Ngere primary school	*	*	*	-	-	-
		6. Nyamware primary school	*	*	*	-	-	-
		7. God kojowi secondary school	X	X	X	X	-	-
	8. God Kojowi primary school	*	*	*	-	-	-	
	9. Wachara primary school.	*	*	*	-	-	-	
10. Kamollo primary school	*	*	*	X	-	-		
11.Nyarongi primary school	*	*	*	-	-	-		

KEY: X Activity done this quarter.

* Activity done previously.

- Activity not done

Reported by Nancy V. Akinyi.