

USAID 4TheChild Quarterly Newsletter

Tuongane Tulinde Tuwekeze Tuboreshe Afya na Elimu ya Mtoto

Remarks from the Principal, Moi University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) -- Prof. Robert Tenge



Moi University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) is pleased to partner with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in implementing USAID 4TheChild grant, which took effect on 25th March 2021, for the next five years. Through this award, the University (MUCHS) will continue to deepen her contributions in health and social services in the five target counties of Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, and Siaya.

In implementing USAID 4TheChild, MUCHS is committed to working with and supporting the county governments to put in place structures towards county-owned, county-managed, and county-led programming in line with Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR). In so doing, we recognize that we cannot work in isolation. We must collaborate with and bring on board various key actors in the child welfare sector -- both public and private -- and it is these synergies that will help us to deliver on our mandate to improve health outcomes for the beneficiaries and communities that we serve.

I take this opportunity to appreciate the county governments of Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, and Siaya for the warm reception and support hitherto. I also register our gratitude to the target communities for their support since project inception, and we look forward to working together to create the change we desire to see in our communities, during the life of the project.

Who We Are

Moi University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) is implementing a 5-year PEPFAR/ USAID-funded project (titled: USAID 4TheChild) to work with the counties of Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, and Siaya to provide quality health and social services to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and adolescent girls and young women (AGYW).

The University is implementing the project through the Academic Model Providing Access to Healthcare (AMPATH) infrastructure. MUCHS is also leading a lean consortium of three (3) local organizations, including Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) and Make Me Smile Kenya (MMS-K).



Remarks from the Acting Chief of Party, USAID 4TheChild -- Kenneth Otieno



USAID 4TheChild is designed to support the county governments of Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, Siaya, and Kisumu in attaining the national goal of addressing HIV/AIDS, safeguarding the rights and welfare of children & adolescents impacted by HIV/AIDS, and ensuring equitable access to and use of quality primary health care services by the most vulnerable. In this first issue of our quarterly newsletter, we share with the public key highlights about our inception milestones.

We have worked with the county governments in harmonizing project priorities through a robust co-creation process. USAID 4TheChild implementation structure is anchored on the local government structures to ensure we journey together towards sustainable care and support to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). I, therefore, take this opportunity to thank the county governments, project beneficiaries, local implementing partners, and our collaborators for supporting the project's

Community co-creation opens USAID 4TheChild innovation process up to a wide range of voices that would normally never be heard or involved



USAID 4TheChild staff engages orphans and vulnerable children during a focus group discussion session held in Matayos Sub-County, Busia, during the project co-creation

Increasing the use of quality county-led health and social services for OVC and AGYW in Bungoma, Busia, Kisumu, Kakamega, and Siaya counties is a high priority for USAID 4TheChild. Therefore, to enable sustainability, adequacy, and effectiveness of its activities, USAID 4TheChild promoted the exchange of information, ideas, strategies, and resources through a process of co-creation with the project beneficiaries, government officials, and other stakeholders at the county level.

First, the project held focus group discussions (FGDs) with 293 OVC, 26 AGYW, 69 caregivers, and 84 caseworkers to understand OVC issues while compartmentalizing policies put forth by authorities and efforts by previous and existing mechanisms to address them. The data gathered were transcribed and analysed qualitatively, using simple descriptive narratives, and quantitatively, using excel, to obtain descriptive statistics.

Next, the project highlighted the issues raised in the FGDs during co-creation workshops with 135 stakeholders, who included government officials at the county level, civil society actors, and the private sector. USAID 4TheChild later visited the project beneficiaries (OVC, AGYW, and their caregivers) and caseworkers to assess/identify their felt/priority needs and jointly develop actions that could be taken to address them.

The issues identified varied. However, to achieve a comprehensive OVC programming, the co-creation participants proposed that USAID 4TheChild activities be implemented across four domains - Healthy, Stable, Safe, and Schooled.

“I advised USAID 4TheChild to offer food to the very needy orphans and vulnerable children from poor households,” a 10-year-old girl (OVC) from Nyamasaria in Kisumu East Sub-County, Kisumu County, told her peer during a focus group discussion held in her area to reach OVC beneficiaries.

“Common vision through co-creation is critical to attain sustainable programming that truly contributes to improving access to health and social services,” said Esther Wasige (Busia County Coordinator for Children’s Services) during a co-creation process conducted by USAID 4TheChild to reach OVC stakeholders in Busia County.

County Project Delivery Committees to strengthen the involvement and leadership of the county governments in the project planning, implementation, and monitoring

USAID 4TheChild supported five engagement meetings with Area Advisory Councils (AACs) in Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, and Siaya counties. AACs are administrative structures formed by the National Council for Children's Services to plan, co-ordinate and determine priority interventions to enhance children's rights and welfare in all counties and devolved units.



USAID 4TheChild team joins Busia County Coordinator for Children's Services and Matayos Deputy Commissioner for a group photo during Busia County's September AAC Meeting

The AACs formed County Project Delivery Committees (CPDCs) to support the project planning, implementation, and monitoring at the county level. The CPCD -- a sub-committee of the AAC -- will meet monthly to ensure that all project partners are accountable for their deliverables, facilitate structured reviews of their counties' progress toward meeting set targets/ results in all project areas, and take corrective actions as necessary among others.

Members include technical representatives from key national/county government agencies, project technical leads at the county level, leaders local implementing partners, and co-opted members from the civil society and the private sector.

“The CPDCs will ensure the sustainability of USAID 4TheChild’s gains as they will promote county-led, county-managed, and county-owned programming,” said Kenneth Otieno (Acting Chief of Party, USAID 4TheChild).

DREAMS beneficiary (adolescent girls and young women) validation exercise confirms 100% of mentors and 99% of beneficiaries in Kisumu County

To execute Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) full package of services so as to increase access and demand for HIV prevention services among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in Kisumu County, USAID 4TheChild held a Beneficiary Validation Exercise to verify eligibility of AGYW in the project. The one-month activity confirmed 191 (100% of) mentors and 16,074 (99.9% of 16,085) AGYW handed over from Afya Ziwani -- a previous USAID-funded project.

The project continued serving the AGYW in eight wards across three sub-counties in Kisumu County. At the end of COP 20, 95% of AGYW were reached with age-appropriate primary services and additional secondary services based on need, and as per the Kenya DREAMS Layering Table; where the AGYW were taken through various interventions including Evidence-Based Sessions, Education Subsidy (e.g., school fees, uniforms, & solar lamps support), Entrepreneurship Training, and Financial Training among others.

USAID 4TheChild also graduated 15,199 AGYW who were fully layered (i.e., reached with services). A Graduation Assessment conducted by the project indicates that the AGYW had received violence prevention education, got a source of income, created friendships within their age cohorts, and identified older mentors to guide them.



Young women in DREAMS, at Make Me Smile Kenya in Kolwa East, Kisumu County, being trained on tailoring in order to gain or start jobs and sustain their everyday lives

USAID 4TheChild enhances local civil societies organizations' (CSOs) influence in county planning and budgeting to promote resource allocation to their priority areas/sectors



Leaders of civil society organizations in Bungoma, Busia, and Kakamega counties during a two-day training on local resource mobilization, lobbying, and advocacy

USAID 4TheChild held a series of transformational training reaching 98 top leaders of civil society organizations (CSOs) from Bungoma, Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, and Siaya counties on local resource fundraising and mobilizing support to implement their objectives. The project also partnered with the Institute of Public Finance Kenya (IPFK) to build the capacity of the CSOs on national and county budget-making processes and how to influence resource allocation to their priority areas/sectors. The CSOs in Kisumu and Kakamega were also supported to constitute Communities of Practice -- a platform which they have used to write memos to their counties on budget priorities for children.

“This will increase the civil society’s influence in their counties’ planning and budgeting,” said Kennedy Odera (Capacity Building and Systems Strengthening Lead).

COP 20 Achievements

| Indicator | COP 20 Target/ Denominator | COP 20 Results | % Achieved |
|------------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------|
| OVC_SERV | 152,277 | 153,917 | 101.08% |
| OVC_HIVSTAT | 141,252 | 132,886 | 94.08% |
| AGYW_PREV | 16,074 | 13,889 | 86.41% |
| AGYW Co-enrolled | 3,135 | 2,965 | 94.58% |
| PP_PREV | 11,161 | 8,292 | 74.29% |

What USAID 4TheChild Means

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| Tuongane | Pooling resources together for the benefit of vulnerable children and their families |
| Tulinde | Protecting the welfare of the vulnerable children |
| Tuwekeze | Investing in the children and systems strengthening for sustainability |
| Tuboreshe | Improving access to quality services for the vulnerable children and their families |
| Afya na Elimu ya Mtoto | Health and Education of the Child |

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