

REPORT OF Meeting with HIV AIDS Parliamentary Committee towards creating an HIV free AGYW generation in Tanzania.

VENUE: Dodoma Parliamentary Premises - MIPANGO (IRDP) CONFERENCE ROOM DODOMA

DATE: 12TH NOVEMBER, 2018

PARTICIPANTS:

6 participants from DSDUT Coalition, 1 AVAC Fellow, 1 AGYW DREAMS from Ambassador from Temeke, 1 National DREAM COORDINATOR, 30 Parliamentary HIV/AIDS Committee Members and 5 secretaries.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 12th November, Tanzania Network of Women Living with HIV and AIDS (TNW+) in collaboration with Differentiated Service Delivery Umoja Tanzania (DSDUT) conducted a Dialogue with Tanzania Parliamentarian HIV/AIDS Committee aiming to request the Parliament to Publicly support the platform for addressing the Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) health crisis existing in Tanzania to contribute on the Government efforts towards reduction of new HIV infection among AGYW and Key and Vulnerable populations and the priority populations in Tanzania as the current evidence shows Tanzania is currently facing public health crisis which is affecting Adolescent Girls and Young Women in different regions within the country.

It should be noted that Adolescent Girls and Young Women are ones of the most valuable segments toward HIV response and National economic strategies of our citizenry. The AGYW are the future generation of leaders as imperiled by inadequate investment in HIV prevention and treatment and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights programming that is available and accessible in a comprehensive and timely manner without stigma or discrimination.

The meeting objective was focused on sharing progress updates, Success, best practices and challenges of different ongoing AGYW programs in Tanzania Mainland with a population of 5,625,848 between the ages of 10-14 years and 4,466,674 between the ages of 15-19 years, which account for 1/3 of the total population.

1.0 REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS AND INTRODUCTION

Participants were engaged in making registration from 1.30 to 1.43 P.M. for those who are already in the room others where register themselves according to their arrivals

At 1.48 PM, the Chairman of the HIV/AIDS Parliamentary Committee briefly welcoming the DSDUT team and ask the Ms. Joan Chamungu to introduce her team and the specific objective of their visit to this committee.

At 1:50 PM Ms Joan Chamungu the TNW+ executive director introduce herself as the head of the organization and DSDUT secretariat, she also ask the Team with her to introduce themselves.

After the brief remarks of the Parliamentary HIV/AIDS Committee and head of the DSDUT secretariat the Chair of the committee gives Ms. Joan the Chance to present what was prepared to be presented to this meeting and immediately she ask the AVAC fellow Lilian Mwakyosi to read the prepared statements.

POLICY BRIEF PRESENTATION.

The presentation was made at 2:00 PM by the AVAC fellow Miss. Lilian Mwakyosi representing the Tanzania Civil Society AGYW Platform for Action towards improving health and wellness for Tanzania's next generation of women.

She elaborated in details the rationale of the AGYW situation and highlighted how insufficient of the AGYW investment in HIV prevention and treatment and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights programming in Tanzania, she also made clear about the size estimation of the AGYW within the country against service available by informing the committee the gaps, coverage and scope of the services, political environments and economic capacity within Tanzania.

It was finally requested that the Parliament Should Publicly support the platform for addressing the Adolescent Girls and Young Women health crisis in Tanzania, through addressing the following priorities;

- Doubling the Adolescent Girls and Young Women investment by investing domestic resources in the country budget and in the AIDS trust Fund (ATF).
- Create an enabling policy environment for provision of health services among AGYW without stigma and Discrimination.

- Enhanced Coordination of Adolescent Girls and Young Women interventions at National, Regional, Council level and Village levels.
- Putting young women and girls at the center.

The presentation ended at 2:33 as it followed by an audience discussion and some issues needed clarifications as explained below by the member of the meeting.

1. Some of the audience wanted to know why do DREAMS program is being implemented only in three regions and not all Tanzania, this was due to the fact that MPs are not know exactly aware on the operation areas of DREAMS intervention.

The response was as: The DREAMS program is a donor funded and have their own target, goals and criterial of selection including HIV prevalence, rate of early pregnancy new infections and school drop outs, the allocation of the project depend on the decision of the one who own resources but at least this time we are able to recommend on the resource allocation according to the need and priorities, also resources are few: example in Temeke Municipal the project cover only 6 ward out of 26.

2. The meeting audience wanted to know if DREAMS intervention is being implemented only in Tanzania Mainland and not in Zanzibar.

The response was as: DREAMS intervention program in Tanzania Mainland is coordinated by the Tanzania Commission of Aids while in Zanzibar there is also an implementation of intervention like this being coordinated by Zanzibar Commission of Aids which is independent and it was promised that both TACAIDS and Zanzibar Commission of Aids will meet and discuss in depth regarding the investment for the benefit of both countries.

3. The committee wanted to know exactly what is the packages of the DREAMS intervention for AGYW.

Response: It was explained that the package of the program contains comprehensive package including Bio medical interventions, prevention, structure barriers, policy issues, testing, treatment and training to the beneficiaries specifically for life and entrepreneurship skills. Also beneficiaries are provided by small loan of TZS. 70,000, sanitary pad to reduce young female school drop outs.

4. After provide skills and small loan to these girls do also do marketing for their hand made products.

Kafura answer.

We are trying to link them to the current platform we have last year we organized trade fair specifically target AGYW for to sale their product and create market networks.

5. As you have introduce your self as the group of CSO what strategies have you took to address these challenge?

Joan answer.

We are the community actor we don't want the number of HIV women to be increased when we observed any intervention that reduce the number of HIV women and if we saw there is gap that is where we came in to make sure we serve our people, the program only target 12 regions out of all Tanzania region if other region didn't reached we all see that the number of HIV women will increase due to the n intervention specifically target young girls in the remains region also this program will help those who are already HIV positive to prevent others against contact HIV virus. So we are here to make sure that this intervention is spread and allocated resources in order to help others in need.

What let us came here is that all these program are donor funded means there is no clear sustainability we are here to influence the government to take the lead and provide resources to this initiatives led by PEPFAR and GF. global fund has 10 municipal in DODOMA, SINGIDA and MOROGORO while PEPFAR cover only 3 regions.

At 03:15 the Committee chairman welcoming the AGYW representative to give testimonies on the success,best practices and lesson learned from the DREAM Program.

TESTIMONY.

I quote what she said "my name is FARIDA OMARY I was born in 23rd January 2000, im working with SAUTI project as beneficiary ,I'm here to express what the DREAM initiative change my life, first of all I thanks God to bring this project to our country because if not this project I don't know where I was supposed to be now, I am orphan who lot both parents mean father and mother I was being cared with my grandmother up to this moment my grandmother is not working she only depend on the rent of two rooms she have for living our total life is not easy, in my child hood I have experience many challenge that can bring my life in danger but before that happen the guardian angle came to my life and rescue me this guardian angel is the DREAM initiate.

This project have done a lot but few I can explain is DREAMS gives me entrepreneurship skills, knowledge about health right, human right, Gender based violence and make strong with a new vision of life this project not only gives me good life but also other girls from temeke district in the wards of mbagala kuu,mtoni, azimio,makangarawe and tandika ,

The project establishes the shujaa club which its work is to provide skills for entrepreneurship for marginalized girls that training them and become their champion and provide skills to their fellows on hand work that let them to create self-employment and also being famous among their community, the program made me to the champion of other girls within my ward so I'm a hero.

this project was helped the AGYW from my community to understand themselves and be aware of bad behavior that tend to expose them to contact HIV transmission lastly I'm here to submit the call of my fellows on my back who sent me here to ask you for more resource allocation for the AGYW intervention witjin the country and make us priority toward the forthcoming 2019/2020 budget allocation we all know that everybody id friend of us but we have to remind you all that we are not only priority to the National development but the key of all success. Thank you"

the AGYW testimony session was finished at 3:45 with no comment and question from the HIV/AIDS Parliamentary committee the Chair of the committee lead the meeting to the wrap up and way forward of the meeting. The following are the Parliamentary HIV/AIDS Committee recommendation toward our visits.

RECOMMENATIONS.

1. The Chair of the committee recommend that there is serious need for the parliament to establish a national AGYW council as an urgent issue.
2. They MPs however directed TNW to gather more data on these campaign and bring it with them on their next visit in January 2019 where the minister of Health and Budget.
3. The parliament made innovations for January when they would pursue this issue further in the presence of both the budget and the AIDS committees.
4. During the KVP&AGYW technical working group MPs especial those in HIV/AIDS Committee should be considered to attend those meeting because political figure also have impact to decision to be made.

LESSONS LEARNED.

1. **MPs if involved in KVP and related intervention's will impact and break so many barrier what learned through this meeting with MPs is that these guys has no clear information, the sensitization on these matter is highly needed to them for their understanding toward making wise decision concern program and policy issues .**

CHALLENGE.

1. Its unfortunate, in their vetting they did not take in the KVP agenda. They however indicated the willingness to take it in the future. They said the agenda is like case all the paragraph are just talk to one person and the government has already said that the action of Makonda is not the government Standing if that the case there is no need to discuss personal standing of the RC in Parliamentary AIDS Committee.

2. This activity was planned to be implemented closer with NACOPHA but due of NACOPHA being busy for preparation of its AGM they were not available in planning meeting even at the meeting with Parliament they were not there.

SUCCESS.

1. We have managed to influence five MPs as AGYW Champion who are Chair and Secretary of HIV/AIDS Committee Mr. Oscar Rwegasira Mukasa and Mr Virgil Mtui accompanied by one member Ms. Happyness Ndalulwa and Chair and secretary of Budget Committee Mr..... and Mr..... who will be coming to Dar es Salaam for further discussions and fact finding mission among AGYW partners.
2. The HIV/AIDS Committee decide to be front liners on pushing the government to establish AGYW Council as their platform to spread their voice.

WAY FORWARD.

1. Identified AGYW Parliamentary champions agree to help DSDUT Partners to organize meeting with Minister of Health and Budget in January for clear setting the goals toward establishing National AGYW Council and resources allocation for AGYW intervention's.
2. AGYW Parliamentary champions decide to meet with stakeholder in Dar es Salaam early January to discuss the issue of resource allocation before the Parliament session in January.

Conclusion

Through presentations, and discussions it was demonstrated that the government has continuing to see issue of AGYW is priority but the only missed issue to accelerate AGYW interventions is evidence on how these programs are implemented and how beneficiaries are benefit from the interventions.

During the session it was observed that there is need for decision makers to understand importance of investing to the AGYW interventions in order for them to make wise decision toward programs target these groups.

Areas that require improvement include MPs to share relevant information with the public include HIV/AIDS Parliamentary Committee for the better understanding the progress, success, challenge and best practices from the project sites, another problem reported was there is no clear platform for AGYW to discuss and made decision toward their issues to the general public thus their issues are only raised by implementing partners which their true voice are missed

To solve the problems above it was recommended that TNW+ and its allies to work with the existing champions identified from Parliamentary HIV/AIDS committee and Budget committee to develop National Council of AGYW on responding to HIV epidemic within the country where their true voice will be heard in good mileage.

CLOSING REMARK.

At 4:00 PM it was closing remark where madam Joan Given 5 minutes to say anything she summarized the remark by thanks the Speaker for allowing DSDUT partners to interact with his Committee also she highlight the issue of importance of tracking expenditure of resources for AGYW she also talk about the current policy environment in Tanzania which limits the extent to which evidence based interventions for AGYW are implemented at scale that addressing HIV risk among AGYW will therefore require a holistic approach that touches on the socio, economic and structural factors affecting AGWY in Tanzania and final she ask the MPs especial Chair of the committee to remember and keep in touch on the agreed issue so that to make this movement perfect and successful.