

WEBINAR

KANCO
Healthy people, empowered communities

**Harm Reduction Progress: Violence
amid Covid-19**

Moderator: Sylvia Ayon, Key Populations
Programs Manager, KANCO

Speakers



Allan Ragi; ED KANCO



Victor Okioma; CEO NACADA



Dr. Cosmas Maina; ED TeensWatch



**Abigael Lukhwaro; Project Coordinator;
Medecines Du Mode**



**Ahmed Said; E.D and Peer Leader,
KwaNPUD**

July 10th 2020 Meeting Link:  KANCO @KancoKE  www.kanco.org

Weekly Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2, July 2020

Announcement

World Hepatitis Day, July 28th 2020

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Harm Reduction Progress, Violence amid Covid-19

According to INPUD, under the current COVID-19 context, People Who Use Drugs (PWUDs) are facing unique needs and risks, due to criminalization, stigma, discrimination, underlying health issues, social marginalization and higher economic and social vulnerabilities, including a lack of access to adequate housing and healthcare. In Kenya, The NASCOP Quarterly Report 2020, indicated a sharp rise in the Violence cases against PWUDs for the period between January-March 2020 compared to October –December 2019 standing at 328 and 138 respectively.

Following the highlight of increased violence against PWUDs in Kwale County, KANCO convened a harm reduction webinar facilitating discussion around Harm Reduction and violence amid COVID-19. The meeting drew panelist From NACADA, KANCO, Medecines Du Monde and Harm Reduction Partners from the coastal region, Teenswatch, KwanPUD.

Making the opening remarks the Executive Director KANCO, Allan Ragi noted that there has been notable flexibility of service in response pandemic for PWUDs however, more can be done. *'We have the ability to end violence against PWUDs, leveraging on the government's commitment, Strengthening the PWUDs voices, adoption and implementation of policies, generate evidence and documenting.'* He stated. Appreciating NACADA's leadership and openness to work with multi-stakeholders including CSOs to address the drug use challenge, he called on the need for better coordination of community efforts, the need to engage the leadership in championing the drug use problem, meaningful engagement of people who use drugs and participating in the Global Fund writing process, towards ensuring that PWUDs are part of universal health coverage.

Addressing the meeting, CEO NACADA Víctor Okioma stated that *'Violence against people who use drugs should be addressed through creation of awareness among communities on drug use as a disease and drug users as people who need help.'* He expressed the need to work with stakeholders to get data, identify perpetrators, and understand the causes and where they are as well as find shared solutions to the same challenges.

Making his remarks Ahmed Said representing Kenya Network of People Who Use Drugs (KeNPUD). He stated that *'Violence makes us sicker.'* He added that the violence is on the rise fueled by the pandemic's negative impact on livelihoods. He however noted that despite reporting these cases to the police, the



Photo Courtesy: Assaulted Drug User in Malindi a case highlighted by the media

perpetrators are rarely reprimanded. He impressed on the need for meaningful involvement of the PWUDs in planning for issues affecting them including representation in the NACADA board.

Dr. Cosmas Maina, ED Teenwatch, added that 'Depression and mental health issues as well as loss of livelihood are major issues factors affecting drug users' He impressed on the need for NACADA to push for the adoption of recovering PWUDs in the government employment opportunities like Kazi kwa Vijana.

Sharing on the MDM's response to Harm Reduction in the, Lukhwaro Abigail shared that they have been issuing PPE supplies to Harm Reduction organization around Nairobi. She called on the need for increased resources for more decentralization of medically assisted therapy and supplies for people who use drugs.

Making a contribution at the meeting Onesmus Mlewa, EANNASO, expressed that the regional body would be willing to provide technical support to the harm reduction organizations in the global fund writing process towards resource mobilization for their work. While Joan Wanjru, Katindi Advocates, offered to provide legal support for the Violence cases against PWUDs, free of charge countrywide.

The stakeholder's concluded that there will be regular follow-up engagements to ensure that issues PWUDs continue to be addressed.

Follow the link below to see some of the highlighted violence on PWUDs. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7Ix8DbUNE>

Kenya Introduces New TB Drug Regimen



Photo Courtesy: CAS Health, Dr. Rashid Aman, during the Launch of New TB Drug Regimen

Tuberculosis (TB) is an airborne bacterial infection and is among the world's top infectious diseases, killing 4,000 people each day, and nearly 1.5 million each year. In Kenya there are 169,000 people in Kenya each year and is the fourth leading cause of death, killing nearly 29,000 people annually.

According to the Kenya drug resistance survey 2014, Kenya is among the top 30 countries with the highest multi-drug resistant TB (MDR TB). On the 30th of June 2020, the Kenyan health ministry launched the [Kenya Latent Tuberculosis Infection Policy 2020](#) and [Kenya Injectable Free Regime Policy 2020](#). The later will seek to support a new oral regime that will put an end to injections for people with Drug Resistant TB. KANCO has engaged in this process that began last year and are pleased that the documents have now been finalized. These two documents are some of the supporting documents for Global Fund Request that Kenya will be submitting soon

The launch of the injectable free regimens is in line with the World Health Organization's (WHO) recently released DR-TB Treatment Guidelines towards improving the treatment

According to Health Chief Administrative Secretary, Rashid Aman, the new regimen is more effective than the daily shots and drugs previously used. He added that the drug will be accessible and affordable, adding that people with TB deserve access to the best, simplest and least-toxic treatment regimens.

The outgoing treatment regimen has been in use since 2006 and requires longer treatment periods and has more side effects such as hearing loss and patient treatment drop out.

The ministry has stated that the new regiment will only be administered to new patients who will be given a three month drug supply. For those currently undergoing treatment under the old regimen, they will have to complete the course before being given the new drug.

This launch will further serve to buttress the National Strategic Plan to Control TB launched a year ago with the aim of at least curing 597,000 cases of TB by 2023.



The 23rd International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2020 Virtual) themed **Resilience**, was held on 6-10 July 2020. The conference is an annual event hosted by the IAS, a premier global platform to advance the HIV response. This first ever virtual conference was held following the advent of the covid-19 pandemic and brought together, experts and scientists, people living with HIV, policy makers, healthcare professionals, funders, media and community members from over 170 countries. Over the years the conference provides a platform where science intersects with advocacy and human rights.


The conference hosted over 600 virtual sessions and events, AIDS 2020, facilitating access to the latest HIV science, advocacy and knowledge virtually.

KANCO participated in the AIDS Conference 2020, through a poster presentation on strengthening harm reduction in Eastern Africa through strategic Policy. In addition, KANCO under the ACTION partnership supported the management of the ACTION booth in the community village as well as the Adolescent and Childhood TB sessions. The village facilitated some fun learning activities like the TB wheel, that allows for question and answer on TB Issues. Further, KANCO under the ACTION Global Partnership, engaged stakeholders through social media throughout the sessions

PEF 1786: Strengthening harm reduction in Eastern Africa through Strategic Policy
KANCO
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Background	Description	Lessons	Conclusions
<p>East Africa is home to about 150 million people, 260,000 among them being people who inject drugs. This constitutes about a fifth of the population of people who use drugs in Africa and growing.</p> <p>Eastern Africa region is recorded as a drug transit route with use of drugs for recreation. Consequently this has fueled the growth of the HIV epidemic standing at about 18%, arising from the sharing of injecting equipment and related sexual behavior.</p>	<p>In October 2015, KANCO supported by the Global Fund through the Regional HIV and Harm Reduction Project, embarked on a journey to introduce and cement harm reduction in eight Eastern Africa countries. Prohibitive policy environment, irregular capacity of professional service providers and limited information on harm reduction characterized the terrain.</p> <p>KANCO in partnership with the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat and eight country implementing partners embarked on developing a policy to address 5 broad policy areas:</p>	<p>Policy development is a long journey that takes at least two years. The consultative process navigates various stages both at regional and national levels. This includes the literature review and data collection to draft a comprehensive situational analysis; the formulation of the draft policy document; country consultations; experts' meetings and peer review consideration, regional validation of the final draft and Ministers approval.</p>	<p>On 26th March 2019, EAC Council of Ministers approved the attached policy. It gives platform for sensitization, advocacy and access to services and calls to the member countries stakeholders to address and sensitize and promote its understanding for effective application to bridge the service gap for people who use drugs in the region.</p>
<p>Country of research</p> <p>Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Zanzibar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Ethiopia</p>	<p>Data collection to inform Harm Reduction, Developing national harm reduction policies, Delivering interventions to people who use drugs, strengthening the capacity of PWUDs across EAC as well as creation of a supportive legal environment.</p>		
<p>Key population</p> <p>People who use drugs</p>			

PRESENTED AT THE 23RD INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE (AIDS 2020) | 6-10 JULY 2020



Poster Presentation by KANCO at the AIDS Conference 2020

Journalist Training on Immunization amid Covid-19



Media Training in Baringo County

KANCO has been carrying out a series of sensitizations for immunization towards the increased uptake of immunization that has been adversely affected by the advent of COVID. These sensitizations have been targeting community health care workers and media, as key influencers in the uptake of immunizations. Last week KANCO held media sensitization forums in Baringo County, bring together media practitioners and the ministry of health officials for discussion around immunization.

This comes at a time when the World Health Organisation (WHO), has cautioned on the pandemic's impact on routine immunization services for children saying that the pandemic has revealed what is at stake when communities do not have the protective shield against an infectious disease.

Although more than 116 million infants are vaccinated, there are still more than 13 million children globally who miss out on vaccination. WHO has reported that at least 80 million children under the age of one are at risk of missing routine immunization, with 22.9 Million of these children being in Africa.

Further Kenya has reported a sharp dip in pediatric emergency and pediatric immunization (with a 13% decline) in 2020.

Concern is growing the number will increase because coronavirus will likely to disrupt vaccination efforts and surveillance of vaccine-preventable diseases thus the efforts by stakeholders including KANCO.



A training session during the Baringo County Training

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#StaySafe

#Komesha Corona

