Upcoming:

- Day of the African Child, 16th June 2020

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Sustained Advocacy on GF Implementation bears hope

Kenya is a recipient of Global Fund grant and in the 2019-2021 funding cycle Kenya received approximately USD 348M to support implementation of activities in HIV, TB and Malaria and Resilient Systems Strengthening for Health (RSSH). USD5 Million was allocated to support nutrition commodities under social protection for TB patients and PLHIV. In addition, a monthly stipend of USD 60, is allocated to MDR-TB patients.

The 2019 Kenya Catastrophic cost study indicated that between 27.1 and 53.7 percent of TB affected households experienced food insecurity. In addition the proportion of TB patients living below poverty line increased from 13.9 percent to 31.1 percent.

KANCO has been among the partners consistent in engaging in high level advocacy on the nutrition commodities due to the prevailing economic and environmental conditions acerbated by the pandemic adversely affecting TB treatment outcomes. The push has been to procure Ready to Use Therapeutic Feeds (RUTF) and Fortified Blended Flours (FBF). The RUTF commodities which are patented are only in 96gms sachets from a company in Europe, however, there has been a push to have 200gms packaging to accommodate allocation to adults. This packaging is not available from the company. This therefore resulted to a law suit against the supplier.

With this stalemate, KANCO engaged various key stakeholders including the Ministry of National Treasury and Planning and Court Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs), members to have this issue addressed. This week, the government communicated that approval had been made by the Global Fund calling for a change in the specifications of the product to be followed by an advertisement for new suppliers through competitive bidding. The ruling from the court case will not have any effect on the new procurement. This is good news as it means no interruption for those in need of support.

This milestone allows for inclusion of these items in the GF 2021-2023 grant to be submitted in August 2020. The current push is to keep all TB patients nutritionally supported with the proposal to have increased cash transfer which cuts on transport and administrative costs.

Media sensitization on COVID 19 and Immunization

Immunization is a life-saving health intervention, protecting Children under 5 years from vaccine preventable diseases and mortalities. KANCO with the support of GAVI continues to support and strengthen the uptake of immunization at the community level under the Expanded Programme for Immunization.

With the advent of Covid-19, which has significantly taken a toll on the health service delivery, the need to sensitize communities to take up immunization has become more urgent to prevent the resurgence of vaccine preventable
diseases and the vulnerability of children. The overstretched health services diverted to support the response as well as fear and myths and misconceptions in the community has gravely affected the uptake of health services among communities.

KANCO has been conducting a series of training under the GAVI-HSS project, targeting media, religious leaders, CHVs and CHEWS who are key stakeholders in promoting immunization uptake. The trainings have been ongoing in all 17 counties supported by GAVI.

The objectives of the trainings have been to brief the stakeholders on the progress, success and constraints, of the County Immunization programme, increase understanding on current immunization status and community acceptability and utilization of immunization services as well as to identify action points with the ultimate goal being to promote uptake of services.

This has seen an increase in media coverage on immunization and increased social mobilization for immunization.

**Counties Covid-19 Response Highlights**

The Council of Governors chairperson Hon. Wycliffe Oparanya, this week made a statement on the preparedness of counties on the pandemic. He highlighted that the counties have invested heavily in Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (RMNCH) focusing on strengthening the healthcare system to effectively respond to the pandemic. He however noted that there was a general drop in the uptake of antenatal Care with April reporting lows of 39% for 4th ANC, delivery by skilled birth attendants shot to 32%, immunization at 34% for under one year and family planning services at 25%.

He also pointed out that counties were diligently managing medical waste to minimize possible secondary impacts of COVID-19.

In regard to quarantine facilities, he reported that currently there were 1,789 people in quarantine while 2,436 people who were confined in public quarantine facilities have been released having tested negative.

On food security, he reported that there was adequate food supply, noting that food prices had shot due to festivities. He added that in addressing the food challenges among the vulnerable households, county governments had mapped 1.9 million households with 742,038 of these prioritized following the livelihood challenges related to COVID 19. He reported that the households were receiving food aid. He noted that 9 counties had so far mobilized 1.087 Billion to support this initiative. Further, the National Government was supporting 250,000 households in 10 counties. He called for expansion of the program to all the 47 counties.

He highlighted that the ongoing floods had washed away over 10,000 acres of land with plans underway by county governments to reclaim these lands. He also reiterated the counties commitment to not charge cess, for the transportation of food to facilitate access. He raised several challenges being faced by counties including; late disbursement by the national treasury, who are yet to disburse the 5 Billion Kenya Shillings to the County Governments to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Further it’s yet to release 353 million Shillings donated by the Danish Embassy towards this fight in the levels two and three health facilities. He highlighted the floods challenge, saying that currently over 50% of land in 20 counties is submerged, posing multiple challenges including access to health.

He further stated that access to clean water was still a challenge calling on the Food Supply and County Government Coordination Committee, to prioritize funding the water supply. He called 11,262 Non-Governmental Organization working across the counties to partner with county government to ensure reaching the most deserving.

He further noted that currently civil servants are not covered by the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) and called for NHIF to expedite signing agreements with the County Governments to ensure that civil servants, including the medical personnel are insured.
Ongoing CHVs sensitization on Covid-19 and Immunization

CHVs sensitization in Nakuru County

CHVs sensitization in Njoro Sub-county