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Increasing access to quality family planning services: Overview

APHIA^{plus} Nuru ya Bonde is a five-year program working with the Ministries of Health (MOH) of the Government of Kenya in 11 counties of the Rift Valley region to increase access and utilization of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment services in public and selected private health facilities.

A key objective of the program is to help improve availability of affordable and high-quality reproductive health services, with a specific focus on family planning, maternal, neonatal and child health services.

Key features of FP interventions

At the core of the implementation strategy of this program is integration of services. APHIA^{plus} Nuru ya Bonde is committed to integrating reproductive health and HIV services into various other services at all levels to increase efficiency and reach more patients while avoiding duplication and maintaining quality.

APHIA^{plus} Nuru ya Bonde family planning interventions are based on the minimum service delivery packages as outlined in the Kenya Expanded Primary Health strategy and other national guidelines.

The program has adopted a highly collaborative approach that combines targeted technical assistance and interventions to ensure provision of and access to high-quality family planning services.

The section below outlines some of the strategies of the project and priority activities planned for Year 2.

Program focus

1. Human Resource Development

APHIA^{plus} supports continuous improvement of health workers' knowledge and skills to deliver quality family planning services in all settings. [The project Collaborate with the Funzo Project, a national USAID-funded program, to train service providers].

2. Expanding contraceptive options

The project supports efforts to expand the family planning options available to women of reproductive age in public and private sector setting by:

- Supporting the Government to implement the national strategy and training plan to increase uptake of long-acting and permanent methods (LAPM).
- Working with the Health Communication team to create demand for services
- Training service providers on LAPM.
- Integrated outreaches including LAPM.
- Scaling up of SDM [Standard Days Method] and LAM [Lactation Amenorrhea Method] by training service providers and collaborating with other partners to improve supply of cycle beads.

3. Supporting use of technology

In Year 2, the project will partner with the Ministry of Health to pilot the Mobile for Reproductive Health (m4RH) approach and other technologies such as global information systems (GIS) in Koibatek District. Lessons from the pilot will be later be used to scale up the project to other areas.

4. Scaling up FP services after delivery

Provision of family planning to mothers who have just delivered is a service as there is a very high unmet need. The provision and uptake of this service is low.

APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde will work with the Ministry of Health to scale-up post-partum family planning services to Level 3 and 4 facilities by building the capacity of service providers using a trainers of trainers (TOT) approach.

5. Integration of FP with other services

In order to meet the unmet FP needs of clients, APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde will support the MOH to initiate and scale up FP/HIV integrated services, including cervical cancer screening, as defined in the minimum package of RH/HIV services. The following measures have been taken to ensure integration of services:

- Provision of FP in comprehensive care centres (CCC).
- Community based FP/HIV integrated services including integrating family planning information and services in the home- and community-based care (HCBC) package.
- Provision of family planning services with HIV counselling and testing (HTC).
- Providing FP/RH/HIV services in collaboration with the non-health sector, including dairy cooperatives.
- Strengthening the provision of FP/HIV in Comprehensive Post Rape services in selected facilities.

6. Male involvement

In its second year, APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde will use the findings from a formative assessment conducted in year one to develop a campaign to involve men in family planning. The project will involve community health units to promote child spacing and limiting in communities.

Collaboration with Water Reed Project

APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde does not cover Bureti, Nandi, Kericho and Transmara counties, which are under another USG-supported program implemented by the Walter Reed Project.

In these areas, APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde will place two family planning/reproductive health (FP/RH) nurses within the Walter Reed program to provide on-site mentorship and supportive supervision to facilities.

The APHIAplus-supported staff will provide technical updates to service providers on focused antenatal care, emergency obstetric care, comprehensive post-abortion care, targeted post-natal care and integration of RH/HIV services, including cervical cancer screening in HIV service delivery settings.

Service providers will also be updated on FP, particularly on quality FP counseling and dual method use. Special emphasis will be placed on improving provider knowledge and skills on long-acting and reversible contraception [LARC] and the permanent methods. These new staff will also work to improve the provision of youth-friendly services in these districts.