

HATUA YETU



Q.4 December 2022



Kenya marks the Global Handwashing Day by emphasizing on the importance of hand hygiene

The Global Handwashing Day is an annual global advocacy day dedicated to increasing the awareness and understanding of the importance of handwashing with soap as an effective and affordable way to prevent diseases. It is celebrated on the 15th of October as an opportunity to design, test, and replicate creative ways to encourage people to wash their hands with soap at critical times.

The National Global Handwashing Day celebrations took place in Homabay County at Rakwaro Chief's Camp, Rachuonyo North Sub-county. The theme this year called for people to 'Unite for Universal Hand Hygiene', a message that was reiterated by every speaker who took to the stage, and reinforced by the day's performances, done by both school students and local entertainment groups.



The celebrations were graced by the presence of the Deputy Director of Public Health, Gamaliel Omondi, who pointed out that only a quarter of Kenyans have access to wash facilities, which exposes them to a lot of communicable diseases, with Homabay being one of the 23 counties at high risk of this. He also addressed the issue of open defecation in the county.

This year, the celebrations focused on the inclusion of school going children by putting a little twist on the alphabet. Instead of the letter 'H' representing common object such as 'Hat', it is paramount that educators all over the world change the narrative to 'H' for 'Handwashing'. Shifting the children's mindset will have an impact not only on them but the society as a whole.

The event was graced by over 1000 attendees, including school-going children and Ministry of Health officials. Others in attendance included Head of Hand Wash Adam Mohamed, AMREF Health Africa-Kenya's Wash

program manager Daniel Kurao, and the Coordinator for School Health and Nutrition at the Ministry of Education, Florence Musalia.

The speakers from the Ministry of Health addressed the presence of Ebola in the neighboring country of Uganda and encouraged the community to wash their hands as a means to keep that, as well as other communicable and respiratory diseases, at bay. The crowd in attendance was reached with various health messages, all reinforcing the need to wash hands in order to stay healthy.

The partners supported the day by providing refreshments to the crowd of locals and school-going children that they had mobilized for the event. They included PS Kenya, AMREF, SATO Sphere, Brands on a Mission, The National Business Compact on Coronavirus, WSUP, UKAID, and Unilever.

National Launch Of The 16 Days Of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign that kicks off on November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and runs until December 10 with this year's theme being "UNITE! Activism to end violence against women and girls."

The National event was held in Kilifi County, which has the highest GBV cases in Kenya. The event was officiated by the Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Affirmative Action, and Gender Hon. Aisha Jumwa and brought together local leadership in the region who pledged their commitment to address the situation. The annual event raises awareness to demand accountability and increase efforts through partnerships, coalitions, and resource mobilization to end gender-based violence, which is recognized worldwide as one of the most pervasive violations of human rights.

"Gender-based violence costs the Kenyan economy Ksh 46 billion annually, including the cost of healthcare, legal services, and the loss of economic opportunities from injuries and death, among others, money that could otherwise be channeled to the promotion of comprehensive health services," said Aisha Jumwa, Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Affirmative Action, and Gender.

PS Kenya's Accelerate Project that focuses on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and Gender-Based Violence, is funded by the Danish Government, and is implemented in partnership with the Gender Violence Recovery Centre (GVRC) and Population Services International (PSI). One of its key objectives is to increase access to and utilization of comprehensive, inclusive, and integrated GBV response and prevention services. The project actively contributes towards the ICPD25 promise of zero gender-based violence and harmful practices in 13 underserved and hard-to-reach counties in Kenya, including Kilifi. It is also currently running a digital campaign dubbed "Ahadi Yangu," which brings together different stakeholders in society in



Aisha Jumwa, Cabinet Secretary, Public Service, Affirmative Action and Gender marks the 16 Days of Activism National event in Kilifi County

a bid to protect the rights of women and girls by speaking against harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and early marriages.

PS Kenya's Accelerate Project partner, GVRC, has provided direct medical services to more than 55,000 survivors and psychosocial support to over 150,000 through their partners.

“The youngest survivor we have attended to was 3 days old, while the oldest was a woman aged 105 years. This shows that gender and sexual violence are more than just about sex. Therefore, we must all unite and fight GBV as it concerns everyone,”

Dr. Sam Thenya, Founder and Group CEO of the Nairobi Women's Hospital and GVRC.

The Government of Kenya plans to put into action 12 commitments deemed most critical for advancing gender equality and the elimination of GBV and FGM by the year 2026. The 12 commitments focus on strengthening accountability and the implementation of GBV laws by holding duty bearers accountable, increasing the budgetary allocation to GBV survivors, and enhancing the service delivery systems that are supposed to protect them.

The Red Cross, through their Deputy Secretary General, Annette Msabeni, pointed out that the cases of GBV in the country are currently high due to the tension caused by the drought in the country. They called on both the national and county governments to mainstream GBV prevention services so as to avoid a repeat of the situation in times of national conflict and emergencies. They also called on the community to mobilize against GBV, citing that the government cannot act without their help.

“Let's work towards a society where everyone's human rights are respected regardless of age, religion, or gender, and discard all notions that women and girls are the lesser sexes. Let's unite and work towards a violence-free society,”
Annette Msabeni, Deputy Secretary General.

#Tuungane, tukomeshe dhulma za kijinsia.



Dr. Sam Thenya, Founder and Group CEO of Nairobi Women's Hospital and GVRC



PS Kenya at the National launch

PS Kenya participates in the 2nd Annual Youth Voices Summit in Nairobi

The second annual YouTH Voices Summit event took place from December 1–3, 2022, at AMREF International University in Nairobi, Kenya. This year's theme 'Activating Youth Leadership Towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC)' brought together youth leaders who are dedicated to working towards the achievement of UHC, exchange best practices, highlight innovative ideas, and spark dialogue that will shape policies for youth-responsive health systems.

Kenya adopted UHC as part of its 'Big Four Agenda' in the hope that the public would be able to access health services without financial hardship. The government's directive to have every Kenyan enrolled in the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) is yet to come to pass for many of the youth in Kenya, and yet they make up two-thirds of the country's population. This

*“Actively engaging adolescents and young people in programming to design interventions that best suit their SRHR needs leads to better results,”
Pauline Nzuki, Youth Innovation Champion, PS Kenya.*

The organization also works with a number of youth-led community-based organizations, such as the Kadzandani Creative Youth Organization and the County Youth and Adolescent Network, under their umbrella body, known as the Inua Grassroot Network. The network aims at empowering CBOs with skills such as resource mobilization and financial management in order to achieve impact at scale.

People aged 15–24 are a crucial demographic whose health status directly affects the socioeconomic status of Kenya. They begin engaging in sexual activity at a young age with a low use of contraception, translating to a high unmet need for contraceptives. PS Kenya has identified this as one of the priority target audiences in dire need of specifically tailored interventions

means that a sizable share of Kenyans who use and provide healthcare services through both formal and informal structures are young people. The youth are noticeably absent from the public conversation surrounding the implementation of UHC, a recognizable barrier to the implementation of the agenda.

PS Kenya engages the youth in matters of health in a number of programs; for example, the A360 Program focuses on teenage and adolescent mothers up to the age of 18. It starts by understanding her and placing her needs first. Through this, it not only teaches them about different contraception methods but also empowers them with skills such as hairdressing, plumbing, and soap-making among others.

that address their unique needs.

“PS Kenya recognizes that addressing the SRH needs of the youth would significantly improve the current national SRH indicators and guarantee a healthy future generation,”
Gladys Someren, Family Planning Technical Specialist, PS Kenya.

As an organization, we believe that actively engaging the youth in matters that address their healthcare challenges and concerns and adopting their innovative ideas will help secure the nation's future in healthcare leadership and improve the provision of healthcare services by leveraging on best practices.



From left: Gladys Someren, James Kamande and Pauline Nzuki speaking at the YouTH Voices Summit 2022



PS Kenya's promotive and preventive strategies for Advancing Men's Health in Kenya.

The seventh edition of the Africa Health Business Symposium (AHBS) was held on November 24, 2022, under the theme: The role of the private sector in advancing men's health in Africa. AHBS is a pan-African conference that sits at the heart of the African healthcare scene and aims to create a more enabling environment for the private health sector on the continent. It brings together different stakeholders in a bid to address the barriers affecting men's health-seeking behavior.

Globally, men's health trends show that their life expectancy has consistently been lower over the years. A report published by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2019 shows that men's expectancy stood at 70.9

years, while women's was 75.9 years. Men's poor health-seeking behavior results in serious illnesses getting a late diagnosis. Surveys have shown that most men often believe that they are in good health and are unwilling to make time to go for regular check-ups. Societal and cultural barriers, such as their need to put up a façade of appearing strong and unbowed at all times, are also huge factors.

“The public and private sectors must work together to provide accessible, sustainable, and affordable healthcare systems in the country. This will encourage more men to take up healthcare as the cost also acts as a barrier.”
Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o, Governor Kisumu County



PS Kenya invests in men's health through its private sector initiatives, such as HIV self-testing kits. The campaign, dubbed "Confirm Unajijua," aims to encourage the public, with its priority audience being men above 35 years of age, to take up regular HIV self-testing as a means to keep up with their health. The organization also takes an interest in men in their different programs, such as DESIP and Accelerate, where they encourage husbands to be more involved and supportive of their wives in the family planning journey. Through the Accelerate project, PS Kenya is engaging the boda boda (motorcycle) sector with the intention of shaping their attitudes toward gender equality and fostering greater respect for girls and women's rights.

Reducing the burden of morbidity and mortality in men has potential benefits for women, children, and society at large. Thus, the effort to improve health must focus on the health needs of both sexes and adjust to the differences between them. Diseases such as heart disease, cancer (colorectal, testicular, prostate, and lung), stroke, lung disease, and diabetes are silent illnesses that require routine checkups and screenings. The risk of developing these conditions can be lowered with a healthy lifestyle, a healthy diet, regular exercise, and regular health care.





PS Kenya marks WORLD AIDS DAY by promoting the HIV Self-Testing Kits in Nairobi

World AIDS Day is celebrated annually on the first of December, with the main goal being to rally support for people living with HIV and to remember those who have died from AIDS-related illnesses. This year's theme was "Equalize," a call to action for everyone to address the inequalities that are holding back progress in ending AIDS. The theme adopted to fit the Kenyan context was "End the Triple Threat: New HIV Infections, Adolescent Pregnancies, and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence."

The national World AIDS Day celebrations were held at the University of Nairobi grounds, and PS Kenya's SHIPs team was in attendance to popularize their campaign dubbed "Confirm Unajijua." The campaign aims to encourage users to take up HIV self-testing as a means of keeping up with their status. They also brought attention to their self-care chatbot, aptly named "ASKA," which allows users from Nairobi and Kisumu counties to find online or physical pharmacies near them that sell quality approved HIV self-testing kits, among other services. On display, they also had a self-testing kit vending machine, which was designed to improve the convenience and confidentiality of purchasing HIV self-testing kits.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 84.2 million people have been infected with the HIV virus, and about 40.1 million have died of HIV to date. According to the Kenyan Health Policy 2014-2030, one of the top priorities is the eradication of communicable diseases such as HIV and AIDS. Despite the tremendous progress made in more than three decades of the HIV and AIDS response, the epidemic continues to be a significant contributor to the national disease burden. To address this, PS Kenya partnered with the National AIDS and STI Control Programme (NASCOP) as well as the Nairobi and Kisumu County governments.

PS Kenya's goal to prevent HIV infection has ensured we remain the leader in implementing innovative and evidence-based HIV prevention programs in Kenya. PS Kenya has worked to prevent HIV infection and remains the leader in implementing innovative and evidence-based HIV prevention programs in Kenya. Various social behavior change campaigns such as 'Wacha Mpango wa Kando', 'Pinch, Place and Roll', and 'Nakufel' were implemented to reduce risky sexual practices among at-risk and vulnerable populations. HIV Self-testing campaigns such as 'Chukua Selfie' and the current 'Confirm Unajijua' aim to address barriers to the uptake of HIV testing and counselling. Campaigns are delivered through innovative and appropriate channels to reach those most at risk populations.

Celebrating PS Kenya Successes in the Health Sector

PS Kenya partnered with the Kenya Healthcare Federation to bring various stakeholders together at the end of the year to reflect on the successes witnessed in the health sector in 2022. The event celebrated the achievements, reflected on the wins, and set priorities for 2023 through a fun, interactive themed dinner and dance event graced by H.E. Sakaja Arthur Johnson, CBS, Governor, Nairobi County.

The health sector round up featured sponsored sessions where PS Kenya highlighted successes in 2022 that included the launch of Inua Grassroot Network that aims at uniting all voices and stakeholders with a special focus on improving the lives of the vulnerable, including women, children, and people with disabilities. Behavior change interventions, such as collaborating with the boda boda sector, have the intention of shaping their attitudes toward gender equality and fostering greater respect for girls and women's rights. Increasing access to and use of family planning services, with a special emphasis on people with disabilities



Nairobi County Governor Johnson Sakaja at the Health Sector Roundup event

PS Kenya has also increased service delivery through quality improvement and assurance in public, private, and faith-based facilities on reproductive health, HIV self-testing kits, gender-based violence, maternal health, TB, and malaria, as well as capacity building of health care workers.

*“Moving into 2023, PS Kenya will align its health interventions with the Ministry of Health to ensure quality care as we continue to raise awareness on various health initiatives with the support of the private sector and various partners.”
PS Kenya COO Dr. Margaret Njenga.*

The Kenya Healthcare Federation (KHF) is a private sector membership-based organization, constituting the health sector board of the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA). Founded in 2004, the Federation has a membership of 170+ organizations, consisting of corporate members and professional and institutional associations in the Kenyan health sector.



Dr. Margaret presents the successes of 2022 at the Health Sector Roundup event that was attended by Nairobi County Governor Johnson Sakaja



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