

# KUJIPANGA BULLETIN

EDITION 16

JANUARY TO MARCH 2024 IMPROVING ACCESS TO FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES IN KENYA



# Director's Statement



*Dr. Charlotte Dake*  
DESIP Programme

Welcome to the latest edition of the Kujipanga Bulletin! It's incredible to mark the five-year completion of the largest family planning DESIP programme implementation in Kenya brimming with insights and reflections.

Population Services Kenya has launched its 5-year strategic plan 2024-2028, prioritizing Better Health and Wellbeing. The plan focuses on strengthening health markets and empowering Kenyans to make healthy choices, with a special emphasis on Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child, and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH).

Our team participated in a staff annual planning meeting aimed at fostering unity and cohesion. Advocacy activities in January highlighted Cervical Cancer Awareness across 12 counties, integrating FP messaging. In February, we were honored to host the British High Commissioner at Homabay County, emphasizing the need for disability-friendly health services.

DESIP also engaged in Zero Tolerance against FGM celebrations and World Cancer Awareness week, integrating FP services. March saw the project host a webinar on "Social Inclusion to Accelerate Access to FP," featuring high-ranking MoH officials and representatives from three counties.

In our final year, we're grateful to the UK government for additional funding, enabling us to onboard Options Consultancy as an advocacy partner to ensure sustainability beyond donor funding. Despite ongoing challenges like the nationwide healthcare strike, we remain hopeful for amicable resolutions among stakeholders.

## The Blessing of a Hospital on Wheels

Poverty and limited access to health services including family planning (FP) services are interconnected issues that disproportionately affect women. Poverty exacerbates issues such as food insecurity, lack of access to clean water and sanitation and limited health services. In addition, geographical barriers leading to inaccessibility pose long distance challenges to health facilities needing transport money which may not be readily available, poor transport infrastructure and the upsurge of insecurity prevents women from seeking necessary reproductive health services, including contraceptives and maternal health services. Women in rural areas particularly in the ASAL regions bear the bigger burden of these challenges.

The DESIP programme, through the Samburu County Health Management Team (CHMT), has provided a glimmer of hope through mobile clinics and outreach programs to the remote sites, by linking with the primary health care units to mobilize and deliver reproductive health education and FP services in the interior villages. Educating women during health talks about their reproductive rights, contraceptive options, and the benefits of family planning has helped them to make informed decisions about their reproductive health.

“We are always overwhelmed by the numbers when we go for outreach on market days,” said Melina, a Healthcare Worker from Samburu County Referral Hospital.

At Lekuru Market, one of the women termed the outreaches as a blessing on wheels. Hindered by the dual responsibilities of caring for her young children and the exhausting journey of over 20 kilometers to the nearest health facility, regular visits were simply unattainable. Through compassionate counseling and support, she made the decision to receive a 5-year contraceptive implant, a choice she views as pivotal in shaping her family's future.

With the donation of the Beyond Zero truck by the Office of the First Lady, the county is looking to continue with the integrated mobile outreaches by

entrenching it to the annual workplan and allocating funds domestically at county level and working through Community Health strategy, leveraging on data from e-CHIS and community health promoters to map priority sites to ensure services such as immunization, family planning and antenatal care are accessible to the women, adolescents and children of the rural hard to reach parts of Samburu.



*Community members receiving services from the Beyond Zero van in Samburu.*

## FCDO Development Partner Visit at The Homabay Referral Hospital



*PS Kenya team during the FCDO Development partner visit in Homabay County.*

On February 14th, 2024, the Office of the Governor of Homabay County, Hon. Gladys Wangwa, received Population Services Kenya's CEO, Dr. Margaret Njenga, the British High Commissioner, Neil Wigan, and the Deputy Development Director, Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO), Eduarda Mendonca.

The visit aimed at laying bare the palpable impact witnessed through the six-year UKAID-funded Delivering Sustainable and Equitable Increases in Family Planning (DESIP) programme, whose central focus is to increase access to and use of modern contraceptives across 12 counties in Kenya.

The goal of the programme is to ensure that women and girls can safely plan their pregnancies and improve their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), particularly the young, rural, and marginalized, with programme impact contributing to reduced maternal mortality, newborn, and child mortality, and increased modern contraceptive prevalence rate in Kenya.

Speaking during the presser, the Governor, Gladys Wangwa, lauded the strategic partnership between PS Kenya and the County Government of Homabay, acknowledging the pivotal role and positioning of Population Services Kenya in transformative interventions in reproductive health.

"We have put a lot of focus on health because Homa Bay is among the counties with the highest levels of teenage pregnancy and maternal mortality. We are pleased with PS Kenya for its efforts in handling reproductive health in Homabay County," she said.

The Governor reaffirmed the county's unwavering commitment to fostering an enabling environment for partnerships to thrive, thereby ensuring continued progress in healthcare delivery and access for all residents.

The synergy between PS Kenya and UKAID under the DESIP programme, which spans over six years, has yielded commendable progress in maternal health indicators, reflecting a resounding testament to the efficacy of partnership-driven approaches in effecting transformative change.

Noteworthy achievements include an impressive 8% surge in modern contraceptive usage, a commendable 10% reduction in teenage pregnancy rates, and a substantial drop in the total fertility rate from 5.2 to 3.3, as recorded by the latest Kenya Demographic Health Survey (KDHS) data.

"I firmly believe in the transformative power of strategic partnerships to drive meaningful change in healthcare delivery. At PS Kenya, we are dedicated to forging alliances that will advance healthcare outcomes, especially in underserved and vulnerable communities," stated Dr. Margaret Njenga.

Dr. Margaret Njenga, a staunch champion of meaningful and change-driven partnerships, emphasized the role of strategic partnerships in effecting sustainable change in healthcare delivery, reiterating PS Kenya's unwavering resolve to advance healthcare outcomes, particularly in underserved and vulnerable communities.

## Enhancing Impact in Mandera County Through Partnership and Innovation



*Nutrition programme implemented by Action Against Hunger.*

Population Services Kenya, through its DESIP Programme, has been actively collaborating with various partners in Mandera County to enhance its impact. One significant partnership that PS Kenya has fostered is with Action Against Hunger. Leveraging their projects, particularly in Nutrition, PS Kenya successfully integrated Family Planning (FP) services into Mandera East and Arabia Sub-counties. Working closely with the Arabia Sub-county health management team, we seamlessly incorporated family planning, gender-based violence and healthcare workers mentorship programs into these areas. The integration of activities has proven to not only be interesting but also crucial in facilitating and motivating staff involved in these projects.

Collaboration and integration not only streamline service delivery but also have a profound impact on reaching vulnerable populations, including people living with disabilities. By joining forces, both organizations can significantly enhance social inclusion and improve the lives of community members.



*Sub-county Health Management team engaging CHPs on health service delivery.*

The logistical challenges in the region, compounded by its vast expanse, often make it impractical for a single organization to cover such a wide service area with limited resources. Integration of activities becomes indispensable in such scenarios, positively impacting both the program and the communities served. Many areas are difficult to access due to environmental factors and other constraints, making collaboration essential for effective outreaches.

However, despite the benefits, there are challenges associated with implementing integrated activities. Harsh weather conditions frequently impede staff from reaching remote areas, while the nomadic lifestyle prevalent in many outreach areas presents difficulties in reaching specific demographics, such as women and other vulnerable groups. Additionally, insecurity poses a significant challenge, requiring collaboration with local security groups to ensure the safety of personnel operating in these regions, particularly in areas prone to attacks by insurgents targeting government and NGO personnel.

## Bridging Knowledge Gaps for Effective Contraceptive Administration in Wajir County

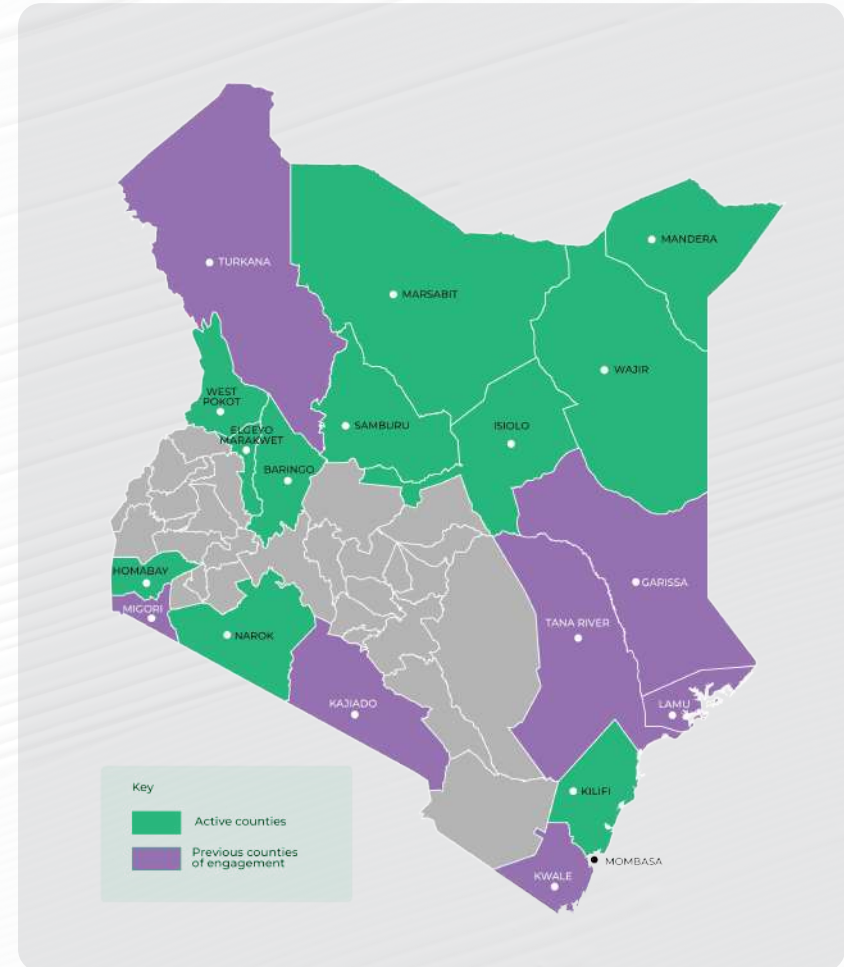
Within the quarter, the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (KEMSA) conducted commodity distribution in Wajir County where significant amounts of Depo SC injections were allocated to facilities, particularly in Wajir East. However, facility-based managers who are also service providers faced a knowledge gap on how to properly administer this new and innovative form of contraception, as they had not received prior training on it. Seizing the opportunity during a Wajir East facility managers' meeting, the Sub-County Reproductive Health Coordinator (SCRHC) took the initiative to train 21 facility managers, along with four members of the sub-county health management team (SCHMT) and two members of the county health management team (CHMT), on the proper administration of the injection.

Following the training session, all 21 facility managers acquired a thorough understanding of how to administer Depo SC injections and promptly began offering the method to members of the public, taking advantage of the readily available commodity.



Sub-cutaneous depo training during sub county data review meeting.

### County Presence



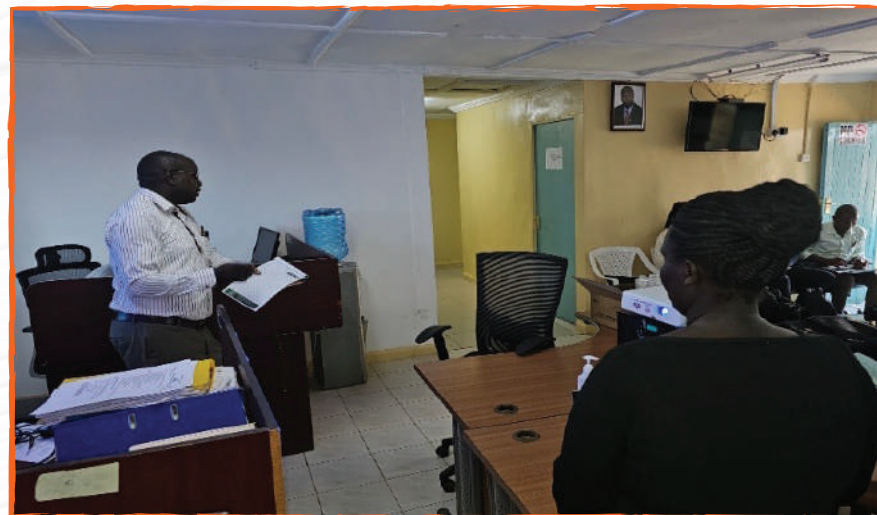
## Reproductive Health Transformation in the North Rift amidst Instability

Kenya's North Rift region grapples with a concerning wave of instability, marked by incidents of banditry attacks, heightened security threats, and clashes between clans. However, amidst these challenges, there have been notable efforts towards fostering peace and improving healthcare services, particularly spearheaded by the Baringo and West Pokot County governments.

In collaboration with PS Kenya's DESIP Programme, local health facilities have been bolstered to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of essential health services across the region. Working closely with county and sub-county health management teams, initiatives have been undertaken to enhance the quality of family planning services and address healthcare needs during turbulent periods through proper legal channels. These concerted efforts have notably contributed to the maintenance of healthcare provision even in the midst of disruptive situations, thus significantly improving access to services, especially in remote and marginalised areas, through supportive supervision and outreach programmes.

Dr. Kangor, the Director of Medical Services in Baringo County, expressed gratitude for the DESIP Programme's invaluable support during a recent meeting with the County Health Management Team.

"We greatly appreciate the support of the DESIP programme in the region; we've seen a reduction in the unmet need for family planning, social inclusivity, and the establishment of social facilities in hospitals," stated Dr. Kangor, Director of Medical Services, Baringo County.



*Joseph Kangor making his opening remarks during a health facility visit.*

Furthermore, he commended the programme's financial backing and technical expertise, which have facilitated successful county meetings and Technical Working Group sessions, ultimately strengthening the region's healthcare infrastructure and services.

As DESIP continues to prioritise investment in reproductive health initiatives, it stands at the forefront of progress in ensuring universal access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services for every individual.

## Integrating FP Services into Cervical Cancer Screening Campaigns in Mombasa County



*An Integrated FP and cervical cancer screening event in Likoni subcounty.*

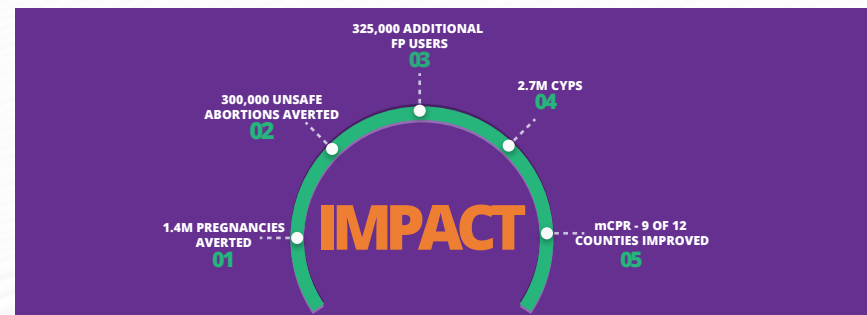
Family planning (FP) and cervical cancer screening services are pivotal strategic components within public health frameworks, particularly in resource-constrained settings where maternal and infant morbidity and mortality remain significant challenges. Effective implementation of these services holds immense potential for mitigating these adverse health outcomes, provided they are integrated seamlessly into healthcare delivery systems. Cervical cancer can be prevented through screening and treatment of precancerous lesions, while FP services could be provided to the same Women of Reproductive Age (WRA) groups of 15 to 49 years.

DESIP, in collaboration with the Mombasa County Reproductive Health (RH) team and other partners in RH, planned a series of events to mark and celebrate cervical cancer month in January 2024. The activities included six community dialogue sessions with targeted messaging on FP and cervical cancer screening, followed by six integrated family planning outreach activities designed to be carried out at the busy health facilities in every subcounty. The provision of FP services was carried out in collaboration with the health care workers from the county team at all the campaign and outreach sites, which also assisted in the monitoring and sustainability of the services.

Clients received comprehensive health education sessions covering both family planning and cervical cancer screening. Subsequently, they were directed to FP counselling rooms, where they were engaged in in-depth discussions with healthcare professionals regarding various FP methods. These consultations included a thorough exploration of the advantages and disadvantages associated with each method, empowering the client to make informed choices aligned with her individual needs and preferences. Following the FP consultation, clients underwent cervical cancer screening. The successful coordination and implementation of these integrated activities during the campaign period were facilitated by collaborative efforts between

DESIP, other partners, and the county RH team. A total of six fully operational campaign sites provided integrated FP and cervical cancer screening services, reaching over 1000 women of reproductive age and significantly contributing to improving women's health outcomes in the community.

The strategy to integrate FP counselling into the mass cervical cancer screening services was a clear demonstration that unmet needs at the local level in both FP and cervical cancer screening can be addressed with affordable measures like VIA/VILI and FP service provision at all service delivery points. This strategic alignment not only ensures comprehensive care for individuals but also promotes health equity by breaking down barriers to accessing vital reproductive health services. Through such innovative and pragmatic approaches, the healthcare system can effectively meet the diverse needs of the population while advancing towards broader public health goals.





## Improving Commodity Security in Isiolo County

DESIP has been collaborating closely with health facilities across Isiolo County to enhance the accessibility of family planning (FP) services. Our efforts extend to supporting the county and sub-county health teams in executing diverse sexual and reproductive health (SRH) initiatives, spanning from facility-based interventions to community outreach programs. Isiolo County's modern contraceptive prevalence rate (mCPR) stands at 29%, a figure indicative of several contributory factors, with the main influence being the persistent challenges of understocked FP commodities within health facilities, heightened by a prevailing deficit in the understanding of the procedures involved in completing the MOH 747A documentation.

In response to this, DESIP implemented a multifaceted intervention strategy focused on enhancing the capacity of healthcare workers through targeted training sessions on forecasting and quantification methodologies. The programme trained County and Subcounty Health Management Teams (C/SCHMT) on the integrated Logistics Management Information System (i-LMIS) and Contraceptive Commodity Electronic Early Warning System (CEWAS).

Furthermore, DESIP extended its support to the County and Sub-County Health Management Teams (C/SCHMT) by conducting comprehensive training sessions on the integrated Logistics Management Information System (i-LMIS) and Contraceptive Commodity Electronic Early Warning System (CEWAS). This will ensure LMIS will reflect the right consumption and need for resupply. The programme's approach to this was to take health care workers through forecasting and quantification training to ensure they receive the right amount based on their needs. Following the training, a series of support supervisions were done to ensure data quality when reporting.



*Support supervision in Daaba dispensary*

Leveraging cutting-edge technology, our support supervision endeavors have been revolutionized through the adoption of CEWAS. Disseminated as part of our comprehensive training on LMIS, CEWAS serves as a powerful tool for mapping and tracking overstocked and soon-to-expire commodities. This innovative approach enables the SCHMT to swiftly identify areas of concern and take proactive measures to mitigate potential risks.

# KUJIPANGA BULLETIN

EDITION 16

## ABOUT DESIP

Delivering Equitable and Sustainable Increases in Family Planning programme, abbreviated DESIP, is a 6-year, UK Aid funded programme focusing on improving Reproductive Health in Kenya with focus on Family Planning in low (<45%) modern contraceptive prevalence rate (mCPR) counties in line with Kenya 'Vision 2030'. The goal of the programme is to ensure that women and girls can safely plan their pregnancies and improve their SRHR, particularly the young rural, and marginalized, with programme impact contributing to reduced maternal mortality, newborn, and child mortality, and increased mCPR in Kenya.

This publication is made possible through the generous support of the citizens of Britain through the UKaid. The contents of this document are the responsibility of the DESIP programme and do not necessarily reflect the views of UKaid and Government of Kenya.



Ministry of Health



Engage with PS Kenya

Email: [info@pskenya.org](mailto:info@pskenya.org) | Website: [www.pskenya.org](http://www.pskenya.org)

Cell: +254 722203199 | 733363630

Jumua Place, Wing B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Lenana Road | P. O. Box 22591 - 00400 Nairobi, Kenya

PSKenya @PSKenya\_ PSKenya @populationserviceskenya PS Kenya @PSKenya\_