

AIDSFree

PARTNERING TO CREATE AN AIDSFREE GENERATION

As part of a USAID-funded global Strengthening High Impact Interventions for an AIDS-Free Generation Project, IMA's role is to engage faith communities to increase community knowledge, and demand for and access to HIV services. Leveraging religious leaders' influence on behavior change and social norms and their wide population reach, the approach equips Christian and Muslim leaders with knowledge and skills on appropriate messaging on HIV issues and strengthens community/facility linkages through faith-based networks. IMA is currently implementing this approach in Kenya for pediatric HIV and in Malawi for PMTCT. Through these efforts, IMA has also developed a pediatric HIV religious guide that equips faith leaders with the knowledge and skills to support congregations in ensuring critical testing and treatment outcomes for pediatrics and adolescents are achieved and in reducing stigma and discrimination that discourages enrollment on HIV treatment. These efforts have resulted in a sharp increase in client referrals for pediatric HIV testing and provision of support services. These have been conducted largely by religious leaders as compared to CHWs and youth leaders who also provide referrals and support services.

Under the leadership of JSI, IMA helps to build the capacity of faith-based networks to address HIV effectively in countries with significant HIV and AIDS burdens. In fiscal year 2016, IMA's efforts contributed to the revision of the Framework and Toolkit for South-to-South Technical Assistance in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Gender Strategy. This framework and toolkit help PEPFAR country teams plan and provide technical assistance through a cost-effective approach that builds local capacity. IMA helped to identify well-established, faith-based organizations that could provide technical assistance to PEPFAR and advance the program's gender-strategic areas.



A woman is tested for HIV/AIDS at a medical clinic in Kenya.

The AIDSFree effort led IMA staff to develop a tool to assess the engagement of community service organizations in prevention of mother-to-child transmission policy and planning. The tool has since been applied by MANET+, a civil society organization in Malawi. A resulting case study considers Malawi's enabling environment for CSO engagement in PMTCT policy; advocacy approaches that MANET+ uses to engage with decision makers; strategies for strengthening its policy and advocacy activities; and challenges to creating change.

In Kenya, IMA is implementing the community-level component of the Public-Private Alliance for Pediatric HIV, designed to strengthen access to and demand for family-focused pediatric care and treatment services in Nairobi. Through IMA's leadership and partnership with the Christian Health Association of Kenya, IMA is piloting a novel approach: engaging religious leaders in the urban informal settlements of Korogocho of Nairobi.