



THE ACHAP QUARTERLY

FOREWORD

The first quarter of 2022 has flown by so fast, it is almost unbelievable what we have managed to do. In these last few months, ACHAP has expanded its focus into to greater areas of programming, including NCDs, capacity reinforcement for member CHAs, support to community health volunteers, HIV, and RMNCH to name a few.

The collaborations that make the work of ACHAP possible cannot be ignored. We extend gratitude to our donors, collaborating governments, partner organisations, technical experts, staff, and community health workers who keep the ACHAP machine running and well.

In this newsletter, we highlight the progress of our current projects, our newly achieved milestones, and our new projects and collaborations of 2022.

As we settle into this year, we continue to encourage you to get vaccinated against COVID-19, and stay safe.

-Nkatha Njeru, ACHAP Coordinator/ CEO.

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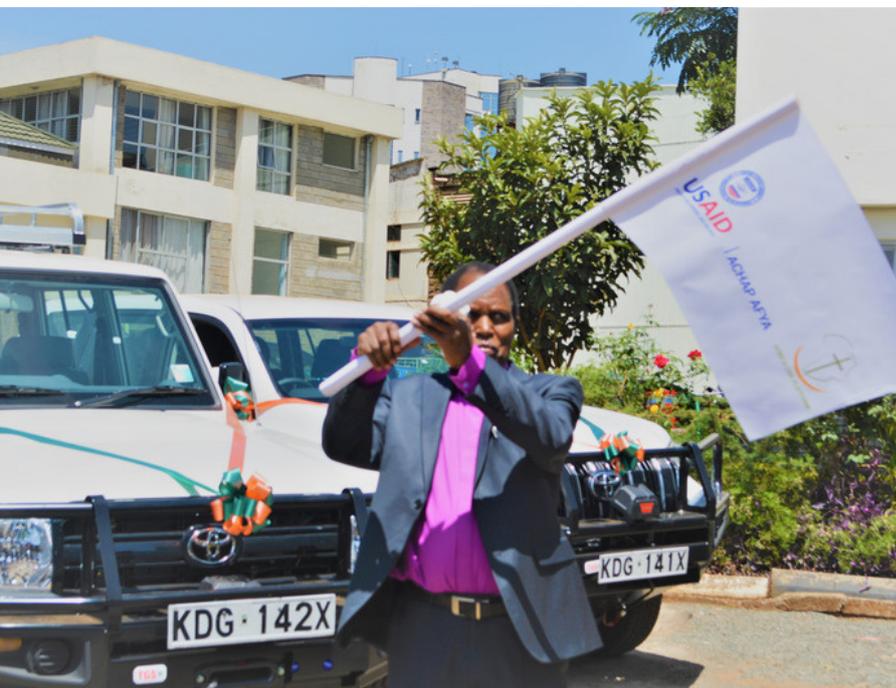
ACHAP OFFICE DEDICATION

Board, staff, and friends of ACHAP at the dedication ceremony



After a long stint of telecommuting necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the travel restrictions that accompanied it, the ACHAP board and staff convened in person for the first time to conduct a dedication service for ACHAP's new office premises. Previously hosted by CHAK, ACHAP now has its office located at the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) compound on Waiyaki way, Westlands Nairobi. Speaking at the event, the ACHAP board chair, Peter Yeboah stated, "We had a vision to bring people together to better the lives of the underserved, and through the work and commitment of like-minded people, ACHAP stands today. The fact that we have come this far is a testament to how much can be done when Africans unite."

ACHAP AFYA VEHICLES DEDICATION AND HANDOVER



Rev. Prof. Nthamburi conducting the official flag-off

Another notable milestone for ACHAP in this quarter is the procurement of three project vehicles, set to support our work in Kilifi County. The ACHAP Afya project is implemented in the farthest and hardest-to-reach areas of Kilifi, which over the course of implementation has presented challenges in transportation, including the high cost of car hire and wanting quality of vehicles. After a tremendous wait necessitated by a shipping backlog on account of COVID-19 related disruptions in trade, the vehicles finally arrived at the ACHAP office premises in February. A colourful thanksgiving and dedication service was led by Rev. Prof. Nthamburi on 11th March 2022, and the vehicles were dispatched to their respective premises.

Present at this service were representatives from the ACHAP board, ACHAP and CHAK staff, and a representative from the All Africa Council of Churches. We are grateful to USAID, the ACHAP Afya Project donor, whose consideration will ensure that this project reaches the people most in need where they are.



ACHAP Afya CoP, Dr. James Mukabi, handing over a project vehicle to consortium partner, CHAK

OUR PROJECTS

Hypertension programme

As part of our NCD programming, the Healthy Heart Africa programme, a partnership with AstraZeneca was launched in Cote d'Ivoire with our member ICPH last year.

Programme implementation has so far been focused on raising awareness of hypertension and heart disease, pre-emptive screening and early referral of cases. As we near the end of the first year of this programme, we note the remarkable effect this programme has had on its beneficiaries.

In a short interview, one of the beneficiaries from Tioro city had the following to say; *"Until now, I told myself that my little problems with palpitations and visual disturbances were due to age and I didn't really care. At the regional launch of the HHA programme, my blood pressure was checked and was found to be at an alarming 190/110 mm Hg after two recordings. After referral and treatment at the Torgokaha Baptist Hospital, I really want to say that HHA saved my life because now I pay attention to my lifestyle habits."*

Besides in-person sensitization campaigns, our field team has also leveraged the widespread radio listenership by staging periodic talk shows to reach a wider audience.



ACHAP HHA PM, Dr Coulibaly Ouonna hosting a radio talk show in Abidjan.

Continuous support to Community Health Volunteers

Faith based organisations are known to work mostly in hard to reach and marginalized communities, a consistent challenge for whom is accessibility of health care facilities. This is where our CHVs step in. They visit homes to initiate dialogue with household members and determine their health situation, deliver key health messages, guide the community on disease prevention, register households at frequencies stipulated in the various project guidelines, treat minor ailments, and with support and guidance from Community Health Extension Workers (CHEWs), implement protocols for Community-Based Maternal and Newborn Health. Through our community RMNCH project, we have been able to support 1158 CHVs by conducting trainings and support supervision visits to monitor their work in the field. This support has ensured that 2656 pregnant women have delivered in hospital. Our NCD project is also working with 100 CHWs who help in the identification of people at the risk of hypertension and refer them for management at health facilities. Within one year, a record 11539 people have been referred for management.

In the community health units we serve, one of the first things you might notice is the VHT help desk at the facility, where patients go for enquiries and information before setting up doctors' appointments. The help desk makes processes easier by reducing the queues at healthcare facilities, and registering patients for at-home follow up.



VHT helpdesk in Arua



VHT monthly review meeting in Ndhew Sub-county, Uganda

Health Systems Strengthening

ACHAP, with funding from IMA World Health, has launched a HSS project in 7 member countries in a bid to fulfil our mandate to support capacity strengthening for our member CHAs. The beneficiaries- Nigeria, Sierra Leone, DRC, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, and Guinea-Conakry- were selected through an EOI process. In DRC and Cameroon, the funding will be used towards setting up a new CHA.

Areas targeted for capacity strengthening include key organizational functions like leadership and governance, strategy and planning, HR management, finance and procurement management, project management, M&E, Resource Mobilisation and sustainability, communication and advocacy etc.

The CHAs will undergo a targeted and focused institutional capacity assessment, they will then be supported to develop capacity strengthening plans that will be implemented in a 1-year period, during which ACHAP will offer technical assistance in the form of online training, mentorship, and coaching, and after which another institutional capacity assessment will be undertaken to measure improvement.

Addressing HIV Stigma and Discrimination

In the last quarter, the ACHAP team has conducted a face-to-face dialogue meetings whose theme was Community Empowerment: "Leaving no one behind on the roadmap towards ending HIV stigma and discrimination." This is in line with our collaboration with UNAIDS to adopt the Framework for Dialogue in HIV policy making.

According to the National AIDS Control Council Stigma Index report, there has been a considerable reduction in HIV stigma in Kenya from 45% in 2014 to 23% in 2020, partly attributed to the work of county governments and HIV programming partners whose work in sensitisation has had measurable results. Some of the key priority areas that still require joint action are:

Addressing the negative bias from religious leaders in their engagement with the LGBTQ community, including people living with HIV in social activities especially in places of worship, integration of HIV services in health facilities to prevent discrimination, and use of appropriate language by healthcare workers in the administration of HIV care.



Face-to-face dialogue in Kilifi County

Addressing gender norms for improved health outcomes

ACHAP Afya recently adopted the 'Emanzi Plus curriculum' for male champions training in the West Nile region. This development is aimed at providing a platform for men to openly discuss pertinent issues in family health including gender roles and stereotypes, violence against women, building healthy spousal relationships, preventing HIV and sexually transmitted diseases, ARV treatment, healthy baby-spacing, and male-centered family planning.

We continue to focus on the importance of dialogue amongst men and provide them a safe space to discuss the issues they face as husbands and fathers, encourage them to get involved in the health of women particularly during pregnancy and childbirth, and become more involved as parents in cultures that view parenting as a woman's responsibility.

The Emanzi Plus curriculum is modeled by JSI Research & Training Institute after the evidence-based Men as Partners curriculum designed by EngenderHealth.



Emanzi Plus orientation session in Uganda

FROM OUR MEMBERS

Cameroon

Following the socio-political crisis that started in 2016 in Cameroon, and the deterioration of the crisis into a violent humanitarian crisis which led to a response by humanitarian organisations and stakeholders, the challenges faced by persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Cameroon have been magnified by the fact that humanitarian assistance has greatly excluded them. To mitigate this, CBC Health Services Disability Inclusive Humanitarian Action (DIHA) Project, in collaboration with the Coordinating Unit of Associations of Persons with Disabilities (CUAPWD) organised separate workshops for leaders of organisations of persons with disabilities in the Northwest region. The workshops took place in February 2022, and were aimed at educating PWDs on the functioning of the humanitarian system.

During these workshops it was noted that while some of these organisations and actors have not been intentional in targeting and meeting the needs of persons with disabilities, persons with disabilities have also not been approaching these humanitarian stakeholders due to lack of information.

Bridging the gap between these two groups has proven a key step towards synergy, and has facilitated measures for inclusion of PWDs including adjusting activity time to enable participation by persons with disabilities, accessibility features in target locations, adapting tasks to the needs of PWDs, and providing/involving personal assistants to ease their work.



OPD leader presenting advocacy action plan

Malawi

After a long journey of academic endurance, Nurse and Midwifery Technicians (NMT) at Trinity College of Nursing were awarded academic diplomas at a colourful graduation ceremony held late last year. This ceremony was originally envisioned for late 2020, but given the setbacks presented by COVID-19, it was postponed almost indefinitely.

Speaking at the commencement ceremony, a representative of the Malawian Ministry of Health expressed the government's appreciation of the role played by CHAM in the national health care system in Malawi, particularly in service delivery.

Trinity College is one of the training facilities coordinated by ACHAP member, the Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM), whose training colleges educated up to 80% of Malawi's health workforce.



NMT at Trinity College receiving her diploma

Sierra Leone

While Ebola is the most immediate health concern in Sierra Leone, the Christian Health Association of Sierra Leone remains actively involved in meeting the most basic health care needs of the people of Sierra Leone. With support from Diakonie and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, CHASL donated drugs, medical supplies, and ambulances to their member health facilities to aid their response to the other common illnesses and emergencies.



Medical supplies and ambulances received at CHASL's member facilities

Uganda

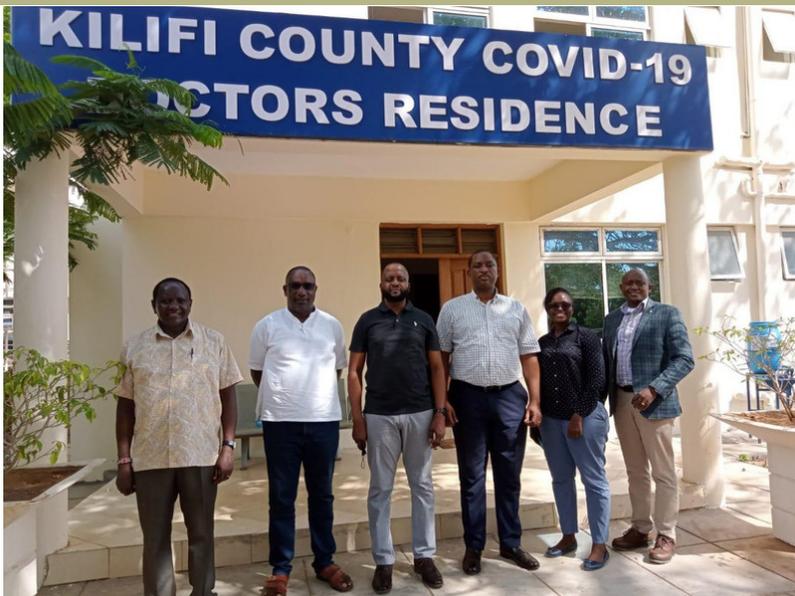
Representatives of Faith based Medical Bureaus in Uganda convened in parliament to present an Inter-Medical Bureau Coalition (IBC) memorandum on the proposed amendments to the Public Health Bill. ACHAP was aptly represented by our members, Uganda Protestant Medical Bureau and Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau.



FBO representatives at the Ugandan Parliament

Acknowledging the importance of representation of Faith-based Organisations, we congratulate UPMB and UCMB for taking part in this very important policy-making process that could potentially shape the health landscape of Uganda.

GALLERY



ACHAP Afya courtesy visit to Kilifi CHMT



MUAC tape demonstration in Uganda



ACHAP board visit to ACHAP Afya Kilifi office



Cake cutting at the ACHAP Afya vehicle dedication service



Meeting with BUFMAR team at the ACHAP office



ACHAP board at a field activity in Kilifi



ACHAP board and staff at the strategic planning retreat

PARTING SHOT

We are beyond excited to announce that the 10th ACHAP biennial conference is happening this year! Our theme will be centered on the role of Christian Health Associations in Pandemics, drawing inspiration and lessons from our work during the COVID-19 pandemic, and direction towards future-proofing health systems against unforeseen disasters. This period has truly been one of continuous learning, and we look forward to exchanging our experiences with other actors in the field of public health.

The conference will be held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 11th to 16th July 2022, hosted by ACHAP's in-country member, BUFMAR. Registration information is available on our website. See you there!



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