



DoD Annual Report October 2013-September 2014

Submitted by

Society for Family Health (SFH)/Rwanda

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Background

Society for Family Health (SFH) Rwanda is a new Civil Society Organization localized from Population Services International (PSI) Rwanda, working in health area. Funded by DOD, SFH Rwanda is implementing the first year of HIV prevention program among the members of the Rwanda Defense Forces (RDF) and their families from March 2014 when the first disbursement of project funds was made. From October 2013 to February 2014, SFH focused on the administrative program setting: proposal review, operational plan, meetings with DOD representatives and Rwanda ministry of defense officials.

The program goal is to reduce HIV incidence by increasing safer sexual behaviors among members of the RDF and their partners. This will in turn mitigate the impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic by increasing access to and use of HVCT and care and treatment services. The program aims at the following objectives:

- 1) Increase the percentage of soldiers and their partners who get tested and get to know their HIV status
- 2) Increase the number of soldiers who are circumcised through the promotion of voluntary medical male circumcision
- 3) Increase the percentage of soldiers who use condoms in a right way and consistently
- 4) Strengthen the capacity of the RDF team in data analysis for regular program monitoring for quality assurance and evaluation

To achieve the program objectives, the following activities will be carried out: HIV Voluntary Counseling and Testing (HVCT), Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC) demand creation and HIV Other Prevention (HOP) activities such as condom use.

During nine months of implementation of HIV prevention program among RDF members and their families, SFH Rwanda achieved all targets as it is highlighted below:

HVCT

- 9,638 people (9,175 Males; 463 Females) were tested versus 8,000 annual targets (120%) and 101 couples were reached versus 100 couples annual targets (101%). The targets were overachieved because of the joint action organized during Army Week.
- A total number of 29 (21 males; 08 females) out of the 9,638 people tested were found to be HIV positive. All clients tested HIV-positive were referred to care and treatment services.
- 5 new counselors from 8 brigades' clinics were trained in counseling and testing versus 15 targeted (100%);
- 65 old counselors from 8 brigades clinics were trained in care and treatment counseling (refresher training) versus 65 targeted (100%);
- 1,654 care booklets were produced and distributed during HVCT sessions. These booklets are giving messages on positive living.

Behavior Change Communication (BCC)

SFH/Rwanda in partnership with Medical Regiment reinforced the BCC messages through Impersonal Communication (IPC) sessions using trained peer educators focused on the following integrated key messages: correct and consistent condom use, HVCT, VMMC and Family planning (FP) for RDF members and spouses. This is intended to motivate the behavior of taking informed decisions and acting responsibly.

We also conducted 4 meetings with trained PEs to encourage experience sharing, discussion on actual challenges to increase ownership by the beneficiaries; versus four meetings planned.

The following achievements are highlighted:

HOP

- To ensure condom availability and accessibility, 100 condom outlets were created within the catchment area of military brigades versus 100 planned (100%).
- Military condom distribution: 600, 000 Military Condoms procured by PSI were transferred to SFH Rwanda and all condoms were distributed in military camps by SFH in collaboration with Medical Regiment team.
- 1,000,000 camouflage condoms under production process; specifications and artwork were sent to the supplier.
- 51,489 people (Military and Civilians) were reached with consistent and correct condom use through IPC conducted by Peer Educators (PE) in anti AIDS clubs; versus 50,000 targeted (103%). The overachievement was due to the increase of the number of PEs, 200 PEs have been trained.

- 30,447 individuals reached through community mobilization events versus 30,000 annual targets (101%).
- 2,100 military T-shirts were produced with messages on condom use.

VMMC

Although SFH does not do actual circumcision, the following behavior change communication messages related to male circumcision were conducted;

- 15 new counselors were trained in VMMC counseling for being familiar with the existing VMMC communication materials.
- 51,489 people (Military and Civilians) were reached with integrated messages on VMMC and consistent and correct condom use through IPC conducted by Peer Educators (PE) in anti AIDS clubs; versus 50,000 targeted (103%).
- The overachievement was due to the increase of the number of PEs, 200 PEs have been trained on VMMC messages and consistent and correct condom use.
- 30,447 individuals reached through community mobilization events versus 30,000 annual targets (101%). During Army Week, a joint action (HVCT, community event promoting VMMC and mobile VMMC conducted by Drew Cares International) was organized and 2,237 uncircumcised men tested HIV negative were referred from mobile HVCT services to mobile VMMC and all of them have been circumcised. This has been a great success.

Meetings: 100 people from 21 clubs participated in the quarterly meeting versus 100 planned meeting organized at brigade level (100%).

Challenges/constraints to implementation of interventions

No challenge/constraints identified.

SUCCESS STORY

INTEGETED CAMPAIGN IN IWAWA YOUTH CENTER

An integrated Campaign for VCT and VMMC among youth based at IWawa Rehabilitation Center has been organized by Rwanda Military Hospital with SFH great collaboration.



Photo showing Birori Jacques and NSENGIYUNA Eric (between 24 and 27 age) demonstrating correct condom use in IWAWA Campaign

The major objective for this campaign was to provide a combination health services on HIV /AIDS (mobilization, VCT and VMMC)

Even though SFH does not do actual male circumcision, it continues to mobile the majority of the uniformed personnel through behavior change communication (BCC) messages as an additional important strategy for HIV prevention, particularly in settings with high HIV prevalence

As evidence, one of provider services reported that **“Male circumcision does not only provide partial protection but also plays an integral part in HIV prevention package”**.

The framework calls for an intensified response by countries and partners to ‘catch up’ with men 15 to 49 years old who were not previously circumcised and to establish sustainable services for infants and adolescents for the longer term. The framework promotes country ownership, a combination of approaches and strategic, coordinated action.

As a result of this event, more than 1,252 Youths received services related to voluntary male circumcision.