



UN Trust Fund and Johnson & Johnson HIV/AIDS/Violence Against Women Learning Initiative

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BACKGROUND: UN TRUST FUND/HIV&VAW COHORT

- The UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women is a leading grant multi-lateral grant making mechanism exclusively dedicated to supporting country and local level actions to end violence against women and girls
- Three priority areas of UNTF: Preventing violence against women and girls; expanding survivor access to services; strengthening implementation of laws, policies and action plans
- In 2007, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women and Johnson & Johnson established an initiative to advance the knowledge and practice on the intersection of violence against women (VAW) and HIV/AIDS. It brought together seven organizations across multiple countries to pilot innovative responses to address the intersection especially in high prevalence areas

Summary of Findings

PREVENTION

- Girls empowered to exercise their rights:
 - Increase in women seeking VAW and HIV-related and VAW services including legal services, medical care, One Stop Crisis Centres (OSCC), property rights, demand condom use
- Change in Knowledge/Attitudes/Behavior:
 - Enhanced knowledge and understanding on the linkages between HIV and VAW among community and Service Providers (SPs)
 - Decrease in stigma and discrimination against WLWHA by SPs (but still challenging)
 - Improved knowledge around safer sex practices and HIV/AIDS prevention
- Men/Boys, Traditional Leaders, and Youth took leadership roles in HIV Prevention and awareness-raising as it relates to women's rights abuses

SERVICES

- Access and referrals to services improved
- Legal and Health Service Providers improved quality of care, were more proactive in the detection of cases, demonstrated enhanced commitment towards prevention of violence and started to build inter-sectoral referral networks
- Attitudes towards WLWHA have improved in some of the projects

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

- Partnerships with CSOs, Data Collection: i.e. Registers have been supplied to Police Divisions across Ebonyi State and Cross River State, Nigeria to record HIV/AIDS-related VAW cases and there was an increase in reporting cases of VAW to the Police.
- Budget: Support from government ministries was still evident in some of the projects. i.e. workshops to raise greater awareness on child sexual abuse and implications for HIV in several communities across Trinidad and Tobago

Promising Practices

Strengthen health and legal service providers' capacity to provide holistic, non-discriminatory and confidential care for WLWHA and VAW: Systems more accessible, less stigma, higher beneficiary satisfaction

Create partnerships and referral systems among health and legal sectors, HIV networks, government bodies, academic institutions, policy makers, NGOs, CBOs: Can lead to combined programming, raise awareness, more informed policies

Create and distribute of (Information, Education, Communication(IEC) materials together with legal literacy training: Can increase women's knowledge and capacity to demand rights

Media campaigns and community outreach activities used together to increase awareness, decrease stigma, and mobilize communities to act

Build capacity of WLWHA and VAW through peer outreach and support networks: Can improve women's confidence, increase reporting & women's demand of rights, communities monitor VAW, raise awareness, change community attitudes

Creation & Support for Anti-VAW Committees and Gender Committees to increase awareness and increase SP accountability & monitor cases of VAW, organized trainings for SPs and police, members became change agents

Lessons Learned

- HIV/AIDS and VAW must be addressed using a holistic approach involving multiple strategies across various sectors.
- An analysis of the intervention staff's attitudes and the organization's policies and capacity regarding HIV and VAW is required before programme implementation in order to prevent the perpetuation of stigma and discrimination
- Baselines studies/situational analyses involving WLWHA and survivors of violence against women should be conducted so that programme staff are better informed on the linkages between VAW and HIV/AIDS to understand the nuanced and complex forms of violence against women and girls living with HIV/AIDS in the particular context.
- Support women's empowerment to demand a life free of violence and to demand their economic/property rights etc., promote the protection of human rights by duty bearers, and address stigma and discrimination.
- It is critical to engage WLWHA and survivors of violence throughout the duration of the project.
- It is paramount to integrate *Prevention* in all interventions. Addressing the gender and social norms that are harmful to women and girls is necessary to stop the cycle of violence and curb the conditions that lead to women's vulnerability to HIV and violence.