

AfriAfya Newsletter

African Network for Health Knowledge Management and Communication

An Introduction

AfriAfya is an African Network for Health Knowledge Management and Communication established by Kenya-based health agencies to share experiences in this field.

AfriAfya seeks to meet the challenge of community access to relevant, appropriate and timely health knowledge and information in an interactive manner through primary and secondary community change agents. It aims at exploring how new opportunities in communication and

information technology can be harnessed for community health.

AfriAfya will emphasize dialogue with the communities and will involve them in interactive decision-making regarding the context, content and packaging of health messages to be delivered. The Network will facilitate sharing knowledge and experiences among partners. The Rockefeller Foundation has provided financial support for the initial 18-month exploratory phase starting in January 2001.

The Project is working through a coordinating hub and seven field centres that are existing community-based health intervention sites run by each of the Partner Agencies. The field centres are spread out over the country and represent different types of facilities.

HIV/AIDS is being used as the pathfinder topic while the Network is being established. Later **AfriAfya** intends to respond to other requests presented by the communities involved.



Participants at the June 2001 Training Workshop

AfriAfya Partner Agencies and their Field Centres

Partner Agency

Aga Khan Health Services, Kenya
AMREF Kenya Country Programme
CARE Kenya
Christian Health Assoc. Of Kenya (CHAK)
Satellife HealthNet Kenya
PLAN International
Ministry of Health, Coast Province
World Vision International

Field Centre

Mtaa Dispensary
Kibera CBHC Project
Child Survival Project, Siaya
Friends Hospital, Lugulu
—
Odiemo Primary School, Kombewa
Kwale DMO's Office
Bunyala ADP Project

Volume 1, Issue No. 1

October 2001

Inside this issue:

<i>An Introduction</i>	1
<i>Partner Agencies and Field Centres</i>	1
<i>Field Centre News</i>	2
<i>Note from the Chairman</i>	2
<i>Donor Visit</i>	2
<i>Field Centre Staff June Training Workshop</i>	3
<i>Mentoring Programme</i>	3
<i>Equipping Field Centres</i>	4
<i>CEOs Forum</i>	4
<i>Steering Committee</i>	4
<i>Resource Persons</i>	4
<i>Hub Personnel</i>	4

AfriAfya Objectives:

1. Explore and develop mechanisms for harnessing community knowledge and experience.
2. Explore innovative models and technologies for information management and communication at community level
3. Enhance the capacity of members of the network in health leadership, knowledge management and communication
4. Develop training modules for health knowledge management and communication
5. Document and share experiences with others

AfriAfya Field Center News

Setting Up Activities

A Note from the Chairman Dr. Christopher Wood



The Publication of this Newsletter marks another milestone in our development—letting people know what we are doing.

Starting with a workshop in Mombasa in April 2000 we have established a consortium of Partner Agencies, obtained funding for an exploratory development phase, set up a coordinating “hub”, identified seven field centers, trained their staff to operate computers and WorldSpace Digital Receivers which we have provided, and have begun to exchange information.

The next nine months will demonstrate our value to the communities involved in this exploratory phase of operations.

We welcome enquiries about what we are doing. We hope to be in a position to extend operations by the middle of next year.

Donor Visit

Ms. Denise Gray-Felder, the Vice President of Rockefeller Foundation visited *AfriAfya* on the 19th May 2001. She met with the Steering Committee members and project staff. She was given a project update, had extensive discussions about the project, and was able to visit the nearest Field Center in Kibera. Here she was able to see first-hand a project fieldsite and listen to community members themselves communicate what they see as their needs, and some of the potential ways of addressing these needs. She was very impressed by the Project progress so far.

The Aga Khan Health Services FC - Mtaa Dispensary

Mtaa Dispensary is in Kwale district in a rural setting with no electricity or telephone lines. In setting up the *AfriAfya* field centre (FC) here a key consideration was the establishment of a power source. A solar panel has been installed in Mtaa and is functional. Reinforcement of security using metal grill doors and windows has also been done.

The Mtaa dispensary health committee led by the chairman, Mr. Peter Mwero,

organised an official launch of the project on 22nd September 2001. This was attended by the area Member of Parliament, Hon. Mr Simon Mkala and other local leaders.

Song and drama was used to entertain guests as well as communicate health messages. Commenting on the solar panel, computer, printer and Worldspace receiver, the MP was proud to note that the Mtaa community now have access to equipment and information that many people in large towns may not even have.



Honorable Simon Mkala officially launches the ICT equipment at Mtaa Dispensary. Looking on are the MIS Specialist AKHS, Kenya, and Area Nominated Councillor.

The focus will now be on utilising them to improve awareness and the health status of the people here.

The team have now conducted their communication methods and HIV/AIDS baseline survey. They will be able to share this with the other FCs once this is ready.

The CARE Field Centre – Child Survival Project, Siaya

The CARE Team have installed their equipment and this is already in use. They have completed their baseline on communication methods in their FC. They have additionally done a baseline survey on HIV/AIDS on school-children – upper primary (standard 7 and 8) and secondary school (form 1–4) in 20 schools that they are finalizing. They have written a paper on HIV/AIDS impact in Siaya that they have shared with the other FCs.

World Vision International Field Centre in Bunyala

Equipment is installed and in use. They have additionally completed their baseline communication methods information and are moving ahead with *AfriAfya* project activities. They are just finalizing a baseline HIV/AIDS survey that they are happy to share with the other FCs once it is ready.

AMREF Kibera FC

The Kibera FC now have electricity to the health centre and expect telephone connection soon. They have been able to get additional security and will be able to get their equipment installed and activities going soon.

PLAN International – Odiemo Primary School, Kombewa

Renovations are being carried out at one of the classrooms in preparation for the installation of *AfriAfya* equipment. They will be looking into strengthening security at the classroom they will be using in the school prior to sending the equipment there from the PLAN offices in Kisumu. They will additionally be looking into means to get power connected from the neighboring secondary school.

The MoH Field Centre – Kwale DMO's Office

The DMO's Team have installed their equipment and already report an improvement in their data entry and processing. They are now able to process data coming in from their health facilities and give feedback on this to the respective facilities. Documentation of the improved communication with facilities based on reporting and feedback rates will be done.

The CHAK Field Centre – Friends Lugulu Hospital

At the Friends Lugulu Hospital, equipment has been installed and is in use. They now have email services, and Internet connection. Telephone connection remains poor, making data downloads through this difficult. They are exploring alternatives to this but are in the meantime using the Worldspace Receiver for ALC data downloads.

Field Centre Staff June Training Workshop

A training workshop to enhance field center (FC) staff skills was held between 18th and 21st June 2001 and brought together staff representatives from all the seven FCs who will be involved in the *AfriAfya* project, steering committee members and hub project staff.



Group discussions

The objective of the June Training Workshop was to get all players to understand what happens at the different FCs currently, to get the different FC staff to meet and promote networking at that level, for FCs to understand *AfriAfya*'s objectives and strategies, and to equip them with the necessary skills to carry these out.



ICT students in a training session. The training sessions were held at the SatelLife HealthNet Kenya computer lab

ICT training was carried out focusing on basic computer literacy, wordprocessing, and the key skills of the use of email messaging tools and web surfing skills. Demonstration of the WorldSpace receivers and data downloads using these was also done.

The different FCs developed their work plans which are what they are currently working on. Among the early activities will be a baseline survey on HIV/AIDS communication at the communities that the FCs are working in.

The information gathering from the communities and the information synthesizing, re-packaging and dissemination are the next stage of the project.



Worldspace demonstrations were given to the participants. Each Field Centre was able to take their Worldspace Digital Receiver with them after the workshop.



Group work (June workshop)

June Workshop Participants

Aga Khan Health Services/Mtaa Dispensary

Peter Diki Mwero—Mtaa DHC Chairman
Saumu Alfani— Community Member
Moses K. Mwangi—Nurse I/c of Dispensary
James Beuchi— DHC Treasurer

AMREF/Kibera CBHC Project

Leonard Nyaoke—Accountant/ICT Officer
Susan Tikolo—ECN Health Centre staff
Wilfred Ireri—Health Education Officer

Care Kenya, Siaya Child Survival Project

Martin Omukuba—HIS (Monitoring & Eval.)
Damaris Ager— ECN Senior Field Officer
Julius Gwada—ECN Senior Field Officer

CHAK—Friends Hospital, Lugulu

Danstone Ilavonga—Supplies Officer
Mellab Bahati —ECN/FP AIDS Programme
Timothy Nato—Records Clerk
Esther Ahono— ECN

PLAN International/Odiemo Primary Sch.

Tom Okeyo—Project in-charge
Paul Mbanga - Health Coordinator
Eric Omondi - ICT Officer
Rebecca Amimo—Teacher I/c of Health Club

MOH, Kwale DMO's Office

Gilbert Nzomo - HMIS Officer
Juma Katembo—Health Records Clerk
David Baya— Health Education Officer

World Vision, Bunyala ADP

Jeff Okumu— Health Programme Officer
John Makokha—Programme Manager
Moses Nagaya—CHW Bunyala
Boniface Dawa— CHW Bunyala
Walter Masiga—CHW Bunyala

Facilitators

Salim Sohani—Aga Khan Health Services
Eunice Mukunya—Project Coordinator, AKHS
MaryStella Barasa—MIS Specialist, AKSH
William Okelo-Odongo—SatelLife HealthNet
Silas Mudekhele—SatelLife HealthNet Kenya
John Matogo—SatelLife HealthNet Kenya

Steering Committee Members

Peter Mokaya—PLAN International
Stephanie Nduba—AMREF HQ
Chris Wood—Resource Person, *AfriAfya*
Francis Kangwana—CHAK

AfriAfya Coordinating Hub Staff

Caroline Nyamai—Project Coordinator
Nancy Ndung'u— Project Administrator

Mentoring Programme

The mentoring programme is aimed at enhancing *AfriAfya* participants' leadership skills. A mentoring workshop was held in March 2001 and brought together 19 participants from the partner agencies, steering committee members, hub staff and resources persons.

This workshop provided an introduction to the Mentoring Program. Brainstorming on how *AfriAfya* was to achieve its objectives and the inter-relationship between *AfriAfya* and the Partner Agencies were also discussed.

An important outcome of this workshop was a better understanding of *AfriAfya*'s objectives, how these would be achieved, and the working relationship of the Partner Agencies and *AfriAfya*. A workplan was developed at this workshop by all parties present that is what is currently in use.

AfriAfya CEOs Forum

The Chief Executive Officers' (CEOs) of *AfriAfya's* Partner Agencies have been an invaluable support and resource for the Network.

They have continued to hold quarterly meetings since last year. The last meeting was held on 31st August 2001 at the new Amref International Training Center and the next one will be held on the 23rd November 2001 at the Aga Khan Hospital in Nairobi.

This has ensured that Partner Agency CEOs remain updated on *AfriAfya* progress, and continue to participate actively in *AfriAfya*.

These meetings have continued to be a useful networking interactive forum for the Partner Agencies.

Meetings are hosted and chaired on a rotational basis emphasising the equal partnership that *AfriAfya* is.

Equipping the Field Centres and the Hub

The seven field centers (FCs) that *AfriAfya* is working with will be used to pilot innovative models that combine the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) with traditional communication methods for communicating health information.

All the seven FCs have now been equipped with a desktop computer, a Worldspace digital receiver and PC card and HP LaserJet 1200 printer. The *AfriAfya* coordinating hub is currently hosted at Amref and has been equipped with one Toshiba laptop, one desktop and one HP LaserJet printer.



HP LaserJet 1200 Printers for FCs



Coordinating Hub

FC staff at all the sites are now able to download selected Internet sites using the Worldspace digital receivers. The use of these receivers for data downloads removes the need for a telephone line to access selected information on the Internet. This means that even sites that are located in the most rural parts of the country can now access up to date health and other information using this technology. This is currently a one-way communication system, and other methods have to be used to communicate information from the FCs to the coordinating hub.

AfriAfya Steering Committee



Boniface Maket
Christopher Wood
Francis Kangwana
Muhoro Ndung'u
Peter Mokaya
Salim Sohani
S.K. Sharif
Stephanie Nduba
Vinand Nantulya
William Okelo-Odongo

Resource Persons

Christopher Wood
Vinand Nantulya

Mentoring Team

Innovation Expedition

Hub Personnel



Caroline Nyamai
Project Coordinator
&
Nancy Ndung'u
Project Administrator

Contact us at:

AMREF Building
Wilson Airport
P O Box 30125
Nairobi
Kenya

Phone: 254 2 609520
Fax: 254 2 609518
Email: info@afriafya.org

*Harnessing Information and Communication
Technology for Community Health*

**Coming soon
Our Website
www.afriafya.org**