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Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Have you ever heard of the World Painkillers, Antibiotics or Laxative Day? I guess not. Our world chose to celebrate one class of pharmaceutical product that stands above all others. The world has just picked out what it considers as the most important drug to celebrate - Contraception. So the World Contraceptive Day surely must be a day of jubilation and celebration for many among us.

Research has shown that many girls and young women do not use a contraceptive the "first time" with a new partner, even when they have the means. They are thus not only risking the far-reaching consequences of pregnancy – or abortion – but also risking infection with sexually transmitted diseases. It is therefore all the more important to educate teenagers and young adults and thus enable them to make a conscious decision about when they want to become parents.

The World Contraception Day is committed to this goal. Every year on September 26, reputable international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) campaign for a responsible approach to the issue of contraception.

Omega Foundation (OF) recently supported the campaign by providing reproductive health services and education. OF appreciates that free access to reliable contraception is a prerequisite, but by no means a guarantee of preventing unplanned pregnancies. Awareness creation on contraception is vital so that young people can make informed decisions on sexual and reproductive health.

Every year, on this phenomenal day a group of medical experts and non-governmental organizations join forces to highlight the importance of birth control and ultimately raise awareness about the need for robust family planning programs

It is sad that many women still face significant barriers to accessing family planning services. Without contraception, women and their families are worse off both financially and physically. In rural areas, many women still face significant barriers to accessing family planning services. Women have several different contraceptive options to choose between, but I believe there is need to be even more choices.

WILFRED OWUOR,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.

OF's role in access to quality health services documented

Owing to OF's exemplary performance in the development and implementation of internal systems and structures, MSH was at OF to make a video documentary that highlights the role of Institutional strengthening in contributing to equitable access to quality health-care for all in Kenya as per MSH Kenya's mission.

The video will show how OF works in collaboration with the Government of Kenya through health systems strengthening as well as show positive outcomes and how intertwined the relationships are between the programs and how the results are organized and effective.

The team visited Hope for Victoria Children (HOVIC) where the Director Rose Diang'a was overviewed. She also delved on the relationship between OF and HOVIC and how the former had supported the centre in terms of technical support in an effort to strengthen its systems and structures.

Also interview was HOVIC's T&OD Accompanier Ms. Pamela Odhiambo who further described the significant role that IS provided to OF by FANIKISHA had trickled down to HOVIC and helped in the restructuring of its programs and engagements.

The team also interviewed the Chairman of the Kadinda Health Centre Committee Bishop Barrack



An FGD at Kadinda Health Centre during the filming

Orawo who gave interesting anecdotes on how the facility has saved many a life in the last year because of proper staffing, equipment and availability of drugs.

At OF, the team interviewed the CEO Mr. Wilfred Owuor. He gave them brief comments on the role of IS in fortifying institutions. "IS has brought OF closer to its affiliates," the CEO said.

OF Attends Reproductive Health Workshop

In an effort to gain knowledge on the magnitude of unsafe abortion in Kenya, Omega Foundation recently attended a workshop organized by the Planned Parenthood Global.

The workshop which was attended by CSOs from around Nyanza Province created understanding on the legal and policy framework on abortion in Kenya and also emphasized the need for strategies and tools that improve abortion related knowledge, attitudes and behaviors in different social, cultural and political climates.

The importance of promoting increased support, advocacy and provision of high-quality, woman-centered abortion care and sexual and reproductive rights was also reiterated.

In the workshop, it became apparent that there is need to gauge the values and attitudes of staff concerning abortion services using the Value Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT). This method can be used to screen and select health-care providers and others before investing in longer, more time intensive

VCAT activities can also be used with other content at clinical, policy, advocacy and general stakeholders' workshops.

Participants noted that mobilizing and communicating Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC) was still a challenge. Also, levying charges either by having standard fees or charging on a sliding scale for CAC services was yet to be agreed upon.

Lack of a strong legal body in the CtG project to regulate and ensure provision of quality CAC services that is safe and ethical to the clients

Youth extravaganza awakens community

Ahero town woke up to sounds of music, song and dance during the Omega Foundation's Closing the Gap Project youth extravaganza.

The extravaganza saw the incorporation of HIV Testing and Counseling; dissemination of information on contraceptives and condom distribution; interactive Question and Answer session where t-shirt were awarded to the winners as well as Participatory Education Theatre (PET) youth groups presented puppetry, poems, skits and dances with SRH education messages during interludes in between speeches.

In his opening speech OF Head of Programs Mr. Harun Kodiaga delved on the impact of teenage pregnancy. He highlighted causes of teenage pregnancy including lack of knowledge on contraceptives, peer pressure, lack of counseling and negligence of the girl child. He also observed that teenage pregnancy results into girls dropping out of school, early marriages and high population growth for the country, He informed the participants that OF currently implements Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) services at its two link health facilities: Kadinda Health Centre and Port Florence Community Hospital.

Also at the event was Eva Tenai the Nyando Sub County Reproductive Health Coordinator who thanked OF for successfully organizing the extravaganza.



Youth groups walk and dance during the Youth Extravaganza,

She stated that health indicators are poor due to underutilization of services provided at facilities. She reiterated that there was need for awareness creation and sensitization of communities in the sub county on SRH.

Through events such as these, OF aims to reach the general population and especially those in the reproductive age with messages on reproductive health.

LOL:) One Monday morning:

BOSS: Frank, you are late. You should have been here at 07:30am !!!

FRANK: Why?? What happened???

“Between true friends
even water drunk
together is sweet
enough.” ~ African
Proverb

Dominion Farm: A business learning trip for OF



Fish harvesting at Kunya Primary School

A team of OF recently visited the Dominion Farm in Siaya county to identify viable business opportunity in aquaculture and rice farming. The visit was aimed at increasing the sustainability of OF projects especially in their work with affiliates.

During the visit, the team interrogated the production processes and technologies, assessed costs and incomes to distil the best practices.

The Dominion Farm is committed to the enrichment of the local population through decent employment, out-grower contracting and supporting various community interventions.

Over the years, the farms local payroll has done wonders for the health and wealth of the hundreds of employees in the region and the farm has provided an excellent example for smaller farmers to emulate.

The team will exchange insights from their own activities and experience as well as other aquaculture ventures within the country.

The visit was an eye opener in the fish business that can be explored with an OF program like Kunya Primary School where a pond already exists. It is highly recommended that responsible persons in Kunya and Kochogo Integrated Child Development Centre attend an exchange visit to similar business ventures.

“Opportunities like these should be explored from a social enterprise perspective bringing on board CBOs or affiliates that are already working on structured ventures related to the fish value chain e.g. the Power-porridge venture could include fish feed production if they are complimentary,” noted George Onyango, OF’s Business Development Manager and IS Focal Person.

OF trains Trainers of Trainers

Omega Foundation working closely with the Ministry of Health trained its Trainer of Trainers (TOTs) on family planning for facility providers.

This was in a bid to build the capacity of its TOTs to provide mentorship and supportive supervision to other service providers based on Kadinda Health Centre and Port Florence Community Hospital.

The training stressed the importance of mentorship and supportive supervision in ensuring quality service provision and adherence to the stipulated guidelines while offering Sexual and Reproductive Health services.

“This training has enlightened me on some of the myths and misconceptions associated with family planning especially in the rural areas,” said Duncan Ogallo the Clinical Officer in charge of Kadinda Health Centre.



Participants at the Trainer of Trainers training

OF in sub-grant preparedness training

OF finance team recently attended a FANIKISHA sponsored sub-grant preparedness training aimed at getting CSOs ready for the implementation of the programmatic grant.

Julius Ayenga shared the objectives of the meeting with the participants, the modes of achieving the objectives and emphasized that it would be important if all the expectations of the meeting are met. He elaborated the role of CSO, challenges they have faced such as confusion during closing mentored grant 1, delay getting approvals and expected going forward CSO to submit report on time so that they can involve home office in time,

The need to manage risk from affiliate by going back to NUPAS report and ensuring special pre award conditions are met before first disbursement and also compliance audit was also stressed since USG does not allow funds to be spend on penalty payment. CSOs were urged to ensure affiliates selected did not duplicate activities supported by other USAID partners.

FANIKISHA Grants Manager Wilkister Miyogoh took the participants through Draft sub agreement and clarified grey areas.

Among the resolutions reached during the training were: the first advance will be based on two months work plan projection; subsequent months reimbursement will be based on liquidated expenses and that there would be no modification of budget. It was unanimously agreed that reports be submitted on the 5th day of the subsequent month.

FANIKISHA will conduct a compliance audit to all affiliates to determine level of liability and risk assessment measure based on historical information.