



WELCOME TO OUR 2023 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

USAID Fahari ya Jamii



USAID Fahari ya Jamii, now in its third year, is a five-year award funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Implemented by the University of Nairobi (UON) in partnership with Nairobi and Kajiado Counties, the project aims to enhance access to quality, county-led health services.

We are committed to sustaining high-quality health systems and improving health outcomes across both counties. We also focus on integrating Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) to ensure comprehensive care for all community members. Through our collaborative approach, we strive to build resilient health systems that sustain these improvements long-term.

In this newsletter you will find:

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Impact stories, and so much more. Keep reading!

Stepping Forward Together

A word from the Chief of Party

2023 was a hallmark year in HIV programming worldwide. This marked 20 years since PEPFAR started. Kenya, a recipient of PEPFAR funds since 2004, has made significant strides towards achieving HIV epidemic control. The estimated progress to the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets stands at 94-94-89, with more significant gaps in specific populations, including children and men.

USAID Fahari ya Jamii is uniquely privileged to collaborate with the county governments of Nairobi and Kajiado to accelerate progress towards epidemic control, develop sustainable HIV response models, strengthen county health systems, and support the counties in implementing the national priority of Universal Health Care (UHC). USAID Fahari ya Jamii team and the county governments from Nairobi and Kajiado have achieved 92%- 95%- 98% against the PEPFAR targets for the year.

Furthermore, ongoing efforts are being made to employ innovative and data-driven strategies to reach underserved populations through integrated outreach programs, weekend clinics, and adolescent-focused initiatives. Immunization coverage has risen from 73% in 2021 to 104% in 2023, and antenatal care 4th visit utilization has increased from 75% in 2021 to 81.4% in 2023.

Looking ahead, we remain steadfast in collaborating with all levels of government and other partners. Our focus will be on implementing county-led transformative solutions that address each county's unique needs. We are committed to strengthening and sustaining health systems and utilizing suitable technologies to advance progress rapidly.



Reson Marima

Dr. Reson Marima

A word from the Project Lead



CF. Otieno

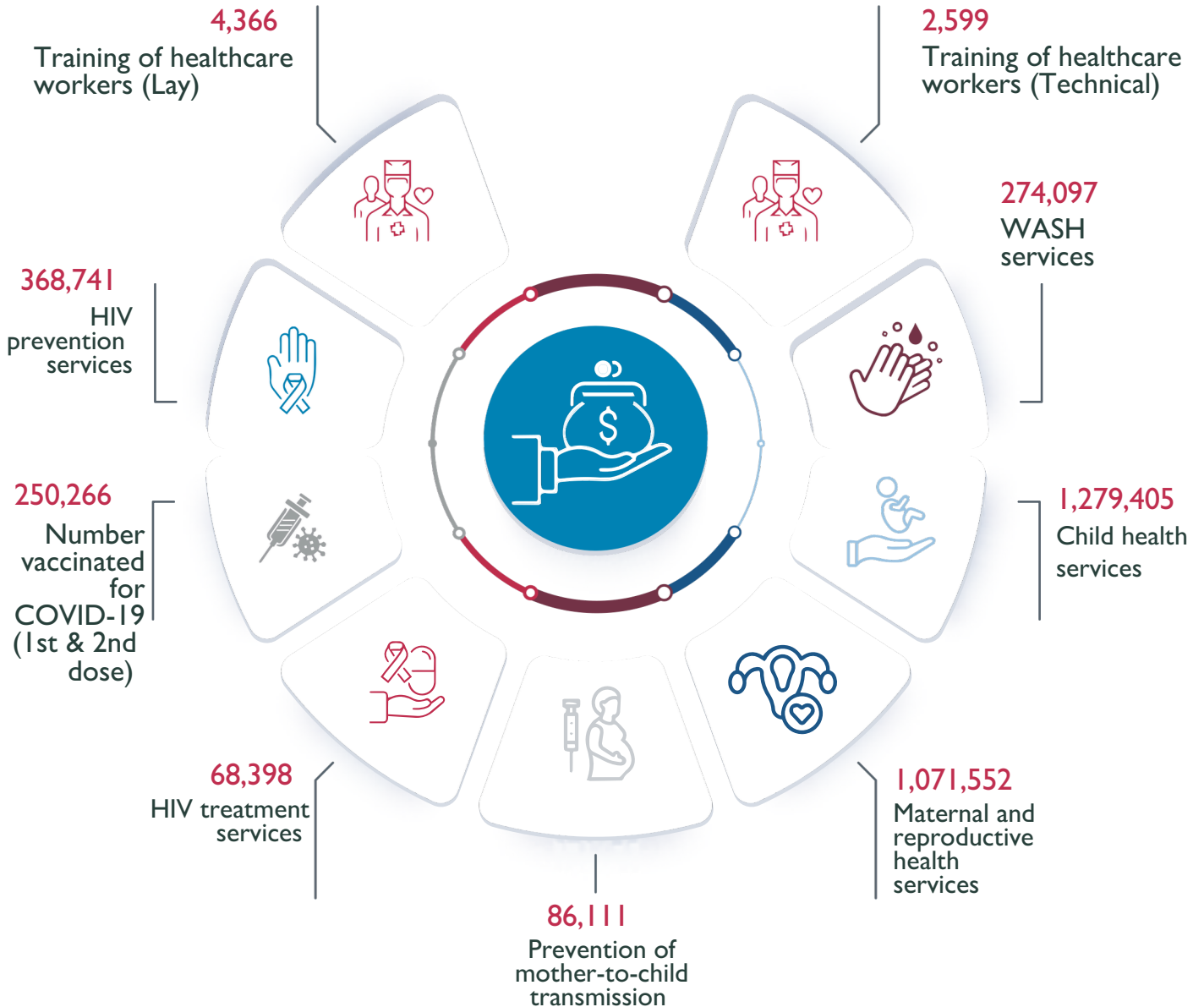
Prof CF. Otieno

Since receiving this award in 2021, our partnerships, particularly with USAID, have provided invaluable lessons in guiding our project implementation. We have established strong relationships with county health departments and various stakeholders, but our most essential partners remain the communities we serve.

We provide care to nearly 70,000 individuals; however, our activities have expanded to serve the HIV-negative population with preventive services and have positively impacted over three million people, especially through Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) and Water, Health, and Sanitation (WASH) services. In addition, our efforts during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic were crucial; we provided widespread advocacy and vaccination to the people of Kajiado and Nairobi Counties. We remain committed to data-driven decision-making and innovative solutions for program implementation.

USAID Fahari ya Jamii also offers learning sessions and electives to students of the University of Nairobi and fosters a culture of mentorship while delivering services. In this regard, our staff and the focused leadership have offered services with diligence and innovative minds, fostered strong team spirit, and been empowered to excel. I highly commend their unwavering dedication. I extend heartfelt gratitude to the Vice-Chancellor of UoN and the deputies for their support in ensuring smooth financial and administrative processes. As we enter the final phase, we refine our service provision and management to ensure full accountability to USAID/KEA and UoN. We will continue to foster partnerships for Kenya's benefit. We are profoundly grateful to USAID-KEA for the award and for building an enduring partnership with this esteemed institution.

Our Contribution To The Communities We Serve



Empowering Future Medical Professionals Through Electives

In 2023, we launched an impactful elective rotation program for University of Nairobi medical students, offering a unique blend of practical experience and in-depth learning tailored to their academic needs. This innovative program is designed specifically for students from year one to year four, aligning seamlessly with their curriculum. We celebrated the conclusion of our inaugural MBChB Year IV elective rotation, marking a significant milestone in our commitment to hands-on medical education.



The first cohort of the elective rotation students with FYJ team

Seventeen students embarked on this journey, gaining invaluable experience across various facilities we support, including Mama Lucy Hospital, Mbagathi Hospital, and Westlands Health Center. Their rotation spanned 6 to 7 weeks, during which they honed skills in various areas, from pediatric care and reproductive health services to specialized tasks like early infant HIV diagnosis and ARV adherence counseling. This inaugural rotation concluded with a feedback and recognition session, bringing together the participating students, facility staff, Nairobi County's health leadership, and our technical team.

The ceremony provided a platform for students to share their experiences and celebrate their achievements with certificates and letters of recommendation.

“Reflecting on the program's success, Prof. CF Otieno, Project Lead, USAID Fahari ya Jamii, shares his enthusiasm for the future, 'We are excited to onboard the next cohort of year four medical students in 2025. With applications in progress, we anticipate another enriching experience, continuing our commitment to nurturing the next generation of medical professionals.' He adds, 'Through this program, we're not just educating students; we are equipping future doctors with the critical skills and experience needed for a successful career in the ever-evolving world of healthcare.’”



Prof CF. Otieno FYJ project lead and Dr Essam Said Ag Director of Medical Services Nairobi County awarding certificate of completion to one of the students



Enhanced Transit Care for Newborns

The Success of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)



A mother celebrating safe delivery with nurses at Baba Dogo Health Centre

Our collaborative efforts in developing standardized operating procedures (SOPs) for managing the transfer of critical newborns have been enormously successful. By uniting healthcare professionals, local health management teams, and stakeholders in care, we have demonstrated our dedication to offering care to the most vulnerable patients from the beginning.

“These SOPs represent our dedication to ensuring a reliable safeguard during one of the most critical stages of patient care: the transportation of newborns to appropriate medical facilities for urgent treatment,” explains Lulu Ndatani, FYJ Women's Health Technical Advisor. “Achieved through a comprehensive professional development program that includes specialized training sessions, collaborative mentorship, and hands-on support supervision, these practices are vital for protecting our youngest patients.”



World prematurity day celebrations at Pumwani Hospital

We maintain a steadfast commitment to quality, as evidenced by our regular and detailed data reviews that scrutinize and enhance every action we take, ensuring our healthcare services are practical and efficient. Additionally, a rigorous data validation process at the healthcare facility level and within the Kenya Health Information System (KHIS) fortifies the integrity and reliability of health data.

"With a comprehensive approach, we commit to supporting a resilient healthcare ecosystem," says Hannah Gathura, the NCCG Child Health Focal Point of Contact. This shall include meticulous planning of newborn transit care, upskilling health workers, and reshaping reporting data quality for newborns. Everything we do is in our stride toward healthcare excellence, which means the well-being of each newborn is protected."



Obstetric emergency drill at Kangemi Health Centre



Our efforts to strengthen the healthcare system against pediatric illnesses with higher mortality rates have created awareness and built the capacity of healthcare providers. They now better understand pneumonia and diarrhea, the two leading causes of death in children under five years, and play a crucial role in better case classification and management based on the latest clinical guidelines.

Lulu Ndatani, Women's Health Technical Advisor, USAID Fahari ya Jamii



A nurse listening to the fetal heart rate at Baba Dogo HC



Eradication of Open Defecation in Nairobi's Informal Settlements



A resident of City Carton with FYJ team and the former CEC Health, Nairobi County Dr Anastasia Nyalita during a WASH intervention implementation assessment

Informal settlements in Nairobi City County face many challenges related to sanitation provision. Low latrine coverage is the main contributing factor to open defecation. We have been collaborating with the Nairobi City County Government (NCCG) to support the implementation of UCLTS (Urban community-led total sanitation) to address these challenges. UCLTS is an innovative methodology for mobilizing communities to eliminate open defecation (OD). Communities are facilitated to conduct their own appraisal and analysis of open defecation (OD) and take their own action to become ODF (open defecation free).

Juliana Ngei, the WASH Lead at USAID Fahari ya Jamii, details the process: "Our collaborative efforts with the Nairobi County WASH unit and the local community have led to every plot in City Carton village gaining access to a sanitation facility. This transformative initiative has increased latrine coverage and promoted hygiene practices, dramatically improving environmental hygiene."

Implementing this evidence-based approach has resulted in tremendous improvement. It encourages community members' active participation and identifies natural leaders who spearhead water and sanitation interventions in the triggered villages.

Erick Inda, NCCG WASH coordinator, elaborates on the economic benefits: "This initiative goes beyond improving hygiene; it also involves economic aspects. For example, our local youth groups have transformed neglected areas into productive farmlands. These initiatives empower our people economically, transforming challenges into valuable opportunities."

Naum Chepchumba, the WASH person in Embakasi West, highlights the health benefits: "The successful rollout of the UCLTS program in places like City Carton has significantly reduced fecal-oral transmissions. This was particularly evident during the cholera outbreak, where City Carton only reported one imported case, demonstrating the effectiveness of our measures."

As City Carton Village nears its goal of becoming an open defecation-free community, its story showcases the impact of community-driven efforts and the strong collaboration between local authorities, global partners, and the community. This partnership addresses sanitation needs while laying the groundwork for sustainable community well-being and progress.



In our community's transformation, we didn't just build sanitation facilities. We reclaimed our dignity, turning once-dirty patches into gardens of hope and hubs of health.

City Carton resident





A rider collecting samples at Loitoktok Sub-County Hospital, Kajiado

Optimizing Laboratory Sample Referral and Monitoring for HIV and TB Diagnostics in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties

In our efforts to improve HIV care, we focused on reducing the turnaround time (TAT) for HIV and TB monitoring tests in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties. Despite Kenya's progress in providing access to HIV and TB monitoring, challenges such as rejected samples, delayed deliveries, and limited availability of load (VL) results persisted. Between December 2022 and June 2023, we implemented measures to address these sample issues at 133 facilities, moving us closer to our objective.

Our team dedicated to strengthening laboratory systems in partnership with the University of Nairobi/Kenyatta National Hospital (UoN/KNH) referral laboratory, conducted training sessions for satellite laboratories. The training focused on enhancing their skills in sample collection, packaging and managing performance indicators to enhance the accuracy and efficiency of HIV and TB tests.

Furthermore staff at the central laboratory underwent training, on sample registration procedures.

Streamlining shipments to the referral center labs while clinical teams were equipped to access VL results through an online dashboard.

Daniel Koma, who is the Lab Strengthening Systems Lead at USAID Fahari ya Jamii, highlights the strategic changes implemented: "Our strategy was to overhaul the sample referral schedule. By instituting regular tracking of TAT and addressing delays in collaboration with testing labs, we really made significant strides in streamlining the testing process. This multidisciplinary approach not only improved the clinical-laboratory interface but also utilized technology for quicker and more accessible VL results."

The impact of these changes was clear; we significantly reduced the overall VL TAT from an average of 27 days to just 8 days.

This improvement, consistent across both Nairobi and Kajiado, was a direct result of our revised shipment schedule and the implementation of remote login

These enhancements have enabled faster sample analysis, paving the way for timely treatment adjustments and, ultimately, better patient outcomes

We developed an online monitoring system called LabPulse to further improve access to HIV monitoring tests, including CD4, CrAg, TB Lam, and HIV drug resistance testing. "The testing labs upload the results to LabPulse, which the clinical team can access in real time," Koma explains.

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The LabPulse portal will be expanded to monitor commodities in real-time. Looking forward, we recommend sustaining and expanding these improvements to reduce TAT and enhance the quality of HIV care.

Daniel Koma, Lab Strengthening Systems Lead, USAID Fahari ya Jamii

Kajiado County

Primary Healthcare Transformation

A significant change in healthcare is happening in Kajiado County, bringing hope and vitality to a population that includes city dwellers and pastoral communities.

Due to its rugged terrain, the region has long waited for a healthcare system tailored to its unique needs. The Primary Healthcare (PHC) Initiative in Kenya is more than a fix; it's a comprehensive approach aiming to provide essential services, preventive care, and health education to all corners of Kajiado. This initiative is committed to addressing all healthcare needs.

Working alongside the County Health Management Team (CHMT), USAID Fahari ya Jamii leads this transformation, establishing the groundwork for a healthcare system characterized by access, affordability, and cultural sensitivity. This effort is guided by a strategy focusing on two primary care networks (PCNs).

The project's reach is broad; it includes stages such as educating health officials, selecting pilot locations, and carefully evaluating health facilities. It's a thought-out initiative that actively involves the community and aims to create a network of healthcare centers bridging expertise with health advocates. At the heart of this vision is the creation of healthcare teams that provide seamless services across various health aspects, including HIV, maternal well-being, nutrition, and hygiene. These teams act as the core of the hub-and-spoke model, improving systems to ensure a seamless flow of care.

Dr. Reson Marima, Chief of Party, explains the project's role: "Our commitment revolves around fortifying the groundwork of the county's healthcare system and its information infrastructure. Through implementing a health information system, our goal is to improve decision-making processes and elevate the standard of healthcare services."

Additionally, through this collaboration, we are developing a robust cadre of community health promoters (CHPs), integrating lay workers into the healthcare system and outfitting them with digital tools to support the new information flow. These include partnerships to increase the efforts of digital health specialists, which help augment these efforts for consistent, quality data flow and quality healthcare provision.



A child health clinic session during a community outreach in Kajiado County

The PHC transformation in Kajiado showcases partnership, meticulous planning, and a steadfast commitment to responsibility and oversight. It revolves around creating a healthcare setting where community members and healthcare providers team up to create a fabric of wellness. Kajiado's narrative demonstrates how successful collaboration can lead to accessible and equitable healthcare for all Kenyans.

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Primary health care integration has the potential to transform the HIV response and sustain the gains. We are committed to supporting the county governments of Nairobi and Kajiado on this exciting journey.

Dr. Reson Marima, Chief of Party,
USAID Fahari ya Jamii



Joyce and Jane reuniting at a community outreach in Kajiado County

Rekindling Hope: Joyce's Journey to Healing Through Community Support

In the peaceful region of Osunyai, located at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro, in Loitoktok, Kajiado County, Joyce Leina's story testifies once again that human spirits rise above all fear. Battling physical and emotional wounds, Joyce's story paints a picture of the triumph of hope over adversity.

Joyce's encounter with the integrated community outreach initiative jointly implemented by USAID Fahari ya Jamii and the County Government of Kajiado began with a brief announcement by the Community Health Promoter (CHP) at her local church. Little did she know that this encounter would lead to a reunion with a friendly face.

"I've been experiencing pain from the burns on my body," Joyce recalls, her voice carrying both sadness and gratitude. The memory of that day in 2013, when a simple cooking task became a nightmare, still lingers. Suffering from epilepsy, a sudden fit while preparing a meal resulted in burns that changed the trajectory of her life forever

Jane, a Community Health Volunteer (CHV), rushed to Joyce's aid that fateful morning. With determination, Jane mobilized the neighbors and community, ensuring Joyce received the urgent medical attention she desperately needed. Joyce's journey to recovery was arduous, marked by months of hospitalization and painful surgeries.

Yet, through it all, she found solace in Jane's support and the community's rallying behind her.

Because of this integrated community outreach, Joyce could access essential health services, including cervical cancer screening. While the primary focus was on addressing Joyce's burns, integrating various health services during the outreach made it possible for her to receive comprehensive care. This accessibility starkly contrasted the usual challenges of accessing healthcare, especially for individuals in remote communities in Kajiado.

Uhai nilio nayo ni kwa ajili ya Jane," Joyce declares, embracing her friend with gratitude. Indeed, her present life is proof of Jane's selfless dedication and the transformative power of community support.

For years, Kenyan Community Health Promoters (CHPs), previously known as Community Health Volunteers (CHVs), have been the unsung healthcare heroes, serving their communities tirelessly, often without compensation.

The integrated community outreach program continues to profoundly impact underserved communities, providing essential health services and fostering resilience and solidarity among its members.

Eunice Omany, PHC Integration Lead,
USAID Fahari ya Jamii

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Meet thirty-year-old Emmanuel Ole Putwai Senteu from Kajiado County, affectionately known as 'Manu' within our USAID Fahari ya Jamii team. Manu brings a passionate heart and capable hands to our community health initiatives. His days are dedicated to patient interactions, comprehensive screenings, and compassionate patient care, delivered professionally and warmly. Beyond his role, Manu stands out for his innovative spirit and lively personality.

He effortlessly turns challenges into opportunities, demonstrating unwavering strength and creativity. Join us as we step into his world, where dedication meets impact, and every task is infused with a profound sense of purpose.

Can you tell us about your role at USAID Fahari ya Jamii and what your day-to-day responsibilities include?

I conduct daily screenings for outpatient and inpatient clients, ensuring eligible ones are referred and tested. I also link those who test negative to preventive services and ensure proper care and treatment for those who test positive.

What inspired you to join USAID Fahari ya Jamii and how has your journey been so far?

I joined USAID Fahari ya Jamii due to the availability of excellent mentorship opportunities and resources like screening tools and comprehensive job manuals on AIDS. My journey here has been incredibly rewarding, marked by a supportive and successful environment.

What's the most rewarding aspect of your job?

I find community and index testing to be the most rewarding aspects of my job, as they allow me to make a direct impact on the individuals and communities we serve.

Could you share a memorable project or challenge you've worked on here?

I have been involved in numerous projects, but working on community dialogue and interaction activities, especially focusing on testing and prevention, stands out. Overcoming challenges like stigma, logistical issues, and poverty has been particularly memorable.

Can you share an innovative solution or idea you've contributed to at USAID Fahari ya Jamii and its impact?

One innovative approach I contributed was implementing community drug distribution for ART. This significantly reduced the default rate and improved drug compliance, ensuring no patient is lost to follow-up and maintaining high rates of viral suppression.



Emmanuel interacting with the Morans during an outreach in Kajiado West

Looking back on your time with us, what has been your proudest moment or biggest accomplishment here?

My proudest moments involve our interactions with the community, particularly with the Moran groups. The success of our HIV testing and prevention activities among these groups has been a major highlight for me.

Do you have a hidden talent or hobby that your colleagues might not know about, and how does it reflect in your professional life?

Yes, I enjoy singing traditional songs. This talent has helped me greatly in engaging with the Morans and integrating them into our prevention services effectively.

What aspect of your work inspires you the most each day and keeps you motivated?

The opportunity to conduct community and index testing. These are the core activities that keep me motivated and committed to our mission.

What's the most valuable lesson you've learned in your current role, and how has it shaped your approach to work?

One key learning has been the importance of immersing myself in local communities. Building connections with moran groups and the Manyatta communities have enriched my understanding and approach to work.

If you could lead any initiative at USAID Fahari ya Jamii, what would it be and why?

If given the opportunity, I would like to focus more on community activities and dialogues. I believe that enhancing our efforts in these areas could lead to an even greater impact and success in our mission.



Emmanuel demonstrating HIV testing

2023 THROUGH THE LENS



FYJ team with UNAIDS Director in Kajiado



World TB Day in March



Blood bank launch at MLKH



Development partners gender group meeting



World Toilet Day



UoN VC visit to our Kajiado office



Best practice sharing meeting



First HIV/ID conference



2023 World AIDS Day



Dr Atul Gawande's visit to Mathare North HC



World Toilet Day Celebrations in Nairobi



At the first HIV/ID conference in Naivasha



ICU and blood bank launch at MLKH



Devolution conference in Uasin Gishu County





NOVA Pioneer girls job shadowing experience



Annual best practice sharing forum



UON VC visit to Kajiado and awarding best performers



Attending the first HIV/AIDS conference in Naivasha



UNAIDS Director Winnie Byanyinya visits FYJ in Kajiado

Project Partners



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