



Gabriel M. Mutua, Team Lead – He Stands Firm

Background

Year 2017

ICASA – UNAIDS launched the Blindspot document, highlighting a growing concern on boys' and men's poor health and even poorer health seeking behaviour.

#BoyChild went viral on Twitter in Kenya after the announcement of the national high school exams citing that the boy child had been neglected and that was the reason they posted dismal results.

Pilot

- A consortium of 4 youth organizations in Kenya (Youth Clan, Maisha Youth, Sauti Skika and UNFPA Youth Advisory Panel co-designed and conceptualized HE STANDS FIRM, from the view point of the adolescent boy and young man (ABYM)
- He Stands Firm is a campaign seeking to change the narrative on what men can do by leveraging on male involvement
- Ran for 3 months ; May – July 2018

Target and Approach

- The campaign sought to reach 2000 ABYM to know their status and link them to HIV care services .
- The approach was to get ABYM tested using the normal facility based testing including HIVST.

Setting

- University settings where 16-22 year old ABYM can be found.
- Kenyatta University (KU) was the prototype campus.
- The benefit of doing this in a campus setting was because most campuses have an ACU (AIDS Control Unit) or a clinic, especially public universities that offer facility based testing for free. They also hold sensitization fora for their students.
- In addition to this, He Stands Firm wanted to recommend HIVST.

Demand Creation Methods

- Peer mobilizers drawn from the school's social clubs. They were suggested by the school.
- Created partnerships.
 - Triggerize. Their digital platform – 't-safe' was configured to enrol ABYM.
 - Population Services Kenya (PSK) – Provision of test kits at a subsidized rate
- Social media.



Results and Lessons Learnt

- Keeping ABYM at the centre worked well for us.



- More ABYM were likely to get tested when a peer mobilizer recommended.
- There were mixed reactions when we made some ABYM aware that they can perform HIVST

Cont..

- It takes time to create a following in social media.
- It is okay to expect that things will go wrong.
 - An estimated 1367 ABYM were tested from KU and its environs within the pilot period through normal testing.
 - Time constraints did not allow us to test the reception of HIVST among ABYM in the prototype campus.
 - Unforeseen circumstances e.g. The University Lecturer's strike caused some lags too.

NB: A contingency plan would have offset this

Cont..

- Youth can conduct trial interventions and partnerships across youth led organizations and initiatives
- Leveraging on partnerships helped saved costs.

Way Forward

The consortium is reiterating He Stands Firm be a model example of how male engagement can and should be.

- We can get to the men where they are and improve their health seeking behaviour.

Special Thanks

