

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Awards 2010

The University of Nairobi (UoN) has been named recipient of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) annual award for 2010.

This award comes in recognition of work on HIV/AIDS, particularly as it pertains to most at risk populations (MARPS). The prize was received by Prof. Elizabeth Ngugi, Director, Centre for HIV Prevention and Research, on behalf of UoN. According to Prof. Ngugi, the MARPS project is focused on translating knowledge and skills in HIV prevention into responsive interventions and research, paying attention to the most at risk populations. The outcomes of the interventions are evidence based results in HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support across a continuum.

Indeed, UoN was the first to describe and implement sex workers peer led system for MARPS in Kenya. One of the positive activities undertaken by the project included training 957 persons comprising of doctors, nurses, clinical officers, public health officers, social workers and academic staff of the Kenya Medical Training College. Similarly, the project mobilized more than 14,000 sex workers and their clients for STI/HIV/AIDS prevention, control, care and support across a continuum.

The project further trained and educated 885 workplace champions comprised of company managers, human resources managers, supervisors and factory/firm/farm workers in STI/HIV/AIDS. The project distributed 6,257,196 male condoms and 371,685 female condoms.

The project has had long term impact including community engagement. Indeed, the vulnerable groups in various communities targeted by the programme were trained on counseling skills with particular emphasis on FSWs as well as HIV/AIDS Model Building for Workplace interventions bringing along evidence based practices. The programme promotes safe and safer sex practices and has demonstrated that it reduces HIV spread and AIDS which enables people to continue enjoying longer and healthier life. The project has trained sex workers as peer educators as well as in business skills development and given them income generating activities loans as capacity building to empower them economically so as to reduce dependency in sex-work. Sex workers are encouraged to always use condoms thus ensuring protection from STI/HIV/AIDS, unplanned pregnancies as well as protecting their clients.

The project established research in the areas of prevention specifically mother to child prevention, safer sex and use of counseling to increase ARV adherence. Through this project, community training manuals were developed and are used as reference materials by government, private NGOs, CBOs and partners.

The Centre brings along a team of trans-disciplinary social and health professionals who are trained and experienced as teachers/facilitators and researchers in the field of STDS/HIV/AIDS at national and international levels.