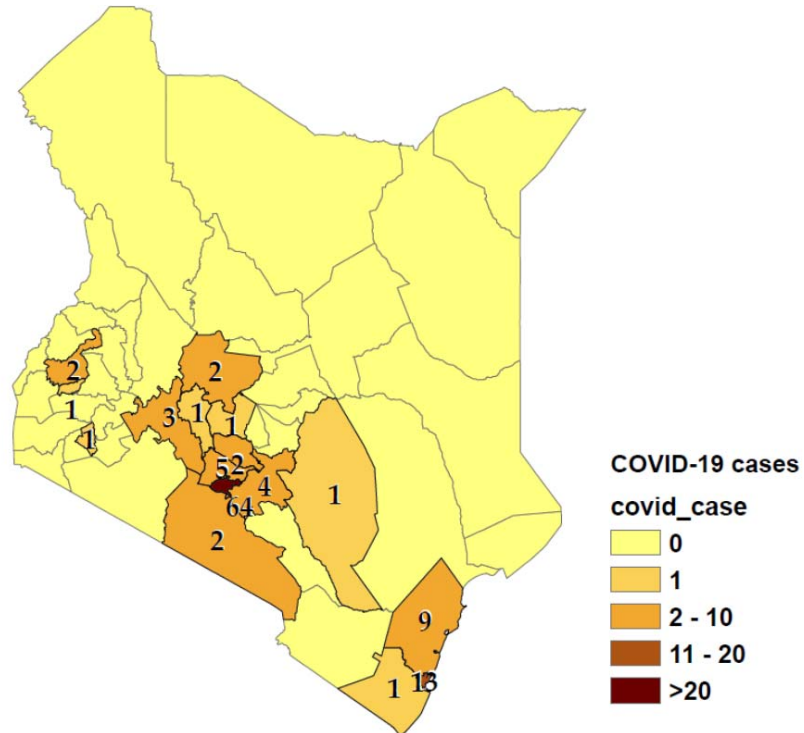


The Kenya HIV and STIs Response during COVID-19 Pandemic

Dr Catherine Ngugi
Head, Division of National AIDS & STI Control Program
(NASCOP)
Ministry of Health, Kenya

COVID-19: Kenya Status



- As at 20 April 2020
 - Total Cases: 281
 - New: 11
 - Recoveries: 69
 - Deaths: 14
- Established 33 quarantine centers, 483 on follow up

Measures Enforced by Government in Response COVID-19 Pandemic



- Ban on social gatherings
- Mandatory masks in public
- Quarantine centers across the country
- 7Pm - 5 Am curfew
- Restricted access to ‘infected’ counties - Nairobi, Kilifi, Mombasa, Kwale
- Setup of mandatory quarantine centers for contacts



HIV Services in Kenya During COVID-19 Pandemic

Background

- Total population:
47,564,296
- HIV Prevalence: **4.9%**
- PLHIV; **1.3 M** adults,
139,000 children
- Total **1.2 M** on ART

Areas of Concern for Program

- Access to services in face of restriction of movements
- Diversion of HCWs towards COVID-19 response; impact of COVID on HCWs responsible for offering HIV services
- Implementation of MMD, decongestion of clinics
- HIV Commodity security
- Effects on vulnerable populations eg KPs



Care & Treatment Services

- Implementation of 3-MMD guidance by Kenya MoH/NASCOP on course
 - Spaced out daily appointment, giving clients exact times of appointment, clustering patients per hour to avoid crowding in CCC
 - Most clients have been re-called and given 3 months of ART
 - Viral load monitoring is ongoing: all regional laboratories are operational.
 - MoH plans to use the VL and GeneXpert platforms for mass testing: in case of reduce operations, prioritization shall be for unstable clients.
 - Unstable and new clients are still being seen monthly or as needed; most clinics have been de-congested to accommodate them
 - CAGs are ongoing; peers are being supported to distribute ART to RoC
 - Counties with low stock levels being supported to make timely orders



HIV Testing Services

- Triaging being effected at all testing centres
- Use of PPEs by HTS SPs; shortage is an ongoing challenge
- Scale up of HIVST has been done

PMTCT Services

- Two-pronged approach, providing 3-month ART refill for all PMTCT mothers, and giving monthly Clinic schedules.
- Ongoing challenge is low stocks of NVP and AZT prophylaxis syrups



Key Populations Program in Kenya

- **Risk factors** that put KPs of HIV acquisition may also place them at higher risk of acquiring coronavirus;
 - High mobility and close physical contact with others through social and sexual practices
 - KPLHIV not on antiretroviral therapy (ART) and not virally suppressed may have a compromised immune system, which may place them at higher risk of coronavirus acquisition
 - Most KPs experience a disproportionate burden of poverty, marginalization, stigma and discrimination hence more affected by severe COVID-19 complications





Key Populations Program: Response during COVID-19

- Development and dissemination of circulars and guidelines on covid-19
- Coordination of partners virtually by NASCOP via zoom meetings, WhatsApp platforms to discuss challenges arising, fundraise for resources as well as make decisions for the program
- Development of SOPs such as Mobile MAT services for Persons Who Inject Drugs
- Fumigation of site and testing of exposed clients in MAT clinics in Nairobi
- Virtual coordination meetings for the different KP typologies
- Lobbying for commodities, resource mobilization



Testing of PWIDs at Ngara MAT Clinic Nairobi



Supporting Safe, Sustained HIV Service Connections

- Multi month dispensing of ART, PrEP and other preventive commodities such as condoms and lubricants
- Decentralization of MAT services e.g opening of Shimo La Tewa methadone clinic
- Mobile MAT dispensation (Still underway)
- Use of vans for service delivery to KPs in their homes or preferred locations
- Provision and promotion of HIV Self testing among KPs



Methadone Dispensing at Shimo La Tewa Methadone clinic

KP Program Ongoing Challenges

- Inadequate supply of PPEs
- Closure of some DICEs/operating on alternate days
- Closure of hotspots and termination of outreach activities
- Lack of KP/Covid/HIV related IEC materials
- Inadequate communication facilitation to outreach team

Virtual Coordination HIV Services

- Zoom NASCOP/Counties & IPS
- National CoE meetings
- Regional TWGs
- Weekly County AIDS & STI Coordinators (CASCOs) coordination meetings
- County program coordination meetings with county partners, SCASCOs and facility staff

Commodity Security

- Nationally no ART stock outs
- 4-month buffer stocks for Counties
- All Counties being supported to provide timely orders for ART and other commodities

Emerging Issues

- Rising of GBV issues during COVID-period;
- Need to support PLHIV in vulnerable households for food rations: program will work with civil societies to ensure they are listed alongside other vulnerable households for GoK cash transfer/food support
- Impact of COVID-19 on HIV clients: no country data, plans to review in-country data with time



Thank you

Stay safe