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SOUTH-WESTERN CLUSTER – DEVELOPMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE MBARARA-MASAKA AREAS. PACKAGE 3: MASAKA. Contract N°: NWSC-HQ/WRKS/24-25/181095

WORKPLACE HIV/AIDS PREVENTION PROGRAM (WHAPP) ACTIVITY REPORT No. 01 MARCH 2026

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HEP B	Hepatitis B
NWSC	National Water & Sewerage Corporation
PREP	Pre- Exposure Prophylaxis
PEP	Post- Exposure prophylaxis
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
GBV	Gender Based Violence



1. INTRODUCTION

On 23rd March 2026, the Initiative for Better Health (IBH), in collaboration with SOGEA SATOM, conducted a comprehensive health sensitization and outreach activity at Kaziru, Bukakata in Masaka District. The activity was carried out as part of the official project kick-off event, integrating community health promotion alongside the construction works.

The outreach attracted over 200 participants, including SOGEA SATOM staff and members of the surrounding community. The event was presided over by the Local Council Chairperson, Ms. Nakanwagi Gertrude, whose involvement played a key role in mobilizing community members and ensuring active participation.

The activity focused on HIV/AIDS prevention, voluntary counselling and testing (HCT), and Hepatitis B awareness and screening. It also involved the **distribution of 2,496 male condoms** and **50 HIV self-testing kits**, which were provided to participants to promote continued and private testing beyond the outreach.

The engagement created a valuable platform for interaction between SOGEA SATOM and the host community. Community members were able to directly engage with the project team at the construction site, which enhanced **trust, transparency, and a sense of ownership** of the project. This interaction helped position the project as inclusive and beneficial to the local population.

Figure 1: HIV/AIDS Awareness and Testing Activity at Kaziru, Bukakata – Masaka



The Initiative for Better Health (IBH) is a health-focused organization dedicated to promoting preventive healthcare, improving community health outcomes, and strengthening workplace health systems. IBH integrates Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), HIV/AIDS prevention, and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention into its programming. The



organization also undertakes community engagement initiatives such as the **annual Empuumo Marathon**, held to commemorate World AIDS Day, aimed at raising awareness and promoting collective action against HIV/AIDS. During the session, IBH expressed interest in hosting the upcoming Empuumo Marathon in Masaka to further extend outreach and community engagement.

1.1 Objectives

The activity was designed to improve awareness and understanding of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B among both workers and the surrounding community. It aimed to provide accessible on-site HIV counselling and testing services, enabling participants to know their status in a confidential and supportive environment.

The outreach also focused on encouraging early health-seeking behavior by promoting routine testing and timely access to treatment services. Participants were guided on preventive practices, particularly consistent condom use, and were supported with self-testing kits to extend testing into their households.

Another important objective was to address myths, misconceptions, and stigma associated with HIV, which often hinder individuals from accessing services. The activity also aimed at strengthening the relationship between the project and the host community, ensuring that the community feels included and engaged in project activities.

1.1.1 Expected Outcome from the Activity

The activity was expected to increase knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B among participants, enabling them to make informed health decisions. It was also anticipated that more individuals would take up HIV testing services and utilize the distributed self-testing kits for continued testing.

Improved attitudes towards people living with HIV were expected, contributing to reduced stigma and increased acceptance within the community. The activity also aimed to promote safer sexual practices and strengthen linkage to care for individuals who test positive.

In addition, the outreach was expected to enhance community engagement and foster a sense of ownership of the project.

1.2 Activities Covered

The outreach included HIV/AIDS awareness, counselling, and testing services, as well as Hepatitis B sensitization and screening. Participants received health education focusing on prevention, transmission, and management of these conditions.

Condom distribution was carried out to support prevention efforts, while HIV self-testing kits were distributed to improve access to confidential testing. Post-test counselling and interpretation of results were provided to all participants who underwent testing.



The activity also incorporated interactive engagement sessions where participants were encouraged to ask questions and share concerns.

1.3 Importance of the Session

The outreach was important in improving access to essential health services within the community, particularly during the project kick-off phase. It ensured that health considerations were integrated into project implementation from the onset.

The session also provided an opportunity to deliver accurate health information, correct misconceptions, and promote preventive practices. Additionally, it strengthened community relations and contributed to building trust between the contractor and the host community.

1.4 IEC Materials Development and Production

As part of strengthening community awareness and ensuring continuity of health education beyond the outreach activity, Initiative for Better Health (IBH), the project undertook the production and printing of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to support ongoing sensitization efforts within the project area.

The content for these materials was developed based on standardized and approved messages from the Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC). Formal consent was obtained to reproduce and adapt the materials, with co-branding to include Initiative for Better Health (IBH), SOGEA SATOM, and other project partners. This ensured that all information disseminated remains accurate, credible, and aligned with national HIV/AIDS prevention and health promotion strategies.

A range of IEC materials were produced, including posters, flyers, banners, and teardrop displays. These materials were designed to deliver clear, culturally appropriate, and easy-to-understand messages on HIV prevention, testing, and stigma reduction. In addition,



supplementary materials such as fact sheets, behavior change communication (BCC) cards, referral information slips, and visual job aids for health educators were also prepared to enhance message delivery during community engagements.

The development of these IEC materials is highly relevant to the project as it ensures sustained awareness creation beyond one-off sensitization events. Given the mobile nature of project communities and varying literacy levels, the use of visual and simplified messaging plays a critical role in reinforcing key health messages, promoting behavior change, and increasing uptake of health services.

Furthermore, the branding of the materials with project stakeholders enhances visibility of the intervention, promotes accountability, and strengthens the relationship between the contractor and the host communities by demonstrating commitment to community well-being.

All printed IEC materials will be disseminated during subsequent outreach activities, community engagements, and at strategic locations such as trading centers, health facilities, and project sites to maximize reach and impact.



Some of the IEC materials produced



2. HIV/AIDS COUNSELLING & TESTING

HIV counselling and testing was conducted in a structured manner, beginning with pre-test counselling to prepare participants and provide essential information about HIV.

A total of 58 individuals were tested, including 50 males and 8 females. One individual tested positive and was successfully linked to TASO for further care and treatment.

Participants were educated on key prevention strategies, including regular testing, faithfulness to one partner, and the use of preventive methods such as PrEP and PEP.

Interactive discussions revealed common misconceptions within the community. Participants asked questions regarding myths such as whether women with higher vaginal fluids are less likely to transmit HIV. These misconceptions were clarified, emphasizing that HIV transmission risk is not determined by such factors but by exposure to infected body fluids.

Table 1: HIV Counselling and Testing Outcomes

Category	Male	Female	Total
Tested	50	08	58
Positive	00	01	01
Negative	50	07	57



2.2 HIV Self-Testing Kits

A total of 50 HIV self-testing kits were distributed. Participants were guided on their correct usage, interpretation of results, and the need for confirmatory testing at health facilities.

The introduction of self-testing was well received, particularly due to its convenience and privacy, and is expected to increase testing uptake within households.



2.3 Observations from HIV Testing Component

There was strong participation in HIV testing, particularly among men. Participants showed a high level of interest in self-testing and actively engaged in counselling sessions.

Notably, **three participants disclosed that they were already on ART treatment** and expressed interest in Hepatitis B screening services, which were subsequently provided. This reflects increasing openness and trust in accessing health services.

3. CONDOM USE AND DISTRIBUTION

Table 2: Condom Distribution

Type	Quantity
Male Condoms	2,496

A total of **2,496 male condoms** were distributed to participants as part of HIV prevention efforts. Participants were guided on the importance of consistent and correct use as an effective method of preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

The distribution ensured that participants had immediate access to preventive tools, supporting sustained behavior change beyond the activity.

4. HEPATITIS B AWARENESS AND SCREENING

Participants were sensitized on Hepatitis B, including its transmission, effects on the liver, and prevention methods. Screening services were provided, including to individuals who specifically requested testing.

The session emphasized the importance of vaccination as the most effective method of prevention, alongside safe practices such as avoiding sharing sharp objects and practicing safe sex.

5. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) AND HUMAN RIGHTS

A session on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) was conducted to raise awareness about the different forms of violence, including physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse. Participants were educated on the impact of GBV on health, including its link to increased vulnerability to HIV infection.

The discussion emphasized the importance of mutual respect, communication, and shared responsibility within relationships. Participants were encouraged to recognize and report cases of abuse and were informed about available support systems.



The session also addressed gender roles and human rights, highlighting the importance of equality and non-discrimination in both the workplace and the community.



6. KEY OBSERVATIONS

The activity recorded a high turnout due to its integration into the project kick-off event. The presence of local leadership significantly enhanced mobilization and participation.

The interaction between SOGEA SATOM and the community strengthened trust and created a sense of ownership of the project. Participants appreciated the opportunity to engage directly with the project team.

There was strong interest in HIV self-testing, and participants actively engaged in discussions, particularly around myths and misconceptions. Additionally, there was noticeable demand for expanded health services.

7. CHALLENGES FACED

The activity experienced minor challenges related to the movement of participants, as a few individuals left before the end, slightly affecting the flow of structured sessions. Some participants expected additional services, such as screening for non-communicable diseases, which were beyond the scope of the activity. Additionally, some participants were unable to register their participation because they did not know how to write.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that similar outreach activities be conducted regularly to sustain awareness and improve health outcomes. Expanding the scope of services to include non-communicable disease screening would address community needs more comprehensively.



Strengthening collaboration with local health facilities will also ensure better referral and follow-up systems.

Participants are encouraged to continue utilizing available health services, including the use of self-testing kits. They should adopt safe health practices, seek early treatment when necessary, and share the knowledge gained with others in their communities.

9. CONCLUSION

The outreach activity was successfully conducted and achieved its intended objectives. It significantly improved access to essential health services and increased awareness of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B among participants.

The integration of the activity into the **project kick-off event** enhanced community engagement and strengthened the relationship between SOGEA SATOM and the host community. The interaction fostered a strong sense of inclusion and ownership, which is critical for the success of the project.

Overall, the activity demonstrated the importance of integrating health interventions into development projects, contributing to both improved public health outcomes and positive community relations.

10. APPENDICES

a. Photo Gallery



IBH staff handing over condoms to a site worker



Sogea site workers receiving counselling and screening/ testing for HIV and Hepatitis B





SOGEA SATOM Staff addressing the participants at general sensitization about HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B community and workers meeting.

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