

High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS

Sauti Skika¹ Call on Government of Kenya through NEPHAK².

Overview.

The priorities listed below were gathered from adolescents (16 to 19 years) and young people (20 – 24 years) who as members of the Sauti Skika Adolescents Network. The summarized issues were gathered through the Sauti Skika WhatsApp contact group by the Coordinator/Administrator of the group. After being alerted and briefed by the NEPHAK leadership, the Sauti Skika Network Coordinator reached out to all members in the WhatsApp group with a brief background on what HLM is and asked them to give one priority they would want the Government of Kenya to carry to the HLM in June. In addition, the Sauti Skika Network representatives in 5 counties were asked to reach out to other adolescents and young people who are not on the WhatsApp contact group.

The issues below have therefore been gathered from 128 adolescents and young people spread across the 12 counties of Kenya. The initial list of priorities submitted to NEPHAK were 12. However, these were reduced during discussions with NEPHAK leadership after it was realized that 4 issues could be summarized under the SRHR and other 4 could be summarized under

The Call:

1. Youth friendly HIV and health information and services that targets and reach adolescents and young people regardless of their HIV status.
2. Comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services including information and services on early and unwanted pregnancies being available to all adolescents and young people in Kenya.
3. Meaningful adolescents and youth involvement in the HIV prevention, treatment, care and support programmes in Kenya.
4. Capacity building and support to adolescent and youth led networks to enable them engage in HIV and health issues.
5. Sustaining the education of adolescents and youth and especially those infected with HIV by ensuring they are enrolled and retained in schools.
6. Enable adolescents and young people to know more about new prevention technologies such PrEP and how they can benefit from them

¹ Sauti Skika Adolescents Network is for and by adolescents 10 – 19 years and young people 20 – 24 years living with HIV in Kenya. Hosted at NEPHAK, the network is modeled along the ideals of the 'All In Social Movement to end Adolescent AIDS and works to ensure the meaningful engagement of young people living with HIV in the response to HIV.

² The National Empowerment Network of People living with HIV/AIDS in Kenya (NEPHAK) is a national Network that unites people living with HIV (PLHIV) and those affected by TB and AIDS through community based organizations such as posttest clubs, support groups, men's associations, carers associations, women groups, youth groups and non-governmental organizations including PLHIV networks.

8. Ensure there is no HIV related stigma and discrimination especially among young people in learning institutions. This can only happen through supportive disclosure among parents and guardians and adolescents themselves. We also need strategies that build the self-esteem of adolescents and young people living with HIV.

Notes and Actions

1. NEPHAK to share the CALL with NACC, Partners and HLM Committee
2. Representatives of A/YPLHIV should join HLM Planning Committee
3. Leaders and representatives of PLHIV need support to have a face to face meeting to deliberate further on their call and rank them in terms of priority. The meeting can be facilitated by NACC or UNICEF.
4. Leaders and representatives of PLHIV need support to attend the HLM Meeting in June.

See also:

From the files of the NEPHAK Weekly Bulletin: http://eepurl.com/bVD_Nz³

³ The issues were gathered by the leadership of the Sauti Skika Adolescents Network through social media approaches. Sixty (60) adolescents participated in the online consultations, including 32 who shared their issues through the Sauti Skika WhatsApp group. NEPHAK prompted the team to generate ideas for the HLM and since there were no resources and time for a face-to-face meeting, the Sauti Skika Network leadership opted for an online engagement through the social media to reach the membership.