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KIDS INITIATIVE INC.

# Kieni Fighters Resource Centre for Women and Girls

## Empowering women and reducing new HIV/AIDS Infections

### Context

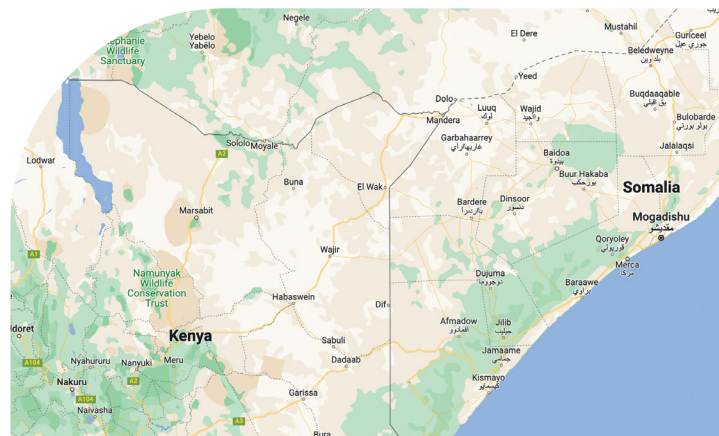
Kenya has made considerable strides to reduce HIV/AIDS infection rates, but despite a decrease in the overall rate, the gender disparity continues. Records suggest that new infections for women continue to be twice as high as men, at 6.1% and 3.4% respectively. Some HIV/AIDS resource centres in Kenya combine behavioural and biomedical interventions, supporting patients with counselling, treatment, and basic needs. Few simultaneously address the structural barriers that increase the risk for women and girls, including lack of education, illiteracy, and access to income and employment.

### The Innovative Solution

Supported by FIT, KIDS and local partner Volunteer International Development Africa (VICDA) tested an innovative solution aimed at reducing the rate of HIV/AIDS infection and increasing healthcare access for infected individuals in Kieni by targeting the underlying drivers of HIV risk and vulnerability for women and girls. The Kieni Fighters of HIV/AIDS Resource Centre is a combination prevention program that holistically addresses the behavioural, biomedical, and structural risks of HIV/AIDS infection.

### Advancing Gender Equality

By holistically addressing factors that lead to increased vulnerability for women and girls, this innovation addressed the gender disparity in the HIV/AIDS infection rate in Kieni, Kenya. To encourage community-wide awareness, workshops included both women and men participants. A gender training workshop was conducted to help the testing team understand what gender equality and mainstreaming meant and how the project will address gender inequality.



**COUNTRY**  
Kenya

**AMOUNT**  
\$197,036

**TESTING PERIOD**  
14 months  
Ended Dec 2021



**GENDER RESPONSIVE (GE2)**

**THEME: HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

# Testing Framework

A pre-test, post-test, quasi-experimental, mixed-methods evaluation process was used. For the quantitative assessment, polling booth surveys were conducted. The surveys involved a group interview method with adolescent girls and young women used to measure sexual, behavioural, and structural outcomes among key populations. Four focus group discussions with 40 girls between the ages of 10 and 24 years were conducted, targeting selected girl and woman respondents across age groups at baseline and endline. The focus groups concentrated on understanding the needs and concerns of the girls and women from a gender lens, and the changes experienced by beneficiaries due to their participation in the intervention. The evaluation team also ran two focus groups with boys and men (10 per group) at baseline and endline, concentrating on perception changes after their participation in multiple thematic workshops.

## Results and Impact

At end line, the results were mixed, with only a moderate decrease in awareness among AGYW about consistent condom use. Even though knowledge did not improve as expected, there was positive change in behaviour. Participants reported an increase in condom use, willingness to use condoms, and condom availability. Condom use at baseline was 45%, compared to 52% at endline. At baseline, 29% of respondents intended to use a condom but could not, due to lack of availability. This dropped to 18% at endline, in response to new awareness, access and practises.

## Key Lessons

1. Due to the complex needs of the participants, it was noted throughout the project that some were unreachable or unavailable. Living in extreme poverty, some of the project participants were without basic items such as sanitary supplies and shoes.
2. Early in the project, staff noted that the Resource Centre was not easy to access for project participants. While mobile clinics and workshops provided staff with the opportunity to visit and support hard-to-reach communities, these were only possible once a month. To complete additional participant check-ins, home visits and phone calls were initiated to allow staff to connect with participants. A Facebook page was also created to allow staff to communicate and share information online.

During a Mobile Clinic, the staff mobilized community members in Kiawara Village to get tested for HIV. A woman came by to be tested but needed someone to watch her sheep. The Executive Director of Kieni Fighters watched the sheep while the lady was tested. After the test they spoke more about HIV. The only previous information the woman had about HIV was that “it is a killer disease, and it is infectious”. The woman was very appreciative of the opportunity to learn more.

### PARTNER ORGANIZATION

- Volunteer International Development Africa (VICDA)

### TARGET PARTICIPANTS

150 girls and women aged 10-24

113 boys and men attended workshops

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### ABOUT FIT

The Fund for Innovation and Transformation supports Canadian small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs) testing innovative solutions that advance gender equality in the Global South.



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