Mentor Mothers! A community Model to Attain Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission -Tanzania.

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BACKGROUND

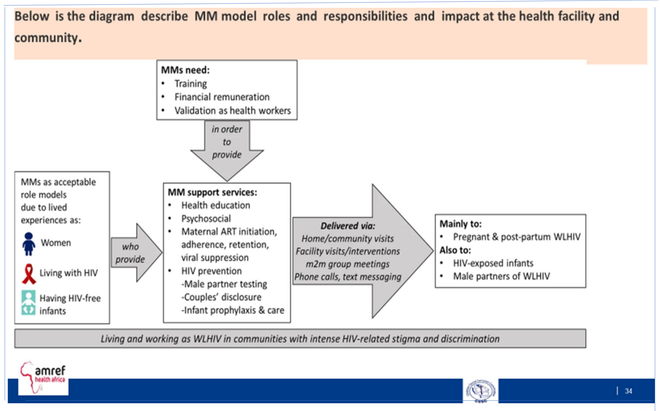
Despite the remarkable progress made in terms of ART provision to pregnant women living with HIV there are still significant number of new HIV infections occurring in children. This program aims to address this gap by reducing new HIV infection.

New HIV infection is linked with poor uptake of HIV testing, gaps in ART initiation, low retention rates and poor adherence to treatment. Social cultural factors associated with early pregnancy stages can also be linked poor HIV outcomes. We aim to address these gaps through the use of a community peer model accepted and trusted by the community members.

METHODS

From January to June 2023 Amref implemented a community model through the use of mentor mothers (MM) who are women living with HIV and are pregnant or breastfeeding champions identified from PMTCT clinics.

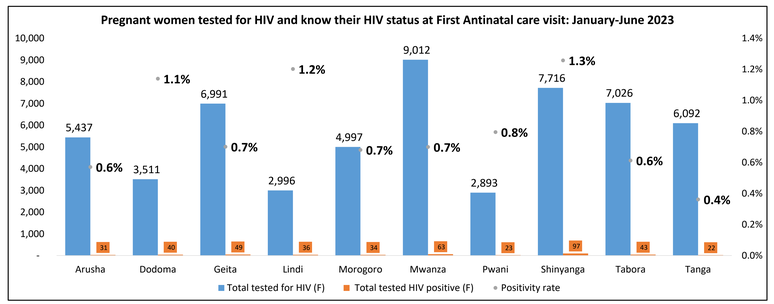
- ❖ Selection criteria included:
- ❖ Having good adherence to clinics,
- ❖ Willingness to disclose or have disclosed status and influential who can perform the task.
- ❖ We identified 330 health facilities in 10 regions and 58 councils.
- ❖ 946 MM who were trained, paired with Antenatal care supervisors from a health facility within their catchment areas.



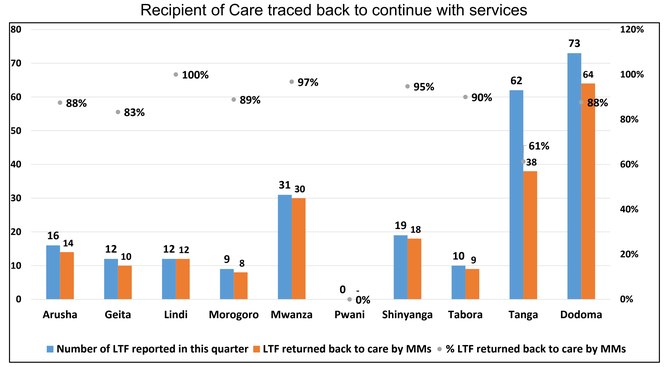
Between January and June 2023, a total of 59,582 pregnant women (93%) of the targeted population, were tested for HIV and received their HIV status results from which 398 individuals tested HIV positive, representing a positivity rate of 0.7%.

RESULTS

- ❖ We reached 36,888 male partners and 395 were HIV positive which is 1.3% yield.
- ❖ Mother mentors traced back total of 219 out of 254 with treatment interruption and linked them back to care.
- ❖ To ensure retention a total of 1,839 beneficiaries from 289 groups were supported and linked to psychosocial support groups and income-generating activities (PSAG).
- ❖ MM also identified 287 adolescents who are attending PMTCT equal to 0.5% of all recipient of care attending ANC for their first time and provided them with psychosocial support to improve their continuum of care.
- ❖ Total number of couple tested for HIV was 33,562, identified HIV positive was 169 making a positivity rate of 0.5%.



RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ The community of mentor mothers has the capacity to address a crucial gap in the quality and continuity of care for mothers living with HIV. Peer support provided through the mentor mothers program has assisted pregnant and breastfeeding women in making informed decisions about initiating or continuing antiretroviral therapy (ART), ensuring infant testing, and providing nutritional support for their children and hence attaining eMTCT.









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