**FGD-007**

**2ND JUNE 2015**

***Therefore as we talked, today 2nd of June we are here at …conducting a discussion about health services in our area concerning HIV care services in general***

Yes!

***We agreed to use this recorder to get hold of all the information, I do not want to miss anything from our discussion, please feel free to share anything you feel it could important for our discussion today, and if you do not want to answer any question please feel free just let me know and we will go to the next question.***

***Ok, my first question is, where do most of people living here in …go for HIV testing?***

Most people are testing here or at …

… where is this …?

Is near to NMB, Is it a Non-Government Organization?

***Right! Is there any center at this area?***

There is … private hospital ....?

There is! But I don’t think if they are testing?

It is testing other diseases, Its about a month now since started operating.

***Ooh! So HIV is tested there?***

All, Yes!

Are you all coming from this area or some of you coming from far?

All of us are coming from … town.

I am coming from …

***So, have you come to take the medication or CD4 check up***.

I have come to check CD4, not yet the date for drugs , but I also I take drugs here.

I come from….

The distance from ….to … and coming here, which is nearer?

Its equal coming here or going to…., for me I registered here so I though I better continue with care here.

***There people who test for HIV they get result and they a give a referral leter to join care but the don’t go, does it happen and if yes what do you think is the problem?***

Its true! We have people like that

Yes, there are many.

***Do you think what is reason for them not to go?***

I think, they are afraid and hiding!

***Oooh! And those who go direct to drugs registration?***

They are open and free and they have faith .

***Okay, what about distance and cost for transport , like coming for CD4 count test and tomorrow you come for medication?***

It is expensive but still we don’t have the HIV care centre there, we are forced to come here since there is no any other means, but if there is services were available at home, I wouldn’t have reasons to come here.

***How much you pay for this distance?***

Eight thousands shillings (8,000/- ) about 4 USD

***Going and return?***

No the cost to here is eight thousand to come and eight thousands going back.

If you hire a motorbike, because they might tell you ten thousands per trip.

***So the cost of transport for others is a problem?***

Yees!

***I heard other people are from “…” how far is this place to here?***

… Its far, is like 100 kilometers from here!

Yes! Its far near …and … it’s far too and it’s very cost fully.

For motorcycles we spend 15,000/-. Thousands shillings?

Mmmh! Many places are far, also …is far, many people come here.

For motorcycles … is 10,000/- … is 10,000/- up to 20,000/-, its better nowadays they are delivering drugs, but you still have come here for registration and CD4 testing. There is a clinic day at … The care providers from here go with drugs, but is only one day in a months.

***Okay what about the health care providers and services?***

Let me start, its four month since am here, for the side of health provider! .... I didn’t see anything bad which made people to be uncomfortable and give up.

If a person give up will it be his/her decision?

Yes! We differ, example, there are other people like me, today I have come to take medicine. So I decided to do services here.

Yes! I come to take medicine and stop all my work .... is the day to take drugs, I am ready to face any challenges. There is no anything which does not have challenges. even in our home there are many challenges, daily you eat at 7.00 o’clock but in other days you can eat at 10:00 O’clock, therefore those are challenges.

***So, do you mean that sometimes you get services early and sometimes late?***

You may be told the problem is file or the doctor is not around is attending seminars so wait a little bit! Those are challenges we face, if you decide to come for services it needs you to face all challenges! There are no challenges which can let a person to give up and drop out.

***Okay, let us assume somebody has come for CD4 test, how many hours will it take from the arrival time and leaving?***

All –It depends with the number of people who are there if they are not many, does not take much time, you may spend almost three or four hours ... that is the challenge we face.

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| For example, this month the CD4 testing machine had a problem it was broken, we had to come again and the transport fair was wasted and is a double cost. | |
|  | |
| Yes! It has a problem, we depend on one hospital and one machine in all …villages, from …. and all villages ........so the CD4 test was not done the whole month. | |
| And this Is it a second time? Because it was broken even in October as well. | |
| Yes! We were coming and be told that no CD4 tests the machine is not working. | |
| It means Tuesday till the whole month, you find people become many | |
| It means many people! As you can you see people outside! they were supposed to start the drugs two weeks ago, due to the delay of CD4 they haven’t started. If not this CD4 problem they were supposed to start since May. | |
| Generally the service providers are treating us well, we do not have any complain.. only the frequently breakdown of the CD4 machine is the issue. | |
|  | |
| ***Okay what about people who start medication and later on or some where they stop medication, does it happen and what are the reasons?*** | |
| Myself I see it as panicking! for instance there was a girl whom they were on medication but her husband continued having sex with another women, So she became angry and decided to stop the drugs..... we buried her yesterday (she died). | |
| Were they both using drugs? | |
| They were all using, but her husband went far away ... he had a bad life style which was not pleasing his wife, so the wife said its better to stop the drugs and die. | |
| So, you are you saying she became angry because of her partner ? | |
| Yes! | |
|  | |
| All ....(laugh) ... There is no anger here you may find in marriage! its your choice ... and sometimes they don’t understand well the education given to us. | |
| ***Do you think education is not enough?*** | |
| Yes! Because this drugs as we continue getting education you can start drugs even if you have a bad condition, but as you continue you find your condition (health) become better now you forget that if you stop drugs, your health will be as before. | |
| Mmh! | |
| Some people stop medication after their health improves, (laugh ) he stops and say,I am not sick. | |
|  | |
| Others may be they lack education and fail to keep in their head right. | |
|  | |
| Mmhm! | |
|  | |
| You find a person is very slim ... now after getting education and start to use drugs he/she becomes fat, he/she finds its normal and decides to stop, there is no need to continue with drugs while he/she is well. | |
| ***Okay so after recovery they stops, then what happens when they start being sick again?*** | |
| They come back, and now you may find medicine can not work because they come in worse condition. | |
| Mmmh! is there any one stoping due to distance as we discussed ealier about the cost being high? | |
| Sometimes they are delivering drugs up to the villages dispensaries (mobile ART clinics) which are far away, but are delivering on selected days only, nurses are arranged to bring medicine in the village so we have to come here for CD4 testing only. | |
| No! May be somebody is stopping just because the services are far away. No it is our bad thought compare to drugs I don’t take daily, I take every month once , It means I can not get 15,000/- thousands? Its impossible..... | |
| Even if you do not have 15,000/- if you know the drugs day is after tomorrow you can walk and sleep on the way .... if a person fail that is his/her laziness. | |
| We from … they are giving us drugs for two month, but other people are very careless, so you may find people who are living near the clinics can stop drugs but not those from far away. | |
|  | |
|  | |
| Mmmh! In some areas they associate HIV infection with witchcraft, what is the situation here? Also some people go to a certain church for deliverance that leads other to stop medication ... mmh what about here? | |
| Now it is a person beliefs, you know which things helped you to improve then you listen to other people saying they pray for you and you will be healed. Is it true that a person can be healed just through praying? It is impossible! | |
|  | |
| There are many, you know if you get problem you become worried so you can come here or you go to other places as well | |
| They are surprising! | |
| Yes they are surprising! to know if they continued well, but the fear is still there, if you inter in our churches you find prayers which are against, they said , Jesus win all in the cross there should be nobody to go to take drugs, here there was prayers... prayers of therapeutic ... drugs is available to the Lord, you will win all! .. | |
| ***So do you have people stopping the medication because of prayers?*** | |
| Yes there are some people, good believers..., but me I think they are narrow thinking (mind) and wrong understanding ... but if you have good thinking you will continue drugs and payers, I can not stop drugs. | |
| It happens even to me yesterday, somebody called and said “God loves you very much” so its possible God to heal you completely stop drugs, you will surprise if you go for test and found HIV negative, I replied that it is true God loves me but I can not stop drugs. | |
| Even me with such a faith, I can not stop drugs, I will proceed to take drugs, I know there is healing in God. | |
| How did they know? Is there any one that knows you are in drugs? Or is your closely person? | |
| Ooh this! The pastor of my son where he wanted to marry. | |
| Ooh! So if he tells him? | |
| I can see its better for my son he has an understandable person I will try to explain everything! ..... but what made my son unhappy ... (laugh) .. I am sick, that is the reason I was called yesterday. | |
| Its better to be open than those who are hiding because they fail to attend at the clinic. | |
| You find a person is not open and scared? | |
| If you are open, the children can remind you that Mom its time for drugs. | |
| Mmh! like me in my home a little child may say ... “Aunt you haven’t taken drugs its time now” you can remember through that. | |
| First of all a sick person can not hide his/her children that you are not sick, you will be wrong doing that, let your children know. | |
| In the morning when you leave, where are you going ... you find them asking; you may surprise asking you have you taken drugs? | |
| ... (all) laugh! | |
| So you want to express that you are supposed to be open to your family that you are sick! | |
| Mmmh! They are all need to know especially relatives and family that you are sick. | |
| ***Ok, what makes you to continue and adhere to medication, What motivates you to come and wait for hours, with all the challenges but you are still adhere to clinic schedules?*** | |
| My health has improved ... I had some problems before starting drugs I had sores in my private area which were disturbing me much. | |
| ..(all) laugh! | |
| Don’t laugh do you think is a joke ha ha | |
|  | |
| So look at us ...don’t you see ... how we look we are okay and have gained weight..... Laughing! | |
| My condition started being worse since I was going only when feeling sick but after medication am good | |
| Was here , I found it was very wonderful but I was staying with many people who were not aware even though I was showing them the card | |
| ***What about traditional treatment, does it happen here?*** | |
| I was admitted in the hospital for almost two weeks but my condition was not improving ...when got discharged, i was taking many drugs without getting better its when i went to the traditional healer... he said I was bewitched ...he gave me some herbs but mmh! There was no much change ... then I was told to go back to the hospital with my friend for CD4 check you might be registered for drugs. ... I did and true I started mashudu (ART) and now I am better. | |
| Eee! That is what made me now to obey .... (laugh) .... recently they told us that those who are coming from far away they should take the drugs for two months, right now after taking this drugs i will start searching the money for bus fare for the next two month, I am very careful for on that. | |
|  | |
| The reasons makes me to keep on staying to this services is that ...before i was very sick, suffering a lot, diarrhea, i even went to which doctors and be given the drugs i was ok for one day then the following day sick, sometimes getting ulcers but after starting drugs ........ | |
|  | |
| Yes, my wound was healed up to now i doing well with the drugs | |
| ***Mmh! What about you my sister, what do you think? You are so quite*** | |
| For me I heard the announcements on a car that there is a mobile laboratory does HIV testing and TB together so I self motivated then I decide to go for test at .... | |
| ***You heard the announcement?*** | |
| Yes! the youth came to me said that they are doing voluntary testing, I asked them are you testing voluntary, I decided to go but before I went I convinced my friend because her behavior was not good, she was not staying at home. Later I decided to go myself at … | |
| ***Mmmh*** | |
| Yes, *So I was just coming for testing and take CD4 results at the same place.* | |
| ***Mmh!*** | |

I can see how health I am, I could not be hereif I had not started medication, I would be dead by now, I was not aware, my husband started being sick, he was very ill and i was taking care of him the doctor said the man is sick i should continue taking care of him and they advised me to go for HIV test. I tested the first day and go back the following day they said i should register for drugs and should not worry ,,, I left the place comfortable, its a month now since I started the drugs.

***What about your husband is he on medication also?***

He died, He took the drugs for one month but he was vomiting ... So I started when he died.

***How is your doing now?***

The progress is good but I have stomachache and feel Heart burn*.*

***Let us continue, did any one get side effect from medication?***

No! Like me when I was taking the weekly drugs still I was going for work.

I face the problems with the two weeks drugs, nausea, they disturbed me I even failed to eat. But not to the extent you decide to stop drugs.

I got rushes but they said the condition will recover by itself.

Is there anybody who is here informed their spouse about their status and what was the reaction?

*I take the drugs with my spouse.*

***Is there anybody here whose her/his spouse doesn’t know?***

My spouse is HIV negative he has tested three times.

This is important and a real example, there are couples whom the results differ but they continue with life as usual.

Okay is there anybody who has been stigmatized in the community due to their status? With relative, neighbors or friends

No!

None! But my daughter who brought this girl whom we came together.

***Ehee! Is she your real daughter?***

Yes she is my own daughter.

Aah! What of stigma happened to her!

When they started being sick we went at … dispensary for testing, her husband and her went for results, the husband took the results to his sisters that all of them are

The husband’s relative said take the wife to her home… her mother should take care of her and you should stay here we will take care of you since now you are not strong enough to find money to feed her. So since then my daughter moved from her husband’s place and there is no communication, they never ask anything about her, not even caring to know her condition, Now is that not stigmazation?

Yes! It is they should have care for both of them, since all of them were sick!

Yes, they were not supposed to separate each other because all are sick, we opened the clinic file for him always they call his name but never showed up.

***Finally, I would like to hear your suggestions on how to improve health care services in our area, suggestion to government, to health care providers or to the community in general?***

For the side of the government it is doing well but according to the nature of the problem itself we advise it to put some strategies on how to overcome it. The problem itself is increasing, they are so many people in the community who are getting new infections, the Government is doing good as we are getting drugs but it should do more because where we are going is very serious the youths are getting infected too.

Yes, they are the most risk people, the government should give more health education and give advice about AIDS, I tried to educate two people but they told me that is the responsibility of the church.

***If you meet a person who has come from HIV testing and is positive, he tells you that he can’t go for drug registration because he is not sick what would you tell him/her?***

I could try to explain the effect of not registering and advantages of registering to the drugs. I could spend some days educating about the effects and benefits I will pay them a visit several times as I know the benefits because he might not know.

There is a problem and look they are so many people who are benefited,I ask you to accompany me and see how they provide education more than what I say.

There are some people who came here but they go straight to the ward while their intention is to take drugs ...(laugh) ...they are many taking drugs but trying to hide, and others are our friends they are hiding themselves. If they see us sitting here they start going there as if they are looking for a certain nurse but we know them

Yes we have people like that, I observed once ... they are many with low understanding, there was a day I took my card going for CD4 check, I found two girls also they came for drugs but when they saw a lot of people one of them said today there is flood [meaning too many people] -(laughs) and they left the place*.*

***Mmh! For the Health providers what advice do you have?***

As I see they can keep on helping and taking care of us!

Initial we were coming on Tuesday and Friday but after we were waiting for too long they asked us to come the whole week sometimes even Saturdays

But the CD4 test is done once per week, Tuesday only.

***Ok, the drugs is given the whole week?***

Yes! All days according to your date.

Okay anything else to wind up?

In addition, maybe we can talk about the CD4 machine which is broken very often, we would like to ask the government if possible to add another new machine.

Yes, At least to have two machines.

Yes, it can help at least every districts to have two machines.

***So for CD4 test all people from the whole … are coming here even from …? Don’t they have the machine at …?***

There is none, all of them are coming here.

Ok! so the main issue is the CD4 machine! I think we should close the discussion

*yes!*

Thanks very much and I appreciate your participation and all the information you have give us.