

P4.9. Effectiveness of Income Generating Activities in Mitigating the Impact of HIV/AIDS among Young People Living with HIV: A Case Study of Youth Alliance On HIV/AIDS and Livelihood(YAHAL) - Ogunrombi Adeolu, Community Youth Advancement Initiative, Nigeria
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Background/Significance: PLHIV are faced with a number of challenges including the need for psychosocial support, access to medical care and treatment, disclosure and planning for the future. These effects and economic impact is more profound among Young people living with HIV (YPLHIV). The reported cases of YPLHIV within Karu community have been on the increase and the critical need for their survival. Many of them are unemployed and have been left, due to stigma, by family members and/relations to fend for themselves.

Intervention/Activity Tested: A peer support group of YPLHIV, those affected and youth advocates was formed by community members called YAHAL. The group with a little fund decide to respond to these challenges by building a vocational center where members can be trained on various vocational skills and also together engage in income generating activities to meet their own needs.

Methodology: The study was carried out at the YAHAL vocational center located in mararaba, karu local government Area of Nasarawa state within a period of ten (10) months. Resources used were determined from programme records, interviews with members and information gathered during the group meetings, observation of production activities and service delivery. The number of registered members was obtained from the organization record.

Findings: After the completion of the vocational center a total of 117 PLHIV applied but for limited capacity only 27 was enlisted and are being trained. In addition to the skills being acquired, the peers also embark on income generating activities through the production and sale of local fabricated cloth (tie & dye) and beads. With the proceeds members' access treatment for opportunistic infections, meet nutritional needs, self-sustenance and educational support for some members.

Limitations: The organization has no regular funding. There is problem of scaling up as a greater share of gain made from sales goes into meeting members need.

Lessons Learned:

- Young people are always willing to get engage in any productive act if given the chance
- Income generating activities supports PLWHA to meet their own needs, keep them busy and promote good mental and physical well being
- It offers economic independence and improve self-esteem
- It helps overcome stigma through involvement in the community

Recommendation: Funding for income generating activities should be given a priority in addressing the need of support groups of YPLHIV