

**2015**



# **WEST AFRICA AIDS FOUNDATION**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2015**

Location: Ecomog Road, Plot 650 Haatso. Ghana – West Africa

Mailing Address: P O Box KD 130 Kanda, Accra

Telephone: +233 262 262 447/ +233 302 541 220

Email: [info@waafweb.org](mailto:info@waafweb.org)

Website: [www.waafweb.org](http://www.waafweb.org)

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2015**

Submitted to

**GHANA AIDS COMMISSION (GAC)**

Submitted by:

Dorcas Aba Annan

Public Relations Officer

West Africa AIDS Foundation

Approved by:

Dr Naa Ashiley Vanderpuye

Chief Executive Officer

West Africa AIDS Foundation

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## List of Acronyms

AIDS	ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROM
CBOs	COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATIONS
CCM	COUNTRY COORDINATING MECHANISM
CSS	COMMUNITY SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING
GAC	GHANA AIDS COMMISSION
HIV	HUMAN IMMUNO DEFICIENCY VIRUS
HTC	HIV TESTING AND COUNSELING
KP	KEY POPULATION
M&E	MONITORING AND EVALUATION
NAP+	NETWORK ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV
WAAF	WEST AFRICA AIDS FOUNDATION
NSP	NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN
PLHIV	PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS
CHRAJ	COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE

## **Executive Summary**

West Africa AIDS Foundation (WAAF) is a registered Non-Governmental Organization based in Accra with subsidiary offices in the Western and Northern Region of Ghana. WAAF's primary mission is to prevent the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and to mitigate its effect on communities by implementing intervention programs and establishing care and support centers. Since its establishment in 1999, WAAF has made greater contribution in the response to HIV through its advocacy, services delivery and rights protection programs. Our contribution particularly in the area of getting people informed about HIV and AIDS is immeasurable. The organization has over the years made greater impact in the life of most marginalized people in the Ghanaian community and still remains active in this service. The year 2015 was particularly marked with diverse community base and service delivery programs of which we wish to highlight few in this document.

Another major initiative WAAF took in the year 2015 was joining forces with the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) to step up efforts aimed at ensuring that the rights of the marginalized particularly PLs and KPs get protected. This public private partnership program also focused on creating demand and use of a web based stigma and discrimination reporting systems designed by CHRAJ to increase reporting of stigma and discrimination cases for justice. The project saw an increase of 30 cases being reported onto the system during the 6months project implementation period.

WAAF has always been a harbinger when it comes to generating demand for PMTCT services. As part of efforts to sustain our commitment, we carried out many activities and initiatives aimed to enhance demand for this service. Our in-house program dubbed Healthy Mum =Healthy Baby which is led by our onsite clinic, the International Health Care Center, reached out to HIV positive pregnant women with comprehensive information on HIV and it related opportunistic infections. We engaged the services of trained counselors and models of hope as mentors to provide advice on how mothers can stay healthy while ensuring that their babies are safe. Beyond what this program offered during the quarter under review, WAAF also integrated the services into all our outreach programs allowing peer educators and project staff to participate in creating demand for it. This saw us reaching a total of 73 pregnant women who delivered in the year 2015.

The West Africa AIDS Foundation (WAAF) on November 3, 2015 joined numerous stakeholders to mark the 2015 World AIDS Day (WAD) at Teshie Salem Park which was officially launched by the Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC). The day was marked with free health screening exercise and distribution of IEC materials.

The year under review also saw the final phase of the NSP project implementation since its inception. WAAF got its contract renewed with GAC was to continue implementation in an effort to sustained commitment to reducing new HIV infection among the general public. The approach has always been engaging the youth, pregnant women and drivers as they form part of the highly risked groups of HIV infection. WAAF conducted HIV Testing and counselling, in school programs and community outreaches as a way of spreading knowledge and getting people informed about HIV prevention.

With a mission to combat HIV and its related infections particularly TB, WAAF engaged in a capacity building program to strengthening the capacity of TB affected community. The program which was funded by STOP TB Partnership-Geneva, aimed at building the skills and knowledge capacity of TB infected and affected individuals to be involved in national TB programming and management. The program saw us training a total of 40 TB infected persons on advocacy and presentation skills.

Another in-house initiative which was sustained was our OVC program. The program which aims at offering psychosocial and financial support for vulnerable children who are either infected or are affected with HIV has been running for over 10 years now. This year saw an enrolment and retention of 10 new orphans and vulnerable children. WAAF onsite clinic which has always lead this program also undertook a new initiative to improve the system of enhancing early TB detection. The clinic which has a client base of more than 800 introduced TB screening for all its clients. The initiative saw WAAF screening 1148 pregnant women.

## **1.1 Introduction**

West Africa AIDS Foundation (WAAF) was set up in 1999 to help battle the spread of HIV&AIDS and mitigate its effect on communities by developing and implementing pragmatic intervention programs/activities. Having been in existence for over 15years, we want to look beyond the shores of Ghana and spread our wings to other Africa Countries. The time to live our name is now. We feel there are many more deprived communities beyond the borders of Ghana whose situations are begging for help. The management and staff are therefore taking new steps to spread our impacts into other African countries. It is our vision to set up comprehensive health care centers in all regions of Ghana and the West African sub-regions that will provide quality health care to all our clients.

Over the years WAAF has built strong relationships and partnerships with a number of institutions. Through the onsite clinics IHCC, we have formal relationships with not only the Ghana Health Services but also other private clinics. The same applies to the vast number of CBO's and other civil society organizations with whom we have a continuous working relationship.

In addition, with 18 years of work in the field of HIV, WAAF has excellent working relations with the media, (TV, radio, print) and many local government entities in the various geographical areas where we serve.

Such partnerships allow for WAAF to have a stronger voice in areas such as policy formation and sharing of best practices. As an organization working at the grass root level, WAAF is uniquely placed to reach and work with underserved populations. This plays an especially strong role in securing and elevating the voice and leadership within many affected populations. WAAF therefore presents the ground-level facts to a large number of relevant partnering NGO's with experience in equivalent areas pertaining to health. Together, we create a stronger voice for advocacy, especially when it comes to policy change.

The immense contributions made have been possible due to the many partnerships and collaborations we have formed, which ensured that there was great synergy and also projects reached the desired goals and target population.

## **1.2 Activities Carried Out**

Below are the activities carried out in the year 2015 to battle and create more awareness and battle the spread of HIV/AIDS in communities.

### **1.3 Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission (PMTCT)**

Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission started in 2007 with support from the National AIDS Control Programme. Over 1000 women have and continue to benefit from this intervention at the onsite clinic. Since 2014 the onsite clinic has not recorded a single case of HIV infection of the babies among its cohort of HIV infected mothers.

*Healthy Mum - Healthy Baby* is a program dedicated to the nutritional needs of HIV expectant mothers and their babies. In addition to the many challenges HIV positive women face, HIV positive pregnant women endure more challenges ranging from stigma to inability to afford good nutrition. Apart from providing nutritional items, IHCC staff educates on a full range of topics about motherhood and assist mothers including providing nutritional services. The program continued its path of success with various sessions from January to December 2015.

The number of women participating in the program has increased. Contrary to the previous year, now on average, we have not less than ten (10) women in each session. This was the case for all sessions throughout January to December, accounting for a total of twelve (12) women being on the program. Ten (10) of these women have given birth to healthy bouncing babies, two (2) of them, not yet. We have ten (10) women still on the program.



## **Result Matrix**

<b><u>Indicators</u></b>	<b><u>Result</u></b>
No of women enrolled in Healthy Mum- Healthy Baby	12
No of babies born negative	10
No of positive mothers pregnant	2

#### **1.4 Stigma and Discrimination Reporting System**

The West Africa AIDS Foundation over the years has taken centre stage in advancing the course of improving access to quality health services for key affected populations in Ghana. Our advocacy and community engagement approaches have led to an increased public consciousness about the impact of stigma on health delivery thereby creating chance for people irrespective of their sexual orientation to access quality health services under friendly atmosphere.

In February 2015, WAAF collaborated with the Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) to create demand for the use of a web-based stigma and discrimination reporting system designed to enhance protection of rights and freedoms of KPs and PLHIVs. This collaboration was informed by the quest to ensure that human rights and dignity of people are respected. The results from this collaboration have been very remarkable. We have seen much more cases being reported recently with speedily response, giving an indication that people are more confident to report cases of rights abuse.

During the 11 months of the project year, reaching hundreds of people through outreach events and weekly health service at the DIC facility, we can boldly say we have increased access to health care for members of the LGBT population in Greater Accra and Western Region.

This project has produced many positive results. 382 individuals made up of PLHIVs and members of KPs were reached with education on fundamental human rights, as well as reminding them of the availability of CHRAJ's Discrimination Reporting System.

Table below gives an overview of persons reached with health services during the project year.

	Number	Male	Female	Known	Diagnosed	Received	HTC	Reactive	LGBT
<b>DIC</b>	210	170	40	121	97	153	108	25	25
<b>Accra Outreach</b>	656	543	143	130	163	283	582	34	29
<b>Accra DIC</b>	53	42	11	53	25	53	29	1	1
<b>Takoradi Outreach,</b>	138	114	24	138	47	138	134	3	3
<b>Takoradi IHCC</b>	8	8	0	7	8	3	4	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1065</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>62</b>

## **1.5 Community System Strengthening (CSS)**

The West Africa AIDS Foundation, through the support of the Ghana AIDS Commission received funding from the global fund, to implement the Community Systems Strengthening as a sub recipient and NAP+ as a sub-sub recipient. The project aims at building strong community linkages for effective service delivery, strengthening the institutional capacity of NAP+ to lead the cause for effective HIV response in Ghana, and ensuring accountability from health service providers. The project gives WAAF the mandate to support NAP+ to build its structures and systems to become a powerful and a more recognized institution to lead HIV response in Ghana.

The concept of Community Systems Strengthening evolved from the backdrop of a dire need to enhance community linkages and participation in the response to HIV/AIDS and TB. Low access to improved and quality health service emanating from resources constraints, capacity gaps and ineffective systems especially at the community levels constitute a key challenge in the response to HIV and TB. Stigma and discrimination, also serve as a major threat to ending the epidemics. Both the affected and infected populations in many occasions come under serious vilifications which exacerbates their conditions leading to their deaths.

The actual project implementation began in November due to contractual delays and differences in implementation procedures. To that end, not all project activities earmarked for implementation in quarter four have been implemented. Some of the activities carried out under this project are outlined below:

### **1.5.1 One time Baseline Assessment**

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) were assessed in the four focus regions for possible collaboration in the CSS project implementations particularly in mobile outreaches. Subsequently, the responsibilities and areas of operation for the project implementation for each CBO have been clearly spelt out.

### **1.5.2 Mapping of ART sites and selection of Models of Hope**

NAP+ and WAAF project teams visited 17 ART Sites in the Eastern region and 28 ART sites in the Ashanti region. The purpose of this visit was to ascertain physical location and directions to the ART sites, the services and human resource capacity of these sites, the existence and functioning of a model of hope and to get a contact person at the ART site.

Models of hope in all ART sites in the Ashanti and Eastern regions that were visited have been identified and assessed on their roles and responsibilities. Afterwards, some were selected based on their geographical location of the ART centre they work in, years of experience, their ability to read and write.

### **1.5.3 Selection of Peer Educators**

Through the help of partner CBOs, peer educators were identified and assessed in Western, Ashanti, Eastern and Greater Accra regions. Inclusion criteria used included volunteers' knowledge on peer education, current location of stay within the region, previous experience in peer education, knowledge on HIV/AIDS and community mobilization, willingness to live in their current community for at least the next 6-8months.

## **1.6 World AIDS Day Celebration in 2015**

World AIDS Day which is held on the 1st December each year is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died. Ghana AIDS Commission launched the 2015 World AIDS Day in Ghana at Teshie and invited West Africa AIDS Foundation to attend.

“Fast Track- Meeting the Health Needs of Children towards HIV-Free Generation” was the theme chosen for the World AIDS Day which was celebrated on December 1, 2015 worldwide”. At the durbar, WAAF provided HIV testing and counselling, shared condoms and educated the community members on HIV/AIDS related issues.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2015, West Africa AIDS Foundation commemorated the celebration with education on HIV and AIDS related issues, distribution of condoms and other materials, Testing and Counselling activity among others in Sunyani in the Eastern Region and Boi-Town in the Ga-East District. The project coordinator was also present in some media houses discuss the current prevalence on HIV/AIDS, stigma and other topics to ensure mass education.

## **1.7 National Strategic Plan Project**

In view of maintaining effective HIV response, the NSP 2011-2015 was developed on the premise that HIV is a developmental issue and a health challenge and must be dealt with as such.

Overall, the focus of this strategy is on reducing by half the HIV infections in the next five years with a virtual elimination of mother to child transmission of HIV, as well as sustaining and scaling up the proportion of people living with HIV (PLHIV) who are on treatment. This plan seeks to leverage treatment as a prevention strategy.

The goal of the project is to contribute to prevention of new HIV infections, increase the uptake of the HIV Testing and Counselling (HTC) services, reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination against PLHIVs, promote positive BCC activities among the general population with special focus on, youth and Most at Risk Populations (MARPS) in the two districts.

Under condom promotion, the activities took a different swift as a result of the festivals celebrated in the month of September. The festivals drove the demand of condoms in a large scale which was facilitated by peer educators. A total number of 98392 condoms were distributed.

Under this project, 330 people were tested and counselled from March to June, 40 peer educators were trained and 3443 reached on one- on –on educational session.

From July 2015 and October 2015, 1450 total number people were tested under the HIV testing and counselling activity carried under this project, HIV prevention educational sessions for in school youths on HIV prevention was also carried out and the total number of people reached was 1200, a total number of 14389 on one on one educational session, total number of people reached under small group discussions was 2788 and 37 peer educators were trained.

## Result Matrix

<b>Intervention Area</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Results</b>
Prevention and behavior change communication	Counseling and testing events	Number of people reached through mobile/outreach Counseling and testing	350,000	300,206
Prevention and behavior change communication	HIV prevention educational sessions for in school youths on HIV prevention	No. of in school youth reached	13,275	17,083
Prevention and behavior change communication	One on one educational session	No of people reached through one on one and small group	20,650	26,954
Prevention and behavior change communication	Condom distribution	No of condoms distributed	350,000	300,206



## **1.8. Access to HIV Testing and Counselling (HTC)**

From inception to 2016, HTC services have assisted over 250,000 people through multiple funding sources and for various target groups including LGBT. In 2015, WAAF conducted numerous HIV testing and counselling in various communities either on its own or in partnership with other organizations such as the Osei Kusi Foundation, City of Refuge Ministries and many more. This allowed for WAAF to penetrate deeper into underserved communities bringing HTC to their doorsteps. Apart from the testing and counselling conducted in communities, WAAF's onsite clinic at Haatso, International Health Care Center (IHCC) had a total number of 180 people as persons living HIV clients. The clinic tested 178 people from January to December 2015 and recorded 154 negative cases while 24 positive cases as well.

- **HTC programme in Sunyani**

In Sunyani on World AIDS Day, the WAAF team was able to test 127 individuals, comprising of 72 males and 55 females. Out of this number, 118 (92.9%) were between the ages of 15-34 (the nationally recognised age bracket for the Youth Population in Ghana) while 68 teenagers formed 53.5% of those who were tested. The team also distributed 300 male condoms and 50 female condoms and also gave out 100 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials.

- **HTC programme in Boi Town, GA-East District**

As part of the activities to mark World AIDS day, the Ga East Municipal Assembly organized a durbar and screening exercise at Boi in the Ga East municipal to commemorate the celebration in the district. The blood samples taken from an individual was used to run all the three tests; HIV I&II, Blood sugar and Malaria. Each individual was registered and offered pre-test counselling and then post-test counselling. In total, 96 persons were screened consisting of 85 females and 11 males with the majority aged 50 years and above.

- **HTC programme in Maamobi;**

The health Promotion and Adolescent unit of the Maamobi General Hospital in collaboration with the Ladidi community and Gep social marketing organized a health screening and community durbar as part of the NSP project to enhance community engagement and education of the general public. The programme was held in a community near the Kaneshie trotro station at Maamobi. After the exposition of the counsellors and health personnel on the various health topics, community members were given the opportunity to undergo HIV counselling and testing. In all, over 124 people availed themselves to undergo counselling and testing. There was no positive case detected.

- **HTC programme in Teshie**

As part of the activities to increase the access to health services by KPs, a community outreach was organized in Teshie on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2015 to screen KPs of HIV and other STIs. This mobile outreach which involved taking health delivery to the doorstep of the target group aimed at promoting early HIV diagnosis among the MSM community. A total number of 52 people were reached through the health screening.

- **HTC programme in Doryumu-Shai Hills**

West Africa AIDS Foundation on November 13, 2015, partnered City of Refuge Ministries to organize free health screening and health education to the community members in Doryumu-Shai Hills in Tema. Some of the relevant topics discussed include personal hygiene, the need to take prescribed medicine and attending regular medical check-ups to ensure healthy living. In all, a total number of 50 people were tested and counselled.

- **HTC in the Western Region**

The West Africa AIDS Foundation branch office in Takoradi also conducted numerous testing and counselling activities in the community. The project team visited the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU) branch office in Takoradi (taxi and trotro station) to educate the drivers and also conduct testing and counselling. WAAF provided health education and screening at the Market Circle and also to Fishing associations and Muslims groups. In all, a total number of 500 people from these organisations were tested and counselled on HIV/AIDS.

Another outreach was conducted in 5 Gold, a community within Kwesimintsim in the Western region where most high at risk populations are known to reside. Only 25 people volunteered to be counselled and tested for HIV of which two (2) positive cases were determined. These reactive cases were referred to the nearest health facility for confirmation and further management.

## Result Matrix

Indicator	Community Reached	Result	Reactive
<b>No of people tested and counselled (HTC)</b>	Sunyani	127	None
	Boi-Town	96	None
	Maamobi	124	None
	Teshie	52	
	Takoradi HTC activities	500	none
	CSS Mobile outreach in Kwesimintsim	25	2

## **1.9 In-School Health Programme**

Preventing the spread of HIV begins with education. Education is the best tool for fighting stigma and discrimination. Educating the public through awareness campaigns coupled with one-to-one knowledge sharing has proven to be effective. Education efforts also focus on encouraging behavior change, such as a reduction in the number of sexual partners, increased use of condoms, and delaying the start of sexual activity.

There is another sense in which education plays a key role. Globally, young men and women between the ages of 15 and 24 are most vulnerable to becoming infected with HIV. Educating the young people, however, has impacted the lives of these young people by keeping informed on HIV/AIDS related issues.

In the year 2015, the WAAF's branch offices in the Western and Northern Region respectively, visited some junior, secondary and tertiary schools to educate them on HIV/AIDS and provided health screening. Some of the schools visited include Ashesi University in Accra, Top Ridge School, Anglican Junior School, Ebenezer Methodist School, Bethel Pentecost Preparatory School, Pishigu D/A Junior High School, Sung D/A Junior High School.

## **2.0 Special meetings & Workshops attended**

### **World AIDS day launch**

WAAF attended the launch of the 2015 World AIDS Day at Teshie. “Fast Track- Meeting the Health Needs of Children towards HIV-Free Generation” was the theme chosen for the World AIDS Day which was celebrated on December 1, 2015 worldwide”. WAAF provided HIV testing and counselling at the durbar.

### **GAC 2015 Partnership and Stakeholders Meeting**

WAAF was invited as an implementing partner for the Ghana AIDS Commission to the partnership meeting. This meeting was to dialogue on issues related to HIV/AIDS in Ghana and the way forward.

### **Country Coordinating Mechanism Meetings**

Dr. Naa Ashiley Vanderpuye, CEO continues to be an active member of the CCM and attended the regular quarterly meetings as well as those of the HIV/TB oversight committee within the CCM of which she is the Chair person.

### **GAC Pre-Implementation Meeting on CSS**

WAAF project team was invited by the Ghana AIDS Commission to attend pre-implementation meeting to discuss the details of the Community System Strengthening (CSS) Project.

### **Dashboard Briefing by GSM**

GSM team members visited WAAF to introduce a new PR dashboard, which will officially take over the current existing dashboard that is normally reviewed at CCM meetings and which gives an overview as to how GF funded projects are being implemented. The dashboard is a single PowerPoint slide derived from a master data sheet created at the PR level through the collation of several data sheets at the various SR levels under the PR.

### **2015 ICASA Poster Presentation**

West Africa AIDS Foundation was invited to present a poster at the 2015 International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa, (ICASA) in Zimbabwe. The poster was on “Improving Access to Quality Health Care for LGBT People”.

## Appendix A- Result Matrix

Activity	Indicator	Community	Result	
Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV	No. of mothers enrolled on PMTCT	IHCC	88	
	No. of babies born		73	
	No. of babies tested		74	
			Positive	Negative
		2	72	
Community Outreaches (HIV Testing and Counselling)	No. of people tested and counselled	Boi-Town	96	
		Maamobi	124	
		Teshie	52	
		Takoradi HTC activities	500	
		CSS Mobile outreach in Kwesimintsim	25	



In-School education on HIV	No. of schools visited	Greater Accra, Western and Northern Region	20
	No. of students reached		300
National Strategic Plan (NSP)	Number of people reached through mobile/outreach Counseling and testing		300,206
	No. of in school youth reached		17,083
	No of people reached through one on one and small group		26,954
	No of condoms distributed		300,206

Stigma and Discrimination Reduction Project	No. of people reached		<b>1065</b>
	No. of people tested and counselled		857
	No. of LGBT people reached		62

**Appendix B - Pictures**



**WAAF and City of Refuge collaborated to organize community outreach in Shai Hills**



**HIV Testing and Counseling in Nima**



**WAAF Project Team at the Launch of 2015 World AIDS Day**