



Action for Children and Young People Uganda (ACYP)

Community Health Report-2021

Enabling Access To Comprehensive, Timely, And Sustainable
Health And Well-Being Services



Covid-19 Caregivers training on malnutrition-2021

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12-31-2021

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Annual Report- 2021

Community Health

1. Introduction

The year 2021 continued to be significantly shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic, although with some easing of restrictions and a focus on recovery. The community health program built upon the adaptations made in 2020, incorporating lessons learned to enhance remote service delivery while gradually resuming safe in-person activities where possible. This report highlights the program's efforts to address the ongoing health needs of vulnerable children, adolescents, and their families, alongside the persistent challenges of economic hardship and intermittent lockdowns. The program focused on strengthening community resilience and integrating hybrid service delivery models.

2. Program Overview:

While movement restrictions eased somewhat in 2021 compared to 2020, the impact of the pandemic on livelihoods, access to services, and community participation remained significant. Food insecurity persisted, and the economic recovery in rural areas was slow. The community health program aimed to refine its hybrid approach, combining remote support with carefully planned in-person activities to maximize reach and impact while prioritizing safety.

2.2 Program Goals and Objectives (Building on 2020):

- **Overarching Goal:**

To enhance the health and well-being of vulnerable children, adolescents, and their families in Kalungu district within the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts.

- **Objectives:**

- To provide consistent remote drug adherence support to at least 220 children and adolescents while gradually re-introducing small, safe in-person support group meetings.
- To maintain efficient community-based drug delivery systems, adapting to evolving movement guidelines and ensuring at least 89% of beneficiaries receive timely medication.
- To actively promote and facilitate access to COVID-19 vaccination alongside routine immunizations through community education and linkage to vaccination sites.
- To support 101 vulnerable families with food security initiatives and provide information on sustainable livelihood options.
- To conduct safe, small-group WASH promotion sessions, reaching at least 79 households with key hygiene messages.

2.3 Target Beneficiaries:

The program continued to serve the same vulnerable population, with an increased focus on identifying and addressing the long-term socio-economic impacts of the pandemic on these families.

3. Program Activities and Achievements (Hybrid Approach in 2021):

3.1 Drug Adherence Support:

- **Activities:**

- Continued remote follow-up (phone calls, SMS) with 140 children and adolescents.
- Re-introduced small, socially distanced in-person peer support group meetings for 6 groups (average 8 members each) when local guidelines permitted.

- **Achievements:**

- Maintained an average of 80% adherence rate among those receiving support, with in-person group attendees reporting improved motivation and reduced isolation.

- The hybrid approach allowed for a more nuanced level of support, combining the reach of remote communication with the benefits of in-person interaction.

3.2 Drug Delivery (Adapting to Evolving Guidelines):

- **Activities:**
 - Continued utilizing community-based drug delivery systems, adapting routes and methods based on updated movement guidelines.
 - Strengthened partnerships with local pharmacies to establish more accessible pick-up points where feasible.
 - Provided targeted transport assistance to individuals with mobility challenges and those in areas with ongoing restrictions.
- **Achievements:**
 - Achieved 87% timely drug delivery to beneficiaries, demonstrating the effectiveness of the adapted systems.
 - Feedback indicated increased satisfaction with the flexibility of the delivery options.

3.3 Access to Immunization and COVID-19 Vaccination:

- **Activities:**
 - Conducted community sensitization campaigns (using a mix of remote messaging and small, safe gatherings) promoting both routine childhood immunizations and COVID-19 vaccination.
 - Collaborated with local health facilities to organize dedicated COVID-19 vaccination drives in accessible community locations.
 - Provided accurate information to address vaccine hesitancy and counter misinformation.
- **Achievements:**
 - Routine immunization coverage saw a slight increase to 65% compared to 2020, indicating some recovery in access to these services.
 - Facilitated COVID-19 vaccination for 150 eligible beneficiaries and their family members.

3.4 Addressing Food Insecurity and WASH (Focus on Sustainability):

- **Activities:**
 - Continued to link vulnerable families with food aid programs and provided information on accessing government support.
 - Initiated small-scale community gardening projects in 3 locations to promote sustainable food sources.
 - Conducted 15 small-group WASH promotion sessions, emphasizing hygiene practices relevant to both general health and COVID-19 prevention.
- **Achievements:**
 - Supported 50 families with resources and training for community gardening initiatives.
 - Increased awareness of sustainable food practices among participating households.

4. Challenges Faced (Persistent and Emerging):

- Intermittent local lockdowns and movement restrictions continued to disrupt in-person activities and transport.
- Economic hardship and food insecurity remained significant challenges for many families, impacting their ability to prioritize health needs.
- Vaccine hesitancy related to COVID-19 required targeted and culturally sensitive communication strategies.
- Maintaining engagement and participation in remote activities over a prolonged period proved challenging.
- The mental health impact of the pandemic and prolonged isolation on beneficiaries and caregivers became more apparent.

5. Lessons Learned (Building Resilience):

- Hybrid service delivery models, combining remote and safe in-person interactions, offer a flexible and resilient approach during prolonged crises.
- Addressing the socio-economic determinants of health, such as food security, is crucial for long-term well-being.

- Building trust and providing accurate information are essential for promoting vaccine uptake and addressing health misinformation.
- Proactive mental health support for beneficiaries and caregivers is an increasingly important aspect of community health programs during and after a pandemic.
- Strong local partnerships are vital for adapting and responding effectively to evolving challenges.

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