

To donate and support the
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Family AIDS Care and Education Services

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FACES TALK



KEMRI staff at the top of Mt. Kenya

Scaling Mt. Kenya

In September,
73 energetic KEMRI staff
members climbed Mt.
Kenya! In 4 days they scaled
the 2nd highest peak in
Africa: Point Lenana at
4,985 meters /16,355 feet.



Final ascent

Loving My Work as a Mentor Mother

After the death of my husband, my in-laws insisted that my second born child be taken to the hospital where he tested positive for HIV. He was to be initiated on highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) and the health care providers demanded that the mother of the child be brought on board. I was counseled and tested and, as hard as it was, I had to start HIV care and also support my child.

After some time I met a man who was HIV positive and we decided to stay together. After pre-conception counseling, I conceived and gave birth to a healthy HIV-negative baby. I was full of hope for life once again because I had never imagined that both HIV positive parents could give birth to an HIV negative child.

When my son was four months old I saw a notice for the mentor mothers and decided to give myself a try since I was interested in sharing with mothers who might have lost hope after turning HIV positive. Currently I am based at Rabour Health Centre as a lead mentor mother. I have managed to eradicate stigma amongst mothers by the formation of mothers to mothers support group where mothers come together to listen to teachings and share their experiences. Out of this, a lot of babies are turning out to be HIV negative and for the few who are HIV positive, they are accessing HIV care easily and consistently. I really love my work because it has helped me accept myself, support my peers and also support women who are losing hope in life.



Mentor Mother

Mentor Mothers and FACES: Working to make a difference in the lives of women living with HIV

Every year FACES helps serve more than 6,000 pregnant women living with HIV and their infants. Nearly half of those women find out they are HIV positive for the first time when they come for antenatal care. They must accept their HIV status, start drugs to treat their HIV and prevent transmission to their baby (PMTCT), and face their partners and family at home. This process is made much easier through the support of Mentor Mothers. Launched officially in 2012, the Kenya Mentor Mother Program (KMMP) seeks to address barriers to PMTCT care by integrating mothers living with HIV (Mentor Mothers) into clinics to provide education, support, and to serve as role models for positive living and healthy choices by building on their own experience. Mentor Mothers must have undergone a pregnancy while living with HIV in the last year. They are competitively recruited and are paid a salary for their important work. Currently, FACES has 45 mentor mothers working in 23 high-volume sites. Mentor mothers are a key part of FACES efforts to eliminate mother to child transmission and support healthy lives for women living with HIV.

**Program-wide, by the end of Sep. 2014,
83,802 patients were actively enrolled in
HIV care including 59,372 on antiretroviral
treatment (ART).**

FACES is a family-focused, comprehensive HIV prevention, care, and treatment program in Kenya. FACES initially launched services in September 2004 with a single site in Nairobi, and a second site in Kisumu, Nyanza region in March 2005. FACES now supports over 140 health facilities. FACES partners with the Kenya Ministry of Health to build local capacity for HIV service provision through training and mentorship. FACES is a collaboration between the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) and the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) and is funded by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through a cooperative agreement (CoAg # U2GPS001913) with the U.S. Centers for Disease and Control (CDC) and through private donations. For more information go to www.faces-kenya.org or visit our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/FACES.Kenya>

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