




**MoH**



for every child



PUNTLAND AIDS COMMISSION



Daryeel Network

# PLHIV Support Group Monthly Meeting

## Shir Bileedlaha Wacyigelinta HIV/AIDS

Implemented Date	Discussion Topic
19th-October-2023	HIV discordant capsules
20th-November-2023	Multiple concurrent sexual partnerships
6th-December-2023	PLHIV rights and accessing legal aid support Services

## **IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION**

**INTEGRATED SERVICE FOR DISPLACED PEOPLE  
(ISDP)**

## **LOCATIONS**

**BOSSASO GARDO, GAROWE, GALKAIO**

## **PLHIV S.G MONTHLY MEETING**

**QUARTERLY NARRATIVE REPORT**

## Background

Support groups for people living with HIV are integrated into HIV care and treatment programs as a modality for increasing patient literacy and as an intervention to address the psychosocial needs of patients. However, the impact of support groups on key health outcomes has not been fully determined.

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In addition to providing HIV education and fostering psychosocial support, recent efforts have shifted the focus to socio-economic activities and retention in care. The sense of urgency to adopt new treatment and prevention strategies, HIV Prevention and care Management engages to promote prevention strategies and optimize treatment as prevention to maximize the utility of support groups in doing so efforts to create an organized, collaborative framework should be considered.

This paper aims to describe the process of refocusing an adult HIV peer-support group and illustrate how a structured program was strengthened to sustain implementation research in resource-limited settings, while promoting patient recruitment and retention. Psychosocial support, nutrition care and support,

Adherence education and income generating projects were the main interventions employed. PLHIV SUPPORT GROUP MONTHLY successfully conducted in every month in each region such as Bossaso, Gardo, Garowe and Galkaio since we started this program which is participated by people living with HIV and registered with art centres, The benefits of monthly meeting PLHIV Support Group comprehensive to psychosocial support, microeconomic projects plan, and improved nutrition.

Support groups bring together people who are going through or have gone through similar experiences. A support group provides an opportunity for people to share personal experiences and feelings, coping strategies, or firsthand information about diseases or treatments.

For many people, a health-related support group may fill a gap between medical treatment and the need for emotional support. A person's relationship with a doctor or other medical personnel may not provide adequate emotional support, and a person's family and friends may not understand the impact of a disease or treatment. A support group among people with shared experiences may function as a bridge between medical and emotional needs.

## Introduction

Support group meetings were held on in every monthly in each region Bossaso, Gardo, Garowe and Galkaio in each month during. The meetings were platforms for group therapy and peer support during PLHIV S.G Monthly meeting. HIV health information was shared through oral presentations and group discussions led by members of the multi-disciplinary team. Information, education, nutrition support, ARV routine and communication materials sourced from partner institutions was disseminated during these meetings. Refreshments were provided at each meeting when resources were available. In a support group meetings were held meetings in each location.

Routine nutrition care and support was provided by WFP nutrition program. Support group members received group nutrition education and individual nutrition counseling for members with deteriorating nutrition status. ART doctors provided education and linkages to clinic and community-based nutrition programs to avoid introducing a parallel system to the government nutrition program at

As nutrition plays a crucial component for PLHIV, routine nutrition education, care and support was a core component for people living with HIV. New clients PLHIV were educated on basic nutrition requirements, healthy foods and received nutrition counseling. Support group as malnourished members would receive assistance from ISDP organization of advocating of people living with HIV while developing sustainable life skills to help and support of PLHIV people.

A PLHIV support group is a group of people living with HIV who come together to talk about the challenges, experiences and/or roles that they have in common within their society without being judged, blamed, stigmatized or isolated. Support groups often advocate for members' mutual goals and create awareness about shared challenges. PLHIV S.G action leads to development and enactment of policies that better serve PLHIV and advance supportive community environments in which group members can increase. Promoting peer educators especially case managers closely with the ART doctors and counselors by the support groups facilitated by trained PLHIV to address the special needs of fellow PLHIV and their partners.

The Support groups of monthly meeting held in each region are generally initiated and supported and implementing ISDP nongovernmental organizations, through engaging with ART centers.

HIV/AIDS sufferers who continue to experience an increase and are not given appropriate and continuous interventions will make the number of cases increase, because the factors ranging from promotive to rehabilitative must work together well. Promotional and preventive prevention must be continuously improved so that no new cases emerge. Curative action must be increased to improve ART and improve the

## **The purpose of HIV support groups Meetings**

The importance of promoting HIV prevention, awareness, and treatment, fighting stigma and discrimination, and supporting people in their fight against HIV. PLHIV support groups have become a cornerstone for those living with HIV/AIDS. These safe spaces provide emotional relief from the stigma, isolation, and loneliness that can come from having this life-altering diagnosis. They also provide education about treatments, therapies, and preventative care that help people manage their diagnosis while leading healthy lives.

People living with HIV need a unique and comprehensive level of care. Support groups provide a valuable resource for those managing the physical, mental, and emotional toll of this life-changing diagnosis.

An HIV support group typically consists of people living with HIV/AIDS as well as family members, friends, healthcare professionals, educators, and counselors. People living with HIV/AIDS Participants have the opportunity to share stories about living with the virus in a non-judgmental atmosphere where everyone is accepted for who they are.

There is no one right way to organize an HIV support group, just as there is no one right way to approach joining a support group. What matters most is that the group is comfortable for everyone who attends. If you are unsure whether or not a group is a right fit for you, consider speaking with a health care provider, licensed therapist, or HIV specialist. They can help you explore your options and find the right group for you.

PLHIV support group of monthly meeting serve the purpose of sharing experiences, encouraging disclosure, reducing stigma and discrimination, improving self-esteem, enhancing patients' coping skills and psychosocial functioning and supporting medication adherence and improved retention in HIV care. Specific populations' pregnant women, adolescents, or couples in discordant relationships. Support groups are also considered an intervention in the management of mental health issues, including alcohol and other substance abuse disorders. Feeling less lonely, isolated or judged, Reducing distress, depression, anxiety or fatigue, Talking openly and honestly about your feelings, Improving skills to cope with challenges, Staying motivated to manage chronic conditions or stick to treatment plans, Gaining a sense of empowerment, control or hope, Improving understanding of a disease and your own experience with it, Getting practical feedback about treatment options, Learning about health, economic or social resources

## Objects and Goals

- Adherence to irregular use of ARVs will increase the amount of virus in the patient's body
- The decrease in immunity that occurs has an impact on the worsening of the disease, the mistake of many opportunistic infections and will make the quality of life of the patient worse, thus affecting on the daily conditions of the patients
- Peer Group Support is effective in forming positive behaviours and new values in individuals who are members; support from peer groups has been shown to increase patient morale in the treatment process
- This intervention costs relatively low costs, and it is highly recommended that the health system continue to improve with peer support starting with anti-retroviral therapy (ART)
- Disclosure of HIV positive status, one of the potential benefits of support groups,
- The Mentor Mothers is considered an effective intervention to improve maternal and infant well-being among women living with HIV. They work alongside health care workers in the clinic and at community meetings to provide health education,
- to promote adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) and to promote disclosure of HIV status among other services.
- The impact of HIV support groups on ART adherence and treatment outcomes. In a systematic review that generally evaluated the impact of HIV support groups on clinical outcomes, support group participation was reported to be consistently beneficial on a range of morbidity outcomes including reduced frequency of HIV-related somatic and psychological symptoms, improved access to ART,
- ART adherence and treatment success, and moderately impactful on improving mortality and quality of life.
- Treatment success was measured as time to treatment failure or reduced risk of detectable change in CD4 count.

## PLHIV S.G Monthly Meeting Goals

The participation of peer groups is very important; peer groups which are special groups with the same conditions will make them support each other. This systematic review aims to analyze the effectiveness of peer group support to

- ✓ Decrease HIV stigma in our community
- ✓ Improve members' adherence to treatment
- ✓ Reduce lacking of knowledge in the community and in the family causing people with HIV/AIDS are often ostracized and get discriminatory behavior from society and families.

- ✓ Empowering people living namely, physical, social, emotional, and family problems which deny that their family members are sick. Some families choose to avoid and isolate their families because they feel ashamed to have infected family members.
- ✓ family support and treatment HIV/AIDS patients need so that the patient's improves, but if the family actually shows an attitude of rejection and does not care about the patient's condition and the family does not provide support to the patient,

## Specific Objectives

The specific of objectives of PLHIV support group monthly meeting in order to increase patient literacy and as an intervention to address the psychosocial needs of patients however the impact of support group on key health outcomes

- ❖ Encourages community members to go for HIV counselling and testing
- ❖ Encourages PLHIV to accept their status and live a positive life
- ❖ Deals with stigma and discrimination
- ❖ Clears up some myths surrounding HIV and AIDS
- ❖ Stimulates better support for people living with and affected by HIV
- ❖ To reduce sexual risk behaviors and optimize ART adherence, HIV/AIDS programs continue to explore interventions,
- ❖ Reduce stigma and enhance disclosure. Social support intervention is one such strategy.
- ❖ PLHIV support groups are the most common and popular way of providing social support for PLHIV.
  
- ❖ PLHIV support groups are comprised of PLHIV who come together to share challenges and experiences of living with HIV. While researchers have reported some benefits of social support to PLHIV
  
- ❖ reduced HIV-related stigma, increased HIV disclosure, safer sexual behaviors and ART adherence, there is limited information, about the benefits of participating in
- ❖ PLHIV support groups in terms of positively enhancing their behavioral outcomes. The purpose of this study was to examine the differences between PLHIV who participate in support groups and those who do not in terms of four key PLHIV behavior outcomes; HIV-related stigma, sexual risk behavior, positive HIV status disclosure and ART adherence.

## The benefits PLHIV Support Group of sharing personal experiences:

A support group is a safe place where you can talk about your emotions and circumstances with others who know how you feel and won't judge or criticize you. It can also help you to:

**Learn better coping strategies.** As you go through challenging circumstances, you may need to learn new ways to cope. At a support group, you'll learn coping skills from people who've found success using them first-hand. You might learn tips on meditating, journaling, or things you wouldn't have otherwise considered. You might also pick up new ways to set healthy boundaries and function better.

**Grow through shared experiences.** A support group gives you opportunities to get things off your chest. Sharing your own experiences with the group can help ease your emotional burden and feelings of isolation. As others in the group share their stories, you can gain valuable insight about how others deal with similar situations.

**Focus on self-care.** Support group participants may offer up innovative ideas for how to care for yourself, manage stress, combat fatigue, and feel mentally and physically stronger.

**Maintain a sense of hope.** Being around your fellow support group members can help boost your mood and sense of optimism, giving you the emotional reserves to realistically envision a better future.

**PLHIV S.G Participation:** Participation all members should be active in meetings and activities. Being active makes the group stronger and helps each member learn and trust more. To help this happen, the group leader or facilitator can:

A support group provides an opportunity for people to share personal experiences and feelings, coping strategies, or firsthand information about diseases or treatments. Support groups bring together people who are going through or have gone through similar experiences.

Sharing experiences allows members to give each other support, and to exchange practical information and ways of coping. It also allows participants to understand themselves better through the insights of others.

**Support Team:** PLHIV Support Group Monthly Meeting Participation of people living with HIV arranged by ART doctors In the regions and selects PLHIV clients had changed their lives of PLHIV S.G Monthly meeting and it helped Meaningful

participation. the participated partners with support PLHIV clients such as WFP, World Vision, ISDP, CMW, ART Doctors, implementing organisation ISDP, Daryeel Network, MOH, PAC, and program team such as Project coordinator, Field officer to support and guidance of legal aid support is essential by providing legal counsel and ensuring access to justice and puntland human right as equal and same rights for all citizens and every citizen have right to get justice.

**Confidentiality Area:** PLHIV Support Group sessions held once a month for each region such as Bossaso, Gardo, Garowe and Galkaio and held in the ART centre or at the Daryeel Network/ ISDP premises depending on feasibility, accessibility. The area chosen for the meeting should be a place that the PLHIV feel comfortable as well as they asked their consent to participate the meeting in order to keep their choices and congenitally as project their mental wellbeing And where they can get Counselling is the first step in the uptake of HIV/AIDS-related health care services Confidentiality thus establishes trust between the two parties because it enables clients to conceal their status.

#### **Discussion Topics selection Monthly**

Discussion PLHIV support group provides opportunities for PLHIV to participate in their care both at the health facility and their communities. However, most PLHIV are yet to hold PLHIV support group activities.

The finding that people aged below 25 years was less likely to participate in support group activities than those of higher age are consistent with young people's health seeking behavior. Generally, in Somalia social norms stigmatize young people and inhibit their health seeking behavior.

Such as HIV or to be pregnant because they are generally expected to abstain from sex until marriage. Consequently, young people tend to shy away from places where sexual reproductive health services are provided. This may explain why young PLHIV shun PLHIV support groups. To address this challenge, some programs have responded by establishing youth friendly service centres.

The finding that women were more likely to participate in support group activities than men is a reflection of gender imbalance. Generally,

PLHIV Support Group Monthly Meeting of arrangement and coordinations through ART Doctors in each region, Regional PLHIV leader, ISDP of implementing NGO and preparations in all necessary needed and we invited this meeting to WFP and World Vision to join us at our monthly meeting. At our monthly meeting, we talked about Family planning and dual protection and also, we talked about the scope card.



## PLHIV SUPPORT GROUP MONTHLY MEETING THE TOTAL REACHED IN EACH REGION QUARTER FOUR 2023

PLHIV SUPPORT GROUP MONTHLY MEETING BOSSASO,BARI REGION				
Implemented Date	Discussion Topic	# Female	# Male	TOTAL
19th-October-2023	HIV discordant capsules	13	7	20
20th-November-2023	Multiple concurrent sexual partnerships	12	8	20
6th-December-2023	PLHIV rights and accessing legal aid support Services	12	3	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>55</b>

PLHIV SUPPORT GROUP MONTHLY MEETING GARDO,KARKAAR REGION				
Implemented Date	Discussion Topic	# Female	# Male	TOTAL
19th-October-2023	HIV discordant capsules	9	6	15
20th-November-2023	Multiple concurrent sexual partnerships	9	1	10
6th-December-2023	PLHIV rights and accessing legal aid support Services	9	6	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>40</b>

PLHIV SUPPORT GROUP MONTHLY MEETING GAROWE,NUGAAL REGION				
Implemented Date	Discussion Topic	# Female	# Male	TOTAL
19th-October-2023	HIV discordant capsules	15	0	15
20th-November-2023	Multiple concurrent sexual partnerships	16	4	20
6th-December-2023	PLHIV rights and accessing legal aid support Services	16	4	20
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>55</b>

PLHIV SUPPORT GROUP MONTHLY MEETING GALKAIO REGION				
Implemented Date	Discussion Topic	# Female	# Male	TOTAL
19th-October-2023	HIV discordant capsules	16	4	20
20th-November-2023	Multiple concurrent sexual partnerships	16	4	20
6th-December-2023	PLHIV rights and accessing legal aid support Services	12	3	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>44</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>55</b>

PLHIV SUPPORT GROUP MONTHLY MEETING IN ALL 4 REGIONS PUNTLAND-SOMALIA				
Regions	Oct,2023	Nov,2023	Dec,2023	Total
1-Bossaso	20	20	15	55
2-Gardo	15	10	15	40
3-Garowe	15	20	20	55
4-Galkaio	20	20	15	55
<b>TOTAL REACHED</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>205</b>

PLHIV SUPPORT GROUP MONTHLY MEETING IN 4 REGIONS IN PUNTLAND			
MONTHLY	# Female	# Male	TOTAL
<b>BOSSASO,BARI REGION</b>	37	18	55
<b>GARDO,KARKAAR REGION</b>	27	13	40
<b>GAROWE,NUGAAL REGION</b>	47	8	55
<b>GALKAIO,MUDUG REGION</b>	44	11	55
<b>TOTAL REACHED</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>205</b>

## **PLHIV S.G Monthly Meeting Arrangement Time**

Support group monthly meetings usually occur once a month, depending on the situation and chance that it be possible to meet and their preparation of their local arrangement of the PLHIV clients which can participate of PLHIV S.G Monthly Meeting in each region. We Consulting with ART Doctors take a good role of preparation of the participants arrangement and appropriate time to make it happen of the meeting PLHIV S.G Monthly Meeting how long you will meet. We prepare for the meeting when its agreed WHEN/ WHERE/TIME.

## **Recommendations**

- HIV/AIDS control programmes have implemented a number of innovations to reduce sexual risk and enhance ART adherence and retention among PLHIV, stigma and non-disclosure of positive HIV status remain daunting challenges
- The outstanding to the knowledge that public health impact of ART in reducing HIV transmission and enhancing treatment outcomes significantly depends on how much PLHIV adhere to the prescribed daily dosing regimens of antiretroviral medicines and reduce risky sexual behaviors.
- PLHIV who participated in support group activities were more likely to have less internal HIV-related stigma, disclose their positive HIV status, adhere to ART and live less risky sexual lives. These findings suggest that PLHIV who participate in support group activities are more likely to adopt positive behaviors than those who do not.
- Educational improvement of people living with HIV Lack of education
- Income generation support of small scale of business orient
- Reduce isolation and discrimination while encouraging acceptance around HIV/AIDS.
- Balanced nutrition plays an important role in maintaining well-being and long-term life, regardless of living with HIV/AIDS. Nutrition
- To create awareness on the need for and the benefits of using dual methods by all sexually active HIV infected partners as a way of promoting the reproductive rights of women to safer sex and birth control.
- HIV prevention services to start promoting dual protection with dual methods. In the long-term, the development of highly efficacious and highly acceptable methods of dual protection.
- To provide emotional support and coping mechanisms to those people who are undergoing a difficult time in their lives, and are willing to be part of a support group

**Conclusions:** PLHIV support group Implementing support groups as intervention is expected to have a high impact on morbidity and retention in care and a moderate impact on mortality and quality of life of PLHIV, it shows that peer group support is very useful in improving the of HIV/AIDS patients, because it can monitor each other's health conditions.

