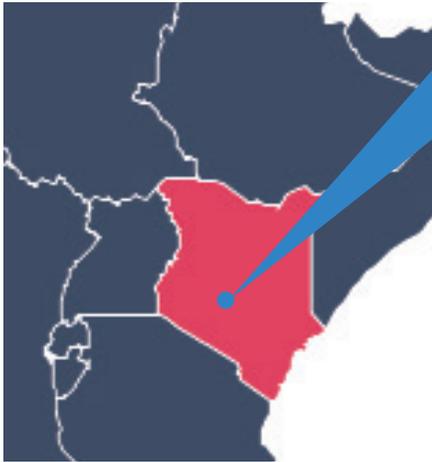




» PEER LEARNING TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY-BASED ACCESS TO QUALITY MEDICINE IN NAIROBI



Program Name: Access Afya
Type of Program: Health Center
Location: Nairobi, Kenya
Partner: Afya Research Africa
Type of partnership: Knowledge Exchange
Origin: CHMI Website Messaging
Result: Access Afya was able to better navigate Kenya's regulatory environment.
Potential Impact: Access Afya opened for business sooner than it would have otherwise, and is currently serving 60-90 clients per day.

SUMMARY

Access Afya is a new social enterprise aiming to provide reliable, high quality care to inaccessible parts of Nairobi. Access Afya opened for business in December, 2012 after a year of planning and design by Melissa Menke, co-founder and CEO. Access Afya currently operates a 12x15 "mini-clinic" in Kisii Village, a slum neighborhood in Nairobi. Melissa adapted elements of M-Afya Kiosks, which she learned about through CHMI. Though she didn't replicate it wholesale, she did maintain the kiosk approach by locating the clinic directly in a slum neighborhood.

KEY STEPS IN FORMING PARTNERSHIP

Melissa Menke learned about Afya Research Africa's kiosk pilot from the Center for Health Market Innovations. She realized their models shared many similarities, including the fact that they are both Kenya-based and both planning to utilize kiosks and information technology.

- Melissa joined the CHMI community to learn more about similar models and develop her network of organizations innovating to improve health systems.
- Given the commonalities between their visions, Melissa contacted Afya Research Africa through a CHMI message.
- Melissa met with Afya Research Founder founder Dr.

Sam Gwer several times in Nairobi.

- Melissa visited Dr. Gwer's pilot, noting that while kiosks got health workers closer to the community and are easier to replicate, organizations were limited in the variety of services they can provide from a kiosk.
- Melissa ultimately decided to open what is officially a "Level 2" health center. Using Dr. Gwer's advice on how to interact with Kenya's different government boards, she also benefited from his introductions to people in regulatory agencies.
- Dr. Gwer now serves on Access Afya's board and continues to serve as a mentor.

IMPACT

The knowledge exchange that took place between Afya Research Africa and Access Afya enabled Access Afya to open its doors sooner, and pass through regulatory procedures more quickly:

- M-Afya's "kiosk" model inspired Access Afya to pursue a similar, distributed healthcare model.
- Though Access Afya ultimately decided to provide a wider range of services in order to reduce referrals for patients, it did maintain the commitment to being

accessible, placing its mini-clinic directly within the community.

- Dr. Gwer advised Melissa on how to navigate Kenya's complicated regulatory system.
- Dr. Gwer accelerated the process by talking with his network of contacts and made sure that Access Afya didn't get lost in the masses of paperwork.

ACCESS AFYA

Access Afya is a new social enterprise striving to improve Kenya's healthcare delivery system. Access Afya is creating a network of high-tech health centers that provide consultations, information, on-site diagnostics, and authentic medication. Access Afya brings health workers and supplies directly to poor communities, enabling people to seek care early. The model relies on technology to improve its effectiveness, creating an electronic medical record for each patient and leveraging mobiles to send SMS reminders to patients about appointments, medications, and to follow up on referrals. Patients pay small fees, which are a result of Access Afya's lean staffing model, efficient management systems, and focus on simple diagnostics and maternal health. These fees help to make each mini-clinic a self-sustaining operation.

AFYA RESEARCH AFRICA

Afya Research Africa is a non-profit making organization established in 2008 committed to fostering research in human health and promoting best practices in the provision of healthcare in Africa. Its pilot program, M-Afya Kiosks, aims to deliver antenatal care for the poor. They install community kiosks, enabling close, quality monitoring of expectant mothers, and promoting access to skilled delivery. Through these kiosks and related mobile phone systems, they connect the community to healthcare to ensure timely recognition of danger signs in pregnancy, prompt access to health facilities, and quick action by the health workers. Their program also incorporates a money saving scheme for expectant mothers.

CHMI impact stories

CHMI connects innovative health programs with potential partners who can help them scale up, replicate, or improve healthcare services. This case study series highlights examples of successful partnerships created through CHMI that are making quality healthcare more affordable and accessible in low- and middle-income countries.

» *This story was compiled through an interview with Melissa Menke.*

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