



# Tanzania

## Country Context

In the midst of a mature, generalized AIDS epidemic and burdened by other communicable and non-communicable diseases, Tanzania's health and social welfare systems face many challenges. About 1.4 million Tanzanians are living with HIV and there is an average adult HIV prevalence estimated at 4.7 percent, according to UNAIDS. Strengthening the health system to better respond to public health challenges, as well as the country's HIV epidemic, is impeded by a severe shortage of trained human resources for health, inadequate infrastructure, and overburdened logistics systems and supply chains, among other factors.

The complexity of Tanzania's HIV/AIDS epidemic requires a comprehensive management system of prevention, care, and treatment services, which encompasses diverse clinical, biomedical, and psycho-social interventions along the cascade of HIV/AIDS care. Sustainable outcomes can only be reached if Tanzania has a healthcare workforce with the necessary skills mix.

With support from PEPFAR and the US team in country, AIHA has been working toward an AIDS Free Generation by building sustainable institutional and human resource capacity for health in Tanzania since 2005.

## Strengthening Nursing Services on a National Level

Nurses constitute the largest healthcare provider workforce in Tanzania. They are frontline caregivers providing specialized treatment and care to people living with HIV (PLHIV), as well as broader clinical services to the entire population. With support from PEPFAR and CDC/Tanzania, AIHA has been working to strengthen the profession and ensure an adequate supply and quality of nurses in the country since 2005 through our dynamic Tanzania Nursing Initiative (TNI).



*In response to Tanzania's severe lack of health and allied professionals, AIHA's health system strengthening efforts largely focus on developing sustainable, locally driven, and locally owned projects to effectively train human resources for health.*

Over the years, TNI has evolved from an institutional partnership created to strengthen nursing school capacity to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to provide quality care, to a multi-pillared national project that supports improved recruitment, deployment, and retention for this critical cadre that has long been on the front lines of HIV/AIDS treatment, care, and prevention.

TNI stakeholders have included the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children's (MoHCDGEC) Nursing Training Unit and the Directorate of Nurse and Midwifery Services, the Tanzania Nurses and Midwives Council (TNMC), the School of Nursing at Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, the Tanzania National Nurses Association (TANNA), World Services of La Crosse, Inc., Winona State University College of Nursing, and the University of Michigan School of Nursing.

Together, AIHA and these broad-based partners have provided the targeted and ongoing technical assistance needed to build capacity for sustainable, professional nurse training and practice in the country. The project encompasses faculty training and mentoring, development of

competency-based curricula, and support for training institutions.

A crucial initial accomplishment of TNI was the development and roll out of an HIV/AIDS care training package, which included creation of a multi-module curriculum, training more than 300 nurse tutors, and implementing the program at 72 nursing schools throughout the country.



**AIHA's Tanzania Nursing Initiative uses a structured and holistic approach focused on four key areas:**

- **Education**  
*curriculum and faculty development, school support*
- **Nursing Regulation**  
*improving the safety of nursing service delivery and public protection through licensure and examinations*
- **Association Building**  
*advocacy, improving the public's perception of nurses and nursing care*
- **National Authorities**  
*policy development, nursing leadership development*

Partners also improved learning environments at targeted schools through the installation of skills labs, International Council of Nursing Mobile Libraries, and a pilot tablet project designed to strengthen nursing education by enhancing access to up-to-date texts and evidence-based resources.

In January 2017, AIHA graduated TNI partners involved with the education pillar as priorities for technical assistance shifted to the development of regulatory mechanisms to support Tanzania's new task sharing policy, which empowers nurses, social workers, and allied health cadres to provide HIV/AIDS-related services. This new focus entails revising existing scopes of practice to incorporate HIV counseling and testing services, nurse initiated and managed ART (NIMART), pharmaceutical dispensing, and adherence counseling, as well as providing training to up-skill these cadres in preparation for their expanded roles in the provision of treatment, care, and support services for PLHIV.

In support of the other three pillars, AIHA has been providing direct technical assistance to Tanzania's Directorate of Nursing and Midwifery Services to bolster its capacity to oversee the provision of quality nursing and midwifery services throughout the country; helping to strengthen TNMC's ability to build capacity of nursing supervisory authorities at the regional and district levels; and building TANNA's capacity to promote nursing excellence, influence health policy, and advocate for its 13,000 members nationwide.

Key recent accomplishments of this dynamic initiative include identifying HIV/AIDS competency gaps and working with the Ministry of Health to upgrade training in prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT), gender based violence (GBV), violence against children (VAC), family planning, voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC), and services for key populations for both certificate and diploma-level curricula.

Partners also conducted PMTCT Option B+ trainings for 100 nurse tutors from high-burden districts across Tanzania and AIHA provided technical support to the Ministry's Directorate of Nurse and Midwifery Services on the development of the national nursing scheme of service, updates to the scope of practice for nurses and midwives, and revised job descriptions for nurses and midwives based on the task sharing policy. In addition, AIHA helped to develop Respectful and Compassionate Care Guidelines for Nurses and Midwives, which will help nurses improve quality of and retention in care for PLHIV.

In response to Tanzania's new task sharing policy, TANNA developed an advocacy plan that is guiding the association's advocacy efforts to strengthen and promote the professional development of nurses, advance their economic and general welfare, and increase and strengthen the positive image of nurses in Tanzania.

Under the aegis of TNI, the Directorate of Nurse and Midwifery Services completed a baseline assessment to determine how implementation of the task sharing policy and Test and Start by nurses can effectively position Tanzania to attain the global 90-90-90 targets by 2020.

TNI partners selected 12 priority districts in six Ministerial zones for data collection on identified NIMART indicators — key national HIV/AIDS and PEPFAR indicators that can demonstrate the role of nurses in the continuum of HIV-related services. The results of the baseline assessment provide a unique opportunity not only to gain a clear picture of where real needs are and where investments can make a significant difference, but also a means to implement the NIMART intervention systematically while scientifically gauging impact.

## Strengthening Community Home-based Care to Improve HIV/AIDS Outcomes

Tanzania's National Community Based Health Care Strategic Plan for 2014-2020 calls for strengthening community involvement and participation to improve health outcomes. In response to the country's shortages of trained human resources for health, the Government of Tanzania has reiterated its willingness to revive and integrate the Community Health Worker (CHW) cadre into the national health workforce as a way to ensure the reliability, availability, efficacy, and organizational sustainability of this important sub-set of care providers.

AIHA is working with the President's Office Regional and Local Government Administration and other stakeholders to provide targeted technical assistance, including developing standardized national HIV/AIDS quality improvement guidelines, a comprehensive training package, and standard operating procedures that will be used to build the capacity of community quality improvement teams to effectively support the provision of quality healthcare services offered at the community level.

## Developing Local Capacity in Biomedical Engineering and Technology

Tanzania faces a shortage of qualified biomedical engineers and technicians needed to repair and maintain HIV/AIDS diagnostic equipment. It is estimated that a significant number of hematology, CD4, and microbiology lab machines are not working in Tanzania at any given time, which results in service gaps and compromises ongoing virological monitoring. This, in turn, inhibits Tanzania's ability to reach UN 90-90-90 targets by 2020.

In response, AIHA worked with the Ministry of Health's Health Care Technical Services from 2017-2018 to ensure that biomedical engineers and technicians are adequately trained and deployed to ensure availability of comprehensive, quality HIV diagnostic services in support of the HIV/AIDS care and treatment cascade.

Key accomplishments include the development of a training curriculum on viral load machine maintenance in collaboration with biomedical engineering training institutions and viral load equipment suppliers. The curriculum was used to train 25 biomedical technicians and 36 laboratory personnel, including lab managers, from 18 viral load facilities to provide first-line and preventative maintenance of the machines to ensure availability and quality viral load monitoring services. To ensure sustainability, a TOT was conducted with 10 biomedics to equip them with the knowledge and skills to continue providing viral load training after the close of the project.

## Strengthening the Social Welfare Workforce to Improve Care for Vulnerable Children

From 2006 to 2016, AIHA's twinning partnership linking the Tanzania Institute of Social Work (ISW) with Jane Addams College of Social Work and the Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center (MATEC) at the University of Illinois in Chicago worked in close collaboration with Tanzania's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to strengthen the country's social work profession.

A particular focus was on training a new community-level social service cadre called Para Social Workers (PSWs) in key social work, case management, psychosocial support, and child development skills, so they are better able to address the needs of most vulnerable populations, including orphans living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and PLHIV.

The comprehensive, multi-stage training program arms PSWs with the knowledge and skills they need to identify children and households most at risk for HIV infection then provide necessary care or referrals to other organizations for needed services. The case management approach PSWs employ helps ensure vulnerable children and their caregivers have access to a holistic support continuum that includes health and allied care, education, nutrition, legal, and other needed services. In 2016, the US and Tanzanian partners updated the PSW curriculum, including enhanced HIV/AIDS competencies to support global 90-90-90 targets and an expanded focus on linkages and referrals to HIV counseling and testing services.

Under the partnership, AIHA and our partners supported the June 2012 launch of a companion social welfare workforce strengthening program representing the next step on a career ladder to enhance the country's social support system. The Tanzania Social Welfare Assistant Program is year-long certificate program that prepares PSWs or others with similar backgrounds for employment in ward-level social welfare roles. The Social Welfare Assistant (SWA) course includes seven months of classroom work and two months of supervised field work.

In collaboration with the Tanzania Human Resource Capacity Project, AIHA and our partners have fully trained 2,747 certified PSWs; 743 PSW supervisors; and 103 master trainers. In addition, another 4,790 individuals have completed PSW I training. ISW now leads all related technical assistance and quality control efforts for implementation of the PSW training.



*PSW training has empowered more than 7,500 community-based caregivers such as Edithrose Moyo, pictured here with orphan Mohamed Shurkuru, to better provide support vulnerable children and families. In 2005, Moyo founded Nira Children and Youth Orphans Foundation in Dar es Salaam's Temeke District, one of the poorest in the city, with untold thousands of children in desperate need of assistance.*

Tanzania's Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children has set a goal of training 6,000 individuals through the SWA program as a means to bridge the human resource gap and strengthen the country's overstretched health and social welfare workforce. The efforts and benefits of a trained social welfare workforce ensure fewer patients are lost to follow up and support continuity of care across community and clinic-based service providers. A total of 140 SWAs have completed training at the Kisangara Institute of Social Welfare and were deployed at the ward level, where they provide case management services to vulnerable populations and supportive supervision to PSWs.

Another important component of this initiative is strengthening the social work profession in Tanzania through support for the Tanzania Association of Social Workers (TASWO). AIHA is supporting TASWO's efforts to expand opportunities for social work professional development and continuing education, as well as working with partners to help establish a National Social Work Council to regulate the profession.

In response to Tanzania's new task sharing policy and the expanded roles of social workers, TASWO conducted a baseline assessment to determine how social welfare cadres can effectively meet national indicators for social welfare services and HIV/AIDS care and treatment services. An assessment was conducted in 18 PEPFAR priority districts across six zones, and data analysis is currently under way. TASWO also supported the revision of the scheme of service for social workers to better align with task sharing.

Through the project, AIHA and our partners also supported the Tanzania Emerging Schools of Social Work Program (TESWEP) to strengthen the country's capacity to provide quality social work education. This component focused on building the capacity of 14 schools of social work throughout Tanzania by standardizing curricula and providing a broad range of faculty support, training, and development activities. For example, in 2016 a MATEC Consultant worked with field practicum coordinators from three schools that offer Masters of Social Work (MSW) programs to improve learning environments for students during field placements. TESWEP was recently registered as an autonomous organization called the Association of Schools of Social Work in Tanzania (ASSWOT), which is dedicated to becoming the nation's leader in supporting social work education and educators.

To that end, ASSWOT has formed a strong working relationship with the Ministry and, in 2016, conducted a meeting to share findings from a situational analysis that assessed HIV/AIDS competencies in social work education across the country; collaborated with MoHCDEG to find ways that the country's schools of social work can utilize the national system for managing training institutions data; and began installing the Training Institutions Information System (TIIS) at the schools to facilitate integration of their data into the Ministry's system as a way to enhance HRH planning.

## Building Capacity of Home-based Care Providers

Home-based care (HBC) is a crucial component of the holistic approach necessary to care for PLHIV and other life-limiting illnesses, yet both hospital and home-based palliative services are extremely limited in Tanzania.

From 2007 to 2015, AIHA partners at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania's Pare Diocese and an Iowa-based consortium led by Empower Tanzania worked to change that by training both medical and non-medical workers to provide high quality care and support to adults and children living with HIV.

Upon completion of the project, they trained more than 300 community health workers at 21 target sites in the Same and Mwanza districts. These HBC workers routinely conducted home visits with patients, providing much-needed care to more than 3,973 patients. In addition, partners trained 10 sustaining trainers/clinical supervisors, who provide complementary services and oversight for the community health workers affiliated with their respective sites.

Partners also established a Patient Support and Care Center that assists in centralizing information and resources. It also provides continuous, sustainable training opportunities for community health workers.

To gain more buy-in from the local government to better ensure long-term sustainability of the program, AIHA and our HBC program partners established a successful collaboration with Community Health Management Teams and local government officials. Upon graduation of the program, both Same and Mwanza district Medical Officers pledged to include funding for HBC services in their annual budgets based on the success of the AIHA-supported program. In 2015, AIHA worked to further institutionalize quality improvement practices that sustain reductions in morbidity, mortality, and HIV transmission in support of Tanzania's efforts to achieve an AIDS-free generation as an HBC technical assistance provider to the President's Office Local and Regional Government Administration.

## Strengthening Laboratory Capacity to Achieve Accreditation

Medical labs in Tanzania are faced with a severe shortage of qualified staff who are capable of supporting care and treatment services. AIHA began working with the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children's Diagnostic Services Section in 2006, linking them with experts at Boulder Community Hospital (BCH) in Colorado to strengthen the capacity of regional labs, with a particular focus on improving the quality of HIV diagnosis and treatment monitoring services.

A key component of this partnership, which graduated in March 2015, was providing ongoing mentorship to ensure proper implementation of standard operational procedures and quality standards. AIHA supported placement of some 40 lab mentors at 23 regional sites where they provided technical assistance, monitoring, and quality control. Additionally, we provided more than 50 lab workers with professional development opportunities while BCH experts trained Tanzanian lab mentors in quality systems essentials, which is in turn enabling them to support the efforts of regional labs to attain 3-star accreditation through the Strengthening Laboratory Management through Accreditation (SLMTA) Program. SLMTA aims to strengthen lab management, achieve immediate lab improvement, and accelerate the process toward accreditation based on international standards. By the completion of the project, three participating labs had attained a one-star rating on WHO's SLIPTA scale and Temeke Hospital Lab earned the country's first 3-star rating.



*Temeke Hospital Lab earned Tanzania's first 3-star rating on WHO's SLIPTA scale as a result of their participation in AIHA's regional lab project.*

## Preventing HIV by Adopting a Recovery Oriented System of Care

From 2008 to 2013, AIHA worked with key stakeholders in Zanzibar and mainland Tanzania to mitigate the impact that substance abuse and addiction play in the transmission of HIV, as well as adherence to treatment for people already living with the virus. The Great Lakes Addiction Transfer and Technology Center and the Detroit Recovery Project provided technical assistance to introduce a comprehensive, evidence-based approach with a strong focus on a recovery oriented system of care (ROSC). Services were designed to assist peers in recovery by building individual, social, and community resources to promote long-term recovery.

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