



Afya Research Africa: Accessible and Affordable Health Kiosks

In Kenya, for every 205 successful deliveries, one mother dies, and for every 19 who are born, one baby dies within the first month. More than 50 percent of Kenyan women deliver at home, mostly in rural areas and informal urban settlements without skilled birth attendants, and where there is limited access to baby wellness support, contraception, and other reproductive health services. Health care in rural and low-income areas is primarily provided by government or faith-based health facilities, which may not be accessible and often lack reliable supplies of medicines. Economic conditions among the rural population and urban poor makes it difficult to attend health clinics if they are not easily accessible, or to save for future health care needs. The HANSHEP Health Enterprise Fund, implemented by the SHOPS project, selected Afya Research Africa (ARA) to receive a grant to start a chain of health kiosks in hard-to-reach areas that offer affordable care alongside other in-demand services.

The Business Model

ARA increases access to health care for the poor in rural and semi-urban areas through community-owned health kiosks. Many of these communities are miles from a major road and significant distances from public health facilities. ARA works with communities to identify gaps in accessing affordable, quality health care. Community self-help groups or savings collectives have shared ownership of the kiosks. These groups contribute labor and monetary resources to build or refurbish the kiosks. ARA pays for start-up costs including medical equipment, initial stock of medicines, and patient and inventory management systems. In low-volume, rural areas, the kiosks are run by a trained community health worker or nurse, and supported by regular attending clinicians. In high-volume kiosks, a clinical officer is available at all times.

The kiosks provide a variety of basic health services, with a focus on maternal and child health and reproductive health. Family planning counseling is offered with several methods, including condoms, oral contraceptives, and injectables. The kiosks provide antenatal services, well baby assessments, and link women with transport services once in labor or if complications present. The kiosks also provide services for chronic diseases, including blood pressure monitoring and glucose checks. Consultations, basic diagnostics, and medicines are sold on a fee-for-service basis at greatly subsidized prices.



Afya Research Africa

Yeemulwa clinic, which serves a rural community 12 km from the nearest health clinic

Grantee at a Glance

- Vision: Improve access to quality health care and create wealth for low-income communities
- Innovation type: Accessible and affordable health kiosks co-owned by the community
- Health focus: Family planning and reproductive health, maternal and child health, non-communicable diseases
- Target population: Low-income populations in hard-to-reach areas
- Country: Kenya

As an additional revenue stream, each kiosk offers at least one other income-generating activity chosen and managed by the community. Activities include safe water sales, soft drink depots, motorbike taxi services, and mobile money transfer services. Each kiosk also sells basic health and hygiene supplies. The resulting income is used to subsidize the cost of clinical services and supplement community savings funds, supporting a positive cash flow.

Expanding Access to Priority Health Services

Through the HANSHEP Health Enterprise Fund, SHOPS supported ARA in establishing their health kiosks, which now comprise a network of 12 kiosks across Kenya. Each kiosk is equipped with supplies for basic reproductive health and chronic disease management, and is staffed with a health care worker. With technical assistance from SHOPS, ARA determined an appropriate financial structure and developed a model that facilitates joint ownership with clinical officers and communities. This model resulted in the creation of their social enterprise sister company, Ubuntu Healthcare, and the rebranding of kiosks as Ubuntu Afya.

Monitoring and evaluation training provided by the fund led ARA to develop an electronic medical record system to integrate each kiosk's clinical data with inventory and revenue tracking in a single platform. Through additional funding, SHOPS is supporting installation of solar panels and connection to the electric power supply, which will allow the kiosks to maintain a cold chain to provide immunizations and to improve patient tracking through the

electronic health system. SHOPS is also working with ARA to deploy clinicians more frequently at the kiosks, increasing technical service provision, including long-acting contraceptives, circumcision, and limited emergency obstetric services.

The Impact

“ We now have a clinic at our door step. Our people are very happy. We will be healthy. Our families will be healthy. And we are also making wealth for the community.”

— Peter Ngovi, trustee, Yeemulwa Self Help Group, Makueni

Within a year of establishing the first kiosk, ARA has provided services to over 8,000 clients. Of those clients, over 1,300 received reproductive health and family planning services, including contraceptive provision and treatment for sexually transmitted infections. The kiosks also provided over 1,400 women and children with maternal and child health care, and over 400 clients received HIV testing and counseling. ARA's model of diversifying revenue through community chosen enterprises has proven successful, with the first nine kiosks generating over \$27,000 in revenue and recovering 99 percent of their operating costs during their first year. Some kiosks have even paid out small dividends to community members. As the kiosks continue to expand their service offerings, ARA forecasts increased revenue and commensurately having a greater impact on the health outcomes of its partner communities.

For more information about the HANSHEP Health Enterprise Fund, contact:

Caroline Quijada, Deputy Director
SHOPS Project
caroline_quijada@abtassoc.com

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For more information about the SHOPS project, visit: www.shopsproject.org



Abt Associates Inc.
4550 Montgomery Avenue, Suite 800 North
Bethesda, MD 20814 USA
Telephone: 301.347.5000 • Fax: 301.913.6019
www.abtassociates.com