

Regional Update 2018

East African Region

In 2018, North Star East Africa continued their unrelenting resolve to serve mobile populations and the communities with which they interact. Traversing the northern and Dar transport corridors, our team of 65 regional office and clinic staff, remained fully committed to making sure quality healthcare and road safety education was being accessed by some of the hardest to reach communities within the region. Our unique ability to work with these marginalised populations endears us to the clients who repeatedly visit our Blue Box clinics time and again, due to the confidence and trust they have in our services.



When perspectives
unite

#thepowerofmany

Together,
we can change
the world.



Throughout the year the team oversaw the implementation of a range of projects. In Tanzania we continued our work with our long-term partners the Trafigura and Puma Energy Foundations together with related corporates Impala and Puma Energy, by proceeding with the implementation of the Health and Safe Supply Chains project. This is a hugely significant initiative which continues to attract the attention of partners from within the transport industry. Truck drivers from a record 454 transport companies received services from our blue boxes in 2018,

where they accessed essential health services as well as advice and consultation on road safety. North Star were also invited to join, and are now represented on the Executive Road Safety Committee. Our partner SHOPS Plus, hired a consultant to register our Blue Box clinics with the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDEC). This now means there'll be a far smoother and efficient flow of medical supplies, as well as an introduction of ART services to these clinics.

In Uganda we worked with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) via Family Health International (FHI 360), on a project which aims to catalyse and support sustainable and African-led regional health development partnerships, as well as improve health outcomes among mobile workers. One of the key outcomes from this project was an improvement in our programming, especially in terms of North Star's contribution towards the achievement of the 90-90-90 goals. Meanwhile in Kenya, we continued to implement a HIV prevention project funded by the Centre for Disease Control (CDC), which is managed through Hope Worldwide Kenya (HWWK). The project saw us further strengthen our HIV care and treatment among sex workers and other key populations.

We also worked on an action-oriented piece of research with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), which was titled "Exploring the barriers to HIV treatment and care among young people (15-24 years) who use injectable drugs of addiction along routes of commerce in coastal Kenya". Preliminary findings have demonstrated that although young people who inject drugs have knowledge of HIV and testing services, there are some who experience difficulties in accessing HIV prevention resources such as clean needles and syringes, and drug treatment, with violence and harassment also identified as an access barrier. Policy briefs on these key topics are currently being developed, and will be disseminated within the year. The research was implemented in collaboration with local partners Reachout Center Trust and Wacha Health.'



In October we celebrated the reopening of the Mlolongo Wellness Centre with a colourful ceremony that was attended by the Deputy Governor of Machakos County, as well as North Star's Supervisory Board and Senior Officers from 24 partner organisations. Our partner the Dioraphte Foundation funded the renovation of the Mlolongo site, which has now become the largest clinic in our network. There was further reason to celebrate in December, when we opened our new clinic in Namanve in Uganda, near Kampala City, which came about as a direct result of the funding increase we received from Aidsfonds. The launch was also officially marked with an opening ceremony, attended by the Mayor of Mukono Municipal Council, together with senior officials from the Ministry of Health, the Ugandan AIDS Commission, local traffic police, as well as other representatives from the transport sector.

Our work with Aidsfonds further continued in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda where they supported North Star towards increasing access to health services among sex workers, whilst raising their awareness of reproductive rights. Through the Aidsfonds project, North Star has further strengthened cordial relationships with stakeholders particularly the Ministries of Health within the respective countries.



We continued our participation in the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) secondment programme by welcoming two new secondees who worked with us in both our Southern and Eastern regions. Dimitri Bois is employed as a Senior Project Leader at J&J and spent six months with our East African team, during which he lent North Star his valuable expertise and supported us in improving our inventory management practices. This will enable both the regional office and our clinics, to ensure there's a sufficient level of stock and supply of medication across the region. The newly proposed ideas were introduced in Maai Mahiu and Dar es Salaam outside clinics and will be rolled out across the rest of our network in 2019.

Following the decision for North Star to move towards a matrix model, Senior Managers from our East African team have become actively involved in the monthly matrix calls, which are led by the Executive Director. This transformation is not only providing an opportunity for managers to participate in the leadership of the organisation, but also strengthens the flow of information, as well as the sharing of best practice and learning between the East and Southern African regions. Colleagues have also been collaborating between the two regions and undertaking a variety of activities which have produced some excellent results, particularly with regards to data and stock management. To this end, the prospects for a fully-fledged matrix organisation will soon begin to bear fruit.

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