

## **reducing HIV prevalence through promoting and sustaining behaviour change among people who inject drugs (pwids) in nigeria.**

### Issues:

Peer-based behavioral change intervention Project by Center for the Right to Health (CRH) aims to reduce HIV prevalence among Injection Drug Users despite limitations in providing Drug-User-Specific interventions such as needle syringe program and opioid substitution therapy in-country.

### Descriptions:

The prevalence of HIV among PWIDs in Nigeria is 4.2% (IBBSS 2010) which is greater than the National Prevalence of 4.1% (ANC 2010) with prevalence among female PWIDs about 7 times higher than among male PWIDs (IBBSS, 2010).

CRH is currently implementing HIV Prevention intervention for Injection Drug Users in 9 States in Nigeria (Lagos, Rivers, Edo, Enugu, Ebonyi, Anambra, Abia, Akwa-Ibom and Cross Rivers). The Minimum Prevention Package Intervention (MPPI) strategies were developed to address key challenges identified during a baseline survey conducted prior to the project commencement. Procedure for implementing strategy for intervention include Peer education which involves targeted messages to address issues related to behavioral change and healthy living interactively discussed in modules.

### **Outcome**

Between January 2013 and June 2015 a total of 4126 PWIDs have been reached with these strategies. PWIDs reached across States reported Reduction in needle & syringe sharing, Reduction in unprotected sexual activity, Access to safer sex products.

### **Limitations of intervention**

- Other interventions, in particular access to ART, Hepatitis and Tuberculosis diagnosis, prevention and treatment, are not documented or lacking, including the evidence.
- The concept of harm reduction is not fully accepted yet in Nigeria, including among the stakeholders.
- Drug detoxification and rehabilitation services are limited in the country.
- Empowerment program lacking

### Lessons learned:

- Intervention for PWIDs requires holistic approach.
- Building capacity of target beneficiaries promotes sustainability
- Respecting the uniqueness of the community has enhanced interventions

### Next steps:

- There is urgent need to invest in research across board.
- Policy advocacy and capacity building is needed for Law Enforcement Agencies on harm reduction and human rights approach to IDU at the highest level.
- Capacity building of service providers, including CSOs, on the provision of harm reduction and access to HIV and other infectious diseases treatment services for IDU.