

Pathfinder in Kenya: Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Building a Healthier Future for All



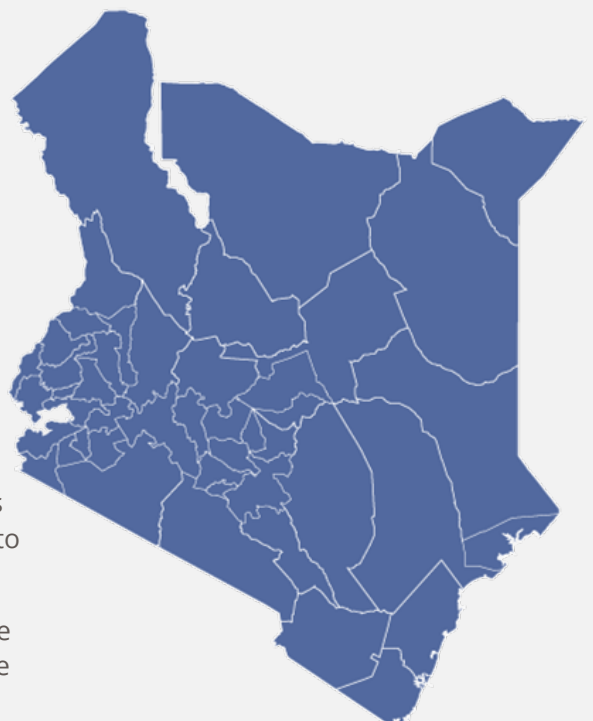
Doris Jumwa and her husband, Peter, with their two-month-old daughter, Esther, whom she had after a c-section thanks to Pathfinder's interventions. Photo Credit: Maren Vespia

About Pathfinder

Pathfinder works globally to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights. We support women, young people, and their communities by expanding access to quality health care and opportunities to thrive. Driven by our country-led leadership and local community partners, Pathfinder has contributed to stronger health systems in dozens of countries, building trusted networks of reproductive health services for millions of people around the world every year. Our integrated programs, informed and driven by local needs and insights, are increasingly designed to enhance communities' resilience to shocks, including conflicts, climate change, pandemics, and natural disasters.

Mission: We build lasting and trusted local partnerships to strengthen health systems, forging resilient pathways to sexual and reproductive rights for all.

Vision: We envision a world where everyone, even in the most challenging environments, has what they need to be healthy, thrive, and live the life they choose.



Pathfinder in Kenya

For more than 60 years, Pathfinder has partnered with the Government of Kenya and local organizations to strengthen health systems, and establish and support high-quality, client-centered family planning and sexual and reproductive health, and HIV and AIDS prevention, care, and treatment services. We have provided substantial guidance, training, and technical support to 250 local partners, including the Ministry of Health, and civil society, faith-based, and community-based organizations. Our programs have contributed to improving and sustaining high-quality, evidence-based, rights-centered, youth-responsive, and gender-sensitive health care.

Pathfinder has worked with our local partners in Kenya to make substantial contributions to strengthening the health system, advancing adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights, enhancing quality and reach of family planning services, improving maternal and newborn care, preventing and treating HIV and AIDS, advocating for policies that advance rights and improve health, and building resilience in communities most afflicted by the impacts of climate change and other shocks. Our projects have been anchored in existing systems and structures, enhancing community ownership, long-term sustainability, and potential for scale. Some project highlights over the last two decades follow.

Current Projects

Uzazi Salama

Mpesa Foundation

Uzazi Salama, led by Amref Health Africa in partnership with Pathfinder, Pharm Access Foundation, and Action Aid Kenya, seeks to increase access to and use of quality reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child, adolescent health, family planning, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene services. The project supports three health facilities, serving five community health units in Ndhiwa Sub-County of Homabay County.

Results

- Trained 336 community members to increase community awareness and promote behavior change.
- Reached 69,090 community members with reproductive health information, resulting in increased use of health services.
- Reached 1,921 women with antenatal care and supported 1,983 women to deliver their babies in a health facility assisted by a skilled birth attendant.

Areas of Expertise

- Adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Contraception
- Family planning and reproductive health
- Maternal, newborn and child health
- HIV and AIDS
- Gender equity and women's empowerment
- Advocacy
- Women-led climate resilience
- Water, sanitation, and hygiene
- Capacity strengthening of public-sector health systems and community-based organizations.

- Supported 8,111 children to receive Vitamin A supplementation and 1,021 to receive all scheduled vaccines.

Female Condom Education and Promotion Project

Female Health Company

This partnership between Pathfinder and the Female Health Company helps bridge knowledge gaps and break down barriers to correct and consistent use of the female condom, FC2. The female condom provides dual protection against sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancy.

Results

- Trained over 400 peer educators at three universities (University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, and Pwani University) as FC2 champions.
- Supported the Ministry of Health's development of the National Condom Strategy (2019- 2023).

Darwin Initiative: Pairing Community Conservation Areas with Sustainable Aquaculture in Lake Victoria

UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Darwin Initiative Program

The Darwin Initiative aims to develop and demonstrate a new model for responsible aquaculture and inland fisheries that conserves native species and produces long-term benefits for people. The project uses community-based incentives to create sustainably financed lake-based community conservation areas. To achieve this, Pathfinder works to enhance gender mainstreaming and participatory planning where voices of men, women, and young people are heard in decisions that promote responsible stewardship of natural assets.

Results

- Increased women's representation in Roo and Ukula Beach Management Units; women make up one-third of each unit.
- Trained 120 women on entrepreneurship and alternative livelihoods to improve resilience to economic shocks and reduce pressure on the lake.
- Demarcated two community conservation areas as breeding zones for fish.



Two women preparing their fishing net on the shore of Lake Victoria, Kenya. Photo Credit: George Martin

Past Project Highlights

Comprehensive Assistance, Support and Empowerment of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CASE-OVC) (2017-21)

USAID

Implemented in 18 counties of the Central, Eastern, and Rift Valley regions of Kenya, CASE-OVC supported children and adolescents affected by HIV and AIDS to ensure they were thriving within their households and communities. The project improved the health and social status of OVC and their families; enhanced economic status, economic resilience, caregiving, and protection capacity of OVC households and caregivers; and strengthened formal and informal protection systems so that are responsive, inclusive, and accountable to the needs of OVC.

Results

- Reached 203,399 OVC with diverse services based of specific needs of OVC and households.
- Graduated 50,248 OVC from project support by increasing the stability of their lives.

- Supported the provision of the following: food supplements to 1,579 OVC, child protection and psychosocial services to 129,078 OVC, school uniforms to 3,542 OVC, school fees and school levies to 5,286 OVC, and sanitary pads to 13,042 adolescent girls.
- Supported 10,310 children and adolescents living with HIV to receive quality care and treatment through linkages with antiretroviral treatments centers.



Mentor Mother explaining HIV transmission to a client at Mtwapa Health Center, Kenya. Photo Credit: Sala Lewis

Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe (DREAMS) (2018-21)

USAID

DREAMS addressed the challenges that make adolescent girls and young women susceptible to HIV. The participation of adolescent girls and young women in project activities reduced their vulnerability to HIV infection by providing alternative sources of livelihood and empowering them to respond to their sexual and reproductive health and social needs.

Results

- 9,680 adolescent girls and young women in Mombasa County enrolled, supported, and engaged in socioeconomic activities, like vocational training and education, business start-ups, and voluntary savings and loan associations.
- 47 mentors trained in financial capability and entrepreneurship, who later became role models and program advocates and followed up with the girls they mentored.
- 350 adolescent girls and young women trained on gender, mentorship, and how to protect and support their peers who experience sexual and gender-based violence. This group later became mentors and program advocates.

Health of the People in the Lake Victoria Basin (HOPE-LVB) (2011-19)

Margaret A. Cargill Foundation, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Barr Foundation, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, USAID through the Evidence to Action project

Pathfinder partnered with several environmental and health sector partners in Kenya and Uganda to implement HoPE-LVB, an integrated population, health, and environment program that promoted couples counseling on family planning and health, environmental conservation, and water, sanitation, and hygiene. The project took place in island, lakeshore, and inland sites of the Lake Victoria Basin, seeking to prevent maternal and child deaths, improve environmental conservation, and foster environmentally sustainable livelihoods for broader economic development. Using the innovative “model household” approach to sustainable development, Pathfinder provided access to sexual and reproductive health services and introduced approaches to help in managing and sustaining natural resources.



Hassan et Halima, members of the Youth Advisory Council in Kilifi and champions of contraception. Photo: Sharon Atieno

Afya Pwani (2016-21)

USAID

Afya Pwani strengthened Kenya's health system, improving the accessibility of quality health services in coastal counties: Mombasa, Kilifi, Lamu, Kwale, and Taita Taveta. The project specifically increased access to and use of services focused on prevention and treatment of HIV; maternal, newborn, and child health; family planning; and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Results

- Enrolled 11,169 women in antenatal care groups, enhancing peer support and women's knowledge about pregnancy, delivery, and reproductive health, and encouraging self-care.
- Among women participating in the antenatal care groups, 97% delivered their babies at a health facility with a skilled provider, and 96% of their children under one year were fully immunized; 86% began a method of family planning following their deliveries.
- Reached 2,452,376 people with HIV testing services, and identified 53,598 HIV-positive cases, referring them for treatment.
- Started 41,669 people living with HIV on antiretroviral therapy through improved counseling, patient escorts, and careful case management.
- Served 12,792 female sex workers, 4,974 men who have sex with men, and 714 transgender people from Mombasa and Kilifi countries with comprehensive HIV prevention services.
- Served 9,591 people who injected drugs with medically assisted therapy.



Roselida and Evans Odongo pose outside a small lakeside community building in Bondo, Kenya, in the Lake Victoria Basin after giving a presentation to the area's fisherman as part of their role as a Pathfinder-supported model household. Photo Credit: David Cooper

Results (Kenya and Uganda):

- Supported 118,000+ visits for contraception in facilities and communities from 2012-2017.
- Contributed to a 214% increase in deliveries in project-supported health facilities between 2013 and 2015.
- Protected 204 fish breeding zones, allowing fish a safe zone to hatch, grow, and spawn before they are harvested.
- Supported the planting 856,000+ trees.
- Supported the construction of 25,000+ energy-efficient stoves, with communities earning USD 98,000 from their sale.
- Worked with communities to support the passage of 60 by-laws to enhance environmental protection and conservation.



Brenda Alwany at Kenyatta University after the Global Female Condom Day celebrations in 2017.

The Evidence to Action Project (E2A) at Kenyatta University (2015–18)

USAID

Pathfinder led E2A, USAID's global flagship project for reproductive health and family planning, from 2011-2019. Through the project, Pathfinder worked with Kenyatta University to assess sexual and reproductive health services for students provided at the university. The study offered fresh insights on how to strengthen the existing program, which was established more than 30 years before. Several improvements were made to how services are offered based on recommendations from the study.

Results

- Allocation of KShs 100,000 annually by the Kenyatta University Student Association to support activities of peer counselors, tripling the number of peer counselors on campus, and allocation of resource room for peer counseling services at the Directorate of University Health Services.
- Allocation of an office at Kenyatta University's Student Business Center for youth-friendly services and monthly in-reaches on campus, where students can receive screenings for cervical cancer and sexually transmitted infections, contraceptives, and sexual and reproductive health and counseling from sexual and reproductive health information.
- Appointment of new management and coordination positions within the youth-friendly services program.

Community-Facility Linked Continuous Quality Improvement Project in Homa Bay County (2016-18)

UK Department for International Development County Innovation Challenge Fund

The project established Continuous Quality Improvement Teams in select health facilities that were directly linked with communities in Homabay County. The teams applied best practices to systematically improve the accessibility of quality care.

Results

- Increased the number of pregnant women completing all of their antenatal care visits, from 40% to 60% of pregnant women.
- Increased proportion of effective referrals for antenatal care, from 25% to 78% (about 8,279 referrals for antenatal care were made).
- Increased number of skilled, facility-based deliveries, from 62% to 73% of all deliveries in Homa Bay County.
- Increased the proportion of health facilities offering basic emergency obstetric and neonatal care 24 hours a day, seven days a week from 35% (5) of health facilities to 90% (31) of health facilities.

AIDS, Population and Health Integrated Assistance plus Nairobi-Coast (2011-16)

USAID

APHIAplus Nairobi-Coast strengthened health systems and institutions at every level to expand access to an integrated package of essential health services. These services spanned: HIV and AIDS prevention, care, and treatment; contraception; maternal, neonatal, and child health; and services to prevent and treat malaria and tuberculosis.

Results

- Over 2.7 million people reached with HIV testing and counseling services.
- Over 1.5 million couple-years of protection delivered through contraceptive methods.
- 487,300 deliveries supported by skilled birth attendants.
- 41,500 gender-based violence services supported.



Vipingo Youth Parliament members discussing adolescent and youth sexual health and rights. Photo Credit: Sala Lewis

Pathfinder is driven by the conviction that all people, regardless of where they live, have the right to decide whether and when to have children, to exist free from fear and stigma, and to lead the lives they choose. Pathfinder builds lasting and trusted local partnerships to strengthen health systems, forging resilient pathways to sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. Taken together, Pathfinder's programs enable millions of people to choose their own paths forward

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