

Access Afya: Health Clinics Serving the Poor

In Kenya, the poor are less likely to access preventative and life-saving treatments, to use family planning, and to know their HIV status. Kenya's informal settlements are characterized by overcrowding, poor ventilation, and inadequate water and sanitation infrastructure. These slum conditions increase rates of infectious disease and exacerbate health problems for the 8 million Kenyans that live there, leading to unnecessary suffering and mortality from preventable and treatable conditions.

When Kenya's slum residents seek care, they face sub-optimal choices. Public facilities are affordable, but most are located outside of informal settlements, and have long wait times and frequent stockouts. This may explain why 47% of Kenyans in the poorest income quintile visit private facilities when their children are sick. However, many private providers' prices are beyond the reach of slum dwellers, and small, local shops sell medicines without the assurance of a trained health professional or reliable supplies of safe products. As a result, many slum residents seek health care only in emergencies. The HANSHEP Health Enterprise Fund, implemented by the SHOPS project, selected Access Afya to receive a grant to address this critical health priority.

The Business Model

To address the shortage of access to affordable, high quality care in Kenya's informal settlements, Access Afya is creating a chain of mini-clinics that bring care to the poor through easy and safe health services. Access Afya designed its facilities to fit into the tight spaces available within Kenya's slum communities. Measuring only 12 x 15 feet, each clinic contains a waiting area, consultation room, and pharmacy. The efficient use of space enables clinics to be a one-stop shop for affordable pay-per-use health services, products, and medicines.

When a patient arrives at Access Afya, a trained health worker from the neighborhood greets them, and they enter a clean space. With a certified nurse or clinical officer on site, the mini-clinics provide standard consultations and a range of primary care services, such as family planning, antenatal care, well baby check-ups, childhood immunizations, and rapid diagnostic tests. After diagnosis, a health worker shares results and a treatment plan with the patient, and provides a written prescription, follow-up recommendation, and a referral to another facility when necessary. By working with trusted suppliers and using an electronic inventory management system, Access Afya ensures a dependable supply of safe health commodities.



A woman visits an Access Afya clinic in Kenya.

Access Afya

Grantee at a Glance

- Vision: 3 million provided with reliable and effective health care
- Innovation type: Mini-clinics bringing affordable outpatient services to slum dwellers
- Health focus: Maternal and child health, family planning and reproductive health
- Target population: Low-income informal settlement residents
- Country: Kenya

Access Afya generates revenue through a combination of products and services. Consultations are priced very low, at approximately \$1.25 for an adult. The largest share of revenue comes from laboratory tests, medicines, and product sales. Approximately half of customers that visit each clinic will order a test or make a pharmacy purchase, which contribute to clinic revenue. Access Afya's lean staffing model and efficient management systems keep prices affordable, while still providing high quality care delivered by a health professional. Open 7 days a week, Access Afya provides a convenient and personable user experience for Kenya's slum dwellers, and encourages them to have earlier, more frequent conversations about their health.

Adding Two Mini-Clinics

The Health Enterprise Fund provided support for two additional Access Afya mini-clinics, the first of which opened in Sinai Village on March 1, 2014. In the first month of business, this clinic registered over 100 new patients. The second mini-clinic is set to open in 2015. Access Afya plans to increase its patient volumes quickly, in part by implementing strategies developed during the human-centered design marketing "bootcamp" organized for Health Enterprise Fund awardees. Each site is on target to be self-sustaining by the end of Access Afya's grant from the fund.

To bolster expansion, the Health Enterprise Fund supported Access Afya in exploring and strengthening its use of new technologies. Access Afya introduced a new point of sale system that helps manage inventory and clinic sales performance in real time. With high penetration of mobile phones in Kenya's informal settlements, Access

Afya is building its use of SMS communications for patient follow-up and to send targeted text messages to patients, such as nutrition tips to new mothers. In addition, Access Afya is working to customize an automated patient tracking system and to develop digital clinical protocols for added support to health workers.

With Health Enterprise Fund technical assistance, Access Afya is undertaking two initiatives to reduce financial barriers to access for the poor. The development of a card-based membership program and a prepaid maternal and child health services bundle will encourage preventive care-seeking by making services more affordable. Market research will inform the services and benefits offered within each of these initiatives, pricing strategies, and other opportunities to explore.

The Impact

“ They [Access Afya] are caring for my health, my child's health, and the community.” – Charlotte Bitengo, an Access Afya client

Over the first year of Health Enterprise Fund support, Access Afya provided 5,600 priority health services in the areas of family planning, reproductive health, maternal and child health, and HIV and AIDS in Nairobi's Mukuru slums. Within its first seven months of operations, the Sinai Village mini-clinic provided health services to nearly 1,000 patients, vaccinated 249 children, and sold over 350 family planning products, including long-acting and permanent methods such as IUDs and implants. By growing its chain of mini-clinics, Access Afya has the potential to reach 3 million people in Kenya's slums with reliable and effective health care.

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



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