

# SUCCESS STORY



## HIV BASIC CARE STILL A VIABLE AND AFFORDABLE CARE AND SUPPORT INTERVENTION

There are many interventions in the care and support for PHAs, but HIV basic care package is still a viable and affordable strategy in the prevention of opportunistic infections.

Jussy Mujuni a 37 year old widow of Bwegiragye cell, Ward IV, Bushenyi Ishaka Town Council .has four children and a person living with HIV. She tested for HIV in 1992 having had frequent illnesses and at the same time her husband had developed Herpes Zoster. The husband had tested for HIV but had not disclosed to her and more to that Jussy was pregnant. Having got information about HIV/AIDS counseling and testing and also reflecting on her health conditions including her husband's poor health, she decided to take an HIV test. Amidst minimal health care and support services by that time, She lost hope and I knew it was the end of every thing. After a few months her husband died and later her 12 year daughter. This further troubled her as she narrates “who ever saw me at that time would not image that I could live longer than a month”.

She was started on Septrin prophylaxis however with time her health condition was not improving because of frequent fevers. In September 2005 the ICOBI counseling and testing team visited her home for HIVCT. She disclosed her status and this motivated them to give her more counseling. Being on Septrin prophylaxis alone was not enough but rather needed additional preventive care especially against opportunistic infections. She was referred to the Resident Parish Mobilizer for Basic Care Package starter kit, which he later delivered and demonstrated to her on its usage in October 2005. “Ever since I started using the insecticide treated nets and treating my drinking water with water guard, I cannot recall when I last had Malaria and diarrhea” Jussy recalls.

With the ongoing supportive counseling from the ICOBI team .She was able to be open and disclose her status to family members and the community which later linked her to more care and support. Because of her positive living attitude and behavior change practices, she was identified and trained by ICOBI as a peer educator and is currently attached to Ishaka Adventist Hospital providing ART. “If it were not for Jussy's positive living practices demonstrated in the community, I would have faced bigger challenges in supporting the PHAs in my area.” Bakunya Resident Parish Mobilizer confesses, because she has supported many clients to adhere to treatment, counseled many HIV pregnant mothers to access PMTCT through home visits.

The ICOBI HBVCT program provides the HIV preventive basic care package to people identified to be HIV positive including their families. 6127 basic care starter kits have been provided to clients .The basic care package Service delivery is done by the basic care team which is linked to the communities by the resident parish mobilizers. Clients are provided with on going supportive counseling on positive living, provided with the basic care package starter kit, referred for care and support aimed at preventing opportunistic infections. As Jussy narrates “services being given by ICOBI restore hope for improved health for people living with HIV”.

Further more the resident parish mobilizers mobilize the HIV positives to form post test clubs, ICOBI also offers community sensitisation and education on the basic care through weekly radio talk shows and has established links with the private and public heath systems for implementations of the HIV preventive Basic package.



*Jussy (on the right) with peers during a group discussion about positive living*