

# Case Study 12: Increasing Participation and Empowering Key Populations

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## Background

Tingim Laip needed to create opportunities and safe spaces for key populations to participate in the project. TL needed key populations to feel safe and comfortable within the working environment and needed to support and build capacity of the workforce in order to encourage and retain KP members in the project. TL went about creating space and opportunities by hiring casual part-time Field Officers (FOs) from key populations; examining, changing and removing policies and procedures and staff attitudes that created barriers; and, introducing a formal capacity building and incentives program for volunteers and FOs.

## Rationale

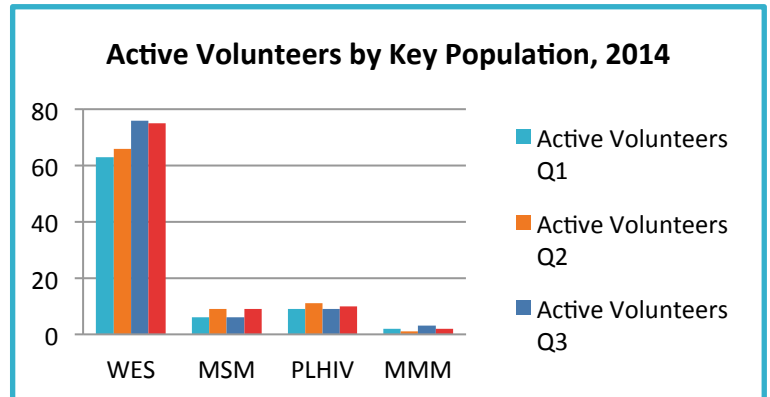
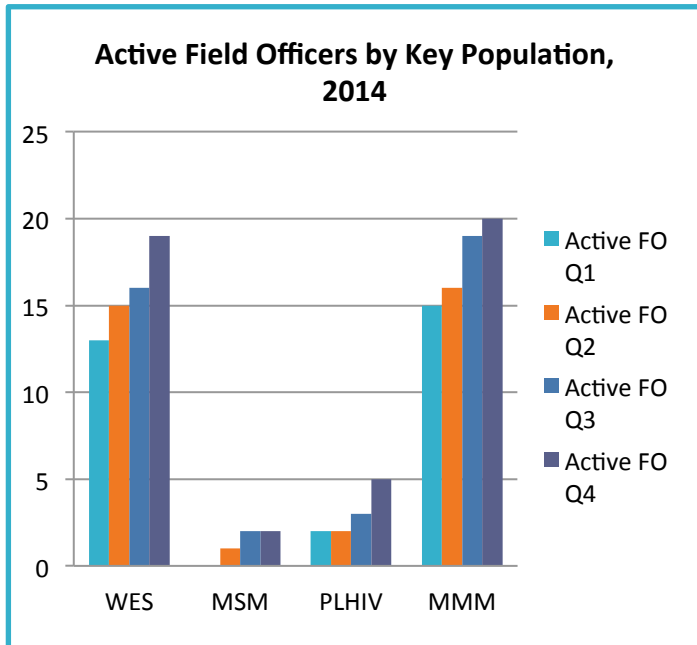
Participation of key populations is important to ensure effectiveness of the HIV response. The 2014 WHO Consolidated Guidelines on HIV Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment and Care for Key Populations recommends that 'programmes should work toward implementing a package of interventions to enhance community empowerment among key populations'. In order to achieve this, Tingim Laip took a peer-based approach to outreach by recruiting field workers from key populations. At the beginning of Phase 2, TL commissioned a Short-term Technical Adviser (STA) to undertake a review of volunteer activity in order to strengthen work in this area. Findings and recommendations from this review were published in The Price of Wok Sol Report, 2011. The review included consultations with TL volunteers and staff and 14 other NGOs in PNG with volunteer programs. TL, along with all NGOs consulted for this review said that it was becoming increasingly difficult to retain volunteers for two reasons: the loss of potential income for volunteers when activities took them away from participating in the informal economy, combined with rising costs of household items and school fees; and volunteers 'shopping around' among NGOs to see which offered the best incentive returns for the investment of their time. The review found that as a result of volunteering with TL there was a significant negative impact on household finances. The report recommended reducing the negative financial consequences for TL volunteers by either extending the out of pocket expenses reimbursement to include additional areas identified in the review; or setting a monthly allowance for volunteer members. It also recommended developing and promoting a Performance Based Incentive (PBI) Program for volunteers.

## Outcomes

- Following the Volunteer Review in 2011, in order to scale up activities, TL introduced part-time paid Field Officer (FO) positions and recruited new volunteers. In 2013, based on findings from the micro-mapping exercise, TL developed strategies in each location which included a new field workforce of volunteers and FOs from key populations. New TL volunteers were expected to work up to 10 hours per week and register and regularly reach 15 peers each month. Volunteers did not receive a wage for their work but were reimbursed for project related expenses such as bus fares to conduct outreach to their peers or to accompany them to services.
- Field Officers were engaged for a variety of purposes, depending on the needs of a particular project location. FO positions were different from volunteers in the following ways:
  - Employed by the project on a casual basis
  - Expected to work up to 24 hours per week
  - Expected to register and regularly reach 20 peers each month

- Paid an hourly wage for their work at K6.50/ hour
- Received all benefits associated with employment with Cardno Emerging Markets: worker’s compensation, NasFund contributions, medical insurance
- Expected to work according to a regular work / activity plan

By end 2014 TL had recruited 46 Field Officers and 96 volunteers from key populations.



“I have been with Tingim Laip since 2008. In December 2012, TL had a dinner to thank the old volunteers. The FO position then came up and I applied for it and got it. It was like a dream to get the job.”

– Field Officer, Jiwaka

- Tingim Laip was able to scale up outreach activities by introducing paid FO positions. Field Officers on average had more registered peers than volunteers, reached their peers more frequently and had a much lower turnover rate. By end 2014 the average number of peers registered to each FO was 26, compared to 12 registered to each volunteer. FOs reached their peers on average 5 times per quarter compared to volunteers who reached their peers 3 times; and, the FO turnover rate was 11% compared to 67% for volunteers.
- There were many reasons why FOs reported being committed to their work, including a shared passion for the work among FO teams; a sense of pride to be working with peers; status in the community gained from having a paid job; respect from peers because of their knowledge and capacity to bring people into services; and a sense that this job could lead them to future employment.

“The volunteers see that the FOs do more work than them. We don’t have any of our own time but the volunteers do. Many of the volunteers would like to be FOs, we say to them that the job is based on performance and that if an FO leaves or doesn’t do good at the job and if the volunteer works hard and do lots of referrals they may take their place.”

– Field Officer, Jiwaka

- In order to increase participation of key populations TL needed to review and change policies and procedures and attitudes of some staff to create a safe and stigma-free environment. Tingim Laip made significant changes to its recruitment process and hiring policies. As the project wanted FOs to be members of key populations it was important that the recruitment process was simple and did not create barriers for the target populations. The project chose not to recruit through the normal advertising channels and instead relied on making contact with members of the target population and building interest through word of mouth. Interviews were a very informal process and were followed by a group exercise with shortlisted applicants in order to assess them on their capacity to work together; follow instructions; show respect to one another and other members of key populations; learn and participate; and, communicate.
- Based on the interview and group exercise, preferred candidates were offered formal contracts with Tingim Laip. TL developed Terms of References and codes of conduct and confidentiality that were adapted to be relevant and accessible to key populations. A comprehensive Operations Manual was developed and distributed to all project locations which outlined all policies and procedures as well as project values.
- By end 2014 Tingim Laip had a workforce of almost 200 people including staff and volunteers. Of these, more than 75% were members of key populations. Tingim Laip ensured that no big-men or other leaders were recruited or held positions of power. Staff members who were not recruited from key populations were provided with coaching and support to work with these populations. Sensitization sessions focused on TL values, the language staff used, and self-reflection of attitudes and behaviours.

“I have two Field Officers who are men and who work with mobile men and oh, it’s very challenging. The challenge is that they are men, and I am a woman, and in Highlands culture I can’t give them instructions. But at the end of the day I have to go by the policies of TL, so I say, ‘this is your TOR, you have to work according to your TOR’ and they listen to me.”

– Project Officer, Hagen

“We really studied the Operations Manual and know the key messages about the rules and how to work together, like not coming to work drunk and respecting each other.”

– Field Officer, Hagen

“It makes me happy to be learning new technical skills like finance and acquittals because it helps for future jobs. Also, it has been good to learn life skills such as managing money which protects you from fraud.”

– Field Officer, Goroka

“On the CUG I’m catching up with all the other sites, I’m connecting to the outside and it’s interesting. The CUG really helps us.”

–Field Officer, Alotau

- Tingim Laip developed a performance-based incentives (PBI) program for FOs and volunteers that included a series of capacity building and training incentives as well as commodity incentives. The program was designed to support FOs and volunteers in their work but also to encourage them to continue work with TL as incentives were distributed based on the length of time in the role.

## VOLUNTEER PBI

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING INCENTIVES					
Peer Education	HIV Sik Long Koap	Love Patrol	Alcohol Harm Reduction	Tokaut na TokStret Facilitation Skills	HIV Refresher
Induction	Peer Education Practice	First Aid	HIV and the Law	Gender Based Violence Harm Reduction	CV Writing
	Coaching	Coaching	Coaching	Coaching	Coaching
	M&E	Working with KAPs			Interview skills
					Personal Finance Training
At entry	Within 3 months	Within 6 months	Within 9 months	1 year	1 year 3 months
OTHER INCENTIVES					
Lanyard	Umbrella	Hand Sanitizer	TL Glove Pouch	Torch	
Cap	Backpack	Compendium	Rain Poncho	Flash Drive	
Mug	T-shirt				
	ID Card				
Volunteer of the Month					

## FIELD OFFICER PBI

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING INCENTIVES					
Peer Education	HIV Sik Long Koap	Love Patrol	Tokaut na TokStret Facilitation Skills	HIV Refresher	CV Writing
Induction	M&E	First Aid		Gender Based Violence Harm Reduction	Interview Skills
	Cash Management and Acquitting	Alcohol Harm Reduction			Personal Finance Training
	Coaching	Coaching	Coaching	Coaching	Coaching
At entry	Within 3 months	Within 6 months	Within 9 months	1 year	1 year 3 months
OTHER INCENTIVES					
Lanyard	T-shirt				
Cap	Backpack				
Mug					
ID Card					

Field workers reported that trainings empowered them in their personal and professional lives and improved their status in the community. In some locations, especially Jiwaka, where no other NGOs were working, TL branded incentives were highly valued and used and worn with pride. In addition to the PBIs, FOs' mobile numbers were put on the TL Closed User Group (CUG), which allowed them to call or text any project staff free of charge. FOs reported using the CUG to share advice and experiences with FOs in other project locations.

## Challenges

- Some locations reported issues with the distribution of PBIs. The M&E team was able to identify when PBIs had not been distributed and reminded Project Officers (POs). Location teams were supported by the National Office to ensure PBI stock was available.
- TL was interested in incorporating vocational training programs such as literacy training, computer training, IT training, and financial management training, into the PBI programme. However, after review of available trainings, TL determined that it was unable to ensure a consistent quality of service and therefore left this out of the program. Some field workers reported disappointment that the project did not provide access to computers and computer training.

“Volunteers can be on volunteer basis but since it’s not a paid job, incentives must be given to them on time, upon the performance of their duties. You need to be fair with every one of them.”

– FO, Daru

## Lessons Learnt

- Hiring outreach workers from key populations is more effective and efficient than using volunteers. Paid field workers reach more peers more often than volunteers and there is a significantly lower turnover rate which leads to savings in recruitment and training.
- In most locations field officers were doing more than the 24 hours a week that they were being paid for. In order to achieve the targets that were set by TL and to be flexible to reaching peers when and where they were located FOs worked closer to 30-40 hours per week. Most locations believed that FO positions should have been full-time in order to properly compensate FOs for the work they were doing.
- In order for the PBIs to be effective in motivating and retaining field workers they must be appropriate and of good quality.
- Targeted and culturally appropriate training is needed that addresses the holistic need of volunteers and FOs to increase motivation and commitment to do the work.

“The paid hours for FOs should be increased so that we’ll be more committed in our work. Sometimes there is just too much work to be done within the time. For just one referral to the clinic, they can tell us to wait and it’s possible to stay all day at the clinic.”

– FO, Markham

“With FOs it’s okay to push a little but with volunteers we can’t push them all the time because they might tell us they’re not getting paid.”

– PO, Central