



The Network of HIV Positives Sierra Leone (NETHIPS), National Aids Secretariat (NAS), and the Consortium for the Advancement of Rights of Key Affected Population (CARKAP) in collaboration with other partners on Friday 1st July 2022 launched the Community-Led Monitoring Project funded by the United States of America Government through the Health Resources and Services Administration. Three (3) documents that will be used to promote and protect the rights of Recipients of Care and Key Populations and at the same time improve service provision in the National AIDS response were also launched. These documents included, Community-Led Monitoring tools, the Community Charter, the Patient Rights Charter and an information sharing platform that will generate Real-time evidence of Services Provision, Stigma and Discrimination and stockout of HIV & TB Commodities. Theme for this launch was: Communities Make A Difference; Communities Will End AIDS by 2030.

Delivering his opening remarks, the Director General of the National Aids Secretariat (NAS) Abdul Rahman Sessay, welcomed all and underscored the importance of the launching, He gave a short overview of the relevance of the newly developed documents and called for commitment from all partners to effectively use these documents to ensure the rights of PLHIV are advanced and also utilize them as conduit to end HIV related stigma and discrimination and inequalities which will improve service uptake in order to reach the global UNAIDS 95,95,95% benchmarks.

In her welcome address, the Chairperson for CARKAP Marie Benjamin, which is the Consortium for the Advancement of Rights of Key affected Populations welcome all and described the event as a turning point in the coordination of the HIV and TB response in our country. She said as a CSO member, she is very proud to join NAS in launching the key and strategic documents, enabling tools that will immensely strengthen the community response to

HIV/AIDS. She said the event was not solely for the purpose of launching key documents but to also launch the CLM Project which will promote client centered approach in the HIV service provision. She noted the launch also will look at not only presentations documents but will again give the National AIDS Secretariat to present the 2021 IBBSS study which was commissioned under the NFM2 Global Fund Grant which is the first ever conducted study for Sierra Leone, a document that would lead to an informed decisions for reaching our goals – the 95-95-95, 90 and 10-10-10. It will also be a platform where NETHIPS introduce the PEPFAR funded CLM Project to partners and at the same time present findings of the intervention.

Madam Benjamin concluded by informing stakeholders that training has already been conducted on various tools and on the platform for the generation of Real-time data. She thanked the UNAIDS, the American Government and other relevant partners for funding the event.

In his short statement, the American Ambassador David Reimer thanked the National AIDS Secretariat, UNAIDS and all other stakeholders for organizing the launch. He thanked the leadership of NETHIPS for their tremendous work in improving the lives of people living and affected with HIV in the country. He informed the audience that NETHIPS is the only Local Non-government Organization that the American Government is directly funded through the HRSA which he said it is as a result of their credibility and hard work. He assured the meeting that the American Government is always committed to providing funds to countries in order not to make HIV a public health emergency Health Threat. He thanked the organizers and wished them a fruitful launch.

In his keynote address the Minister of Health and Sanitation Dr. Austin Demby said, to achieve the government of Sierra Leone's Human Capital Development Agenda, it is important that all people in Sierra Leone have access to quality health services delivery, and in an environment free of stigma and discrimination; as enshrined in the country's universal health care roadmap. Consequently, there is the need for a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, rights and privileges of all the actors in the health sector.

He said the meeting will guarantee better health outcome for all Sierra Leoneans by ensuring that Recipient of Care receive quality health for all despite of their perceived or known status rather than for just few people. He further stated that as a country has made good progress in improving access to health services resulting in better health indices, such as reduction in maternal and child mortality. He said most patients have limited knowledge of their rights and the failure of some health workers to live up to their oath. "Health is a fundamental human right; thus, we must all work together to ensure that this right is guaranteed for all Sierra Leoneans"

he said.

He described the event as significant milestone in this transformative journey communities are considering key drivers to end AIDS in the country. He said communities will surely end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, pointing out that the engagement in implementing community led-responses, community-led monitoring and advocacy will provide better health outcomes for beneficiaries of care while holding health care workers accountable for quality health service delivery.

He said the Patients' Charter is a platform for partnership between the health care workers and recipients of care with the hope to provide quality service delivery in our health care facilities. It presents a framework that will empower our recipients of care to become active participants in their own health, instead of passive recipients, He noted as recipient of care people should express better particular needs which will guide health workers in deliver quality services that are patient centered.

He pointed out cooperation and coordination between committed partners will transform the delivery of services in the healthcare sector and thus contribute to achieving universal health coverage.

Other speakers who made statements included, Portfolio Manager of the Global Fund Seble Abebe and other representatives of the Global Fund Country Team, the UNAIDS country Director Isaac Ahemesah, the United Nation Resident Coordinator. The Launch was interspersed with testimonies from Women In Crises and Dignity Association.













