

PrEP as a Layered Service for DREAMS and other AGYW in Zambia: Insights for Roll-out from the USAID DISCOVER-Health Project



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PROBLEM & RESPONSE

The USAID DISCOVER-Health Project (DISCOVER), implemented by JSI Research & Training Institute (JSI), supports the Ministry of Health to improve access to and utilization of quality HIV services in Zambia.

Shortly after MOH PrEP scale-up approval, DREAMS PrEP products arrived in Zambia, requiring DISCOVER to roll out DREAMS PrEP services with both speed and prudence. Three months into program implementation, we undertook a rapid program review to inform future program direction.

DISCOVER was among the first MOH partners to roll out PrEP after May 2018 scale-up approval, and is currently providing oral PrEP services to AGYW in DREAMS districts, using product donated for DREAMS by Gilead Sciences.



LESSONS LEARNED

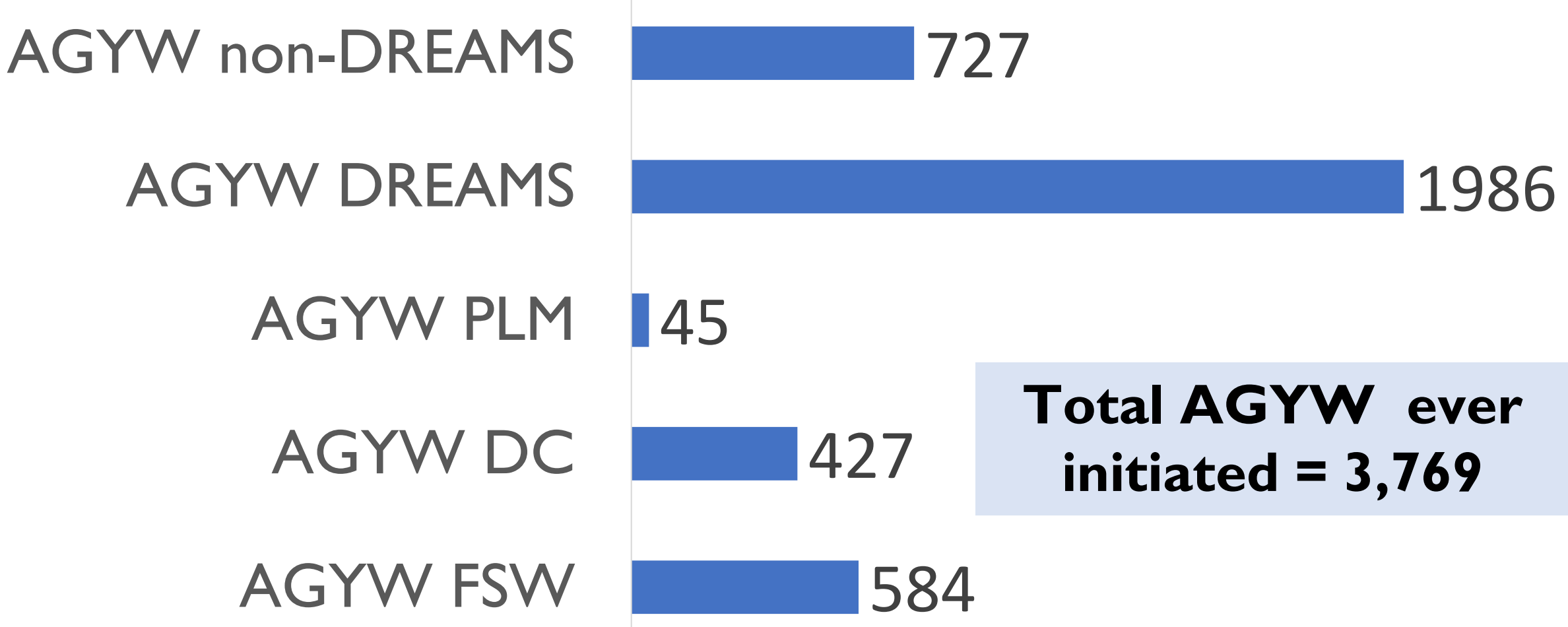
	Challenge	Course Correction
1.	Staff not competent to provide PrEP	Training, intensive mentorship and supportive supervision for staff (lay/clinical), to assure quality service-provision
2.	Limited bandwidth among ART providers to add-on all PrEP service delivery.	Trained RMNCH providers with Option B+ training to provide PrEP off-site or integrated into FP/MCH services
3.	Over-crowded clinics, with PrEP adding to congestion	Layered PrEP services onto a successful pre-existing service-mix, off-site, at DREAMS centres
4.	Staff/provider biases about AGYW taking PrEP – some judgmental/disapproving	Retrained/mentored staff, increasing PrEP knowledge-levels and improving interpersonal communication competencies
5.	High PrEP demand from non-DREAMS AGYW	Obtained flexibility to use DREAMS centres and Gilead product to provide PrEP to non-DREAMS AGYW, allowing enrolment of older AGYW into DREAMS
6.	Challenging environment for AGYW on PrEP at start-up – delayed official launch of PrEP delayed community awareness activities for a supportive environment for PrEP	Provided targeted support to AGYW facing parent/guardian PrEP-related challenges; and supported MOH to launch PrEP and develop a national HIV prevention campaign: Zambia Ending AIDS
7.	No competent/motivated peer-mentors for community-based support to AGYW on PrEP	Recruited DREAMS graduates as peer-mentors/mobilizers, who were already HIV-prevention champions, contributing to program success

CONCLUSION

Layering PrEP onto successful pre-existing DREAMS-centre-based services provided greater HIV-resilience for AGYW at substantial HIV risk. Additionally, use of program data for mid-course correction increased program effectiveness.

RESULTS

AGYW initiated on PrEP by sub-category (April 2019 – April 2020)



Fridah Mutunda, Manager, Nchanga DREAMS Center, Chingola

“Ladies taking charge, in general, is really amazing. Traditional African norms deny girl children the ability to make decisions for themselves. Now we’re seeing girls say, ‘I have the power to make a difference.’”
-Fridah, DREAMS Centre Manager, Chingola