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**Topic:** Community health and nutrition programs

**Title:** Youth-led Nutrition Enhancement Initiatives for PLWHA and OVCs in Zimbabwe

**Presentation Type:** Oral

Restless Development in Zimbabwe implemented a three year project in Zimbabwe to support the livelihoods and enhance the nutritional intake of PLWHA and OVCs in the 31 wards Harare, Manicaland, Mashonaland East and Matabeleland South.

**Methodology:**

Youth-led initiative implemented for three years (2012-15) was studied through a pre-post study design to understand how the intervention was relevant, efficient and effective. A mixed method approach was used to obtain quantitative and qualitative data from a cross-section of respondents.

**Results:**

Significant improvements were reported in the nutrition intake among PLWHA and OVC. Series of sessions were organized regarding livelihoods and nutrition enhancement. Consumption of green leafy vegetables was identified as the most low cost nutritional meal locally viable. PLWHA were supported to grow green leafy vegetables in their own gardens/house plots so that they don't need to spend extra money in buying vegetables. By end of project 79% (N=83) PLWHA and 59% OVCs (N=183) reported of consuming green leafy vegetables more than three times per week against a baseline of less than 50%. 6.9% PLWHA and OVC who were able to consume leafy vegetables only once in a week and 27.4% twice a week. 81% PLWHA felt best to own gardens.

**Conclusion:**

Through youth-led model for livelihoods and nutrition, Restless Development built a successful scalable integrated model to increase income for PLWHA and OVC to improve nutritional intake. The enhanced nutritional status and income of the family ensured re-entry of OVCs in school, who were further getting educated for better future life.