HAART Kenya reached a total of 103 (Male 48 Female 55) first responders during five workshops and one stakeholder forum conducted in Nairobi and Tharaka Nithi counties. The workshops sensitized the duty bearers on human rights, human trafficking, offences charges under the counter trafficking in person’s act of Kenya 2010 and safe migration measures to consider before and after migration.

(a) In Nairobi; Kamkunji sub county, trainings were conducted for the local area advisory council working on children matters together with two of the Sub county children officers who were present at the training. Another training involved different community based organizations working with young people and persons with disability. The other two workshops were conducted in Tharaka Nithi; Tharaka Sub county- Tunyai targeting area chiefs and their associates, two assistant county commissioners and police officers.

(b) Prevalent cases reported in Tharaka Sub County were of child marriage that has also attributed to many cases of child pregnancies occurring in the area. Participants explained that the area is facing prolonged drought which compels the population to hunger. Many of the parents are forcing their female children to drop out of school and get married so as to get dowry (monetary or livestock) from the marriage.

(i) Other female children aged 14 to 18 are impregnated and end up being married off to the adult males involved. The area chiefs reported to have handled close to 15 child marriage cases since the beginning of 2019. Most of the marriages occur in secret and few community members report them. However, together with the children officers, they only identified these cases as child marriage and not child trafficking.

(ii) The police officers shared a possible open route that migrant smugglers might be using for transportation to the Garissa main highway via the area. Irregular migration of the migrants coming from Somaliland pass through the area and their area of destination is Nairobi County, including parts of Eastleigh. The officers have been able to intercept some of the migrants who are mostly placed in cells and deported back to country of origin. It was not clear if there are victims of trafficking transported through that route as they only arrest and deport them back after a few weeks in police cells.

(c) Children officers in Kamkunji sub county; Nairobi County expressed concern of young women arriving from Uganda coming to work as domestic workers. They also stated that through observation, some of them are children. Most of the women and children lack identification documentation and end up working for less pay with a minimum of KES 1000 for the whole month as they are given meals during work hours by their employers. Some of them face mostly physical abuse and sexual exploitation from their employers. As explained by the participants, they are afraid to report these cases as they lack identification documents and fear being deported back to country of origin. Others who are deported again find ways of coming back and face re-victimization.
The Children Officers from Nairobi County have requested HAART Kenya to conduct more awareness workshops specifically targeting migrant domestic workers from Karamojong community in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. In Tharaka sub county, there is a call for more awareness activities and the area chief requested for partnership and linkages with organizations that focus on behavior change communication and reproductive health programmes. The organizations will be able to sensitize pupils and students in the area and reduce prevalent cases of child pregnancies and child marriage cases.

During the reporting period, HAART Kenya and International Rescue Committee- IRC partnered to conduct a stakeholder’s discussion on matters of human trafficking and refugees. The discussion was geared towards mapping forms of trafficking in the Refugee space, push factors for trafficking, adequacy of the Kenyan legislative framework and ways of preventing incidences of human trafficking among refugees. The forum was to also guide on how awareness workshops targeting urban refugees and host communities will be conducted with regards to the information disbursed and support provided to a victim of trafficking by various stakeholders. Other present actors in the forum were Amnesty International, Tushirikiane African Trust- TUSA, Refuge Point, Mixed Migration Centre, Kituo Cha Sheria, Centre for Victims of Torture- CVT, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees- UNHCR, Africa to Africa Mediation and Advocates.

During September, 74 youth were targeted in community awareness initiatives, 29 male and 45 female and the counties included Nairobi Kitui and Machakos. As for adult workshops, a total of 256 were reached including, male 114 and female 142 and the counties reached out to are Nairobi, Kilifi, Mandera, Makueni, Kitui and Kajiado counties respectively.

There were also four community workshops targeting Internally Displaced Persons conducted in the month. 130 participants (Male 90 Female 40) were sensitized in the workshops. The areas reached were Kilifi county (Magarini and Mtwapa locations) and Mandera County- Rhamu location. Participants emphasized on the right to own land. One gentleman said, “If you have a place to stay and live and a place to call home, then everything else will be accessible”. “That’s the biggest issue here in Kilifi, people’s houses are taken away and they are chased off”. One lady mentioned women are denied the right to equality, she explained that women are viewed as inferior to men and are mistreated. The women are viewed as, “Kivutio cha mali”- Kiswahili dialect or “Objects for attracting wealth” for the family. Even when it comes to education, males are given first priority to females. They suggested that more workshops should be done in the area to spread awareness on human trafficking to the communities. They also wanted HAART Kenya to establish an office near the area so as to bring services close to them.

20 case stories were shared in the four IDPs workshop sessions. They highlighted cases of both internal and external trafficking in persons for various exploitations. Prevalent case studies shared were of external trafficking for forced labour affecting domestic workers. There were also cases of child marriage and organ removal affecting children mentioned.