

KENYA

SRH MONTHLY WRAP UP

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH MONTHLY BRIEF

TRAINING ON RIGHT HERE RIGHT NOW II PRINCIPLES

Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation (MIYP), is key to achieving the goals and outcomes set out by Right Here Right Now2 Kenya program particularly in ensuring young people in all their diversity enjoy their sexual and reproductive health in a gender-just society, RHRN Kenya further observes the gender transformative approaches (GTAs) in its implementation of interventions that are centered around human rights, ensuring young people enjoy their rights without any form of discrimination.

During the month of February 2022, the Centre for the Study Adolescence (CSA) trained young people on four key principles of RHRN 2 namely:

- Meaningful Youth Participation (MIYP)
- Inclusivity
- Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA)
- Human Rights Approach (HRA)

The young people being involved in the implementation of the program had an in-depth discussion on the factors enhancing their participation (preconditions) as well as the important indicators (core elements) of meaningful and inclusive participation. The training highlighted the key concepts of Gender Transformative Approaches, the impediments of gender transformation in society particularly in relation to sexual and reproductive health, The focus on Human Rights allowed young people to reflect on existing discriminations in society and how they affect the health and wellbeing of all especially adolescent and young people. Discussions and plans on how to mainstream the principles within the partner organizations and the entire implementation were held.



Existing discriminations in society and how they affect the health and wellbeing for all.





HIV: Hope in the Horizon.

JOURNEY TOWARDS ENDING HIV

HIV remains a major public health concern, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Nearly 38 million people living with HIV globally, 20.6 million of them are from the Eastern and Southern Africa. In Kenya, about 1.5M people are reported to be living with HIV, with the young population making the largest cut of new infections.

Discouraging might these figures be, the vision of ending the HIV epidemic as a public threat by 2030 got a new breath of life and is now more of a reality.

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved a long-acting injectable HIV drug for adults living with HIV, who can now go for the monthly injection instead of the daily pill.

The new drug, Cabenuva has shown to be as effective as the daily ARV pills in suppressing the viral load. This will go a long way in reducing the stigma associated with taking the daily pill and supporting adherence to treatment as many people forget to take the daily pill. Many stakeholders hold on to the hope that the therapy will be approved and available for the sub-Saharan population sooner than later.

The last decade has seen remarkable progress in searching for an HIV cure. Cases of cure in cancer patients who received stem cell transplantation have been reported so far. Scientists are leveraging the science behind the cure to develop an effective drug against HIV. This comes at a time when Moderna has launched clinical trials for the HIV vaccine which uses the same technology as the Covid-19 vaccine.



The last decade has seen remarkable progress in searching for HIV cure.



Equipping the Young with Sexuality Information



They see me as a friendly figure in their lives they feel comfortable approaching with their problems and look up to.”

- Ochola Komuono

This month's a star youth advocate Komuono, whom we can all say is the teacher we probably wish we had back in high school!

Komuono has practiced Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) youth advocacy for 6 years, since his days as a university learner. He teaches science however extends his advocacy skills and knowledge in SRHR to tackle menstrual hygiene management stigma and challenges that young girls encounter.

Komuono a resident of Kisumu county, other schools other than his designated institution to share age-appropriate sexuality information and empower other teachers to have confidence in doing the same.

Komuono as a teacher engages with high school students freely and believes it's healthy to have a safe space



to discuss "taboo" topics. "I do not want my students seeing me as a symbol of authority. They see me as a friendly figure in their life and feel comfortable approaching with their problems and look up to."He narrates.

He indicates this as what he wishes was done during his time as a student. As a teacher at an all-boys school, he notes the lack of preparedness of high school students for the outside world and he hopes to transform them into holistic adults who can make informed decisions about their lives including sexual health.

Komuono narrates that young people should grow up knowing who they are and their bodies.

Advocacy for me has been a learning and unlearning process and being open-minded has made it easier.

Parting quote: I invite my fellow young people including teachers to join the conversation and help raise an informed and educated generation. Let us do what we wish happened for us. Let us be part of the solution in realizing better sexual health for adolescents and young people

International day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Kenya joined the world in marking the International day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) under the theme "Accelerating Investment to End Female Genital Mutilation." Despite the setbacks caused by the pandemic leading to UNFPA estimating that there may be as many as 2 million cases of female genital mutilation by 2030 that would have otherwise been averted due to the spread of COVID-19, stakeholders are certain that with the investment to the course without resting, many cases can be prevented. Over years' government, civil society organizations and other stakeholder have worked together in Kenya in, preventing, protecting, and caring for adolescent girls and women at risk or survivors of the cut. The day is marked annually every 6th February.

International Condoms Day Chat and Check in

The international condom day is the other informal holiday co-joined and celebrated along with valentine's day every 13th of February. This year's theme "Chat and Check in" Invited many organizations and health providers to share series of information offline and online as well as listening to the voices of young people on how to engage in safe sex with zero regrets, especially among adolescent and young people starting with condom as the main method of contraception that provides dual protection against unintended pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections including HIV.



Launch of the Online Sexuality Card Game

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is an age-appropriate, culturally relevant approach of teaching about sexuality and relationships by providing scientifically accurate, realistic, and non-judgmental information. Its rights-based and gender-focused, whether in school or out of school.

CSA continues to support access to life-saving sexuality information for adolescents and young people through various nontraditional ways such as the use of video, off and online gamifications. In the month of February CSA launched sexuality information online play cards which are also available in hard copies. The online event saw the speakers highlighting the relevance of diversifying the access to CSE for adolescents and young people. The is already available at CSAs website: <https://www.csakenya.org/cse> game targets to support adolescent and young people in gaining basic critical knowledge on sexuality and gender as they enjoy playing.



Launch Day



Tausi Taskforce Dinner Launch

Kenya and Mozambique were among the countries that were selected to implement the Deep Dive program through the Her Voice fund, which aimed at accelerating progress on some of the ICPD +25 commitments including the meaningful engagement of Adolescents Girls and Young Women (AGYW). The program focused on the sexual and reproductive health issues of adolescents and young women (AGYW) comprehensively. Y+ Kenya through a competitive process within the last six months established an AGYW task force dubbed Tausi Taskforce, a Swahili name meaning peacock to work for and with AGYW in spearheading efforts in addressing poor AGYW engagement in policies and guidelines development and other reproductive health outcomes among the populace within the country.

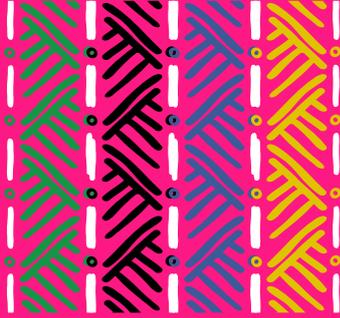
Under the theme "Tackling national and community challenges of adolescent girls and young women reproductive and sexual health through an AGYW centered design" Tausi Taskforce held a dinner launch, on the 26th of February 2022 featuring a high-level panel discussion with key experts and panelists on the hits and misses of meaningful AGYW in Kenya. The evening event which culminated with the gifting of the young women saw promising commitments from the high-level stakeholders present from government and non-governmental institutions in support of the Tausi Taskforce.



Closing Hunger Gap is Crucial to Realizing Better Education and Development of Adolescents



Sharon Sitati



Adolescence is a very crucial stage that marks transition into adulthood. A lot happens at this stage including, physical, socio-emotional and behavioral change and most likely to reflect in someone's adulthood. A report from the National center for children in poverty (NCCP) indicates, among all children, 45% live in low-income families and approximately one in every five (22%) live in poor families. Poverty can negatively impact the adolescents as the poor one's experiences high level of anxiety from lacking the basic needs. The government of Kenya recognizes that illiteracy, and poor health are an impediment to national development and poverty reduction. It is therefore committed to promoting availability and access of quality education and health to all, including learners.

Kenyan pupils and students especially from the marginalized regions are among the Sub-Saharan Africa school goers who continue to face malnutrition that affects their general health and wellbeing furthermore impacting their educational journey negatively.

Center for Disease Control (CDC 2015) reports that undernutrition in childhood and adolescence can delay sexual maturation, slow growth and reduce a child/adolescent's ability to learn, lowering school performance and achievement. Therefore, investing in nutrition remains imperative to the desired growth and development of young people. Good nutrition involves eating healthy foods in adequate amounts in order to ensure a child's proper physical and cognitive growth and development and prevent nutrition-related diseases. Good nutrition increases a child's attention span, learning capacity and ability to fully engage in educational experiences and therefore reach their full potential in life.



School-age children and adolescents 4–18 years of age have high nutritional needs because they are growing rapidly and are also very active; especially adolescents 10–19 years of age. Adolescents have higher calorie and nutrient needs than any other age group with boys needing more overall calories to meet the demands of growth spurts and the onset of puberty. The onset of menstruation imposes additional iron needs for girls. Calcium is needed due to increased muscular, skeletal and endocrine development.

As acknowledged by the first four Sustainable Development Goals and the Zero Hunger Challenge, it is clear that the leading cross-cutting issues of the global agenda are to eradicate hunger and poverty, achieve food security, ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote healthy lives.

Kenya has achieved significant economic growth and performance. However, inequality persists in access to nutritious food, particularly in the arid and semi-arid lands, which cover 80 percent of Kenya's land area.

As part of building back better from the COVID19 ravage, Kenya must scale-up initiatives, to ensure a coordinated approach for any school meals program that are far-reaching the neglected areas such as east and west northern parts of Kenya, to have all school children receive healthy, safe, nutritious and culture-sensitive meals. Maximizing on transversal links between education, agriculture, health, and social protection should be a key priority approach in fast-tracking the efforts.

Miss: Sharon – SRH Youth Advocate, Member of AFYAHR under Centre for the Study of Adolescence

Thanks to the
Advocates for
Adolescent Health
and Rights
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the Centre for the
Study of
Adolescence
(CSA)



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