Linking in and out of school clubs to health facilities and community in HIV Prevention: Experience from 10 years of Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health (ASRH) Project in Rwanda

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Issues

- Rwanda has made substantial progress in increasing access and utilization of reproductive health services.
- Although this progress has led to overall improvements in sexual and reproductive health, a significant proportion of adolescents are sexually active before age of 18 (23.6% of girls and 28.1% of boys).
- Furthermore, there is limited “comprehensive knowledge” about HIV transmission and prevention among adolescents (62% of girls and 60% of boys).
- The ASRH project intervention aimed at introducing a new approach, pairing in and out-of-school youth to health facilities and community to improve HIV prevention and ASRH-related knowledge, attitudes and practices, and increase the utilization of youth friendly services in Rwanda.

Description

- Since 2010, Imbuto Foundation has implemented the ASRH project in four districts and featured three interrelated components:
  - Establishment of youth ASRH clubs to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and communication;
  - Pairing of youth clubs with nearby health facilities;
  - Training health facility staff on the delivery of youth-friendly ASRH services; and
  - Organizing Parent and adolescent Communication (PAC) forums and outreach campaigns.

Lessons Learned

- **ASRH clubs were established.**
  - ASRH clubs have 30 members on average.
  - Clubs provide intensive ASRH education and dialogue.
  - 39,015 workforce (doctors, nurses, CHWs, teachers, peer educators and CBOs) were trained and delivered SRH including HIV and family planning services within our coverage area.
  - 14,414 people reached through parental-adolescent communication forums: 8,800 parents, 5,426 teen mothers, 188 adolescents and youth.
  - 299,834 young people accessed ASRH services, including HIV and STI screening and treatment.

- **92.4%**
  - The linkage between in and out of school youth, health facilities influenced youth perceptions and improved exposure to ASRH information and knowledge of HIV prevention by 92.4% among club members.

- **65.5%**
  - Use of ASRH youth friendly services is at 65.5%.

Next Steps

- The experiences of the ASRH project implementation can be scaled up to other districts with high rate of HIV and ASRH related issues.
- Greater efforts are required in raising awareness on use of youth friendly services and encourage parental involvement in PAC dialogues with their children.
- Partnership and collaboration are essential for effective implementation of ASRH Project.

- **Key words:** Youth, HIV prevention, ASRH, Clubs
- **For more information:** [www.imbutofoundation.org](http://www.imbutofoundation.org)