Delivering integrated package of interventions for socio-economic reintegration of Teen Mothers in Rwanda

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Issues

- Teenage pregnancy and early motherhood have far-reaching consequences, ranging from health complications, halting a girl’s education, to social, cultural and economic consequences such as discrimination, stigmatization and low income earning potential, which lead to a vicious cycle of poverty.
- 95% of births to adolescent mothers occur in developing countries. About one in five young women in developing countries become pregnant before age 18, an equivalent of 7.3 million births every year.
- In Rwanda, the teenage pregnancy rate increased slightly from 6.1% in 2010 to 7.3% in 2015, and slightly reduced to 5.2% in 2020.
- About one in five girls in Rwanda become teen mother at the age of 19 in 2015.
- Despite Government efforts, to expand Adolescent friendly Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) services and access to quality services tailored to young people’s needs is still limited in Rwanda.
- As a response, the teen mothers project was initiated, providing an integrated package of interventions for effective social re-integration.
- Since April 2017, Imbuto Foundation, in partnership with different government institutions & Development Agencies and have implemented teen mothers project in 8 districts. The project targets the teen mothers aged between 10 and 19 years and their children.

Description

Teen mothers Project was implemented through integrated package:

- Psycho-social support: Psycho-social support - counseling provides once a week at health center (HC).
- Parent Adolescent Communication (PAC): 1st and 2nd PAC forums were conducted to restore the relationship between teen mothers and their parents.
- Community mobilization: Community-based outreach campaigns to increase awareness and fight social discrimination, stigma and violence.
- Skills-based training: Health care providers trained to improve the uptake of contraceptives after delivery and HIV testing; child care practices.
- Economic reintegration: 137 groups were formed to promote income generating activities (IGAs).
- Health Services: Teen mothers received ASRH information and HIV services through youth-friendly services at HC.

Data collection:

- Project M&E Indicators on monthly basis.
- FGDs with teeb nithers and their Parents; KIIs with Nurses focal point and Local leaders.

Data Analysis:

- Descriptive statistics and bivariate analysis were used to generate the findings, using STATA v14.

Lessons Learned

- # of identified teen mothers received Counseling and PAC Forum.
  - Of all teen mothers who were chased out of their homes (25% of the total cohort).
  - Teen mothers were equipped with ASRH information through youth-friendly services.
  - 81% of teen mothers chose to use contraceptive methods to prevent another unplanned pregnancy and risk of HIV infection.
  - # of teen mothers received economic empowerment; and Of them 16% become peer educators.

IGAs were effective in teen mothers socio-economic reintegration.

Next Steps

- With regards to future scale-up, collaborating with similar institutions and government initiatives would facilitate addressing the identified needs.

Key words: Teenage pregnancy, Integrated Package, ASRH, Teen Mothers.

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