THE YOUNG ADOLESCENTS PROJECT (YAP)

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Improving the Sexual and Reproductive Health of Young Adolescents in Uganda (YAP)

A three years pilot project implemented by DSW Uganda with support from Bayer HealthCare 2009 - 2011
Why give information about ASRH to a 10-14 year old?

- Early Adolescences, the years between 10-14, marks a critical time of development for young people.

- Young adolescents between the ages of 10 and 14, are acquiring information, developing attitudes, and experimenting with behaviors that will affect their present and future life.

- Many societies perceive 14 year olds as young adults ready for work, marriage and child bearing.

- The large majority of young adolescents is attending school and not yet sexual active
The Problem

Some facts about the 10 – 14 year olds (young adolescents)

- Only 33.8% of females and 22% of males have received sex education in school. (Darabi L. et al., Protecting the Next Generation in Uganda: New Evidence on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Needs, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2008, p.16)

- 71% of females and 64% of males have never talked with the parents about sex-related matters. (National Survey of Adolescents, 2004)

As a result: Pregnancy is a major cause for girls drop out of school and contributes to the high teenage pregnancy rate of 25% in Uganda. Teenage child bearing and abortions contribute to the high maternal death rate in Uganda.
The Misconception

- 10-14 years olds are often considered as too young for sexuality education and hence left out in SRH projects for young people

- Teachers and parents do not have comprehensive understanding of SRH issues, and do not talk about SRH issues with their pupils and children

- It is taboo to talk sex with children and youth

As a consequence: The knowledge of young adolescents about changes in puberty, pregnancies and family planning as well as ways of HIV/AIDS transmissions is generally poor
WHAT to Do?

- Start preparing young Adolescents early enough to be able to make informed decisions and healthy life choices!

- Use a holistic approach, consider their influential environment!

HOW do we prepare them?

- Equip young Adolescents with life skills and knowledge about their changing bodies, dangers of teenage pregnancies and advantages of planning for your family

- Use methods that are attractive to young Adolescents

- Build a supportive surrounding, where young Adolescents have access to adequate and correct information and services
What is YAP about?

Objective 1: Increase Sexual and Reproductive Health knowledge of young adolescents (10-14 years) in primary schools.

Objective 2: Create support among parent/guardians, teachers and community leaders for reproductive and sexual health of young adolescents (10-14 years).

Objective 3: Increase access, utilisation and referral of quality youth friendly services for young adolescents (10-14 years).

Objective 4: Publish project results and recommendations
Intervention Strategies and Activities for Pupils

- Peer education
- Youth Participation
- Youth-friendly environment, methods and materials
Intervention Strategies and Activities for Adults

- Capacity building
- Beneficiaries active involvement
- Awareness creation and grass root advocacy
The success so far speaks for itself:

• Teachers give more reproductive health information to pupils than before (average increase by 38%)

• The right understanding of family planning among young adolescents improved on average by 70%

• More than 5,700 pupils directly reached with information on SRH, HIV/AIDS and prevention of unwanted pregnancy.

• 10 school youth clubs were established and 399 teachers trained to incorporate SRH and rights topics into their classes

• 7 new educative SRH materials for teachers and youth clubs were developed to facilitate sexual education classes

• 6 schools reported reduced drop out rates (34% less girls & 31% less boys dropped out of school in 2010 compared to 2007)
Recommendations and Outlook

- Addressing young adolescents’ SRHR needs must engage parents, schools and communities in a sustainable manner.
- Equipping pupils, parents, teachers and community leaders with information, knowledge and skills is key to discuss cultural taboos and eventually overcome traditional practices.
- Addressing sexual harassment of young people needs to be an integrative part of SRHR projects. One strategy can be to involve parents as allies – especially if the harassment takes place in schools.
- The project has created demand in the 3 districts that calls for scaling up, there is need to strengthen youth-friendly health service delivery and continue encouraging open communication between children and their parents and teachers.
Thank You!