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TECHNICAL
BRIEF 9

Community Strategy

Clinical Services

Health Communication

Monitoring & Evaluation

Health Communication to improve youth health

Youth aged between 15-30 years comprise over a third of Kenya's population. Although youth have a relatively high level of basic education, many are out of school or unemployed. Among the critical health problems young people face are those associated with sexuality and reproductive health.

Adolescents are up to three times more likely to experience pregnancy-related complications than older women. HIV is higher among young women than men. Other health issues that affect young people include obesity due to lifestyle and drug and alcohol abuse.

Access to and use of health services by young people is poor. Only one in ten health facilities provide youth-friendly services that would enable young people to make informed choices regarding their health and seek services when they need them.

The youth program is a critical component of APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde project's partnership with the Government of Kenya, diverse organisations and communities to implement health programs that address health issues affecting young people.

Program objectives

1. Increase access for in-school youth, out of school youth and informal sector youth to an integrated package of health services and behavior interventions that are informed by evidence and meet minimum standards.
2. Strengthen capacity of youth, local partners and local communities to address social determinants of health and roll out interventions that enhance protective factors while reducing vulnerabilities among young people.

Program strategies

The program uses a combination prevention approach that includes clinical services (bio-medical), behaviour change as well as social change and structural interventions to address youth reproductive health challenges, particularly HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STI). The combination prevention approach aims to have the greatest sustained impact on reducing new HIV infections.

1. Clinical services

- HIV testing and counselling
- STI screening (presumptive treatment and encouraging partner treatment)
- TB screening, referral and treatment
- HIV care and treatment
- Prevention with Positives (supply of condoms and knowledge of status by partner)
- Reproductive health (family planning and cervical cancer screening)
- Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for those exposed to HIV
- Encouraging 100% condom use
- Screening and treatment for alcohol and drug abuse

Youth populations in focus

- Youth in school
- Youth out of schools
- Youth tertiary institutions
- Orphans and vulnerable children
- Youth in informal sector (including short-distance passenger (matatu and boda boda) operators.
- Young people living with HIV

2. Behaviour change interventions

- Training and mentoring peer educators
- Provision of accurate and current information on HIV, STIs and other reproductive topics.
- Provision of condoms and lubricants, and education on their correct use
- Risk assessment and risk reduction counselling
- HIV counselling and testing
- Health assessments and referrals for services
- Screening and treatment for drug and alcohol abuse
- Conducting integrated health outreaches
- Life skill education for youth in primary and secondary schools

3. Social change

- Addressing harmful traditional and cultural norms
- Addressing gender inequities
- Fighting stigma and discrimination
- Creating awareness and mitigating sexual and gender-based violence
- Addressing gender issues

4. Structural interventions

- Economic empowerment through entrepreneurship mentorship
- Formation of alcoholic anonymous (AA) groups
- Establishment and strengthening of social support groups.
- Promoting HIV prevention and meeting other health needs of youth, women and other underserved groups.
- Enhancing food security and social protection of marginalized groups

Reaching out to young people

APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde uses a number of approaches to reach out to young people. The strategies are tailored to the needs of youth in different cultural, economic and social settings.

Peer Youth Education: Small group interventions using a modular approach based on national or program-approved standards and curricula. Youth in primary and secondary school are given life skills and teachers trained using a government-approved curriculum.

Youth empowerment centres: These started off as drop-in service centres and serve as hubs shop for youth-friendly services, including referrals to health facilities.

Magnet Theatre: Magnet theatre is used to mobilise youth to access health information and services. The program supports youth groups to effectively use this approach by setting standards, training and provision of basic equipment.

Linkages to Social Determinants of Health:

The program works with the ministry responsible for youth affairs, Youth Enterprise Development Fund and the private sector to enable youth to access economic and social opportunities that reduce health vulnerabilities.

Youth Participation: Youth involvement is central in delivering a sustainable program. Young people are involved in the program through participation in implementation of interventions as well as in the management of drop-in centres, Youth Empowerment Centers, national forums, program advisory committees and community units.

Community Prevention with Positives:

Youth support groups are established and strengthened as the starting point of community Prevention with Positives (PWP) activities. These groups will be linked to comprehensive care centres for services and to economic opportunities.

APHIAplus Nuru ya Bonde is a decentralised program with the head office in Nakuru and regional offices in Narok, Baringo, Nanyuki and Ngong.

The APHIAplus Rift Valley Project is implemented by FHI 360 together with partners that include African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), Liverpool VCT, Care and Treatment (LVCT), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the National Organization for Peer Educators (NOPE), and Gold Star Kenya. The project started in 2011 and runs until December 2015.



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