

	Réseau Rwandais des Personnes Vivant avec le VIH/SIDA	Urugaga Nyarwanda rw'Ababana na Virusi itera SIDA	Rwanda Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS
B. P. 6559 KIGALI		E-mail: rrp.rwanda@gmail.com	

Report of Awareness raising event to promote SRHR and rights of young people living with HIV at schools Kicukiro Academy and Lycee de Kigali Schools on November 6 and 8, 2017

Introduction

Involving youth is crucial to end the HIV epidemic in Rwanda. They not only constitute a big part of the Rwandan population (40% is between 14 and 35 yrs¹), they are also the most sexually active (likely with different partners) which puts them at high risk of HIV. Another risk for young people is unwanted pregnancies potentially leading to girls dropping out of school, disempowering them to pursue economic independence or other goals in life.

To avoid new HIV infections and unwanted pregnancy in the future, sexual education in schools that currently focus mainly on the anatomy of men and women, without discussing other sexual health related topics², is not enough. Lack of comprehensive sexual health education leads to dangerous misconceptions about sex, how women become pregnant, and how HIV and other STIs are transmitted. Young men and women need to know about the importance of consensual sex, the right to refuse it, the risk of HIV and STI, and ways to prevent these. Especially young women and girls need to be empowered to say no, to negotiate condom use and to take their own measures to protect themselves. In short, their knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) need to be improved so they can effectively plan their futures and pursue their dreams.

To avoid new infections, young people already living with HIV have to avoid transmitting the virus to others. Only when the rights of young people are known and respected by all (HIV positive and negative) the risk of spreading HIV can be reduced. Especially the right to non-discrimination is crucial when focusing on young PLHIV. When stigma and discrimination of young PLHIV are reduced, young people can live (more) openly with HIV and negotiate protective sex. Apart from the right to non-stigmatization and discrimination, young people need to know that PLHIV have the same rights as anyone else, *including the right to plan their future, receive higher education, to get married and have a family.*

Evidence is clear, providing comprehensive sexual health education programs is the primary factor that contributes to youth remaining healthy and avoiding negative sexual health outcomes. Research has identified highly effective sex education and HIV prevention programs affect multiple behaviors and/or achieve positive long term health impacts. Behavioral outcomes have included delaying the initiation of sex as well as reducing the frequency of sex, the number of new partners, and the incidence of unprotected sex, and/or increasing the use of condoms and contraception among sexually active participants. Long-term impacts have included lower STI and/or pregnancy rates.

This report presents an awareness raising event to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights and the rights of PLHIV conducted in Kagarama Academy and Lycee de Kigali of Kigali City by Rwanda Network of People Living with HIV (RRP+) with the support of GIZ under the theme “*Rubwiruko tumenye uburenganzira ku buzima, Dufata ibyemezo ku mu biri wacu, Duhananira kugera ku nzozi z’ejo hazaza.*”

¹ Fourth Population and Housing Census, Rwanda, 2012

² UNAIDS, Global Report: UNAIDS Report on the Global Epidemic, 2013

	Réseau Rwandais des Personnes Vivant avec le VIH/SIDA	Urugaga Nyarwanda rw'Ababana na Virusi itera SIDA	Rwanda Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS
B. P. 6559 KIGALI		E-mail: rrp.rwanda@gmail.com	

Increased awareness of these rights and openness to talk about sexual health education topics is expected to contribute to the reduction of new HIV infection, reduction in un-wanted pregnancies among adolescents and increased quality of life of young PLHIV.



Students at LDK watching the health promotion club dancers on Nov. 8, 2017

Objectives

- Increase knowledge of school going youth about SRHR
- Reduce misconceptions of school going youth about sex, HIV and other STIs
- Increase knowledge of the rights of PLHIV, including the right to non-discrimination
- Promote the work of existing youth clubs and peer educators in the school
- Promote comprehensive and effective sexual health education as a fundamental component of rights and education for adolescents and PLHIV

Methodology

The events have been organized for youth in Academy School (Monday Nov 6) and Lycee de Kigali (Wednesday Nov 8). RRP+ provided key messages and facilitated discussions about SRHR, HIV and the rights of PLHIV, in collaboration with schools active health promotion clubs. Anonymous questions of students were collected and answered.

A young person living with HIV also provided a testimony and answered questions from the students. In order to create an open and relaxed atmosphere in which students are willing to discuss topics around SRHR and the rights of PLHIV, the event started with a dance as well as other talented of local students.

	Réseau Rwandais des Personnes Vivant avec le VIH/SIDA	Urugaga Nyarwanda rw'Ababana na Virusi itera SIDA	Rwanda Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS
B. P. 6559 KIGALI		E-mail: rrp.rwanda@gmail.com	



Awarding the best respondents of SRHR quiz at Kagarama Academy School on Nov.6, 2017

On Monday November 6 an **awareness raising event to promote SRHR and rights of young people living with HIV** was organized by RRP+ in Kagarama Academy Secondary School, and on Wednesday November 8 in Lycee de Kigali.

The interactive session, provided by a consultant of the Young Women Mentors Network (YWMN) included the following topics:

- Adolescence
- Educational talk about sex with parents
- Myths about sex and reproduction
- Sugar daddies / mummies in the context of poverty.
- Consensual sex and gender (right to decide when, with whom and how to have sex)
- Condom use as a measure to avoid pregnancies and HIV and impact on realizing dreams in the future

The second session was organized to make students reflect on what SRHR means for their future and achieving their dreams. Due to time constraints, the three guiding questions behavior change, self-acceptance, how to be an example to others in the context of SRHR and respecting the rights of PLHIV were addressed in plenary (instead of having small discussion groups as planned).



Réseau Rwandais des
Personnes Vivant avec
le VIH/SIDA

Urugaga Nyarwanda
rw'Ababana na Virusi
itera SIDA

Rwanda Network of
People Living with
HIV/AIDS

B. P. 6559 KIGALI

E-mail: rrp.rwanda@gmail.com



Students for Kagarama Academy performing the SRHR skeck on Nov. 6, 2017

Lessons learned and Recommendations:

- According to the feedback and interventions of participants, Students at school need more messages on SRHR;
- The total number of students who received the messages are 1.300 from 2 schools
- While working with the students at school it is better work closely with current and existing talented clubs to attract the attention of their peers;
- RRP+ to advocate for more funds for the next awareness on SRHR at school

Kigali, November 30, 2017

SEMAFARA Sage,

Executive Secretary RRP+