“THE POWER TO BE YOUR BEST” TALKSHOW

ACTIVITY REPORT

Supported by: AIDS INFORMATION CENTRE

Venue: UYDEL Rehabilitation centre—Masooli

Date: 27th June 2008
Introduction

In Uganda, young men aged 15–24 face high rates of sexually transmitted infection (STI’s), HIV/AIDS and drug use and are less likely than young women to seek health services when they need them. Young men share the responsibility for the health problems young women face, including STI’s pregnancy–related complications, and gender based violence. Young men make sexual debut later than young women, but when they do start are influenced by societal norms that promote risk taking, multiple sexual partners, use violence to ‘control’ women and so forth.

Over the last decade, numerous initiatives have sought to empower women and redress gender inequalities. Recently, it has been recognized that men, too, are negatively affected by societal expectations and harmful gender norms. Unlike other gender equity campaigns, be a man focuses on young men directly. Improving the health and wellbeing of Ugandans requires the involvement of both young women and young men.

In Uganda, there are many gender norms for men that are dangerous or unhealthy. For example, men are expected to initiate sexual activity early in Life, have many sexual Partners, maintain control over their female partners and Seek health services only When they are extremely ill. These norms in Uganda Put men at increased risk of HIV And other health problems

Gender norms however a driving force behind the practice is. Men and boys who engage in Transactional and cross generational relationships are often married or partners in sexual Relationships with other women. This infidelity is often the source of amusement or even Envy among other men, and condoned by media personalities young women in exploitative Relationships often find it difficult to leave them for fear of violence by their partners. Further More, violence against such young women are usually seen as guilty of seducing married men With their physical beauty. These talk shows are a platform for promoting gender equitable Behavior among youth audiences in Masoole a centre for orphans and vulnerable children , managed by Uganda Youth Development Link.

On 27th June 2008, therefore Katushabe Claire, Kits Victoria, Agumenitwe creanad, Abaho Moses and Kamukama Alex trainers with Youth Link Initiative conducted the activity with support from AIDS INFORMATION CENTRE and YEAH IU. Eunice.k a counselor at the centre attended the activity and participated in most of the activities as well.
Specific objectives:

1) To pass on knowledge skills and positive attitudes about gender norms and behavior that affect relationships between men and women in communities

2) To stimulate dialogue about gender based violence and how it brings about the risk to HIV/AIDS.

Methodology:

- Video presentations (trigger videos)
- Open forum (discussions)
- Role plays
- Quiz bowls

Talk show content:

1) Sex gender norms and HIV/AIDS
2) Violence vs. respect
3) Trigger videos
Activity accomplishments:
Participants were involved in a one day talk show about gender norms and behavior with the aim of helping them understand and explore issues related to gender based violence, gender roles, men and HIV/AIDS. Some of the activities that led discussions included the following.

Open forum (interactive discussions): These were unique and lively discussions aimed at stimulating dialogue about issues like STD’s, HIV/AIDS, sexuality, adolescence, gender norms and behavior among others.
During the discussions young people openly discussed about issues they face in their day to day lives and discussed realities of having to make positive choices in order to survive the challenges they go through. They are intended to create an active thinking process and concentrate their minds on the consequences their decisions can have in real life.
In the end youth will were fed with knowledge, skills and positive attitudes about reproductive health issues and left with the choice to make informed decisions.

Trigger videos: were used to stimulate discussions among the participants about gender equitable behaviors. These are silent videos commonly referred as VIGNETTES aimed at stimulating discussion from the participants on an issue. It was a back up of the session earlier conducted. The videos are simple, easy to use and handy.
Participants act out a role-play about faithfulness and multiple sexual partners
Participants vibrantly discussed and explored issues about multiple sexual partners. They realized the risk and started making option for changing their sexual behavior and made commitments to stay faithful to their partners.

The youth Link Team had a variety of prizes to give out. These prizes included t-shirts (Rock point 256 and Be A Man) comic books and posters
These prizes act as motivators to the audience and enhance their participation and involvement. This approach keeps youth active during the talk show and helps them exhaust issues being discussed.

Young people express their feelings about the issue of violence against women
The unique and lively approach that youth Link uses to involve youth keeps them involved, focus and interested in the messages being delivered. The above picture portrays youth sharing their feelings during a quiz bowl.

**Facilitators take participants through a discussion about the video scene about faithfulness in relationships.**

The facilitators helped the participants to realize that:
- These expectations change from time to time and from society to society.
- They determine how one is treated in society.
- They breed discrimination, however, they are learned and therefore can be unlearned.

**Facilitators guided participants through exercises like role plays, skits, stimulation games among others.**

A variety of methods were used to accommodate the different learning styles of the youth group and involve them in ways that motivated them and encouraged them to participate effectively during the talk shows.
Participants watching a trigger video about violence in relationships

Successes:

1) The youth link team managed to reach out to 59 young people in the age bracket of 14–24.
2) Participants appreciated the aspect of gender equity and made commitments to pass these messages on to their fellow peers.
3) Participants openly shared their experiences about issues like gender based violence, and negative gender behaviors: since these youth had been sex workers and drug addicts before joining the rehabilitation centre

Challenges:

1) Most of the participants did not understand English so the facilitators had to translate messages to luganda.
2) Participants need continuous outreach so as to conceptualize the issues of gender norms and behavior and how they put men and women at risk of HIV/AIDS.

Recommendations:

1) In the future more time should be set for activities. A one day session might not enable trainers to explore all the issues needed for young people to acquire attitudes about positive genders roles and behavior.
2) These youth need to be revisited as a follow up activity to track behavior change trajectories.
Attachments:

1. Talk show pictures

2. Registration forms