



Use of social media to increase SRHR services and HIV/AIDS awareness, testing and support among the Young LGBTs in Kampala City. A Case Study in Uganda.

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Abstract:

Research shows that young LGBTs in Kampala have less access to HIV information, testing and support thereby being at a risk of HIV infections. Vijana Na Children foundation-Uganda (VINACEF) used social media to provide access to information and support services. This study focussed on observing whether youth LGBTs who access HIV information can seek testing and support from "friendly" providers. VINACEF approached leaders of LGBTs who helped us to identify LGBTs peers (60 in total aged 19-25 and 40 were male). VINACEF trained them as peer educators in prevention and support. It enrolled them on social media to help with rolling out the opening of peers' accounts and orienting them on usage. VINACEF peer educators issued coupons to enable "peers" for access internet periodically. Educators started social media discussions on HIV awareness and support. Peer Educators issued referrals/treatment vouchers to enable LGBTs peers access free services and more information in "friendly" centres. A data tracking tool was developed/used to collect data periodically, analysed it to come up with results. A total of 948 peers were reached during the study. 43% HIV/AIDS related risks awareness, prevention and care among young LGBTs was realised from 51% at baseline. 35% of the target peers had social media accounts at baseline compared to 98% at the end of the study. 91% MSM compared to 71% WSW ably used social media to share concerns with "their peers". 61% wSW picked coupons to access testing services compared to 89%MSM. At baseline 42% believed that circumcision stops HIV transmission compared to 8% at the end of the study. 13% of enrolled peers tested positive to HIV, enrolled on ART program and support groups.

Biography:

Secretary General, VinacefUganda Benard is an MSM from the LGBTI community Uganda, persons affected by punitive laws, regulations and policies, severely stigmatized and marginalized, and are disproportionately affected by HIV, This includes men who have sex with men



(MSM), transgender persons (TG), sex workers (SW) and their Children and people who inject drugs (PWID) and other underserved communities., August 2009 Nominated Volunteer by Uganda Red Cross Society Management to support Office of the Secretary General in preparation of meetings with confidential and sensitive clerical services for Partnerships, Management, Governing Board and National Council meetings which exposed me to decision making skills and preparation of such big meetings for an organization,2009-2010 achieved a Diploma in Social Development from Nsamizi Institute of Social Development. He has spent all his education semesters in Uganda where his research allowed him to offer services to all without discrimination. 20th February - 20th May 2010 Volunteer Internship with Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU) Peer Educator. After graduation, Benard focused on advocating for the rights of the young people with emphasis on access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights friendly services without discrimination.

Publication of speakers:

1. Menachemi, Nir & Hogan, Tory & DelliFraine, Jami. (2015). Journal Rankings by Health Management Faculty Members: Are There Differences by Rank, Leadership Status, or Area of Expertise?. *Journal of healthcare management / American College of Healthcare Executives*. 60. 17-28. 10.1097/00115514-201501000-00005.
2. Rosini, E. & Pucci, D. & Calabró, G. & Girardi, P.. (2015). MISM: Clinical and epidemiological data of a new Italian Public Mental Health Care Model in development. 21. 239-245.

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