

TRACK 3: Society, race, class and culture – diversity and challenges- for effective HIV prevention

POSTER PRESENTATION

Title:Enhancing effective HIV prevention among girls by fighting child marriage and sexual and gender based violence in Karonga district, Malawi.

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Background and Objectives

In Malawi, early sexual debut and marriages, initiation and marriage systems, intergenerational and transactional sex, multiple partners, and sexual coercion expose youth especially girls to HIV. More than half of Malawian youth marry while still in their teens and 69% of sexually-active young people have multiple partners. Example, 30% of young women aged 15–19 years have first sexual intercourse before they were 15 years old making themselves more vulnerable to HIV and AIDS, STIs and maternal death.

Similarly in Traditional Authority (TA) Kilupula, Karonga district youth especially girls are affected by the situation.

Cases of Sexual and gender based violence as well as early child marriages among girl children were high in Traditional Authority Kilupula, Karonga district which exposed girl children to HIV infections while denying these girls' rights of accessing education. The situation was influenced by culture, poverty and ignorance.

Therefore, Fountain of Hope Organisation carried out a project aimed at enhancing protection of 3500 girls from Early child Marriages and Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) situations which were increasing the rate of new infections of HIV among girls.

METHOD

Baseline data from health facilities and school was collected .

Trained 50 girls of 10 to 17 years in how to protecting themselves and others against HIV infection, early childbearing and marriages;

Established 10 girls clubs in schools.

Trained and identified 11 young women as paralegals .

.Conducting awareness campaigns against child marriages, SGBV in relation to HIV infections. t

Trained local leaders, religious leaders, teachers, Village development committees

Facilitating linkages to care and treatment for all youth identified as HIV infected.

Conduct patient motivational talks in Out Patient Department (OPD) on option B+ including adherence/counseling;

Protecting themselves and others against HIV infection, early childbearing and marriages;

RESULTS

17300 youth and 13930 adults were sensitized for HIV testing.

4830 Youth went for HIV testing and counseling from which 123 were identified as HIV positive.

123 Youth identified as HIV infected were enrolled into care and treatment at their nearest health facility.

Increased knowledge of HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support among youth and adults.

CONCLUSION/INTERPRETATION

Enhancing Youth's HIV/AIDS Prevention, Treatment, Care and support is possible and youth's death can be reduced.

RECOMMENDATION

There is need of mobilizing more youth for HIV testing because timing treatment to youth will save lives of the future generation.