

Improve Provision of Youth-Friendly Health Services in Kabale District

Young people make up the majority of Kabale District's population. With access to youth-friendly health services, including family planning for pregnancy prevention, they can lead healthy and productive lives that contribute to Kabale's society and economy.

Yet, negative health care provider attitudes and privacy concerns often deter youth in Kabale District from seeking these services, putting their futures and the district's future at risk.

What Are Youth-Friendly Services?

Youth-friendly health services provide a comfortable, appropriate, and nonthreatening setting to attract young people and support their diverse health needs. Youth-friendly facilities offer:



Policies that protect youth confidentiality and privacy.



Affordable fees.



Hours and locations convenient for young people.



Providers trained to communicate with youth in a nonjudgmental manner.



Youth participation in the development of facility policies and implementing services.

Through the *Uganda Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan, 2015-2020*, and the *Uganda FP2020 Revitalized Commitment 2017*, the Government of Uganda has committed to ensuring that young people have access to youth-friendly family planning services.

Are Services Youth-Friendly in Kabale District?

Research with young people and stakeholders in Kabale District reveals that young people are not always comfortable going to clinics to access family planning because health care providers are not friendly to them.



“Some [health care providers] are rude and always tell youth that they are still young to access family planning services.”

YOUNG WOMAN, AGE 18 TO 24, KABALE

“[Health care providers are] friendlier to elders but judgmental and biased about the youth.”

YOUNG MAN, AGE 18 TO 24, KABALE

“They spread rumors and if they know you, they can tell your parents when you go to access the family planning services.”

YOUNG WOMAN, AGE 15 TO 17, KABALE

“...[M]ost of the health facilities do not again respect young people when it comes to contraception and contraceptive use. It's like youth are sneaking in, in fear, and nobody is looking at this young girl, asking for something. They'll just say, 'What? Why is this young girl here?'”

NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION,
KABALE



16 percent of women ages 15 to 19 in Kigezi Region have had a live birth or are pregnant with their first child.

Why Should We Improve Youth-Friendly Services in Kabale District?

When young people can access services in a supportive environment, they have:

Improved knowledge of sexual and reproductive health and contraceptive services.

Greater access to and demand for contraceptive services.

Increased protection from HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Increased satisfaction with contraceptive use among young people.

Reduction in unintended pregnancies.

Kabale District can train its health care providers with a manual from the Ministry of Health on how to treat young people and build youth-friendly services. By doing so, it can help Uganda meet its commitments to improve youth-friendly contraceptive services and improve young people's reproductive health.

What Should Policymakers in Kabale District Do?

- Prioritize funding for public-sector health care providers' training on youth-friendly services, especially at the health system's lower levels, in the 2020-2021 budget.
- Include youth-friendly services training in health care providers' existing refresher trainings.
- Inform communities about why health facilities should be youth-friendly.

Investments in family planning lead to a better-educated, healthier population and improved development for all youth in Kabale District.



NOTES

Focus group discussions with youth and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders conducted in Kampala, Kabale, and Mayuge districts in 2018 assessed gaps between policy commitments made in *The National Policy Guidelines and Service Standards for Reproductive Health Services; Health Sector Strategic Plan III, 2010/11-2014/15; National Adolescent Health Strategy, 2011-2015; National Sexuality Education Framework, 2018; Uganda Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan, 2015-2020*, and the implementation of youth-friendly family planning services. Selected challenges identified at the national and Kabale District level are presented here.

SOURCES

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