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- 5th May, 2016



- Launch of Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health Youth Friendly Services in mahama 4th May, 2016
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On the 15th of April as One UN Rwanda, we commemorated the lives of our colleagues who lost their lives during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.



New curriculum to promote sex education in schools



Photo: L-R Peter Wallet UNESCO, Gasana Janvier DG REB and Jozef Maeriën UNFPA Rep with Deans.

“Comprehensive sexuality education is vital in curbing cases of unwanted pregnancies and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases as it ensures that young people are equipped with competencies they need to make safe and responsible choices about their sexual and reproductive health”, says Jozef Maeriën, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) representative in Rwanda.

The remarks were made by UNFPA representative during the official launch of a teacher -training program geared towards equipping teachers and stakeholders in the education sector on key features of the new curriculum and learner-centered teaching methodologies.

The three-day training also aimed at providing deans of studies from 1,508 secondary schools from 30 districts an overview on the importance of comprehensive sexuality education. The Ministry of Education through Rwanda Education Board embarked on a teacher training plan geared towards equipping teachers and the education sector stakeholders on main features of the new curriculum and on requirements of learner-centered teaching methodologies.

A total of eight cross-cutting topics have been integrated in the new curriculum among which, is Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). CSE is integrated in five subjects, two in Primary schools (Science and Elementary Technology and Social Studies) and three in Secondary Schools namely; Biology and Health Sciences, General Studies and Communication Skills including History and Citizenship. Preparing young people for the transition to adulthood has always been a great challenge which the new curriculum hopes to address.

Comprehensive sexuality education emphasizes a holistic approach to human development and sexuality. It views sexuality within the context of emotional and social development and also promotes human rights, knowledge, as well as skills for prevention of HIV and unwanted pregnancies.

“Young people receive an array of contradictory and confusing messages about sexuality often but how we meet this challenge is the greatest opportunity to breaking the trajectory. This renewed optimism that the introduction of a curriculum that includes sexuality education programme, can help in proper nurturing of children into full responsible citizens” Maeriën added.



Facilitator during CSE training

Parents are encouraged to be able to address the physical and behavioral aspects so that children are able to make responsible decisions regarding relationships and sexuality Janvier Gasana, the director-general of Rwanda Education Board, said potential partners should embrace the approach of a comprehensive sexuality education and sensitize all stakeholders for successful implementation.

“We need to do everything we can so that young people get the right guidance. With this era of technology they are so exposed and that’s why a sensitive approach is needed to put them on the right track. However this needs to be approached well so that the beneficiaries are not pushed in the opposite direction,” he added.

Quality education motivates a couple to practice Family Planning

Gone are the days when families preferred having many children for various reasons including having enough hands to till the land. Shyirambere, 47 and his wife Nyirabazubafite, 34 started practicing family planning in 2004. They are residents of Rubengera Sector, Karongi District.

Shyirambere said: *"We looked ahead. It is not enough to provide food for the children. One needs to plan for their education because times have changed."*

"I knew our family would struggle financially if we had many children because our income from farming is little" said Nyirabazubafite. *"I did not want children to be a burden to us and the community."*



The couple has two sons aged 14 and 11, both in school. *"We want them to study up to university. They should have a better lifestyle than ours,"* said Shyirambere.

Nyirabazubafite revealed that she receives an injectable every three months.

The couple said that although their income is little they are able to provide basic needs for their children. *"We have no problem paying for health insurance, and we always pay it in advance,"* said Shyirambere. He added that besides health insurance their children get all the school requirements in time.

"I am very strong. I am sure if I had many children I would be worn out by now," said Nyirabazubafite. On the health of the family she said that both parents and children rarely fall sick because they feed well.

Shyirambere urges government to sensitize people in the countryside about the benefits of family planning. He said: *"People produce many children because of ignorance. They should be taught to think about the future of their children."*

After knowing benefits of family planning Shyirambere and his wife occasionally sensitize their village mates about Family Planning benefits.