



Title: Life planning skills integrated with rites of passage to address FGC	
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Division/Branch: AYA	
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Primary Subject Area: <u>Adolescent Reproductive Healths</u> Other:	Additional Keywords: Life planning skills education,, Harmful traditional practices
<p>Lesson Learned: Integrating Life planning skills education into rites of passage among adolescent candidates to discard FGC. This approach worked well in Uganda under the AYA BCC component for out of school youths affected by FGC in Kapchorwa district. All 162 Sabinu adolescent girls who had declared to undertake FGC rejected it after they were trained in LPS integrated with rites of passage.</p>	
<p>Description of Issue and Context: In Uganda, Adolescent girls and women from the age of 13years to 30 and even above in Kapchorwa district are subjected to FGC as a means of graduating them from child hood to adulthood. The practice involves cutting part or all the girl’s external genitalia using crude blades and performed by traditional women. Upto today, there are many cases where one knife is used for many candidates. Besides several health, psycho-social and economic problems associated with the practice, it poses high risk of spreading STIs and HIV/AIDS and a violation against women’s rights to good health. Previous efforts concentrating on awareness creation and advocacy helped increase knowledge and created conducive environment by making FGC optional for girls. However, despite initial gains in reducing the practice, the number of girls undertaking FGC in the recent years since 2000 remained stagnant. Most girls appreciated that the practice was harmful but lacked the action to reject FGC.</p>	
<p>Strategy Used: The strategy of integrating LPS into rites of passage to address FGC involves identifying the adolescent girls who are candidates of FGC and taking them through a one-week training covering Life planning skills and other SRH issues including the harmful aspects of FGC. This is conducted by well-trained LPS TOTs. The FGC mentors who have been engaged in rites of passage initiation for actual circumcision are facilitated to take the adolescents through the various issues of rites of passage. Information that used to be concealed and reserved for the initiates of FGC and used to intimidate the uncircumcised girls is shared during this training and after the training, the trained girls are taken through a graduation ceremony declaring them adults.</p> <p>This activity is preceded by a lot of advocacy activities targeting parents and community leaders for acceptability of the alternative method and for them to allow the children to attend</p>	

the trainings. This also help the parents to accept the new decisions the girls will take rejecting FGC after the training which has been the case for most girls.

Results:

- All the girls who attend the LPS integrated with rites of passage training in 2002 rejected FGC that years circumcision season revealed by the 2002 FGC enumeration survey.
- There was increased number of girls rejected FGC resulting from the influence of the trained colleagues.
- The myths and fears surrounding information taught to FGC initiates and the circumcised is dispelled.

Recommended Practice: LPS integrated with rites of passage has worked in kapchorwa and Kenya. It could be replicated also in other countries.

Refresher trainings should be conducted for the adolescents trained in the previous season and the trained girls transformed to be peer educators to influence their fellow colleagues.

The male youths counterparts who form the spouses for the girls need also to be targeted to reduce resistance to the girls when they enter the marriage setting.

Application: Recommended practice currently done in Uganda and Kenya among the Masai of Narok. Ghana.

Implications for UNFPA's Programme and Operational Policies:

Scaling-Up: This programme needs to cover more adolescent youth in Kapchorwa and Nakapirit Districts and other circumcising countries like Sudan, Ethiopia and so on.

Suggested Follow-up: Proper documentation of the success story in Uganda.

Sources: PATH-AYA(Uganda)