

HIV Prevention for Girls & Young Women



**Feedback to the Report Card on HIV Prevention for
girls & young women in Jamaica**

Objectives of this Presentation



- To facilitate the discussion of key findings and recommendations of Jamaica's HIV/AIDS Report Card
- To facilitate the transference of the perspectives of young people about HIV prevention for girls and young women
- To encourage the participation of girls & young women and boys & young men in national dialogue and advocacy about HIV prevention issues
- To encourage an objective evaluation of young people's perspectives about the findings of each prevention component

Objectives of this Presentation

Cont'd



- To encourage prioritisation and focus on HIV prevention for girls and young women at the national level
- To serve as a tool for advocating for the enhancement of HIV prevention for girls and young women around five core components: legal & policy provisions, availability & accessibility of services, and participation and rights
- To re-emphasise the challenges facing girls and young women and encourage commitment to addressing the situation at a national level

Research Overview



- The research leading to the development of the Report Card on HIV prevention for girls and young women was a qualitative research, which used focus group discussions and in-depth interviews to answer preset questions on the situation of HIV prevention for girls and young women around five core components. The research was conducted in June 2006
- The Report Card was created as an “advocacy tool to increase and improve the programmatic, policy, and funding actions taken on HIV prevention for girls and young women in Jamaica.” As an advocacy tool it targets “national, regional and international policy and decision-makers, and service providers”

Research Overview Cont'd



- The “Report Card summarizes the current situation of HIV prevention strategies and services for girls and young women ages 15-24 years in Jamaica. It contains an analysis of five key components that influence HIV prevention”:
 - Legal provision
 - Policy provision
 - Availability of services
 - Accessibility of services
 - Participation and rights
- The “Report Card provides recommendations for key stakeholders to enhance action on HIV prevention strategies and services for girls and young women in Jamaica”

Research Overview Cont'd



Summary of Findings

- “Girls and young women in Jamaica benefit from relatively high levels of literacy and contraceptive use, and age of sexual debut is about 17 years”
- “The level of HIV prevalence is low among 15-24 year olds, about 1 percent; with the majority of cases occurring among those aged 20-39 years”

Research Overview Cont'd



Summary of Findings

- Girls and young women are particularly vulnerable to HIV because:
 - Sexual activity is often coercive
 - Young people are disproportionately affected by STIs
 - High adolescent fertility rate, at 112 per 1000, with 40 percent of girls giving birth before 20 years
 - Young men have multiple partners
 - High levels of violence in the society, particularly physical & sexual abuse
 - Unplanned pregnancy, three quarters of those occurring among 15-24 y-o

Prevention Components 1 & 2: Legal & Policy Provision

**National Laws and Regulations & National
Policies, Protocols, and Guidelines**



Young People's Views: Legal and Policy Provisions



- There is need for **coordination** of all the issues concerning HIV prevention
- **Comprehensive sex education** is needed before people begin to form intimate relationships--sex education should be elevated as a priority issue
- There is need to go **beyond looking at legislation** as a solution to problems--There is need for public education about the issues (including practices that increase girls and young women's vulnerability to HIV) and to support knowledge of existing laws
- Need to establish **national standards** concerning young people's access to HIV prevention services—these would cross-cutting through all ministries
- The National Youth Policy needs to articulate **strategies/ actions** for supporting HIV prevention

Young People's Views: Legal and Policy Provisions Cont'd



- There is need for **integrated services**, so that HIV is not seen as a separate health issue from others--No HIV specific law is needed, rather integration of HIV into general health services
- **Sensitisation** about women's rights, gender-based violence, relationship behaviour, change management, young people's rights, and communications
- Need for clear-cut policies to inform the public about their human rights
- Need for **greater public education** about available HIV prevention services--where they are available, what is their value/ use, availability youth-friendly services
- There is a need for **visible signs in health facilities** to speak to people's rights, the institution's mission, vision, and core values—this would go a far way in increasing client's awareness of the expectations

Prevention Component 3: Availability of Services

Number of programmes, scale, range...



Young People's Views: Availability of Services



- There is need to increase the number of services that **target males**—using innovative strategies
- **Women's empowerment and confidence building**--in SRH skills (HIV prevention trainers and contraceptive & condom use), self worth, and acceptance
- Prevention services should be made **available to persons within the privacy of their homes**
- Need for the **enforcement of prevention services** for young people in public health facilities
- There is a need to **highlight best practices** in HIV programming, and institutionalize them as a means of ensuring that good programmes do not die

Prevention Component 4: Accessibility of Prevention Services



Location, user-friendliness, affordability...

Young People's Views: Accessibility of Services



- Need for the creation of **local health facilities whose operational stakeholders include community members and young people**
- Need to **access prevention services locally** (homes and communities)—this would help to address some fears and stigmas
- Increased **use of mobile testing clinics** and ensuring that such clinics provide **integrated services**
- Need for **greater public education** about prevention services: what they are? where they are available? and who they are for?

Young People's Views: Accessibility of Services Cont'd



- There needs to be a very strong **focus on improving the physical layout of clinics**, as they act as deterrents to accessing prevention services—existing layouts do not facilitate privacy, confidentiality, and trust
- There is need to **train young people as SRH services monitors** in order to help evaluate health workers
- **Signs** displaying the rights of clients, workers, and redress mechanisms should be posted in health facilities
- **Establish support groups** persons who are positive, as well as for those who are not and want to prevent infection

Prevention Component 5: Participation and Rights

**Human rights, representation, advocacy,
participation in decision-making...**



Young People's Views: Participation and Rights



- There is generally a **greater need for the involvement of men**—programmes need to be oriented to influence male participation
- There is need for **greater awareness about human rights** through the media—artists need to send appropriate messages
- **All teachers need to be trained in SRH practices**--not just Guidance Counselors
- Increase in the number of **peer educators on SRH**
- An **on-going media campaign on SRH** is needed nationally
- There is need for the **community to play a greater role in implementing SRH programmes** at the local level

Young People's Views: Participation and Rights Cont'd



- **Make HIV prevention popular** through apparel that is appealing to young people
- Need for **consistent educators** in schools discussing the issue of HIV
- There is need for the **publication of text books** to support education on SRH and HIV
- Need to make internationally and nationally expressed **human rights visible in schools and health facilities**
- Need to implement **legislation to prosecute persons** who deliberately share private health information to others and engage in discriminatory practices

For further Information
on the
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girls and young women*
held at
Knutsford Court Hotel
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