

Abstract

CDD1412 - Identifying possible community interventions to compliment an innovative sexual and reproductive health programme for young people in Mwanza, Tanzania

J. Komrower¹, K. Nyalali¹, L. Medard¹, M. Makokoha², D. Wight³, J. Chungalucha¹, F. Mohammed², A. Obasi⁴

¹National Institute of Medical Research, Mwanza, Tanzania, ²African Medical and Research Foundation, Lake Zone, Mwanza, Tanzania, ³MRC, SPHSU, Glasgow, United Kingdom, ⁴Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Liverpool, United Kingdom

Issues: Preventative programmes based in schools and health services are likely to be more effective if complemented with community-based interventions. Frequently inadequate resources are invested in the identification and development of new interventions. This paper describes how possible complementary interventions were carefully identified in northern Tanzania.

Description: A large-scale adolescent reproductive health intervention is being implemented in Mwanza Region, Northern Tanzania. Process evaluations within an earlier randomized controlled trial of this intervention identified a need for community interventions to support the core activities within schools and health units. Analysis of a three year anthropological research programme, community participatory analyses, multi-level stakeholder workshop and a literature review were used to prioritize potential community-based interventions and identify appropriate structures through which to deliver them sustainably.

Lessons learned:

- There was little difference between the priorities identified by all. Everyone prioritised working with parents and community groups, stating that they play a fundamental role in supporting young people in their development, followed by the use of video shows.
- Intervention development needs to be context specific. Within villages the various groups did not differ greatly in their views; however they generally focused on interventions specifically targeting the different groups and not necessarily the community at large.
- The specific involvement of different groups within the intervention development would increase participants' sense of responsibility and ownership, potentially leading to a more sustainable intervention.
- The importance of close examination of the existing structures and exploration of issues relating to sustainability, coverage, monitoring and evaluation within each intervention area was emphasized.

Recommendations: Different data sources, organisations, groups and individuals from various levels should be used in order to better identify possible community interventions and to understand which are most appropriate. Involvement of the community in careful formative evaluation research is likely to be key to the effectiveness of interventions produced.