



Initiative Africa

Life Skill Education In Schools



**For Adolescents Developing
skills for Life**

What we do

Initiative Africa (IA) works to promote self-reliance and sustainable development. We work in collaboration with NGOs, professional associations, academia, and journalists to reduce poverty through education. Our mission to build a better tomorrow focuses on four elements in which we operate to build thriving, stable communities: building community wealth and promoting gender equality, partnering with entrepreneurs and businesses across Ethiopia, educating communities and training individuals, and promoting self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods.

Together with our partners, IA creates and implements projects that facilitates community pro

Who we are

Initiative Africa is a membership driven non-partisan, non-profit organization based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Established in 2009 by like-minded activists with a shared commitment to promoting self-reliance in Africa, IA works with partner organizations to end the injustices that cause poverty.



Why SRH Education for Adolescents

According to UNFPA State of World Population 2005, young people under 25 years of age now comprise nearly half of the world population - more than 3 billion. 85 percent of youth live in developing countries and nearly 45 percent of all youth (515 million) survive on less than \$ 2 a day.

Besides its demographic significance, this age group has increasingly become victim of sexual and reproductive health problems, which has endangered the lives of so many young people. Every year, some 14 million adolescent girls give birth. They are two to five times more likely to die from pregnancy related complications than women in their twenties and their babies are also less likely to survive. In Ethiopia, two in every five girls are married before their 18th birthday and nearly one in five girls marries before the age of 15 (UNFPA 2016).

Estimates suggest that one out of every 20 young people worldwide contracts a sexually transmitted disease (STD) each year. The 2016 data from Federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office indicates that there are over 718,550 people living with HIV in Ethiopia alone, a little over 1.18% of the population. According the globally accepted consensus, if the total number of HIV infected people in a given country exceeds the one per cent threshold of the population, that country is considered to be under category of 'outbreak of the virus' (HAPCO 2016).

The 2016 Ethiopian Demographic Health Survey (DHS) reveals that around 56% of the women and 55% of the men among the surveyed household have never been tested for HIV, an indication the the current number of HIV positives in the country could be a lot more had all the population been tested. And, despite the existence of the large number of people living with HIV/AIDS, only 72% of them are thought to be aware that they are living with the virus; the remaining 28% think they are not infected.

Initiative Africa (IA) is one of the organizations involved in this endeavour. IA works to improve the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and young people through establishing, strengthening and networking youth clubs. More specifically, the initiative aims at changing the attitudes and behaviour of adolescents and young people towards improved sexual lifestyle by preventing unwanted pregnancy, abortion, STIs, including HIV/AIDS and other SRH problems by empowering the youth to learn from each other.

At the adolescent age, between 10 and 19 years, the youth is undergoing a tremendous change both physically and emotionally. With the growth and change of the reproductive organs, youth experience dynamic unfolding of emotions leading to sexual activities.

At this critical and vulnerable age the inexperienced youth need knowledge on essential and desirable topics, guidance and services to protect themselves from dangers and lead a healthy sexual life. In almost all Ethiopian tradition neither the parents nor the educational institutions provide such guidance on sexual issues. As a result, young people learn from each other about sexual issues, which are sometimes



full of misconceptions and prejudices. In the process of trial and error or from undesirable peer pressure, the youth might end up in risky sexual behaviour with grave health consequences such as unwanted pregnancy, STIs, and HIV/AIDS.

The tradition of learning from each other is to be maintained, organized and developed through peer education programs (peer learning groups) which sports/health/gender clubs promote. Through this approach, young people can learn from each other's experiences and discover their challenges, using the latest knowledge and participatory methodologies.



SRH in the Make Change Happen Project

The SRH component of the Make Change Happen project has many activities that supplement one another. These are:

Strengthening sports/health/gender clubs: In schools sports/health/gender clubs play vital role in disseminating core messages that clarify misconceptions and prejudices. Target schools will be supported to empower the clubs to train school level Peer Educators who will organize and facilitate peer learning groups. Through counselling services students will be supported to manage unfolding of emotions leading to sexual activities and protect themselves from dangers of vulnerability.

Edutainment activities: These activities will be used among every sport/health/ gender club as means to reach young people with educational messages while they are entertaining using dramas, theatres, essay competitions, cartoon drawings etc.

Reproductive health service provision through referral arrangements: Trained Peer Educators facilitate sexual and reproductive health service provision to their peers through referrals using existing health facilities at local level.

Advocacy on all levels: Youth clubs identify and advocate on harmful traditional practices and other issues that affect the overall psychosocial and health status of young people in their locality. This enables clubs to win the heart and minds of people in their community and create friendly environment that supports their cause. Besides, IA and its partner organizations advocate at higher level to improve SRH services to young people.

Production and distribution of IEC materials: Youth friendly IEC materials including newspaper, leaflets and others are centrally produced and supplied to young people in the program to supplement the peer learning.

Capacity building of club leaders: This is part of ensuring the standardized service delivery and sustainability of the program by building leadership, management, planning and implementation skills of young people involved in overall activities of the club.



Making Change Happen

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This Project is supported by:



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