

HIV/AIDS AWARENESS FOR SCHOOL GOING YOUTH AT MAKUNDUCHI CONSTITUENCY - ZANZIBAR

Acknowledgements

On behalf of JUKEJIMA, I would like to extend thanks to all individuals and organizations who for one way or another contributed to the successfulness of this project. It is because of their supports, the activities and results of this project have come into reality. Specifically the thanks have to go to:-

- United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
- South District Education and Vocational training Officer.
- Head teachers and other staff of all nine schools in the Makunduchi Constituency
- AidNet Zanzibar
- Zanzibar AIDS Commission
- Mnazi Mmoja Referral Hospital
- ZAPHA+
- Media Institutions (Television Zanzibar, Zanzibar Leo News paper, and Radio Zanzibar)
- Meli Nne Video Shooting Center and
- Participating youth/students

JUKEJIMA actually appreciates each respective support from these organizations.

Introduction

As an educative oriented NGO, **Jumuiya ya Kuendeleza Elimu Jimbo la Makunduchi (JUKEJIMA)** among other things is responsible for making young people especially those in school live in a safe and healthy life. To accomplish this, JUKEJIMA has taken a number of initiatives so as to make sure that students acquire knowledge and skills concerning their life styles. One among those initiatives is implementing the UNESCO sponsored project called "HIV/AIDS Awareness for School Going Youth"

The focus of this project is to raise awareness amongst teachers and students in particular and the community in general about the issue of HIV/AIDS especially in the area of infection/transmission, effects and stigmatization and discrimination. This objective was planned to be met by implementing 4 main activities with 5 subsidiary tasks. The project activities were undertaken in all nine schools of Makunduchi constituency namely; Kiongoni, Kusini, Makunduchi Secondary, Miwaleni, Kajengwa Mtende, Kizimkazi Mkunguni, Kizimkazi Dimbani and Kibuteni. Each school had to invite a minimum of 60 students in all activities of

the project. The project then was expected to involve more than 540 students that is about 10.9% of the total number of students in the constituency (4947).

Main Activities

1. Organise viewing of films relating to HIV/AIDS followed by discussions.
2. Conduct mini lectures sessions accompanied by role plays.
3. Organise competition among youth for song/jingle highlighting HIV/AIDS issues.
4. Organise two panel discussions on HIV/AIDS issues involving youth from local peer counseling groups.

Subsidiary tasks

1. Involve a minimum of 2 youth in the management and implementation of the project who will then submit report concerning their involvement.
2. Seek sponsorship for prizes.
3. Broadcast the winning song, panel discussion and all activities through local media.
4. Evaluate the level of HIV/AIDS knowledge among students and report the result to UNESCO
5. Provide UNESCO with photographs, audiotapes of winning song and unedited video footage on Master tape of the activities.

This report provides highlight of the project activities that have been implemented in the entire period of the project implementation.

FILM VIEWING AND DISCUSSIONS

The activity was conducted to all nine schools where students aged 12 – 20 years participated. Films viewing and facilitating discussions conducted by members of AidNet Zanzibar who have specific skills on running such activities. After each film was shown, the facilitators led the discussions concerning what have been viewed from both students and responsible teachers. The films were authorized by Zanzibar AIDS Commission (ZAC) special board to be shown to such category of population. The films shown were “dreams of Good life”, “Let us talk about It”, “Ho Ea Rona – We are Going Forward”, “A fighting Spirit” and “A Miner’s Tale”. All films were translated in Kiswahili so that the audiences can easily understand.

The students were very eager to know many things highlighted in the films as most of the characters in the films were people either living with HIV or who are very closer to PLWHA stating their experience. However, the age of the students seems to hinder qualitative contributions among students where students above 15 had strong points and questions while those below 15 were quite afraid to

give their views. People from ZAPHA+ also gave some experience especially on the area of discrimination and stigmatization.

MINI LECTURES

JUKEJIMA assigned this task to members of ZAC who in collaboration with members of Mnazi Mmoja Referral Hospital provided the most basic knowledge concerning HIV/AIDS. This included HIV/AIDS history, i.e. first reported case in the World, in Africa, in Tanzania and in Zanzibar in particular. The current status of HIV/AIDS in Zanzibar in district wise.

The other topic presented was ways of HIV transmission and prevention which were identified as through unsafe/unprotected sexual intercourse with infected person, infected blood transfusion, contaminated sharp instruments such as razor, syringes etc. mother to child. The students were also highlighted with issues concerning care and living positive. The issues discussed were stigmatization and home based care.

The students were given chances to ask questions and seeking more information about any issue related to HIV/AIDS. The activity was also conducted in all 9 schools and the participants were those who participated in film viewing and discussions.

ROLE PLAYS

As the way of transferring knowledge to audiences, the project decided to include role plays concerning issues of HIV/AIDS in its activities. The plays were linked to the topics presented and those related to young people. The activity was performed by students attending the lectures and film viewing.

After mini lectures and before film screening and discussions, the students assisted by the concerned facilitator composed the HIV/AIDS related role-play and feature to the audiences. The theme of the role-play was critically focused to all areas of discussion which include; prevention, care and support. Further more, the issue of students' roles in the fighting against further transmission of HIV to young people especially students was emphasized.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

So as to share knowledge and information and gain new ones among young people, the project organized two panel discussions concerning HIV/AIDS. The discussions involved youth in schools' AIDS clubs and out of school youth. Although previously the discussion was supposed to involve only peer counseling groups, we decided to involve schools youth and out of school youth due to the fact that at the constituency there is no single local peer counseling. Existing AIDS clubs in schools are the one that plays the same role at the local levels.

There were two main agenda/topics for discussion in each panel/session.

- 1. Role of young people in the fighting against HIV/AIDS in the society.**
- 2. How can we reduce Stigmatization in our society**

The most crucial points in topic I contributed in the discussion were:

- Study in deep the nature and all related issues of HIV/AIDS
- Practice religious activities and adhere/abide to all dos and don'ts as articulated in the religious books/words
- Engage fully in the sports activities as can put some one busy and forget about engaging in sexual matters.
- Form HIV/AIDS youth clubs at local levels which will provide HIV/AIDS related information to peers at their respective areas.
- Go and test their HIV/AIDS status as the way of preventing more infections and living positive.

On the side of second topic, the most burning points were:

- Educate people especially at family level on the ways of HIV transmission.
- Enact laws that can prevent HIV positive person for being discriminated on all life aspects – such as employment and social/economic services.
- Educate general public on basics of HIV/AIDS.
- People living with HIV/AIDS should not stigmatize themselves by parting themselves from the community/other social groups.
- Practicing religious activities and abide to religious books/words.

Each panel discussion involved more than 50 participants. However, there was a limited number (about 10) of people who dominated the discussions.

SONG COMPITITION

It is believed that songs are one among the best ways of transferring messages and information and can be useful to such category of people. Songs also can

stay longer/ stuck in the people's minds rather than normal statements/talking. This is due to the fact that songs are repeated again and again.

Based on that thought, the project organized song competition among HIV/AIDS school youth clubs and other youth in the constituency. This activity was highly supported by education district office. The activity was organized through gathering all 9 schools and other members of the Makunduchi community so as to hear and receive the portrayed messages.

The song competitors were:

- Kiongoni Primary school
- Kizimkazi Dimbani School
- Kajengwa Primary school
- Makunduchi Secondary school

The project team set winning criteria for songs which include:

- a. Portrayal of the HIV/AIDS prevention and fight against stigmatization themes **(60 points)**
- b. Rhythm and tone of the songs **(25 points)**
- c. Smartness of the participants **(10 points)**
- d. Activeness/confidence of the participants **(5 points)**

After each group/school performed, the judges who were selected from members of JUKEJIMA and District Cultural Office declared that Kizimkazi Dimbani School was the winner for song competition after collecting 87 points out of 100. The other results in ascending order were:

1. Kajengwa Primary School – 82 points
2. Makunduchi Secondary School – 76 points
3. Kiongoni Primary School – 70 points

The prizes were given in the following manner:

First winner (Kizimkazi Dimbani) - Tsh. 150,000/=

Second winner (Kajengwa Pr. School) – Tsh. 120,000/=

Third winner (Makunduchi Sec. School) – Tsh. 75,000/=

The Last Kiongoni - Tsh 30,000/=

The total amount used for prizes is Tsh. 375,000/= (300US\$).

N.B The audio cassette of the winning song is submitted with this report.

Other Information

The project was under the special team composed of 6 members of whom 2 are youth, 1 coordinator, 1-information personnel and 2 supporting staff.

All activities were broadcasted through 3 public local media - Radio Zanzibar through its daily morning programme (Mawio), Television Zanzibar in News bulletin and special programme (youth and Music – Muziki na Vijana) and Daily news paper (Zanzibar Leo)

All activities were conducted by using Kiswahili language.

Conclusion

Although South District is one among the least HIV/AIDS infected district among ten districts in Zanzibar, the need for imparting HIV/AIDS knowledge couldn't be escaped. Implementing such a project which focus on both prevention and care is necessary so that no new infection can be reported and those who are living with the viruses being supported accordingly.

JUKEWJIMA attempted to undertake this initiative to young people especially those in schools as part of its basic role in the constituency. The methods used to portray the HIV/AIDS message to students were acceptable to both students and education authorities in the district.

The community at its side was very impressed to the initiative taken by JUKEJIMA and call for further development of such health educative programs. As the project seems to meet its immediate objectives, the impact of the knowledge will be observed after a while.