



# SPOTLIGHTING

## UGANDA *October 2023*

### PROMOTING DISABILITY INCLUSIVE SGBV SERVICES IN KALIRO DISTRICT

We are thrilled to announce significant achievements in Kaliro District's commitment to promoting disability inclusive services, especially in the context of Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).

- **Successful Launch and Dissemination:** Kaliro District has successfully launched and disseminated the Kaliro District Policy on Disability Inclusive SGBV services to key stakeholders and local leaders.
- **Sub-County Dissemination Commitment:** The district has taken a further step by pledging to disseminate the policy at the sub-county level, ensuring that it reaches even the most local government levels.

### EMPOWERING ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN (AGYW) WITH DISABILITIES

Our initiatives have empowered AGYW with disabilities to identify crucial issues for advocacy and action, some of which include:

- **Health Worker Orientation:** AGYW with disabilities are orienting health workers on how to handle Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and Women with Disabilities (WWDs) effectively.
- **Sign Language Accessibility:** Efforts are being made to provide sign language interpreters at health facilities, ensuring accessibility for the hearing impaired.
- **Combatting SGBV:** AGYW are actively following up on the perpetrators of sexual gender-based violence against women and girls with disabilities.
- **Diversity Profiling:** There is an ongoing project to profile all PWDs within Kaliro district, recognizing their diverse needs.

- **Skill Development:** AGYW with disabilities are receiving training and skill development in producing reusable sanitary pads.
- **Enhancing Accessibility:** The district is dedicated to ensuring and monitoring accessibility in all public buildings for PWDs.

### INCREASED KNOWLEDGE AND ACCESS TO SRHR/HIV SERVICES

We have also made significant strides in increasing knowledge among AGYW on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and HIV information, leading to greater demand and access to services.

- **Outreach Sessions:** Five outreach sessions were conducted on HIV prevention and access to HIV/SRHR services among AGYW in Mbale City and District.
- **Increased Demand and Access:** Thanks to these sessions, AGYW are now more informed and have increased demand for and access to services like condom usage, HIV testing, contraceptives, and PEP and PrEP at various health service points.

### ADVOCACY AND POLICY INFLUENCE

Our commitment to advocacy and policy shaping is yielding fruitful results:

- **AGYW Representation:** An AGYW representative has been elected to be a part of the District HIV Committee, ensuring that AGYW's needs are well represented and addressed.
- **PrEP Distribution Guidelines:** A Technical Working Group (TWG) in Mbale District has developed PrEP Distribution Guidelines among Young People to facilitate better access to PrEP and reduce HIV infections among AGYW.
- **Policy Influence:** These guidelines aim to shape policy discussions at the national and district

levels, emphasizing the importance of HIV/AIDS policies that impact AGYW positively.

- These achievements demonstrate our commitment to inclusivity, health access, and advocacy for the rights and well-being of the most vulnerable in our communities. We look forward to even more progress in the future.

**Empowering AGYW through Capacity Building** We conducted a capacity-building training for 52 AGYW, equipping them with leadership skills and boosting their confidence to advocate for their rights. A post-training assessment revealed that 45 AGYW reported feeling more confident in their ability to advocate for their rights. This training also significantly increased their knowledge regarding SRHR needs and services.

**Impactful Testimonials** Through testimonials, participants highlighted the life-changing impact of the capacity-building training sessions. One participant stated, “The training provided has empowered me to speak up for my rights and the rights of other girls in my community. I now feel more confident in advocating for comprehensive SRHR services.”

**Comprehensive Knowledge Dissemination** Twenty peer educators successfully conducted peer-to-peer activities, equipping 80 adolescent girls with age-appropriate knowledge on vital topics, including HIV, gender-based violence, SRHR, teenage pregnancy,

and menstruation. These educational activities empowered girls to make informed decisions and life choices.

#### Interactive and Engaging Peer-to-Peer Activities

The peer-to-peer activities included various interactive elements such as breakaway sessions, discussions, outdoor learning, group exercises, and information sharing sessions. This approach fostered active participation and engagement among the participants while boosting the confidence of peer educators in their ability to educate their fellow peers.

**Leader interaction.** ARYA has had dialogue meetings with 40 clan leaders 20 women from this clan, 30 representatives of AGYW on the topical issue of girl child property inheritance right.2) conducted CSO education sector working group meeting in partnership with Kitgum NGO forum. 19 CSOs participated, 8 AGYW representatives attended, a kitgum education principal officer attended, an assistant inspector of school attended and a deputy CAO also attended. 30 participants. Advocating for linking and integrating the provision of HIV and SRH services in schools in Kitgum district.

The country lead completed and launched the Her Voice Fund strategy for Uganda which will guide the work of the grantees as well as the country lead on design, implementation, documentation, and report writing on all the activities under the Her Voice Fund to maximize reach and effect.