



Striving for a healthy society

Quarterly Newsletter

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2018



Enhancing friendly service provision to people with disabilities

October 2nd

People with disabilities face challenges in terms of accessing health services due to stigma, social and environmental barriers; it is in this regard that HDI staff and the GIZ Rights-based program partners (Haguruka, AJPRODHO, Pax Press, GLIHD & RRP+) had a 5-days training on Disability and Inclusion conducted by UWEZO. The purpose was to provide HDI staff & RBP partners with knowledge on the rights of people with disabilities and non-discriminative terms associated with disability. The training included sessions on myths, models and perceptions towards persons with disabilities. It is recommended to conduct further trainings on disability and inclusion and all organizations working on human rights need to take the necessary measures to support people with disabilities.



Empower, Include, Respect

October - December

HDI empowered community based organizations to raise awareness on discrimination against LGBTI and SW communities and to build their capacity in the area of small grant proposal writing under the non discrimination fund. 2 project proposals submitted by coalitions that are SFS/HOCA & AHR/JABFA and 4 by CBO members that are FSWs Nyarugenge, BHF, Bright future organization Muhanga and FSWs Ruhango were announced as winners. HDI also led a steering committee meeting where project achievements and challenges faced during the implementation process were presented.

During the last quarter, activities conducted include; the training of 20 CBO leaders on non-discrimination project proposals writing, documentation of discrimination cases, a workshop on how to develop strategic framework for the rights of LGBTI persons & sex workers and conducting self-help group meetings.



International Conference on Family Planning

Nov 12th-15th

HDI was pleased to be a member of the steering committee that hosted the International Conference on Family Planning under the theme “Investing in a lifetime of returns.” HDI had 3 oral presentations on: “Male activists and advocates for safe abortion”, “Experiences of women incarcerated for illegal abortion” and “Parents’ Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices towards Comprehensive Sexuality Education.” HDI also had one poster presentation, “Rwanda’s experience in the roll-out of comprehensive Sexuality Education in formal education: 2013-2016. HDI sponsored over 50 participants including young people, male champions and civil society organizations to attend the conference. This was a great opportunity to integrate the youth into the conversation and enable them to increase their knowledge about family planning in a safe space. During the conference, HDI had a booth that exhibited family planning materials, researches made by HDI, information on the hotline, newsletters as well as reports providing an overview of the organization’s work. HDI’s booth received over 100 visitors and materials were distributed to many of these visitors.



Young peoples' experiences in ICFP 2018



Ndizeye Ange Thaina, a fifth year medical student in national university of Rwanda Huye campus: “Words cannot express my gratitude to HDI, the government of Rwanda & the ICFP organizing team for having provided me with an opportunity not only to attend the largest conference on FP & RH but the opportunity as a young lady to moderate the opening ceremony. It was such a great mile stone for me. It has changed my life for the best. The ICFP was a great platform for me to broaden my knowledge & connections, meet new friends and mentors. I can only promise to use this inspiration and wisdom shared with me to keep serving the Rwandan community by educating young boys and girls on FP &SRH”.

Vanessa Uwase, a member of Huye shapers in national university of Rwanda, Huye campus: “Attending the ICFP helped me to view RH issues from another angle. FP is not about having 1 or 2 children only, it is having a population who are free to discover and use their full potential. It is having young people who have the maximum capacity of competing at the labor market and find their dream job. It is about families being able to talk about everything and prevent future regrets and words such as “had I known”. The ICFP made me realize all the above and much more and I believe that everyone shall work hard to see a country and a society where FP and SRH are being discussed freely and openly”.





Mukangenzi Clementine, a female sex worker peer educator in Huye district: "Before this conference, I had difficulties understanding FP because of some myths from my society. I thought FP was only for married couples; however I have found that even the youth can use FP as a way of preventing unwanted pregnancies. The examples from various countries where the young women and young men are practicing family planning and other SRH related treatments are more advanced than the youth from Rwanda. I am going to advocate for Rwandan youths to partake in family planning programs for a bright future and a healthy society. Family planning matters to build a great nation".

Sostene Nsengimana, a fifth year medical student and Coordinator of Steering committee on SRH including HIV/AIDS prevention in national university of Rwanda, Huye campus: "Attending the ICFP was a very great opportunity for me as I learnt more about FP methods used all over the world. Through the conference, I got a chance to connect with different people from all over the world with different backgrounds and expertise. I will use the knowledge gained in the conference to create new projects that all Rwandans will benefit from especially the youth. I am passionate about FP and SRHR. I would also like to thank HDI so much because of your initiative to involve young people including me".



Swedish Ambassadors visit to HDI

November 19th

HDI was pleased to host HE Jenny Ohlsson, Ambassador of Sweden to Rwanda and HE Helena Rietz, Ambassador, Head of Africa Department in the ministry of foreign affairs in Sweden, at the center for health and rights. The visit aimed at learning more about HDI programs and challenges regarding all people's rights to sexual and reproductive health. There are still some challenges of stigma and discrimination for marginalized groups though the Rwandan law prohibits discrimination. HDI is currently running 2 centers for health and rights that provides stigma free SRH services to young people, women and marginalized groups such as LGBTI and SWs. The Ambassadors were amazed by the work HDI is doing with the youth and marginalized groups. HDI's Executive Director concluded the meeting by thanking them for their time and commitment to the continued partnership.



Consultative Meeting With Adolescents And Young People On Accessing SRHR services in Rwanda

December 7th

HDI organized a consultative meeting with **100** young people. This meeting aimed at disseminating information on the current legal framework, get their views regarding SRHR issues and the barriers within the law. Participants emphasized on issues concerning adolescents access to health services, legal capacity to consent and parental authorization. They also stressed their concern on the availability and accessibility to contraceptives and condoms in and out of schools to protect them against unwanted pregnancies. They recommended for special measures to protect children affected or infected by incurable diseases (special needs and appropriate measures to be adopted) . Participants observed that young people perceived the SRHR legal framework as a barrier to improve access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights.



International Human Rights Day

December 10th

HDI supported and participated in an event organized by a coalition of Safe Friendly Society (SFS) and Horizon Community Association (HOCA) project proposal winners under the non discrimination fund. This event was also to evaluate the progress on human rights progress, challenges and the way forward. The event was attended by the representative of the delegation of the EU to Rwanda, local leaders, CSOs partners and CBO members. Participants enjoyed presentations and performances on non discrimination through poems, songs, dance and sketches. The representative of the delegation of the EU to Rwanda recognized the efforts of HOCA and SFS in organizing the event and encouraged all participants to put into consideration progress and challenges discussed in the event. One of the local leaders assured the collaboration between LGBTI organizations and local authorities and also recommended the continuous sensitization on the community to protect key population from discrimination and violence. HDI appreciated the work of LGBTI and FSWs CBOs in organizing the event and urged the importance of case documentation in their testimonies.



Dialogues On Gender Equality, Teenage Pregnancy And SRH In High Learning Institutions

December

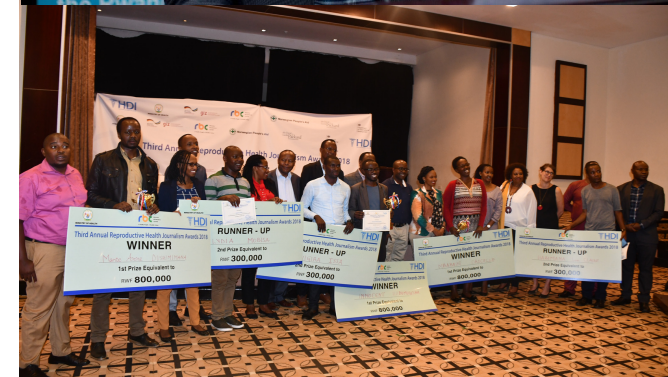


HDI partnered with MIGEPROF to organize dialogues on gender equality, teenage pregnancy and sexual and reproductive health. The dialogues were conducted in high learning institutions and reached around **1,600** students and teachers participating Rwamagana School of Nursing and Midwifery, ULK and University of Rwanda (Rusizi and Rukara) Campus. The objective was to raise awareness on teenage pregnancy and its prevention mechanisms, gender equality and its role in sustainable development. HDI also facilitated a session on enhancing knowledge on sexual reproductive health & family planning. Students were keen to know more about sexual reproductive health and family planning. They are also willing to be engaged in adoption of policies and laws relating SRH and FP.

Third Annual Reproductive Health Journalism Award

December 20th

HDI in partnership with the Ministry of Health through Rwanda Biomedical Center hosted the third reproductive health journalism award. The event was attended by over **80** people from different media houses, RBC/MoH, and partners of HDI including civil society organizations and Swedish embassy. The purpose of the event was to recognize exceptional media coverage on reproductive health, to encourage journalists to cover issues of reproductive health, and to collectively review national policies on reproductive health. HDI received **128** applications from **30** different media houses including radio, TV and printed & online. HDI awarded **6** journalists; **2** from each category (radio, tv and printed & online), who addressed issues concerning sexual and reproductive health. The guest of honor, Dr. Turate Innocent, the head of IHDPC in RBC recognized the efforts of journalists and encouraged good culture of using media to channel information related to SRHR. He also said that working together, we can break the taboos around SRH and it can also ensure our health system to be inclusive and stigma free.



National Dialogue on the role of men & boys in the fight against violence & teenage pregnancy

December 20-21

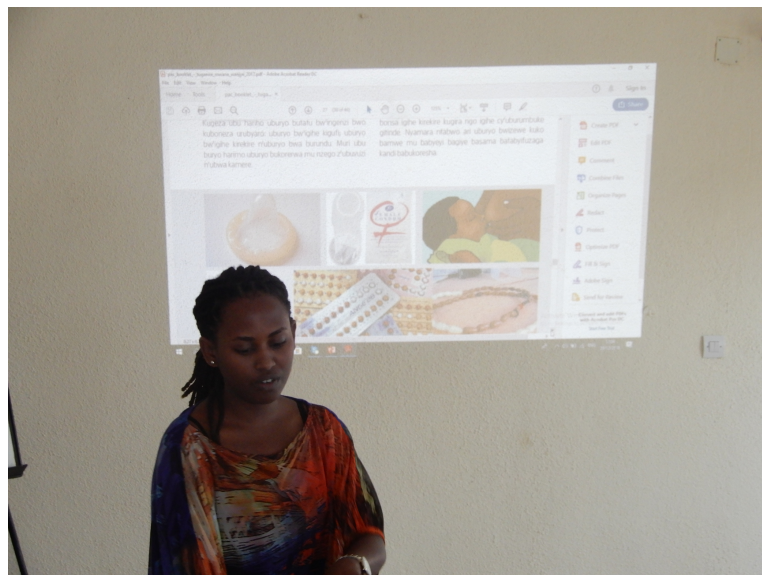
HDI conducted a 2-day national dialogue that brought together adolescents, young people from high school and high learning institutions, male champions, government institutions, representatives of CSOs and international organizations involved in the fight against GBV and teenage pregnancies. It aimed at engaging men and boys in the prevention of GBV and teenage pregnancy. Some sessions focused on case studies and success stories on men leading anti-GBV movements. Imbuto foundation shared their presentation on first time young mothers. Adolescents and young people actively participated in the discussions and shared their ideas and thoughts.

On the 2nd day of the dialogue, 6 adolescent held a press conference addressing the barriers that prevent adolescents from accessing SRHR services in Rwanda. The need of accessing SRHR services without parental consent was identified as a means to prevent teenage pregnancy. During the conference adolescents were able to voice their rights and share experiences about the barriers to access SRHR services.



Community outreach campaign on HIV prevention

October-December



HDI trained **60** female sex worker peer educators on HIV prevention and transmission methods under the Global Fund/HIV project. The quarterly meeting for collecting data on HIV and STI prevalence was successfully organized in Nyanza, Huye and Nyaruguru districts. In this quarter, **148** people were referred for HIV testing and **6,480** condoms were distributed. Across all **3** districts, **1,555** sex workers, **364** hotspots, and **71** sites were identified. HDI visited **17** health centers in the **3** districts, tested **148** people for HIV, of which **9** people (6.1%) tested positive and were encouraged to immediately started on ARV treatment. HDI conducted a consultative meeting on HIV prevention among key populations with **120** local authorities and healthcare providers from each of the **3** districts. HDI plan to conduct more consultative meetings to continue to raise awareness on inclusiveness of key populations across all HDI programs. The ultimate goal is to break all barriers to accessing health services in Rwanda.

HDI wishes to thank our partners and supporters:

- Amplify Change
- Catholics for Choice
- CDC
- The Center for Reproductive Rights
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Delegation of the European Union to Rwanda
- DFID
- EAHP
- The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- The Embassy of Sweden
- FEMNET
- FOSI/OSIEA
- GIZ
- Global Giving
- Global Health Corps
- The Global Fund
- Norwegian People's Aid
- Peace Corps
- PROMUNDO
- PSA
- PSF/Emory University
- PYXERA
- SAAF/IPPF
- Stephen Lewis Foundation
- Stop TB Partnership
- UHAI-EASHRI
- UNAIDS
- UNFPA
- UNICEF
- ViiV Healthcare
- Women's Link Worldwide
- WHO
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Local Government
- Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
- Ministry of Justice
- Rwanda Bio-Medical Center
- Rwanda Education Board
- Rwanda Governance Board
- Imbutu Foundation
- GLIHD
- IMRO
- RNGOF
- RSOG
- RBP partners





Contact us

Email: info@hdirwanda.org

Website: www.hdirwanda.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/HDIRwanda/

Twitter: @HDIRwanda

Phone: +250 788 309 262

**Hotlines for Sexual and Reproductive Health
Information:**

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