

**Abstract: 7<sup>th</sup> African Conference on sexual health and rights**

**Title:** Increasing Contraception Prevalence in adolescent girls in Malawi: A model for success

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**Introduction:** Youth in Malawi lack adequate access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV services and have limited power to negotiate contraceptive use resulting in high rates of unintended pregnancy. Contraception Prevalence Rate (CPR) amongst 15-19 years old is 9%. In Nkhotakota District, teenage pregnancies account for 25% of all pregnancies. Reaching adolescent girls, in and out of school, with integrated HIV and family planning services is essential to empowering young women and fostering economic development.

**Objective:** To increase CPR among adolescent girls in Nkhotakota District through improved access to comprehensive HIV and SRH education and services.

**Methods:** Young female coaches were trained to deliver a girl-focused innovative life skills curriculum that aims to empower young women to avoid risky behaviors, protect themselves against HIV and unintended pregnancies, and increase gender-equitable norms. Coaches were also trained as Youth Reproductive Health Assistants to provide SRH information and short-term contraceptive methods to community youth and to refer them to Banja La Mtsogolo (BLM) outreach teams for longer-term methods.

**Results:** A mid-term review revealed that CPR amongst adolescents had increased from 9% to 21%. Data revealed that 3,781 clients referred and accessing services

resulted in 8,843 couple year protection; averting 2,870 unintended pregnancies, 852 unsafe abortions, 54 maternal deaths, and saving an estimated US\$ 179,526 in direct health care costs.

**Conclusions:** The model successfully reached in and out-of-school adolescent girls with essential SRH information. Caring relationships built between coaches and participants ensured adolescent girls were supported to access critical HIV and SRH services.

Total service lifespan impacts	2015
<b>Demographic impacts</b>	
<i>Unintended pregnancies averted</i>	2,870
<i>Live births averted</i>	1,561
<i>Abortions averted</i>	890
<b>Health impacts</b>	
<i>Maternal deaths averted</i>	10
<i>Child deaths averted*</i>	54
<i>Unsafe abortions averted</i>	852
<b>DALYs and economic impacts</b>	
<i>Maternal DALYs averted (mortality and morbidity)</i>	600
<i>Child DALYs averted (mortality)*</i>	4,602
<i>Total DALYs averted</i>	5,202
<i>Direct healthcare costs saved (2014 US\$)**</i>	179,526
<b>Couple Years of Protection (CYPs)</b>	
<i>Total CYPs (FP only)</i>	8,843

The services provided in 2015 will avert an estimated 10 maternal deaths