



**FEDERATION OF DEAF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT NETWORK- KENYA
(FEDWEN KENYA)**

**COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS EDUCATION
AND SERVICES FOR ADOLESCENT AND YOUNG PEOPLE.**

**Hivos Regional Sexual and Reproductive Health and
Rights Fund**

Quarterly Narrative report for the period:

(01/12/2023-15/06/2024)

Regional SRHR Fund Goal: Increased access to adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health Rights information and services for young people in the East and Southern African Region by 2026

Regional SRHR Fund Goal Impact: By December 2026, stronger, more diverse and better-coordinated youth-led civil society organizations are able to demand and promote access to inclusive and affirming SRHR information and services for adolescent and young people.

Objectives:

- 1. Shifting the narrative: including social norms, attitudes and practices** – society increasingly acknowledges and supports the SRHR of adolescents and young people
- 2. Support and empower adolescents and young people** – Strengthened and empowered youth and youth led organizations increasingly defend and promote their SRHR
- 3. Engage and influence duty bearers** – duty bearers increasingly design, adopt and implement laws and practices that promote the SRHR of adolescents and young people
- 4. Evidence generation** - strengthened and empowered youth researchers to generate evidence on SRHR in the ESA region



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY *(Please give an overview of the report)*

This report shows the progress of the project: *Comprehensive sexual reproductive health rights education and services for adolescent and young people*, in the first quarter, a period of 6 months, depicting how far the project has reached and anticipated next steps.

The targeted beneficiary is Deaf adolescents/young people aged 13-25-years-old in Murang'a school for the Deaf and Isinya school for the Deaf as well as youth out of school in Nairobi county. The aim of the project is to strengthen the capacity of Deaf adolescents and young people to lead empowered and healthy lives by addressing significant gaps in their access to comprehensive sexual reproductive health rights education and services. Herein this report, you will find an introduction to the project highlighting the need for these interventions and the key objectives of the project.

Following the introduction is the project body highlighting each objective and how it contributes to the project goal, how it will be achieved, tracking the progress of each activity as at the reporting date. In this section you will find the approach adopted by FEDWEN, in detail, towards the achievement of the project goal and how it contributes to the overall goal of the regional SRHR fund and the desired impact.

The key challenges experienced during implementation are then listed, as well as lessons learnt in the course of implementation, which is then followed by a conclusion. This report gives an overview of the project design giving the reader a clear image of the methodology adopted by FEDWEN to increase access to adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health Rights information and services for young people especially Deaf communities in the East African Region.

2. INTRODUCTION

(Please give a background to project, including what the project seeks to achieve and the implementation approach for the reporting period)

The project aims to empower Deaf adolescents and young people by addressing the significant gaps in their access to comprehensive sexual reproductive health rights (SRHR) education and services. Deaf individuals often face communication barriers and discrimination, resulting in limited information and knowledge about their SRHR needs and ultimately limited control over their sexual and reproductive health decisions.

We target Deaf adolescents and young people aged between 13- 25 years, typically school going age in Deaf communities, recognizing their unique challenges and needs. We prioritize the development of tailored approaches and activities that enable Deaf individuals to gather and control knowledge about their SRHR needs and issues. This includes ensuring that information and services are accessible in sign language and other appropriate communication modes, enabling effective communication and understanding.

To achieve our project goal, we employ innovative strategies and activities. These include the use of easy to read formats, visual aids, interactive stakeholder engagements, peer-to-peer education through clubs, and the development of user-friendly educational materials specifically designed for Deaf individuals.

The project has 3 main objectives contributing to the overall goal; to empower Deaf adolescents and young people lead empowered and healthy lives by addressing the significant gaps in their access to comprehensive sexual reproductive health rights (SRHR) education and services. The specific objectives are as listed below:

1. To improve knowledge and understanding of SRHR needs and rights for 300 Deaf adolescent girls/young people by the end of the project in 2024.
2. To strengthen coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders i.e. 2 education institutions, and 75 parents of Deaf adolescents to ensure sustainability and inclusivity of SRHR activities by the end of the project in 2024.
3. To empower 6 Deaf adolescent girls/young women to actively participate in decision-making regarding their SRHR

Through this approach, we envision a future where Deaf women and girls have equal access to SRHR information and services, enabling them to lead empowered and healthy lives.

3. PROGRESS PER OBJECTIVE *(What has been done?)*

OBJECTIVE 1

To improve knowledge and understanding of SRHR needs and rights for 300 Deaf adolescent girls/young women by the end of the project in 2024.

The project improves knowledge and understanding of SRHR needs among 300 Deaf adolescents and young people by increasing access to accessible ASRHR information through production of Deaf centered learning resources, which include;

- *An end user manual and trainers' manual,*

- 10 signed topical videos,
- Brochures and pamphlets for teachers, parents and adolescents.

Videos, brochures and pamphlets are additional support materials for the manuals which will be disseminated to the beneficiary. The learning resources will be distributed through the clubs known as IKID clubs both in school and out of school. IKID clubs are managed by patrons mobilized and trained by FEDWEN.

Table 1: An assessment of progress against objective 1

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Progress towards target	Comments
1.1 Number of user manual and facilitator training manual developed	0	2	(100% done)	Target Achieved.
1.2 Number of copies of user guides, training manuals distributed.	0	65	(100% done)	Target Achieved.
1.3 Number of pamphlets and brochures distributed.	0	90	(100% done)	Target Achieved.
1.4 Number of clubs organized and formed.	0	2	2/2 (100% done)	Target Achieved.
1.5 Number of videos produced.	0	10	(100% done)	Target Achieved.

The end user manual and trainers' manual were developed and distributed to Murang'a School for the Deaf and Isinya school for the Deaf each receiving 25 copies of the user guide manuals and 2 copies of the facilitator's manual each.

Clubs known as IKID clubs were successfully set up, with an out of school IKID outreach program managed by 2 Deaf youth facilitators also receiving a facilitator's guide each. Manuals were also shared to other stakeholders such as other schools for the Deaf, CSOs, Ministry of Education office, Ministry of Health office, Deaf led organizations.

Alongside the manuals, 90 pamphlets and brochures were developed and distributed to parents, teachers, Deaf adolescents and young people. 10 topical videos in Kenyans sign language were done and successfully distributed via YouTube.

Activity progress

Activity 1: Develop Deaf friendly ASRHR Deaf centered learning materials for knowledge dissemination i.e. 1 facilitator's manual and 1 user guide, 10 videos, brochures and pamphlets.

Consultancy to support the development of the end user manual and trainers' manual was successfully identified and on boarded. The technical working group consisted of a set of consultants working in SRHR, the consultants were all young people the oldest being 30 y/o. 2 Deaf young people (22 y/o and 25 y/o) were involved throughout the process of developing the manual to ensure the relevance of the manual in the Deaf community, 2 Deaf inclusion specialists, 5 youth consultants and the FEDWEN Kenya team.

The manuals consist of 10 topics; Gender, SRHR and HIV, Human Rights, Violence, Relationships, Life skills, Mental health, Drugs and substance abuse, Youth friendly services and Advocacy. The content of the end user manual is mainly informative while that of the trainers' manual is heavy with facilitator guided activities to boost experiential learning.

The manuals have been distributed and are currently in use in the IKID clubs established. We are at the stage of implementation to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the manual as a learning tool. We have also developed M&E tools to measure the impact and scalability of the IKID clubs to extend into other schools for the Deaf. *Sample of the developed ICE materials annexed.*

Activity 2: Organize peer support groups in form of clubs.

Targeted schools were visited: Murang'a school for the Deaf and Isinya school for the Deaf, and clubs established successfully.

Organized a TOT training for 6 facilitators of the IKID manual, 2 of whom were involved in the technical working group in the manual development phase. All facilitators of the IKID manual are Deaf.

Facilitators consist of 2 facilitators for youth out of school and 4 facilitators of IKID clubs, 2 in each school. Out of 6, 5 of the facilitators are youth below the age of 35, in which 2 are 25 y/o and 22 y/o. The gender distribution is equal with 3 males and 3 females.

IKID clubs have an estimate of at least 24 learners in each club meeting, meetings are held twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. Membership in the club is voluntary but is restricted for learners above the ages of 12 y/o although we have had participation from 10 y/o who were very active in the session. Club meetings are informal, and adopt experiential learning and a facilitation mode of delivery i.e. the facilitator uses experiences; activities, games, stories and anecdotes to clarify values and transform attitudes. The facilitator also works with the knowledge of the learner on the subject matter, providing clarity and debunking myths and misinformation.

So far 221 Deaf adolescents and young people have interacted with at least one component of

the manual, while 102 Deaf adolescents and young people are between their 2nd to 4th component. *See the IKID program report compiled in a separate report annexed.*

Activity 3: Produce 10 videos.

We have shot 10 topical videos to support the manual, which have been uploaded on our YouTube platform. *See them at <http://www.youtube.com/@FEDWENKENYA> on the IKID playlist.*

Contribution of Objective 1 to the Regional SRHR Fund Objectives:

- *Deaf adolescents are able to access inclusive sexual reproductive health rights information that is safe and reliable.*

221 Deaf adolescents and young people have gained access to ASRHR information that is specifically developed to meet their communication needs. The manual is in easy to read format with visual aids and pictures to boost understanding, accompanied by signed videos to communicate messaging in the first language of the Deaf community. In the feedback collected so far, the manual is easy to understand, fun and enjoyable, and a good way for adolescents to break the ice and engage in the topic of SRHR.

IKID clubs facilitate a safe and reliable learning environment for Deaf adolescents and young people to interact with information that emphasizes on value clarification and attitude transformation to strengthen the capacity of Deaf adolescent to make informed choices that defend and promote their SRHR. Clubs further strengthen peer to peer learning which is proven to boost interest and understanding and build a sense of togetherness.

OBJECTIVE 2

To strengthen coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders i.e. 2 education institutions, and 75 parents of Deaf adolescents to ensure sustainability and inclusivity of SRHR activities by the end of the project in 2024.

The project strengthens coordination and collaboration with 2 educational institutions; Murang'a School for the Deaf and Isinya school for the Deaf, to ensure sustainability of the project beyond the project implementation period. Learners are trained by club patrons who are also Deaf, and are able to access resources and materials that are Deaf centered and adolescent friendly.

There are also 3 planned periodic engagements with parents to strengthen their capacity to meet the needs of their Deaf children by improving communication in the household and encouraging networking, community organizing and establishment of support systems among parents of Deaf children.

Table 1: An assessment of progress against objective 2

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Progress towards target	Comments
2.1 Number of schools onboarded to form ASRH clubs	0	(2)	2/2 (100%)	Target Achieved.
2.2 Number of parents reached.	0	(75)	64/75 (85%)	Ongoing
2.3 Number of adolescents/young people reached	0	(75)	64/75 (85%)	Ongoing
2.4 Number of capacity strengthening forums organized	0	(3)	1/3 (33%)	Ongoing

2 schools have successfully been on boarded onto the project; Murang’a school for the Deaf and Isinya school for the Deaf within which clubs have successfully been formed. We organized a parents’ day forum at Murang’a school for the Deaf in collaboration with the school reaching 64 parents and their Deaf children. The forum focused on inclusive communication, raising awareness on Deaf culture and sign language and boosting collaboration between the parents and the school to support the needs of learners. We had a session training on basic sign language where we all practiced a few signs that support communication at home. Besides this we created awareness on the SRHR needs of Deaf adolescents, engaging their parents on how to support them.

Activity progress

Activity 1: Establish partnerships with at least 2 educational institutions.

2 schools were successfully on boarded on to the projects, i.e. Murang’a school for the Deaf and Isinya school for the Deaf. IKID clubs are already functional meeting twice a month at the schools, providing a platform for Deaf learners to access comprehensive sexual education from reliable sources.

FEDWEN has further supported the institutions to strengthen the capacity of their learners to lead informed lives and make better sexual reproductive health choices. 99% of schools for the Deaf schools are boarding schools, the program has notable improved relations between the sexes as learners increasingly understand gender, sex and relationship dynamics. The schools are open to extending the partnership even further.

Activity 2: Organize 3 capacity strengthening forums for parents of Deaf adolescents with their children.

1 capacity strengthening forum was organized for parents of Deaf children in collaboration with Murang’a school for the Deaf. Topics handled in the forum include: creating awareness on Deaf culture, Kenyan sign language and strengthening the capacity of parents to engage their children Deaf on SRHR. *See activity report annexed.*

We anticipate the next capacity strengthening forum for parents set to happen in Isinya school for the Deaf on 15th June 2024.

Contribution of Objective 2 to the Regional SRHR Fund Objectives:

- 64 Parents have strengthened capacity to support the SRHR needs of their Deaf children.

Parents are informed of the communication needs and the sexual reproductive health risks and needs of their children, and are in a better position to support access to SRHR information and resources for Deaf adolescents and young people. Parents are also empowered with communication skills to support inclusion at home, strengthening support systems for Deaf adolescents.

OBJECTIVE 3

To empower 6 Deaf adolescent girls/young women to actively participate in decision-making regarding their SRHR.

Further, this project aims to strengthen the capacity of 6 Deaf adolescents and young people to take part in decision making processes around ASRHR, this includes empowering them to understand their SRHR and articulate their needs, supporting their access into rooms with policy makers and implementers and amplifying their voices through advocacy with relevant stakeholders.

Table 1: An assessment of progress against objective 3

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Progress towards target	Comments
3.1 Number of dialogues organized.	0	(3)	1/3 (33%)	Ongoing
3.2 Number of adolescents/ young people engaged	0	(6)	3/6 (50%)	Ongoing
3.3 Number of mentors identified	0	3	3/3 (100%)	Target Achieved

3.4 Number of mentors engagement with adolescents.	6	3	1/3 (100%)	Ongoing.
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Stakeholder engagement was organised bringing together key actors in ASRHR including the ministries of Health and Education, the County Government of Nairobi, Deaf activists, a representative of parents of Deaf Children, as well as a representative teacher from a school for the Deaf. 2 Deaf youth, both IKIDs, participated in the stakeholder engagement sharing the position of Deaf adolescents and young people.

Activity progress

Activity 1: Organize 3 dialogues for adolescent girls to engage relevant stakeholders.

1 dialogue was organized with key stakeholders from the ministries of Health and Education, the County Government of Nairobi, Deaf activists, a representative of parents of Deaf Children, as well as a representative teacher from a school for the Deaf. It sought to engage the stakeholders in a review on the status of access for Deaf adolescents to Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (ASRHR) programming in Kenya. FEDWEN sought therefore to engage government and other stakeholders on how to effectively address these challenges and their adverse consequences on Deaf adolescents’ sexual reproductive health.

It was noted and acknowledged that the existence of barriers in society prevents Deaf adolescents from making informed decisions on their sexual and reproductive health. Among others, it does not allow Deaf girls and women to negotiate for safe sex. Challenges of Deaf adolescents in Sexual reproductive health rights were highlighted as well as what needed to be done to reduce barriers against Deaf women and girls.

The ministry of health as well as ministry of education both expressed good will to explore areas that FEDWEN could collaborate and engage government. *See activity report annexed.*

Activity 2: Organise 3 engagements for adolescent with mentors.

Facilitators mentored 2 Deaf youth who attended the stakeholder engagement forum. Belinda has been a mentee since the beginning of the project, her capacity has been strengthened. She represented Deaf adolescents and young people articulating the challenges that Deaf adolescents and young people are experience, alongside her was Geoffrey, who is a Deaf youth and young father, whom they both presented the reality of the Deaf adolescent and young person and why access to inclusive information is key.

Contribution of Objective 3 to the Regional SRHR Fund Objectives:

- *Deaf youth empowered to become youth advocates.*

2 Deaf youth, both IKIDs i.e. trainees of the IKID program, participated in the stakeholder engagement organized by FEDWEN sharing the position of Deaf adolescents and young people. One of the Deaf youth, Belinda, was involved in the development of the manual which has strengthened her capacity to engage with stakeholders and advocate for herself as well as others. She has also moved on to begin lobbying for a sign language interpreter at her college.

Capacity of 2 Deaf IKID champions strengthened to advocate for ASRHR. Both have been trained on the manual and were involved in its development, and are at the frontline of empowering other Deaf adolescents and young people to access Deaf centered adolescent friendly information. These IKID champions were also trained as IKID facilitators.

4. CHALLENGES DURING THE QUARTER

1. Lack of/ Minimal qualified skills within the Deaf community required to on board new staff/ consultants to support project implementation.
2. Contingency costs were not included in the budget. There was a steep rise in the cost of fuel that had not been anticipated when developing the budget. Government is also unexpectedly increasing statutory deductions, which was not anticipated.
3. The budget requires readjustment to allow for proper project implementation. There are costs that can be reallocated to boost impact of other activities in the project particularly stakeholder engagement.
4. Climate related disasters delayed project implementation bit as schools had to be shut down due to extreme flooding which had caused loss of lives and destruction of roads and infrastructure.

5. LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE QUARTER.

1. Deaf adolescents and young people are eager to be engaged with factual and reliable information, learners have been very open to engagement and are curious to learn more and understand the physical and emotional changes they experience.
2. High rate of misinformation among Deaf adolescents/young people contributes most to the increase in undesired sexual reproductive health outcomes. There are many myths that are believed by adolescents. For example, a common myth in Murang'a school for the Deaf was that HIV cannot be transmitted in extreme temperatures such as high heat or extreme cold. Adolescents engaging in unprotected sex would shower with extremely hot or cold water to prevent infection.
3. Parents of Deaf children know they need to contribute to supporting their children access sexual reproductive health education and services but have almost no capacity to do this.
4. Climate action should be prioritized as it threatens our wellbeing.

6. LOOKING AHEAD (PLANS FOR THE NEXT QUARTER)

1. Monthly club engagements with club patrons.
2. Organize 2 Capacity strengthening workshops for parents of Deaf children.
3. Organize 2 dialogues with policy implementers and policy makers.
4. Monitoring and evaluation.

7. CONCLUSION.

The progress of the project so far is up to par. As displayed in the report, the project objectives are continuously being achieved, in line with the objectives for the regional SRHR fund that speaks to;

1. Support and empower adolescents and young people.

The project heavily emphasizes on empowering Deaf adolescents and young people to access reliable ASRHR information to strengthen their capacities to make informed choices. So far, the project has impacted 221 Deaf adolescents and young people, and continues to impact more. 3 Deaf youth between the ages 20-25 years have become youth advocates; strengthening the capacities of other Deaf adolescents and young people in ASRHR as IKID facilitators as well as youth advocates.

Belinda is a good example, she is a 22 y/o girl, a student of food science at a local college. She was identified as a Deaf inclusion advisor to support development of the manual and ensure its relevance to Deaf adolescents and young people. She did very well in this, and was trained as an IKID facilitator. She is currently working with her own IKID club to increase access to ASRHR information and referral to SRH services, she has also begun to advocate for sign language interpretation services at her college to support her and other Deaf learners. Besides this, Belinda also effectively engaged government stakeholders, elaborating the needs of Deaf adolescents and young people's need for ASRHR information and services.

2. Engage and influence duty bearers.

FEDWEN recognizes that duty bearers are heavily influential in determining the outcomes of SRHR of adolescents and young people through designing, adopting and implementing laws and practices that promote/undermine the need for ASRHR.

In this project we engage with Ministries of Health and Education, the County Government of Nairobi, 2 education institutions i.e Murang'a and Isinya schools for the Deaf to advocate for equal access to ASRHR information and services for Deaf adolescents and young people.

We look forward to accessing the impact of the project through Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning to highlight areas of improvement, assess the scalability of the initiative to maximize the impact of the project. We believe when adolescents and young people are informed, they are able to make good choices. When I Know; I Decide (IKID).