

Addressing vulnerable youth and SRHR in Burundi



SRHR research projects of NWO-WOTRO - SUMMARY BRIEF FOR BURUNDI

INTRODUCTION

This summary brief is based on the collective learnings from the three SRHR research projects of NWO-WOTRO Science for Global Development in Burundi. The research projects were conducted between 2015-2019, and were part of a three-country research programme supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Three research projects

1. Empowering young women in Bujumbura to improve their SRHR and claim to their rights
2. Young Burundians tactical agency regarding sexual relations, and decision making: from participatory research to evidence-based and practically relevant sexuality education
3. SRH of youth and adults with disabilities in Bujumbura - Burundi (HANDI-SSR)



"We die twice like charcoal" - a Burundian refugee youth in Uganda. This illustrates how the problems youth suffer are compounded from their origin in Burundi, where it is taboo to speak about SRHR with their parents, with the further challenges of displacement in Uganda where there are limited health and education services, and other stigmatising factors like poverty and displacement.



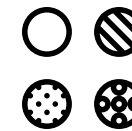
45% of the Burundi population are young, below the age of 15



INSIGHTS

- Young women detached from their parents are highly vulnerable to early childbearing
- Young refugees, who are part of the displaced population, face double vulnerability
- There is a negative tone to SRHR messages youth receive
- Where parents are able to communicate effectively and accurately about SRHR, vulnerable youth have improved access to SRHR information and services they need
- Youth with disability are particularly vulnerable to adverse SRHR outcomes
- Vulnerable young people are strategically navigating options and chances as they emerge. Even in suboptimal implementation, positive results have been achieved through sexuality education which also shows the resilience of youth and their teachers

RECOMMENDATIONS



Involve a broad range of youth, including those vulnerable to specifically define their needs



Involve parents with safeguarding their youth's health and well-being



Consider the compounding layers of poverty, disability and displacement that make certain youth more vulnerable to poor SRHR outcomes and address and prioritise them within programmes and policies



"Nothing about us without us"

One of the key take home messages from the NWO-WOTRO Policy Roundtable on Vulnerable youth and SRHR, which took place at the 8th African Population Conference in Uganda in November 2019

Additional project resources

SRHR Roundtable conference report APC2019
<https://cutt.ly/LitM981>
NWO WOTRO SRHR Programme site
<https://cutt.ly/Ku82yZS>