

April 2016

Nairobi City County Plan of Action Validation Meeting

Introduction

Nairobi City County health and education officials convened stakeholders in March 2016 to validate the plan of action aimed to strengthen implementation of school health programming. The plan was created in partnership with the Strengthening Evidence for Programming on Unintended Pregnancy (STEP UP) consortium over the course of a year. Its main objective is to increase implementation of the School Health Education Policy from 15% to 50% by 2020, and to 100% of schools by 2025. It is hoped that this will decrease early, unintended pregnancies from 14% to 5% by 2025.

Support from County Leadership

The Plan of Action was endorsed by the Nairobi County Director of Education, Abdikadir Ali, and the County's Chief Officer of Health Services, Dr. Samuel Ochola.

"This Plan of Action is a way forward to start thinking progressively on school health programming. Other counties are borrowing from Nairobi County's example since they do not have active school health programs." said Dr. Ochola

Abdikadir Ali acknowledged challenges in implementation of certain thematic areas in school health programs such as sexual and reproductive health programs. "Despite challenges in inadequate funding, weak coordination and networking between relevant government ministries, we as a county are committed to implementing these guidelines with your support," he said.

Government teacher bodies were always well represented at the meeting. Hesbon Otieno, Deputy Secretary General of the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) gave full support in implementation of the Plan of Action, "We are committed to training teachers so that implementation can be rolled out to other counties as well."

Stakeholders' and Partners' Comments

Overall, stakeholders attending the validation meeting had been engaged in the creation of the plan. They made the following suggestions to enhance the plan further:

- There is need for clarification on whether 15% of implementation of school health programs (as indicated in the Kenya Health Sector Strategic and Investment Plan report) include private and public schools. County officials said 15% are implementing some aspects of school health programming, however it's not comprehensive.
- The background focuses on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) but the rest of the document highlights SRH issues. The suggestion was to focus on the broader challenges with the implementation of school health policies, then highlight comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) as an entry point.
- There is need to clearly articulate that the target is students in private and public schools.
- We need to change the approach in how schools will implement CSE due to competing priorities and teachers' focus on attaining good grades.
- There is need to refocus efforts on the child since teachers feel micromanaged and 'powerless'.

- Ensure that the role of young people is clearly articulated in the Plan of Action.
- The overall goal of the Plan of Action refers to comprehensive school health programs but the activities only focus on one thematic area – life skills – there is need to rethink the goal.
- The roles with the Nairobi City County coordination structure need to be clearly outlined.

Way Forward

The Nairobi City County will select a sub-set of schools (approximately 100) within the county to kick off the Plan of Action before rolling out activities more widely.