

Empowering Adolescent Girls through Podcasts: Addressing Barriers to Sexual Education in Nigeria

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BACKGROUND

- Comprehensive sexual education (CSE) remains a taboo topic in Nigeria, particularly for adolescent girls, who face barriers to accessing accurate, age-appropriate information. Stigma and societal norms contribute to these challenges.
- Africa REACH grantee, InspireIT, supported by the Ministry of Health in Imo State, Nigeria, aimed to break down these barriers by launching an adolescent-owned podcast.
- This initiative focused on educating young girls about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and discussing teenage pregnancy, topics often neglected in traditional education settings.



METHODS

- InspireIT conducted 30 semi-structured interviews with adolescent girls in secondary schools to explore perceptions and challenges related to sexual health education. These insights guided the development of podcast content, which was tailored to address misconceptions and provide accurate information. Data collection included podcast analytics, user feedback, and follow-up interviews.



RESULTS

- The podcast initiative garnered high engagement among adolescent girls, leading to significant improvements in knowledge about STIs and teenage pregnancy prevention. Participants expressed appreciation for the accessible and adolescent-focused approach of the podcasts, which filled gaps left by formal education systems. The initiative successfully fostered dialogue and empowerment among young listeners.



CONCLUSION

- InspireIT's adolescent-owned podcast has effectively addressed barriers to comprehensive sexual education for adolescent girls.
- By tackling taboo topics like STIs and teenage pregnancy in a relatable manner, the program has made substantial strides in empowering young girls with essential health knowledge. This model demonstrates the potential of youth-driven initiatives to bridge gaps in sexual health education and promote positive health outcomes among adolescents.
- The podcast's availability on digital platforms such as Google Podcasts, Spotify, and web browsers further enhances its accessibility and impact, reaching a broader audience of young people.

