

Empowering adolescents to transition through puberty



Changing emotions and social dynamics

Changing biology

Expectation to marry

Limited access to menstrual products

Lack of knowledge of bodies and rights

Puberty is a highly vulnerable time for adolescents

Predation of girls and boys by adults and others

Limited evidence base; few rigorous studies or proven solutions

Shame, stigma and negative social and gender norms

Lack of accurate, standardized, relevant and engaging tools for adolescent health and life skills education

Adolescents lack answers to their most pressing questions...

...particularly regarding unwanted sex and self-protection in situations where they lack power

“What are safe days to have sex without getting pregnant?”

“When having my period am I expected to remain silent?”

“If you have a boyfriend how will you know that he love and respect you?”

“When I get periods for the first time what can I do?”

Out of over 10,000 anonymous questions collected from adolescents across Kenya,

90%+ centered on:

periods bodily changes relationships consent abuse

The consequences are real and very serious

Lack of health education has dire consequences...

- 40% of 19-year-olds in Kenya are pregnant or have started childbearing (*DHS, 2014*)
- 47% of teen pregnancies are unintended (*Population Council, 2014*)
- During covid, pregnancy rates increased at the primary school level for the first time (*MOEST data*)
- **Average age of first sex is 11.7 (less than 12 years) with 92% of encounters unwanted (our RCT, 2017)**
- First sex usually with a male 8-10 years older; power dynamics have lifelong implications (*Becker et al, 1999*)
- 10% of transactional sex by 15-year-olds is for pads (*KEMRI-CDC survey, rural western Kenya, 2015*)
- 1 in 4 girls have experienced partner violence (*DHS, 2014*)
- Female youth have a 4x HIV prevalence vs males (*DHS, 2014*)
- >25% of girls fail to enter secondary school despite universal transition (*our randomized control trial, 2019*)

As does a lack of menstrual products



Girls are forced to make impossible choices to manage their periods, putting them at great risk of derailing their futures

ZanaAfrica's integrated approach: Products and programs co-created with girls, women and communities

- Sanitary pads – affordable, high quality products
- Education
 - 1.5 year adolescent health and life skills school-based program, and adaptations
 - Addresses underlying causal factors e.g., stigma, social norms through social and behaviour change communications
- Free hotlines and referrals to services run by trusted non-profit partners
- Policy solutions



Pads underpin extensive school programs for adolescent health and life skills

- **Nia Yetu:** 25 session adolescent health and life skills training manual delivered over 1.5 years
- **Nia Teen:** Companion textbook in the format of 5 interactive, shareable magazines
- **Nia sanitary pads** helped to create a “gateway” to difficult conversations
- Story-based approach with content co-created with adolescents across Kenya
- Evaluated in 2016-2019 through a 4 armed randomized control trial in Kilifi County



School program materials

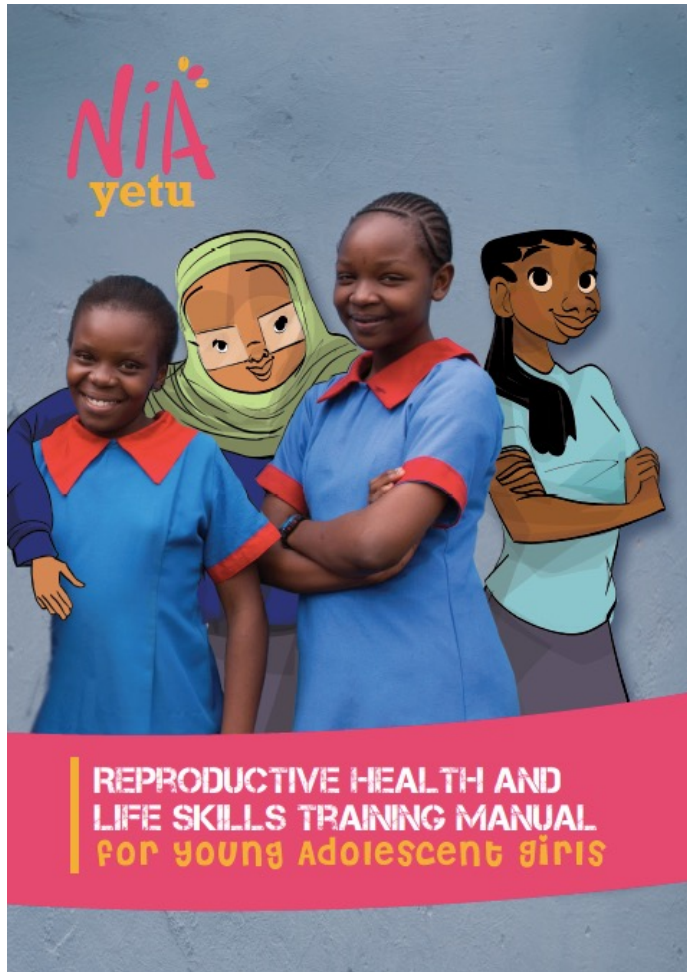


TABLE OF CONTENTS

MÓDULO 1 - WELCOME TO PUBERTY	
Session 1: Getting Started, Values.....	05
Session 2: Setting Goals	16
Session 3: Adolescence and Puberty	23
Session 4: Menstruation	30
Session 5: Menstrual Health Management	41
MÓDULO 2 - GENDER	
Session 1: Male and Female Reproductive Systems	52
Session 2: Self Esteem	62
Session 3: Communication	69
Session 4: Introduction to Gender	77
Session 5: Gender Stereotypes	83
MÓDULO 3 - GENDER, POWER AND RIGHTS	
Session 1: Human Rights	90
Session 2: Power Dynamics	100
Session 3: Sexual Violence and Exploitation	109
Session 4: How to Report and Avoid Cases of Sexual Violence	120
Session 5: Being Assertive	129
Session 6: Decision Making	136
MÓDULO 4 - HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS, HEALTHY DECISIONS	
Session 1: Healthy Relationships	142
Session 2: Romantic Relationships	150
Session 3: Sexuality and Behaviour	161
Session 4: Teenage Pregnancy	170
Session 5: Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and HIV	178
MÓDULO 5 - BEING TRUE TO YOURSELF	
Session 1: Resisting Peer Pressure	191
Session 2: Drug Use and Abuse	198
Session 3: Managing Stress, Anger and Conflict	208
Session 4: Program Wrap up	223



GLADYS KAPTOU: STARTING AGAIN

She was a student of Theroth High School in Kenya. Her dream of getting an education was quickly abandoned when her mother could no longer afford her education.

"She was from a humble background so my parents were not able to pay for her fees, so that's why I dropped out of school." The 17-year-old who was only 17 years old, in Form Three.

The need and inspired her to start her own business. She started by selling coffee beans. Her dream was to start her own business. She started by selling coffee beans. Her dream was to start her own business.

She says, "I was very hard because I was still young. Through all the struggles, I was able to start my own business. I was able to start my own business. I was able to start my own business."

There are still people looking for my skills. I would like to see my business grow. I would like to see my business grow. I would like to see my business grow.

TONY KIBET: FACING ADDICTION

He admits that he was never a good student in school. He admits that he was never a good student in school. He admits that he was never a good student in school.

"My first job was at a shop. I was a shop assistant. I was a shop assistant. I was a shop assistant."

He admits that he was never a good student in school. He admits that he was never a good student in school. He admits that he was never a good student in school.

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HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT

become great at negotiation

Me: There are two sides to every coin. When negotiating, use this thought process to help you get the best deal.

Them: Their side of the story is what you are looking for. Focus on what you can offer and what's in it for them.

US: The number has different meanings. Focus on the value you can bring to the table.

Think: How does what you want affect the other side? What are their needs? What are their fears?

OUTSIDE THE BOX: Be creative and think of solutions that no one else has thought of.

DISCUSS: A discussion takes time. If someone is not willing to meet and compromise with you, then you may need to walk away.

WIN! The same applies to you. Listen to the other side. You may have been wrong about what they want.

NOT DATING!

NO, NOT YET. I'M WAITING FOR HER TO BE READY. SHE'S OLD ENOUGH FOR ME.

YES, SHE'S OLD ENOUGH FOR ME. SHE'S OLD ENOUGH FOR ME. SHE'S OLD ENOUGH FOR ME.

NO, NOT YET. I'M WAITING FOR HER TO BE READY. SHE'S OLD ENOUGH FOR ME.

YES, SHE'S OLD ENOUGH FOR ME. SHE'S OLD ENOUGH FOR ME. SHE'S OLD ENOUGH FOR ME.

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CHEF MALACHI: LOVE OF COOKING

He loves to cook and has a passion for it. He loves to cook and has a passion for it. He loves to cook and has a passion for it.

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HOW PREGNANCY HAPPENS

EXTERNAL REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

INTERNAL REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

THE UTERUS

THE VAGINA

THE VULVA

THE CLITORIS

THE BLOOD SUPPLY

THE NUTRIENT SUPPLY

THE NERVOUS SUPPLY

THE MUSCULAR SUPPLY

THE ENDOCRINE SUPPLY

THE IMMUNE SUPPLY

THE SKELETAL SUPPLY

THE INTEGUMENTARY SUPPLY

THE RESPIRATORY SUPPLY

THE DIGESTIVE SUPPLY

THE EXCRETORY SUPPLY

THE REPRODUCTIVE SUPPLY

BOYS

EXTERNAL REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

INTERNAL REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

THE PENIS

THE TESTES

THE EPIDIDYMIS

THE VAS DEFERENS

THE SEMINAL VESICLE

THE PROSTATE GLAND

THE URETHRA

THE BLADDER

THE RECTUM

THE ANUS

THE CLITORIS

THE VULVA

THE VAGINA

THE UTERUS

THE BLOOD SUPPLY

THE NUTRIENT SUPPLY

THE NERVOUS SUPPLY

THE MUSCULAR SUPPLY

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THE INTEGUMENTARY SUPPLY

THE RESPIRATORY SUPPLY

THE DIGESTIVE SUPPLY

THE EXCRETORY SUPPLY

THE REPRODUCTIVE SUPPLY

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

How to Make Decisions

YOU HAVE FIFTY SHILLINGS (50/-). DO YOU:

YOU SEE A NEW GIRL SITTING ALONE IN A CHURCH FOR A YEAR. YOU WANT TO JOIN. DO YOU?

YOU MEET FOUR OF YOUR FRIENDS AT THE SHOP. DO YOU?

YOU FIND OUT THE NEW GIRL JUST STARTED HER PERIOD. DO YOU?

AS YOU ARE ABOUT TO BUY SOME SWEETS, YOU REALIZE ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS WON'T GET A SWEET. DO YOU?

YOU SEE THE NEW GIRL AGAIN THE NEXT DAY. DO YOU?

YOU REALIZE YOU CAN ONLY AFFORD TO BUY TREATS FOR 2 OUT OF 4 FRIENDS. DO YOU?

YOU SEE THE NEW GIRL AGAIN THE NEXT DAY. DO YOU?

YOU REALIZE YOU CAN ONLY AFFORD TO BUY TREATS FOR 2 OUT OF 4 FRIENDS. DO YOU?

YOU SEE THE NEW GIRL AGAIN THE NEXT DAY. DO YOU?

YOU REALIZE YOU CAN ONLY AFFORD TO BUY TREATS FOR 2 OUT OF 4 FRIENDS. DO YOU?

TARURI GITARE: LOVE YOURSELF!

She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it.

She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it.

She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it.

JENIFFER GITARE: LOVE YOUR BODY!

She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it.

She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it.

She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it. She loves to dance and has a passion for it.

ALFRED MAKABIRA: BREAKING THE SILENCE

"It's very important for people to break the silence on violence," Alfred Makabira says, and he does so everyday through his work. He focuses on getting men and boys to understand the role they play in ending violence. Majority of Gender Based Violence (GBV) is committed by men against women, though men and boys can also be victims, and women can also be perpetrators. Alfred says, "For long, men have been left out of this dialogue, the reality being most of these [GBV] incidents are perpetrated by men and boys."

Alfred does this to help build a more just society, which benefits everyone. "What I can tell other boys and men who are not yet involved in fighting GBV is that there are a lot of benefits in having a just and violence-free society where both the men and the women are equally valued."

Victims, for example, often blame themselves when violence happens but the victim is never to blame. "It's not the victim's or survivor's fault that it happens to them, that's the principle. Someone [the perpetrator] does it because they choose to do it," says Alfred.

Alfred knows that to fix a problem, you focus on the cause (the perpetrator) not the result (the victim). He teaches men and boys that all humans are equal, whatever your gender, saying, "We teach boys to embrace principles of gender equality."

He began this work in Mathare around 2004 as a volunteer. A creative writer, he wrote skits performed to the public on social issues and was approached to volunteer with Men for Gender Equality (MEGEN).



Alfred knows we all have to work together to end violence



Alfred teaches men to be active supporters of women and girls!

The organisation teaches men & boys about the negative effects of sexual and gender-based violence, encouraging the men in their programs to treat women with the same importance they give men.

MEGEN started a project called Men to Men within FEMNET (The African Women's Development and Communication Network - which works to promote women's development in Africa). Alfred says the Men to Men project, "meant men reaching out to other men." MEGEN works with men who have been trained on the subject of violence to engage with other men and boys because, "It is more practical to have men engaging with other men [and] boys in addressing GBV," says Alfred. In his experience as a Men Against GBV activist, he has learnt, "Men appreciate it more when you communicate the benefit of a violence-free society."

He focuses on men to make sure that this core message clearly comes through; **violence can only be stopped when everyone in the community takes responsibility, men included.** He says, "It's a problem that affects everyone and therefore everyone has a duty to [stand up]," against all forms of violence.

NIA TEEN

WHAT DO THE men say? Respecting women & girls

NIA TEEN

"RESPECT IS EVERYTHING. IT MAKES SOMEONE KNOW THE BOUNDARIES, SO IF [THEY] CROSS, THEN THAT'S ANOTHER ISSUE [OR PROBLEM]."

Brian Wapua 28 years old - Nairobi

"ANYTHING TO DO WITH VIOLENCE IS UNACCEPTABLE IN ANY RELATIONSHIP. WHEREVER YOU SEE ANY VIOLENCE THAT IS TOTALLY SOMETHING THAT IS NOT GOING TO WORK."

Lewis Gatimo 15 years old - Mombasa

"THERE'LL BE A TIME YOU MAY NEED THEIR HELP AND, IF YOU DON'T RESPECT THEM, THEY CAN'T HELP YOU. YOU SHOULD START RESPECTING THEM SO THEY RESPECT YOU."

Joseph Njuguna 13 years old - Kisumu

"IT IS NOT ADVISABLE [TO HIT GIRLS & WOMEN]. IF YOU HIT HER, IT SHOWS LACK OF RESPECT. THEY ARE THE MOTHERS OF THE NATION, THEY CONTINUE THE CYCLE OF BUILDING UP THE WORLD. IF WE DID NOT HAVE GIRLS, ALL OF US WOULD NOT BE HERE."

Stephen Mwangi 13 years old - Kisumu

"YOU CAN SHOW RESPECT TO GIRLS BY BEING POLITE AND SHOWING RESPECT TO THEM. DO NOT ACT LIKE YOU ARE MORE SPECIAL THAN HER, YOU ARE NOT, WE ARE ALL THE SAME."

Joseph Njuguna 13 years old - Kisumu

"RESPECT IS A TWO-WAY THING. YOU LIKE THIS GUY BUT THIS GUY DOESN'T RESPECT YOU, DOESN'T GIVE YOU YOUR WORTH. DON'T GO THROUGH THAT PAIN. JUST LEAVE THAT GUY."

Stephen Mwangi 13 years old - Kisumu

"IF WE RESPECT EACH OTHER PEOPLE WILL LOVE YOU AND IN TIMES OF TROUBLE PEOPLE CAN HELP YOU. YOU CAN SHOW RESPECT TO GIRLS BY BEING THEIR FRIEND BY ACTING NORMAL LIKE YOU DO WITH OTHER PEOPLE."

Machewi Mawenzi 13 years old - Nairobi

"RESPECT IS EVERYTHING. IT MAKES SOMEONE KNOW THE BOUNDARIES, SO IF [THEY] CROSS, THEN THAT'S ANOTHER ISSUE [OR PROBLEM]."

Chris Nenzi 28 years old - Nairobi

THE FACTS ABOUT STIs

HIV isn't the only Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI). There are so many different types. The only ways to reduce transmission of STIs are:

- Abstinence
- Regular testing (of yourself and any sexual partner)
- Correct use of condoms during sex

Chlamydia (Bacteria)

WHAT IT DOES: Many people with chlamydia have no symptoms. If they do have symptoms, they appear between 1-3 weeks after infection.

Women may have:

- Increase in discharge
- Pain when urinating or in the lower abdomen
- Pain/bleeding during or after sex
- Bleeding between periods/unusually heavy periods

TREATMENT: A short course of antibiotics

WITHOUT TREATMENT:

- Increased risk of other STIs including HIV
- For women, no treatment can lead to more serious issues including:
 - o Blocked fallopian tubes making getting pregnant harder
 - o You can pass chlamydia to your baby if pregnant

Herpes (Virus)

WHAT IT DOES:

- HSV-1: Causes cold sores and blisters around the mouth & lips
- HSV-2: Genital herpes causes cold sores and blisters around the genitals and rectum

You may also feel like you have a flu or pain when urinating. Most people have no symptoms when first infected - it can take months/years to develop.

TREATMENT: It has no permanent cure. It is a virus, so it stays in your body for a long time. The doctor will give antiviral tablets to reduce symptoms or given methods to prevent the blisters from becoming infected.

WITHOUT TREATMENT: Increases risk of HIV infection.

Gonorrhoea (Bacteria)

WHAT IT DOES: Symptoms include:

- Unusual discharge from the vagina (thick and green or yellow in color) in women
- Pain when urinating in the lower abdomen in both women and men

TREATMENT: A short course of antibiotics.

WITHOUT TREATMENT:

- Increased risk of other STIs including HIV
- In rare cases, it can spread to other parts of the body. It can damage your reproductive system so you can't get pregnant. At worst case, it can cause swelling around the brain or spinal cord (meningitis), which can kill you

Syphilis (Bacteria)

WHAT IT DOES: It has three stages:

- Primary: Firm, round and often painless sores around the point of infection
- Secondary: Includes skin rash and fever. Primary and secondary syphilis symptoms can be mild and unnoticed
- During the latent stage, there are no signs or symptoms

TREATMENT: A course of antibiotics.

WITHOUT TREATMENT: The disease can develop into Tertiary Syphilis, which is very serious because it can affect the heart, brain and other organs of the body.

Character universe developed for social and behavior change communications, with specific messaging per character





Selected statistically significant outcomes of pads and education in 2-year randomized control trial

Positive shifts in norms and attitudes

- Menstruation attitudes
- Gender norms in marriage
- Heteronormativity in adolescents (what boys and girls are “supposed” to do)
- Gendered sexual norms (sexual double standards for boys and girls)
- Self-efficacy including self confidence, problem solving, better equipped to say no to unwanted sex

Increased adolescent health knowledge

- Pregnancy knowledge
- STIs
- HIV/AIDs

Improved menstrual health management

- Has enough pads
- Reduced leakage

Norms change: positive masculinity

Participation in Nia clubs

No participation in clubs

What would you do if a girl stained her clothes in class due to her period?

- “I will help her by assuring her not to worry.”
- “I will report to the teacher to get help for the girl.”
- “I will help her even if it is to do a cloth pad and give it to her to manage her menstruation.”
- “I will help her to go home and change.”

- “I do not know what to do.”
- “I would ask the girl what was happening and then wait for her to answer.”

Should there be equal opportunity between girls and boys?

- “Girls should be given equal opportunity because both girls and boys are human beings with equal rights.”
- “Girls should be given more. They sacrifice a lot.”
- “Household chores should be shared by boys and girls.”

- “Household chores belong to girls because they were created for such a responsibility.”

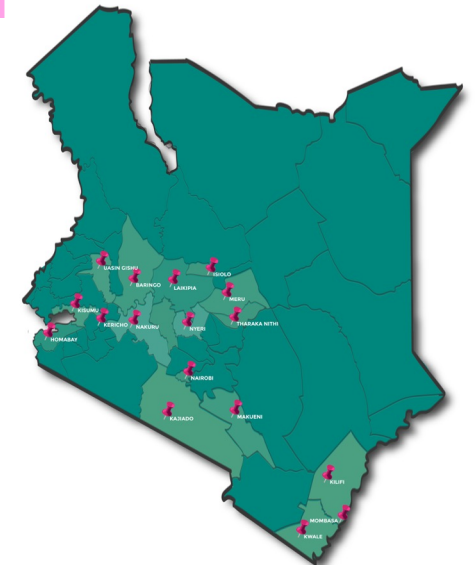
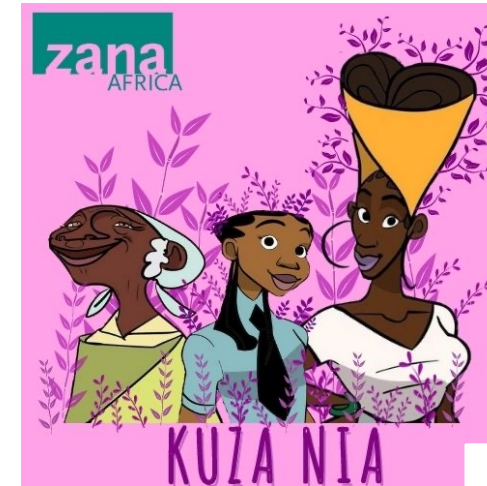
What the randomized control trial results prove



- ZanaAfrica's **sanitary pads** address the material and social dimensions of period poverty
 - Reduced leakage: 20% percentage point reduction in leaking in the combined and pads only arm
 - Less shame and stigma, creating a gateway to breaking other negative social norms
- ZanaAfrica's **education program** improves health knowledge and life skills, including the ability to navigate difficult situations
- The **combination** of pads and education addresses the **entrenched gender norms** that are at the root of adolescents' worlds narrowing during puberty, and empowers youth to challenge social norms and expectations
- **Validation of our theory of change around the impact of pads and health education on social and gender norms and behavior change, including the underlying causal factors and their effects**

Adaptation and scale

- Selected health education sessions adapted for delivery by community organizations across Kenya
- New content developed on COVID-19 and trauma
- Partnership with public sector stakeholders (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development and Teachers Service Commission) to
 - Understand the barriers teachers face to delivering health and life skills content in schools
 - Co-create teacher-facing adaptations of the full program, with deep engagement from teachers, government and other stakeholders
 - Collaborate on integrating content into the new competency-based curriculum and equipping teachers



Adaptation for delivery during COVID-19



Commit to listen to each other and solve the conflict

- Aim for **mutual satisfaction**, not victory. Conflicts don't have to end with a winner and a loser
- **Be creative.** Finding a solution that satisfies everyone requires creativity and hard work. Be careful not to give in simply to avoid conflict or maintain harmony.

Resolve.
Don't give up.
Try to not give up and give in just to avoid conflict and maintain harmony. That only postpones conflict or devalues yourself. Working through the conflict leads to better solutions.

Be specific.
Write things down and clarify unclear words that may be understood differently.
• Use "I" statements

- **Observe** the situation and step in to help if they are unable to reach an agreement
- **Leave** the situation if you are unable to control your anger

TRY OUR FREE RESOURCES!

Thanks for coming to our webinar on **managing stress**, everyone!
Please join the conversation on our **Social Media Handles** and we'll respond to them in real time until we release our next issue!

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [@zanaafricafoundation](#)

Until next time!

Until next time!

Images from our COVID comics prepared for distribution in communities during school closures and afterwards, including mental health resources for adults supporting adolescents

Some lessons we've learned along the way

- **Africa has solutions.** We don't have to feel like all solutions need to come from outside – in fact there are no “one size fits all” solutions. We can develop evidence-based, robust answers to our own challenges
- **Sanitary pads are a human right** - not because of period poverty, not because of school retention, but a right in themselves. We should not expect them to be a silver bullet (do you expect your toothpaste to change your life on its own?)
- Rights-based, fact-based human sexuality and life skills education are essential if we want to truly address teen pregnancy, adolescent risk, mental health and trauma, etc. **We don't need to fear these topics**
- Adolescents are **naturally curious**, and learn by trying out new things and making mistakes. Integrated approaches and programs that address the key barriers adolescents face can encourage learning and experimentation without derailing lives. **Safe mentors** are very important for adolescents during puberty, especially if they can journey together for a longer period of time
- **Build in time and process** for design, implementation and alignment. Communities might have values that may not align with yours. Be respectful and open, and engage in true dialogue. Do not expect quick results
- Be ready to **give up power and voice** so that beneficiaries can define both the problem and the solution. Use your skills, resources and networks to help make that solution a reality. Engage in co-creation, not consultation or token participation



Asanteni! (Thank you!)

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NiaYanguKe

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