



“Church leaders can encourage parents to send children to school”

- Blessing



Gown and Town: Synergy for Enhanced Societal Impact

A Community Engagement Project among Stakeholders in Adolescent Health and Well Being in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria



Community stakeholders' engagement brief

Background

Adolescence (the period from 10 to 19 years) is a time of immense opportunity. It is also a time when some individuals start engaging in health-risk behaviors such as smoking, drinking alcohol and unsafe sexual practices¹. Studies we conducted in Oyo state, Nigeria, revealed that these risky behaviors are more common among older adolescents who are not enrolled in senior secondary school^{2, 3}. In Oyo state, more than half (53%) of adolescents who should be in senior secondary school are not in school; ⁴ even though education is currently free from primary to senior secondary school⁵. These adolescents who are out of school are exposed to the likelihood of engaging in unhealthy practices.

What did we set out to do?

Our team conducted a community engagement project to sensitize stakeholders (adolescents, teachers, private school owners and government) about the importance of senior secondary school enrollment

How did we engage with our key audience?

Teachers and secondary school students reviewed existing research data highlighting the role of senior secondary school enrollment in protecting against unhealthy habits

Groups of teachers came together to draw maps of their immediate community and identified and discussed about issues within these communities that promote or hinder senior secondary school enrollment

In and out-of-school adolescents took photographs of things and activities within their communities that promote or hinder senior secondary school enrollment, discussed their findings and came up with suggestions for improving senior secondary school retention.

What can community members and other stakeholders do to promote senior secondary school retention?

- i. Work with school authorities to encourage students to remain in school
- ii. Refrain from selling wares to school children during school hours
- iii. Support indigent student through provision of scholarships

Further reading

UNESCO International Bureau of Education. (2010). World Data on Education. Principles and General Objectives of Education. Retrieved from http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdfversions/Nigeria.pdf on November 6, 2015

¹ UNICEF. (2012). Progress for Children. A report card on adolescents. Geneva, Switzerland: UNICEF

² Olumide AO. (2017) Unpublished. Prevalence, Predictors and Costs of Health-Risk Behaviors among Adolescents in Oyo State, Nigeria. PhD thesis, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

³ Olumide, A. O., et al. 2014. Predictors of substance use among vulnerable adolescents in five cities: findings from the well-being of adolescents in vulnerable environments study. *Journal of Adol. Health* 55.6: S39-S47.

⁴ Federal Ministry of Education (2017). Nigeria Education Indicators 2016. . Viewed online at <http://www.nemis.gov.ng/downloads/fold/Nigeria%20Education%20Indicators%202016.pdf> on 10 February, 2020

⁵ Editor. Live Times. Why I declared free education in Oyo – Makinde. Nov 10, 2019 Live Times. Viewed online at <https://www.livetimesng.com/why-i-declared-free-education-in-oyo-%E2%80%95-makinde/> on 10 February, 2020

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