

Tackling abortion stigma and supporting stigma-free services for young people in Benin

Kader Avonnon, YAM, ABFP Benin

Introduction

- The Association Béninoise pour la Promotion de la Famille (ABPF) works with young people to provide youth-friendly services and address challenges they face in accessing SRHR services;
- Youth Action Movement (YAM) - network of young volunteers trained on SRHR topics, including sexual rights and abortion;
- Youth (10 -24) are 33% in Benin; Access to abortion is restricted, but accessible under a number of conditions; Abortion is highly stigmatized leading to high rates of unsafe, in particular among young people; 1 death of unsafe abortion out to 5, is adolescent one.

ABPF' works to address abortion stigma

Objective: To address the manifestations of stigmatization at the individual, community and the organizational level, which prevent young women from accessing safe abortion information and services

Conclusions

- Fear of stigma from parents, the community and health care providers a major barrier to access of abortion-related service for young women
- Comprehensive approach needed to tackle compounded stigma - address all elements of SRH-related stigma that young people might face
- Integration of messages on sexual rights can help to combat stigma, empower young people and improve acceptance of young people as sexual beings
- Youth led initiatives for young people are highly effective at reaching young people with appropriate messages and support