

**SAFE SPACE AS AN APPROACH IN DELIVERING QUALITY INFORMATION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTRACEPTIVES, TO AGYW IN COMMUNITIES.**

One out of every four young girls aged 13 to 21 in our communities is either pregnant or a mother. The rate of early pregnancies in our communities is a call for consent to the nation as the impacts of early or unwanted pregnancies are many and quite gruesome. Young girls continuously drop out of schools to become mothers, while out of fear and shame others turn to using harmful and non-medical methods to abort the pregnancy. Some of these girls face terrible complications during child birth due to the fact that their bodies were not mature enough to carry a baby. Moreover, some even end up losing their lives in the process of unsafe abortions or during child birth. There are different contraception methods which one can use to prevent unwanted pregnancies such as abstinence, knowing your menstrual cycle, ovulation period as well as other contraceptives such as pills. Due to the community views on contraceptives as a taboo subject, young girls often shy away from learning or gaining information about them. It is with this realization that VISION IN ACTION CAMEROON with funds from HER voice set out to organize a mobilization campaign

on sensitizing AGYW on the importance and use of contraceptives in order to help reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy in our communities. This strategy was focused on using a safe space approach to get to as many adolescent girls as possible. A professional team was sent into these communities to carry out sensitization sessions, by gathering girls between particular ages in private and comfortable environment so as to make them feel comfortable and free to share, and ask every necessary questions relating to contraception methods without being judged or criticized. Using Safe Space as a strategy was a means to break down barriers placed by the community on acquiring contraceptives by young girls and women and also a way to give AGYW a chance to share their own stories and experiences with the team, and to give the team a chance inform them on the importance and way of using the different contraceptives.

At the end of the Safe Space discussions, a total of 300 AGYW were given adequate knowledge on the different types of contraception methods, and contraceptives,

as well as how or where they could access these contraceptives in order to make better and informed choices and decisions for themselves . The team on the other hand had an opportunity to gain new experiences and skills in coordinating safe spaces discussions. In all, when a safe space discussion is used as an approach to reach out to AGYW it gives both the girls and the team an opportunity to learn from one another thus making the experience and session more impactful.



VISION IN ACTION CAMEROON

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