

Tubiteho: harm-reduction for drug users



The Tubiteho project is an advocacy project for the introduction of harm-reduction services for drug users in Rwanda.

Context

If data on drug use in Rwanda were scarce at the start of the project, studies conducted in the city of Kigali revealed a high prevalence of HIV among drug users, at least three times higher than in the general population. These studies also documented the negative social, health, and financial impact of psychoactive substance use among the individuals surveyed. The Rwandan government address to this public health problem is a combination of a policy of cracking down on drug trafficking and consumption with mass prevention campaigns targeting the general population, and limited healthcare services for consumers in rehabilitation centers. So far, these centers have mainly offered abrupt withdrawal without any psychosocial or medical support.

Description

The Tubiteho project advocates for the introduction of harm-reduction services for drug users in Rwanda, integrating gender and human rights issues to improve their quality of life. A consortium of three Rwandan civil society organizations implemented the project with the support of the French NGO Médecins du Monde. Tubiteho revolves around three types of interventions:

- Creating a conducive environment to make harm reduction services accessible to drug user,
- Enhancing their knowledge of their rights and harm reduction approach,
- Offering them a minimum package of harm reduction services in pilot health facilities.

The direct beneficiaries of the project are drug users in three targeted districts of Kigali (Gasabo, Nyarugenge, and Rubavu), service providers in health facilities and rehabilitation centers, legislators and policymakers at the central level, law enforcement officials at the decentralized level, and civil society organizations in health and human rights.

Impact

By establishing a range of harm-reduction services and generating data on the specific needs of drug users, the project Tubiteho aims to facilitate a shift in the response to drug use from a punitive approach to a public health approach.

Project leader
Health Development Initiative
Partners
Rwanda NGOs Forum on HIV/AIDS and Health Promotion (RNGOF), Ihorere Munyarwanda Organization (IMRO), Strive Foundation Rwanda, Médecins du Monde
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