

Case Study: LINKS Project



Advancing Abortion Rights for Marginalized Women in Nigeria

Abuja, FCT
2023 - 2025

Overview

The LINKS Project, implemented by the Youth Network for Community and Sustainable Development (YNCSD), addresses critical gaps in sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) for Female Sex Workers (FSW) and sexual and gender minorities in Abuja, Nigeria. Funded by the Global Fund for Women, the project focuses on improving access to self-managed abortion (SMA), reducing unsafe abortion-related mortality, and combating stigma through education, advocacy, and community empowerment.

Key Challenges



Limited Access to SRHR:

Restrictive laws and stigma force marginalized women into unsafe practices.



Financial Barriers:

High costs of ultrasounds and pills hinder access.



Healthcare Discrimination:

Non heterosexual and FSW women face judgmental attitudes from providers.



Knowledge Gaps:

Many women lack accurate SRH information including Post Abortion Care.

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Interventions and Achievements

1. Capacity Building & Training

- Conducted Train-the-Trainers workshops for 20 leaders from 10 community organizations, equipping them with sufficient SRH Knowledge, legal rights, and post-abortion care.
- 70% of participants demonstrated improved understanding, cascading knowledge to peers.

2. Strategic Partnerships

- Signed MOU with youth-friendly hospital to encourage access to SRH commodities at discounted process, removing cost barriers.
- Trained 5 healthcare workers on stigma-free, client-centered care, improving service quality.

3. DIVA Hotline Expansion

- A 30% increase in engagement due to social media ads and outreach.
- Served 650+ individuals with counseling and referrals.

4. Community Outreach

- Trained 18 peer educators to reach 200+ community members.
- Partnered with CBOs and advocacy groups (e.g., Lawyers Alert, MAMA Network) to amplify impact.

Impact

- 822 direct beneficiaries (793 young women, 19 trans/non-binary adults).
- Policy Influence: Partnered with AmplifyChange to influence a more inclusive SRH policy.

Lessons Learned

- Flexible Funding Matters: Unrestricted grants enabled adaptive responses (e.g., sponsoring ultrasounds).
- Peer Networks Drive Change: Training community leaders created sustainable knowledge-sharing loops.
- Partnerships Reduce Barriers: Collaborating with youth-friendly clinics improved access and confidentiality.

Future Goals

- Scale hotline services nationwide.
- Engage stakeholders to influence SRH policy across 5 states in Nigeria.
- Expand partnerships to reach rural areas.

LINKS exemplifies how grassroots initiatives can transform SHR access, one community, one hotline call, and one trained advocate at a time.