

Addressing Health Provider Bias

Uganda has one of the youngest and most rapidly growing populations in the world, with a total fertility rate at 5.2 children per woman—among the highest in the world. Of Uganda’s total population, 57% are under 19 years of age. The teenage pregnancy rate is also high, with 25% of girls under age 19 having already started bearing children. Rural areas report 25% of unintended pregnancies, and urban centers follow closely at 21% (UDHS 2022).

Multiple barriers prevent young people from accessing high-quality sexual reproductive health information and services, including provider bias.

Health providers’ backgrounds, beliefs, attitudes and biases influence their approach to providing adolescent SRH services, often hindering services.

Pathfinders’ Beyond Bias model, developed through a human-centered design process involving extensive research, prototyping, iteration refinement, and evaluation, disrupts the status quo above. The model is grounded on the premise that bias is a behavior that can be changed.

Pathfinder Uganda rolled out the Beyond Bias strategy under the Uganda Family Planning Activity (FPA).

FPA engaged over 310 health workers from 164 health facilities in the Rwenzori, Albertine, and Central regions.

From its inception, Pathfinder has observed a notable trend of young people (10-24 years) taking up SRH services, from 95,852 in 2020, 150,407 in 2022 to 154,759 in 2023 across the 11 districts of implementation.



Health worker Rukia Mugambe, trained through FPA, prepares a contraceptive implant for insertion. Gombe Hospital, Butambala

Photo: Lovington Kambugu

Pathfinder Uganda, together with its partners, intends to scale up this strategy to other districts, including the Wakiso and Busoga region which have some of the highest teenage pregnancy rates (DHIS 2022).

Addressing and eliminating provider bias is a key step toward achieving equitable and inclusive sexual and reproductive health care.

The Beyond Bias strategy enables providers to deliver respectful and high-quality care to young people—including providing accurate information, offering a range of contraceptive methods, respecting young people's autonomy in decision-making.



REACH OUT TO PARTNER WITH US ON THIS TRANSFORMATIONAL CAUSE

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