Rwandan HIV Campaign Addresses Cross-Generational Sex

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To curb HIV prevalence among young people, Rwanda's Ministry of Youth recently launched a six-month campaign to fight cross-generational sex, allafrica.com reports. The campaign, a joint effort with the National Commission for the Fight against AIDS (CNLS), USAID and Population Services International (PSI), is called "Sinigurisha (I Am Not for Sale)."

According to the article, sexual relationships between girls and older men and boys with older women—often for gifts and money—have been linked to HIV transmission in Rwanda. Researchers note that girls and young women are particularly at risk.

"Statistics have indicated that girls aged 20 to 24 are five times more likely to be infected with HIV than boys of the same age," said Anita Asiimwe, MD, executive secretary of CNLS. She added that one in 10 girls had her first sexual experience with a man 10 or more years older.

"Since older men are much more likely to be [HIV positive] than [the girls'] counterparts, young girls appear to be getting infected by older men, rather than by boys of their age," Asiimwe explained.

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