

Fact Sheet

Innovation: Working smarter



Why we innovate

UNFPA Tanzania supports investments in innovative technologies and mobile health solutions to enable the communities we work with to pursue new pathways towards realizing universal sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), including for the most marginalized women and girls and young people in Tanzania – accelerating progress to deliver on the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda.

We promote innovation to:

- Empower adolescents and young people across Tanzania to develop solutions that expand access to comprehensive, age-responsive and quality SRHR education and services.
- Build the capacity of health workers in remote, offline communities to deliver life-saving reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health care as part of intensified efforts towards realizing the goal of zero preventable maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality by 2030.

The Innovation Accelerator “AMUA”

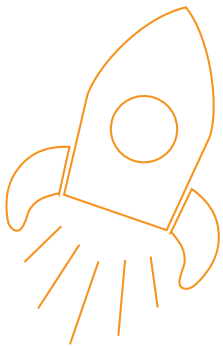
Round I of the Innovation Accelerator, dubbed ‘AMUA’ – Accelerated Initiative, Modern Technology, Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health for Adolescents and Young People – was launched in Tanzania in March 2017. It is a mentorship-driven acceleration programme, implemented by UNFPA Tanzania in collaboration with Sahara Sparks and government, which supports young entrepreneurs with seed funding, training and skills development to build innovative solutions that address their unique SRHR needs.

During the first round of AMUA young entrepreneurs across Tanzania were invited to develop solutions to tackle the challenges they face in realizing their SRHR with a focus on teenage pregnancy – Tanzania has a high adolescent pregnancy rate at 27 per cent,¹ with one in every four adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 already a mother or pregnant with their first child.²



¹ Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey 2015/16.

² Ibid.



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Following a boot camp in Dar es Salaam and a “Demo Day”, four start-ups were selected to develop a market-ready product, and received mentorship, seed funding and skills development.

All four innovations expand access to age-appropriate SRHR information and to date thousands of adolescents and young people have been reached through digital engagements, products and services, while the innovators have become leaders and SRHR champions in their communities.

In April 2019, Round II of the accelerator was launched. Selected teams are now receiving training and mentoring to further develop their innovations to meet the SRHR needs of young people living with disabilities, some of the furthest behind.

Mkwawa Community Art Space

Mkwawa Community Art Space is a mobile community space that uses entertainment (drama, music) and arts (drawings and painting) to provide young people with SRHR information. Sessions also include skills building in entrepreneurship to address other challenges young people face such as remaining in school and gaining employment.

Mkwawa is currently running a campaign at 10 schools around Iringa Municipality, a rural part of Tanzania, and expects to include more rural schools in the near future. The campaign is dubbed “Shika Kitabu” to encourage young people to concentrate on their studies and to make informed and healthy decisions about their future.

Mkwawa is also recording SRHR edutainment songs and video clips to reach young people through other channels. Three songs have already been released and Episode 1 of a series of 10 that will be broadcast on You Tube has been recorded with an expected release date of early 2020.

eShangazi

eShangazi is a knowledge-sharing, artificial intelligence chatbot – a computer programme that simulates human conversation through voice commands or text chats or both – accessible via social media, where adolescents and young people can access age-appropriate SRHR information and find the answers to some of the questions they may find it difficult or uncomfortable to ask in a normal clinic setting. eShangazi is the perfect platform to inform, educate and advise young people about their SRHR as Tanzanian internet providers offer free access to social media sites, which are used by many young people. Initially available on Facebook, eShangazi can now be accessed through Telegram and Slack and is also being tested on WhatsApp and SMS channels.

Code for Africa supported the start-up with funding of \$15,000, which included the development of three chatbots to educate the user community about gender, health and climate resilience.

Over 145,000 people have accessed eShangazi since its launch in August 2017 and page “likes” for eShangazi have increased to more than 17,500 (figures as of October 2019).

Maisha Package

The Maisha Package offers SRHR information together with menstrual hygiene products such as sanitary pads, underpants, and a urine scanner as well as condoms in a single package. The package aims to empower adolescents and young people, particularly adolescent girls.

The Maisha Package team has presented their product, which has received positive media coverage, at 12 events attended cumulatively by more than 5,224 participants. As of October 2019, approximately 3,400 packages had been sold and around 11,400 had been distributed to adolescents at events and through various initiatives.

Launched in Dar es Salaam, the package is now available in three additional regions, Morogoro, Manyara and Dodoma, with plans to reach all 26 regions over the next five years. Discussions have been held with UMATI Tanzania (a Tanzanian NGO) and Glory Pads (a small enterprise that manufactures organic sanitary pads) to scale up distribution.



Harakati za Lucy

Tai Tanzania is currently producing an animated series called Harakati za Lucy – Lucy’s adventures – which is developed around a central character called Lucy, a young, strong Tanzanian girl. Through a straightforward, story-telling, animated format, with striking visuals and youth references, Lucy challenges taboos and unpacks some of the SRHR issues that young people often do not discuss – such as menstruation and early sexual experiences.

Four animated videos have been produced and disseminated on social media, TV and at 10 secondary schools in Dar es Salaam. The organization is in the scale up phase after piloting and reporting on the proof of concept and is currently working with the Foundation of Civil Society Tanzania, under the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) consortium, FAYA, to produce animated comprehensive sexuality education content.



Tai Studio Production

Portable Mobile Learning System

In 2016, UNFPA launched the Portable Mobile Learning System (PMLS) in Tanzania to equip midwives and other health workers with key skills to combat the most prevalent causes of maternal and newborn mortality. This project was made possible through a grant to UNFPA by the Government of Denmark to find innovative ideas and solutions to advance SRHR.

The PMLS is a UNFPA-branded, portable projector pre-loaded with multimedia modules that contain animated content on postpartum haemorrhage, pre-eclampsia and eclampsia, obstructed labour, danger signs in pregnancy, essential newborn care and family planning. The materials were developed by UNFPA, the World Health Organization and Jhpiego and meet international clinical guidelines.

The PLMS is an innovative approach to improve access to quality training for midwives and health workers in remote, low resource settings. These settings are often characterized by poor infrastructure and unreliable power, poor internet connectivity and an inadequate number of trained tutors.

The technology kit includes a handheld projector with built-in tablet, a solar charger, an additional battery and a micro SD card. The additional battery maintains power for more than eight hours and the solar charger easily provides power for the projector so long as there is natural light. The PMLS has proved to be cost-effective and efficient, allowing any blank white wall in any setting (remote or urban) to become a classroom, reducing expenses related to in-service training and fulfilling the function of a tutor in the absence of qualified trainers.

Since its launch in March 2016, and as of December 2019, **7,770 healthcare providers have used the PLMS for training**

Initially piloted at 15 institutions, the PMLS is now in use at 20 health training institutions in Mainland Tanzania and at 10 health facilities in Zanzibar. Six modules have also been translated into Swahili and localized to improve training outcomes. Since its launch in March 2016, and as of December 2019, 7,770 healthcare providers have used the PLMS for training.

iPlan

iPlan is an innovative microinsurance health scheme that targets young people between the ages of 18 and 25 and addresses some of the challenges they face in accessing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services in Tanzania – stigma, a lack of satisfaction with or availability of services, and misconceptions about the different methods of contraceptives available.

For a one-time nominal fee, TZS 20,000 (around \$US9), an individual receives comprehensive SRH services for a year including four counselling sessions on contraception; one year's supply of a contraceptive method of choice; 100 to 150 condoms; and quarterly HIV/AIDS testing and counselling services.



The scheme is implemented by DKT Tanzania (DKT(T)) at partner universities in Mwanza, Dodoma, Mbeya and Dar es Salaam.

Since the inception of the initiative in 2015 – and as of June 2019 – 11,615 young people have signed up to iPlan and 22,400 have been reached through digital platforms and DKT(T) outreach. UNFPA Tanzania collaborates with DKT(T) to support the subsidization of the iPlan package.