

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



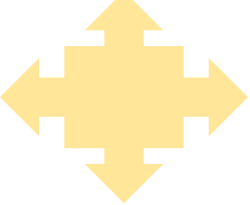


OUR MISSION

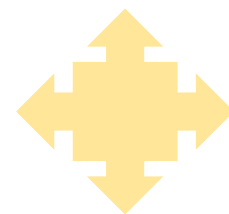
As a Christian organization, we exist to eradicate prevalent health and social conditions plaguing communities by providing information and appropriate support.

OUR VISION

ACAiD exists to be the leading consultant in the health industry to educate, empower and transform people and their communities through innovative and effective ways of promoting health via support, dialogues and engagements.



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“A little more persistence, a little more effort and what seemed hopeless failure may turn to glorious success.”

— Elbert Hubbard



2020 turned out to be very productive year for ACAiD despite the novel Coronavirus Pandemic. There were some hinges in our programming due to the pandemic but we made incredible impacts in the lives of thousands of adolescents and young people

ACAiD ran three significant projects this year in the area of Adolescent Reproductive Health also in the area of HIV/AIDS ACAiD held a sensitization and screening program in Tema West to commemorate the World's AIDS Day

Thanks for still believing in us.

1.0 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APEX COMMUNITY AID (ACAiD)

Apex Community Aid (ACAiD) is a development and advocacy Non-Governmental Organization dedicated to working with children, families, and communities to fight poverty and injustice. Inspired by our values, we are dedicated to working with the world's most vulnerable people. We serve all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender. We are a result-driven, Child-Focused, and Community Empowering organization with the mission to create enabling environment that helps the most vulnerable groups to thrive and achieve their dreams. We operate in the Ashanti, Greater Accra, Volta, Bono, Ahafo, Eastern, and Central regions, hoping to extend to other regions and beyond. Our Thematic areas include food security and household resilience, health and nutrition, WASH, and education. We tackle issues within these thematic areas from the root causes which could be socially, economically, and environmentally related. We partner with organizations, institutions, communities, and Faith-Based organizations to undertake health and non-health-related projects to improve the livelihood of community



Figure 1: A group of Adolescents that participated in the program

members, especially women and children.

Our main purpose is to build the capacity of communities to promote their total well-being. Thus, we strive to work with people and communities to promote healthier behaviors that lead to effective control and prevention of diseases such as Malaria, TB, Hepatitis, HIV, and AIDS which plague our communities.

1.1 Areas of Operation

- ✚ Health Education, Promotion, and Support
- ✚ Sexual and Reproductive Health
- ✚ Maternal and Child Health

- ✚ HIV/AIDS Education, Screening, and Counseling
- ✚ Counseling and support for Young Mothers
- ✚ Community Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses
- ✚ Environmental Health
- ✚ WASH
- ✚ Food Security and Household Resilience
- ✚ Education

1.2 Description of Projects Realized in the Scope of Our Thematic Areas

- Reproductive Health Talks
- 'Bold 2 Decide' project
- 'True Love Waits' 2020
- World AIDS Day Celebration (ACAIDs chapter)

2.0 REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH TALKS IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS TO COMMEMORATE 2020 VALENTINE'S DAY.

Adolescents today face many challenges as they strive to become young men and women. Sexual and reproductive health is a major focus during the onset of adolescence for young people. The lack of accessing reproductive health information and care leads young girls to be coerced into unwanted sex or marriage, putting them at risk of unwanted pregnancies, and unsafe abortions contributing to high maternal mortality and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV. Adolescent boys are also pressured into substance abuse and early sex. Even those able to find accurate information about their health and rights may be unable to access the services needed to protect them.

Apex Community Aid operates in the Tema West Constituency in the Greater Accra



Figure 2:

Region. The constituency has a substantial portion of its population as adolescents and young people. These young people form the target group for our Adolescent Reproductive Health outreaches. According to GSS, young people living in Tema are 16,811 of these the number of girls is 8221, and that of boys is 8588. The average age of a resident of Tema is 22 years which falls within the category of young people according to (WHO). The municipality has seen a serious surge in teenage pregnancies in subsequent years.

Apex Community Aid set 14th February 2020 aside to engage two basic schools in its catchment area on Adolescent Reproductive Health and to debunk the misconceptions among teenagers that VALS day is to show love through the act of sex. The overall goal of this program was to



Figure 3: Students in a group activity on self-esteem:

impact the right ASRH information to the targeted adolescents to make informed wise choices in their reproductive health life.

2.1 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Improve the confidence of 400 adolescents and make them bold enough to make informed and wise decisions.
- Increase awareness of unhealthy relationships which may lead to sexual abuse, rape, and other social vices among young people.

2.2 IMPLEMENTATION



Figure 4: An adolescent student contributing to a discussion

The Adolescent Reproductive Health talk was held at Old Lashibi JHS and St. James Preparatory school. The first school recorded 300 students attending. The second school had 70 students present. The topics centered on Building Self Confidence, Beliefs, and Values and Adolescent Sexual Health plus a little insight on Valentine. All topics were handled by the Apex Community Reproductive Health

Team. Appropriate teaching methodologies were used to engage the participants. Discussions, Role plays, demonstrations, and questions and answers were the methodologies used.

2.3 OUTCOMES



Figure 5: A facilitator helping a student during a presentation

A total of 370 adolescents were trained on ASRH, and 30 teachers also were sensitized on how they can help build the confidence of their adolescent students who are battling with low self-esteem. The participants learned ways to improve their self-esteem and build their self-confidence. Participants acquired knowledge on how to accept each other and see individuals as people unique in their own way.



Figure 6: B2D ambassadors brainstorming in discussion

3.0 'BOLD 2 DECIDE' PROJECT

From a global perspective, a great majority of adolescents are in dilemma; they are struggling with emotional instability, career consciousness, and physical, social, and moral development that undermine their ability to make healthy and wise decisions. Decision-making skills are crucial to adolescents because they are confronted with many developmental issues, career choices, and sexual and reproductive matters, and thus the need to make the right decision rises.

The “Bold 2 Decide” initiative is a Sexual Reproductive Health Program targeted at both in-school, and out-of-school youth and adolescents with disabilities, this is an ACAiD initiative that was started in 2015 with an overall goal to equip adolescents and youth who are in-school and out-of-school between 10-24 years with in-depth knowledge on sexual and reproductive matters to enable them to make informed and wise life choices. The project also intends to create a coordinated comprehensive educative platform to educate adolescents on their rights, STIs, HIV/AIDS, and drug abuse, etc.

The results of a situational analysis carried out by ACAiD as part of its sexual reproductive research and development showed that there was limited access to sexual reproductive health information and support on the path of most adolescents leading to risky and unhealthy decisions. According to the social research carried out by the research department, a total of 160 adolescents interviewed wanted access to more sexual reproductive health information and services to help them make informed decisions on their sexual life.

3.1 IMPLEMENTATION



Figure 7: Group discussion

ACAID rolled out the first phase of the project during the first quarter of 2020. This was mainly focused on training and equipping 16 carefully selected young people aged between 19-27 years on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health. The Four weeks of intensive training qualified them to become Bold 2 Decide Ambassadors. The work of these young people would be to be advocates in their respective communities and join the Sexual Reproductive Health Education outreach programs to schools and the marginalized youth across the country.

3.2 OUTCOMES

- Sixteen young people were trained in Sexual Reproductive Health and Basic Counseling Techniques.
- The program has helped in reaching out to about 500 young people in 4 communities in Tema Municipal.
- The training has increased the human capital of the organization as well as the capacity to implement more ASRH programs using trained volunteers.

4.0 TRUE LOVE WAIT 2020

Apex Community AIDS collaborated with Compassion International Ghana to pilot its first-ever adolescent reproductive health training program for its participants dubbed “True Love Waits” in 2014. The pilot project covered a total of 84 communities covering Greater Accra, Central, Volta, and the Eastern Regions of Ghana. A total of 2823 participants were reached with the program during the pilot phase of the program. Apex Community Aid worked in 28 communities in the Tema and Central region and trained a total of 168 peer educators during the pilot phase of the

program. The organization after the pilot phase has been very instrumental in the structuring and development of the entire program including the development of the first-ever sexual and reproductive health manual for Compassion International Ghana.

ACAiD is therefore one of the major consultants that is contracted by Frontline Church Partners of Compassion International Ghana to support the implementation of the “True Love Waits” program for their respective Child and Youth Development Centers.

Tema Ashaiman cluster of projects in partnership with Compassion International contracted Apex Community Aid (ACAiD) to train 90 peer educators in 15 Child Development Centers on project Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health (ASRH) for Tema-Ashaiman cluster in the Tema Metropolis District and Ashaiman Municipal District respectively.

The training was held at the Presbyterian Women’s Centre, Abokobi. The training was conducted within two weeks due to the large number of participants. The first batch of participants was trained from the 5th of October 2020 to the 9th of October 2020 while the second batch of participants had their training from the 12th of October 2020 to the 16th of October 2020. The “True Love Waits” project uses the Structured Peer Network Model (SPNM) which involves a three-stage process: training of peer educators, peer educators recruiting and training peer contacts, and peer contacts recruiting and training peer promoters.



Figure 8: TLW participants in an activity

Forty-eight (48) peer educators participated in the 1st-week of training and forty-two (42) peer educators during the 2nd week of training respectively. The training consisted of facilitator-led and participatory training methods which included power-point presentations, role plays, small and large group discussions and presentations, quizzes, questions, and answer sessions.

The main goal of the training was to build the capacity of beneficiaries by making available the knowledge and accessibility to appropriate sexual and reproductive health materials to enable them to make informed and wise choices toward healthy sexual living. It is also intended to train adolescents to be peer educators who will also teach and train their **peer contacts** and **peer promoters** respectively to effectively implement the “True Love Waits (TLW)” project.

Objectives of the “True Love Waits” Project

- To provide in-depth knowledge on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights (ASRHR) in order to prevent and minimize issues of teenage pregnancies, STIs, and possible sexual abuses among others.
- To provide an in-depth understanding of the Bible’s perspective on sexuality and its related issues.
- To improve participants’ confidence in making healthy decisions regarding their reproductive and sexual life.
- To provide access to reproductive and sexual health centers in their communities.
- To sensitize caregivers on adolescent reproductive health issues and how to support their children during puberty.



Figure 9: Participants engaging in group work

Implementation

The training was held at the Presbyterian Women's Centre, Abokobi. The training was done within two weeks due to the large number of participants. The first batch of participants was trained from the 5th of October 2020 to the 9th of October 2020 while the second batch was from the 12th of October 2020 to the 16th of October 2020. The "True Love Waits" project adopts the Structured Peer Network Model (SPNM) which involves a three-stage process: train

peer educators, peer educators recruiting and training peer contacts, and peer contacts recruiting and training peer promoters.

The 'peer educators' training incorporated both participatory learning and instructor-led approach to facilitate meaningful participation and interaction between participants, encourage contributions on various topics, and build confidence which included:

- Power-point presentations
- Roleplays
- Small and large group discussions and presentations
- Quiz
- Questions and answers sessions

Outcomes

Prior to the training, participants undertook a pre-test and later took a post-test after the training



Figure 10: Peer educators making a presentation during the training

ended. The mean pre-test score was 59% and the mean post-test score was 81%. It could be deduced that participants increased their knowledge by 22%. The following are outcomes that were realized during the program:

- a. Participants attained knowledge of beliefs and values and their importance of them in life.
- b. The peer educators identified symptoms and causes of STIs and the stages of HIV.
- c. Participants understood the need for building healthy relationships and abstaining from sexual activities before marriage.
- d. Participants acquired knowledge of the human reproductive system and adolescent sexual health.
- e. Participants understood the types of decisions and the need to make wise life choices.

Some beneficiaries had pertinent issues which were addressed during the training:

One participant shared her story of how she easily gets carried away about her feelings towards the opposite sex and gives in to sexual favors. At the end of the training, self-esteem, self-control, and power of assertiveness were gained by participants.

Another participant indicated that most of his friends were engaged in internet scams, and he had a problem disassociating himself from them since he had joined them in this act. After the building healthy relationship topic, the purpose of defining what a relationship means was understood by the participants.

4.0 WORLD AIDS DAY DECEMBER 2020

World AIDS Day takes place on 1 December each year. It's an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, to show support for people living with HIV, and to commemorate those who have died from an AIDS-related illness. Founded in 1988, World AIDS Day was the first ever global health day.

Globally, there are an estimated 38 million people who have the virus. Despite the virus being



identified in 1984, more than 35 million people have died of HIV or AIDS, making it one of the most destructive pandemics in history. According to USAID estimated statistics; 38.0 million [31.6 million–44.5 million] people globally were living with HIV in 2019. 1.7 million [1.2 million–2.2 million] people became newly infected with HIV in 2019. And 690 000 [500 000–970 000] people died from AIDS-related illnesses in 2019.

Today, scientific advances have been made in HIV treatment, there are laws to protect people living with HIV and we understand so much more about the condition. Despite this, each year in Ghana, adults, and children living with HIV and AIDS are about **340 000 [250 000 - 460 000]** according to USAID, people do not know the facts about how to protect themselves and others, and stigma and discrimination remain a reality for many people living with the condition.

World AIDS Day is important because it reminds the public and government that HIV has not gone away – there is still a vital need to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education.

Goal of the Program



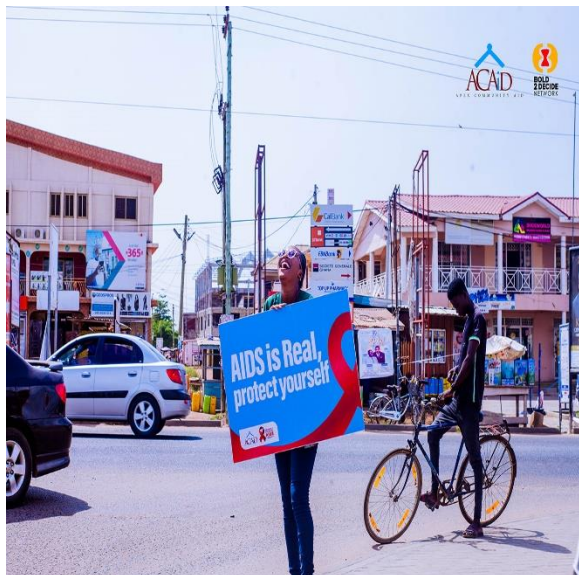
The theme of the 2020 **World AIDS Day** was “Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility” and Ghana has adopted the **theme**: Stay Safe, Let's End **AIDS** by 2030. Apex Community Aid (ACAiD) in partnership with Tema West Municipality and the Community 18 Taxi Rank joins the world to mark the Day. World AIDS Day is a day set aside by UNAIDS to inspire global solidarity for persons infected with and affected by HIV as well as commemorate those who have lost

their lives to the epidemic. It is a day set aside to assess the impact of the epidemic on nations and join hands to plan strategies to minimize its impact. The main goal of the celebration was to create awareness of the condition, conduct free health screening on HIV/AIDS and other related illnesses, and educate and then sensitize the general public.

Objectives

The celebration focused on three major areas.

- To educate and empower individuals and communities to live healthier lives by improving their physical, mental, emotional, and social health by increasing their knowledge and influencing their attitudes about caring for their well-being.
- To run free HIV and other health screenings for the general public to help detect early HIV and other health infections that may affect the well-being of people.



Implementation

- The organization collaborated with the Tema West Municipal Assembly, Comm. 18 Taxi Rank Association. and trained volunteers from Apex Community Aid's **Bold 2 Decide Network**, held a debar at the Community 18 taxi Rank on the 1st of December 2020 between the hours of 10 am to 2 pm.

- Nurses from various health corners within Tema metropolis participated in the free health

screening and education to the general public and pedestrians who freely wanted to be part of the program.

- Other media organizations like United Television (UTV), OBONU TV, SVTV, and many others partnered with Apex Community Aid to celebrate World Aids Day.

Outcomes

- Over 300 people were educated on HIV/AIDS and other related STIs prevention, management, and stigma reduction.
- 120 people underwent free HIV and other health-related screenings after going through the education.

