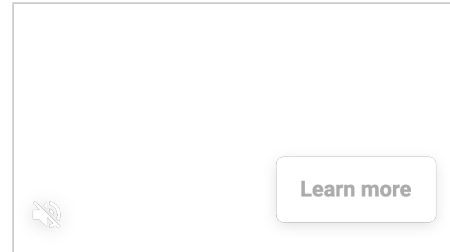


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Study finds Ugandans less attracted to free condoms

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Kampala, Uganda | URN | The Ministry of Health has started a study to establish the kind of condoms Ugandans would prefer and easily use, as records show a dwindling number of people using condoms.

Vastha Kibirige, the condom coordinator at the AIDS control programme says that they have been giving out free condoms over the years, but the use is too low. For example, he says they have projected a male condom need at 590 million packets in 2021, but they may end up supplying these over three years.

She says that among the things they plan to change is the color of the condoms since they are receiving feedback from users that the hot pink color is becoming monotonous.

According to her, they should be at least distributing 18 million condoms per month using their estimates of sexually active men. They are now moving into comprehensive condom programming which involves giving comprehensive information and education such that they capture the numbers.

But while the ministry is doing this, experts attending an awareness campaign launch which was part of the events to mark World AIDS Day organized by Reach A Hand Uganda (RAHU) on Wednesday 1, December 2021 cautioned that the government was taking the wrong route.

Dr Moses Okello, a Public Health Expert working with DKT International Uganda, a social marketing entity that supplies contraceptives, says their market surveys have shown Ugandans associate free things with poor quality, a reason as to why many are not as forthcoming to use free condoms.

Okello says people tend to attach value to their pleasurable moments and class which is why the manufacturers of KISS condoms for sale on the market, resolved to brand them with flavors such as chocolate and strawberry among others also to break condom fatigue.

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He notes many other NGOs that have been supplying free condoms such as HIV Advocacy, Uganda Cares have since rebranded their products to Icon Condoms. For him, the ministry should be pre-occupied with identifying interventions that attract young people with grim picture of especially adolescents and young women being the highest number getting newly infected with HIV.

On his part, Humphrey Nabimanya, RAHU's Chief Executive says a lot of work still needs to be done to boost the confidence of young people for them to

seek to know their HIV status and have those who come out positive enroll on treatment with full knowledge of why they have to remain on their medication.

This he says is the reason as to why they resolved to launch a seven day campaign dubbed I Know Kati HIV/AIDS Awareness and Prevention campaign in all cities and high prevalence areas such that through musicians and comedians, young people can be educated as they are being entertained to come out test and get enrolled on care if found positive.

Previously, he says through similar campaigns, they were able to test up to 16,000 people, and linked others to health facilities for appropriate care.

of Busoga Kingdom?



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