



**RWANDA HEALTH INITIATIVE
FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN**

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) PREVENTION, RESPONSE, AND SURVIVOR SUPPORT INTERVENTION

Program Objective

To prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (GBV) among adolescents, youth, and women through community awareness, psychosocial support to survivors, clinical care, and structured community referral systems, while strengthening the capacity of primary health facilities to deliver high-quality, survivor-centered services.

Background

Gender-based violence remains a critical public health and human rights issue in Rwanda, with physical, psychological, sexual, and social consequences for women, adolescents, and young people.

To address this challenge, the Rwanda Health Initiative for Youth and Women (RHIYW), in collaboration with its partners, implemented GBV prevention and response interventions aimed at increasing awareness, strengthening survivor support systems, and improving access to quality, survivor-centered care.

Between 2019 and 2025, RHIYW delivered community-based GBV prevention education, strengthened service delivery through youth centers, primary health care facilities, and community outreach platforms.

The organization also provided psychosocial support and initial counseling to survivors at youth-friendly centers, while ensuring effective referral pathways to **Isange One Stop Centers (IOSCs)** for comprehensive medical, psychosocial, and legal services.

KEY INTERVENTIONS 2019 - 2025

1. Community Awareness and Prevention

RHIYW conducted community and facility-based awareness sessions targeting adolescents, youth (boys and girls), and community members to:

- Prevent sexual and gender-based violence
- Promote gender equality and respectful relationships
- Increase awareness of available GBV services and reporting mechanisms
- Strengthen positive behavior change among young people, including boys and men



2. Survivor-Centered Support and Referral Services

The program provided immediate psychosocial support and counseling at youth center, followed by structured referrals to specialized services, including:

- Isange One Stop Centers for medical, legal, and psychosocial care
- Health facilities for clinical management and follow-up care
- Protection and legal support services

This ensured timely, confidential, and coordinated care for survivors.

3. Strengthening Health System Capacity

In collaboration with the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), RHIYW supported capacity building of health care providers through:

- Onsite Training on GBV clinical management and survivor-centered care
- Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) training to reduce stigma and ensure non-judgmental service delivery
- Clinical mentorship and supportive supervision in health facilities
- Participation in national GBV mentorship teams and supervision of IOSCs

RHIYW also contributed to the development and dissemination of national GBV clinical guidelines and SRHR standards across more than 10 districts.

4. Integration of Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC) within GBV Services

RHIYW supported the integration of Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC) into GBV programming across more than 10 districts by:

- Facilitating access to comprehensive abortion care through telemedicine-supported services for survivors of sexual violence.
- Strengthening health care providers' competencies in respectful, rights-based, and survivor-centered care.
- Expanding access to quality post-violence reproductive health services at the primary health care level.

5. Youth Engagement and Behavior Change

Through youth centers and community platforms, the interventions engaged adolescents and young people by:

- Providing education on GBV prevention, early identification, and reporting of sexual violence.



- Promoting positive masculinity and responsible behavior among boys and young men.
- Raising awareness of rights, protection services, and referral pathways.

Results Achieved (2019–2025)

In collaboration with national and international partners:

- More than **3,000 survivors of sexual and gender-based violence** received psychosocial counseling and were referred for comprehensive medical, legal, and protection services through 56 primary health care facilities across five districts.
- **Over 1,000 survivors of sexual violence** accessed comprehensive abortion care at primary health facility level through telemedicine-supported services.
- Thousands of adolescents and young people (girls and boys) benefited from GBV prevention education through community outreach, youth centers, and health facilities.
- More than **900 mid-level health care providers from 83 primary health facilities** were trained in specific topics for GBV clinical management and VCAT training; strengthening non-judgmental and rights-based service delivery.
- RHIYW participated to the review of National GBV clinical guidelines and dissemination of updated guidelines across five districts, improving standardization of care.
- **Thousands of adolescent boys and young men** participated in educational sessions on positive masculinity and responsible behavior delivered through youth centers. The sessions strengthened knowledge and attitudes related to gender equality, respectful relationships, and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence.
- RHIYW actively participated in the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC) National GBV Mentorship Team, contributing to supportive supervision of Isange One Stop Centers and national quality improvement processes.

Impact

The program significantly strengthened access to survivor-centered GBV services for adolescents, youth, and women.

Key outcomes include:

- Improved availability and quality of GBV response services at primary health care level
- Increased community awareness sessions and willingness to report GBV cases
- Strengthened referral systems linking communities, health facilities, and Isange One Stop Centers
- Improved clinical capacity of mid – level health providers to deliver confidential, non-judgmental, and rights-based care

Key Lessons Learned

- Community awareness and youth engagement are essential for preventing GBV and increasing service uptake
- Confidential, survivor-centered services significantly improve reporting and access to care
- Continuous training and attitude transformation of health care providers improves quality of care to survivors.