



RWANDA HEALTH INITIATIVE
FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN

VALUES CLARIFICATION AND ATTITUDE TRANSFORMATION (VCAT) INITIATIVE FOR STRENGTHENING SUPPORTIVE SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR) SERVICES



OBJECTIVE

To improve community and health facility-level understanding, acceptance, and support for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services through Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) workshops. The initiative aimed to reduce stigma and misconceptions, promote rights-based approaches, strengthen awareness of the national legal and policy framework governing SRHR service provision, and improve access to accurate information, referrals, and quality services for women, girls, and young people.

Context and Rationale

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) are essential for the health and well-being of women, girls, young people, and communities. Despite progress in expanding access to SRHR services in Rwanda, barriers such as stigma, misconceptions, harmful social norms, and limited awareness of available services and legal frameworks continue to affect service utilization. Community leaders, Community Health Workers (CHWs), and healthcare providers play a critical role in influencing community perceptions, promoting health-seeking behaviors, facilitating referrals, and ensuring respectful service delivery. To address these challenges, *Rwanda Health Initiative for Youth and Women (RHIYW)* and its partners **implemented a Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) initiative; workshop across nine districts** to strengthen knowledge of SRHR, reduce stigma and misconceptions, increase awareness of relevant legal and policy frameworks, and strengthen referral pathways. The initiative engaged community leaders, CHWs, and healthcare providers from primary health centers to foster supportive attitudes and create a more enabling environment for access to quality SRHR information and services.



STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS 2019 -2025

1. VCAT Workshops for Community Leaders

A total of **236 community leaders from five districts** participated in Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) workshops aimed at strengthening understanding and support for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). The workshops covered key topics including values clarification and attitude transformation, sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality and rights-based approaches, prevention of stigma and discrimination, Rwanda's legal and policy framework governing abortion services, available SRHR services and referral pathways, and strategies for strengthening community support for health service utilization. Through these sessions, community leaders enhanced their knowledge of SRHR issues and their role in promoting supportive attitudes, reducing stigma, and facilitating access to health information and services within their communities.

2. VCAT workshops for Community Health Worker

A total of 6,523 Community Health Workers (CHWs) serving the catchment areas of 66 primary health centers across four districts were oriented through Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) sessions. The training focused on strengthening their understanding of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), including values clarification and attitude transformation, gender equality and rights-based approaches, prevention of stigma and discrimination, and Rwanda's legal and policy framework on abortion services. It also addressed common myths, misconceptions, and stigma related to SRHR, while reinforcing the important role of CHWs in community education, health promotion, and referrals to appropriate health services.

3. On-Site VCAT Training and Project Orientation for Healthcare Providers

680 Healthcare providers from 66 primary health facilities and 12 hospitals across 9 districts received on-site orientation and Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) training aimed at strengthening respectful, rights-based, and client-centered Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) service delivery. The training focused on enhancing providers' capacity to deliver quality SRHR services through client-centered care approaches, promotion of SRHR rights, prevention of stigma and discrimination within healthcare settings, and strengthening referral systems to ensure continuity of care. Participants also gained a deeper understanding of the legal and policy framework governing SRHR services in Rwanda including the provision of SRH services, as well as professional ethics and quality standards for service delivery. This contributed to improved service provision and increased access to respectful and equitable SRHR services.



Key Statistics at a Glance

Indicator	Achievement
Districts reached	9
Community leaders and stakeholders trained	236
Community Health Workers oriented	6,523
Primary public Health centers reached	66
Public hospitals reached	12
Health care providers trained	680

Key Outcomes

► Improved Knowledge and Awareness

- Increased understanding of SRHR concepts, rights, policies, and services among community and health system stakeholders.

► Reduced Stigma and Misconceptions

- Strengthened positive attitudes toward SRHR services.
- Reduced misconceptions and discriminatory beliefs.
- Increased acceptance of rights-based and client-centered approaches to care.

► Improved Access to Services

- Increased capacity of leaders, CHWs, and healthcare providers to guide clients to appropriate services.

► Strengthened Community–Health System Linkages

- Expanded support networks for women, girls, and young people seeking SRHR services.



DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

The initiative contributed to creating a more supportive environment for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) service delivery by strengthening knowledge, reducing stigma, addressing misconceptions, and promoting positive attitudes among community leaders, Community Health Workers, and healthcare providers.

SUSTAINABILITY AND SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING

The initiative strengthened existing community and health system structures by building the capacity of leaders, CHWs, and healthcare providers who continue to influence community perceptions, referral practices, and service delivery. Embedding VCAT principles within local governance structures, community health systems, and health facilities supports long-term improvements in respectful, rights-based, and stigma-free SRHR service delivery.

Overall Result

The VCAT initiative successfully reached 7,439 stakeholders, including 236 community leaders, 6,523 Community Health Workers (CHWs), and 680 healthcare providers across nine districts in Rwanda. Through Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) workshops, the initiative enhanced knowledge of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), reduced stigma and misconceptions, promoted rights-based and client-centered approaches, and strengthened linkages between communities and health facilities. As a result, the project contributed to creating a more supportive environment for equitable access to quality SRHR information and services for women, girls, and young people.

