

The Learning Initiative on Norms, Exploitation and Abuse (LINEA) Trial to Prevent Age-disparate Transactional Sex in Tanzania

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BACKGROUND

- Age-disparate transactional sex is associated with negative sexual and reproductive health, developmental and social outcomes including HIV, unintended pregnancy, unsafe abortions, school dropout, early/forced marriage and violence¹.
- Adolescent girls and young women account for 32% of new HIV infections in Eastern and Southern Africa despite making up only approximately 10% of the population, and are 2.5 times more likely to contract HIV than their male peers².
- There is limited evidence about what works to prevent age-disparate transactional sex, and LINEA is the first age-disparate transactional sex prevention intervention.
- There is growing global evidence on how entertaining mass-media can be used to prevent and reduce gender-based violence, in particular for hard-to-reach populations or where face-to-face implementation is challenging.

THE LINEA INTERVENTION

The LINEA intervention is an evidence-based, co-produced and feasibility tested intervention that aims to prevent age-disparate transactional sex at the individual and social norms level targeting both girls and men³. The intervention has been pilot tested in Shinyanga and Kigoma with excellent results⁴.

The intervention consists of:



MSICHANA WA KATI RADIO DRAMA

A 39-episode radio drama (broadcast weekly) related to issues around age-disparate transactional sex. Through the radio drama storylines, the listeners will get to know the characters and witness them supporting each other to take action to avoid and prevent age-disparate transactional sex.

- Target population: Whole community
- Number of sessions/episodes: 39-episodes
- Length of sessions/episodes: 15-20 minutes
- Number of participants: Whole community
- Duration: 9 months



EDUCATIONAL CURRICULA SESSIONS WITH GIRLS AND MEN

Curricula delivered weekly, concurrently with the radio drama. They are designed to encourage critical reflection on issues of gender, power and individuals own values, focusing on positive alternative norms and goal achievement for girls.

- Target population: Adolescent girls aged 13-15 years and men 23 years old and over
- Number of sessions/episodes: 17 sessions for girls and 18 sessions for men
- Length: 90 minutes for girls and 120 minutes for men
- Number of participants: 15-25
- Duration: 4 months

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STUDY OBJECTIVES

The study utilises a cluster randomised controlled trial design and aims to evaluate the impacts of the LINEA radio drama vs the LINEA radio drama and curricula on age-disparate transactional sex among 13 to 15-year-old girls and men 5 to 10 years older in Mwanza and Geita regions.

The specific objectives are to:

- 1 Assess the short- and mid-term impacts of (1) a complex intervention combining radio drama and small-group based curriculum workshops; and (2) radio drama alone, on social norms driving age-disparate transactional sex; and gifting behaviours on the pathway to age-disparate transactional sex.
- 2 Assess short- and mid-term effects of diffusion of the key messages of the interventions (radio drama and curricula) among household members and peers of intervention participants in the target communities, and the role of targeted diffusion exercises included in the curricula.
- 3 Examine how contextual factors (for example implementers' attitudes and norms, implementation design and characteristics) facilitate or impede the delivery of the intervention curricula.

TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

The LINEA trial is planned for 2023-2026. If found effective, we hope to collaborate with partners to increase the reach of the LINEA programme and adapt it for different populations and contexts in Tanzania and beyond.

PARTNERS

- Amani Girls Home (AGH): Implementation
- National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR): Evaluation
- London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) : Oversight and Technical Support

RESEARCH LEADS

- Dr Joyce Wamoyi, NIMR Mwanza
- Dr Ana Maria Buller, LSHTM

FUNDERS

- OAK Foundation
- Wellspring Foundation



LINEA (The Learning Initiative on Norms, Exploitation and Abuse) is an international, multi-pronged project testing how social norm theory can be used to reduce sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in regions across the world.

For more information see our website:
www.lshtm.ac.uk/linea