

# POLICY BRIEF

## COMPARISON OF EXISTING SRHR POLICIES VS THE WHO RECOMMENDED SRH CARE PACKAGE

### KISUMU COUNTY

### Specific Objectives Of The Analysis

1. To conduct a desk review of the existing policies where SRH is contained and provided and identify some of the policy gaps related to SRHR service provision hindering the provision of quality SRH services.
2. To assess the policy gaps hindering the provision of SRH services identified through KIIs with healthcare providers at sub-county level.
3. To make recommendations on how to enhance and incorporate provisions of the care package within existing SRH policies.

### Methodology

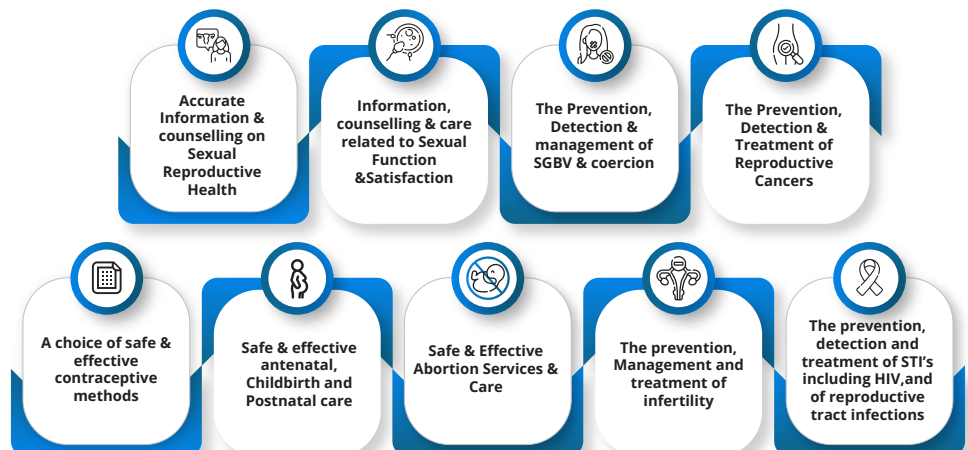
- **Desk review:** Review of the current SRH/ASRH policies vs the SRH Package of Care to identify gap.
- **Key informant interviews (KII):** with 2 CHMT members, 1 County RH Coordinator and 1 sub-county RH Coordinator to provide qualitative data on the challenges and recommendations.

### Background

Good sexual and reproductive health (SRH) is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being in all matters relating to reproduction for both men and women, including adolescents. Results from Kenya’s Demographic Health Survey (KDHS) 2022 reveal that Kenya needs to enhance policy implementation to enhance universal SRH provision by providing adolescents with services to prevent, diagnose, and treat STIs. Furthermore, there is need for information on and strategies for preventing unintended pregnancies and HIV infections, reducing SGBV incidences, prevention and management.

To identify advocacy priorities, legal and policy gaps, and violations that prevent access to SRH information and services among women of reproductive age, Access to Medicines Platform commissioned a policy gaps assessment on existing SRH-related policies, guidelines, and standard operating procedures, to provide recommendations on incorporation of the findings into the SRH Care Package in Kisumu County.

#### Essential Package of SRHR as recommended by WHO



## Findings

- Kisumu county has domesticated a total of 18 existing National policies, guidelines, and Standard Operating Procedures to guide provision of Sexual and Reproductive Health services in the county.
- The SRH Package of Care provides counseling services options without focusing on other management components like treatment, testing, and even pregnancy management. The information further excludes SRH, sexuality and growth, Counselling, and treatment of irregular or painful menstruation, and screening for anemia as indicated in the AYFS Guidelines.
- Despite the existence of National Positive Parenting Guidelines, it is not clear if this is being implemented in Kisumu.
- Contrary to the National SRH policy 2022-2032 policy direction 2 that outlines reducing unmet need for family planning by rationalizing the provision of FP method mix and services, facilities grapple with unavailability of a full range of FP commodities options.
- The SRH Package lacks a clear framework for the provision of age-appropriate SRH education to adolescents and youth and particularly for those who are already mothers or sexually active.
- The current SRH policies do not include provision of reproductive health educational programs that are responsive to the needs of the marginalized populations including the use of health education materials in BRAILLE and SIGN language.
- The SRH Package lacks a clear framework for the provision of age-appropriate SRH education to adolescents and youth

***“The SRH Package of Care for Kisumu County only offers the provision of SBGV Counselling -This doesn’t address other components of management like pregnancy prevention, HIV prevention, STI management and prevention and safety and security of the victim to include referral pathways, as required by the “Health Sector Gender-Based Violence Quality Assurance tool.”-KII Respondent***

## Recommendations

- Costing of and implementation of policies to improve the availability and accessibility of SRH commodities. This involves forecasting and procurement of contraceptives to ensure a consistent supply of essential drugs for maternal health and establishing efficient distribution systems.
- Address legal and regulatory barriers related to provision of comprehensive and age-appropriate sexuality education to adolescents and young people.
- Ensure that the SHR Package of Care provides both prevention and comprehensive care to address different SRH needs including counseling, mental health, referral systems, and treatment of cases with appropriate SGBV referral pathways.
- Strengthen the integration of SRH services with other related services such as HIV testing and treatment, GBV response, and mental health support.
- Strengthen the role of Community Health Promoters (CHPs) in delivering SRH services, particularly in remote and underserved areas.
- Establish youth-friendly SRH services that are accessible, confidential, non-judgmental, and tailored to the specific needs of young people. Including periodic assessment of the functionality of existing youth-friendly centres/corners in line with the WHO recommended SRH Package of Care.
- Embrace technological solutions including telemedicine, M-Health and SMS reminders and other digital platforms to enhance access to SRH services as contained in the Policies.

### Low Hanging Recommendations for Implementation

- Ensure comprehensive dissemination of SRH policies and guidelines to the lowest facility levels, empowering healthcare providers, to effectively implement and integrate these policies.
- Leverage on existing SRH Technical Working Groups to develop tailored strategies and monitor the implementation of SRH programs.
- Strengthen integration of SRH services to ensure individuals can receive a wide range of services, including SRH, HIV testing and treatment, GBV support and mental healthcare, under one roof.
- Provide ongoing training and support to CHPs, focusing on SRH service delivery, community outreach and education to generate demand and enhance health seeking behavior.
- Refurbish youth-friendly centres to ensure they are fully functional, providing accessible, confidential and non-judgmental SRH services for young people.