HDT in collaboration with Tanzania Marketing and Communications (TMARC) has reached 6230 parents through Families Matter! Project (FMP) translated as ‘Familia Inafaa’. FMP is an evidence based project that targets adolescents of 9-12 years through parents and guardians. It is funded by the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and as Phase II of the project it was implemented in Dar es Salaam – Tembeke Municipal and Shinyanga District.

The project brings together multitude of parents and guardians in its six weeks sessions referred to as wave. The primary aim is to reduce risky sexual behavior among youth and ultimately decrease both HIV infection rates and early pregnancy among children. The program is designed to help parents overcome parent-child communication barriers on sexual reproductive health such as embarrassment or discomfort; lack of knowledge, skills and confidence. The program also enhances parenting skills and practices including parental monitoring, positive reinforcement and building of strong parent-child relationship.

The intervention increases parental awareness and parenting skills through a series of six weekly sessions of maximum three hours. The sessions focus on increasing parental awareness about issues children face, improving parents’ ability to communicate with their children about sexuality, and encouraging parenting practices that increase the likelihood that children will not engage in sexual risk behaviors. Parents are also asked to bring their children to a designated session in order to practice the skills learned. Ultimately, parents are expected to be competent and comfortable in addressing issues related to sex and sexuality within their children.

In Tanzania, HIV prevalence is 5.1 percent at national level among 15-49 age group. Data indicates that, 9 percent of girls and 10 percent of boys engage in sex before 15 years. Hence, FMP establishes prevention among 9-12 years from risky behaviors. The project was introduced in Tanzania in 2008 and to-date has been implemented in four regions namely Mtwara, Ruvuma, Shinyanga and Dar es Salaam. Officially, Phase I of the project commenced in 2010 in Ruvuma and Mtwara regions which have prevalence rates of 7 percent and 4.1 percent respectively, where a total of 3892 parents were reached in two years. From July 2014 to October 2015, FMP was implemented in Tembeke Municipal – Dar es Salaam and Shinyanga District where 6230 parents and 6288 children have been directly reached. Dar es Salaam has a prevalence rate of 6.9 percent while Shinyanga the prevalence is at 7.4 percent. FMP has also been very successful in Kenya, Botswana, Ivory Coast, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

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Health Promotion Tanzania