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Hiv-Aids prevention through a life-skills school based program in Bandung, west java, Indonesia: evidence of empowerment and partnership in education

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Abstract

Increasing numbers of young people with HIV ask for sustainable, comprehensive and effective prevention programs. Since the targets are junior high school students, a school-based HIV prevention curriculum was developed to increase knowledge and to develop life-skills to prevent HIV infection through drug use and risky sexual behaviour. Teachers and schools were involved in the planning and implementation to improve the design of the intervention, and to increase ownership. Advocacy to local government and educational authority as well as to school management, students and parents and the involvement of religious and community leaders during the development and implementation process proved to be the key of success of this HIV prevention school program.

Keywords: HIV-AIDS; school based; life skill, adolescent; advocacy; drugs education, sexual reproductive health, teachers

1. Background

Indonesia has a fast growing HIV-AIDS epidemic. According to national data, up to June 2010, the number of cases reached 21.770 which are twice from the number in 2007. It is estimated that the number of people living with HIV-AIDS will reach 500.000 people by the year 2014. West Java province is after Jakarta the province with the largest numbers of HIV cases: 5.536 HIV patients up to June 2010. More than half of these patients are 20-29 years old. The main risk behaviours are: unprotected hetero sex (49, 3%) and injecting drug use (40, 4%) (UNAIDS, 2010). West Java has an estimated 22,000 IDUs, of which over 50% are HIV-positive and 20% are incarcerated (UNGASS, 2008). Drug use starts relatively early in adolescence: 4% of junior high school students were involved in drug use, while every 1 out of 1000 of junior high school students has consumed drugs (National Survey on Drug Abuse and Drug Traffic among School Students and College Students, 2006). Students started with smoking and alcohol and experimenting with drugs and sex from 14 years onwards (Pinxten et al., 2007). According to a survey in four big cities in Indonesia 16% of the youth have their first sexual experience at age 13-15 years, 44% at 16-18 years old and 32% at 19-21 years old (Behavioural Surveillance, 2005). Needle sharing by injecting drug users (IDUs) a very effective way of spreading HIV infection, showed an eightfold increase from 1997 to 2003. This is believed to have contributed to the steep increase of the HIV prevalence among IDU: from 16% in 1999, 41% in 2000 to 48% in 2008 (Pisani, et al., 2003).

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