

Advancing family planning solutions in Burundi

The Health Action International (HAI) team were in Burundi in September to formally launch our [Multi-stakeholder engagement Approach to Family Planning in Burundi Project](#) (“Solutions”), along with local partner [Twitezimbere](#). The highly interactive and busy week consisted of a workshop on project monitoring and evaluation, a workshop on operationalising the multi-stakeholder approach, as well as the formal launch of the project at a fair hosted by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Burundi and the Burundian Ministry of Health.

The aim of the HAI-implemented component of the Solutions project, funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Burundi, is to improve access, availability, and demand for sexual reproductive health (SRH) commodities, particularly modern family planning methods and sanitary products for women and adolescents. The programme, which will be implemented through advocacy strengthening of local civil society organisations, revolves largely around evidence-based dialogues, using HAI research, at the national and sub-national levels, bringing actors together from the public, private, and civil society spheres. This component therefore contributes to the broader aims of the Embassy’s Solutions programme, which focuses on education, health worker training, and awareness-raising, among others.

From 12-14 September 2022, HQ and field representatives from Twitezimbere and HAI met for an introductory meeting on outcome harvesting. This workshop gave both organisations an opportunity to review the theory of change and outcomes of the project, reflect on how these outcomes can be formulated, familiarise themselves with the outcome harvesting methodology, and discuss monitoring and evaluation tools to be used by both organisations.

The Teams met again the next day to discuss the project’s multi-stakeholder engagement approach, this time joined by representatives from other civil society organisations with various backgrounds, including a single mothers association, a women’s lawyers’ association, scouts, and other Solutions Project partners. The main objective of bringing together such a diverse group was to reflect on advocacy in the Burundian context and how to operationalise the multi-stakeholder engagement approach for SRH advocacy.

By doing so, HAI and Twitezimbere were able to identify key stakeholders from various spheres for its advocacy work on SRH, but also to start a support movement with actors representing various members of the community, including our target audience of adolescents and women.

The advocacy component was able to discuss with several young people, and their curiosity showed us an urgency to be informed factually on sexual and reproductive health so that they are better educated in their choice.

Sonia Akimana, Twitezimbere

HAI gave a presentation on the multi-actor approach, based on the MeTA methodology ([see an example here](#)), and an introduction to policy advocacy. The engagement workshop was successful in identifying the key stakeholders for SRH advocacy, and the team felt energised and excited for the challenge ahead. As a result of the workshop, multiple organisations confirmed their wish to join the multi-stakeholder platform and represent various voices of the community when advocating for access to SRH and commodities together with HAI and Twitezimbere.

The week ended with the official launch of the Solutions project, during a fair hosted by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Burundi and the PNSR (from the Burundian Ministry of Health). HAI and Twitezimbere held a stand where we were able to explain and share experience of our multi-actor engagement approach, as well present previous [prices, availability, and affordability research](#), demonstrating how effective it can be in driving policy change for the better. The fair was a great opportunity to learn more about the SRH commodities created and distributed by Solutions partners and was attended by the First Secretary of the Burundian Ministry of Health.

The Burundi Solutions Project is funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Burundi.

