

Gender

JOICFP/JICA launches sexual reproductive health for Upper Manya

From Ezekiel E. Sottie, ASESEWA

THE Japanese Organisation for International Cooperation for Family Planning (JOICFP), an international non-governmental organisation in collaboration with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has launched a project for promoting access to sexual reproductive health (SRH) services for young people in the Upper Manya Krobo District at Asesewa in the Eastern Region.

The project, which spans three years (2024-2027), is sponsored by JICA and being implemented by JOICFP, at three sub-districts in the Upper Manya Krobo District namely: Anyoboni, Asesewa and Akateng.

Project

The project when fully implemented would help curb the increasing number of teenage pregnancies in the Upper Manya Krobo District which is classified as the district with the highest teenage pregnancy in the Eastern Region.

At the start-up meeting held with key stakeholders for the project at Asesewa last Wednesday, the Country Director of JOICFP, Emmanuel Obeng, stressed that the essence of the project was to contribute to the efforts to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy in the

Upper Manya Krobo District.

According to Mr Obeng, the Eastern Region Ghana Health Service 2023 annual report on health rated the Upper Manya Krobo District with the highest teenage pregnancy and therefore there was the need for intervention to curb the situation.

Training

The JOICFP Country Director explained further that the project would train 100 peer educators and also 100 adult supporters who would organise educational sensitisation activities in the communities.

Furthermore, the project would also train health workers in youth-friendly services to enable them to provide confidential SRH to young people. He urged all the project stakeholders and partners, especially the communities, the district health directorate and the district assembly to provide the necessary support to ensure that the project interventions could be sustained even after the project period.

Impactful projects

The JICA representative in Ghana, Kozue Amemiya said JICA in partnership with JOICFP and the Eastern Regional Health Directorate had implemented some impactful projects over the last decade which included community empowerment project at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthening of

maternal newborn child and adolescent health in selected districts of the region.

She said access to safe sexual and reproductive health services continued to be a challenge as evidenced by the Ghana Demographic and Health Survey in 2022.

A Public Health Nurse from the Eastern Regional Health Directorate, Ellen Asare, who represented the Regional Director lauded both JOICFP and JICA for their intervention in adolescent health issues.

She gave an assurance that the regional office was going to support the implementation of the project for its success in reducing teenage pregnancy in the district.

The District Chief Executive (DCE) for Upper Manya Krobo, Joe Sam, said the project could not have come at a better time as the district was ranked first in the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in the region last year as that development was very worrying and could impact the human resource capacity needed to propel the development of the district.

The DCE was hopeful that when adolescent reproductive clubs were formed in all 13 electoral areas in the district, it would also go a long way to complement the efforts being made by the assembly in addressing the issue of school dropouts, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, illegal abortions among the youth, especially the adolescents.

The Girl-Child Coordinator for Upper



Kozue Amemiya, JICA Representative in Ghana

Manya Krobo GES, Victoria Barku, said some of the pregnant girls in the district needed support to continue their education after delivering as they were good students but had no support from their homes.

She, therefore, pleaded with JICA and JOICFP to support such girls in the district to continue their education.

The Chairman for the occasion, Nene Olesu III, a representative of Dorm Matse at Asesewa, said the increasing number of teenage pregnancies in the district was a great concern and pleaded with all stakeholders to come together as a district to understand the root causes, promote education and provide support systems to empower the youth in making informed decisions.