



INTERNATIONAL CONDOMS DAY



NATIONAL SYNDIC DISEASES
CONTROL COUNCIL





Gone are the days when conversations about sex were considered taboo. Sex is a part of everyday life for the typical Kenyan tertiary institution student. Young people engaging in sex has become so common that it's even referenced in music. Meaning even those that are yet to start engaging are exposed to information about sex at some point in their daily routines. Unfortunately, this reality is also reflected in the rising cases of unplanned pregnancies and new HIV infections among students.

According to the 2022 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS), approximately 35% of new HIV infections in Kenya occur among young people aged 15-24, with female youth disproportionately affected. Adolescent and young people's pregnancies remain a significant public health challenge, with a national prevalence of 15% among girls aged 15-19. These statistics highlight the urgent need for increased access to contraceptives, SRHR education, and youth-friendly services for our young people

Let's be honest, young people are not going to stop having sex. The message of abstinence is no longer widely accepted. Sex is normal. In fact, chances are that every campus student you know is either already sexually active or will be soon. So instead of pretending it's not happening, why not focus on empowering them to be safe?

For far too long, discussions around condoms and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) have been clouded by stigma, misinformation, and cultural taboos. While awareness has improved significantly, a major challenge remains myths and misconceptions., and they evolve every year. You will hear young people argue, "Why would you eat a sweet with the wrapper on?" "Condoms aren't comfortable," and "Sex isn't as enjoyable with a condom." Some young men even claim that condoms don't fit them or that they smell funny. This is yet another indicator of the dire need for targeted behaviour change communication to address these attitudes. That's why PPI chose to host this year's International Condom Day at Laikipia University, bringing these conversations and services to those who need them the most.



"To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity."
Nelson Mandela



#ICD2025

Organized by PPI in collaboration with Laikipia County's Department of Health, Laikipia University and its students association, Beyond Zero, the National Syndemic and Disease Control Council, and Hope Worldwide, this health outreach, under the theme "Vybe Ni Safe, Just Use It," focused on three key priorities:

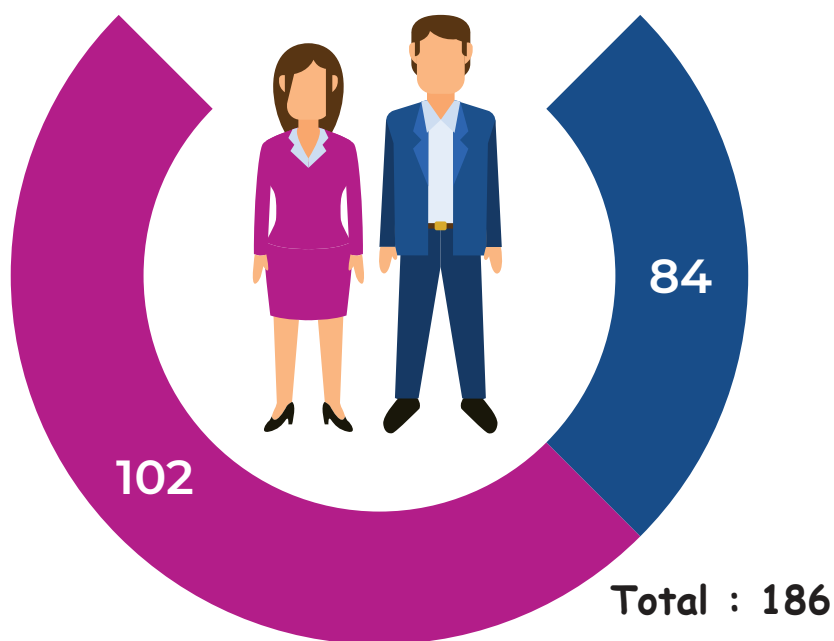
Meeting the youth where they are, both physically and in terms of information access.

Shifting the narrative, removing shame and embarrassment from the conversation.

Ensuring accessibility, making condoms and SRHR services more available and acceptable.

ICD25 SERVICE PROVISION STATS

HIV Testing



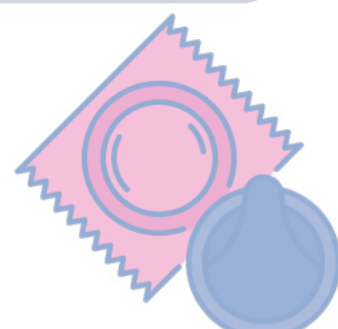
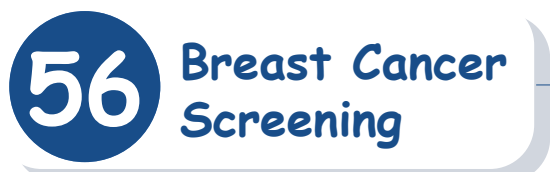
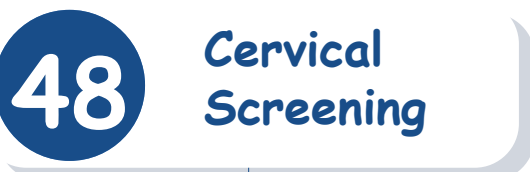
CONDOMS DISTRIBUTED

143,000



STUDENTS REACHED

2500



Unlike traditional SRHR campaigns that rely heavily on information dissemination and speeches, ICD 2025 took a radically engaging approach. Through games, competitions, music, and hands-on demonstrations, young people were not just passive recipients of information, they were active participants in their own learning.

One of the most eye-opening activities was the random vikaos (informal group discussions) held between service provision sessions and music breaks. PPI staff engaged youth in candid conversations about their experiences with condom use, allowing them to openly share concerns and ask questions in a relaxed setting.

Students also participated in condom-blowing and water-holding games, designed to debunk myths about condom size, durability, and effectiveness. Watching a condom stretch up to 40 times its original size and hold 10 litres of water wasn't just entertaining; it was a powerful, visual testament to condom strength and reliability. By breaking down misinformation in a fun, interactive way, leading to stigma-free conversations.

Many young people shy away from seeking SRHR services due to fear of judgment, financial constraints, or lack of accessibility. By bringing ICD25 directly to Laikipia University, a space familiar and comfortable to students, the event successfully removed these barriers.



Laikipia County CECM for Health, Albert Taity, interacts with students while distributing condoms as part of the awareness campaign.

“
Wrap it up, stay safe,
and play smart—because
protection is power





Free medical services provided by the Beyond Zero truck ensured that students who might otherwise lack the financial means to access SRHR services could receive care without worry. More than 2,500 students were reached, with 143,000 condoms distributed, a clear indicator that when young people are provided with the right information and support, they are willing to make safer choices.

One of the highlights of the event was hearing young men and women explain how “borrowing” condoms from friends has become a normal occurrence. This means the conversation around condom use is no longer met with shame or discomfort, a major step forward in normalizing safe sex practices.

As the day progressed, the energy around the school shifted. The narrative around condom use no longer evoked laughter or embarrassment among students; instead, it became a routine, responsible, and even empowering practice.

The theme, “Vybe Ni Safe, Just Use It!”, resonated deeply with students, reinforcing the idea that safe sex is not just responsible, it’s cool, normal, and, most importantly, accessible.



ICD25 taking place near the youth was just the beginning. If we are to truly transform SRHR access for young people, we must continue to: innovate our approaches, engage youth in meaningful ways, and expand how we communicate about condom use and SRHR. The message from ICD 2025 is clear: Young people are not just open to discussing SRHR; they are demanding it. It is our collective responsibility to meet them where they are, provide them with the resources they need, and break down the barriers that keep popping up and keep the conversations in the shadows. The time for stigma and silence is over. Now we are only focused on open, informed, and youth-led SRHR advocacy.



Regional Health Coordinator – Region 19, Wario Boru, from the National Syndemic Diseases Control Council, addresses participants at Laikipia University during International Condoms Day 2025, highlighting the importance of safe sexual practices and access to reproductive health services



To keep the conversation going beyond the event, students were given stickers with myth-busting messages to place on their phones and laptops. The rationale being that every time they reach for their devices, they will be reminded that condoms do not reduce pleasure, they are not “only for promiscuous people,” and they are an effective tool for protection against unintended pregnancies and STIs.



“ Smart choices, safe moments! Protect your health, protect your future. #CondomsDay ”