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Sex Lives of Kenyans

The Life Conversation Forum held its inaugural public forum, which brought together members of the public and experts to discuss the implications of one's sex life on their physical, emotional, economic and mental well-being. The public forum included a question-and-answer session for physical and virtual attendees.

This quarterly forum seeks to identify societal issues and provide a platform for public discussions to leverage Aga Khan University's (AKU) expertise in collaboration with the communities we serve to provide practical, relevant, and impactful solutions. During the discussions, the following themes emerged;

- *Sexual preferences of Kenyans and the diverse societal perceptions*

Participants recognised that sexual preferences are personal and should not be stigmatised or discriminated against. There was also consensus that individuals must be provided with accurate information to make informed decisions about their sexual health and relationships.

- *How the lack of sex education has impacted the sex lives of Kenyans*

It was noted that without adequate information, Kenyans may have limited knowledge about reproductive health, sexuality, and safe sex practices. This can lead to several adverse outcomes, such as:

- Unplanned pregnancies from a lack of access to contraception or knowing how to use it effectively.
 - Sexually transmitted infections due to lack of information on how to protect oneself
 - Unsafe abortions due to lack of information on pregnancy prevention or appropriate alternative options
 - Sexual violence especially due to a lack of understanding of the importance of consent or recognising the signs of sexual abuse.
- *The importance of age-appropriate sex education for children*

The importance of age-appropriate sex education was emphasised. Parents in the forum agreed there is credence in sex education but struggled with the timing, what to say, and how to say it.

There was consensus that different players need to support parents in determining the content, timing, context and how to deliver the content. There was also the question of the role of religious organisations, schools and government agencies in this journey.

- *Need for sexual education policy in Kenya*

The forum appreciated the need to create a sex education policy for Kenya. These policies should be inclusive and cover all aspects of sexual health, including consent, contraception, and sexually transmitted infections. Such policies must be implemented appropriately to ensure everyone receives the necessary education to make informed decisions about their sexual health.

Conclusion

We urge the government, non-governmental organisations, and all other stakeholders to collaborate to create comprehensive sex education policies for Kenya. We also encourage parents and guardians to actively educate their children about sex and sexuality in a safe and non-judgmental environment to ensure they make the appropriate choices in future.

We hope the insights shared during this forum will help raise awareness and stimulate ongoing discussions on sex and sexuality in Kenya.

The Organizing Committee