



## DENTAL CONNECT PROJECT

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### INTRODUCTION

Globally there is a high risk of oral diseases regardless of geographic location, age and socioeconomic status. These disease are largely preventable, yet remain highly prevalent conditions affecting great number of population reaching from 60-90% dental caries and gingival disease in children.

#### **Aims and objectives:**

The aim of this project is to promote oral health awareness through education, changing attitude and primary prevention in the disabled population of Rwanda

#### **Objectives:**

- Provide oral hygiene awareness and promotion materials in different modalities whether through stories, or videos.
- Provide oral health awareness training to health workers to help in the promotion of oral health.
- Provide opportunities for parents, caregivers and children to discuss and receive reliable oral health awareness information

### METHODOLOGY

Community needs assessment and oral health screening for the target population was done to assess the situation and place strategies to overcome the statement problem.

- Development of innovative oral health promotion materials (story books and videos) that were new to the target population.
- Training sessions were developed and delivered to health care workers.
- Group discussions and oral health promotion and awareness campaigns were done to parents, caregivers and disabled children with the developed materials.

To measure the effectiveness of our approach feedback was collected from the participants to better understand the effect of our project on delivering new oral health messages and information.



### OUTCOMES

The use of Oral health promotion story developed for the project shows that children and families interacted more positively than giving them basic instructions.

Enhancing the skills of health-workers to promote oral health through training helped to overcome the shortage of dental providers and sustainability in the workforce.

The project tapped on discovery of bad oral habits such as using teeth for opening objects that caused harm to the oral cavity of children and oral health advice was provided accordingly.

Positive reinforcement introduced in the project encouraged the involvement of parents and caregivers to children with disabilities. In addition 30 children were reached, 5 parents and guardians and more than 15 books were distributed.

### TARGET POPULATION

Children with disability living/studying together in Kigali city, NYANZA, HUYE Districts.



### CONCLUSION:

This project has introduced a new method to deliver oral health awareness that has been received with much enthusiasm and corrected many of the misinformation within the target population. There is a need to increase such projects into the community to have a larger impact on improving oral health in Rwanda.