

ADOLESCENT PARENTING SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS

A review of existing parenting programs in Africa to
assess responsiveness to adolescent parents' needs

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Rationale



- Parenting is very important in positive child development outcomes (Sangsawang et al., 2019).
- Statistics:
 - In the Global South, 21 million pregnancies resulting in 12M births among 15-19 year olds. (WHO, 2023)
 - In Africa, 106 adolescent births per 1,000 population. (WHO, 2023)
- Adolescence is arguably the most stressful period of human development, considering the developmental tasks and their capacities hence they should not be left to parent without support (WHO, 2018)

Purpose and Objectives



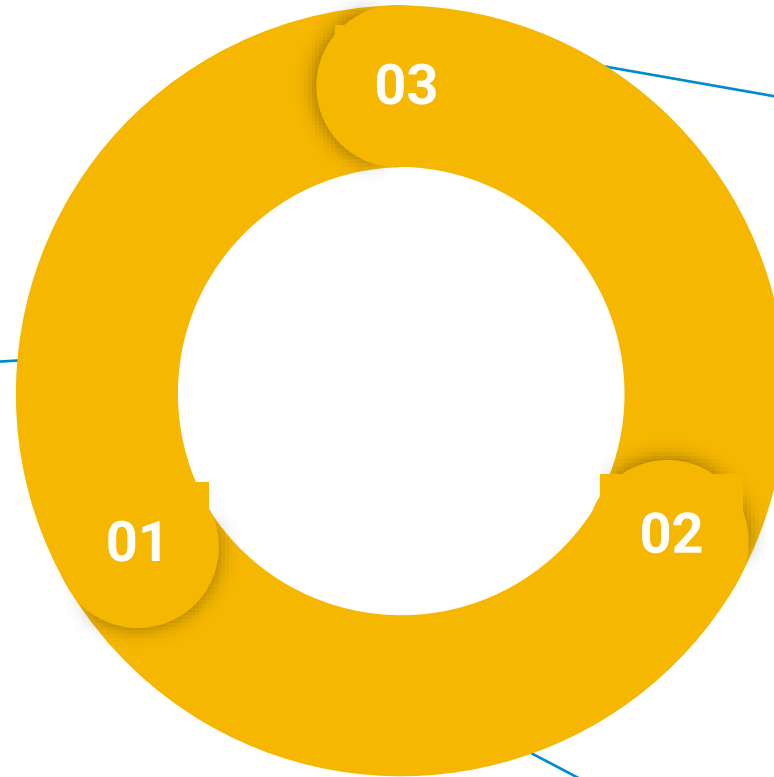
The objective of this project was to a review existing support programs and interventions that can meet adolescent parents' needs.

Research Questions:

1. What are the unique needs of adolescent parents?
2. What characteristics make a parenting program suitable for adolescent parents?
3. What examples of these programs?

Methodology

**Initial
Internet and
Network
search**



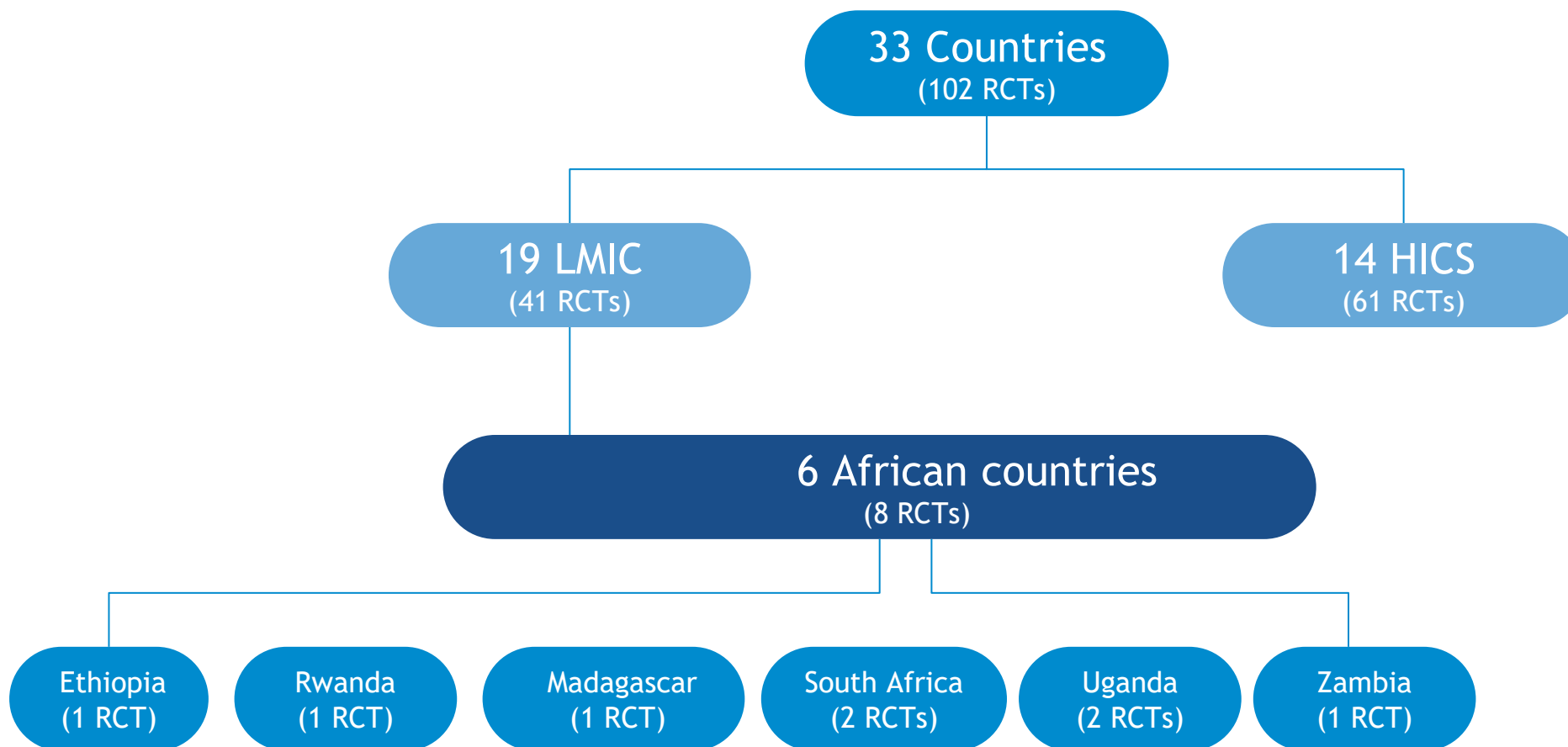
Review

Content, Approach and accessibility of intervention to check for suitability

Use of a Global Systematic Review and Meta analysis

(Jeong J, Franchett EE, Ramos de Oliveira CV, Rehmani K, Yousafzai AK. Parenting interventions to promote early child development in the first three years of life: A global systematic review and meta-analysis. *PLoS Med.* 2021;18(5):e1003602. Published 2021 May 10. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1003602l)

Methodology, continued



Findings: Needs of Adolescent Parents



Mental health support: This is particularly important to combat adolescents' tendency toward depression (Ajayi et al., 2023)



Social interaction with peers: This is important to combat the disconnection adolescent parents may experience due to social stigma. (Frosch, Schoppe-Sullivan, & O'Banion, 2021)



Individualized support: Since adolescent parents may feel less comfortable asking questions in a group setting with older parents, home visits or other 1:1 follow up is more likely appealing than group sessions in healthcare facilities (Roberts, et. al., 2021)

Findings: Summary



Out of 8 reviewed parenting programs and interventions:

- 3 interventions were found most suitable to be adapted to adolescent mothers.
 - 2 in South Africa
 - 1 in Uganda
- 1 intervention in Rwanda was suitable with adjustments to be made to the accessibility and approach of delivery.
- 4 interventions were not found suitable because they did not meet the needs of adolescents.
 - Ethiopia, Madagascar, Uganda, and Zambia

Findings: Examples

		Suitability		Strengths / Limitations
1.	South Africa Educating parents on book sharing and mother-child interactions		✓	• Providing components of both maternal and child care and support • Personnel trained and sensitized to provide adolescent reproductive care • Practical approach - cooking classes, making recipes together
2.	Zambia A Parenting intervention for early childhood intervention In Rural Zambia		✗	• There was no focus on maternal care • The group focused sessions included older mothers, was at a healthcare facility and was offered by older midwives and nurses • The program was for mothers with children ages 6 - 12 months leaving out mothers with newborns

Recommendations

Health care

- Adolescent friendly reproductive healthcare services
- Mental health care services

Empowerment

- Skills acquisition, financial/economic empowerment, shelter and care, legal support
- Psychosocial support with therapy, counselling
- Education and childcare services



Community involvement and support

- Social support from schools, religious institutions, traditional leaders
- Family integration and support

Parenting skills

- Training and education on how to care for their children

In developing adolescent parenting programs, keep in mind:

- Mode of delivery - best to be individualized
- Place - home visits or integrated in school is helpful
- Target of intervention - should include mother, child, and family
- Implementor - should be sensitized to the needs of adolescents and include peer
- Components - strategies should support both maternal care and care for the child



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