

Menya wirinde!



IrindeBot Pilot Project What did we learn?

Achievements During the Pilot (May-Nov 2020):

- ✓ 1277 completed chats on IrindeBot:
 - 94.8% Kinyarwanda - 61.2% female, 38.1% male; 26.5% parents
 - 5.2% English - 64.3% female, 35.7% male; 23.8% parents
- ✓ 4201 partial chats
 - 13.4% under age 13 (disqualified)
- ✓ 2807 Facebook Page followers
- ✓ 9 mini audio dramas viewed 17,000+ times via Facebook
- ✓ 80+ Facebook posts in Kinyarwanda on relationships and adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR)
- ✓ Weekly Facebook reach of 18,000-29,000 people
- ✓ 6 Mobile Access Points engaged in community outreach in two communities

What did we learn from the pilot project?

We learned that chatbot users:

- ✓ LOVE the mini audio dramas
- ✓ Learned how to have more positive, open intergenerational relationships
- ✓ Gained insights into the risks associated with porn and 'sugar daddies/mommas'
- ✓ Really love the chatbot's conversational format
- ✓ Felt safe asking vulnerable questions
- ✓ Learned how to prevent pregnancy and STIs
- ✓ Used what they learned to have a conversation with their spouse on parenting ASRHR
- ✓ Used what they learned to advise others (e.g. partner, peers, children)
- ✓ Are unlikely to submit questions when prompted, but may submit questions throughout the chat
- ✓ Want the content to be accessible to adolescents and caregivers who do not have internet access, i.e. via radio or community discussions
- ✓ Trusted the chatbot as a reliable source of ASRHR information for parents and adolescents

"There is a big difference between someone who has used IRINDE and one who hasn't. Already they are more aware and informed about SRHR." Female chatbot user

"IRINDE taught me how to prevent unwanted/unplanned pregnancies and STIs" Male chatbot user

"Broadcast IrindeBot audio dramas on the radio so that even young people in rural areas get to hear about SRHR." Male chatbot user

Chatbot users also:

- X Expected an artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot that is capable of responding to their comments and questions in real time
- X Have trouble understanding when to click a button and when to type text
- X Don't immediately understand that they need to click a hyperlink
- X Need to watch a "how-to" video before they begin using the chatbot
- X Some found the chat too long - didn't see it as something to return to over time
- X Do not want to submit their phone number to allow recontact (e.g. to get a response to their question, receive another chat)

"This educational activity was designed for participants to take in multiple sittings. However, we learned quickly that most people preferred to complete the activity all at once. I think this speaks volumes to our conversational approach! It was rare that

people would get bored and stop at our pause points, instead they remained engaged all the way through.” Julia, Rival Technologies

We learned that Mobile Access Points (MAPs):

- ✓ Improve the quality of user engagement (e.g. they demonstrate how to use the chatbot, encourage users to submit questions to the Bot)
- ✓ Appreciate earning their phone as they reach their target
- ✓ Need to have a relational connection to the project
- Should be the same gender as the audience they aim to engage
- X Need a transportation budget in order to reach the most vulnerable, rural target beneficiaries
- X Need a technical support person

“It would be hard for people who are not part of the RWN network to be consistent in their work because this was very hard work.” MAP

We learned about chatbot and Facebook technology:

- ✓ Once the chatbot is developed, the content can easily be adapted or changed – for example, you could add new topics or quizzes. We added COVID safety messages.
- ✓ Once the chatbot is developed, it can easily be offered in other languages
- ✓ Facebook ads provide tremendous reach, increasing the potential number of users
- ✓ The chatbot can be used via a web-based platform (URL) but the interface is not as visually attractive
- X Facebook ads and Messenger engage more males than females
- X The Facebook Messenger chatbot platform is accessible to users, but it requires strong IT support to adapt to Facebook's constant changes and updates
- X Chatbot engagement relies heavily on advertising and awareness raising (e.g. Facebook ads)
- X Licensing and advertising costs mean that engagement needs to be high every month
- X Some jurisdictions require that data is housed in-country
- X It is very difficult to reach the most vulnerable adolescents and caregivers via chatbots because they are unlikely to have access to a smartphone or computer or reliable internet

“It is a very educative platform. I learnt much about how to help young boys and girls prevent unplanned pregnancies and I also learnt about what services to use in case of any abuse or harassment.” Female chatbot user

We learned about chatbot flow and structure:

- ✓ Audio dramas with follow up discussion, open answers, and quizzes was an effective and engaging format
- X Monitoring and evaluation (M & E) questions slowed people down and reduced their options - for example, they couldn't just choose a topic because that would risk overwriting previous data. Omitting M & E content would have made a more enjoyable experience for users.
- X Embedding ethical processes (i.e. informed consent) meant that chatbot users couldn't just jump into the content. Many abandoned the chat at this stage.

“It was very helpful. For me as a parent, it helped me learn about menstruation and how to give advice to my daughter about it. And also, that adolescent boys should be more careful since they can also impregnate girls if they are not cautious.”
Female chatbot user