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Outreach Communication Strategy in Community Mobilisation for Reproductive Health Education in Niger State of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT This study looked into operational significance of outreach communication adopted in the community based reproductive health education project in Bida Emirate Council in Niger State, Nigeria. The outreach initiative became imperative given the limitations placed on traditional individual extension methods. Hence, the use of outreach communication that involves extending community services to reach a wider segment of the population collectively. This project being evaluated comprises community visitations and educational campaigns with folk musical performances, videocassette recorder shows, question and answer sessions and drama sketches. A sample of 288 residents from both urban and rural communities assessed the effectiveness of the outreach program in the study area. Findings from the study reveal that outreach programs mobilized, entertained and educated people on the issues raised on the project such as family planning, sexually transmitted diseases, safe motherhood and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Residents from rural areas ranked the outreach highly in the area of social service. Outreach program strategy in various ways promoted participation in the program initiative such as dancing, listening, watching and questioning. It was hence recommended that outreach communication programs should be a virile component in all development programs, particularly, in rural areas where access to other forms of communication support is in short supply.