HEALTH | Report ranks Narok as third in cases of early sex

Teen sex rolls back

gains in war on Aids

Study says children

as young as 15 are

sexually active

despite campaigns

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Children as young as

eight are actively engaged

in sex, a scenario

likely to be frustrating efforts

to reduce HIV infections and

early pregnancies.

In a new report, the government

has uncovered details

showing that more than half

of the children in some counties

are starting their sexual

encounters before the age

of 15.

According to the county

profile of all 47 counties, up

to 60 per cent of boys and

girls aged 15 and below in

Nyanza’s Homa Bay have

started sexual encounters. It

means six in every 10 youngsters

have had their first sex

— sex debut.

This is much earlier than the

period officially classified as

the reproductive age for females,

which ranges between

15 and 49 years.

Usually, the government has

been encouraging females,

and males, to delay their sex

debut as this can lessen teenage

pregnancies and lower the

chance of young unexposed

children getting infected

with HIV and other sexually

transmitted diseases.

Stunned by the high numbers

of children having an

early sex debut, the chairperson

of the Parliamentary

Committee on Health Rachael

Nyamai said the trend was

worrying and promised that

MPs would do everything to

reverse the trend.

“The situation is bad and

as the elected leaders we need

to act urgently,” said the Kitui

South MP at a meeting organised

by the National Council

for Population and Development

last week to discuss the

country’s population growth

trends.

According to the counties’

report, nine in every 10

teenagers below the age of 18

in Homa Bay have had their

first sex. Only one in every

10 youngster in the country

is capable of delaying their

first sex encounter until they

turn 18, the age when they are

officially adults.

The report shows that

children from Rift Valley’s

Samburu County are also

launching their sexual encounters

early, with nearly

six in every 10 having their

sex debut before the age of

15. In all, 80 per cent of the

children start sex before the

age of 18.

Ranked third among counties

where children have an

early sex debut is Narok,

another Rift Valley county,

followed by Migori and Kisumu,

both in Nyanza.

Prevalence rates in Nyanza

are highest, ranging from 13

to 28 per cent in the entire region’s

population, according to

results of a recently launched

Kenya Aids Indicator Survey

preliminary report, 2012.

Homa Bay County is the

region with the highest HIV

prevalence rates