

YouthNet

Lessons from Zambia: Capacity Building in Policy Development

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YouthNet



Organizational profile

- Established: 1997 (formalized 2003)
- Membership: over 14,000 congregations, mosques and temples (Bahá'í, Christian, Hindu and Islam faiths)
- Geographical presence: National



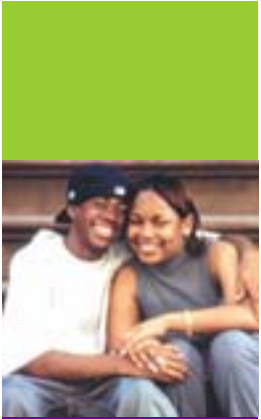
Country Situation

- Majority of youth initiate sex at 19 years (ZSBS 2005)
- 31.3% of teenagers already parents or pregnant (ZSBS 2005)
- 16% of population HIV+, majority are youth (DHS 2002)



National Response

- Government response:
 - Policies and strategies on RH/HIV prevention in place
 - Policies and strategies call for youth access to RH
 - Integration of RH issues in formal education
 - Encourages parent-child communication on RH
- Faith Based Organization (FBO) response:
 - Life skills training
 - Integration of RH/HIV in school curriculum
 - Integration of RH issues within 'church' programs



Gaps in Youth Reproductive Health (YRH)

- Inadequate access by youth to RH information and services
- No standard guidelines for FBOs on youth RH issues



Project Overview

Goal:

- Increase youth access to RH information and services through the promotion of youth-faith leader partnerships within Bahá'í, Christian and Islamic faiths

Strategy:

- Develop and advocate for the use of standard YRH guidelines within FBOs

Rationale:

- FBOs have widest reach and influence
- Youth are window of hope
- Effective prevention strategy to go beyond ABC



Project Road Map

- Situational analysis of YRH perceptions, attitudes and needs
- Situational analysis of YRH information and services offered by FBOs
- Consolidate findings
- Develop and endorse Guidelines
- Advocate for guideline utilization



Where are we now?

- Guidelines developed and endorsed through partnership between youths and faith leaders
- FBOs have been supported to develop plans of action, proposals and mobilize resources



Guidelines (Example)

- What is YRH? (*Defining and understanding the subject matter*)
- Why discuss YRH? (*Defining the objectives*)
- What are the priorities in YRH? (*Defining areas for intervention*)
- How do we implement YRH? (*Defining what to do*)



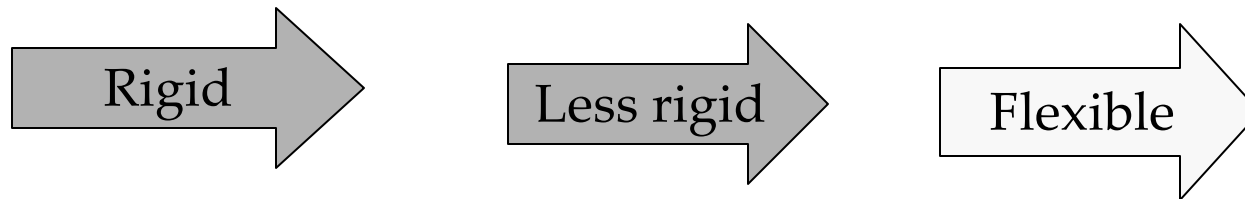
Example (Continued)

- When should we do what we have identify as important? (*Working within a timeline*)
- Who discusses YRH and with whom? (*Assigning responsibility*)
- Where do we meet? What other opportunities exist to discuss YRH (*Defining place and context for YRH*)
- How much will each activity cost?



Lessons Learned

- FBOs are a vital conduit to YRH activities
- Flexibility needs to be exercised in working with FBOs



- Advocacy activities increased faith leadership participation



Recommendations

- YRH advocates should exercise caution in working with FBOs
- Faith leaders/FBOs need to be given the capacity to engage in:
 - Dialogue and meaningful youth adult partnerships
 - Allow youth access to quality information and referral services



Conclusions

- Policy development presents an ideal opportunity for FBO support/interest on RH issues
- Advocacy activities increase faith leadership participation
- Faith leaders realize the need to engage in partnerships with youth but *'limited by tools'* and technical know how
- Guidelines will assist FBOs:
 - To systematically build leadership capacity to address YRH issues
 - In guiding and directing youth-adult relationships
 - Stimulate more YRH discussion



Way Forward

- Disseminate guidelines widely to create awareness
- Continue advocacy to increase support
- Build capacity of religious leaders to:
 - engage youth in RH/HIV prevention



Thank You
Merci Beaucoup
Zikomo Kwambili
Shukran Jazeelan
Asante Sana