# YouthNet

## PHASE 1 REPORT

Productivity and sustainability of youth peer education programs: Phase 1 of a two-phase study on effectiveness

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USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# List of Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| AIDS | Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome |
| CBO | Community-based organization |
| DHMT | District Health Management Team |
| DR | Dominican Republic |
| FBO | Faith-based organization |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussions |
| FHI | Family Health International |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| M&E | Monitoring and evaluation |
| MOE | Ministry of Education |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| PHSC | Protection of Human Subjects Committee |
| PI | Principal Investigator |
| RH | Reproductive Health |
| STI | Sexually Transmitted Infection |
| TM | Technical Monitor |
| VCT | Voluntary counseling and testing |
| YPE | Youth peer education |

# Table of Contents

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

YouthNet is a global program committed to improving the reproductive health (RH) and HIV/AIDS prevention behaviors of youth 10 to 24 years old. YouthNet works to improve and strengthen youth programs, services, and policies; conducts research; and disseminates and promotes information, tools, and evidence-based approaches that address RH and HIV/AIDS prevention for youth at national, regional, and international levels.  The program is funded by USAID through a five-year cooperative agreement (No. GPH-A-00-01-00013-00) awarded in October 2001 to Family Health International (FHI), which works in partnership with CARE USA and RTI International. The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect FHI or USAID policies.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Peer education is a widely used approach to HIV prevention and reproductive health (RH) promotion. Peer education is appealing on several levels. On the financial level, it is assumed to be inexpensive to operate (since it relies on unpaid volunteers); on the intellectual level, peers are assumed to be more acceptable sources of information to adolescents than professionals and the approach takes advantage of pre-existing channels of information sharing; and on the emotional level, the idea of people donating to their community or peer group for altruistic motives is appealing.

The proliferation of the approach has not been commensurate with evidence as to its effectiveness; questions regarding its programmatic- and cost-effectiveness have been raised. One factor that may influence effectiveness is the high turnover of peer educators. Youth peer education (YPE) has elements making it more complex than adult peer programs. This includes the direct involvement of youth in program design and implementation, the dynamics of youth-adult partnerships, and the authoritative role of adult stakeholders/gatekeepers.

Before this study, there were no assessment devices and instruments to measure core YPE components that would allow the generalization of research or monitoring and evaluation (M&E) findings from one program to another. This put severe limitations on YPE effectiveness studies attempting to elucidate "what works and what doesn't", as well as "why or why not". In addition, it restricted evidence-based decision-making for the replication or scale-up of successful programs.

This first phase of a two-phase study on the effectiveness of YPE addressed the question: What are the core elements of successful YPE in terms of program productivity and sustainability? Information on program dynamics, costs, activities, and outputs were used to identify core elements of well-established programs and develop YPE assessment devices. The knowledge gained and instruments developed during Phase 1 are being used in a Phase 2 effectiveness study that includes exposure and outcomes measurements of six programs in Zambia.

Phase 1 took a descriptive, process evaluation approach to examine four well-established community-based programs in Zambia and the Dominican Republic. YPE is a dynamic approach, and actual practice is so diverse that in order to explain programs it was necessary to pay attention to all aspects. A key issue was the retention and turnover of the volunteer peer educators who carry out program activities.

The objectives of the Phase 1 study were to: 1) describe program dynamics, costs, activities and outputs in two countries in order to identify the core elements of successful YPE programs; and 2) develop frameworks and indices to assess YPE productivity and sustainability using objective 1 results.

Data collection ran continuously for 18 months. This included an examination of each program's costs, outputs, activities, and dynamics. Program dynamics were examined by assessing the quality of their technical frameworks, the quality of cooperation within and outside the program, and the degree of community participation. These were examined using interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). An ecological design was utilized for the interviews/FGDS and included donors, policy makers, stakeholders, intermediaries, parents, program staff/management, and youth peer educators. Sixty-four interviews and 21 FGDs were conducted, transcribed, coded, analyzed and interpreted.

The results revealed core components of YPE common to all four programs. This led to development of a single version of validated assessment devices and instruments that could be utilized in both countries.

The major conclusion to be derived from the results is that youth involvement is critical for peer educator retention, motivation and productivity. This is not a matter of peer educators taking control but of the degree of empowerment given by program adults. This needs to be backed up with adequate training and supervision that increase their decision-making skills and proficiency in carrying out their responsibilities. Gender equity and equality, as well as cooperation within the peer educator groups, were also found to be critical to motivation and retention.

Youth-adult partnerships were operational and critical at all levels in the programs. It was a step beyond youth involvement, and a balancing process that needed to be shaped and facilitated by adults. Balanced youth-adult partnerships required the following building blocks: direct youth involvement, open communication, trustworthiness, mutual respect, reciprocity, and adult support.

The study found that YPE programs need sound technical frameworks especially in regard to adequate training and supervision that meet the special demands of youth and adolescent volunteers. Rather than these being seen as "add-ons" to regular programming, YPE technical frameworks need to integrate youth involvement, youth-adult partnerships, and gender equity and equality into their planning and strategies.

The study found that community participation and support can be critical to program sustainability and productivity because it increases the motivation of youth peer educators and parents, responsiveness of the program to its target group, access to community institutions and their youth audiences, and can even sustain a program though economic hardship. Also, YPE was found to be both a result and a method of community mobilization.

YPE was found to be an untapped and sometimes wasted resource in that hundreds of young people are trained every year as health promoters and youth advocates and leaders without follow-up once they leave a program. The resources put into their education/training and their acquired knowledge and leadership skills could further contribute to civil society. Policy makers should consider strategies that would allow YPE to become systemically integrated into youth policies at all levels.

Lastly, the data reveal that there are considerable variations between YPE programs in terms of the number of activities carried out, type of participants, nature of the contacts, locality, topics covered, and costs. The two peer education programs located in cities reported working more hours and contacting more participants at lower costs than the two programs located in semi-urban locales.  This appears to be a function at least two factors—the economies of scale and more urban locations provide access to larger audiences at lower costs.

The actual effects of the programs' activities on targeted young people remain unknown. In Phase 2, the study will examine exposure to six Zambian YPE programs and their affects on target audiences. The instruments developed and lessons learned in Phase 1 will be applied in examining the core components of these programs. This will allow us to begin uncovering the program antecedents of effective YPE and their costs.

# INTRODUCTION

Peer education is a popular approach to HIV prevention and reproductive health (RH) promotion and represents a variety of sub-approaches used with a diversity of target groups (1). Peer education is appealing on several levels. On the financial level, it is assumed to be inexpensive to operate (since it relies on unpaid volunteers); on the intellectual level, peers are assumed to be more acceptable sources of information to adolescents than professionals and the approach takes advantage of pre-existing channels of information sharing; and on the emotional level, the idea of people donating to their community or peer group for altruistic motives is appealing. (2). Much of the appeal comes from the expanding use of community participation and mobilization approaches and the clear dissatisfaction many young people have felt towards traditional adult-developed programs.

The proliferation of the approach has not been commensurate with evidence as to its effectiveness (3); questions regarding the programmatic- and cost-effectiveness of peer education have been raised in recent overviews (4,5). One factor that may influence effectiveness is the high turnover of peer educators, if nothing else because young people grow into adults and "age-out" of the program. Youth peer education (YPE) has other elements making it more complex than adult programs. These include the direct involvement of youth in program design and implementation, the dynamics of youth-adult partnerships, and the authoritative role of adult stakeholders/gatekeepers (6). Overall, there is a lack of information on youth peer educator retention and the program dynamics that influence it (7,8,9). Moreover, there is little information on the productivity of YPE programs. This requires an examination of what youth peer educators are actually doing, retention rates, and costs for training, supervision, and support.

In short, despite their broad use there is little understanding of the core elements of successful YPE programs. Research is needed to contribute to the scientific knowledge base, to improve programming by developing operational frameworks, and to create indicators able to predict effectiveness and sustainability. In order to determine program productivity, information is needed on what outputs are produced by peer educators and the costs of achieving those outputs.

This first of a two-phase study on the effectiveness of YPE addressed the question: What are the core elements of successful YPE in terms of program productivity and sustainability? Information on program dynamics, costs, activities, and outputs were used to identify core elements of successful programs and develop frameworks and assessment devices to evaluate other YPE programs. Calculation of program costs, i.e. payments to supervisors, costs of training programs, and any payments made to peer educators (including in-kind payments) were a central component of the analysis of productivity.

The information gained and instruments developed are being used in a second effectiveness study (Phase 2) using case studies of six programs in Zambia to examine program outcomes/impact. In the Phase 1 program analysis, we developed quantitative instruments able to measure program antecedents associated with outcomes/impact. This includes checklists for measuring the complex program processes found in YPE.

In summary, the study comprises two phases: In Phase 1 descriptive data were collected on various aspects of four YPE programs in two countries and are the focus of this report. These were used to identify core elements of successful programs and develop instruments for future program evaluation and analysis of program productivity and effectiveness. The results and instruments are being used in a separate Phase 2 study that measures program outcomes and impact.

# BACKGROUND

The Phase 1 study took a descriptive, process evaluation approach to examine YPE programs. YPE is a dynamic approach to HIV/AIDS/RH, and actual practice is so diverse that in order to explain program effectiveness it is necessary to pay attention to all aspects of a program. This includes its dynamics within the program and with the outside world, costs, activities, and outputs.

YPE **program dynamics** are the mechanisms by which resources are put together to produce program activities and outputs. These are conceptualized as involving three domains:
- The *technical framework* that is composed of a program's design or model, implementation, management and responsiveness to the target audience;
- The program's level of *cooperation* within the program as well as outside the program with gatekeepers, stakeholders, intermediaries, and decision makers; and
- The quantity and quality of *community participation* in the program.

**Program costs** are all the resources, i.e. material, equipment, localities, and personnel time that go into the preparation and delivery of services. Identifying and assigning value to them permits calculation of the costs of producing program outputs.

**Program activities** and **outputs** are all the activities or services that peer educators engage in. This includes their contacts with targeted youth, information dissemination, presentations, face-to-face discussions, media, and so on.

A key issue in all the above is the retention and turnover of the volunteer peer educators who carry out the activities. These affect the quality and quantity of outputs as well as the cost-effectiveness of the program.

# STUDY OBJECTIVES

- To describe program dynamics, costs, activities and outputs in two countries in order to identify the core elements of well-established YPE programs.

- To develop frameworks and indices to assess YPE productivity and sustainability using objective 1 results.

# METHODOLOGY

The study utilized descriptive methodologies to collect data on program dynamics, costs, activities and outputs at each of the four program sites. A situational analysis was carried out for each program and baseline data on program processes collected using focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews. The analysis was used to develop quantitative-based instruments and indicators to be used in Phase 2.

## 1. STUDY PROGRAMS

The study examined well-established YPE programs in two countries in Africa (Zambia) and in Latin America and the Caribbean (Dominican Republic). A thorough desk review of ongoing programs was carried out as part of the decision-making process. Two programs in each country were selected that use diverse YPE models and that target mainstream but vulnerable young people (e.g. high HIV

incidence). The selection was made in collaboration with local governments, NGOs, UN agencies and USAID Missions. The minimal criteria were that the program:

1. Addresses RH/HIV/AIDS;
2. Targets general but vulnerable youth (e.g. high HIV incidence in catchment areas) in out-of-school settings;
3. Utilizes youth peer educators between 14 and 24 years old;
4. Has clear aims and objectives;
5. Uses a clear strategy and an explicit program design;
6. Has sound management practices and high-quality training;
7. Generates local funding or support through community involvement;
8. Has multiple peer education components (e.g. outreach, pedagogical);
9. Has at least 3 years successful running experience; and
10. Has the capacity to sustain accurate data collection.

## 2. STUDY SITES

The criteria for choosing the study sites included the above criteria, geographical region, and the availability of a local research organization with proven experience in the data collection methodologies and analysis. For Phase 1, it was also our goal to include programs of varying sizes, style, and structure. We selected the ADOPLAFAM and ProFamilia programs in the Dominican Republic (DR) and SEPO Centre and YWCA programs in Zambia. Two of the programs, ADOPLAFAM and SEPO Centre, are located in semi-urban areas, San Cristobal and Livingstone, respectively. The other two programs, ProFamilia and YWCA are located in urban capital cities, Santo Domingo and Lusaka, respectively.

### ProFamilia in Santo Domingo, DR

The ProFamilia program, "Expansion of Reproductive Health Programs for Adolescents using Peer Education Strategies" (La Asociación Puertorriqueña Pro Bienestar de la Familia) operates in marginalized neighborhoods ("barrios") in the capital city of Santo Domingo (pop. 2.1 million). The program targets adolescents 13 to 25 years in ten urban-marginalized zones and three "bateyes" (sugar cane villages, mainly inhabited by Haitians). Its objectives focus on the prevention of unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STI), HIV/AIDS, and promotion of youth-friendly services and sexual and reproductive rights. The project has selected and trained 240 peer educators. The study examined programs sponsored by USAID DR in two barrios, Gualey and Espaillat. These barrios are characterized by above-average HIV and STI prevalence, as well as unplanned pregnancies.

ProFamilia has deep roots in the field of sex education; in 1979, it trained counselors to provide sex education to students in public schools. For political reasons, sex education was stopped in the schools. ProFamilia now meets the reproductive health needs of the community's adolescents through its community-based peer education program.

The peer educators work in the geographical areas where they and their families reside. Candidates are suggested by community and neighborhood leaders, as well as teachers. The peer educators reach direct and indirect beneficiaries. Direct beneficiaries are young people recruited by the peer educators and are taught systematically about all the activities carried out by the program. Peer educators meet weekly or every fifteen days with their direct beneficiaries to teach one or two topics from the manual "Hablemos". The manual contains 16 topics. Indirect beneficiaries are not recruited, but rather are young people that a peer educator may meet on the street, at school, or at a social event. These

beneficiaries are educated by the peer educators in a non-systematic way and therefore may only have one encounter with the peer educator.

New peer educators attend a training that lasts about three days at an external place with sleeping facilities. Peer educators are also given 24 hours of practice, attend "update" workshops every three months, and go to study groups where technical topics are covered in depth.

Peer educators are not paid for their time working for the program; their work is voluntary. They continue to participate mostly because they value the social interaction that participation affords them, as well as the information they learn and the skills they develop. They also enjoy helping other young people in their community. Peer educators receive caps and two T-shirts. Transportation is paid for when they attend trainings.

The program is funded by USAID for a period of five years. The USAID 2004 budget is 3,415,753 pesos (approx. US$115,000). The project receives non-financial, but nonetheless vital support from the parents, community leaders, and teachers. Parents give permission and encouragement to their children to participate in the program. Teachers will often invite peer educators to talk to their class about self-esteem or other subjects that do not have an obvious sexual content. These discussions open the door to other topics such as adolescent pregnancy or HIV/STI prevention.

Management of the peer education program is integrated into the general structure of ProFamilia. The program is located in the eastern wing of the fourth floor of ProFamilia's building. ProFamilia also pays for the housekeeping services, utilities, Internet, computers, and expendable material.

**ADOPLAFAM in San Cristóbal, DR**

The ADOPLAFAM (Asociación Dominicana de Planificación Familiar, Inc) peer education program operates in both urban and marginalized areas of Santo Domingo, San Cristóbal, Hatu Major, Villa Mella, Villa Altagracia and other districts in the DR. The program targets young people aged 10 to 22 years. The objectives are to help reduce the incidence of early sexual debut and pregnancies and decrease STI/HIV/AIDS risk behavior. The study examined two programs in the semi-urban barrios of Lava Pie and Madre Vieja in San Cristóbal.

The ADOPLAFAM youth program has a similar structure to ProFamilia in that the peer educators systematically educate a group of direct beneficiaries and non-systematically educate indirect beneficiaries often encountered via local schools. ADOPLAFAM has also identified a secondary target population of adults who have direct or indirect influence on young people in the community. This population includes parents, teachers, and community leaders. While the main strategy of the program is interpersonal communication via peer educators, the program also disseminates its messages through local media channels and other communication channels including posters, videos, pamphlets, and participation in events such as World AIDS Day and mass sports events.

Peer educators have a diverse number of activities they conduct including talks, lectures, home visits, face-to-face meetings, recreational activities, socio-dramas, theatrical presentations, and running/jogging activities. Strategies employed when working with parents and teachers include lectures and home visits in which the objective is to improve family communication regarding sexual health and gain support for their children's participation in program activities. Visits, lectures and dramatizations are used with community leaders and other grassroots organizations to gain support for the program and aid in the recruitment of future peer educators.

The peer educators reside in the geographic area of the program and are usually 13 to 22 years of age. Initial recruitment takes place at neighborhood council meetings where peer educators of nearby neighborhoods present role-plays or dramas and explain the role of the peer educators. The neighborhood council members then propose candidates. The candidates attend a later meeting where the peer educators explain what the program expects of them. Parents of the candidates are contacted and thoroughly informed about the program.

New peer educators receive an initial three-day training session. This is followed by several workshops, which reinforce the material learned. Food and transportation are provided for these training activities. Peer educators receive a certificate of attendance after the training. All peer educators receive the manual "Aprender es vivir" and the flipchart "Infórmate". The manual "Hablemos" and a flipchart on RH are distributed to the neighborhoods; one copy is shared among five peer educators. Two copies of the video "Daniela" are given to each neighborhood. Additionally, all peer educators attend an annual meeting where they can network with peer educators from other geographical areas.

The peer educators do not receive monetary incentives for participation. They remain active in the program to meet new people and to learn information about sexuality, which is not directly addressed at home or at school. They also take pride in developing their leadership skills and feel it is important to provide help to their community. Peer educators receive a tote bag to carry their materials and a T-shirt with the group logo. Recreational activities organized and financed by the peer educators also serve as an incentive to participate.

This four-year USAID project was started in 2001 after a two-year pilot stage from 1998 to 2000. The pilot stage was supported through Development Associates. Additionally, the program receives a large amount of support from the community. Parents offer their homes and teachers offer their classrooms to the peer educators to conduct their meetings and activities.

Volunteer peer educators are monitored by "leader replicators". These leaders, usually former peer educators who aged-out of the program, are paid a small incentive to collect activity reports from the peer educators, provide educational materials to them, plan future activities with the peer educators, and attend weekly meetings at the headquarters office with the coordinator of the project.

### YWCA in Lusaka, Zambia

The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) peer education program in Lusaka targets young males and females aged 14-25 years in and out of school. The program operates mainly in the Ngombe and Bauleni compounds. The goals of the program are to reduce the rates of early pregnancies, STI, HIV/AIDS and substance abuse; to provide youth friendly services; and to provide life skills to young people in Lusaka. The program provides referrals for youth to Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT). The capital city Lusaka (pop. 1.2 million), where the program operates, has an HIV prevalence of approximately 20%.

The YWCA has branches in many districts throughout the country. YWCA is well known and established in the community. This aids the peer education program in accessing the community and in gaining support. However, there are many NGOs in Lusaka, causing competition for funding and resulting in the duplication of activities.

The main communication channels used by the peer educators include focus group discussions, dramas, one-on-one counseling, sensitization and awareness programs, videos, debates and quizzes, local radio and television programs, and printed materials. The peer educators also work at two clinic

sites providing referrals for youth. These "youth-friendly" corners are paid for by the District Health Management Team (DHMT).

There are currently 30 peer educators, although 15 of them are the most active. Their ages range from 17 to 25 years and they have been in the program for three to seven years. Peer educators are recruited during one-day mobilization workshops held in the communities. Leaders from the schools and churches nominate young people to become peer educators.

When funds are available, new peer educators attend a training that lasts ten days. The follow-up trainings are held every quarter. However, due to lack of funds, the last training was held in 2001. Other trainings for the peer educators come from opportunities with other organizations.

The peer educators do not receive monetary incentives for the work they do. When funds are available, peer educators will receive small allowances for transportation and lunch. Due to lack of funds, the peer educators currently do not receive transportation or lunch allowances. The program does not have funds to purchase T-shirts for the peer educators. The last time shirts were provided was in 2001. Some activities cannot be carried out because the program cannot afford to buy fuel for the car to transport the peer educators to the outreach activities.

The peer education program was supported by UNICEF, but this funding ended in 2001. Currently, the program has a grant from the Society for Family Health and receives some funding from the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The program is part of and supported by the Lusaka YWCA Branch. The peer educators meet in the YWCA Lusaka compound. Additionally, churches and schools provide space for the peer educators to conduct their outreach activities. Peer educators are supervised by a paid youth coordinator.

**SEPO Centre, Livingstone District Health Management Team, Zambia**

The SEPO Centre peer education program operates in Livingstone (pop. 175,000). YPE is a key component of the Livingstone DHMT's program for RH and HIV/AIDS efforts for youth and is linked to youth-friendly services provided by its clinics. SEPO Centre is the DHMT's HIV/AIDS center, is responsible for HIV/AIDS/STI prevention, provides home-based care, and offers VCT services. Livingstone has a high, stable HIV prevalence of around 31%.

Through the YPE program, SEPO Centre's goal is to reduce the HIV prevalence rate among young people 15 to 24 years old living in Livingstone from 24% to 18%. The program consists of about 20 peer educators who work in the five zones of Livingstone. These peers, referred to as "super peer educators", recruit and work with other peer educators in the zones. Each of the zones is supposed to recruit at least 20 other peer educators.

Peer educators are recruited in each of the five zones where the program operates. Established peer educators recruit new peers based on enthusiasm and skills displayed. The peer educators use the following channels to deliver their messages: one-on-one dialogue, group counseling, and drama. They also distribute brochures, pamphlets and condoms. The manual they use is called "Bridges of Hope". Community-wide and other activities are carried out with other local organizations, including peer educators.

The strength of the program lies in its effective collaboration with other organizations. Through this collaboration, the peer educators are working in 13 youth-friendly corners based at health centers in Livingstone. The collaboration has also resulted in the reduction of duplicated activities and an increase in the referral base among the various organizations.

Only some of the super peers have undergone training. The rest learn from those who were trained. Due to budget cuts, the program's last refresher course was in 2002. Some peer educators occasionally attend other organizations' trainings.

The peer educators currently do not receive any financial incentive for their work. In the past, Southern African AIDS Training Trust (SAATT) provided a small monthly allowance to the peer educators (US$6/month) as well as T-shirts and jeans; however, this funding stopped in 2003. Dropout rates among the peer educators have soared due to the lack of financial incentives, especially among the trained peer educators who join other organizations that are offering incentives.

The SEPO Centre's general administrative costs are supported by the Livingstone DHMT. This continuity has enabled the program to sustain itself even when funding levels drop low. The IEC co-coordinator monitors and supervises the "super peer educators" and the super peers supervise the peers at the community level. The coordinator meets weekly with the super peers.

## 3. STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Community-based programs were specifically chosen for the study and the study took an ecological approach in the interview design. YPE uses adolescents and young people still dependent upon parents, guardians, and adult institutions such as schools. We examined programs within their context from the program to national levels. The study took a systemic view towards YPE.

Because young people grow into adults, there is a constant turnover of peer educators within a program and its sustainability is dependent on its ability to attract and retain the appropriate young people, as well as on funding. Cooperation between the peer educators and staff is a critical aspect, and the program and its staff must also cooperate with parents, community stakeholders, intermediaries, and donors. Youth policy and policy makers set the tone for all the above.

Youth peer educators also interact directly with adults outside the program including their parents and intermediaries at schools and clinics. They interact with stakeholders during joint activities, trainings and in carrying out community-wide activities. Nonetheless, it is the program that establishes and maintains ongoing collaboration through the cycles of new peer educators.

The participants in the study included the groups typically involved in an YPE program (below).

- Youth peer educators (age range 15-24 years);
- Project coordinator(s), peer educator trainers, supervisors, finance officers and administrative staff;
- Intermediaries (e.g. youth workers, clinical staff, religious leadership);
- Project stakeholders, gatekeepers (e.g. parents) and collaborating NGOs/CBOs/health care services/faith-based organizations (FBOs);
- Local, regional and national policy makers; and
- Donor contact persons.

Figure 1 provides a conceptual model for the ecological interview design.

Youth peer educators

Program staff

Parents

Stakeholders & Intermediaries

Policy makers & Donors
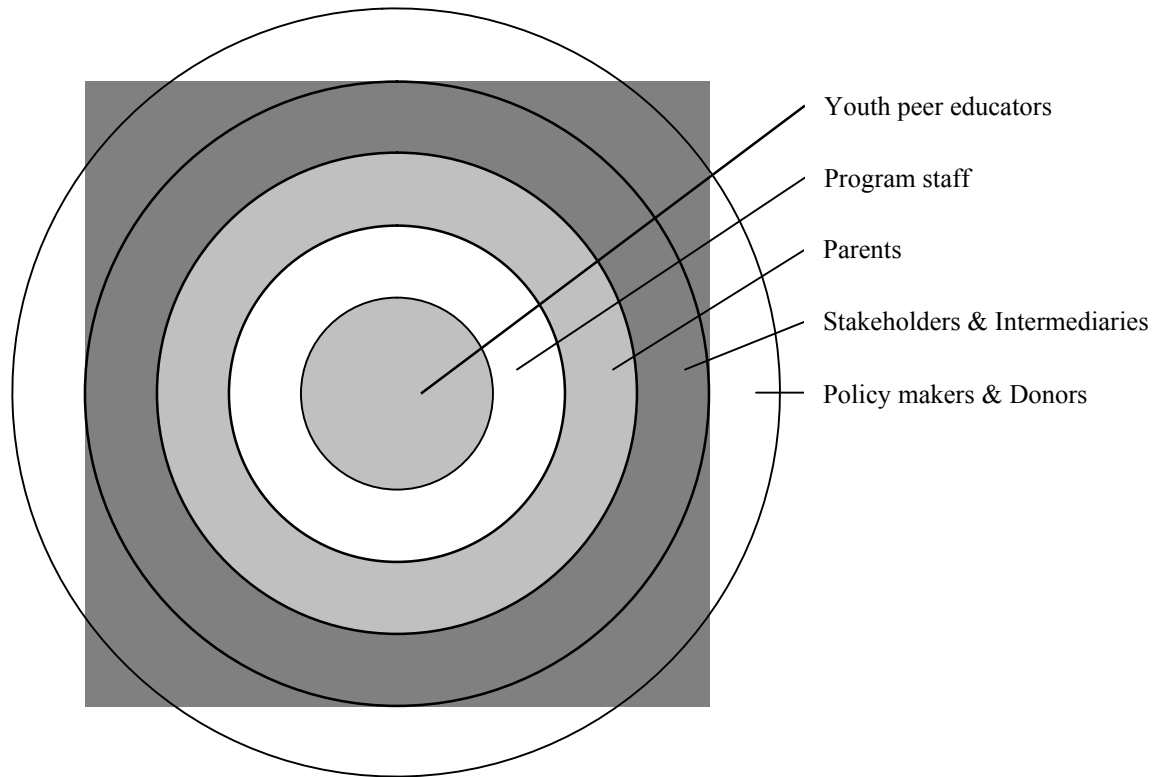
**Figure 1**

## 4. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection in the selected sites ran continuously over a period of 18 months. Table 1 provides an overview of the Phase 1 sub-goals, the methodologies used, populations examined and study outcomes.

**Table 1.** Phase 1 components, sub-goals, methodologies, populations, and study outcomes

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| 1. **PROGRAM COSTS** | 1.1 | Identify and quantify all items used for training and in the delivery of services. | o Records and document analysis<br>o Structured interviews | o Program staff | List of materials and personnel (along with quantities) used for training, preparation of dissemination material, and service delivery. |
| | 1.2 | Ascertain the most appropriate set of prices to be used to value costs. | o Records and document analysis<br>o Structured interviews | o Program staff | List of wages paid to personnel and market prices of materials. |
| | 1.3 | Identify and document all revenue/financing sources of programs. | o Records and document analysis<br>o Structured interviews | o Program staff | List of revenue sources along with amounts received. |
| **2. PROGRAM DYNAMICS**<br><br>**2.1 Technical framework domain** | 2.1.1 | Assess the quality of the programming framework | o Records and document analysis<br>o Semi-structured interviews<br>o Observations | o Program staff | Report on program model, strategy, and site; Development of a Technical Framework checklist |
| | 2.1.2 | Assess the quality of peer educator recruitment & training | o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Peer educators | Development of a Technical Framework checklist |
| | 2.1.3 | Assess the quality of peer educator supervision & support | o FGD discussions<br>o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Supervisors<br>o Peer educators | Development of a Technical Framework checklist |
| | 2.1.4 | Examine peer educator retention and turnover | o Records<br>o Semi-structured interviews<br>o Exit questionnaires | o Program staff<br>o Supervisors<br>o Peer educators | Results presented in Final Report |
| **2.2 Cooperation domain** | 2.2.1 | Assess the level of youth involvement at various program stages | o FGDs<br>o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Supervisors<br>o Peer educators | Development of a Youth involvement checklist |
| | 2.2.2 | Assess the quality of youth-adult partnerships | o FGDs<br>o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Supervisors<br>o Peer educators | Development of a Youth-adult Partnership checklist |
| | 2.2.3 | Assess gender equity & sensitivity | o FGDs<br>o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Supervisors<br>o Peer educators | Development of a Gender equity and Equality checklist |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2.2.4 | Assess stakeholder-program cooperation | o FGDs<br>o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Peer educators<br>o Stakeholders | Development of a Stakeholder involvement checklist |
| | 2.2.5 | Assess intermediary cooperation | o FGDs<br>o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Peer educators<br>o Stakeholders | Development of a Stakeholder involvement checklist |
| | 2.2.6 | Assess parent involvement | o FGDs<br>o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Peer educators<br>o Stakeholders | Development of a Parent involvement checklist |
| **2.3 Community participation domain** | 2.3.1 | Determine degree of coalition building | o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Peer educators<br>o Intermediaries<br>o Policy makers<br>o Stakeholders/ gatekeepers | Development of a Community Participation checklist |
| | 2.3.2 | Determine community-level activities and meetings | o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Peer educators<br>Intermediaries<br>o Policy makers<br>o Stakeholders/ gatekeepers | Development of a Community Participation checklist |
| | 2.3.3 | Identify mobilization and outreach activities | o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>o Peer educators<br>Intermediaries<br>o Policy makers<br>o Stakeholders/ gatekeepers | Development of a Community Participation checklist |
| | 2.3.4 | Assess stakeholder/ gatekeeper involvement, endorsement and support | o Semi-structured interviews | o Program staff<br>Intermediaries<br>o Policy makers<br>o Peer educators<br>o Stakeholders/ gatekeepers | Development of a Community Participation checklist |
| **3. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS** | 3.1 | Identify number/types of peer educator activities | o Peer educator logs<br>o Records analysis | o Program staff<br>o Peer educators | List of number/types of peer educator activities |
| | 3.2 | Identify number/types of communications produced and disseminated | o Peer educator logs and debriefings<br>o Records analysis | o Program staff<br>o Peer educators | List of number/types of communications produced and disseminated |

## A. Qualitative data collection

The qualitative data were used primarily to develop checklists within the three domains of the program dynamics component. A single interview or FGD covered topics relevant to more than one sub-goal. For instance, an interview with a program staff member covered all four of the sub-goals making up the community participation domain. The number of interviews and FGDs carried out depended on the size, setting, geographic distribution, and operational framework of each peer education program.

Interviews were conducted with peer educators, program staff, parents, stakeholders, policy makers, and donors. This included donors and policymakers at the national level because their decisions have a strong influence on youth programming including programs at the local level.

For purposes of this study, a "stakeholder" is a person or organization who holds an important or influential community position, and has an interest, investment, or involvement in the program. The stakeholders interviewed included representatives from collaborating NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and local government. It also included managers from clinics and schools where the programs were working.

The interviews and FGDs were carried out by trained interviewers in each country and tape-recorded. They were carried out in the local language, transcribed, translated, and sent to the Technical Monitor (TM). All field staff were trained in Research Ethics and Confidentiality using the FHI Protection of Human Subjects Committee (PHSC) training module.

A total of 21 FGDs were conducted with peer educators. The average number of participants in each group was eight in the DR and five in Zambia. Seventy adults were interviewed. Table 2 details the number and type of participants interviewed at each program. The FGD guides can be found in Appendix A.

**Table 2.** Number and type of participants interviewed by program

|  | ADOPLAFAM | ProFamilia | SEPO | YWCA | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FGDs for cooperation domain (Female peer educators) | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| FGDs for cooperation domain (Male peer educators) | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| FGDs for Technical Framework (Mixed-sex peer educators) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| Staff/Management (no. interviewed) | 5 | 6 | 8 | 1 | 20 |
| Parents (no. interviewed) | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 14 |
| Intermediary (no. interviewed) | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 8 |
| Stakeholder (no. interviewed) | 2 | 2 | 9 | 6 | 19 |
| Policy maker (no. interviewed) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Donor (no. interviewed | 2 [a] | 1 [a] | 1 | 2 | 6 |

a Same donor was interviewed for both DR programs.

***Topics covered***

The interview guides used for each group were the same in both countries and can be found in Appendix A. Program staff and management were interviewed concerning  1) the Technical Framework, 2) Program Cooperation and 3) Community Cooperation.

Two focus group discussions were conducted with the peer educators concerning the program's 1) Technical Framework and 2) Cooperation domain. During the Technical Framework discussion, the peer educators were in mixed-sex groups. The peer educators were then split into single sex groups for the Cooperation domain discussion. Topics covered in the focus groups with peer educators include:

- How they were recruited;
- Reasons for becoming a peer educator;
- Personal prevention goals;
- Personal perceptions of why HIV is a problem in their community;
- Activities within the project and in the field;
- Support and supervision;
- Youth-adult dynamics;
- Cohesion within the program;
- Gender roles and dynamics;
- Program decision-making;
- Suggestions to improve the program and their work ;
- How their work affects them personally; and
- Reactions from friends and family.

The study explored the dynamics of cooperation between the peer educators and adults, and between the peer educators and other young people. Hart's Ladder (11), displayed in Figure 2, served as a discussion guide during the cooperation FGDs with the youth peer educators.

**Figure 2**
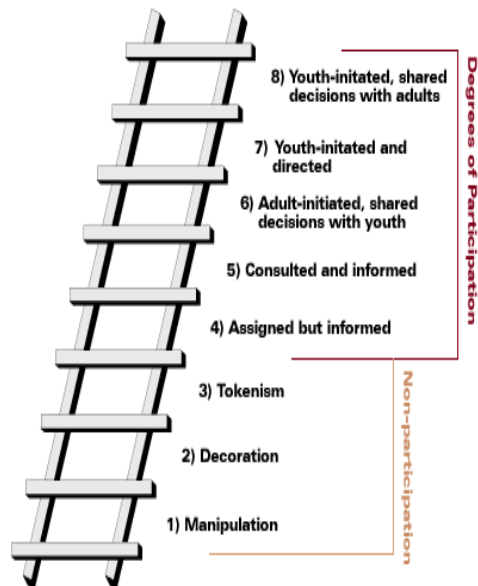


Degrees of Participation

**8) Young people-initiated, shared decisions with adults**
This happens when projects or programs are initiated by young people and decision-making is shared between young people and adults. These projects empower young people while at the same time enabling them to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults.
**7) Young people-initiated and directed**
This is when young people initiate and direct a project or program. Adults are involved but only in a supportive role.
**6) Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people**
Occurs when projects or programs are initiated by adults but the decision-making is shared with the young people.
**5) Consulted and informed**
Happens when young people give advice on projects or programs designed and run by adults. The young people are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.
**4) Assigned but informed**
This is where young people are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved.
**3) Tokenism**
When young people appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.
**2) Decoration**
Happens when young people are used to help or "bolster" a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by young people.
**1) Manipulation**
Happens where adults use young people to support causes and pretend that young people inspire the causes

## B. Quantitative data collection

Quantitative monitoring and data collection included three components:
- Program costs;
- Program activities and outputs; and
- Peer educators exit questionnaires.

### *Program costs*

Data on program costs were collected both retrospectively and prospectively with some effort expended on verifying these data with observation of program activities. Spreadsheet-based data collection instruments were designed for this purpose, and program managers or their assistants were trained in recording the relevant information.

### *Program activities and outputs*

This involved measuring the number and types of peer educator activities, the number and types of peer educator communications produced and disseminated (e.g., printed materials) and the number of peer educator referrals to VCT and RH services. This was measured using 1) activity data reported by the program staff and 2) activity logs kept by the peer educators.

Peer educators kept detailed logs of the type of activities they carried out and the characteristics of those they contacted. This log can be found in Appendix B. The purpose of the logs was to capture the important informal or opportunistic contacts that the peer educators have with their peers. The logs are detailed so measurements were not conducted continuously because of the inconvenience to the peer educators and the possibility of inaccurate reporting.

*Peer educators exit questionnaires.*

All peer educators in the Zambian programs leaving a program were asked to fill out an anonymous questionnaire regarding the reasons they left the program. The questionnaires were sent to the Technical Monitor (TM) and entered into a database for analysis.

The DR programs routinely collect and record data on their exiting peer educators; these records were analyzed for this study.

## 5. DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

### A. Qualitative data

The transcriptions were imported into the software program QSR N6 by a research analyst to facilitate text data coding and analysis. Coding was based strictly upon the interview guides and text. The analyst was unfamiliar with YPE and purposefully not given a theoretical or other framework that might bias the development of the coding tree and actual coding.

A team including the TM, a research analyst, and the Principal Investigators (PIs) conducted the final analysis. The first draft of the checklists was reviewed by the PIs in each country for their face-validity. The next step was for the checklists to be validated by the original peer educators and adult interviewees in each country.

### B. Quantitative data

The local research organization was responsible for coding, checking questionnaires and activity reports, entering data into SPSS databases, and cleaning the data.

For the cost analysis, the costs of training, supervision, and remuneration were divided by the output produced by the program. The costs of training are dependent on the length of time that the program benefits from any training program, and this, in turn, depends on how long peer educators work. This information was obtained from the logs that the peer educators maintained while they worked for the program. Thus, program costs to support a worker could be calculated taking into consideration the training and supervision as well as the compensation that the worker receives while s/he is working for the program. This figure was then divided by the average output produced by the peer educator while still working.

## 6. PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

Before the implementation of this study, FHI's Protection of Human Subjects Committee (PHSC) reviewed the study proposal and consent process. Appropriate local ethical review committees for each study site also reviewed and approved the protocol before study implementation.

All interview, FGD, and written questionnaire data were kept confidential. Interviews were conducted in a private location where they could not be overheard. FGD transcripts and questionnaire data associated with this study show only an identification number, not the names of the participants. All information pertaining to the study was stored in locked filing cabinets and password protected computers. Audiotapes were destroyed after the accuracy of transcription was verified.

Oral consent was requested from participants in all the data collection activities. A witness signature verified verbal consent.

# RESULTS

## 1. DYNAMICS OF THE YPE PROGRAMS

## A. Technical Framework

***Program Assessments***
The technical frameworks of the four programs were assessed over the period of the study using a checklist based upon the research literature and refined during the course of the study. The checklist rated the quality of the programs' design, implementation, management and responsiveness to the target audience. The final assessments were based upon the accumulated data and carried out by the local PIs and two researchers at FHI/YouthNet. The results are shown in Table 3. Unfortunately, the programs did not carry out any peer educator trainings during the period of the study that could be observed and used to develop a training checklist.

***Program design***
The program design items are concerned with the basic elements of the program. This includes the degree of clarity in defining the target audience and program goals and objectives.

The four projects had clear aims and objectives, focused on specific risk behaviors, sought to be theoretical and/or evidence-based, and provided ample opportunity for the peer educators to practice their skills.

***Implementation***
The implementation items describe those actions that result in the implementation of the program. These items include a realistic schedule and adequately trained staff and peer educators.

The Zambian programs were weak in peer educator training due to insufficient funding. Young people were recruited to fill the peer educator ranks due to high dropout rates and received on-the-job training. It is questionable whether or not they received the training necessary to carry out interventions. The scheduling of activities was erratic, often due to lack of transportation. The coordinators were knowledgeable and skilled, but were at times overstretched with other duties. Both Zambian programs are embedded in their target communities.

The Dominican programs scored high or very high on the implementation items but had higher levels of funding.

***Management***
The management items are concerned with the support, both administrative and financial, of the peer educators and the program in general.

The main organizational challenge for the Zambian programs was insufficient funding. This affected training, supervision, materials, peer educator incentives, and transportation. The host organizations were well embedded in their communities but one program lacked administrative support at the highest levels. Both programs were average or below in flexibility and openness to youth input.

The DR programs had adequate funding, administrative support, flexibility and openness to youth input. The host organizations were embedded in their communities and relevant to them.

***Responsiveness to the target audience***

Responsiveness to the target audience items deal with the program's relevance and appropriateness for the target population and larger community.  Two of these items also evaluate the acceptability of the level of youth-adult partnerships and youth involvement in the program as perceived by the recruited peer educators.

Three programs were rated high in meeting the needs and priorities as defined by the target communities. One program in Zambia was rated average. All four programs had high ratings in having representative and culturally competent peer educators, being gender sensitive and specific, and having interventions that were developmentally appropriate to the audience.

The peer educators were recruited from the target audience and the Dominican programs were highly acceptable to them in terms of youth involvement and youth-adult partnerships. The Zambian programs received low ratings on both of these factors.

**Table 3.** Results from the assessment of YPE program Technical Frameworks in Zambia and the DR

| A.  PROGRAM DESIGN ITEMS | SEPO Center, Zambia | YWCA, Zambia | ProFamilia, DR | ADOPLAFAM, DR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The program has a clearly defined audience | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| 2. The program has clearly defined goals and objectives | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 3. The program is based on sound behavioral and social science theory or evidence-based experience | 4 | 3 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| 4. The program is focused on reducing specific risk behaviors | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 5. The program provides ample opportunities for peer educators to practice relevant skills | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| B. IMPLEMENTATION ITEMS | | | | |
| 1. There is a realistic schedule for the implementation | 3 | 3 | 4.5 | 4 |
| 2. Staff are adequately trained to be sensitive to the needs of young people during the trainings and supervision of peer educators | 3 | 3 | 4.5 | 5 |
| 3. Peer educators are adequately trained to deliver the core elements of the intervention. | 2.5 | 2.5 | 4 | 4.5 |
| 4. Core elements of the intervention are clearly defined for staff, peer educators and maintained in the delivery | 4 | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| 5. The program is embedded in a broader context that is relevant to the targeted youth and community | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4 | 4 |
| C.  MANAGEMENT ITEMS | | | | |
| 1. There is administrative support for the intervention at the highest levels | 4.5 | 1 | 4.5 | 4 |
| 2. There are sufficient resources for the current implementation, including peer educator training and supervision. | 2 | 2 | 4.5 | 4 |
| 3. There are sufficient resources for sustainability (does not mean self-sufficient) | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 4. Adult decision-makers are flexible and open to youth input | 3 | 2 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| 5. The program organization is embedded in a broader context that is relevant to the target population and community | 5 | 4 | 4.5 | 4 |
| D. RESPONSIVENSS ITEMS | | | | |
| 1. The program meets specified priorities and needs defined by the community | 4 | 3 | 4.5 | 4 |
| 2. For the targeted population, the peer educators are representative and culturally competent | 4 | 4 | 4.5 | 5 |
| 3. For the target population selected, the intervention is developmentally appropriate | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4.5 |
| 4. For the target population selected, the program is gender specific and sensitive | 4 | 3.5 | 4 | 4 |
| 5. The intervention as implemented is acceptable to the peer educators regarding the quality of youth-adult partnerships. | 2 | 2 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| 6. The intervention as implemented is acceptable to the peer educators regarding the degree of youth involvement. | 2 | 2 | 5 | 5 |

## B. Cooperation and Community Participation

The Cooperation and Community Participation domains were measured using interviews/FGDs and are combined for this report. The reason is that the programs examined were community-based, and in the analysis it was difficult to draw a line between where a program ended and "the community" began. Moreover, the peer educators themselves had considerable direct contact with community adults and organizations where they were recognized in their role as community peer educators.

The results are presented in the order used in the ecological interview design. This begins with adult donors and policy makers on the outer ring and the youth peer educators in the center (see Figure 1). In between are the stakeholders, intermediaries, parents and program staff. A second reason to present the results in this manner is that most of the checklists developed for Phase 2 ended up being based on program role after data collection and validation. Thus, the report also serves as an explanation for the items in the checklists.

This section first provides the results from interviews with the adults involved in YPE. The second section provides the results from the FGDs with youth peer educator volunteers. The reader should keep in mind that the Zambian programs had been recently struck by budget reductions that affected many features of the programs and thus the discussions about them.

### 1. Adults involved in YPE

### Donor

Donors who support YPE programs were interviewed in both countries. They were asked what criteria they used to determine which *YPE programs* they sponsor and the responses focused largely on YPE technical frameworks and youth-adult issues.

> How well it's planned, how clear its objectives are. The timeline - how well it's going to be monitored, that is key because you might end up having a team saying "We will be working in Kalingalinga compound", and yet they are just in their own homes after you've given them transport money for an entire week. *(Donor, Zambia)*

> There must be a technical framework that responds to needs and able to work in developing and orienting people. There must be receptiveness in the target audience and an information gap where it makes sense to provide information. There must be young people capable of informing others, trading ideas and know how to go about it. *(Donor, DR)*

It was stressed that a program must be relevant and responsive to the youth audience.

> We must be clear what the youth want. The program must be for them. When a program is not clear on what the youth want then you won't have the anticipated results. This is because youth don't perceive that the program was created for them. *(Donor, DR)*

Donors were also asked what criteria they used when determining the qualifications of an *organization* (e.g. NGO) planning a YPE program. In the DR, donors looked for field experience, the ability to complete a program and a good performance record. It was not considered a problem to find such organizations. In Zambia, it was considered difficult to find trustworthy organizations. The result is that funding is provided to well-known organizations typically funded by international donors. Small NGOs and innovative programs were seen with suspicion. Donors in both countries looked for sound management, honesty, and accountability in the programs they funded.

On paper, most of these programs are very effective: "We've reached out to XYZ many people, we gave out XYZ many condoms, and we gave out so many lessons". But if you go to the actual community where this is happening and just ask anyone, "Do you remember seeing program X". They would say, "What are you talking about?" The minute the money comes in someone is buying a BMW and going to South Luangwa with the family on vacation. *(Donor, Zambia)*

Donors in both countries were aware of the adult-youth issues in YPE. They underlined the importance of involving youth and of creating balanced youth-adult partnerships.

They [youth] must be involved in all the decisions areas. They must participate when they are making decisions related to their own lives. That is why sometimes young people feel unhappy because they are not invited to be involved in making policies that are supposed to be created to protect them. *(Donor, DR)*

The two are not communicating as they should, the old person is not relating to the young person, and the young person understands what his or her peers are thinking. The relationship is closed and it just doesn't end there but extends to peer education. *(Donor, Zambia)*

The donors were asked what they saw as the greatest challenge to YPE. The DR donors said that young people needed to learn how to prioritize activities based on existing resources. This requires budget transparency on the part of program management.

Young people must be involved in programming, and programming has a financial aspect. Young people must know the limits. We must teach young people to work and make decisions based on existing resources. We must teach them that some things are more important than others. *(Donor, DR)*

Motivating peer educators was seen as a major challenge in Zambia. Young people are highly motivated when they join a program but lose it after a short time. The donors considered this to be due to disempowering factors and young people's realization that they are getting little out of volunteering.

Zambia's Ministry of Health (MOH) is working on incorporating income generation and livelihoods training into YPE programs. This action from government was considered highly appropriate by a Zambian donor.

It's either government or nothing - those are the guys in the driver's seat, and as long as they are not supportive, at no point are we ever going to wake up and see Zambia's HIV/AIDS situation change. Look at Uganda for instance; it took everyone's effort - the church, the government, everyone - to change the situation. (Donor, Zambia)

**Policymakers**

Policymakers have the authority to make decisions about how youth RH and HIV/AIDS challenges are addressed and by what means. The Ministry of Health (MOH) in Zambia and the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the DR were interviewed.

Ministries have an influence beyond the development and financing of youth policies - they can influence laws and legislation concerning youth participation and the rights of young people.

The laws, especially the parliamentarians, are very crucial to youth programs and that is why we collaborate with the National Youth Assembly. It has representatives from districts and provinces and exposes them to the legal aspect of governing our country. Then comes the question of their rights and knowing what youth rights are and being able to demand them and making an informed choice. *(MOH, Zambia)*

The Ministries carry out very few YPE programs themselves but can sponsor innovative initiatives using NGOs. In the DR, YPE is used extensively and the build-up began 20 years ago as a result of collaboration between the MOE and the NGO ProFamilia.

> In 1984, we worked with ProFamilia in the Peer Education Project. The program we developed in 12 provinces at the national level was a success. The relationship with the NGOs is positive and we get along very well. There are no problems. *(MOE, DR)*

Two recurring themes emerged in the interviews with policymakers: the need to expand the involvement of parents and FBOs in YPE. Indeed, these themes were evident in the interviews with all groups. Respondents believe that parental involvement contributes to peer educator recruitment and retention. Cooperation with FBOs was viewed as a means to strengthen programs locally and allow access to larger youth audiences. The Zambian MOH included the traditional leaders in their country in this group.

> The church needs to be strengthened [in YPE]. I don't think we are involving them as much as we could. The other area that needs to be strengthened is the involvement of parents. I believe we are not getting parents' views and ensuring communication between youth, adolescents and parents. The traditional leaders, I think we need to do much more because they are the ones who train, teach and provide a lot of thrust to how these young men and women will behave in the future, which could harm or protect them. *(MOH, Zambia)*

> If the father, the mother or the family isn't prepared to continue with this [prevention] information a link is lost. It means the peer educator cannot influence prevention in those neighborhoods in which they are working. This is why sometimes programs become unsuccessful - they don't take this into consideration. *(MOE, DR)*

When asked what they viewed as the greatest *current* challenge to YPE the MOH in Zambia saw a need for standardization to ensure quality. For the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the DR it was the expansion of YPE into rural areas away from urban centers.

> What we need is to standardize the YPE package used right now. We need to define what YPE is, who they are and who qualifies to be a peer educator. We need to define the kind of training we should give peer educators. Is it counseling? Is it more technical information? I think this is a challenge because everybody has something to say but ensuring that it is the correct information and not misinformation is one of the biggest hurdles. *(MOH, Zambia)*

> The challenge is to work with other geographical areas, because most organizations have their headquarters in the city [Santo Domingo]. The largest number of interventions is helping populations in the National District. There are youth all over the country, youth in need. *(MOE, DR)*

The Ministries were asked what the greatest *future* challenge was for YPE. In Zambia, volunteerism was viewed as having low feasibility. The MOH is working on integrating economic incentives into YPE.

> I think voluntarism is not very feasible in Zambia. So we need to look at a way of remunerating them (peer educators) and giving them something small like bicycles. We are trying to tie in income generating programs so that they are doing peer education at the same time they are making a little bit of money on the side. They don't last very long in the programs…..You will invest, train them and then they are gone. It means you will need to be constantly training and that is the biggest challenge. *(MOH, Zambia)*

The greatest challenge in the DR was the development of a comprehensive sex education program in schools to reduce unintended pregnancies and HIV/AIDS. The DR has had better experiences with

YPE and the MOE wants to incorporate it into its national planning. In its proposal, trained teachers and school counselors will provide supervision to selected pupils trained as peer educators.

> We foresee a change in attitude: that sex education will be a true reality within the educational system. That there will not be any more taboos or myths; that the generations, both present and future, will be able to prevent such problems as AIDS, drugs, teenage pregnancy. These are the challenge we face. *(MOE, DR)*

## Stakeholders

A stakeholder is a person or organization who holds an important or influential community position, and has an interest, investment or involvement in the program. The stakeholders interviewed included representatives from collaborating NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and local government. They also included managers from clinics and schools where the programs were working. These interviews, in combination with interviews with other actors, resulted in the Checklist for Stakeholder Cooperation (Appendix B).

The stakeholders interviewed shared the opinion that YPE was a valid approach to improve RH and HIV/AIDS prevention. They felt that it was not only a means of disseminating information, but had the potential to address core issues. For instance, they saw the communication gap between youth and adults as increasing, and viewed YPE as a means to bridge it through youth-adult partnerships. They agreed that young people should be empowered and trained to become directly involved in the health issues that affected them.

> There are two main youth challenges in this country. First, there's a lack of role models for youth to emulate. The other is the country's current serious youth problems, i.e. HIV/AIDS, teen pregnancy and adolescent and youth health. From my point of view, peer education is fulfilling its aim in terms of ensuring that youth take their part [in finding solutions]. *(DR, stakeholder)*

> I believe youth require information, they require training and at the same time they also need involvement. Issues that pertain to their welfare, they need to be involved at all levels. These are the community level, household level and in a district, they need to be involved. They also need representation. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

Stakeholders believed that young people had the capacity to be energetic and active citizens but required the involvement of individual adults and the adult community. Moreover, as organizational leaders they took a broad perspective and advocated for youth involvement at the policy making level.

> Youths are interested in having up-to-date information. They are interested in getting involved in decision-making. They like to plan their own programs. I know they have zeal, they have the energy, and they have the ideas. These need to be put together with the adults' experience and knowledge. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

> Sports, the arts, movies; the role models that serve as an ideal for youth are often empty. Young people cannot channel their concerns and concrete needs into the real world. The present world is beyond their possibilities for action, so we have to place young people within their concrete reality and for this you need political action. *(DR, stakeholder)*

With minor exceptions, stakeholders were pleased with the quality of cooperation with the programs. They considered themselves informed, shared the programs' goals and felt the programs complimented their own organizations' activities.

> The program is very effective in attaining the goals of peer education. Basically, that's what I've seen. The peer educators are actually representative of the target group unlike other places where you see peer educators who are not. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

> They have contributed a lot, such as the exchange of experience in the work they do and their credibility with the public. Working with them opens doors for you, not everywhere, but in a lot of places. *(DR, stakeholder)*

Because we assessed community-based programs, it was necessary to collaborate with a range of stakeholders. These partnerships developed progressively over time. The first step was to find and share a common vision about young people and the second was an appreciation for the program's competency and trustworthiness. The final step in developing a cooperative partnership was to establish mutual sharing or reciprocity.

> But it was an intelligent approach on their part; first, by being aware of our good intentions and abilities, and by recognizing that we were doing something meaningful. It was not only a matter of taking a central role; they saw us as a means to get what they wanted, and so did we. It was a two-way relationship. *(DR, stakeholder)*

> Last year we were reorganizing and we didn't have office accommodation or equipment. They gave us office space and we were allowed to use the telephone and computers. All that was done free of charge, so whenever we are doing our programs we are always obliged to incorporate them into our activities and most of our activities are jointly with them. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

There were a few criticisms of the programs and opinions on how they could operate better. Overall, the YPE programs were considered good partners who worked hard for the community. The only negative comments were for the Zambian programs and their handling of peer educators. As mentioned earlier, the stakeholders cooperated directly with these peer educators and supported them to cover their host program's deficits.

> Program X should let their peer educators be involved in decision-making or let them have an autonomous unit they run themselves. I have seen that sometimes these peer educators are over worked and are paid nothing. To build the quality of messages, have fewer turnovers, there is a need for incentives. You see that they are sidelined, so the program should be organized by the peer educators because they are the ones actually dealing with their peers. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

When asked about YPE challenges, the stakeholders shared two concerns: increased parental and youth involvement. In Zambia, the degree of parental involvement was seen as having a direct effect on peer educator recruitment and retention.

> The issues we talk about, especially sexuality, are looked at as taboo and this has really created a barrier; some parents are not opening up. This is leading to high attrition levels amongst peer educators. Most parents stop their children from going to the program or getting involved because they feel we are teaching them bad manners, 'matapa' [insults]. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

> The parents who visit the youth-friendly corners find condoms being demonstrated and have their own feelings about such. But then we and the peer educators explain what we are really teaching. So it's all about dialogue between the parents and the peers and so on. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

Stakeholders believe that if parents are not involved, they remain uninformed about a program and its goals. Because of the program's subject matter, it is easy for them to interpret it as having a negative influence on their children. Feeling powerless, they pull their children out of the program. In reality, involving parents can increase community support and possibly help spread its health messages.

The parents need to be involved in the program. From our evaluation, parents really don't know why their children are working in the health centre. I am glad to say once informed most appreciated and vowed to support the program and even help sensitize fellow community members and elders who weren't aware of it. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

The parents really want their kids to join the Program. They say, 'Take my son, he's 11, he's 12'. In these barrios, there are no recreational areas or organizations for kids. When not in the Program they are doing 'who-knows-what' on the corners. The Program is really a fabulous place for the kids. *(DR, stakeholder)*

The second YPE challenge identified by stakeholders in both countries was the need to increase youth involvement.

I think that young people have to participate. First, they have ideas, they have the energy, the motivation, the ability, and they have everything necessary to participate. Regrettably, youth participation in the complete process from planning to evaluation of project processes is very limited. *(DR, stakeholder)*

Youth are living in today's world; they understand the world, the feelings and what is going on better. I live in a different world. I need to listen to them but they should also be able to ask, "Okay, but in your time, how did you solve the issues. How do you look at this?" In that exchange of ideas, something comes out that is for adults and for young people. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

The improvement of partnerships between youth and adults was seen as the best manner to increase youth involvement.

I see a danger in those who think young people should be left on their own. Young people need guidance, they're intelligent, they're able to make good decisions, responsible decisions but with support and help from the adults. They need to work together but not to the extent where either adults or young people dominate. I would want to see a situation where both come to issues as equals. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

In the DR, stakeholders saw two organizational barriers to increased youth involvement in YPE. The first was that peer educators participated in the programs for only a short period and only in their spare time. This made it difficult for them to have an enduring influence. The second barrier was that there was not a systemic policy anchoring and linking youth involvement (and YPE) to the national level from the grassroots.

Our institutions are making a great effort to achieve youth participation but there is still a lot for us to do. For us, the directors of these institutions, the intelligent thing is to step back and allow these processes to grow. Not a spontaneous movement because youth participate voluntarily and in their spare time. If they are not involved on a permanent basis, they have no opportunity to make decisions. *(DR, stakeholder)*

The peer education strategy is fundamental and facilitates the transmission of values between young people. However, it needs the application of policies supporting youth participation. There is a need to link youth to the adult world and the institutions that represent them. The adult representatives in these institutions need to provide support to young people and their initiatives. Without this peer education can end up being a diversion, a social exercise without effectiveness. *(DR, stakeholder)*

Incentives for peer educators are a major issue in Zambia. Young people contribute to the family from an early age as an economic necessity and by tradition, and volunteering for the public good takes time away from these responsibilities as well as from school. The Zambian stakeholders had strong concerns about this issue, as did the Zambian MOH.

Incentives should be looked into critically. Even though it's voluntary, there is a need for incentives to sustain the programs. Look at the sustainability of peer education, its not there. Today we have peer educators, tomorrow there are others due to the lack of incentives. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

In Western countries, people who volunteer are rich and if they need money, the government gives them a living allowance. To me a living allowance is a lot of money. We are asking people to do without and work for literally nothing. There is no incentive and it makes peer education very, very difficult. Their families expect a lot from them, their friends are expecting a lot and now you want them to work for nothing. We need to find ways to give them something at the end of the day, to buy soap, to buy something to take home to their families. *(Zambia, stakeholder)*

Zambian stakeholders found incentives to be necessary and the consequence of not providing them is high peer educator turnover and burnout. Another effect is that of funding being wasted on training young people who quickly drop out and programs are tempted to fill their ranks with improperly trained youth. Zambian stakeholders offer suggestions below:

We don't have to pay them a salary but something to get them going. We have young people who have established a workshop where they are do carpentry and they take breaks and talk about reproductive health. They are *also* getting something.

We've built in a little lunch allowance. People are prepared to sacrifice in order to get that and it is the only way we can actually help the peer educators in terms of incentives.

Peer educator incentives shouldn't be just money, we should be looking at training opportunities, providing materials they need to carry out their activities - those are more relevant than money. We need to empower them to retain them in the program. They need their own facilities and equipment to work well and organize like any other employee.


## Parents of peer educators

Parents can have an influence on YPE programs via their child who is a peer educator and as direct participants. Parents and guardians can control the recruitment of their child into a program and withdraw them if they perceive negative influences or effects. As mentioned, parents may fear that the program will take time away from their child's studies or duties at home. Moreover, parents can be concerned about how their child's involvement in a controversial program reflects upon them in the community. After all, the task of a peer educator is to be "widely seen and widely heard".

In short, parents need to perceive more benefits than detriments. There were few differences between the DR and Zambia on this point. In both countries, parental support was found to be critical to peer educator recruitment, retention and motivation. This resulted in the development of the Checklist for Parental Involvement (Appendix B).

Most peer educator parents interviewed saw positive benefits for their child. The positive changes in the behaviors and attitudes of their children led to greater parental support for the program. Parents of older peer educators (over 20 yrs) saw benefits from their child's involvement because it kept them away from drug use, violence and sexual activity.

I'm thankful for the change from the way he was. He was rude; he would yell at me and tell me off; not any more. He also worked and used to say, "I don't have money" but he had. Not anymore. Now if he earns 100 pesos out there before he gets to the house he already has it in his hand and says, "Look mom, take half". *(DR, mother of peer educator)*

There is a very big difference - he was almost taken up in the life of the streets. He wanted to do a bit of drinking because he had nothing to do. But immediately when he got involved in this [program] he was quite busy. He had no time to get into bars and this other kind of thing. This has actually made him get to church now and he's very active with church matters. *(Zambia, mother of peer educator)*

Parents saw benefits not only for their children but also for their community. They took pride in their children's work for the public good.

Yes, the program has helped her a lot. It has helped her to help others, other girls, so that they don't get into trouble. It has helped me a lot, because she is at the age when girls here are in the street, but not her, she has stayed strong. *(DR, mother of peer educator)*

I would urge other parents to let their children get involved with this kind of activity because it would be to the benefit of people not involved in this program. These peer educators are actually trying to save the lives of other people who don't understand much about AIDS. *(Zambia, mother of peer educator)*

On the other hand, parents were critical when they felt programs were not treating their children fairly. In Zambia, some parents were critical of staff attitudes towards peer educators and the lack of remuneration. Remuneration concerned meals or tokens of appreciation that acknowledged the contribution.

In these programs, what I really see is that the children really work as hard as their leaders. I think the leaders need to be considerate in looking out for the welfare of the children in the program. *(Zambia, mother of peer educator)*

Some of them have stopped because they need at least something to sustain them, not really much, because they are volunteers. Peer educators in the rural areas cycle long distances to conduct their meetings and they would need something at least. *(Zambia, mother of peer educator)*

There should be somebody to head the peer education to look into the problems of the peer educators; an organization to look at the interests of the peer educators so that they could come up with their own solutions to the problems that they are facing. *(Zambia, mother of peer educator)*

The Dominican programs were more active in reaching out to parents. They met with parents during recruitment to inform them about the program, had ongoing dialog and outreach to parents, and meetings and seminars for them. Parents did not always participate but they had the perception that they were involved and could influence the program when they wanted to. In addition, parents were informed that community opinion leaders and decision makers endorsed the program.

The majority of other parents know that the Project is good and that they try to help girls avoid getting pregnant or being out in the streets… They know that if their children are in this Project everything goes fine. *(DR, Mother of peer educator)*

I participated recently in a meeting they had about adolescence. I heard several comments on how they treat their kids at this age, how they think and how they avoid letting their kids fall into some of the existing social problems. *(DR, father of peer educator)*

Involving parents in programs helped avoid conflicts over the sensitive subject covered.

When you say to a mother who doesn't have much education, "We're going to talk about sex to your 14-year-old daughter," she screams to high heaven; it's very natural. But when they get involved, they change their minds. You have to teach them and when they learn about the program, they participate. *(DR, mother of peer educator)*

> At first, the fathers didn't want the program because they believed that if you teach young people about family planning it's as though you were encouraging them to have relations; that you were telling them how to use birth control. *(DR, father of peer educator)*

## Adult program staff

YPE staff are the mediators between the world of young people and that of adults. They recruit and train young people from the community and then return them as volunteers to carry out prevention activities under their supervision. Because youth "age-out" of YPE programs these staff need to maintain cooperation with the community and young people through the cycles of peer educator recruitment.

YPE programs and their home organization are also anchored in an institutional and funding structure. They need to be responsive to donors, policy makers and stakeholders. Management usually has this responsibility, and the YPE program may be only one of several components in the home organization. Management and YPE coordination also have the responsibility to encourage the community members to participate so that the program is responsive to community realities and values. Most communities are far from homogenous and this can be a delicate balancing act.

### *Cooperating with the community and young people*

At issue is the establishment of a balance between the world of young people and that of adults and their institutions. The YPE program is the mediator, and a potential training ground for youth leadership.

> One of the things that makes us stronger in our work is that the youth identify completely with us. The youth claim their space, they want information. We as educators know how to approach them. At least we know how to provide them with an environment of information, an environment that promotes changes in their behavior. *(DR, local program coordinator)*

The DR programs had high peer educator retention and motivation. An important reason for this is that the peer educators were successfully anchored in both the program *and* the community (barrio). Community leaders carried out recruitment and this involved parents. The peer educators could identify with both the program and their role in the community.

> The program contacts the neighborhood group and asks them to choose the peer educator. Then the neighborhood group starts looking for adolescents in the community. They meet with parents to explain what it is about and what they expect to achieve. (*DR, program manager)*

> I think involving the community is what makes youth feel, because they were selected by the neighborhood group, that they are a part of the community. They feel committed, they feel good. In their role, the community recognizes that they as youth, who know a topic, know it well, can talk about sexual and reproductive health, and have the ability to bring youth together and talk with them. They value this and it makes them feel important. *(DR, program coordinator)*

### *Cooperating with schools*

Schools are key institutions for YPE programs because they offer large and captive youth audiences. However, schools are often conservative in their values and reluctant to modify youth-adult hierarchies to match those found in YPE. A challenge for YPE programs is to gain their cooperation and trust. The four programs we examined used their community reputations for success and trustworthiness to gain access and cooperate with schools. The interviews described a step-by-step process that involved open communication, compromise and reciprocity.

Now there's no objection to our approaching the students in schools. We can use their facilities. Just saying that we're going to talk about domestic violence and self-esteem opens doors, because they understand that it's valid. Also, they know we have experience working with youth. *(DR, program coordinator)*

The involvement and support of schools had an empowering effect that also motivated the peer educators.

The fact that community leaders, schoolteachers as representatives of the adult world, recognize them [peer educators] has extraordinary value. The fact that a teacher, whether their own teacher or another, sees them as people that can give a talk at any time is of extraordinary value for them. *(DR, program manager)*

*Cooperating with health services*

A second key institution for YPE programs is RH and HIV/AIDS health services. The programs examined used their peer educators to make referrals and promote the use of health services among young people. The establishment of cooperation was also a long process, especially in clinics providing RH and HIV/AIDS/STI services to young people. In the beginning, clinical staff were far from "youth-friendly" to pregnant or STI-infected adolescents.

In Zambia, it was found that clinical staff were actually scaring young people away from diagnosis and treatment. A solution was to establish "youth-friendly corners" in clinics staffed by peer educators and to train clinical staff to work with young people. Cooperation was established between the YPE programs and health services. This was endorsed by policy makers at the local, provincial and national levels, and the youth-friendly corners are in operation throughout Zambia.

Nurses had to be trained to understand youth and youth-friendly corners were established. Being older they feel like a mother to everybody, and when a youth comes to say, "I've got a STI", they said, "At your age you've already started having sex?!" For the programs to run we had to start with adults, to train them to understand youth. *(Zambia, peer education coordinator)*

Cooperating with health services also had an empowering effect upon the peer educators.

There is another important point concerning peer educators feeling validated: That they can make referrals to health centers and not just develop informational and educational activities. *(DR, program coordinator)*

*Cooperating with FBOs*

Zambia and the DR have strong faith-communities. Zambia is Protestant Christian and Muslim while the DR is Catholic Christian. Each of the programs examined cooperated with FBOs and this cooperation took time to develop because of the subject matter (RH/HIV/AIDS). Condom promotion was a major source of FBO concern in both countries, and promotion/provision of contraception was a concern in the DR. The key to successful cooperation was for the programs to advocate an "ABC approach" to prevention (Abstinence, Be Faithful and Condom use). However, one program in the study refused to promote condoms and the consequence was that some donors refused to sponsor them.

The programs needed to find a balance between the values of FBOs and the high prevalence of unintended pregnancies, HIV and STI among young people in their communities. They had learned that if a YPE program takes only one side on sensitive issues, it would split their community support *and* the youth peer educators.

The programs used their reputation for trustworthiness and competency in the community. They communicated often with the FBOs and some programs invited them to be official stakeholders. In addition, there were several descriptions of the peer educators becoming agents of change in their churches. HIV/AIDS and sexual habits are usually taboo subjects but the peer educators were able to gradually introduce them into church programs and even hold classes for other young people.

> When the community supports you in this work, the human side prevails and it's the human side that we take as a priority. This helps some churches support our work. Before, the priest in XX closed the doors on us but when he saw the work we've done with problem youth: the improved grades, their new leadership skills. Even the nuns made a commitment to us and let us work in peace. We use their rooms, we give talks, and we have panels with the nuns. *(DR, program coordinator)*

> We belong to the community. We are part of the community, we are part of the church and this commandment directs us everyday. You find people dying in our churches; they've got AIDS. So we are trying to say, "As well as put the Bible there, let's save lives, lets save a soul". This we do as representatives of the Ministry of Health. *(Zambia, program coordinator)*

## *2. Youth peer educators*

Because peer educators are at the center of a program, they need to cooperate with many adult groups including staff and management, intermediaries in clinics and schools, stakeholders and decision makers. They need to cooperate with their parents to join and stay in a program. In addition, the peer educators need to cooperate with each other as a team and, obviously, with their friends and peers in the field.

This section contains the results of the FGDs with the peer educators. In review, two rounds of FGDs were conducted with the peer educators. In the first round, they were interviewed in single-sex groups and in the second as mixed-sex groups. Interviewing them in single-sex groups allowed frank and open discussions on gender equity and equality. The FGDs together with the interviews with adults resulted in four checklists that were validated within all groups:

- Youth Involvement,
- Youth-Adult Partnerships,
- Peer Educator Cooperation, and
- Gender Equity and Equality.

### Cooperation with Program Staff

Cooperation between the peer educators and program staff is highly critical. Because the peer educators are still maturing, staff are in the position of being teacher, coach, mentor and someone to turn to. They have significant influence on the quality of peer educator teamwork, gender equity and equality, skills and wellbeing. In addition, staff have control over resources and mediate relationships with the world outside the program including parents, stakeholders, policy makers, donors and evaluators.

Seven central themes emerged during the analysis as vital for youth-adult cooperation and this section is organized accordingly. Interestingly, factors considered to be most lacking in the Zambian programs were those that were most praised in the DR. There is greater cultural distance between young people and adults in Zambia than there is the DR. This concerns the tradition of respect that young people are to show to adults. In a sense, every Zambian adult is the "mother" or "father" of every child. Adults are considered authorities, and young people are under cultural pressure not to

challenge them. Sexual behavior, sexuality and reproduction are highly sensitive subjects to discuss with adults.

*Youth involvement: Power and decision-making*

Youth involvement is defined as the degree of *direct* involvement peer educators and other youth have on program decision making. This includes program design, strategies, training and supervision, materials, implementation of activities and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). It is not a matter of the peer educators taking over – it describes the degree of empowerment given by program adults. The process should increase the peer educators' skills, self-esteem, motivation, and command of their responsibilities.

Zambian peer educators felt that they had little influence on decision-making and that was a major source of discontent for them.

> We basically implement what the staff has already designed in terms of activities and in the actual program itself. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> Sometimes we are assigned and sometimes we are just used as tokens, things are just placed on us and we have no choice and no room to maneuver. We just do as we are directed. Sometimes we do things out of our own understanding, out of our own knowledge. *(Zambia peer educator)*

The peer educators in Zambia did have the opportunity to develop various field activities and received support from intermediaries, stakeholders and other young people. The majority perceived that they had little influence on the program itself and blamed this on poor communication with management and not necessarily the coordinators.

> You are assigned to do something then at the end you are informed on how you have done it and how it went and what else they [adults] will need on that. We don't really initiate the things that we want. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> We don't have much to the say in terms of decision-making and there is no actual feedback. There is no platform created for us to discuss or to see how the program can be improved. *(Zambia peer educator)*

The result was that many peer educators felt a lack of program ownership, which in turn affected their retention, motivation and the quality of their work:

> For programs that will really affect young people, if they are initiated by the young people themselves they carry more weight. You become more cautious; you become more responsible in what you are doing. We are then going to work with all our hearts! *(Zambia peer educator)*

In the DR, programs facilitated the direct involvement of young people and were transparent with their budgets. The peer educators perceived that they had an influence on decision-making and this resulted in a strong a sense of ownership and empowerment. Youth-adult cooperation was seen as balanced.

> The Project opens doors for us, how can I say it, to make decisions. They like to hear our opinions. They base what they do on what we think, not on what we like, no, but on what's best for youth. They take our voices into account, our point of view. They act on that. *(DR peer educator,)*

> Tomorrow there's going to be an activity. We plan it and then check the budget. So we have to work on that budget, but we can't say: 'Look, we need RD$100,000 for this activity'... Never!!! *(DR peer educator)*

*Quality of youth-adult communication*

The quality of communication with staff was highly important in both countries. This was a matter of being "heard" and having a platform to offer suggestions and opinions. Youth-adult communication was less effective in Zambia than in the DR.

> When we initiate ideas and make decisions, they don't have an ear to hear us out and I don't think our decisions or opinions are actually taken that seriously. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> There is no way we can go all the way in reaching up to them [staff]. If I have a problem, I go to somebody and air my view. If that person will not hear my view my voice will not go anywhere, reach nowhere. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> It's like we don't really meet on the same level to say, "Okay, this is what is happening and now let's sit down together". We need to tell these people in the big offices to hear us out and if they want to give information, they've got to reach down to the level of youth. This frustration has not given us the motivation to move forward or to tell them what we want. *(Zambia peer educator)*

The Dominican peer educators found open communication to be one of the best features of the programs and it contributed to their eagerness to participate and learn.

> There's a lot of participation, they [staff] communicate everything to us. *(DR peer educator)*

> They explain everything and allow you to express yourself, as you want. It's like setting you free, you can talk about topics you can't on the streets. You can be yourself. *(DR peer educator)*

*Trustworthiness*

"Trustworthiness" is the perception of someone as honest, reliable and a keeper of confidences. In a cooperative relationship it means being dependable, loyal and fair. In Zambia, most adult staff and management were not considered trustworthy by the peer educators. Peer educators felt some staff were unfair and took advantage of them as young people and as volunteers. At issue was the peer educators' desire to be recognized for their contribution and to be considered members of the organization.

> At the end of the day, you find yourselves as decorations because adults want to be exposed. They know you are going to meet big people, interact with them, so they shun you and you are only decorations. All we want is to be exposed as the young people who initiated the programs, not them, and not let us end up looking like people who are doing nothing for the organization. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> We were asked to arrange a program whereby we would come and train other youths to work on our behalf. When we came back with that information they [staff] said, 'Okay, that's good'. We discovered that they then took it themselves. They took it themselves saying that since we are youths, we cannot do it. *(Zambia peer educator)*

The DR peer educators had a contrasting perception.

> We treat each other with a good deal of trust. In a way, they come down to our level, so that we don't see them as superior to us, so that we trust them. *(DR peer educator)*

> We get along super with the adults in the program because whenever we meet with them, we get very friendly with them. Every time we see each other, we say hello, we ask each other questions, and they

ask for our opinion about  how is the project going, how far has it gone, what are the weaknesses or strengths. We always want to see each other, there's an atmosphere of trust, of great trust. *(DR peer educator)*

*Mutual respect*

Without mutual respect between peer educators and staff, the significance of their interactions is reduced, especially in a program based on volunteerism. A majority of Zambian peer educators experienced low respect from staff and this had negative effects on cooperation.

> What is happening is that the young people are not supported by the adults. I don't know why. Maybe they are jealous or something but the truth is we are not supported. When we come up with a very good program for youth we take it up to them and they just look at it and say, "We will look at it some other time". Then we go back to them and ask, "How far have you gone with that thing?". They will just say, "Oh! I had forgotten, come back tomorrow" and then it will just die a natural death.  We don't know what to do about this but we are trying our level best. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> Adults have a tendency of looking down on young people. Even when we feel that our programs are urgent they look down on us - that our programs are not serious. They'd want theirs first and ours later or maybe even never. It's very demoralizing. *(Zambia peer educator)*

Mutual respect was equally important for the Dominican peer educators who praised its existence with most adult staff.

> From the beginning there was mutual respect, they respect us as youth and we respect them as adults. We have established a relationship. When we do something wrong, they tell us, when we do something well they congratulate us. It's a good relationship, a transparent approach. *(DR peer educator)*

> The manager treats us very well. When he sees you he hugs you, he greets you: How do you feel, girl, and how's the barrio? And the way he treats you, you really feel that you're the most important one. It's in the details. *(DR peer educator)*

*Support from adults*

The peer educators in all programs considered staff support essential. They did not see themselves as professionals nor did they expect to carry out activities on their own.

Peer educators in RH and HIV/AIDS programs are confronted with sensitive issues and sometimes the suffering of others. As non-professionals, it can be difficult to tackle some situations or cases and they may become overburdened. Peer educators need to be properly trained and supervised by adult staff. In addition, staff need to take responsibility for difficult cases – peer educators cannot replace professionals.

> There are cases that are very hard for us. There are youth with emotional problems and here at the Center they get psychological counseling. In addition, there are youth who are already involved in drugs and things like that, things we ourselves don't know what to do about. We always need an adult's guidance. *(DR peer educator)*

> A youth may have family problems, for example, a stepfather wants to rape his stepdaughter. They need support of an adult staff who can deal with this better than we can. Because we're young, we don't have the ability and these people aren't going to take us seriously anyway. *(DR peer educator)*

Adults needed to provide structure, stability, and consistency to a program. This included acting as teacher, coach, and mentor. What they considered as non-supportive were ready-made solutions from adults and not having their ideas validated or being given the opportunity to make choices and learn.

> The young people come up with the ideas and then they talk to the big people, the adults. If the adults think it's a good idea then they will then help out with an open hand. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> If we want to give a talk or do anything related to the program we go and tell them [staff]. They help us with communication and we continue telling them about our ideas and what activities we want to lead. They support us. *(DR peer educator)*

*Reciprocity*

Reciprocity refers to positive or negative responses by individuals towards the actions of others. Positively interpreted actions elicit positive responses and vice versa. Reciprocity was a foundation for nearly all cooperation examined in the study. For peer educators it is highly important because as volunteers they are under little obligation to remain in a program. If the program became unrewarding, they can drop out, reduce their participation or become less effective due to reduced motivation.

The Zambian programs were hit by budget cuts and stopped providing the peer educators small travel and food allowances. Many dropped out and those who remained were motivated primarily by altruism and their positive role in the community.

However, there are forms of reward other than cash and the core problem may be a perceived lack of reciprocity. Tokens of appreciation have high symbolic value in that regard. They denote respect, appreciation and the sense that one is a valued and contributing member of the organization. This was brought up repeatedly in the interviews with the Zambian peer educators. The tokens of appreciation the peer educators described were identity badges, bars of soap to wash and look presentable as a peer educators, the sharing of leftover food, and so on.

Transportation was a big issue and they described being told at the very last minute that there was not fuel for a vehicle they had booked for an activity miles away. The peer educators described one instance when they were told the vehicle was unavailable and later the vehicle was observed chauffeuring a high-level staff member.

> We go out there from morning and you come back and you expect to find lunch, but then they don't even provide lunch for the volunteers. The staff in the offices have their lunch, this is so frustrating. That's why most of the programs that we have initiated are not being achieved. We are the ones who are doing the groundwork and we want to be treated as people working towards the development of the organization and the community. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> They [staff] feel like there is much they deserve and when it comes to working together, there is the lack of a strong relationship. They always want to be on the receiving end and we always on the giving end. *(Zambia peer educator)*

In the DR, the peer educators felt that there was reciprocity in their relationship with the programs. These programs have a long list of young people wanting to join including requests from parents.

*Youth-adult partnership*

By definition, partnerships are relationships between individuals or groups that are characterized by cooperation and shared responsibility in achieving a common goal (12). Partnerships are relationships

between equals and one partner does not override the choice of the other. Partnership is multi-vocal rather than univocal, and those in the partnership require the opportunity to express their opinions.

Youth-adult partnerships begin on unequal ground because the adult clearly has the dominant role. This was evident in the YPE programs examined where youth and adults strived to cooperate in achieving common goals. The adults held the knowledge, skills and resources while the young people knew the thinking, feelings and lifestyles of the youth they represented. The adults were mature while the peer educators were still maturing, socially and psychologically. One way to view the partnership is to see it as a "learning partnership" in that each group learns continuously from the other and about the other's world.

Youth-adult partnership in the programs examined was more than youth involvement in decision-making. Besides youth involvement, they required open communication, trustworthiness, mutual respect, adult support and reciprocity. These are the themes presented above, and it appears that all needed to be present for there to exist true "youth-adult partnership".

> For us to reach our goal, we have to have a balanced relationship whereby when it comes to decision making, let's come together, adults and youths, they present their views, we also present our views, with the view of respecting one another. Unlike a situation where someone just brings his view to me when I don't even understand it, it will be very difficult for me to achieve that. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> We get along well because even though they're [staff] more mature than us, they treat us as equals. *(DR peer educator)*

The learning partnership between youth and adults in YPE is illustrated below by two quotes from peer educators in the DR.

> The projects are initiated by adults in order to build the project, and then they share it with the youth so that the youth can make decisions. They teach us, give us guidance, they're the foundation and they give us material support.

> We're the ones who live in the barrios; we know other youth's concerns, their problems and possible solutions. All those young people deal with us peer educators and we plan projects with them. We then have to update our superiors in the Program to see how together we can find solutions to the concerns of the youth in the barrios.

## Cooperation among Peer Educators

In the discussions with peer educators, it was revealed that the camaraderie and friendships developed among them was a strong motivator to join, be active and remain in a program. They expressed much dissatisfaction over conflicts created by themselves or by staff through favoritism. Cooperation among the peer educators was so important that the Checklists for Peer Educator Cooperation were developed to evaluate Phase 2 programs (Appendix B).

The economic difficulties faced by the two Zambian programs had an effect on peer educator cooperation in one program, but very little in the second. In the first program, the peer educators had lost motivation and commitment.

> One of the most important issues or points is that as peers there should be commitment. We plan to do something and there's no commitment. So I think commitment is one thing we need. *(Zambian peer educator)*

The second program had more peer educator cooperation because their activities had broad community support. These peer educators worked in teams in neighborhoods where they had field support from intermediaries, stakeholders and local young people.

> We work in teams. There's teamwork when it comes to implementing the work or implementing an idea. Teamwork is there, full participation is there. *(Zambia peer educator)*

The DR programs put considerable effort into helping the peer educators to bond and to increase their self-esteem and social skills. They were trained in 3-5 day retreats, supervised in how to cooperate and handle conflicts, and encouraged to arrange community activities together. There were regular get-togethers or dinners and the peer educators were supported in arranging recreational activities. In addition, they were recruited from the same neighborhoods where they carried out activities.

> We get along well because there's an environment of familiarity, trust, and respect. We respect each other. Almost everybody has known each other since childhood, that's how such a positive environment is created. *(DR peer educator)*

> This balance has been achieved through communication. The program's internal network is working. This network is composed of youth from each one of the zones, so through this network the representatives of the peer educators get information. That's how the communication begins. *(DR peer educator)*

## Cooperation between Genders

The programs interviewed took gender equity and equality seriously and addressed it in their training and supervision. It was facilitated and put into practice by staff among the peer educators. This covered not only biological facts but also the influence gender roles have on RH and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The latter was included in discussions and debates where gender roles are examined. Gender equity and equality were found to be a core component of successful peer education and the Checklists for Gender Equity and Equality were developed.

Many peer educators felt that they first needed to understand themselves and how their gender identity influenced their beliefs and behaviors before they could discuss the topic with peers.

> We start first by sensitizing ourselves about gender and sexuality. When we know ourselves, that's when we go to the community. The way we used to think *before* we had the workshop, I think that's the way the community still thinks now. *(Zambia peer educator)*

Bonding as a group and working in mixed-sex teams allowed the peer educators to practice and adopt new roles under the guidance of staff.

> We see ourselves as one. The roles that we play in the community aren't 'that is a Man and that is a Woman'. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> We get along very well because we're a team. We shouldn't treat them badly because they're female or talk to them badly. If we're a team, we should always be united. *(DR peer educator)*

The discussions and debates on gender between the sexes contributed to the development of a critical consciousness. Both Zambia and the DR are male-dominant cultures.

> Peer educator 1: Yes, sometimes they joke with you, and they also have different opinions.
> Moderator: For what reasons do you argue?

Peer educator 2: Because they're men, they always want to have the last word and impose their views on you. *(Female peer educators, DR)*

The male peer educators have tried to help us women because they themselves understand that machismo has been handed down from generation to generation. Practically speaking, the women are also to blame for that. We women have been getting the boys used to violence and machismo: "You're so strong", "You mustn't cry", "You're a man". They've tried to help us break the bonds of machismo. *(Female peer educator, DR)*

The peer educators reported that this process changed them and they became advocates of gender equity and equality. As a result, they were better able to tackle gender issues in their relationships.

I have several friends with whom I've almost had to fight when we talk about machismo. But now as a peer educator you're persistent, seeing that they are friends, brothers, and you deal with them up close. *(Female peer educator, DR)*

What the peer educators learned in the program was put to use during field activities where the youth audience is dealing with the same gender issues.

We're talking about ourselves, our body makeup, and our feelings. It's just real; it's reality. The boys are very active, they like talking about this because they want to know more about reproductive health and sex, their sexuality, and they're so excited. They really open up, so freely, easily, they ask a lot of questions. *(Zambia peer educator)*

My male team member says that the tough guys will get fresh, and I say back that I have to take care of myself. Even though I'm a woman they have to respect me because I have information. If I never go and confront this there'll always be that limitation. *(DR peer educator)*

The peer educators needed a good understanding of the opposite sex as well as of their own. Sometimes they worked in same-sex youth groups where they needed to provide information and guide discussions on relationships and the opposite sex. When they worked in mixed-sex groups, it was important for them to serve as positive role models.

I think it really helps because we meet different kinds of people out there. Some people feel comfortable talking to their fellow male counterparts and some feel comfortable talking to the female counterparts. *(Zambia peer educator)*

I feel funny discussing certain topics in a group of young women. There are males and females in my team and it wouldn't look good for me to give a talk to the girls about their bodies. It would seem weird. *(DR peer educator)*

## Cooperation with the General Community

This section examines cooperation between the peer educators and community actors and institutions in general. Staff and management establish these relationships and maintain them, but the peer educators have ongoing contact to organize and carry out their activities. This includes parents, intermediaries in schools and clinics, stakeholders, and local decision makers.

The four programs examined had good working relationships with their communities. In Zambia, it was revealed that strong community support and solidarity around a YPE program could sustain it through funding cuts. The analysis of the FGDs and adult interviews resulted in the development of the Checklist for Community Involvement (Appendix B).

> The project has been appreciated positively by the community, the people, the neighbors, the teachers, and the church. In homes, parents are happy now to see their children being able to talk openly about sensitive or private issues. Many children now know themselves inwardly and externally. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> The community leaders in the schools seek us out a lot because they see us as part of the solution to the barrio's problems. Adults come to us and ask how it is that we're so young and know so much. It's like they see us differently. There are adults who think that the best way to reach both young people and adults is through us. *(DR peer educator)*

The communities provided moral and in-kind support to the peer educators. Moral support came as praise, respect and trust. In-kind support came in several forms. In Zambia, materials, condoms and training were provided by NGOs, schools, clinics and governmental agencies. In-kind contributions not only help cover costs but have an empowering and validating effect on the peer educators.

> Sometimes when we don't have IEC materials we go to the district health office to check. If the district office doesn't have any we check with our partners at Society for Family Health. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> Talking about the media, that is one thing, which has really played a very, very positive role in the program because they give radio time. They'll give time just to talk about something or just adverts or anything to do with health and sexuality. *(Zambia peer educator)*

*Working with community adults*

Despite community support there remained considerable and, at times, overwhelming challenges in working with the adults who are the caretakers of tradition. This is because their health messages can appear to contradict established values and beliefs.

In Zambia, one solution was for adult staff to accompany the peer educators during field activities.

> For us to work together with the adults isn't easy. Last time we went into the community to participate in an awareness program, the adults were offended. The adults that went with us explained and advised these adults to talk with them if they were not comfortable talking with us. *(Zambia peer educator)*

In the DR, challenges center on adult fears that if young people learn about sexuality and family health they will become sexually active. The programs try to overcome this by directly involving community adults, and allowing them to see the positive effects of the program on young people.

> Adults see our work as an activity, as something excellent. They see that we have the ability, that we're young, that we're not into anything bad. *(DR peer educator)*

Parents of the youth audience became more accepting and supportive if the peer educators were serving as positive roles models.

> With parents, I think they have been very supportive. Whenever we want to talk to their children, to have a discussion, they always encourage and tell them, "Those are the people you should associate with because at least they have the right information." *(Zambia peer educator)*

> There are a lot of mothers who have problems with their daughters getting pregnant at a young age and kids who have problems with drug addiction. They [parents] approach us so that we can try to talk to them and get them to stop doing those bad things. *(DR peer educator)*

The positive comments of peer educator parents were presented in the section on parents. Positive and supportive attitudes from parents had, in turn, an empowering effect on the peer educators.

> I was filled with joy because my parents were actually encouraging me to do this kind of work. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> My mom is very proud of me for being in the Program because she knows that the topics it deals with are very important. Also, that we help young people and that we help in our community. I think that parents are also proud of the other peer educators. *(DR peer educator)*

*Working with schools and health care*

Adults who work directly with youth peer educators at schools and clinics are usually referred to as 'intermediaries'. The peer educators had positive comments on their cooperation with intermediaries and found them respectful and supportive.

Comments on schools:

> There is good communication and a good working relationship with teachers. Maybe even the head teachers because they really help us a lot. They organize the groups we to talk to and are very supportive. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> The schools in our zone open their doors to us, they give us a chance. This is because adolescents, the youth of today, are being corrupted. There's violence, pregnancy, prostitution. *(DR peer educator)*

Comments on clinic staff in Zambia:

> The clinics I go to only have sisters-in-charge. We get along very well with them. Even if you are a new peer, you just tell them that you are from the program. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> When we refer a young person to go to a clinic or the police because they were raped, she probably won't be treated in the same way as when we accompany her as peer educators. She might be shunned or they will think it was her fault or be blamed. I think they respect that we are there to assist our fellow peers. *(Zambia peer educator)*

*Working with FBOs*

As mentioned earlier, religious faith is strong in both countries and FBOs have considerable influence. In Zambia, traditional beliefs and practices are not uncommon and, for example, in a 2003 survey 21-22% believed that HIV could be transmitted by witchcraft (10).

For the interviewed peer educators, it was sometimes difficult to balance their knowledge on RH and HIV/AIDS with the attitudes of some FBOs.

> The pastors [in my area] aren't cooperative. If you suggest the youths at the church might want to do a workshop about HIV/AIDS then they'll say, "No, this is not spiritual things" or "We need to talk more about the Bible". But I think we should talk about our physical as well as spiritually needs. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> The problems that one has in the barrios are partly with the people who are religious. They have a concept of what youth is, of what a woman's role is, of what reproduction is. Since they see that we know much more about these subjects, they see us as very liberal, that we're going to end up immoral and promiscuous. *(DR peer educator)*

Several of the peer educators worked individually within their own congregations to slowly bring issues into the church. The peer educators reported increasing acceptance of their work, which has brought balance to their own spirituality.

> We start with the pastors, teaching them and telling them that AIDS is real. Nowadays, in faith-based organizations there are peer educators. *(Zambia peer educator)*

> In my church, they are now proud because if a person has a HIV problem they come. What they do not want in churches is condoms. Otherwise, when educating people on STIs, HIV/AIDS, family planning, and early pregnancies they are okay with it. *(Zambia peer educator)*


## C. Peer Educator Exit Interviews

The results of the peer educator exit interviews are displayed in Tables 4 and 5. In the ADOPLAFAM program, the results are presented for each of the two barrios that were examined. As shown in Table 4, the Madre Vieja barrio in the ADOPLAFAM program had the fewest exiting peer educators while the ProFamilia program had the most.

The reasons the peer educators reported leaving the program are presented in Table 5. Exiting peer educators we able to give more than one reason for leaving. In the Zambian programs, the reasons peer educators reported for leaving appear to be partly a result of the funding cuts these programs experienced. In contrast, the peer educators in the DR programs left because of more external factors such as going to school, having a baby, moving, or starting a job.


**Table 4.** Results from peer educator (PE) exit interviews

| YPE Program | SEPO Centre | YWCA | ADOPLAFAM | | ProFamilia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Lava Pie | Madre Vieja | Gualey and Espaillat |
| Number PEs exiting | 8 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 12 |
| Number of male PE | 3 (2 missing) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| Average age (years) | 26 | 26 | 16 | 18 | 18 |
| Average duration in program (years) | 4 years (2 missing) | 3 years (4 missing) | 2 years | 2 years | 2 years |

**Table 5.** Reasons PEs reported for leaving the program (multiple responses possible)

| YPE Program | SEPO Centre | YWCA | ADOPLAFAM | | ProFamilia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Lava Pie | Madre Vieja | Gualey and Espaillat |
| Had to leave/life transitions | 6 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 11 |
| Scheduling problems | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Illness/death in family | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Personal illness | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Parents discourage | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Transportation problems/cost too much | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Takes too much time | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Few/no incentives | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asked to leave | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Too little support | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Did not get along with other PEs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Lost interest | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Lack of opportunities | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Did not get along with program staff | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Embarrassed to talk about subject matter | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Had too little influence | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Created social difficulties with friends | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Program was not what was expected | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

## 2. COST ANALYSIS

## A. Program Costs

### DR Programs

The objective of the economic component was to calculate annual costs of YPE programs in four neighborhoods in the DR. Two of the neighborhood programs are administered by ProFamilia, and two are administered by ADOPLAFAM.

The unit of analysis was the program zone, defined as a neighborhood ("barrio") with a specific catchment area. In both ProFamilia and ADOPLAFAM, existing financial reporting systems were reviewed, and custom data collection forms for the economic component were produced. These forms were designed to be similar to the financial reporting formats already in use, and we requested the programs submit these reports to FHI on the same schedule as routine financial reports sent to USAID. Nearly all of the data needed for the economic component were assembled by program accountants from existing sources.

Main cost categories included personnel costs, which were divided into three subgroups: (1) payments to the local program supervisor in each barrio; (2) costs of administrative and support staff in the main office of each program; and (3) costs of volunteer labor associated with efforts of the peer

educators themselves. Volunteer labor was valued at the rate of 19.75 DR pesos per hour of work. This wage is based on the minimum wage in the DR and the programs use it to calculate the value of their volunteers' work. Although volunteer labor does not involve an actual cash outlay, it is nonetheless important to consider since peer educator labor is a resource that may eventually need to be paid from project funds.

A second main category was 'other expenditures', including all other recurrent costs such as educational materials, office supplies, transportation allowances, utilities, etc. Training costs comprised a third main category and included the trainer fee, venue rental, lodging and per diem for participants, and materials. These costs were calculated differently in the two organizations. ProFamilia reported one training line item, and this was divided evenly across the 24 neighborhoods in the USAID-funded program. ADOPLAFAM collected information on the cost of specific training sessions and the number of peer educators that attended these trainings. From these data, we calculated a cost per trainee, and multiplied by the number of trainings recorded during the year. The final main cost category was the annualized costs of capital, including equipment, furniture and other infrastructure having a useful life of more than one year.

Table 6 presents the results of the economic analysis in the DR. ADOPLAFAM costs per neighborhood were nearly twice as high as in the ProFamilia sites, and the main reason for this difference appears to be economies of scale that exist in ProFamilia's youth peer education program. While the ProFamilia peer education program actually is much larger and has higher total costs overall than the ADOPLAFAM program, ProFamilia distributes these costs over 24 sites, while the ADOPLAFAM program has only five sites. Economies of scale are the most obvious in costs of administrative personnel, training and other expenditures in the ADOPLAFAM program.

**Table 6.** Annual Costs of YPE by program, barrio and cost element (in DR Pesos)

| | ADOPLAFAM | | ProFamilia | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cost Element** | **Lava Pie** | **Madre Vieja** | **Gualey** | **Espaillat** |
| Personnel | | | | |
|   Educator/Multiplier | 36,000 | 36,000 | 26,965 | 26,965 |
|   Administrative | 101,373 | 101,373 | 50,982 | 50,982 |
|   Volunteer Labor | 43,608 | 54,984 | 75,600 | 75,600 |
| Other Expenditures | 111,498 | 109,601 | 15,544 | 15,544 |
| Training | 84,377 | 106,388 | 34,346 | 34,346 |
| Annualized Costs of Capital | 21,951 | 21,951 | 14,392 | 14,392 |
| | | | | |
| Total Financial Costs (RD$) | 355,199 | 375,313 | 142,229 | 142,229 |
| Total Non-Financial Costs* (RD$) | 43,608 | 54,984 | 75,600 | 75,600 |
| | | | | |
| **Total Cost (RD$)** | **398,807** | **430,297** | **217,829** | **217,829** |
| **Total Cost (US$)** | **$9,727** | **$10,495** | **$5,313** | **$5,313** |

*Non-Financial Costs include Volunteer Labor

The table also shows that all cost elements for the two ProFamilia sites are identical, while some of the cost elements in the ADOPLAFAM sites have are different values in the two neighborhoods. Two main reasons account for this difference: first, ProFamilia's program exhibits more uniformity in program structure across neighborhoods. For example, ProFamilia has the same number of peer educators in each barrio, while the number of peer educators in ADOPLAFAM barrios varies. A

second and related reason is that PROFAMILIA adopted more of a 'top-down' approach to costing its programs, while ADOPLAFAM's reporting system produced more detail by neighborhood.

## *Zambia Programs*

The objective of the economic component was to calculate annual costs of two Youth Peer Education programs in Zambia: YWCA in Lusaka and SEPO Center in Livingstone.

The unit of analysis was the program. In both programs, staff members were interviewed using the instrument developed for the DR costing study as a guide. The notes were then summarized by FHI research staff and sent electronically to the coordinators of each program for review.

Main cost categories included personnel costs, which was divided into three subgroups: (1) costs of administrative and support staff of each program; (2) the costs associated with providing tokens of appreciation to peer educators; and (3) the imputed costs for those not receiving compensation for their work.

Ten of the 30 peer educators in the YWCA program receive a token of appreciation for their work (50,000 Zambian Kwacha per month or approximately US$10.75/month). If funding permits, the YWCA program would like to provide the same compensation to the remaining 20 peer educators. The SEPO program currently does not have the funds to provide any payment to their peer educators, though it would like to provide them a small token of appreciation, if the funding becomes available. In addition, the SEPO program has one adult coordinator who volunteers for the peer education program. Although unpaid and volunteer labor does not involve an actual cash outlay, it is nonetheless important to consider since this labor is a resource that may eventually need to be paid from project funds.

Using YWCA's peer educator compensation as a reference point, a token of 74,984 Kwacha per month (approximately US$16/month) was calculated for the SEPO peer educators. This compensation is higher than that of the YWCA peer educators because the peer educators in the SEPO program are expected to work more hours per week than those in YWCA. The volunteer coordinator's rate was valued based on the rate for another coordinator who is paid by the program.

A second main category was 'other expenditures' including all other recurrent costs such as educational materials, office supplies, transportation allowances, utilities, and contraceptives. The SEPO program purchases and sells at-cost male and female condoms. Donated media time is the next category displayed. Peer educators in the YWCA program receive donated time to present their messages on several local radio stations and newspapers. These businesses were asked to provide the retail value of these placements. The SEPO program did not receive such contributions.

Training costs comprised a fourth main category and included the trainer fee, venue rental, refreshments, transportation and materials. Both programs collected information on the cost of specific training sessions and the number of peer educators that attended these trainings. From these data, we calculated a cost per trainee, and multiplied by the number of trainings recorded during the year. The final main cost category was the annualized costs of capital, including equipment, furniture and other infrastructure having a useful life of more than one year.

Table 7 displays the results of the economic analysis of the two Zambian programs. Again, these costs include estimated costs for in-kind and donated materials and volunteer labor and therefore are higher than the actual financial expenditures of these programs.

The estimated annual cost of the SEPO Centre program is $10,000 more than the estimated cost of the YWCA program. A similar difference was observed between the financial costs of the two programs. Looking at the financial costs, YWCA spends more on administrative costs while the SEPO program has substantially higher 'Other Expenditure' costs.

The difference in 'Other Expenditures' can be partially explained by the numerous male and female condoms (approximately 60 cases of each) that are distributed by the SEPO peer educators each month, an activity that the YWCA peer educators do not conduct. Additionally, more fuel is consumed each month for the SEPO peer educator activities compared to the YWCA activities (data not shown). This last finding may be a function of SEPO Centre's location in semi-urban Livingstone where the YPE program's catchment area is more spread out compared to the YWCA's catchment area located in the capital city, Lusaka.

While unpaid labor is not currently paid by the program, these costs may have to be incurred in the future to keep peer educators participating in the program. The SEPO program has higher estimated costs for unpaid and volunteer labor than the YWCA program because SEPO has more of this type of personnel who are expected to work more hours per year.

**Table 7.** Annual Costs of YPE, by program and cost element (in 2005 Zambian Kwacha)

| Cost Element | YWCA | SEPO |
|---|---|---|
| Personnel | | |
|    Administrative | 32,997,115 | 9,300,000 |
|    Paid Peer Educators | 6,000,000 | 0 |
|    Unpaid/Volunteer Labor | 4,499,040 | 22,495,968 |
| Other Expenditures | 28,035,000 | 115,788,000 |
| Donated Media | 23,032,000 | 0 |
| Training | 22,600,000 | 14,000,000 |
| Annualized Costs of Capital | 620,015 | 2,904,372 |
| | | |
| Total Financial Costs (Kwacha) | 90,252,131 | 141,992,372 |
| Total Non-Financial Costs* (Kwacha) | 27,531,040 | 22,495,968 |
| | | |
| **Total Cost (Kwacha)** | **117,783,171** | **164,488,340** |
| **Total Cost (US$)** | **25,330** | **35,374** |

 *Non-Financial Costs include Unpaid/Volunteer Labor and Donated Media. However, some non-financial
 costs are also found in the expenditures, training and capital categories.


## B. Activities and Outputs

In this section, we describe the activities and outputs that are produced by the peer education programs. The data are derived from activity logs completed by the peer educators in each program.

*Data collection*

The peer educators recorded their activities over varying amounts of time. There was more variability in the reporting time period among the Zambian peer educators (range: 1.5-11.5 weeks) compared to then those completed by the DR peer educators (range: 4.1-4.3 weeks).

It is important to keep in mind the relatively short time the peer educators recorded data when extrapolating this data to a year. Although we do not believe that the time when the peer educators recorded this data was substantially different from other times of the year in terms of the number of activities conducted, it is possible that over the course of a year slight variations in activity level around holidays and other seasonal events may exist.

Eighty-eight peer educators completed activity logs for this study. Twenty-six peer educators completed logs in the Zambian programs (18 from SEPO and 8 from YWCA) and 62 peer educators completed logs in the DR programs (32 from ADOPLAFAM and 30 from ProFamilia). Unfortunately, four peer educators from YWCA did not include the dates they conducted activities and therefore they have been excluded from the results presented in Table 8. These peer educators, however, did record other pertinent information and are included in Tables 9, 10, and 11.

### Overview of activities and outputs

Table 8 presents the peer educators' average inputs, activities and outputs for each program studied. These data are averages and displayed per day and per year.

To extrapolate the data to a year, the proportion of days each individual peer educator worked was calculated based on their activity log data. Since peer educators, even within programs, work varying amounts of time it was necessary to find an individual value for each peer educator. The proportion of time each peer educator worked was determined by dividing the number of days the individual reported working by the number of days they recorded data in the log. The resulting proportion was multiplied by 365 to determine the total number of days each peer educator works per year. The total number of days worked per year was then multiplied by the 'per day' values of the inputs, activities, and outputs presented in Table 8. Lastly, the average was taken across each program.

Overall, the Zambian peer educators reported working more hours, performing more activities, covering more topics and contacting more participants than the peer educators in the DR programs. However, when looking at the programs themselves an interesting trend emerges: peer educators from the two programs located in capital cities and more urban environments, ProFamilia and YWCA, reported working more hours and contacting more participants than the two programs located in more rural locales, namely ADOPLAFAM and SEPO.

### Types of participants contacted

We asked the peer educators to record the number of participants in each activity and the number of males, females, and new or first-time participants. Peer educators, especially in the Zambian programs, often conduct activities with large groups of participants in schools or in their communities. The groups can sometimes be so large that it is hard to count everyone. In these cases, we asked the peer educators to make an educated guess about the number of people participating.

Unfortunately, too few peer educators in Zambia recorded the gender of their participants for the analysis to be valid. However, looking at the output data from the DR, it appears that peer educators in the DR programs are reaching more female than male participants and fewer of their contacts are with new or first-time participants. This latter finding makes sense given that both programs in the DR are structured so that the peer educators conduct multiple formal activities with the same participants (called 'beneficiaries') over time.

Table 9 presents additional information about the nature of the peer education activities, namely the average number of peer educators present at an activity, the type of participants and the location of activities.

As the data in this table demonstrate, more peer educators were present during activities in the Zambian programs compared to the DR programs.  For the most part, peer educators in the ADOPLAFAM program appeared to conduct their activities alone.

In addition to their planned activities, peer educators sometimes provide advice or knowledge about RH or HIV/AIDS to their close friends and family members during non-working hours.  In an effort to measure these types of activities, the peer educators were asked to indicate their relationship to the participants during the activities.  The three categories of relationships were: *primary, secondary* and *tertiary* participants.  Primary participants are family members or friends of the peer educators.  Secondary participants are people that the peer educators know.  Tertiary participants are people the peer educators do not know.

It is possible that different types of participants may be present during an activity.  For example, a peer educator may conduct an activity with a group of people some of whom he/she knows and others he/she does not know.  In this case, the peer educator recorded both codes for secondary and tertiary participants for this activity.

In all four programs examined, the peer education activities contained a higher proportion of secondary participants (people they knew) than primary or tertiary participants.  This finding was much more prevalent in the DR programs, where over 70% of the activities contained at least one secondary participant.  Activities in the SEPO program contained the highest proportion of primary participants (friends and family) compared to the other programs studied.  Activities conducted by ADOPLAFAM peer educators contained the highest proportion of tertiary participants (people they did not know).

### Location of contacts

As Table 9 reveals, the community or barrio was one of the most common locations for peer education activities across all the programs studied.  Indeed, the most prevalent locations for activities among the DR peer educators were the community (67%) and school (20%).  Among the Zambian programs, the most prevalent locales for SEPO activities were the home (26%) and community (25%), and for YWCA activities the school (30%) and the community (28%).  It is important to note that a substantial number of activities occurred in clinics for the two Zambian programs (13%) and ProFamilia (10%).

### Type of contacts or activities

Table 10 presents the distribution of peer educator activities by program.  Discussion groups, lectures, workshops and home visits were the most frequently reported activities by the peer educators in this study.  All of these activities, while called by different names by the programs, involve the peer educators providing information in a formal session.  Peer educators in the ADOPLAFAM program reported conducting home visits more frequently than any other program.

Peer educators in the two urban programs, YWCA and ProFamilia, reported attending meetings more frequently than the other two programs.  SEPO peer educators reported conducting more counseling activities whereas YWCA peer educators reported performing more outreach activities compared to the other programs studied.

*Informal or spontaneous contacts*

Peer educators in the two DR programs reported more encounters than the Zambian peer educators. Encounters are spontaneous or informal activities where the peer educator provides information about RH or HIV/AIDS. For example, a peer educator may be approached while walking down the street and asked a question about HIV. Or, while hanging out with friends, a peer educator may provide information about RH. Follow-up on the low informal contact figures revealed that Zambians take a more formal attitude towards their role as peer educator and very likely under-reported these 'off-duty' encounters. In addition, since this type of activity comes naturally to many peer educators, encounters were probably the hardest activity to remember and record on the log. Considerable effort was made during the training of the activity log instrument to encourage peer educators to recognize and record such encounters. Nevertheless, the data on encounters may be under-representative of the actual time spent on this activity.

*Topics covered*

Table 11 displays the topics covered during the peer education activities. Peer educators often covered more than one topic per activity; therefore, the percentages in Table 11 do not add up to 100 percent. All four programs covered HIV/AIDS and pregnancy prevention frequently in their peer education activities. However, in SEPO program the topic of HIV/AIDS was covered during half of the activities performed. In contrast, almost half of the activities conducted by the peer educators in ADOPLAFAM were about pregnancy prevention. YWCA and ProFamilia reported more diversity in the topics covered during their peer education activities compared to the other two programs. Pregnancy prevention, contraceptive methods other than condoms, and sexuality were topics frequently covered by ProFamilia peer educators. Interestingly, child abuse was the most frequently reported topic covered by YWCA peer educators.

Though it might be tempting to summarize the cost and output data by dividing the program costs by the number of contacts made by the peer educators in each program, such a summary would be inappropriate because it would assign equal weight to all types of contacts. In other words, the summary would assume the quality of instruction when contacted in a large group is equal to the quality of a one-on-one counseling session. The results, therefore, would favor programs that conduct activities with large groups over those programs that provide more one-on-one instruction like the DR programs.

Phase 2 of the study will examine the impact of YPE programs on behavior (a separate study not part of this report). The instruments developed in Phase 1 to measure program dynamics, outputs, activities, and costs will be used in conjunction with measurements of program exposures and outcomes in targeted youth populations. Associations between these program aspects and exposure/outcomes will be analyzed to understand the antecedents of YPE effectiveness.

**Table 8.** Peer educator inputs, activities, and outputs per day and year by program

| YPE Program | SEPO Centre n=21 | | YWCA n=30 | | Both Zambian programs n=51 | | ADOPLAFAM n=52 | | ProFamilia n=80 | | Both DR programs n=132 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Per PE per day* | *Per PE per year\** | *Per PE per day* | *Per PE per year\** | *Per PE per day* | *Per PE per year\** | *Per PE per day* | *Per PE per year\** | *Per PE per day* | *Per PE per year\** | *Per PE per day* | *Per PE per year\** |
| **Inputs** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Average # of hours spent working | 1.07 | 155.39 | 1.38 | 81.62 | 1.13 | 141.98 | 0.62 | 34.66 | 1.47 | 154.35 | 1.03 | 92.57 |
| **Activities** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Average # activities | 1.40 | 191.44 | 1.00 | 59.63 | 1.33 | 167.48 | 1.17 | 66.54 | 1.01 | 104.05 | 1.09 | 84.69 |
| Average # topics | 1.37 | 184.69 | 1.09 | 65.40 | 1.32 | 163.00 | 1.11 | 63.11 | 1.14 | 118.31 | 1.12 | 89.82 |
| **Outputs** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Average # of participants contacted | 12 | 1,910 | 54 | 3,167 | 20 | 2,149 | 9 | 478 | 11 | 1,155 | 10 | 806 |
| Average # of *male* participants contacted | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3 | 175 | 5 | 488 | 4 | 326 |
| Average # of *female* participants contacted | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 5 | 295 | 6 | 667 | 6 | 475 |
| Average # of *new* attendees | n/a | n/a | 0.68 | 40 | n/a | n/a | 2 | 111 | 1 | 160 | 2 | 135 |

Note: The *n's* presented are the number of peer educators in the programs, not the number of participants who completed activity logs. The number of peer educators who completed logs is: SEPO n=18, YWCA n=4, ADOPLAFAM n=32, ProFamilia n=30.

N/A is used when there are too many missing values.

*The data were extrapolated to a year by calculating the proportion of days each peer educator worked. First, the number of days each peer educator reported working was divided by the number of days they recorded data in the activity log. This proportion was multiplied by 365 to determine the total number of days each peer educator works per year. The result was then multiplied by the 'per day' values, and lastly, the average was taken across each program.

**Table 9.** Reported peer educator activities by type of participant contacted and locality by program

| Type of participant & locality | SEPO Centre | YWCA | Both Zambian programs | ADOPLAFAM | ProFamilia | Both DR programs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of activities reported | 159 | 98 | 257 | 156 | 252 | 408 |
| Average number of PE present at each activity | 4.9 | 2.5 | 3.9 | 1.0 | 3.4 | 2.5 |
| **Percent of activities that contained (%):** | | | | | | |
| Primary participants* | 35.5 | 13.5 | 27.0 | 0 | 14.3 | 8.8 |
| Secondary participants | 55.9 | 57.3 | 56.5 | 67.3 | 75.0 | 72.1 |
| Tertiary participants | 38.8 | 36.5 | 37.9 | 43.0 | 19.1 | 28.2 |
| **Locations where activities occur (%):** | | | | | | |
| Clinic | 13.6 | 12.4 | 13.2 | 0 | 10.3 | 6.4 |
| Market | 12.3 | 6.2 | 10.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Project office | 13.6 | 7.2 | 11.2 | 0 | 6.8 | 4.2 |
| Home | 26.0 | 9.3 | 19.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Community/Barrio | 24.7 | 27.8 | 25.9 | 78.9 | 59.9 | 67.2 |
| Shop | 2.0 | 0 | 1.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Town centre | 0.7 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Street | 3.3 | 0 | 2.0 | 0 | 0.4 | 0.3 |
| Church | 2.6 | 2.1 | 2.4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Park | 1.3 | 0 | 0.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Radio | 0 | 3.1 | 1.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| School | 0 | 29.9 | 11.6 | 21.2 | 19.4 | 20.1 |
| Bus stop | 0 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| University | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3.2 | 2.0 |

Note: The number of peer educators who completed logs are:  SEPO n=18, YWCA n=8, ADOPLAFAM n=32, ProFamilia n=30.

*Primary participants are family members or friends of the peer educators.  Secondary participants are people the peer educators know.  Tertiary participants are people the peer educators do not know.  More than one 'type' of participant may be present during an activity.

**Table 10.** Distribution of peer educator activities by program (in %)

| Type of activity | SEPO Centre | YWCA | Both Zambian programs | ADOPLAFAM | ProFamilia | Both DR programs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Informal encounters | 0.6 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 29.5 | 16.7 | 21.6 |
| Distribute materials | 15.7 | 4.1 | 11.3 | 12.8 | 6.8 | 9.1 |
| Referrals | 10.7 | 2.0 | 7.4 | 0 | 4.8 | 2.9 |
| Discussion groups | 45.9 | 38.8 | 43.2 | 0 | 7.5 | 4.7 |
| Performance (skit, play, song) | 7.6 | 18.4 | 11.7 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.5 |
| Lectures & workshops | 2.5 | 0 | 1.6 | 21.2 | 35.3 | 29.9 |
| Outreach activities | 4.4 | 13.3 | 7.8 | 0 | 1.6 | 1.0 |
| Participate in radio or TV | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Counseling | 16.4 | 7.1 | 12.8 | 0 | 2.8 | 1.7 |
| Home visits | 0 | 0 | 0 | 48.7 | 2.8 | 20.3 |
| Training sessions or days | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.4 | 2.7 |
| Meetings | 0 | 11.2 | 4.3 | 0 | 12.3 | 7.6 |
| PE team building activities | 0 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 0 | 1.6 | 1.0 |
| Preparation (posters, rehearsal, etc) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.5 |
| One to one discussions | 0.6 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 0 | 0.4 | 0.3 |
| Other | 23.3 | 0 | 14.4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Note: The number of peer educators who completed logs are:  SEPO n=18, YWCA n=8, ADOPLAFAM n=32, ProFamilia n=30.

Percents do not add up to 100% because more than one activity could occur at the same time, i.e., distribute condoms during an outreach activity.

**Table 11.** Topics covered in peer educator activities by program (in %)

| Topics covered | SEPO Centre | YWCA | Both Zambian programs | ADOPLAFAM | ProFamilia | Both DR programs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HIV, AIDS, STI | 50.3 | 13.3 | 36.2 | 37.2 | 13.5 | 22.6 |
| Pregnancy prevention | 10.7 | 7.1 | 9.3 | 47.4 | 17.9 | 29.2 |
| Condoms | 25.8 | 8.2 | 19.1 | 3.2 | 6.8 | 5.4 |
| Other contraceptive methods | 9.4 | 6.1 | 8.2 | 0 | 14.7 | 9.1 |
| Abstinence | 0 | 2.0 | 0.8 | 0 | 1.6 | 1.0 |
| Communicating with partners | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| Gender issues | 0 | 4.1 | 1.6 | 0 | 1.2 | 0.7 |
| Sexuality | 0 | 3.1 | 1.2 | 0 | 14.7 | 9.1 |
| Being an adolescent | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9.0 | 10.3 | 9.8 |
| Self-esteem and life skills | 0 | 12.2 | 4.7 | 7.7 | 5.6 | 6.4 |
| Family communication | 0 | 2.0 | 0.8 | 0 | 2.8 | 1.7 |
| Stigma and discrimination | 0 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 0 | 2.0 | 1.2 |
| Drugs/alcohol | 0.6 | 6.1 | 2.7 | 0 | 1.2 | 0.7 |
| Gender violence | 0 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 0 | 7.9 | 4.9 |
| Child abuse | 0 | 22.5 | 8.6 | 0 | 0.4 | 0.3 |
| Other | 26.4 | 16.3 | 22.6 | 0 | 9.5 | 5.9 |

Note: The number of peer educators who completed logs are:  SEPO n=18, YWCA n=8, ADOPLAFAM n=32, ProFamilia n=30.

Percents do not add up to 100% because more than one topic could be covered at the same time.

# CONCLUSIONS

The objectives for Phase 1 of the study were to uncover the universal or core components of YPE and to use the results to develop instruments for use in the Phase 2 effectiveness study. The study found key components that were universal to the four programs examined in Zambia and the Dominican Republic. In addition, it was found that a single version of the checklists and other instruments was applicable to both countries after validation. This was unexpected because of the cultural and geographical diversity between the two countries. During Phase 2, the instruments will be field-tested and a guide will be developed for their use.

The study examined, but did not measure, factors contributing to the long-term sustainability of the programs. It goes without question that a program cannot be sustained without ensured long-term financing. Nonetheless, the sustainability and success of programs also depends on the ability of local organizations, communities, and individuals to develop, implement, and support programs over time. The Zambian programs were hit by funding cuts just before data collection began, and this crisis allowed an examination of the non-financial influences on peer educator retention and motivation. In short, the Zambian programs were able to continue a number of activities because of the strong community support they established and the commitment from the peer educators. However, the crisis revealed underlying and problematic dynamics affecting cooperation within the program, particularly the youth-adult partnerships.

The study found YPE programs to be people-intensive and dependent upon cooperation among many actors and institutions. The 'work force' is composed primarily of adolescent and youth volunteers who can join and leave a program with little obligation. Their retention, motivation and productivity are critical to the programs success. Until this study, these processes were not well understood and there were no objective instruments to measure them. This lack of information created difficulties in generalizing research or evaluation findings from one program to another. In consequence, the scale-up and replication of promising YPE programs were often based on the importation of models, manuals and experienced trainers. For this reason, a considerable portion of this report concerned findings on YPE processes and their measurement. The resulting instruments can be found in Appendix B.

## 1. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT

The study found that broad community support is critical to program productivity and sustainability because it increases the motivation of youth peer educators and their parents, the responsiveness of the program to the community, and access to community institutions and their youth audiences; it even sustains a program through economic hardship (e.g. Zambia programs). Community support affects not only a program as an organization but also the individual peer educators. In addition, the data support the premise that community-based YPE is a product *and* a method of community mobilization. If a community mobilizes around its young people and has sufficient funding, it can initiate a process perpetuated by the ongoing recruitment and training of its youth as peer educators.

The mobilization process can affect not only a targeted youth audience but also the adults and institutions involved in a YPE program through giving its young people a voice and a platform. The interviews suggest that such a mobilization needs ongoing nurturing by a YPE program and must be sustained through a multi-sectored response. The multi-sectored response includes decision makers, stakeholders, FBOs, CBOs, institutions such as schools and health services, and parents.

An overview of the results and recommendations is presented below.

**Broad community support is critical to program sustainability**
- Decision makers must:
  - ✓ Understand program goals and philosophy
  - ✓ Support program goals and philosophy
  - ✓ Advocate community involvement and see its benefits
  - ✓ Feel they are involved and can influence program progress
  - ✓ Have a program contact person and consistent communication

- Programs should:
  - ✓ Organize or participate in joint community-level activities
  - ✓ Provide outreach and active collaboration with FBOs
  - ✓ Focus on abstinence and faithfulness as well as condom use
  - ✓ Collaborate actively with RH, HIV/AIDS/STI and other health services

**Stakeholder support and collaboration is vital**
- Stakeholders should be knowledgeable about a program's model, work plans and activities (transparency)
- The stakeholder and the program should:
  - ✓ Cooperate to avoid duplication of activities in same area
  - ✓ Meet regularly and carry out joint YPE initiatives
  - ✓ Share resources and information among their peer educators
  - ✓ Share a vision and agenda to promote local young people and their wellbeing

**Direct parent support and involvement is vital to YPE**
Parents need to:
- Understand program goals and philosophy
- Support program goals and philosophy
- Support their children's involvement and see benefits for them
- See benefits for the community in involving their child
- Perceive they are involved and can influence the program
- Have a program contact person and consistent communication

## 2. TECHNICAL FRAMEWORKS

YPE programs need sound technical frameworks and the basic requirements are the same as with any type of effective RH or HIV/AIDS prevention program. However, YPE does have unique demands because it directly involves adolescents and youth. The following is an overview of basic requirements as derived from the study.

Basic YPE requirements include:

- Clearly defined goals and objectives
- A clearly defined youth audience
- Interventions based upon behavioral and social science theory or evidence-based experience
- A focus on specific risk behaviors
- Ample opportunities for peer educators to practice relevant skills

YPE programs carry out a range of innovative activities to reach young people. These activities should:

- Have realistic schedules
- Be imbedded in the youth audience and the community
- Be clearly defined for both staff and peer educators
- Be sensitive to young people's needs
- Have adequately trained and supervised peer educators

There are wide variations in YPE organizational structures. For instance, the Zambian programs were one component of larger organizational structures. The Dominican programs were based at NGOs using YPE as the core of several RH/HIV/AIDS community initiatives throughout the country. Regardless of the type of organizational structure, YPE programs need the following organizational elements:

- Accountability, and administrative support at the highest levels
- An organizational culture supportive to YPE
- Sufficient funding for adequate peer educator training and supervision
- *Organizational* placement in the community and target audience
- Administrators who are flexible and open to youth input

Responsiveness to the youth audience and community is essential to YPE because that is where the peer educators are recruited and carry out activities. It needs to be built into YPE technical frameworks and not be viewed as an 'add-on' or as supplementary to it. YPE technical frameworks should include the following:

- Program priorities that are defined by the youth audience and community
- Recruitment of youth who are representative and culturally competent
- Integration of gender equality and equity into training and activities
- Involvement of peer educators at all levels and stages of decision making
- Strategy and planning to develop balanced youth-adult partnerships

## 3. YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

The major conclusion to be derived from the study is that youth involvement is critical for peer educator retention, motivation, and productivity. This is not a matter of the peer educators taking control but describes the degree of empowerment given by program adults. This process should increase their decision-making skills, self-esteem, motivation, and proficiency in carrying out their responsibilities. This requires the proper training and supervision of peer educators so that they are able to conduct the decision-making and implementations expected of them. Additionally, young people need to be viewed as having valid experience regardless of their age. It may require training adults in how to work with young people and youth participation.

To volunteer and remain in a program, peer educators need inducements and incentives. To help the reader understand, we first present a list of key motivators and 'de-motivators' as reported by the peer educators. The list is categorized into community and family, program and personal levels. Motivators are bulleted with a '+' symbol and de-motivators with a '-'symbol.

Community and family level
+ Helping other young people and contributing to their community

+ Gaining respect and being a leader within the community and among peers
+ Parental support and encouragement
+ Support and new friendships with youth and adults in the field

− Dissatisfied or poorly informed parents withdraw peer educator from program

Program level
+ Support and encouragement from staff
+ Respected and valued by staff
+ Sense of fairness and equal treatment from staff
+ Sense of program ownership through involvement in decision-making
+ Support and friendship within the peer educator group
+ Gender equity and equality in the program
+ Small cash incentives or tokens of appreciation (T-shirts, certificates, badges, lunch)

− Poor program management creating confusion and uncertainty
− Staff not respectful of young people
− Not being taken seriously by staff
− Being a program token, decoration or being manipulated by adults
− Staff taking credit for peer educator activities
− Favoritism practiced by staff that creates disharmony among the peer educators
− Non-representation in program decision-making, planning and implementation
− Lack of proper training, supervision and emotional support
− Distrust and lack of transparency in the program
− Conflict or disharmony among peer educator group
− Unfair cash or in-kind incentives

Personal level
+ Self-development and gaining new skills
+ Feeling of achievement from their work
+ Interest in program issues and subjects (RH, sexuality, HIV/AIDS)

− Burn-out due to difficult cases and situations

## 4. YOUTH DYNAMICS

The least understood and perhaps most sensitive component of YPE is youth dynamics. Without well-chosen and well-trained peer educators, there is no YPE program. A considerable portion of the checklists and their items concern cooperation between youth peer educators and program staff, parents, intermediaries and stakeholders. Teamwork among the peer educators and across genders is also vital. As the interface between the world of adults and youth, YPE programs have the responsibility for guiding and facilitating cooperation.

Providing support and supervision to young people in YPE programs is very time intensive. A program coordinator not only oversees the peer educators, but also has contacts with decision makers, administrators, educational and medical professionals, parents and young people in the field. He or she needs to be experienced with young people, understand their spirit, and be well supported by the organization. *All* staff working in YPE need appropriate training. This includes knowledge of adolescent health and development, gender roles, program development and youth culture. They need

skills in conflict resolution, leadership, consensus building and in developing balanced youth-adult partnerships.

**Youth-adult partnerships**

The study found balanced youth-adult partnerships to be based on these building blocks:

- Direct youth involvement
- Open communication
- Trustworthiness
- Mutual respect
- Adult support
- Reciprocity

Youth-adult partnerships are operational and critical at all levels in a program and include peer educators, trainers, coordinators, management and intermediaries. It is a balancing process that needs to be shaped and facilitated by adults because they tend to have the upper hand in the relationship. Moreover, young people only pass through the program as peer educators and the adult staff remains.

**Youth involvement, gender equity and peer educator cooperation**

Youth involvement, gender equity and equality, and cooperation within the peer educator team were found to be critical to motivation and retention. Below are summaries of the conclusions and specific recommendations.

Youth involvement:
- PEs need a clear understanding of how and why they conduct activities.
- Youth should be involved at all stages including the design and development of materials and implementations.
- Input of youth needs to be taken seriously. No 'Youth are too immature and uninformed'.
- Budgets should be transparent and youth should be taught how to prioritize.
- Management decision making needs to be transparent if youth are not directly involved.
- Manipulation, decoration, and tokenism lead to low motivation and drop-outs.
- Programs must have an atmosphere of trust, respect and sympathy.

Gender equity and equality:
- Gender equality and equity should be included in training and supervision as a staple.
- Gender equality and equity need to be guided and promoted within the program by staff.
- Gender sensitivity needs to be taught for proper application in field settings (e.g. role-playing).
- Issues of gender violence, abuse and their causes need to be included in training and supervision.
- Open and respectful discussions among the peer educators about gender and gender roles and their association with sexual and reproductive health should be facilitated.
- Programs should aim for a critical consciousness among the peer educators about gender and gender roles.

Cooperation within the peer educator team:

- Teamwork skills should be taught and promoted.
- Gender equity and equality should be promoted including equal burdens and mixed sex activities.
- Guidance on conflict resolution must be taught.
- Peer education requires an appreciation of human diversity and work in an atmosphere of trust, cooperation and reciprocity.
- Peer educators should have a shared vision and commitment to the program and its goals.
- Group and recreational activities should be included to facilitate peer educator bonding.
- Favoritism by adults must be avoided because it breeds resentment, conflict, rebellion and confusion.

## 5. YPE AS A LEADERSHIP AND CITIZENSHIP TOOL

The first concern of donors and policy makers was that programs were carried out productively and effectively. The greatest barriers to this were considered the lack of standards or guidelines for YPE and inadequate funding. This and other studies attempt to address this concern, but governments also have an opportunity to address this as part of youth policy making.

A second concern or issue for donors and policy makers was that YPE is an untapped and often wasted resource. Hundreds of young people are recruited and trained every year as health promoters and youth advocates and leaders. Without follow-up or a national strategy these trained and experienced young people become a wasted resource once they leave the program. The financial and human investment made in their training and supervision is considerable and usually covered by international donors. These young people have not only acquired knowledge and leadership skills, but have also learned to apply them as active citizens engaged in civil society. This is, perhaps, the most valuable resource.

- Trained and experienced youth peer educators are a valuable community resource that is underutilized once they leave a program – follow-up strategies are needed.
- YPE needs to be systemic and integrated into policymaking and planning at local, regional and national levels.
- Youth organizations, councils and networks are needed at local, regional and national levels to give young people a platform and voice in developing their societies.

## 6. PRODUCTIVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Phase 1 was conducted with a view towards examining YPE productivity and sustainability. Productivity is a way to measure the effectiveness of resource utilization as achieved through the management of a program or 'system'. It is measured as the ratio of service outcomes and costs (e.g. resources) consumed to produce these services. As this study confirms, community-based YPE is a complex 'system' functioning on several levels and with numerous contributing factors.

When looking at the cost analysis and activity log data together a trend emerges: the two peer education programs located in capital cities report work more hours and contact more participants at lower costs than the two programs located in semi-urban locales. These results appear to be a function of at least two factors. First, in the DR, ADOPLAFAM costs per neighborhood were higher than ProFamilia costs. The main reason is economies of scale in the costs of administrative personnel and training that allow programs to distributes these costs over more sites. The second factor is that

urban locations provide programs access to larger audiences at lower costs (time and transportation) compared to less urban locales.  It simply takes less time to travel to make a contact in urban areas.

Data from the peer educator exit interviews coupled with the findings from the peer educator cooperation FGDs revealed that YPE programs that nurture more equal youth-adult partnerships and involve youth in decision-making are able to keep their volunteer peer educators in the program, and thus may improve the productivity and sustainability of the program. In addition, we learned from the Zambian programs that sustained funding of programs by donors is essential to providing the proper training, supervision, and incentives in resource-constrained settings. Strong community support and dedicated youth peer educators seems to only help a program limp along with the risk of burn-out.

Lastly, the data reveal that there are considerable variations between YPE programs in the terms of the number of activities carried out, type of participants, nature of the contacts, locality, topics covered, and costs. The actual effects on the targeted young people remain unknown. In Phase 2, the study will examine exposure to YPE programs in target audiences and any effects on indicators. The instruments developed and lessons learned in Phase 1 will be applied in monitoring these programs' dynamics, costs and outputs. In addition to impact, the results of Phase 2 will also shed light on the important question of whether the funding spent on YPE programs, including the costs of training peer educators, is worth the output.

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