

Together Alive Youth Link (TAYL)

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2.1 AIM

The ultimate aim of the TAYL is to work with both local and international organizations on issues concerning HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases among youth and women.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

- To mobilize youth and women in the fight against HIV/AIDS through advocacy, research, counseling, and increased accessibility to drugs and treatment.
- To address the youth and women about the dangers of prostitution, early marriage, and casual sex.
- To support the youth and women in the fight against poverty, hopelessness and human rights abuse.
- To create a global youth community by connecting the youth of different nations through the internet, media, conferences, seminars, and cultural exchanges.
- To promote talents and cultural values among diverse groups of youth and women.

Together Alive Youth Link

Uganda is widely heralded for its success in reducing HIV prevalence. The success of Uganda is generally attributed to its extensive ABC (Abstinence, Be faithful/reduce partners, use Condoms) campaigns promoting abstinence, fidelity, behavior change, and condom utilization. Paradoxically, the widely acclaimed reduction in Uganda's national HIV prevalence rate may have predisposed youth to be less vigilant in protecting themselves and their partners from HIV infection.

While knowledge levels about HIV/AIDS among young people in Uganda remains high, and while researchers have observed both an increase in age of sexual debut and a reduction in premarital sexual activity¹, there is a danger that risk perception of HIV infection has decreased among Youth².

Cross-generational and transactional sex remains widespread. Cross-generational sex, defined here as sex between a young person 15-24 years of age and an adult who is 10 or more years his/her senior, and transactional sex, defined here as sex provided by adolescent females in exchange for gifts, favors, or money, continue to place adolescent girls at risk. Both undermine the power of young women and men to negotiate safer sex, which heightens their vulnerability to HIV infection, sexual violence, and continues to fuel the spread of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa³. Teenage girls in Uganda are six times more likely than teenage boys to become HIV infected. Among girls 15-19 years of age, the risk of HIV infection doubles for those women with male partners that are ten or more years their senior⁴.

Couples rarely test before marriage and often enter into marriage without knowing their own or their partner's status. Across all ethnic groups there is a strong social pressure for young brides to prove fertility early in the marriage, thus newly wed couples usually refrain from using condoms in order to bear children immediately⁵. In marriage, young wives have little negotiating power regarding sexual behavior and practices, putting them at greater risk of contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

TAYL fully endorses the programming principles for behavior change among youth in regards to HIV/AIDS outlined in the 27th November, 2004 issue of *Lancet* and reprinted in the 9th February, 2005 issue of the *New Vision*, which highlighted three programming principles in collaboration with Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD):

- Pragmatic approaches are to be locally endorsed, relevant to the indigenous social and cultural context, and respectful of human rights. Interventions are to be epidemiologically grounded, addressing the main sources of new infections.
- The ABC approach can play a role reducing the prevalence of HIV as a generalized epidemic. All the elements of ABC are essential to reducing HIV, although the emphasis placed on individual elements needs to vary according to the target population.
- Community-based approaches involving religious organizations, women and men's associations, care groups, youth organizations, health workers, local media, and both traditional and governmental leadership are an important factor in fostering new norms of sexual behavior. Prevention programs are to address issues such as stigma, gender inequality, sexual coercion, cross-generational relationships and transactional sex, and directly involve people living with HIV/AIDS in order to maximally achieve the behavioral objectives necessary to reduce HIV incidence at the population level.

TAYL works in the effort to raise the HIV risk perception among the Uganda's youth and affect their preventive behaviors. Successful and replicable methods for meeting the needs of out-of-school youth are desired. Grant funded interventions are intended to capitalize on insights TAYL has gained in past work.

Start early: Reaching youth during early adolescence (10-14) is most effective to promote delay of sexual debut through life skills programs. Sexually active adolescents will be reached with 'secondary abstinence' promotion, using role influential models.

Increase risk perception and self-esteem: A high perception of risk combined with low sense of self-esteem can lead to hopelessness and inaction. Innovative interventions increase realistic perception of personal risk among youth. Meanwhile building self-esteem reduces that risk.

Parent and adult-to-child communication: Most studies of adolescents have shown that communication with parents and other influential adults helps children avoid risk-taking behaviors. Parents themselves need education and awareness of the risks their children face, and the risks they create in perpetuating gender imbalances. Parents should be taught how to communicate effectively with their children about sensitive issues such adolescent sexuality, risk-taking behavior, and HIV prevention. Strengthening adult-to-child communication and guidance among traditional authorities, law enforcement officials, health workers, teachers, and other adults is beneficial.

Peer influence: Peer pressure can have both positive and negative effects. HIV/AIDS peer education programs take advantage of this. Peer education is often conducted as a pure information/education exchange and tends not to be interactive or stimulate introspection or assessment of personal risk. Our innovation programs address this shortcoming, as well as address issues such as the risks associated with cross-generational and transactional sex, alcohol and drug abuse.

Partner communication training: Perceived gender differences often lead to lack of communication about sexual issues such as abstinence, faithfulness, and voluntary counseling and testing (VCT). Interventions address gender roles, sexual responsibility and encourage communication between partners.

Link multiple sectors: The risk among youth is often compounded by poverty, lack of education, poor health, and unemployment. Integrating HIV and behavioral change messages with programs, activities, and campaigns from other areas of society can be an effective means of maximizing a single point of contact with hard to reach youth who are often unable to confidently access legal protection and other support services. TAYL has developed links programs supporting such services.

Keep girls in schools: Data indicates that girls who complete some secondary education are more likely to delay sexual activity. TAYL's programs encourage girls to stay in secondary schools and encourage parents and communities to advocate norms and policies that discourage girls' attendance.

Community connectedness: Connection with community activities has an impact on a variety of health indicators. A number of community and faith-based programs have established youth and drop-in centers that provide safe and supervised environments for youth to address difficult situations. TAYL has organized training in life skills with assistance from local media and entertainment programs to ameliorate our HIV/AIDS programs.

TAYL seeks grants to support interventions in one or more of the following areas:

- Programs supporting primary and secondary abstinence and behavioral change among youth 10-19 years of age.
- Programs addressing the causes and consequences of cross-generational and transactional sex.
- Programs supporting the engaged and newly married and, in particular, programs reducing the risk of partners infecting one another.

These areas of interventions directly support the Revised Uganda AIDS Commission's National Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS activities, and its goal to reduce HIV/AIDS in Uganda by 25%.

1. Programs for abstinence and behavior change among the youth 10-19 years of age:

Young people who have not had their sexual debut must be encouraged to practice abstinence till they have established a lifetime monogamous relationship. For those youth who have initiated sexual activity, returning to abstinence should be a primary message of prevention programs.

For youth 10-14 years of age, TAYL will cater for age-appropriate and culturally appropriate:

- Dignity and self-worth
- The importance of abstinence in reducing the transmission of HIV
- The importance of delaying sexual debut until marriage
- The development of skills for practicing abstinence

For older youth above 14 years of age, TAYL will cater for ABC programs that promote:

- Dignity and self worth
- The importance of abstinence in reducing the transmission of HIV
- The importance of delaying sexual activity until marriage
- The development skills for practicing abstinence and, where appropriate, secondary abstinence
- The elimination of casual sexual partnerships
- The importance of marriage and mutual faithfulness in reducing the transmission of HIV among individuals in long-term relationships
- The importance of HIV counseling and testing
- Accurate information about correct and consistent condom use as a way to significantly reduce, but not eliminate, the risk of HIV infection

TAYL is strongly committed to involving youth in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the projects in which they participate. In particular, TAYL will develop projects that are particularly responsive to the needs of youth and will seek their input and collaboration for focused improvement.

TAYL seeks a grant to be used in for marketing campaigns that target youth and encourage condom use as a means of HIV prevention.

TAYL anticipates that the proposed activities mentioned in the grant application will predominantly take place inside of school environments, and will seek another small grant in order to further address the needs of out-of-school youth in order to help reach a wider community.

The grant funds that are being applied for are not to be used to physically distribute or provide condoms in school settings, but are intended for out-of-school youth.

2. Programs addressing cross-generational and transactional sex:

Communities are to be mobilized to amend the underlying norms, attitudes, values, and behaviors that increase vulnerability to HIV. These include the acceptance of multiple casual sex partnerships, cross-generational and transactional sex, forced sex, and the sexual coercion and exploitation of young people. TAYL activities will help communities identify existing norms that contribute to risk, vulnerability, and stigma while helping communities support interventions that change norms, attitudes, values, and behaviors that increase vulnerability to HIV.

TAYL will encourage activities that generate public discussion about harmful social and sexual behaviors at the community and congregational levels. Focus will be primarily placed on cross-generational sex, transactional sex, and, in particular, on young, out-of-school women.

TAYL is to participate in the national Young, Empowered And Healthy (YEAH) campaign coordinated by Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC) and aimed at coordinating BCC for young people. The first phase campaign, June 2005–July 2006, focused on transactional and cross-generational sex. TAYL will encourage a collaborative response to YEAH program and expand to the communities this campaign reaches, helping to reduce the development of duplicative materials and approaches.

Suggested activities include the following:

- Educating parents to improve parent-to-child communication on HIV, sexuality, and broader issues through parent-teacher groups, local associations, and faith-based groups
- Training local religious and other traditional organizations in HIV concerns and supporting them in publicizing the risks of early sexual activity, sex outside of marriage, multiple partnerships and cross-generational sex
- Supporting youth-led community programs to help youth, their parents and the broader community personalize the risk associated with early sexual activity, sex outside of marriage, multiple partnerships and cross-generational sex
- Supporting media campaigns that reinforce abstinence, fidelity, partner reduction, HIV counseling and testing, and other safe behaviors
- Organizing activities and events to educate local communities about sexual violence against youth and strengthen community sanctions against such behaviors
- Workplace programs to stress male sexual and familial responsibility, and school based programs for young males to educate about preventing sexual violence
- Training healthcare providers, teachers, law enforcement officials, traditional healers and peer educators to identify, counsel, and refer young victims of rape, incest or other sexual abuse to health care facilities
- Adoption of social and community norms that denounce cross-generational sex, transactional sex, rape, incest, and other forced sexual activity

3. Programs supporting the engaged and newly married and, in particular, programs reducing the risk of one partner in marriage infecting the other:

Under this grants program, we will encourage the engaged and newly married to practice fidelity in marriage as a vital way to reduce risk of exposure to HIV. In addition, funds are to be allocated to support HIV voluntary counseling and testing for couples that do not know their status.

TAYL activities under this component will focus on the following:

- Development of skills for sustaining marital fidelity
- The importance of mutual faithfulness with an uninfected partner in reducing the transmission of HIV among individuals in long-term sexual partnerships
- HIV counseling and testing for those couples that do not their HIV status
- The need to address domestic violence and female neglect as way of reducing the number of female partners males possess
- Endorse social and community norms supporting partner reduction and marital fidelity, by using strategies that respect and respond to local cultural customs and norms
- The enforcement of existing laws and regulations pertaining to marriage at a legal age and child protection

Together Alive Youth Link (TAYL) training awareness and education on health related matters among youth (12-38 years of age) with a target of reverting the traditional, health, socio economic, and cultural behaviors and of revitalizing the status of women and youth through identifying challenges, opportunities, values, and priorities withing society — with an aim of reduction on HIV/AIDS spread rate and poverty levels Action Work Plan 2005–2007 Vision.

Fostering room for research on causes of HIV/AIDS (i.e. Reproductive health, early marriages, discrimination against women/girls and youth, forced sex, peer influence as the causes for high poverty and morbidity rates which consequently hinders development of an active labor force, with an implication on broadening the dependence ratio) among the populations of Sub-Saharan African countries.

action work plan

Sources:

1. Bessinger, Akwara, Halperin, Phase 1 of the ABC study
2. Fielder, Straight Talk Study
3. Luke and Kurz, 2002,ICRW and AIDS Mark, August 2003
4. Kelly and Gray
5. (ICRW, 2003)

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Objective	Activities	Time Frame	Milestones	Monitorable Indicators
1. To conduct further research projects on causes of HIV/AIDS and other STDs	Comprehensive research studies on HIV/AIDS related topics:	2005–2007	Availability of ample knowledge on all problems identified by 2007.	An assertive voice of the groups formerly regarded as vulnerable against the contraction of HIV/AIDS.
	Reproductive health, early marriages, youth behavior (peer influence), culture, poverty and low income, gender insensitivity.	Continuous	Easy dissemination and adaption of information on HIV/AIDS prevention, especially from the perspective of social norms and values to all people.	An adopted responsibility among women, girls and male youth to fight HIV/AIDS and hold up their voice against the trauma of the epidemic.
	Other studies on early marriages, children's rights (girl child), sexual harassment, mobile population, trafficked sex workers, etc.	Continuous	Availability of tools for preventing HIV/AIDS to all people.	Women and youth fully bound by the duty to fight negligence of work (physiological backwardness) and uplift their economic status and value in societal development.
			Reduced rate of infection among the vulnerable groups (i.e. women, girls, and male youth, etc.) and rest of population by 2007.	Indicators of sustainability of the above changed thinking and behavior among the population as a cultural consumable for future generations.
2. To sensitize the youth (12 – 38 years) to the facts and dangers of HIV/AIDS and STDs, with an aim of entrenching preventive attitudes	Co-ordinate efforts to harmonize and enforce methods of highlighting the dangers and spread of HIV/AIDS among the youth and measures to care for and address the problems of those who are currently affected.	2005–2007		Properly functioning AIDS prevention and control mechanisms among the youth and all people by 2008.
	Monitor and manage HIV/AIDS prevention measures initiated by this organization for preventing the further spread of AIDS.	Continuous		Completed inventory of major causes of AIDS and equipped with the knowledge prevent against the disease.
	Monitor and manage behavioral change among the youth.	Continuous		Reduced infection rate among the youth and other people.
	Monitor and manage formulated programmes and enforce measures to uplift the status of women, girls, and male youth.	Continuous		Realization of their roles, duties and responsibilities to fight against HIV/AIDS among women, girls and male youth.
	Assess the effectiveness of AIDS control and prevention methods.	Continuous		A collective voice raised against the stigma of HIV/AIDS.
				Female assertiveness toward choice to marry, number of children and birth intervals, by 2007.

		Time Frame		Monitorable Indicators
con't	Monitor and conduct investigations to determine how best these behavioral changes can ensure sustainability, to protect future generations.	Continuous		
3. To address women and youth about the dangers of prostitution, early marriages and disobedience	Formulate and enforce an effective mechanism for continuously identifying causes of prostitution, early marriages and disobediences among the youth by 2007.	2005–2007	Availability of knowledge about the dangers of prostitution, early marriages, and disobedience.	Reports on monitored behavioral changes.
	Implement solutions to the identified causes of prostitution, early marriages and disobedience.	Continuous	At least 75% of the youth population involved in productive activities, reducing the influential forces of poverty which lure the youth into prostitution and early marriages, by 2007.	Reports on increased involvement of the youth in production services sector.
	Constantly alert the youth to the dangers identified and associated with prostitution, early marriages and disobedience.	Continuous	An achieved balance of respect and proper ethical representation, regard and understanding/interpretation of the youth across all societal sectsa	Improved welfare of the youth, limited or no cases reported on rampant prostitution.
	Introduce incentives for psychologically transforming the youth towards positive thinking, hope, self esteem, and a culture in which foresight is sustainable.	Continuous	Better production contribution that accrue to the youth with improved levels of income by 2007.	Reports on protection of the rights of girl child, as in eradicating early marriages, sexual harassment of female.
				Respect for the roles played by women, girls and male youth in society.
4. To work as one voice in fighting against grievances and problems faced by both women and youth.	Look at human rights with gender sensitive eyes, especially to empower women and youth in society by 2007.	2005-2007	Practice opposing violence against of women properly understood (i.e. battering, sexual abuse of female children, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation, non-spousal violence, and other practices that are harmful to women).	Reports indicating improved gender respect in society.
	Prevent actions that violate or undermine of the sensibility of ownership of production resources by women and youth.	Continuous		Improved economic production of women and youth.
	Extend access to information about maternity as a social function and the common responsibility of men and women in children's upbringing.	Continuous	Increased access of production resources to women and youth, and enhanced economic status and repute of women and youth.	Reduction in the levels of redundancy, peer influence and successful behavioral change by 2007.
				Reduction in the levels of infection among women, girls, and male youth.

Objective	Activity	Time Frame	Milestones	Monitorable Indicators
con't	Implement effective working mechanisms for the advancement of equality between women, girls, male youth and the rest of societal characters as a condition for social justice.	Continuous	Reduction in rural to urban migration among girl children, and the youth especially seeking urban-based jobs.	
	Measures for enhancing negotiated sex between women and men.	Continuous	A reduction of cases where women are subjects to physical, sexual, and psychological violence, that cuts across lines of income, class and culture in public and private life.	
	Abolish inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women (measures to suppress all forms of trafficking and exploitation of prostitution of women, girls, etc.)	Continuous		
5. To support women and youth in all the world, and Uganda in particular	Acquire and hold production property resources (e.g. land, capital from well wishers, loans and donors for and in the name of the organization) in order to broaden opportunities for women and youth to embroil economic production ownership by 2007.	2005–2007	A reduction of gender and age dependence ratios, transforming the unproductive section of the population to a productive.	A reduced perception of women and youth as non-productive demographics.
	Through increased fundraising, bring more women and youth into an enhanced culture of economic production.	2005–2007	Grow labour force with skills in low cost agro-production enabling women and youth to produce optimally amidst low level resource availability.	Smaller family sizes and reduced demand on available resources.
	Hold constantly seminars, symposiums, and public lectures as a tool to achieving TAYL aims i.e. empowering women and youth with information in all discipline.	Continuous	Ownership and accessibility to economic production resources by women and youth (reduction in redundancy levels and peer groups).	Equitable distribution of health and economic production, information, and knowledge to all people.
	Borrow and repay money to further our objectives of sustainable practice with good repute.	Continuous	Equitable distribution resources across all population to reach the underserved rural population meeting needs like health care.	A reduction in poverty, which is supported by good health, gender respect, and a checked population growth.
			Increased income and a culture of involvement in economic production among the youth.	Population proportions of dependants relatively lower to the working age population, opening a window of opportunity (specifically before dependant elder population becomes a burden).
				A right based agenda sustained to address and support women and youth with capability of indications of supporting subsequent generations.

Objective	Activity	Time Frame	Milestones	Monitorable Indicators
con't	Create solidarity able to sustain relations between organization members and government, the youth in other countries, and other NGOs in order to further the achievement of TAYL aims.	Continuous	Reduced effect of poor girls who give birth at an earlier age (early marriages due to poverty) and have more than wealthier ones.	Highlighted the role that gender plays in resource use and development, sustainable natural resource use, and reduction in consumer class dependence to a productive one as an achieved socio-economic viability.
6. To link the Ugandan youth to the youth in other parts of world relevantly promoting talents, cultural values and create value for culture and esteem among the youth	Serving adolescents and engaging them in development of talents like drama, sewing, sports and protection safe guarding cultural rights, by 2007.	2005–2007	Recorded improvement in health status among the adolescents.	Reports on improved health among the youth and adolescents and women.
	Addressing sensitive issues of adolescents' i.e. reproductive health needs for information and services that will prevent them from unwanted pregnancy and infection and be seen as wasted characters of society.	2005–2007	Excavation and development of hidden talents among our adolescents and youth.	Reports reduced availability of female and male prostitutes and enhanced self-duty and responsibility.
			Created full time occupation of the youth and improvement in self esteem and capability to say no to early sex, early marriages and abuse of their rights.	Reports on increased income generation stemmed from cultural development of the youth achieved through search and development of talents.
	Implementation of measures that reduce the trend of adolescents marrying and provide information of self protection through cultural promotion as activities for economic production.	Continuous	Reduced dependence proportion ratio and reduced redundancy among the youth curbing growth peer groups and moral decadence (i.e. sexual immorality, drug abuse, alcoholism, prostitution, etc.)	
	Training in drama, film production, singing and protecting against abuse of this venturous activity from piracy and abuse.	Continuous	Linking prevention of HIV efforts and voluntary testing to reduce stigma, worries, and self confidence that save money and stimulates protection efforts among the safe population.	
Linking our efforts in cultural development in LDCs with those of Youth in DCs through a facilitated global link.	Continuous			