Training for Young Adult Sexual and Reproductive Health

Tijuana A. James-Traore, MSW
Program & Training Advisor
FOCUS on Young Adults
The training strategy assumes that:

- Youth are different from adults and therefore have differing needs, requiring different approaches.
- Staff, volunteers and others benefit from a better understanding of these needs.
- Personal values and beliefs related to adolescent sexuality influence how policies and programs are designed and implemented.
The training strategy is designed to:

- Respond to the needs of missions, CAs, and others.
- Meet the needs of diverse groups of people who work with youth.
- Provide an orientation to YARH issues, including HIV/AIDS, sexual behavior & decision making, and contraceptive use.
- Increase institutional & individual capacity.
- Orient or train professionals to apply FOCUS tools.
Training activities have targeted:

- Policy makers
- Program managers
- Service providers
- Youth
- USAID
- Donors
- Public sector
- Private sector
- NGOs
- Government
Types of training and professional exchanges:

- State of the Art (SOTA) training courses
- Skills building courses in Monitoring and Evaluation, Youth Friendly Services and Advocacy
- Working groups
- Partner dialogues
- Technical Assistance
Training materials developed:

- Reproductive Health of Young Adults: Contraception, Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (with FHI)
- Improving Interpersonal Skills for Counseling Adolescents on Sexual and Reproductive Health (Latin America)
- Assessing and Planning for Youth-Friendly Services training manual
Training materials developed:

- Monitoring and Evaluating Adolescent Reproductive Health Programs manual
- Youth to Youth Peer Education Training of Trainers (TOT) Manual (with CAFS)
- Reproductive Health: A Practical Pocket Guide for Providers (with Pathfinder Mozambique)
Training materials developed:

- Self-directed Learning Program Guide (with INTRAH)
- Developmentally-based Interventions and Strategies: Promoting Reproductive Health and Reducing Risk among Adolescents
- Annotated Bibliography of Training Curricula for YARH Programs
Lesson learned:

- There is a tremendous need for training in areas related to YARH, especially among NGOs and GOs.
- Training alone is not sufficient. Organizational commitment and supports are also needed.
- More follow-up and technical assistance is needed after training is conducted to assist in applying newly acquired knowledge.
Lessons learned:

- Training efforts and information exchanges must be culturally specific and take into account the resources and limitations within which people are working.

- The attitudes of service providers greatly impact service provision. Accurate information and training can help change attitudes and improve interactions with adolescent clients.
Lessons learned:

- Fostering partnerships is an important way to integrate YARH and broaden our reach.
- The capacity that lies within developing countries is an underutilized resource.
- Creative ways of sustaining training efforts should be employed. For example, technical assistance, mentoring, and list serves.
- There is a need to clarify terms and test assumptions.
Lessons learned:

- Site visits, the involvement of youth, and other hands-on, participatory training techniques help maximize participant learning.
Future direction:

- Training materials need to be developed in different languages
- Training needs to be available not only to intermediary organizations but to various levels of direct service providers as well.