

Section I: Contact Information

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Section II:

Title: **Making Public Sector Facilities Youth-Friendly: Tanzania's Case Study**

Designated Presenter: Naomi Achimpota

Type of Session: Panel

Proposed Theme: Health-Related Development Issues for Youth

Topic: Access to health information and services

Learning Objectives:

Participants attending this session will be able to:

- 1) Discuss the experience of the Infections Disease Center (IDC) in integrating youth-friendly services into a public-sector facility in Tanzania.
- 2) Explain the importance of building on existing structures to reach young people with sexual and reproductive health services.
- 3) Apply best practices and lessons learned from the IDC to future adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) programs in other developing countries.

Background:

Tanzania's Infectious Disease Center (IDC) has operated for over ten years and has served young people for over the past six. In April 2002, the IDC formed a partnership with Pathfinder International/African Youth Alliance (AYA) to extend and implement youth friendly services (YFS) to youth in its catchment area. AYA is a partnership between Pathfinder, PATH, and UNFPA, which aims to improve the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of young people between the ages of 10-24.

Currently, AYA works with IDC to implement YFS in four Dar es Salaam facilities. Although IDC was providing STI treatment to youth before its partnership with AYA, they were not offering youth-friendly SRH services. Service providers were very committed and skilled before the collaboration, but the providers were not adequately trained in providing services specifically for young people. With Pathfinder's technical and financial assistance, service providers were trained in YFS, all four facilities were assessed, and quality improvement plans were implemented. By building on IDC's history as a research center and a partner in other HIV/AIDS donor projects, implementation of YFS was accelerated. Out of all the facilities working under AYA, IDC was able to obtain a higher level of youth-friendliness in a short timeframe due to staff commitment, interest in serving young people, supportive leadership, and teamwork.

IDC reported a significant increase in the number of young clients between the program's first and second years, largely due to the increased acceptability of its youth services. During the first quarter of 2003, 5,949 young clients were served, which was more than the total number of young clients served during 2002, 5,681. Because of such overall success, IDC has become a learning center for other public and private sector facilities involved in AYA, and its model is now being replicated in several districts in the AYA project.

Partners: District Councils of Ilala, Temeke, and Kinondoni

Conclusions:

Implementing services that are youth-friendly has been a challenge in Tanzania's public-sector facilities; however, IDC has demonstrated that it is possible to make services more attractive to youth with limited financial resources. Most quality improvements centered on feasible activities that could be done without much external assistance and costs were shared between government and project funds. Central to quality improvements for YFS is the commitment and creativity of management and staff. Government support is required to harness needed human and financial resources as well as to sustain YFS beyond the life of the project.

Additional Authors: Nelson Keyonzo, Country Representative, Pathfinder International/Tanzania; **Dr. Guerenó Chalimilla**, Gwyn Hainsworth, Adolescent Reproductive Health and Training Associate, Pathfinder International