

## **PANEL PRESENTATION**

Title: Empowering Youth: Actions and Measurement

Designated Presenter: Doris Aglobitse

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. Measure capacity of young people using Youth Empowerment Index
2. Use Index to plan youth empowerment strategies and to involve youth meaningfully in adolescent sexual and reproductive (ASRH) health programs
3. Develop operational structures that support youth empowerment and involvement
4. Qualitatively assess impact of youth involvement

### Background:

AYA is a collaborative program implementing by a partnership of three international organizations that seeks to improve the sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) of young people in Botswana, Ghana, Tanzania and Uganda.

It is already recognized that youth participation is key to developing successful and sustainable youth programs. Working in partnership with young people is often a challenge for adult programmers. Also challenging is involving youth meaningfully and assessing their impact on the program.

Partners: Government and local NOGs (MoE, NYC, PPAG, FIDA)

### Conclusion:

Using the Youth Empowerment Index, young people and their coach assessed their empowerment according to levels of knowledge, skills, decision-making and experience. The young people then used the Index to set their annual performance goals. Young people reported that the process was motivational and enabled them to identify what skills they needed to focus on.

AYA program managers and the youth then developed youth involvement action plans for capacity building, decision-making and managerial processes, programmatic implementation and monitoring. Each AYA country put different operational structures in place to implement youth empowerment action plans.

These structures include program advisory boards, monitoring teams, guidelines, and editorial boards. Young people were also included in various program management structures.

Youth involvement in program activities and management structures was documented and compared with index scores and then qualitatively assessed against activity outcomes. Assessment findings highlight the effectiveness of youth advocates in Ghana due to their involvement early in the design of the activity, in identifying capacity improvement needs, milestones to be achieved and confidence placed in them by their supervisor.

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