



AYA TANZANIA

PARTNERING WITH MEDIA IN ADVOCATING FOR ADOLESCENT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

SUCCESS STORIES AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM IMPLEMENTATION

MAY 2005

Building Partnership with the Mass Media

1.0 For over 40 years since Tanzania attained its independence, the mass media institutions, then owned by government, were fully utilized for mass education-sensitization and mobilization. This tradition has seen various political and social campaigns using the mass media to reach out to beneficiaries and/or stakeholders with encouraging results. The main source of information singled out by members of public is radio (Steadman, Tanzania HIV/AIDS Indicator Survey 2003).

Against this background, the African Youth Alliance (AYA) project through its Policy and Advocacy component identified five media partners for media advocacy for ASRH. The main objective was to initiate and promote discussions on ASRH issues and rights with a view to creating a more favorable environment for ASRH.

2.0 The media partnership strategy was therefore set to attain the following results:

- Introduce and engage the public, particularly policy makers and youth in discussions and debates on:
 - ASRH issues
 - ASRH-related laws and policies
 - Youth participation in ASRH issues, rights and programmes.
- Sustain discussions and dialogue with policy makers on the need to implement favorable ASRH related policies and laws.
- Provide youth a voice through ASRH and discussing.
- Promote sustainability of ASRH media programme within media institutions.

3.0 **Engaging the Media Partners: The Approach**

3.1 Selection

AYA selected five media partners using the project's selection criteria based on partner's track record. The following media institutions were selected.

- Africa Media Group (AMG) - Mainland
- Television Zanzibar - Unguja and Pemba
- Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam - Mainland

- Sauti ya Tanzania Zanzibar - Unguja and Pemba
- Clouds FM - Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Arusha, Mwanza, Tanga

These media partners selection was strategic in that RTD, TVZ and STZ are government owned stations (more likely to be used by policy/decision makers for official statements or issues); AMG and Clouds FM are private media organs with a broad range of listeners with the latter focusing on youth issues.

- AYA Media Network

A network of journalists who served both the print and electronic media was also established to support AYA's ASRH advocacy initiatives.

3.2 Training of Media Partners and Practitioners

The Policy and Advocacy (P&A) component organized various ASRH and advocacy training workshops for its partners in efforts to set the stage for a more favorable coverage of ASRH issues. Journalists and media partners who participated in the workshops had minimum or no knowledge in ASRH issues and media advocacy in general. Admittedly, mass media institutions and particularly the Press, shows more inclination coverage of political and economic issues as opposed to social/cultural aspects.

Mass media practitioners as members of the society have varying perceptions, attitudes and prejudices with respect to ASRH issues and rights, and this is evident in the manner in which the media handles sexuality-related issues.

An AYA sponsored Media Content Analysis (MCA) in the pre-AYA period showed that ASRH coverage in the Print Media revolved around rape, sexual abuse and abortions (MCA, George Inc 2003 survey). ASRH related issues were placed in the inside pages of the surveyed newspapers occupying insignificant space.

Based on this, AYA Policy and Advocacy organized three workshops for its media partners. The workshops were:

- ASRH workshop for mass media practitioners (to strengthen their understanding on ASRH).
- HIV/AIDS Media Advocacy (organized in collaboration with SATF to promote a more positive and empowering coverage as opposed to sensationalizing HIV/AIDS).
- Media Advocacy and Advocacy Strategy Development (to collectively identify key ASRH issues and explore opportunities and threats in advocating for them)

The project also adopted a practice of cross-component capacity building whose added value was strengthening the knowledge base of AYA partners in Advocacy, Behavior Change Communication (BCC) and Youth Friendly Services (YFS) concepts. This, in turn, instilled in the media partners a holistic approach in tackling ASRH issues hence availing them a solid foundation for ASRH media advocacy programme and coverage. Media partners also received Monitoring and Evaluation training.

- ASRH workshop for mass media practitioners (to strengthen their understanding on ASRH).
- HIV/AIDS Media Advocacy (organized in collaboration with SATF to promote a more positive and empowering coverage as opposed to sensationalizing HIV/AIDS).
- Media Advocacy and Advocacy Strategy Development (to collectively identify key ASRH issues and explore opportunities and threats in advocating for them)

3.3 Media Partners Action Guide Development

In order to ensure a more systematic approach to ASRH media advocacy, AYA organized strategic thinking meetings and sustained consultations with media partners throughout media programme planning and airing.

The AYA media partners identified ASRH issues within the context of AYA outcomes which are:

- Percentage of sexually active youth using condoms consistently
- Percentage of youth who have delayed first sex
- Number of youth whose first sex was forced/coerced
- Number of sexual partners in the past year
- Number of sexually active youth who have ever used a modern contraceptive method

This exercise enabled them identify key concerns, assess the policy, legal and cultural environment, identify resourceful documentation and/or institutions to source ASRH information and set the advocacy tone with overall key messages – all in favor of ASRH issues, rights and programmes. This provided a common approach to the culturally sensitive issues.

3.4 Media Programme Format

The TV partners focused on monthly live and talk shows that placed young people at the center of the discussions and debates

with policy makers, ASRH experts, parents, cultural and religious leaders.

On the other hand, the radio stations anchored their programmes on youth variety shows – a mixed grill of mini-dramas, music and interviews and young peoples’ testimonials on ASRH-related experiences.

Programme recording also extended to other AYA sites such as Tarime, Arusha and Pemba apart from the media institutions headquarters of Dar es Salaam and Unguja. These recordings also served as community and leadership sensitization exercises.

To compliment these efforts, the AYA media network devoted themselves to compiling special events publications “Tetea” that highlighted ASRH concerns while challenging stakeholders to place ASRH on their development agendas. The network members also participated in writing ASRH articles in the FEMINA Magazine and AYA quarterly newsletter.

3.5 Programme Theme Selection and Participants

The media partners selected ASRH-related themes relevant to the AYA outcomes and those that came out of preceding media discussions. The partners involved AYA implementing partners, ASRH stakeholders, Members of Parliament, Ministers; various society leaders and youth in programme discussions, debates and interviews. Public feedback through phone calls, letters and email provided an input to programme theme selection. The media debates and discussions drew significant references from a situation analysis on laws and policies impacting on ASRH.

Young people were actively involved in research, interviewing feedback collection and moderating some of the media programme.

4.0 Results Recorded

A total of 155 TV and 462 Radio programmes on ASRH issues were aired between June 2002 and December 2004. Young people involved in the media programme were 1,280 while resource people totaled 600 during the stated period.

Some of the notable results from the media partnership strategy include:

- Increased awareness on ASRH (evident in public feedback; youth demand for ASRH information and services; youth participation in media/AYA activities).
- Increased leadership support for ASRH issues and concerns
 - President Mkapa's repeated statements condemning leaders and elders enticing young girls to early sexual activity.
 - Prime Minister's appeal to relevant legal authorities to punish men who impregnate school girls.
- Increased openness in public discussions on condoms and sexuality issues in the Zanzibar society.
- Increased youth involvement and participation in ASRH-related issues as a result of their active role in the media
 - ASRH school clubs formed by youth advocates
 - ASRH media (radio) listeners' clubs formed.
- AYA media partners winning national and international awards in recognition of ASRH programmes
 - RTD's "Twende na Wakati" and "Mambo Bomba" Programmes won a Global Media Award for excellence in population in issues reporting 2004.
 - Clouds FM's "Njia Panda" Programme (Nini Chanzo - Root Cause) segment won the Best Radio Programme Award 2004 in the radio station. Njia Panda also won community programme of the year 2005 in National Radio Awards.
- Improved media practitioners' capacity in ASRH media advocacy
 - AYA sponsored programmes format adapted by other stakeholders partnering with the media.
- Improved AYA media partners' outlook on ASRH.
 - Media institutions establish ASRH units/desks devoted to cover and priorities youth issues.
- At policy level, media debates and discussions stimulated action towards:
 - the amendment of Zanzibar Spinster, Widows and Female Divorcee Protection Act 1985.
 - Legal consultations on the Marriage Act 1971.
 - Broad consultations on the National Youth Policy (2004); conception of Zanzibar Youth Policy.

- Popularization of the National Policy Guidelines on Reproductive and Child Health (2003) which contain a chapter on Adolescents.

5.0 Challenges in ASRH Media Advocacy

- Public not fully aware of policies and laws (related and unrelated to ASRH issues).
- High airtime costs limited more frequent airing of media programme a necessity in sustaining momentum of media advocacy.

6.0 Lessons Learned

- ASRH media advocacy should use a “bang” style for effective lobbying for change.
- Effective media partnering requires continuous and consistent consultations on the focus of programme/issues.
- Data collection tools to capture specific media-related effect or impact of ASRH discussions are necessary.