

COORDINATION & DISSEMINATION

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Rationale

Since most organisations have specialised mandates and areas of expertise, a combination of strategies may be necessary to produce desired outcomes. In the adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) field, there is growing consensus that achieving multiple goals, including providing reproductive health information and services, creating a supportive environment, and expanding livelihood opportunities, may require multi-sectoral consortia of organizations and networks similar to that established by the African Youth Alliance (AYA), as no single organization may have the full range of required expertise to adequately achieve all these goals. While such partnerships can help to ensure a wide range of technical expertise, they also pose unique challenges. Naturally, one of these is related to the formation and governance of these alliances. A major challenge of partnerships is the management of an effective and efficient programme through the coordination of the partnership. Another major challenge for the partnership is how to use external relations and dissemination of findings and results to better position itself among other players in the field.

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Definition

As one of AYA's six programme areas, the coordination and dissemination component focuses on effective partnership management and is intended to improve and enhance the project's capability to achieve desired outcomes, as well as effective documentation, evaluation and dissemination of programme successes, best practices and lessons learned.

Examples of Program Interventions

Within AYA, coordination and dissemination are operationalised at the global and country levels. Globally, key coordination objectives consist of ensuring overall programme coordination, management and administration; coordinating technical inputs from the partners; coordinating on a regular basis with partners' representatives at all levels; coordinating and collaborating with other United Nations (UN) agencies and donors; and providing oversight for monitoring and evaluation.

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Meanwhile, at the country level, important coordination objectives involve coordinating the alliance partnership during the planning, implementation and evaluation of AYA for synergistic impact on adolescent ASRH; coordinating AYA's implementation within national and district frameworks and plans; monitoring and ensuring that the project receives appropriate logistical and administrative support; liaising, coordinating and networking with relevant government ministries and departments, donors, UN organisations, nongovernmental organisations and other civil society organisations for equitable utilization and leveraging of resources; employing Country Coordinators and other country-level staff; and procuring, storing, shipping and distributing programme-related equipment.

With regard to dissemination, key global-level programme

goals include ensuring the development of a programme-wide dissemination plan to share best practices and lessons learned across countries; information sharing; dissemination and discussion of key results; and representing the Alliance in regional and international forums, networks, technical

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advisory groups and consultative sessions and conferences. At the country level, major dissemination objectives include coordinating with implementing partners to develop publications addressing lessons learned in service delivery and expansion; defining mechanisms for acquiring, adapting and using guidelines on assessing and documenting project processes, best practices and lessons learned; developing stakeholders' skills for assessing and documenting project findings; and developing incentive schemes for reporting such findings.

Key Program Elements

The management functions of coordination and dissemination will improve facilitation and administrative support for AYA operations; increase the capacity of AYA to demonstrate a nimble partnership; provide leadership and oversight to maintain a focused, cost-effective programme; increase capacity to demonstrate results-oriented programming; and increase awareness among ASRH stakeholders about the AYA partnership's progress and achievements.

Strategic Approaches

Programme strategies to achieve these outputs include establishing internal and external programme coordination and governance partnership structures at the global and country levels. These structures provide oversight, technical quality and management of the programme and include the Partners Council, the In-Country Partners Council, the Headquarters Technical

Advisory Committee, and the monitoring and evaluation staff groups. Similarly, dissemination strategies include both internal and external structures, namely the intranet, website, listserv, newsletters, participation in knowledge sharing arrangements, documentation centers, and representation at various ARSH events that take place at each level of AYA operation (global, national, district, sub-county).

Linkage to Other Programme Areas

Coordination and dissemination linkage to other programme areas is supportive in ensuring coherence, focus and "synergistic" planning and implementation. This is achieved through the development of joint programme frameworks, work plans, budgets, capacity building plans, etc.

Internal and external programme coordination and governance partnership structures at the global and country levels have been established to provide oversight, technical quality and management of the programme

Scaling-Up

In order to scale-up programme interventions and reach all youth that require services, and as a strategy for ensuring sustainability, AYA is working through or supporting the establishment of ASRH coordination committees at the national, district and sub-county levels. These committees will receive capacity building on how to plan for and integrate ASRH issues (funding, budgets, work plans) into health and overall development plans. Similarly, dissemination will be conducted through existing government centers, help desks, etc. at the country level. Externally, and to the extent possible, AYA will document and report on progress through existing dissemination and knowledge sharing channels.

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Mechanisms for Sustainability

AYA has adopted sustainable and participatory programme design and implementation approaches. To coordinate such approaches, AYA will strengthen and nurture its internal partnership and also establish external partnerships with ASRH stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of programmes. The main thrust will be the integration of ASRH issues into the larger reproductive health and development agendas. Coordination will rely on various mechanisms to achieve integration and therefore documentation of how these processes are managed and its effectiveness in changing health outcomes will be a primary focus.

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Evaluation Methods for Assessing Programme Interventions

Innovative partnerships such as AYA are new to the ASRH field and have not been adequately tested. As a result, evaluations of such programmes are critical for identifying what does and does not work. To address this need, AYA will cultivate a coherent programme that is monitored and evaluated in order to determine what set of programme interventions is most effective in low-resource settings and in different segments of the youth population. In addition to objectively determining successes, lessons learned and best practices, this

approach will inform programme replication and expansion. It is essential to the ASRH field that not only these findings, but also the processes and mechanisms that produced these results, be disseminated at all levels.

AYA, a “pioneer” in terms of scale and approach, aims to provide field evidence of successful interventions through rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

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Evaluation methods will focus on a process evaluation to assess the efficiency of internal and external partnership mechanisms implementing programmes as designed. Meanwhile, internal and external communication audits will evaluate if dissemination strategies and mechanisms have informed and supported information recipients.