



International
Planned
Parenthood
Federation

vision2000ofunds

LESSONS LEARNT

The peer education
approach in promoting
youth sexual and
reproductive health



Vision 2000 Funds

LESSONS LEARNT

The peer education approach in promoting youth sexual and reproductive health

London, December 2001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was conducted on behalf of IPPF Vision 2000 Fund (V2F) in order to document the experience in Peer Education acquired through the implementation of five projects in various countries around the world. V2F would like to thank everybody who contributed to the realisation of this document, in particular Anne-Emmanèle Calvès, Professor at the Sociology Department of the University of Montreal, who conducted the study and compiled the report with support from Dr Ridha Gataa.

V2F would like to extend its gratitude to the staff of all Family Planning Associations (FPAs) involved in this study. Without their support and input of information it would not have been possible.

The Fund is most grateful to all Peer Educators who participated, for their time, information and ideas. Their enthusiasm and commitment are a continuous source of inspiration for V2F to carry out its work.

In addition V2F would like to thank all others who helped; in particular the community leaders and parents who participated in the focus group discussions.

Finally V2F would like to thank the IPPF Africa Regional Office and the IPPF East & South-East Asia and Oceania Regional Office for their collaboration, and Jeremy Hamand for editing the report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of acronyms.....	i	
List of tables.....		ii
List of figures.....		ii
PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.....	1	
INTRODUCTION.....	2	
1. BACKGROUND: IPPF VISION 2000 FUND.....	4	
2. STUDY DESIGN.....	5	
2.1 Conceptual framework.....	5	
2.2 Methodology.....	7	
3. RESULTS.....	9	
3.1 Project origin and rationale.....	9	
<i>Rationale for focusing on youth.....</i>	<i>9</i>	
<i>Objectives relating to youth.....</i>	<i>10</i>	
<i>Peer education: keystone in project design.....</i>	<i>11</i>	
3.2 Target audience definition.....	12	
3.3 Peer education models.....	13	
3.4 Selection of peer educators.....	16	
<i>Selection procedures.....</i>	<i>16</i>	
<i>Selection criteria.....</i>	<i>17</i>	
<i>Profile of a good peer educator according to peer educators.....</i>	<i>20</i>	
<i>Becoming a peer educator: motivations.....</i>	<i>21</i>	
3.5 Peer educators' training.....	23	
<i>Training format.....</i>	<i>23</i>	
<i>Training curricula.....</i>	<i>24</i>	
<i>Training evaluation.....</i>	<i>25</i>	
<i>Training needs: peer educators' opinions.....</i>	<i>26</i>	
3.6 Peer educators' activities.....	27	
<i>Scope of activities.....</i>	<i>27</i>	
<i>Activities and messages according to audiences' perceived needs.....</i>	<i>29</i>	
<i>Activity planning.....</i>	<i>31</i>	
<i>Activity targets.....</i>	<i>31</i>	
3.7 Material.....	32	
<i>Material used by peer educators.....</i>	<i>32</i>	
<i>Peer educators' opinions and suggestions on material.....</i>	<i>33</i>	
3.8 Peer educators' monitoring and evaluation.....	34	
<i>Monitoring format.....</i>	<i>34</i>	
<i>Evaluation format.....</i>	<i>37</i>	
<i>Management style.....</i>	<i>39</i>	
<i>Obstacles to monitoring and evaluation.....</i>	<i>40</i>	

3.9 Motivation and reward system	41
<i>Coping with dropouts and keeping peer educators motivated</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Peer educators' opinions on compensation and reward systems</i>	<i>43</i>
3.10 Peer educators' involvement.....	44
<i>Peer educators' involvement in project formulation, implementation</i>	
<i>and evaluation</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Peer educators' opinions on their involvement.....</i>	<i>45</i>
3.11 Community participation.....	46
<i>Informing the community.....</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Involving community leaders.....</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Working with opposition groups.....</i>	<i>47</i>
3.12 Impact of peer educators' activities	48
<i>Impact on community.....</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>Impact on peer educators</i>	<i>49</i>
3.13 Programme success and catalytic effect.....	50
3.14 Major constraints.....	51
3.15 Suggestions for improvement.....	52
4. KEY LESSONS FOR SUCCESSFUL PEER EDUCATOR APPROACH	56
4.1 Project formulation.....	56
4.2 Selection procedures	56
4.3 Training of peer educators.....	57
4.4 Peer educators' activities	57
4.5 Educational material and tools	58
4.6 Monitoring and evaluation.....	58
4.7 Management of peer education programmes.....	59
4.8 Motivation and reward system	59
4.9 Involvement of peer educators.....	59
4.10 Involvement of the community	59
4.11 Responding to the peer educators' needs.....	60
REFERENCES.....	61

List of acronyms

ABBEF	Association Burkinabé pour le Bien-Être Familial
ASBEF	Association Sénégalaise pour le Bien-Être Familial
CBD	Community-Based Distribution
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FLE	Family Life Education
FPAs	Family Planning Associations
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IPPA	Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
JHU/PCS	Johns Hopkins University's Population Communication Services
KAP	Knowledge Attitude Practice
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
P/E	Peer educator(s)
PPAG	Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STIs	Sexually transmitted infections
V2F	Vision 2000 Fund
YICC	Youth Information and Counselling Centre
WHO	World Health Organisation

List of tables

Table 1	Target groups' characteristics in each project
Table 2	Selection criteria for peer educator recruitment
Table 3	Attributes of a good peer educator according to peer educators (by order of importance)
Table 4	Motivations to become peer educator: selected quotes from focus group discussions in Ouagadougou, Richard Toll, Dakar, and Sogakope
Table 5	Performance indicators used in the Lentera project to evaluate training
Table 6	Examples of peer educators' monthly activity targets per project, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana
Table 7	Peer educators' monitoring format used in the ABBEF, ASBEF, PPAG and Lentera projects
Table 8	Peer educators' evaluation format used in the ABBEF, ASBEF, PPAG and Lentera projects
Table 9	Examples of financial compensations and reward systems for peer educators used in Burkina Faso, Senegal and Ghana
Table 10	Suggestions made by programme managers interviewed to improve peer educators' performance
Table 11	Suggestions made by community members interviewed to improve peer educators' performance
Table 12	Suggestions made by peer educators during focus-group discussions to improve their performance

List of figures

Figure 1	Conceptual framework for analysing peer educator approach in youth sexual and reproductive health
Figure 2	Summary of peer promoters models used in each country

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The overall purpose of this study is to describe and highlight some of the work that IPPF is doing with young people in the field of sexual and reproductive health. This study focuses on the different peer education approaches and experiences in five youth projects funded by the IPPF Vision 2000 Fund in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana and Indonesia.

The specific objectives are to identify the main lessons learned and key criteria for developing a successful peer education approach in a similar context; and to establish a model which encompasses the various experiences and approaches for peer education, and outreach activities.

This document is designed to be used as a guideline by Youth Programme Managers in Family Planning Associations and other people who want to plan and carry out peer education projects for youth, such as social workers, health educators, personnel of non-governmental organisations and youth associations, etc. The results and key lessons learned can be used to start a new project, or to integrate peer education into an existing youth project.

The document describes the necessary steps to plan, design, implement and evaluate peer education programmes and the main elements to be taken into consideration for each of the steps.

Based on the experience of these five innovative peer education programmes, the present review highlights a number of key lessons and “useful tips” relating to the components of successful peer education programmes. These include:

- Project formulation
- Selection procedures and selection criteria of peer educators
- Training of peer educators, including training formats, training curricula and evaluation of peer education training
- Peer educators’ activities and development of messages for young people
- Educational material and tools
- Monitoring and evaluation of peer education activities
- Management of peer education programmes
- Motivation and reward systems including management of dropouts and peer educators’ motivation
- Involvement of peer educators in project implementation and decision-making levels
- Community participation and working with opposition groups
- Constraints and obstacles.

Although this document focuses on IPPF’s experiences of peer education programmes in three countries in sub-Saharan Africa and in Indonesia, it offers a variety of practical ideas and guidelines on all the above topics which may be useful in establishing peer education projects in other countries.

INTRODUCTION

Young people under the age of 25 constitute half of the world's population today. This burgeoning segment of the population, especially in developing countries, has increasingly attracted the attention of both researchers and policy makers, because of its growing vulnerability to a number of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) problems.

First, a large proportion of women in the developing countries still marry and bear their first child before the age of 20 (Alan Guttmacher Institute 1997). Adolescent mothers face increased health risks since maternal mortality and pregnancy-related complications occur disproportionately at early ages.

Second, earlier sexual maturation and later age at marriage have increased the likelihood of non-marital sexual activity and non-marital pregnancy. Pregnancy to unmarried youth, especially those who are in school is often associated to abortion attempts. Abortions are particularly dangerous to adolescent women because they are more likely to resort to unsafe and self-induced abortion and to postpone abortion longer compared to older women (Friedman 1995). The sexual activity of unmarried youth is also closely associated with sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Of the 30 million people alive in 1998 with HIV infection or AIDS, at least 10 million are young people aged 10-24. Every day, 7,000 young people worldwide acquire the virus. This means around 2.6 million new infections a year among young people, including 1.7 million in Africa and 700,000 in Asia and the Pacific. Overall, young people account for at least 50% of all those who become infected after infancy, and in some countries the figure exceeds 60%. To some extent, these high infection rates reflect the preponderance of young people in the world. The global population is young, and increasingly so. Of the world's young people, 85% live in developing countries, and this is where over nine-tenths of the epidemic is now concentrated (Statement for the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, August 1998).

Finally, in several countries, the deteriorating economic conditions have also placed young people, especially young women, at increased risk of abusive, exploitative, and unsafe sexual encounters (Meekers and Calvès 1997; McCauley and Salter 1995).

Although it is clear that services and information are required to meet adolescents' reproductive health needs, adolescents still have limited access to such services and information (Friedman, 1995). In most developing countries, youth's knowledge of reproduction and sexuality remains low and inaccurate knowledge of sexual issues abounds (Senderowitz 1995). Family Planning service programmes still emphasise service to older, married women who have completed their childbearing or who wish to determine the spacing and timing of future births (Senderowitz 1997). Even when there are no legal or policy restrictions to serving youth, adolescent and young adults are reluctant to use public facilities because of the lack of privacy and confidentiality, as well as a result of the judgmental and unsympathetic reception that they think they will receive (CERPOD 1996). Although research overwhelmingly points to the contrary, parents, teachers and politicians often believe that sex education in schools will increase young people's interest and involvement in sexual activity (Birdthistle and Vince-Whitman 1997).

In view of the difficulties in reaching youth in schools and in health facilities, innovative approaches have been tested and implemented by non-governmental organisations (NGOs). These approaches include youth centres and outreach activities in which trained peers provide SRH information and services to both in-school and out-of-school youth.

Both theoretical and practical reasons explain the increasing popularity of peer education programmes to promote SRH among youth in developing countries. These reasons include:

- the commitment, energy and enthusiasm of young participants;
- adult discomfort and difficulties with adolescent sexuality;
- the value of youth networks in contacting;
- peer credibility;
- cost-effectiveness, and
- the constitution of a new generation of social workers and health professionals who are not embarrassed by sexuality (Fee and Youssef 1996; Baldo, 1998).

Despite the increasing popularity and prevalence of the use of peer-education in the area of youth SRH, the experience of programmes using this innovative approach remains under-documented, especially in developing countries. Practical issues regarding the recruitment, training, monitoring, evaluation, motivation and involvement of peer educators as well as larger questions regarding the overall design and implementation of peer education approach need particularly to be documented and such documentation would greatly benefit organisations willing to adopt such an approach.

Thus, the purpose of the present study is to report and document the pioneering work of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and its affiliated Family Planning Associations (FPAs) in designing, implementing and monitoring peer education programmes. Both the successes of, and obstacles faced by, five projects supported by the recent IPPF Vision 2000 Fund in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal and Indonesia are reported.

The present report is organised in four sections. The first section presents a brief background on the IPPF Vision 2000 Fund. Section two describes the study design and presents the study conceptual framework guiding the analysis and the data sources used. Presentation of the results is shown in section three, and recommendations for “successful peer educator approach” are presented in the last section of the report.

1. BACKGROUND: IPPF'S VISION 2000 FUND

Established in 1994 with support from USAID and three other donors, the Vision 2000 Fund (V2F) was created as the driving mechanism to implement the goals of the IPPF's Vision 2000 Strategic Plan and to increase the proportion of IPPF resources available to priority countries with high-unmet needs. The main focus of this new fund was to take on challenges not previously addressed by traditional family planning programmes. It looked to tackle issues such as unsafe abortion, gender and women's empowerment, male participation, and programmes for youth. The purpose was to work in areas where Family Planning Associations (FPAs) had formerly been reluctant to venture and to meet the needs of underserved groups. Youth was one of them.

In the area of youth SRH, one of the objectives of the IPPF Vision 2000 strategic plan is to "promote family life education as a means of preparing youth for responsible parenthood in the future and increase the access of young people to appropriate information, education and services in addressing their reproductive and sexual health care needs" (IPPF, 1992:18). To achieve this objective one of the activities recommended by the plan is to "actively involve young people in the design, implementation an evaluation of programmes, and in the decision-making structures of the association." (IPPF, 1992:19).

IPPF/V2F's willingness to promote youth SRH via active youth involvement has led to the development of various innovative participatory models of youth programmes in various part of the developing world. IPPF/V2F is currently funding 11 youth projects (seven in Africa, three in Indonesia and one in Romania). Family Planning Associations (FPAs) in these countries are currently providing sexual and reproductive health information, education and services for a large number of young people, including high-risk groups. These projects aim to reduce the incidence of unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortion, STIs and HIV/AIDS, and to address other sexual and reproductive health issues among young people aged 10-24 years.

These projects are also meeting the sexual and reproductive health needs of young people by creating youth clinics and by providing in-centre and outreach education activities and counselling, in a number of urban and rural sites. Key to the innovative approach taken by these projects is the provision of information, education, counselling and services to young people by young people themselves employed as peer educators and community-based distributors of condoms to both in- and out-of-school youth.

The experience of five of these innovative projects is reported in the present review. In sub-Saharan Africa, three projects are documented: the "*Youth for Youth*" project implemented in Burkina Faso by the Association Burkinabé pour le Bien-Être Familiale (ABBEF), the "*Family Health Programme for the under-served population of Volta region in Ghana*" implemented by the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG) and the project untitled "*Sexual and Reproductive Health Centres for Youth*" in Dakar and Richard-Toll of the Association Sénégalaise pour le Bien-Etre Familiale (ASBEF). While the primary focus of this report is on these projects, the experience of the "*Youth Information and Counselling Centres*" and "*Lentera*" projects implemented by the Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association (IPPA) is also reported.

2. STUDY DESIGN

2.1 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework used to document and contrast the experiences of the five V2F youth projects is shown in Figure 1. Three stages of programme design are examined in the framework: 1. formulation, 2. implementation 3. monitoring, evaluation and motivation. The projects' impact on both community and peer educators themselves is also discussed. Finally, the level of community participation in the peer educators' component of the projects as well as the level of involvement of peer educators in the project are considered.

As seen in Figure 1, three dimensions of project formulation stage are considered in the analysis: 1. the project origin and rationale (rationale for focusing on youth, project objectives regarding youth, and place of the peer education in the project design); 2. the target audience definition (characteristics of targeted youth, rationale for target selection); and 3. the peer-education model selected by each project.

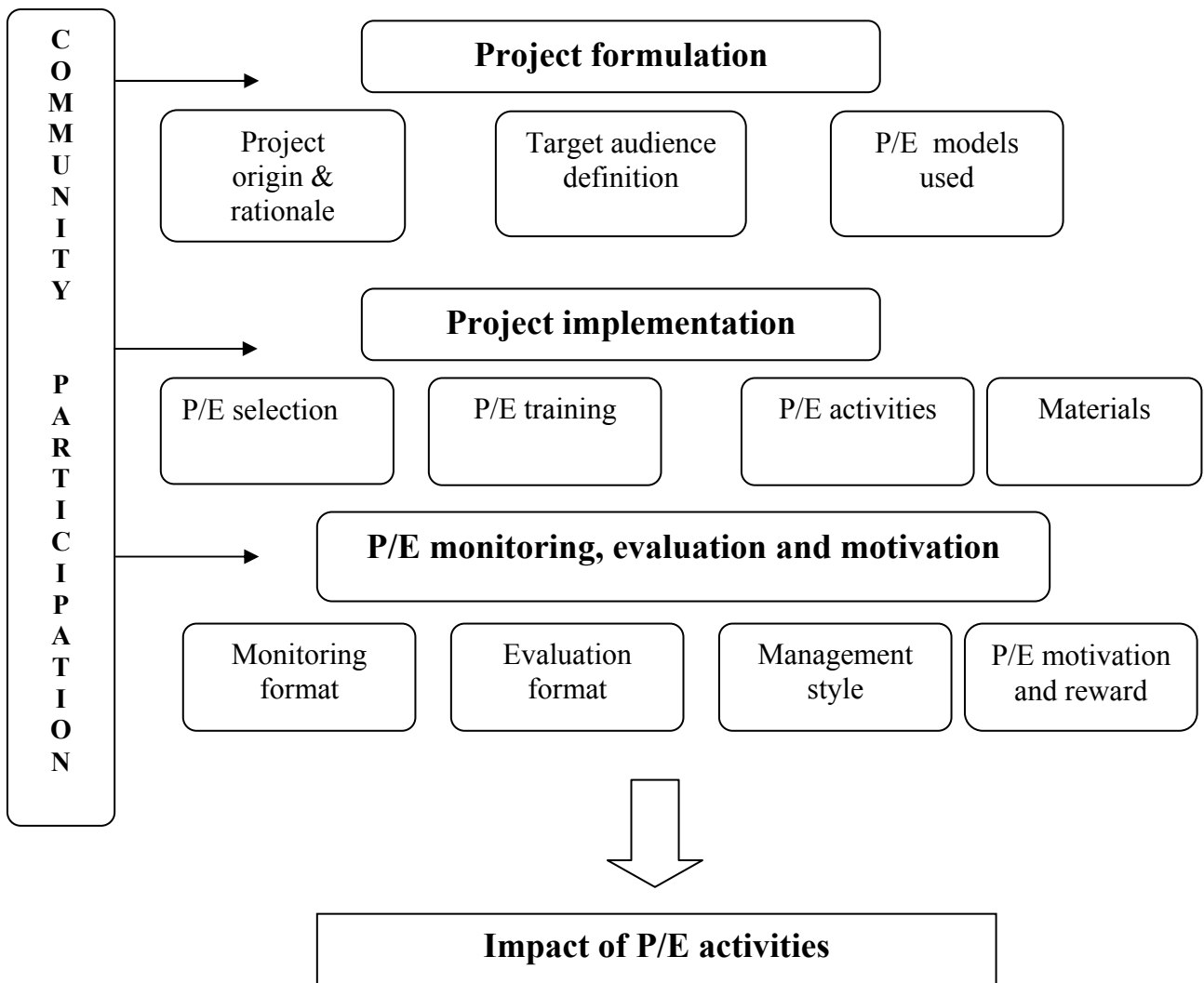
At the implementation stage, attention is paid to 1. peer educators' selection (selection procedures, selection criteria, profile of a good peer educator according to peer educators, motivations to become a peer educator); 2. peer educators' training (training format, training curricula, training evaluation, training needs); 3. peer educators' activities (scope of activities, activities according to audience perceived needs, activity plans, activity targets); 4. materials (materials used by peer educators, opinions and suggestions regarding materials).

The peer educators' monitoring, evaluation and motivation component of the framework looks at monitoring format, evaluation format, management style, motivation and reward system. Obstacles to monitoring and evaluation as well as peer educators' opinion on reward system are also considered.

Finally, both peer educators' involvement (involvement in project formulation, implementation and evaluation and peer educators' opinion on their involvement) and community participation (informing the community, involving community leaders and working with opposition groups) are discussed.

When looking at the impact of peer educators' activities, the impact on the community, on the peer educators themselves, and the success of the approach and its catalytic effect are examined.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework for analysing peer educator approach in youth sexual and reproductive health



2.2 Methodology

Both primary and secondary data were used to collect information on each component of the conceptual framework. Primary data were collected from January 24 to February 5, 2001 during field visits to the project sites: Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, Dakar and Richard-Toll in Senegal, and Sogakope in Ghana.

Primary data

Primary data collection consisted of focus group discussions with peer educators, community leaders and parents, in-depth interviews with programme managers and programme co-ordinators, informal conversations with project beneficiaries, as well as participant observation of peer educators activities.

In each project site, focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with mixed groups of male and female peer educators. The objective was to form “moderate sized” groups, of six and ten participants (Morgan 1988). The actual number of participants ranged from five (FGDs with peer educators working in the informal sector in Ouagadougou) to 12 (FGDs in Dakar). The purpose of these group discussions was to collect peer educators’ opinions on their recruitment, their training, their activities, the way they are monitored and evaluated, their involvement in the programme, their motivations, as well as their perceptions of the main constraints and benefits of their work and their suggestions to improve their working conditions. For comparative purpose, similar interview guidelines were used in all three countries.

Although focus group discussions were based on pre-prepared fairly structured and detailed discussion guidelines, these guidelines were general and open-ended and moderator involvement during the discussions was not very high. The consultant served as a moderator in all focus groups and ensured that although the desired set of topics was covered, it was not at the expense of letting participants raise their own opinions. To increase the willingness of discussants to speak freely and critically about the project no adults associated with the project were present during the discussions. Focus group discussions were conducted in French in Burkina Faso and Senegal and in English in Ghana, taped and then transcribed. A total of six FGDs with peer educators were conducted. Peer educators were also observed while conducting group discussions with youth in both Dakar and Ouagadougou.

Because one of the objectives of the study is to evaluate the level of community participation in peer educators’ activities in each project site (see conceptual framework in Figure 1), FGDs were also conducted among community leaders and parents in each project site. Community members involved in the youth projects, generally members of the project steering committee, were selected for FGDs. Discussions centred around their involvement in the project in general, and with the peer educators component of the project in particular, their motivation to take part in the project, the initial and actual community reaction to peer educator activities, as well as their opinions and suggestions for improving the projects.

To obtain additional information on project design, peer educators selection, training, monitoring, evaluation and motivation, successes and obstacles in programme implementation, in-depth interviews with programme managers and project co-ordinators were also conducted. Both directors of youth centres and project co-ordinator in charge of peer educators’ monitoring were interviewed in each project site.

Informal discussions were conducted with programme beneficiaries. Two formats were used. In Dakar and Ouagadougou, where two group discussions conducted by peer educators were observed, young participants were questioned after the information sessions. In Richard-Toll and Sogakope, four to five youth beneficiaries were selected and interviewed in youth centres. Among other things, young beneficiaries were questioned on their SRH needs, their perceptions of the quality of peer educators' activities, the impact of peer educators' activities had on their lives, and their opinions on project improvement.

Secondary data

In addition to the primary data collected on the project sites, secondary data were also used. All documents relating to the youth projects including project proposals, mid-term and final evaluation reports, training materials, project publications and advertising materials, monitoring and evaluation tools, were collected. The analysis consisted of content analysis of these project documents and of the interviews and discussions transcripts.

In addition to the field visits in Africa, the consultant collected information about the Lentera and Youth Information and Counselling Centres in Indonesia from the available material in the IPPF Central Office.

3. RESULTS

The results section is divided according to the components of the conceptual framework presented in Figure 1. Project origin and rationale, target audience definition, peer educator models, peer educators' selection, training, activities, material used, peer educators' monitoring and evaluation, motivation and reward system, peer educators' involvement, community participation, and the impact of peer educators' activities are presented in turn. Suggestions for improvement are also presented.

3.1 Project origin and rationale

All four FPAs responsible for the implementation of the youth programmes have a long experience in training family planning personnel and advocating the need for population and family planning education and services. In fact, ASBEF in Senegal, ABBEF in Burkina Faso, PPAG in Ghana and IPPA in Indonesia have each played a pioneering role in family planning services delivery to the general public since their creation in the 1970s. Since the establishment of the IPPF Vision 2000 Strategic Plan, FPAs are moving away from traditional family planning programmes to the more comprehensive sexual and reproductive health approach and have made youth one of their priority targets.

Rationale for focusing on youth

The rationale behind the focus on youth's SRH is basically the same in the four countries and includes:

1. The large number of young people in the country;
2. The increasing rates of STIs including HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancy and unsafe abortion among adolescents and young adults and the high prevalence of early pregnancy and related health problems;
3. The lack of knowledge of youth about sexual matters and the high prevalence of risky sexual behaviour among youth;
4. The disappearance of traditional means of informing and educating youth about their sexuality;
5. The limited scope of Family Life Education (FLE) curricula and/or the lack of out-of-school FLE curricula;
6. The reluctance of government family planning programmes to target unmarried youth;
7. The lack of IEC materials which address adolescent sexuality; and
8. The growing number of marginalised youth, or "youth-at-risk" (IPPA: 1994; ASBEF 2000; ABBEF, 1995; PPAG, 1998).

In all four countries, programmes have relied on secondary data to identify youth SRH unmet needs. Secondary data sources include official statistics, survey results from small-scale Knowledge Attitude Practice (KAP) surveys conducted among youth, hospital-based survey (for abortion-related health problems), and/or from large-scale nationally representative survey such as the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). Programmes have also collected or plan to collect their own data. In Ghana, for instance, a baseline survey was conducted in 1997 among youth aged 12-24 years from the Volta region. Similarly, ASBEF has conducted a small-scale survey among teachers and students in a Dakar school to evaluate youth SRH needs and teachers' opinions on these needs. In Burkina Faso, a quantitative and qualitative KAP survey was conducted between December 1993 and March 1994 among 436 youth in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso to evaluate youth SRH needs.

Objectives relating to youth

Recognising that there are still unmet needs in terms of providing youth with appropriate SRH education and services, the four FPAs have set both general and specific objectives emphasising youth. Programme managers were sometimes obliged to revise the initial specific objectives (for example in Ghana and Senegal both in 1999) to make them more SMART (Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic and Time-bounded).

In Senegal, for example, one dimension of ASBEF's new strategic orientation is "to promote sexual and reproductive health specifically among youth aged 10 to 24, through IEC activities and provision of quality care". The specific objectives are: "to increase the knowledge in SRH of 60,000 youth in Dakar and 40,000 in Richard-Toll" and "to increase by 15% every year the number of youth using contraception". Similarly, in Burkina Faso, the ABBEF "Youth for Youth" project aims at "disseminating information, providing counselling, family planning and STI/HIV services to youth aged 12-24 years in the formal and informal sectors of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso". More specifically, the objectives are "to provide 150,000 youths in both formal and informal sectors of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso with information and counselling on family planning, STIs/AIDS and FLE" and "to induce use of modern methods of contraception and STI services among 10,000 youth (40% condoms users, 30% pill users and 30% of spermicides).

In Ghana, PPAG objectives are formulated in the same fashion. By the end of the project the FPA hopes to (1) "increase the SRH knowledge of out-of-school youth 12-24 years from 30% (1997) to 65%", (2) increase access and use of SRH services among sexually active out-of-school youth from 29% (in 1997) to 45%; (3) maintain a level of 60% of out-of-school males (12-24 years) using condoms".

Finally, in Indonesia, IPPA has been implementing youth activities since the early 1980s and the general objective of the YICC project is to continue to "provide comprehensive sexual health information to youth with the goal of promoting healthy, responsible sexuality." More specifically, the objective is to "provide appropriate sexual health information/FLE, counselling and health services to around 200,000 young people aged 15-24 years both in and out of school" In the Lentera project based in Yogyakarta in southern central Java "the emphasis is on providing reproductive health/STIs and AIDS prevention programmes to young people, particularly those already sexually active such as gay men, transvestites, sex workers, tour guides, disco and billiard hall patrons, and street youth".

In all four countries, and based on the identified unmet needs in the project sites, programmes have formulated objectives related to the provision of sexual and reproductive health information, education, counselling, and family planning and STI/HIV/AIDS services for youth. Most of these objectives are seen as concrete and measurable, in that they can be attained and evaluated. However, sometimes the initial objectives have been revised (in the case of Senegal and Ghana projects for example) because they are judged to be too ambitious, not realistic and not measurable.

Peer education: keystone in project design

To achieve their goals and objectives, the five youth projects have developed innovative strategies, which include both centre-based, and outreach activities for youth. In all projects, youth centres have been opened in selected project sites. In Senegal, the ASBEF has opened two youth centres, one in Dakar, the capital city, and one in Richard- Toll, a town located in Northern Senegal in the St Louis region. Two youth centres have also been opened in Burkina Faso in the two largest cities of the country: Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. In Ghana, the geographic focus of the youth project is in North and South districts of the Tongu districts of the Volta region, an under-served area of the country, and two youth centres have been created in the small towns of Sogakope and Mepe respectively. Finally, the IPPA projects have a larger geographic scope than their African counterparts. In 1991 a first youth centre was opened in Jakarta, followed by two additional centres in Medan and Bandung. Under V2F funding eight other youth centres were opened throughout Indonesia, including the Lentera youth centre in the city of Yogyakarta.

While the geographical scope varies from one project to the other, the main purpose of youth centres is to provide a range of services dedicated to youth SRH needs including counselling, pregnancy testing, contraception, emergency contraception, gynaecological consultations, diagnosis and treatment of STIs, etc. In all centres a qualified doctor is available at least twice a week and a nurse works daily in the centre clinic. Besides clinical and counselling services, recreational (film projection, games, TV shows) and educational activities (library, conferences etc.) are also provided in the centres.

Of specific interest to the present study is the second strategy used by all five youth projects to achieve their goals: outreach activities involving peer educators. Referred to as *peer promoters* in Ghana, *jeunes "relais"* (literally "young relays") in Senegal, JAS or *Jeunes Animateurs de Secteur* (Youth sector animators), and JACS, *Jeunes Animateurs des Clubs Scolaires* (Youth animators of school clubs) in Burkina or *young volunteers* and *kokos* (peer-group school counsellors) in Indonesia, peer educators constitute the centrepiece of the youth project in each country.

In all five cases, the peer education component was included from the beginning of the programme or shortly after the programme initiation. Today, the peer education component is so embedded in the programme philosophy and perceived as a "*natural*" and "*obvious*" element of it that project managers are even surprised when asked about the rationale for including a peer educator component in their project.

In Burkina Faso, for instance, the strategy "Youth for Youth" has been adopted since the early phase of the project in 1992. As stated in the project proposal, this choice was made based on the association's prior field experience (ABBEF has been targeting youth audiences since 1985) which "made it clear that the 'youth for youth' approach was appropriate and efficient" since youth "have their own reference systems, models and languages" (ABBEF, 1995).

In Senegal, the peer education approach is presented as the "most efficient" and "widely accepted answer to young people's difficulties in accessing sexual and reproductive health information and services" (ASBEF, 2000).

In Indonesia, since its first involvement with youth, IPPA has adopted a very strong participatory approach. IPPA's first Youth Centre opened in Jakarta and was the first centre of

its type: “run for young people by young people”. Peer educators as well as youth volunteers who carry out outreach and in-centre activities are all adolescents or young adults and, whenever possible, young doctors, counsellors, administrators etc. are also employed.

In formulating youth programmes, the peer education component has been strongly integrated within the youth centres in the five projects. Reaching young people through a holistic approach is adopted as the main strategy and is proved to be the corner stone of the “Youth for Youth” strategy in each project.

In fact, through their outreach activities (providing information, counselling, referrals and community-based services) peer educators are central in reaching and referring young people to the youth centre.

3.2 Target audience definition

Groups targeted by peer educators vary from one project to the other. Table 1 shows the characteristics of youth targeted by each project in the four countries.

Table 1: Target groups’ characteristics in each project

Project	Target groups characteristics			
	Occupation, school status	Sex	Age	Place of residence
ABBEF, Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-school youth • Out-of-school youth 	Both	10-24	Urban: Ouagadougou, Bobo-Dioulasso
ASBEF, Senegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-school youth • Out-of-school youth 	Both	10-24	Urban, semi-urban: Dakar, Richard-Toll
PPAG, Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-of-school youth • Trokosi girls (see next page) 	Both	12-24	Rural: 11 communities in the Volta region
Lentera and YICC, Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalised youth (Gay men, transvestites, sex workers, street youth) • High school students • Other youth 	Both	12-24	Mostly urban: Yogyakarta and other urban Chapters

As seen in Table 1, the V2F youth projects implemented in Senegal and Burkina Faso are very similar with respect to the targeted youth. They both focus on female and male youth, both in and out-of-school, aged 10 to 24 and living in urban areas.

While these two projects are focusing on mainstream youth, the Ghanaian and Indonesian projects, on the other hand, have targeted more marginalised groups of youth. In Ghana, the

project targets under-served population living in rural communities, including the Trokosi¹ community as a specific target group. Because they marry early, practise early sex and early childbearing without access to education, contraception or appropriate sexual health services, Trokosi girls represent a very vulnerable sub-group of the youth population. While Trokosi girls are not the main focus of peer promoters' activities, two Trokosi girls have been trained by PPAG and are working as peer promoters in the International Needs Institute, a school providing vocational training to liberated Trokosi girls. The two Indonesian youth projects also target high risk-groups and marginalised youth in addition to high school students and mainstream youth. The high-risk youth groups targeted include gay men, transvestites, female sex workers, and street children.

The five projects are reaching specific target groups in the project sites and focus on male and female youth, both in and out-of school. Although all projects are reaching mainstream youth in urban and rural areas, some of them are mainly targeting marginalised and under-served groups such as young people in rural communities, and high-risk groups. The choice of target groups is always based on the identification of specific needs of young people in the project sites.

3.3 Peer education models

To reach target groups, youth projects have selected different peer education strategies. Figure 2 summarises the model used in each programme. As seen in Figure 2, while the ABBEF has chosen to train a specific group of peer educators for each of its two target groups (in and out of school), ASBEF uses the same peer educators for both in-school and out-of-school youth. In Ghana, the focus of peer promoters is now on one type of target group, out-of-school youth.² Finally, Model 4 representing the YICC and Lentera project in Indonesia is a mixture of both Model 1 and Model 2. In the Indonesian projects, a specific group of peer educators or “peer-group school counsellors” (*Kokos*) are trained to work with high school youth specifically. Young volunteers (also called outreach workers) work with both high-risk youth and “other youth groups”. Finally, peer counsellors conduct in-centre face-to-face, telephone and mail counselling with mainstream youth. As mentioned above, the young volunteers are so present within IPPA projects that it is sometimes difficult to make a clear distinction between the activities that fall under the peer educators' responsibility and those that do not. Thus, young volunteers can also be considered as “peer educators” because of their age, and also because some of them belong to high-risk groups such as the gay community, transvestites and commercial sex workers.

The five projects use a mixture of different approaches. Peer Educators often belong socially to the target groups such as school and university students, mainstream youth, Trokosi community in Ghana and high-risk groups in Indonesia. However, sometimes

¹ The Trokosi are girls sent to Shrines at very young ages (before the onset of menarche) to atone for the transgressions of their extended family members. While in the custody of the Shrines, they become the “temporary wives” of the priest and bear children for the Shrine, starting shortly after menarche and continuing for as long as they are held at the Shrine.

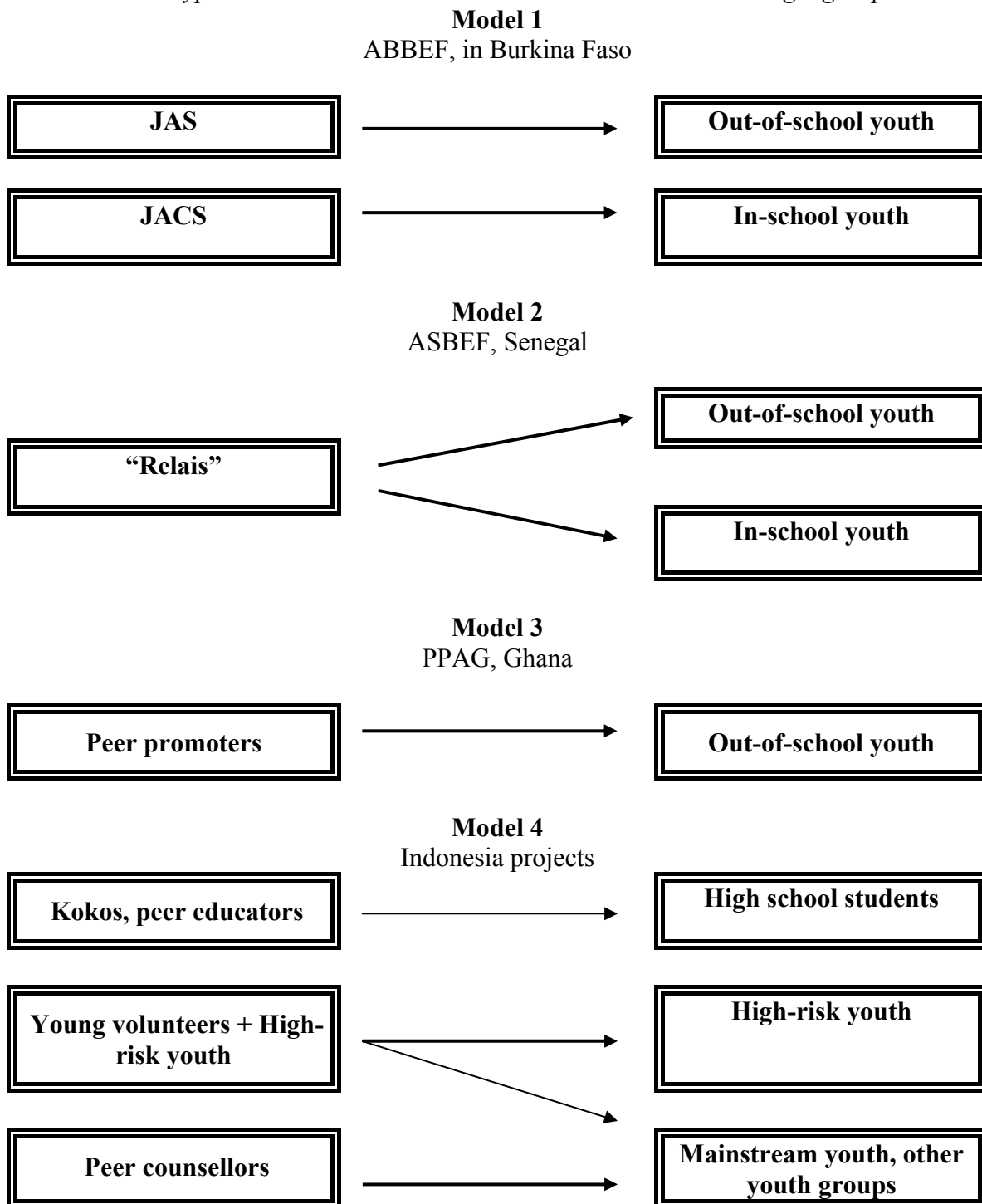
² Because Trokosi are not the main target of peer promoters in the region, they have not been included in the scheme.

peer educators do not belong socially to the target groups they are working with. This example is noted in Senegal for the in-school peer education activities and also in Indonesia where some of peer educators working with high-risk groups do not share characteristics and lifestyle with the target groups.

Figure 2: Summary of peer promoters models used in each country

Peer educator types

Target groups



3.4 Selection of peer educators

This section discusses the peer educators' selection procedures and criteria used by projects, the opinions of peer educators on what makes a good peer educator, as well as their motivations in joining the programme..

Selection procedures

All peer education programmes have developed recruiting procedures that secure a high level of acceptability of peer educators within their future work environment (communities or schools).

In Burkina Faso, the ABBEF programme has decided to leave the selection of peer educators working with in-school youth (JACS) and out-of-school youth (JAS) to teachers and community leaders respectively. The school administrators identified teachers of biology or Family Life Education and who are willing to be volunteers. These teachers set up ABBEF clubs in schools composed of volunteer pupils (around 25 members) and choose a peer educator within that club. As for the selection of JAS, the choice of peer educators is not left entirely to the community leaders, but the FPA do contribute to their selection.

In Ghana, the PPAG uses similar procedures to recruit their out-of-school peer promoters. Because of the strong influence of various churches in the Volta region where the programme is operating, both members of the communities and church leaders are involved in the peer promoters' selection process. They are responsible for identifying young community and church members who they recommend to PPAG staff.

In Senegal, ASBEF also relies on community leaders and members of the steering committee to identify young "relais". In addition, associations such as youth associations, sports associations, or women movements are also contacted to identify potential candidates. As opposed to the ABBEF programme, however, ASBEF peer educators working with in-school youth are not pupils from those schools. This questions the level of acceptability of those peer educators within the schools and limits the level of interaction the peer educator have with their target groups.

Finally, in Indonesia while little information is provided in the documents regarding recruitment procedure, the selection of *kokos* (peer-group school counsellors) for the YICC project is conducted in a similar manner to that of Burkina Faso. High school students are encouraged to join the SKR, which is similar to a club, and some of them are then trained to be peer-counsellors. As for young volunteers targeting high-risk youth and "other youth", the YICC centres prefer to recruit them from medical or psychology faculties at universities or from friends of staff or other volunteers.

The selection of peer educators is not the responsibility of the programme managers only. In order to increase the acceptability of peer educators either in schools or at the community level, the programme managers had involved teachers, community leaders, religious leaders and other youth organisations in the selection process of peer educators. This approach proved its success as peer educators involved in the five projects have been highly accepted and respected within their own communities and schools.

Selection criteria

Table 2 (see below) presents the selection criteria used by programme managers of ABBEF, ASBEF and PPAG when recruiting their peer educators.

As seen in Table 2, the criteria used by programme managers fall within three main categories: 1) adequacy of candidates with programme philosophy; 2) “character” criteria; and 3) socio-demographic criteria. All three programmes are looking for candidates who are “willing to work as volunteers”, and do not expect “any salary for their work”.

Several criteria relating to peer educator “character” are also mentioned including dynamism (ability to take initiatives), “good morality” (role model), and sociability. The ability and willingness to communicate and “talk freely”, or more specifically in Ghana, “talk about sexuality”, is also perceived as a necessary characteristic to be recruited as peer educator. Related to the necessary “sociability”, the ability to be accepted and respected within the community (or school) is also an important criteria mentioned in all programmes. Selection criteria in Senegal and in Ghana include the experience of the candidate in working with the community.

Table 2: Selection criteria for peer educators' recruitment, as set by programme managers

<p>ABBEF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Never have been convicted of criminal offence ▪ Be a student in one of the schools targeted by the programme and be there for at least two more years (JACS) or be a resident of one of the city sectors targeted by the programme and remain there for at least two more years (JAS) ▪ Accept ABBEF goals and objectives ▪ Respect scrupulously ABBEF organisational system ▪ Accept the goals and objectives of the national reproductive health policy ▪ Be sociable and have a good morality ▪ Accept to work during free time as a young volunteer without expecting a salary in return ▪ Accept to provide monthly, activity and programme reports. ▪ Accept to be supervised by FPA and project staff ▪ Be aged 16 to 25 years old (JACS) or 18 to 28 years old (JAS) ▪ Be single without children ▪ Be one of the best student in his/her school (JACS) or have a high school level at minimum ▪ Be dynamic ▪ Be able to communicate easily ▪ Be accepted in his/her community (school) ▪ Be able to speak the local languages (for JAS)
<p>ASBEF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have an educational level (minimum BFEM – school leaving certificate) ▪ Be dynamic ▪ Accept to be a volunteer ▪ Be able to communicate easily ▪ Be accepted by the community ▪ Have a history of community participation ▪ Be available ▪ Be less than 25 years old
<p>PPAG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accept voluntarism ▪ Be willing/able to talk about sexuality ▪ Be literate ▪ Have a known history of community participation ▪ Be accepted by the community ▪ Be a role model ▪ Be less than 25 years old

While programme managers seem to agree on both the need for candidates to accept the programme philosophy and on the character features of the peer educator, there is no consensus regarding the “socio-demographic” criteria, such as education, age, marital status, and gender balance.

As seen in Table 2, education is mentioned as a selection criterion in all three programmes. However, the educational level required varies from one programme to the other. PPAG

programme where peer promoters are targeting out-of-school youth living in rural areas requires that the candidate be literate only, while ASBEF requires a minimum level of education (BFEM)³ for its “relais” and ABBEF requires an even higher level of education for its JAS. Managers of ABBEF programme stated that some peer educators could not answer some of the questions youth were asking them and that *“more educated peer educators will more likely to add to their own training by personal research and answer audience questions”*. However, programme managers in Senegal and Ghana do not perceive high level of education for peer educators working with out-of-school youth as a plus but rather as an obstacle. *“If they are too educated, young people they are talking to won’t feel close to them, won’t trust them. They need to be able to read and write, but having a diploma is not what counts,”* said one project co-ordinator.

Age requirement for peer educators to be selected is also a matter of debate. While the minimum age is not a concern, the age limit is. As seen in Table 2, the official age limit is about the same in all three programmes: being less than 25 years old. However, some programme managers believe that the age limit is difficult to respect and feel that it is difficult to refuse a good candidate because of his/her age or ask a peer educator to leave the programme, because he/she is too old. Fieldwork visits confirm that in several programmes, especially in Senegal, peer educators were older than 25 years. Participants in Focus groups and interviews did not always agree that age is what matters and they often debated on the definition of “youth”. *“The important thing is to be young in your head, be close to the young people”* said one “relais” from Dakar. *“Some people are 30 but they look young,”* said one JAS in Ouagadougou. *“In Senegal people says you are young until you are 35. It’s the norm”*, declared more than one participant interviewed in Senegal. However, other peer educators disagree. As one JACS in Burkina Faso explains, *“A JACS cannot be the oldest one in the class or in the school, he should be in the average age group”*.

Closely related to age, or “social age” is peer educators’ marital status. While some older peer educators have got married and are still working for programmes, in all programmes being single is an explicit (ABBEF) or implicit selection criterion.

Finally, in all three youth projects, both males and females are encouraged to apply. In all three African programmes visited girls are less likely to apply than boys and the sex ratio of peer educators is in favour of males. For instance, the ABBEF youth programme manager recognises that some socio-cultural factors may explain the small number of girls who are willing to accept *“talking about sex, but the most important barrier is that 18 to 20-year-old girls do not have the same concerns as their male counterpart; they have to get ready for marriage, they need to get a proper job to prepare themselves for their future married life”*.

The study has shown that generally for the selection of peer educators there is consensus about selection criteria that relate to the programme philosophy (volunteer-based work, and ability to deal with sexual and reproductive health issues, community-based activities) and the criteria that relate to personal characteristics (dynamism, good morality, ability to communicate, acceptable to the target group, etc). However there is less consensus regarding the socio-demographic selection criteria such as education, age, marital status, and gender balance:

³ Brevet de Fin d’Etudes (school leaving certificate).

A high level of education is mainly required for school-based activities, but for peer educators reaching out-of-school youth, a minimum level of education could be accepted.

The informants agreed that age of peer educators should be within the average age of the target groups. The age limit is usually around 25 years old, however in practice it proves difficult to respect this age limit, particularly when good and experienced ‘older’ candidates are available. It is also an expensive exercise to change peer educators in the course of project implementation because of their age.

Some programmes are not very explicit about the marital status. Priority is given to single candidates during the selection process, however when peer educators get married while still working for the programme, they continue to be involved as peer educators. Target groups did not perceive this as an obstacle.

Although both male and female candidates are encouraged to apply, girls are less likely to be involved as peer educators. Young girls, particularly in Africa are more concerned with their family life, including marriage and their professional future rather than voluntary work.

Profile of a good peer educator according to peer educators

To contrast the official selection criteria with the experience of peer educators in the field, peer educators working in the ABBEF, ASBEF and PPAG programmes were asked their opinions of “what makes a good peer educator”. Answers are presented in order of importance in Table 3.

Table 3: Attributes of a good peer educator according to peer educators (by order of importance)

- Able to give information to target group and convince them (clear and understandable message)
- Trustworthy, and discreet (about people secrets), be a good listener
- Tolerant, understanding
- Be known in the community, be a leader
- Available
- Be sociable, be liked by others
- Dynamic
- Be a model, a reference
- Be patient (wait for the audience to show up)
- Punctual
- Polite
- Not judgemental
- Able to control a group

In their description of “*the ideal*” peer educator, young people in the three African countries stress “character attributes” and do not mention any specific socio-demographic profile or any obligation of commitment to the programme philosophy. Communication skills both in terms of giving and receiving information are at the top of the list. A good peer educator must be able to give a clear and understandable message to his audience, and be able to generate trust to receive and keep secrets. These results confirm that being a peer educator also implies a role as counsellor, as peer educators are expected to be tolerant, understanding and not judgmental. Recognising that peer education requires hours of work every day, young people stress that availability is also an important attribute for a good peer educator. They also give high importance to other personality qualities such as patience, punctuality, politeness and the ability of a peer educator to control a group of young people.

Becoming a peer educator: motivation

Focus group participants were asked what motivated them to become peer educators. Answers are presented in Table 4.

As seen in Table 4, the dominant motivation for young people to enrol in the programme is the “*desire to help*” their peers in their respective community. Young focus-group participants said they were concerned about the increasing prevalence of the AIDS epidemic and other sexual and reproductive health issues such as abortion, unwanted pregnancy as well as delinquency and drug abuse among young Burkinabé, Ghanaian and Senegalese. In a context where information is difficult to get, “*even within the family*” and where young people are ill-informed about sexuality, educated youth feel they have a “*role to play*” in providing information to others.

Several focus group participants also mentioned the fact that they had attended a peer educator information session, were “*impressed with the work*” and wanted to do the same. For in-school peer educators, the fact of being chosen by the teacher was also perceived as an “*honour*”, which they could not refuse. Finally, out-of-school youth see peer educators’ activities as an avenue to get an occupation, and start a “*career*”.

While information on what has motivated peer educators to join the Lentera and YICC projects were not collected, the mid-term evaluation report of the Lentera project pointed out that psychology students decided to become peer counsellors because they saw this work as a way to improve their interpersonal skills.

Peer educators join the programme particularly because they want to help others, be useful and because they have a role to play in providing information to their peers, particularly on HIV/AIDS and other sexual and reproductive health issues such as abortion, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, etc. Peer education programmes are also seen as good channels to develop social skills as well as education and communication skills, and therefore could increase their chances in job search and career building.

Table 4: Motivations to become peer educator: selected quotes from focus group discussions in Ouagadougou, Richard Toll, Dakar, Sogakope

JACS, Ouagadougou	JAS, Ouagadougou	“Relais”, Richard Toll	Peer promoter, Sogakope
<p>“I had a friend who was a peer educator in Bobo Dioulasso, he was very pleased with it”</p> <p>“I was curious about sexuality”</p> <p>“I wanted to give the information. AIDS is the curse of the century. I know many young people who have been infected”</p> <p>“Last year I participated in some discussions with female peer educators. When the teacher asked me I said yes, immediately”</p> <p>“I was proud to be asked. There is so much to do”</p>	<p>“I am interested in the activities they do, AIDS is a real problem among youth”</p> <p>“Young people have a lot of problems: unwanted pregnancy, STIs, AIDS. Why does a young person have AIDS? Because he does not have any information. These are things that motivate you to do something, to give the right message to your friends”.</p> <p>“I was in the same situation as those young people in the neighbourhood, even within the family communication is difficult. I have the chance to be educated. In my neighbourhood many young people do not have that chance, they become delinquent, use drugs and I know I could help.”</p>	<p>“I chose this career because I like it. I learn a lot and I get to know better my compatriots.”</p> <p>“I needed an occupation. We left school. It is a way to get a useful training. We want to take part in the education of our population.”</p> <p>“It gives me something to do”</p> <p>“I was already involved in a women’s association, it came naturally to join.”</p> <p>“I wanted to give the information to my friends who cannot have it”</p>	<p>“When you see your friends suffering from that. You want to do something”</p> <p>“Because of the problems before the project, STIs, drug abuse. There was no opportunity to stop this except through PPAG. So I felt very happy to join the project.”</p> <p>“It’s difficult to explain our problems to elderly people. We wanted to provide an alternative.”</p> <p>“ I attended talks from a peer promoters from the first batch. I liked it and wanted to do the same”</p> <p>“With all the problems of STIs, teenage pregnancy and abortion in our community, I was feeling pity for them. I join PPAG because I wanted to help”</p>

3.5 Peer educators' training

In this section, training format, training curricula and training needs as expressed by peer-educators interviewed are presented.

Training format

In all programmes three types of training are planned: initial training, continuous training and refreshers.

In Burkina Faso, Ghana and Senegal the format of the initial training is similar. It consists usually of 10 to 14 days residential seminar, conducted by the FPA staff as well as resource persons. In ASBEF, the doctor working at the youth centre and a midwife from the community took part in the training. This useful initiative needs to be underlined as other projects often fail to include medical personnel in their peer educators' training. The training approach is usually participatory and includes activities such as role-plays, sketches, brainstorm in addition to mini-lectures provided by trainers on a daily topic.

Besides initial training, refresher courses are also conducted in all projects. Here again the format is the same in all projects. It consists of a two to three-day seminar on specific topics that have already been discussed during the initial training. In Ouagadougou, for instance, a refresher for JACS and JAS takes place every year on specific topics.

The last component of the training activities is the continuous training. This type of training is highly informal and based on personal initiatives of peer educators.

Finally, an innovative approach to training has been tried by ASBEF in the youth centres of Dakar and Richard-Toll and is worth mentioning. It consists of accepting "peer educators trainees" any time during the year and training them informally on a daily basis. Trainees are then sent to the field with a fully trained "relais" to get field experience. In Dakar, 7 trainees were in the association at the time of the consultant's visit. These trainees are sometimes students who need to write a report on SRH topics, or other youth who would like to join but arrived after the official training session. The advantages of such an approach is to constitute a reserve group (substitutes) of peer educators to allow the project to remain at full strength in the event of absentees or dropouts, and to provide potential peer educators with extended field experience.

The raison d'être of peer education training is to equip young people with the knowledge, understanding, necessary skills, and motivation to carry out peer education activities. The study has shown that training programmes should include the following elements:

- Initial training of 10 to 14 days. The length and intensity of the knowledge component depend on the project objectives and approach.
- Regular refresher training of 2-3 day-seminars (once a year for example). During the project implementation, peer educators will need more skills development and more knowledge. Refresher training will help peer educators to update their knowledge and improve their skills.
- Providing continuous support and supplementary training. Peer educators will

always need support and assistance in developing activities and ensuring self-development. Programme managers should plan to monitor and observe peer educators and assess their specific needs in terms of training accordingly.

- The preparation of “peer educators as substitutes” is an innovative idea that could be very useful to gradually replace the older peer educators and the dropouts.

Training curricula

All projects have developed training curricula, often in collaboration with other NGOs working in the area of adolescent sexual and reproductive health and international funding agencies. In Burkina Faso, for instance, ABBEF elaborated in June 1997, in collaboration with the GTZ, a comprehensive training curriculum on SRH for both the initial and refresher training. The curriculum for the initial training includes eight modules: 1. Conceptual framework for peer educators (profile, role and tasks); 2. Youth sexual health; 3. Contraceptive methods; 4. STIs/AIDS; 5. Youth sexuality; 6. Excision; 7. Drug abuse; 8. IEC, group discussions, counselling. The curriculum for refresher sessions includes six modules: 1. Unwanted pregnancies and contraceptive methods; 2. STIs/HIV/AIDS; 3. Excision; 4. drug abuse; 4. Communication and counselling.

In 2000, ABBEF added two modules to the existing ones: one on gender and one on the national “code des personnes” (personal code). In addition a brochure “Questions-Answers” which includes the questions youth most frequently asked has been recently produced to help JAS and JACS in their daily activities.

In Senegal, ASBEF has also developed a curriculum for the training of its “relais” but without the collaboration of any other NGOs. The curriculum includes 12 modules, which are very similar to the ones presented above. No specific curriculum has been developed for refresher sessions.

In Ghana, PPAG uses a curriculum on Family Life Education and Peer Counselling developed in 1997 in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University’s Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS) to train its peer promoters. The manual entitled “*Reach Out*” is divided into 14 modules. “Modules 1-4 deal with issues pertaining to the individual, from infancy to old age, as well as information on individual’s relationship with society at large. Modules 5-7 deal with sexuality. Module 6 includes information on contraceptives. Module 8 covers relationships and skills needed for family life. Module 9 addresses the rights and responsibilities of young people. Modules 10-11 provide knowledge and skills that promote physical and emotional health of young people. Finally, modules 12-14 discuss issues dealing with communication, peer counselling and how to be an effective youth leader. (PPAG 1997).

In 1999, PPAG decided to design a new handbook for “peer motivators working in sexual and reproductive health projects for young people”. This “*Handbook on sexual and reproductive health for peer motivators*” was developed in collaboration with Population Concern in a five-day workshop by a group comprised of peer motivators, PPAG staff, six resource persons (volunteers), a consultant and an artiste. The handbook contains 11 topic sessions with objectives, key facts, and number of different activities such as role-plays, stories, brainstorm, personal testimony, drawings and diagrams for each session.

The above examples show that all projects have designed their own training curriculum. These curricula generally include six broad categories of topics 1. Biological information on youth body and body changes, 2. Large range of sexual and reproductive health problems (STI/AIDS, unwanted pregnancy and abortion, teenage pregnancy, excision etc.) 3. Family planning and safe sex, 4. Social and psychological aspects of sexual relationships (peer pressure, friendship, gender issues, sexual abuse, rape etc. as well as other related social issues such as drug abuse); 5. Skills training (communication and counselling skills) and finally, 6. Organisational values training (information on peer educators' role and tasks, familiarisation with the project philosophy and the FPA's work).

The training curricula are often developed in collaboration with other NGOs and agencies working in the field of youth sexual and reproductive health.

Training evaluation

All projects are using methods to evaluate their peer educators' training. In Ghana, the manual "Reach Out" includes two evaluation instruments a "daily evaluation form" and a pre and post test which were both used to evaluate the initial training of peer educators. While the daily evaluation form is designed to gather qualitative feedback on the training (comments of trainees on what they learned, the difficulties they faced, their training needs for future session, the overall perception of the training day) the pre and post test collect quantitative information used to assess the level of post-training knowledge on SRH.

In Burkina Faso, ABBEF has also integrated an evaluation component into its peer educators' training activities, and uses a pre and post-test questionnaire. In Senegal, training evaluation exists but is very informal and consists of inviting participants to give their opinions on the session at the end of each day as well as evaluating them when they perform role-plays. Importantly, even when data have been collected, like in Ghana and Burkina Faso, they have not been analysed in a systematic way and no reports on the evaluation of training is available in any country visited. Thus, the evaluation of training needs remains highly informal in all three African projects and data collected are not used to modify project strategies or activities. In Indonesia, on the other hand, the Lentera project has set up clear and detailed data collection and analysis strategies and instruments to evaluate the training of their volunteers (IPPF 1999). Performance indicators used in the Lentera project to evaluate training are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Performance indicators used in the Lentera project to evaluate training

Process indicators	Outcome indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and length of training sessions • Number of trained counsellors, Kokos • Number of training materials distributed • Number of curricula developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for additional training sessions • Relevance of curricula to specific groups of trainees • Number of trainees assessed to be actively using information • Change of attitudes of trainees • Post-training knowledge

As seen in Table 5, the Lentera project set up quantitative indicators to evaluate the training process and outcome indicators to measure the actual impact of the training session on participants. To collect these indicators, pre and post feedback questionnaires as well as focus group discussion techniques with trainees are included in all training exercises. As opposed to the African youth project, data collected on training performance are analysed and used to improve training activities. To analyse the results a statistical overview of what questions participants got right and wrong before the training took place, and how that profile changed after the intervention. Thus, attention is paid to how the overall test score has changed but also which individual questions shows the most or the least improvement. To obtain results for each participant and match individual pre and post test, but avoid the embarrassment of having trainees to write their name on the test, each participant can be asked to develop a personal code on the questionnaire. While statistical compilation is done by hand for small-scale training, questionnaire results are also often entered in a computer to use a statistical analysis programme (such as SPSS) for more complex and rigorous analysis of the data (Monitoring and Evaluation: lessons learned from Lentera project: IPPF, 1997).

Finally, in the YICC project, while pre and post tests for training programmes are conducted regularly, the mid-term evaluation report of the project pointed out that pre and post tests focus more on the trainees' attainment of knowledge rather than their feedback on the topics, content and presentation. Despite the time and effort that is put in to conduct training evaluation, the results are often not analysed and not used to modify project strategies or activities (IPPF 1998).

Evaluation of peer educators' training is performed in all peer education programmes and used to collect information on the current training sessions. The projects in Africa are using various instruments such as daily evaluation forms, pre and post tests, or more informal appreciation tools based on observation of trainees during role plays or group discussions. However, although the data are collected, they have not been analysed and reported in a systematic way. In Indonesia both projects have set more clear and detailed data collection formats, however analysis strategies for training evaluation is only performed by the Lentera project. And as opposed to the African projects, the results of the evaluation are often analysed and used to improve training activities and practices.

As described above, the training evaluation tools and approaches used in the Lentera project are exemplary as a successful approach of evaluating peer educators' training.

Training needs: peer educators' opinions

Overall, all focus group participants, especially those who had been newly trained were very satisfied with the training they received. They expressed a need for more refreshers, more practical types of training, and more training on counselling and communication techniques.

In Ouagadougou, the JACS and JAS were newly formed and were unanimously enthusiastic about their training. They liked both the content and the methodology of the training. "We learned a lot," said one JACS, "There was no barrier, we were feeling at ease", said another JACS. "I liked the way it was done, we were comfortable" said one JAS.

When asked about what aspects could be improved, peer educators in Burkina Faso would have liked *“to go to the field to practise”* and suggested that more practical aspects be added to the theoretical training in the future.

Peer promoters in Ghana were also very satisfied with their training. As one participant summarised *“I can’t see anything wrong with the training, I was introduced to a new world”*. However Ghanaian peer promoters mentioned a need for more refreshers. They would like to enlarge the scope of topics covered. As one participant pointed out *“everyday we are asked new and different questions that are sometimes beyond our knowledge.”*

The need for more refresher training was also mentioned during group discussions with “relais” in Dakar. Generally satisfied with their training, “relais” also asked for more training on communication techniques.

Finally, the enthusiasm about the training they received was not shared by “relais” in Richard-Toll, who complained that the training period was too short, with *“too much to learn in too little time”*, and was too theoretical. They suggested that the training be longer and should include a nurse or a doctor. One interesting suggestion was to give trainees answers to frequently asked questions and establish a “question & answer brochure” for example.

The need for additional initial and refresher training was also reported in the YICC project in Indonesia. According to the mid term evaluation report, “there is universal agreement that more training on many aspects of SRH, youth centre work and counselling is necessary to help the staff and volunteers improve their performance. Lectures or workshops which last 2-4 days were estimated not to be enough to deal with very sensitive issues that young people face, and these sessions often concentrate on technical or medical aspects (IPPF, 1998: 20).

It is obvious that the initial training in the five projects has been very successful and satisfactory. However the general concern shared by peer educators is the lack of regular refresher training and continuous support from the programme managers. There is not a systematic assessment of peer educators training needs and therefore peer educators expressed their urgent needs and recommended the following:

- Refresher training in order to enlarge the scope of the topics covered by the initial training.
- More practical rather than theoretical trainings.
- Suitable training period.

3.6 Peer educators’ activities

Scope of activities

Peer educators in all four countries could also be called “peer counsellors”, “peer promoters” or “peer referrers” as the range of their activities goes beyond simply conducting group discussions among young people. In all three African countries, core peer educators’ activities are the same and include: 1. conducting group discussions and group debates (“causeries” or “tea-debates”), 2. individual counselling, 3. home visits, 4. referrals to the youth clinics, and 5. community-based distribution of condoms and some contraceptives. Activities are the same for

out or in school youths. Only the setting where group discussions are conducted differs (schools versus community). While discussions are held within the schools for pupils, they are conducted in various places of the community for out-of-school youth: personal house, soccer fields, apprenticeship places such as mechanical workshops, tailoring shops or garages, places where “tea round group” meetings are held in Senegal, under trees, or more generally in places where out-of-school youth “hang out”. Peer educators also use the youth centre for their educational activities.

In the Indonesian projects, the core activities conducted by peer educators, young volunteers, and peer-counsellors, are more or less the same in the YICC project and in the Lentera project. In the Lentera project, the activities conducted by peer educators in school include providing face-to-face information about sexual health, referring peers for health and other services and organising conferences and activities at the high schools. As part of their activities several workshops on reproductive health (3 hours), AIDS/STIs (3 hours), and sexuality and sexual health (8 hours) are conducted within the school setting:

The peer educators also distribute a monthly bulletin on sexual health. Thus, with the exception of community-based distribution of condoms, the activities are basically the same than those conducted by African school peer educators.

The peer counselling aspects of the project includes face-to-face counselling and information provision by phone and letter. Like the in-school peer education, this peer-counselling component does not include any contraceptive services for young people. Activities to reach mainstream youth also include conducting presentation and discussions sessions on reproductive health topics at youth organisations.

Two types of outreach activities directed towards “youth-at-risk” are conducted by young volunteer outreach workers at the Lentera project: visiting clients at their homes and communities, and cruising areas/brothel during the nights. During these field visits young volunteers provide information, support, condoms and referrals for services. In addition the project has several support groups, for sex workers, gay men and transvestites. Young volunteers hold meetings approximately twice a month. During these meetings there is a mix of educational and recreational activities. Special games are developed to discuss sexual health issues. Finally, Risk Reduction Training Workshops of approximately three hours are also given to sex workers, gay men and transvestites. Issues such as interpersonal communication, condom use and negotiating skills are included in the workshop.

In all four countries, besides these core activities, peer educators also take part in larger IEC events implemented by the projects including film projections for the general public, sport events, game tournaments, TV/ radio spots, quiz games etc. Additionally, in Burkina Faso and Ghana peer educators are part of a theatre troupe, which presents sketches and plays on issues such as teenage pregnancy, female genital mutilation (excision), parent/ child relationships, unwanted pregnancies, STIs, drug use. In Ouagadougou, the theatre troupe was created in 1996 and is believed to be a great asset of the project. In both countries, there is a high demand for the troupe performances coming from both schools and various organisations and performances are given on a regular basis. Sometimes, peer educators themselves write play screen.

In all projects peer educators conduct various activities that fall under four approaches:

Peer information and communication for in-school and out-of-school youth. These activities involve providing information, often to large groups, such as group discussions, video shows, drama performance, radio broadcasts, sports events, games, music concerts, etc. During these activities a big number of IEC material (leaflets, brochures, posters, etc) is also distributed.

Peer education activities involve smaller groups or individuals. The activities are based on training activities such as organising workshops for the target groups. Both Indonesian projects for instance conducts specific educational and training activities for small groups of youth at risk (commercial sex workers, gay men, street children, transvestites, etc). IEC material as well as contraceptives are distributed.

Peer counselling to carry out face-to-face counselling or counselling for small groups of youth. This usually includes support and help with problem solving. Home visits, face-to-face counselling, counselling provided by phone, answering letters, discussions with couples, etc. are the main counselling activities conducted in the reported projects.

Community based distribution of condoms and other contraceptives as well as referral to the youth clinics are performed in all projects.

Activities and messages according to audiences' perceived needs

Peer educators discuss a wide range of themes with youth. The issues covered include, for example puberty, menstrual cycle, STIs and HIV/AIDS, early sex and early pregnancy, unwanted pregnancy and unsafe abortion, family planning methods, relationship between parents and their children, responsible parenthood, sexual violence and female genital mutilation (FGM) as well as drug and alcohol abuse. Decisions regarding which topics to be discussed are ultimately left to peer educators, although they are encouraged to vary the topics they cover. As mentioned above, "*peer educators often follow the will of the group*".

While in theory, issues discussed do not vary according to group characteristics; all programmes have an implicit policy of sending different messages and emphasising different activities to sexually active and not sexually active youth. Since it would be difficult to judge whether an audience is sexually active or not, the age is often used as a proxy for sexual activity. While no written rules exist regarding developing different activities or discussing different themes depending on the age of the target groups, peer educators and programme managers admit that the topics covered and messages sent to youth vary according to the age.

In Senegal, for instance, peer educators mention that they tend to emphasise abstinence and biological aspects of the reproductive system with younger audience and discussing family planning and safe sex with older audience. Similarly, in Ghana, peer educators are encouraged to separate the youth groups according to the age and discuss different topics with various age groups. As the programme manager explained, "*Because it is difficult for very different age group to be together and discuss freely, we generally separate the very young ones, those who are likely not sexually active from those who could be. With younger people we discuss issues like abstinence, disadvantages of early sex and with older ones we tell them how to protect themselves from STIs*". The need to officially design specific activities according to age has been felt by the ABBEF programme in Burkina Faso as well. In the coming years, ABBEF

programme is planning to develop different strategies for different age groups and conduct specific activities according to age.

In Indonesia, messages sent to youth by the YICC and Lentera projects also vary according to target groups. While African programmes use age as a proxy for sexual activity, the Indonesian projects assume that “high-risk” groups including female commercial sex workers, gay men, transvestites, street children are sexually active while high school students and “other youth” are probably not. Consequently, the main messages given to high school students and other youth in all programmes are to avoid sex before marriage and be a “*responsible youth*”, while the message given to those considered as sexually active is “safe sex” (IPPF, 1998). While condoms are given to high-risk, marginalised youth, no contraceptive services are offered to high school students or mainstream youth.

Besides age, gender is sometimes a differentiation criterion for the choice of themes discussed during group discussions. In all programmes, peer educators conduct information sessions both with boys and girls together and single-sex group. Most peer educators interviewed value talking to a group composed of both girls and boys because “*it makes the discussion more lively*”, “*more dynamic*”, or “*it gives the opportunity to boys to ask question to girls*”. This seems to be especially true for topics such as unwanted pregnancy or responsible parenthood, or more general topics such as STIs and AIDS. In two of the six focus groups conducted, however, some peer educators mentioned that specific themes such as contraception or female genital mutilation (excision) are easier to discuss in a single-sex group. A female JAS explained that she feels it is easier to speak to girls alone when it comes to contraception because “*the language is easier, and girls can ask me simple and straight forward questions*”. Other peer educator mentioned the fact that some girls feel shy to ask specific questions while in-group with boys.

Importantly, in all four programmes, the choice is ultimately left to the peer educator to compose his/her groups and to decide whether or not to speak to mixed or single-sex audience.

This section clearly points out the difficulty and the controversy regarding the message peer educators should send to sexually active and to not-sexually active youth. This controversy also applies to the strategy to be adopted.

The different strategies used in the four countries to reach sub-groups of adolescents do reflect the reality that adolescents and young adults, both male and female, have different sexual and reproductive health needs in different stages in their lives, as well as different levels of comprehension of technical and scientific issues related to SRH. Importantly, promoting abstinence before marriage, and avoiding speaking about family planning to younger groups based on the assumption that they are not sexually active could be dangerously misleading. In fact, survey results used by programmes (see section on rationale for focusing on youth) show that youth in all four countries initiate sexual activity at an early age. Additionally, for programmes to send two contradictory messages (e.g. safe sex and abstinence) could cause confusion among youth.

Activity planning

In all programmes, peer educators plan their activities by themselves. They generally fill up monthly schedule sheets for the discussions to be held during the month, which they give to the co-ordinators. In Burkina Faso, for each discussion planned, this planning sheet includes the place, the date, the name of the group, and the theme to be discussed during the discussion as well as the support to be used.

While similar planning schedules were initially used in Ghana and Senegal, their implementation turned out to be difficult. In both cases, peer educators had difficulties planning on a monthly basis, because of “*the high mobility of their target groups*” and “*the changing demand for discussion*”. As the project co-ordinator explained “*associations want the peer educators to come and talk to them, there is a high demand and it makes planning difficult*”. Consequently, in Dakar ASBEF peer educators have now switched to a weekly schedule of activity. They inform the co-ordinator of the activities they are planning to conduct during the week and these activities are written on a board at the centre. In Ghana, the monthly schedule, referred there, as “*itinerary sheet*” seems to have been totally abandoned. Thus, activity plans are highly informal.

While little is said about activity plans in the Indonesian project official documents, the mid-term evaluation of the Lentera project mentions that work plans are developed so that each person knows what to do for the next six months.

The findings mentioned above confirm that peer education activities are not usually worked out with full involvement of peer educators themselves during the planning and implementation stages. It is also confirmed that peer education programmes need flexible planning. The need for flexibility arises out of working with dynamic young people who have a wide range of interests and high level of dropouts. In order to ensure a smooth programme implementation it is important that peer educators are fully involved in the planning process and have some power for making decisions and amendments at the action plans.

Activity targets

Setting up specific objectives is part of a clear working plan. The three African projects visited have set specific targets for peer educators to achieve monthly. While targets can vary depending on the overall project performance, Table 6 shows the activity targets each project had set for their peer educators at the time of the visit.

Table 6: Examples of peer educators’ monthly activity targets per project, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana

Activity	ABBEF, Burkina	ASBEF, Richard Toll	PPAG, Ghana
Group discussions	Individual objectives: 10 for JAS, 4 for JACS	Group objectives: 120 (Richard-Toll), 88 (Dakar)	Individual objectives: 10
Tea-debates	---	Group objectives: 60 (Richard-Toll)	---
Counselling	None	Group objectives	7
Referrals	None	Group objectives	None
CBS	None	Group objectives	90 condoms

Table 6 shows that, two types of objectives can be set: individual objectives and group objectives. In Ouagadougou, peer educators have individual targets to fulfil with regard to group discussions and these targets vary for school educators (JACS) and community educators (JAS). Each JAS has to conduct 10 group discussions per month while JACS are expected to conduct 4 group discussions monthly. Although peer educators are aware of the yearly target they have to achieve, no specific target is set for counselling, referrals or CBS. In Ghana, peer promoters working for the PPAG youth project have also individual targets for their monthly activity. The objectives to reach for group discussions are the same as in Burkina Faso. In addition specific targets have been set for the number of individual counselling, referrals to conduct and condoms to be sold. In Senegal, group objectives rather than individual objectives have been set for “relais” activities.

The objectives set for peer educators are mainly quantitative targets to be reached monthly. Besides these quantitative targets, some “implicit” qualitative objectives are also set for some activities. Interviewed peer educators found these objectives achievable and did not complain about them. As for projects managers, they all declared that their peer educators generally achieved their monthly objectives without problem.

3.7 Material

Education material used by peer educators

In all three African projects the basic material used by peer educators during their group discussions include flip charts on each topic (“boîte à images”), brochures, contraceptive sample, penis models, as well as the documentation received during initial training. They also have access occasionally to video material for film projection. In Ghana, peer promoters also use games during their group discussions and debates (“snake and ladder” game on

HIV/AIDS). Another innovative instrument developed in Dakar and Richard-Toll, “study cases”, is used by “relais” to illustrate a problem during group discussions. These study cases include a short story, taken from every day life examples and a set of questions “relais” use as a basis for discussion.

In all three youth projects, most of the material is shared among peer educators, used and returned to the centres after group discussions. Overall, local development of materials has been slow in all three African countries. In Ghana, however, an IEC Material Development Workshop took place in May 2000. The main objectives of this workshop were to bring together ideas to develop IEC materials, redesign existing IEC materials, formulate SRH messages to be communicated to communities, prepare IEC materials on SRH that will be acceptable to youth and develop posters. By the end of the workshop four leaflets, a 24-page flip chart to be used by peer educators, messages for stickers to be printed on cue cards, a playing card game on STIs/ HIV AIDS, synopsis for six different radio drama performances, and 24 posters with various SRH messages were developed. The topics covered in the draft flip chart to be used by peer promoters include: youth sexuality, abstinence/virginity, condom use, gender based violence, abortion, and SRH services. Eight peer promoters were involved in the workshop.

In the Lentera project, materials development for both mainstream youth and youth at-risk is one of the strongest assets of the project. A variety of materials have been developed, ranging from brochures, postcards, pins, stickers and booklets. Staff and volunteers have designed most of the materials. Each outreach worker receives a “bag of tricks” which includes for example, booklets, pamphlets, manuals and handbooks, demonstration models, condoms and stickers.

Peer educators and youth beneficiaries often complain about the lack of educational materials that are set in local languages. In order to respond to the needs of all categories of youth, printed and audiovisual material should be understood by everyone.

Peer educators’ opinions and suggestions on material

In all focus group discussions conducted with peer educators, participants agree that the material is too scarce. “Take video, for instance, what do you do when several peer educators want to organise a film projection the same day?” asked one JACS in Ouagadougou. Most peer educators perceived the fact that flip charts have to be shared as a problem as well. Peer educators also complain that there is no variety in the material used, that “*the audience is getting bored, the movies are always the same*”.

While peer educators understand that some materials need to be shared, they almost systematically asked for individual kits, which would include basic material such as contraceptive sample, flip charts, reference books, handouts, brochures and promotional material to be distributed. Other suggestions include: small blackboard to write on during group discussions, new video-tapes, billboards to announce up coming group discussions in the neighbourhood, more reading materials, more games, a condom storage box, and T-shirts with messages. They also need material developed in the local language for less educated people.

Peer educators use a wide variety of educational material for their activities. The main concern that is shared by all peer educators is the lack (in number) of these material as some of the material has to be shared by all peer educators, such as video tapes, flip charts, demonstration kits, etc. In order to be able to plan their activities independently of

each other, peer educators recommended that the programme managers should equip every peer educator with a personal educational Kit. They also suggest to diversify audiovisual material, and to make available material in the local languages.

3.8 Peer educators' monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of youth peer educators' activities is often a challenge in peer education approach (Focus on Young Adults 2000). Both project staff and peer educators were questioned on the monitoring and evaluation formats used as well as the main obstacles and challenges they face in monitoring and evaluating peer educators' work.

Monitoring format

Monitoring is the routine tracking of programme activities by measuring on a regular, ongoing basis whether planned activities are being carried out (Focus on Young Adults, 2000). Table 7 presents the monitoring format used by ABBEF, ASBEF, PPAG and IPPA (the Lentera project only) including the main person responsible for peer educators' monitoring and supervision, monitoring methods and instruments, and monitoring schedule.

In all three African projects, the main person responsible for peer educators' monitoring is the social worker, working at the youth centre. In all three projects the director of the youth centre is also involved in the monitoring. Importantly, the projects also involve people from the community (generally a member of the steering committee) and school teachers in the monitoring of peer educators working with out-of school and in-school youth. The type of monitoring provided by the "non-staff", external persons is more informal, and consist of helping the peer educator in his/her activities and giving informal feedback to them. In Dakar, older "relais" were also involved in the monitoring of newly recruited ones at some point. In Lentera project the in-school peer educators are supported and supervised by university students and one staff member. Staff members monitor outreach volunteers' activities.

Several methods are used to monitor peer educators' activities. As seen in Table 7, ABBEF, ASBEF and PPAG youth projects use more or less the same monitoring methods and instruments. In the Lentera project the range of monitoring methods used is much broader. In fact, as mentioned above (see training evaluation) monitoring and evaluation of project activity is one of the strongest assets of staff in the Lentera project.

Table 7 shows that, in all four projects, **field observations** (surprise or planned visits) are used to supervise and monitor peer educators activities. Project staff members (social workers, the director of youth centres etc.) attend some activities lead by peer educators. The schedule of these field observations is established based on the activity plan given by peer educators at the beginning of the month (ABBEF), or on a weekly basis (ASBEF). In Ghana, where no formal activity plans exist, monitoring visits are not formally planned. Not all programmes keep track of these field observations. Only in the ABBEF project the social worker mentioned the existence of both written visit schedule and monitoring report.

Table 7. Peer educators monitoring format used in the ABBEF, ASBEF, PPAG and Lentera projects

	ABBEF	ASBEF	PPAG	Lentera
Main person responsible for peer educators' monitoring	Youth centre staff (social worker and director)	Youth centre staff (director and social worker)	Social worker (one per site)	University students - - Staff members
Other person involved in peer educators' monitoring	Community leaders Guidance teachers	Community leaders Older "relais" (Dakar)	Community leaders Youth centre director	N/A
Field observation schedule	Established based on activity schedule	Established based on activity schedule	No schedule	Clearly established (regular visits)
Monitoring methods and instruments	Field observation Visit reports Peer educators' reports Meetings Informal feedback	Field observation Peer educators' reports Meetings Informal feedback	Field observation Peer educators' reports Meetings Informal feedback	Field observation Peer educators' reports Meetings with peer educators Client meetings FGDs with volunteers FGDs with clients Questionnaires with clients Questionnaires with volunteers

This monitoring or observation sheet is kept by the co-ordinator while some written feedback (comments and suggestions for improvement) is given to the peer educator. In Ghana and Senegal, feedback from the monitoring visit is given to the peer educators through informal conversation at the end of the group discussion.

Besides field observation, all projects use **peer educators' reports**, to monitor their activity. In all four projects, peer educators provide, generally on a monthly basis, short reports or tracking sheets for each type of activity they conducted. While the reporting formats are slightly different, they generally include quantitative information on the time and place of the event, the topic discussed, the number and characteristic of youth served (age, sex, schooling status), the type of contraceptive given (for CBS). In addition to quantitative information, each peer educator is asked to reflect on the quality of his/her work.

The third monitoring method used is **meetings**. In all project staff hold monthly meetings with peer educators to discuss the project, its performance, forthcoming events, as well as peer educator's achievements and problems faced in the field. During these meetings, peer educators reports are compiled and discussed. Besides these "formal" meetings, peer educators often meet informally with the youth centre staff to discuss their work. In addition to these meetings with young volunteers, the Lentera project staff holds regular meetings with some of the project clients. These meetings provide an opportunity for monitoring volunteer activities. In the ABBEF, ASBEF and PPAG projects, co-ordinators also meet peer educator target audience to get feedback on peer educators' work, but on less regular basis and in a more informal manner.

Finally, Lentera project uses other interesting tools to monitor peer educators' activities including: **FGDs with both volunteers and clients and qualitative questionnaires**. In terms of monitoring, Lentera uses FGDs as a way to get information quickly about how the project, and the volunteers are doing. During FGDs, volunteers are asked how they feel about management, their opinions about the quality of their work, their main problems and successes, their suggestions etc. Periodical qualitative questionnaires with volunteers and clients are also used.

Monitoring activities are planned in all projects to show how much progress has been made and to give clear feedback to the project managers. Project staff and other volunteers such as community leaders, teachers and older peer educators have been involved as resource persons for monitoring activities. Regular monitoring is scheduled in all projects except in Ghana where peer education activities are monitored in an informal way.

Peer education programmes use various instruments and monitoring tools, such as field observation, field reports submitted by peer educators, regular meetings with peer educators and steering committees, informal feedback and focus group discussions.

As mentioned above, the Lentera project in Indonesia gives a good example of successful monitoring activities and tools that could be shared as a success story for peer education programmes. In 1997 IPPF published a report on the experience of the Lentera project. The document is entitled "*Monitoring and Evaluation: Lessons learned from the Lentera project*", which is currently available from IPPF in English and French.

Evaluation format

Besides monitoring, the strategies used by project managers to evaluate peer educators' activities were examined. The evaluation format used by ABBEF, ASBEF, PPAG and the Lentera project are shown in Table 8. The type of evaluation, indicators, and evaluation instruments are considered.

Table 8. Peer educators' evaluation format used in the ABBEF, ASBEF, PPAG and Lentera projects

Evaluation type	Project	
	ABBEF, ASBEF, PPAG	Lentera
Type of evaluation	Process evaluation (mostly quantitative)	Process evaluation Impact evaluation (Both quantitative and qualitative)
Type of indicators	Implementation indicators	N/A
Indicators used	Number of group discussions held Number of tea-debates held Number of referrals made Number of individuals counselled Number of house to house visits Number of youth reached Number of condoms sold	N/A
Evaluation instrument	Activity reports and tracking sheets	Qualitative questionnaires FDGs Pre/post-test questionnaires Behavioural surveys

In the three African projects, the evaluation format is the same. It mainly consists of a process evaluation. In all three programmes the evaluation is mostly quantitative and is based on numeric indicators reflecting the activity targets set for peer educators (see section on activity targets above) and provided in the monthly monitoring reports and other tracking forms. Thus, indicators used are performance indicators which measure how many planned activities have been conducted: number of group discussions conducted, number of tea-debates conducted, number of referrals to the youth centre, number of house to house visits and individual counselling sessions, number of condoms and contraceptives distributed. The box below shows an example of information collected on the number of condoms distributed by peer educators in four projects.

<p><u>Condom distribution</u></p> <p>SENEGAL (Source: Annual reports 1998-99) Year 1998: total of 44,280 distributed, 452/PE Year 1999: total 202,247 distributed, 1,838/PE</p> <p>BURKINA FASO (Source: Final evaluation report 1999) From 1996 to 1999: total of 88,991 distributed, 824/PE</p>
--

GHANA (Source: Annual report 2000)

Year 1999: total of 38,538 sold male condoms, 350/PE

Year 2000: total of 123,437 sold male condoms, 1,259/PE

LENERA (Source: Updates 1998)

Year 1995: total of 15,850 distributed

Year 1996: total of 24,926 distributed

Year 1997: total of 38,956 distributed

When target groups are taken into account, the indicators considered are the number of youth reached by peer education activities: number of youth attending group discussions and tea debates, number of condom users, number of persons referred to the programme. Importantly, counting the number of condoms distributed or the number of youth who attended group discussions, counselling sessions does not help determine the performance of peer educators if the target is not established from the beginning.

The Lentera project bases the evaluation of its volunteers on both qualitative and quantitative data. Besides focus group reports, the qualitative monitoring instruments mentioned in the above section are also used for qualitative evaluation of young volunteers' work. In addition to outcome evaluation, the Lentera project also conducts impact evaluation to measure the effects of volunteers' activities on the youth targeted. Two evaluation instruments are used: pre and post test questionnaires and behavioural surveys. The pre and post test questionnaires are similar to the ones used to evaluate volunteer training (see training evaluation above). The idea is to utilise a short, self-administered questionnaire before the intervention (group discussion, seminar, or counselling.) and the same questionnaire after the intervention to measure change in the target population knowledge and attitudes. ABBEF developed similar pre-post questionnaires for its peer educators in Ouagadougou to administer to their audience before and after the group discussions. However, while data has been collected for some time it has never been analysed and such evaluation has stopped.

Importantly, all projects have included an operational research component and have collected data through baseline KAP surveys (see section on "rationale for focusing on youth"). The data collected has not been analysed and no follow-up surveys were planned making the impact evaluation impossible. The projects often have large amounts of data that never get analysed nor published. Thus, there is a need for more systematic data entry and statistical analysis in all projects, particularly in Africa.

Process evaluation is a routine activity in all projects. While process and performance evaluation is mainly quantitative in the three African projects, the Lentera project uses both quantitative and qualitative indicators. It was observed that in the studied projects evaluation of performance is not usually compared to targets, as all projects have not established clear targets to be achieved, particularly in the early years of implementation.

The evaluation process and instruments used by the Lentera project (see above) are considered a good example to be adopted for evaluation of peer education programmes. The use of quantitative and qualitative indicators as well as process and impact indicators in this project are seen as very innovative in evaluating the performance and the impact of peer education programmes.

It is also noted that what is making impact evaluation difficult or impossible in all projects are the lack of baseline data and the absence of follow-up surveys. While projects have often collected large amount of information and data during the implementation process, there is no systematic data analysis and reporting.

Management style

Part of the monitoring and evaluation process is the ability of peer educators to communicate with, and report their successes and difficulties to the project staff. “Youth friendly” management style and working environment contribute significantly to efficient monitoring and evaluation. During field visits, peer educators in Ouagadougou, Richard-Toll, Dakar and Sogakope were asked whether they received support and could report their successes and problems to the projects staff.

In most of project sites visited, peer educators interviewed were very satisfied with the level of communication and support they receive from the project staff. “100 per cent support!” summarised one JAS. “*It depends on the problems we have; regarding the lack of materials we did not get any answer yet but generally they do their best to answer our problems*”, said another FGD participant. Overall, peer educators found that programme supervisors were accessible and efficient. Results show that having peer educators monitored by young staff members contributes to the creation of a friendly working environment and open monitoring style.

In Indonesia, the management system of volunteers developed at the Lentera project is one of the assets of the project and a good example of a “youth-friendly” democratic management style and open communication between managers and volunteers. To ensure that volunteers were comfortable to provide the necessary information to successfully monitor the project, Lentera project managers developed a practical list of five useful tips for managers and coordinators: 1. *Be clear about your expectations of volunteers* (carefully explained targets, deadlines, dates for activity well in advance) 2. *Do not intimidate people with power and position* (admit mistakes honestly and openly, recognise staff achievements) 3. *Be accessible* (set aside time to talk to volunteers individually) 4. *Deal with problems in an honest and straightforward manner* (listen to volunteers’ concerns without being defensive, follow up after concerns had been raised by volunteers, give reasons for decisions taken) 5. *Create a healthy working environment* (discourage gossip, empower volunteers by giving them adequate materials, training, and support) (IPPF 1997:21).

The use of planned volunteer retreats illustrates well the efficient management style used at Lentera. In addition to meetings with volunteers Lentera organises regularly two to three-day retreats with volunteers to discuss monitoring and evaluation findings, work out potential problems, and develop work plans for the next six months.

The key element of building a successful management style in peer education programmes is creating a youth friendly atmosphere with open communication between project managers and peer educators. It has been noted that it is very important that peer educators are dealing with young staff members and volunteers. The democratic management style of the Lentera project (see above) is an example of a successful management style of peer education programmes.

Obstacles to monitoring and evaluation

Besides time and money (the “classical obstacles”), the main obstacles mentioned by project co-ordinators to proper monitoring and evaluation include lack of staff, lack of skills in monitoring and evaluation, and lack of computer and analytical skills.

Lack of staff

One of the problems mentioned by project staff in monitoring peer educators activities is the lack of staff available. In fact, in all African projects, the social worker and the director of the youth centre have other duties aside from peer educators’ monitoring. This year, ABBEF has decided to recruit fewer peer educators partly because of financial constraints but also because of the required monitoring workload. As the youth project manager explains: *“It was difficult to monitor all peer educators’ work, too much work for our staff. We thought it would be better to have few of them who we could monitor properly than an army who will prove to be very difficult to supervise”*.

Lack of monitoring skills

Another issue mentioned during discussions with project co-ordinators and project managers is the lack of monitoring skills among project co-ordinators. In the three African projects, social workers are in charge of the monitoring and evaluation of peer educators. Most of the time, these persons do not have any background in project management including monitoring. One of the suggestions formulated by the peer promoters co-ordinators interviewed in Ghana was to include a training seminar on monitoring to help them organising their monitoring plans.

Lack of computer and analysis skills

Finally, as seen above, while projects do collect a lot of data, most of the questionnaires, field reports, pre-post questionnaires, KAP surveys remain in boxes in the office without being used and there is a need for more systematic data entry and statistical analysis. Computer training and workshop in data analysis could help overcome this obstacle.

This section identified three main obstacles to monitoring and evaluation of peer education programmes:

- Lack of staff, as peer education activities are usually integrated within other youth activities.
- Lack of monitoring skills among project managers, as most of project managers are young and never been prepared to be managers.
- Lack of computer training and data analysis skills.

3.9 Motivation and reward system

High level of turnover and loss of motivation among peers educators are often mentioned as common problems with the peer educator approach (Baldo, 1998). Consequently, we examined the motivation and reward systems established by youth projects to keep their peer educators motivated and prevent dropouts. We also asked peer educators their opinion about these reward systems.

Coping with dropouts and keeping peer educators motivated

Not surprisingly, programme managers complain about high dropout rates among peer educators. The analysis of interview and discussion transcripts in the three visited projects reveals that the leading reasons of peer educator dropout include: finding a job, getting married, having to prepare for exam, or sickness. Thus, overall, peer educators dropouts are not caused by dissatisfaction with the project itself but rather by some other life events independent of the project.

In each country, managers have designed some strategies to cope with dropout rates. In Burkina Faso, managers decided to give each peer educator a one-year contract, renewable only once. Given that peer educators had stayed with the project for two years on average in the past, they decided to “make the turnover official” and recruit new peer educators every two years. Some of the newly trained peer educators, especially some working in the non-formal sector, were concerned about the non-renewable contract. “*I heard the contract is for two years. It’s not enough. They should let us do it longer*”, says one of the JAS interviewed. More than the problem of high dropout rates, ABBEF had to cope with the issue of “recycling” its old peer educators. One of them was allowed to continue working as a peer educator, another one works for the small café in the centre, and six others are still associated with the theatre troupe.

None of the projects considered had instituted a formal reserve of peer educators to cope with absentees and dropouts. While project staff believes that it would be a good idea, they all point out that the residential initial training is too expensive to afford to train “reserve peer educators”. As mentioned above, the initiative of ASBEF to hire “peer educator trainees” who are trained on a continuous basis could provide cost-effective strategy to prepare a reserve of peer educators.

To keep their peer educators motivated and efficient, ABBEF, ASBEF and PPAG projects have established some financial and non-financial compensation for all their peer educators and reward systems for their best peer educators. The motivation systems established by all three projects are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Examples of financial compensations and reward systems for peer educators used in Burkina Faso, Senegal and Ghana

	ABBEF	ASBEF	PPAG
Financial compensation and travelling allowance (to all peer educators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,500 FCFA⁴ (US\$2.50) per group discussion - 1,000 FCFA (US\$1.50) per referral - 50% of condom sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6,000 FCFA (US\$10) monthly for travel expenses (Richard-Toll) - 3,000 FCFA (US\$5) per group discussion - 1,500 FCFA (US\$2.50) for tea-debates (Dakar) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 200 Cedis (US\$30) monthly for travel expenses - 40% of condom sales
Non-financial compensation (to all peer educators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bags for JAS - Bicycles 	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free oil lamps - Bicycles - T-shirts
Reward system (for best peer educators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None 	Financial: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 150,000 FCFA (US\$250) divided quarterly between three best “relais” 	Non-financial: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Better” T-shirts given quarterly for 5 peer educators in each of the three communities
Criteria for reward		Based on performance indicators, priority given to referrals	Based on performance indicators, priority given to referrals and CBS

As seen in Table 9, the system of peer educators’ motivation varies from one project to the other. There are three types of financial compensation that are used separately or in combination: a fix allowance given per month for travel expenses (Richard Toll and PPAG), a fix amount given per group discussion, tea-debate and referral (Ouagadougou, Dakar), a percentage on condom sales (Ouagadougou and PPAG). In addition to these financial compensations, some gifts are given to peer educators in both ABBEF and PPAG projects. These include: bicycles, bags, oil-lamps and promotional T-shirts.

In Senegal a financial system has been established to reward quarterly the best “relais”. 150,000 FCFA (US\$ 250) are divided between the three best “relais” based on performance indicators (see above section). Because ASBEF wanted to increase the number of youth visiting the centre clinic, priority was given to referrals. PPAG also established a reward system for the 15 best peer promoters giving priority to the number of referrals and condom sold, but gave out T-shirts rather than financial reward. The director of the youth centre in Dakar mentioned that the association was considering switching to a non-financial reward system, as well, where best peer educators would receive cell-phone instead of money. *“In that way we would also be able to reach them easily”* he added. Finally, while the best JACS or JAS gets “congratulations at monthly meeting” no reward has been established by ABBEF.

⁴ FCFA: CFA Franc (currency of West African francophone countries)

The high dropout rate of peer educators is one of the main constraints of peer education programmes. It was demonstrated that peer educators usually drop out for personal reasons, rather than dissatisfaction with the programme.

Different strategies are being used to cope with dropout rates, ranging from renewing peer educators every two years as is the case in Burkina Faso, to establishing a more attractive reward and motivation systems as is the case in other projects.

It is important to have a reserve group of peer educators in order to cope with dropouts and absentees. The example of ASBEF (see above) is a good cost-effective strategy to prevent this.

To keep peer educators highly motivated and committed to the projects, programme managers have established financial and non-financial reward systems. There are three types of allowances provided to peer educators:

- A fixed amount given per month for travel expenses.
- A fixed amount given per type of activity (group discussion, tea debate, number of referrals, a percentage of condom sales, etc). Some gifts are also given to peer educators (T-shirts, bags, bicycles as a transportation tool for the project activities, oil lamps, etc)
- Financial reward system on a quarterly basis in the Senegal project only.

Peer educators' opinions on compensation and reward systems

We asked peer educators their opinions about the compensation they get and the reward system put in place.

In Ouagadougou and Sogakope, all ABBEF and PPAG peer educators declared being satisfied with the compensation and non-financial reward system. Overall, peer educators repeated that they *“were not in it for the cash”* and would welcome any financial and non-financial compensations and rewards.

In Richard-Toll and Dakar, on the other hand, “relais” complained about the reward system. In Richard-Toll, the criticism was the strongest. *“It’s not good”*, explains one “relais”, *“you can be good and you don’t get anything”*. *“It rewards quantity not quality”* adds another one. *“This system is discouraging instead of motivating us”* concludes another “relais”. As in Ouagadougou and Sogakope, “relais” stressed, *“money is not what motivates us to be here”*, *“we are going to work anyway”*. A Dakar FGD participant believes that *“This reward system can work somewhere else. But fortunately here, we don’t have this competitive spirit that goes with it”*. Another one said that he would rather have the amount equally split among all “relais”. Peer educators in all projects mentioned that they would like to have the opportunity to discuss the reward system with the project manager in order for it to be revised.

Peer educators are generally satisfied with the reward systems, particularly the transportation allowance and the non-financial compensation. However the financial reward system used by the Senegal project (quarterly based reward) is criticised by peer

educators who see this system as “discouraging” rather than “motivating” and favours the “quantity” rather than the “quality” of work.

It is clear that the use of money as an incentive is a very controversial issue from the programme managers’ point of view. However, from the peer educators’ point of view, reasonable financial incentives are always welcome and will keep them motivated and committed to the programme for as long as possible.

3.10 Peer educators’ involvement

Several studies have stressed the crucial role of involving youth when designing SRH programmes targeting youth (Senderowitz 1995; Hughes and McCauley 1995). As mentioned above, youth involvement is at the heart of the IPPF Vision 2000 strategic plan and is the underlying philosophy behind the peer educators approach. Besides their core activities, the level of peer educators’ involvement at various stages of the project was considered in relation to the different components of the project: formulation, implementation (selection of peer educators, training, youth centre activities, material development, motivation system), and monitoring and evaluation.

Peer educators’ involvement in project formulation, implementation and evaluation

At the initial stage of project formulation, youth involvement in Senegal, Burkina Faso and Ghana was very indirect. Peer educators had not been recruited yet, and youth in the general population were not involved in a direct manner. In all three projects, opinions and needs of young people were taken into account indirectly through qualitative or quantitative surveys conducted among target groups, informal feedback from the field, or, usually, by using existing surveys conducted among youth (see above section on rationale for focusing on youth). Since the peer educators were recruited, their involvement in the overall management of the project and in the decision-making process regarding the strategic orientation seems to be low.

Interviews with programme managers and peer educators reveal that young volunteers have been mostly involved in the implementation aspect of the projects rather than its formulation or re-orientation. When training new peer educators, for instance, older peer educators have been invited to “*drop by to share their experience and encourage the new comers*” but they were not formally involved in planning the training format and content. Similarly, while peer educators are encouraged to provide ideas and suggestions during the monthly monitoring and evaluation meetings with staff, discussions generally centre on project implementation issues and daily activities.

Overall efforts have clearly been made to create a feeling of “project ownership” among peer educators and involve them in the decision-making process regarding daily project activities. “*We want them to feel that’s the project is theirs and that we are only there to support them. They are the implementers of the projects,*” said PPAG project manager in Sogakope. The social workers co-ordinating peer educators in the Volta region communities confirm that “*all activities in the community involve peer educators*” and that they “*don’t plan anything without them.*”

Peer educators are also often encouraged when taking initiatives of their own. The drama troupe in Ghana, for instance was initially a peer promoters initiative, which programme managers encouraged and developed. Recently, young animators in Burkina Faso organised a party for youth at the centre in Ouagadougou, which not only advertised the centre but also generated some revenues that allowed animators to start a little fund for the group. In Dakar and Richard-Toll, the “relais” created a “Relais’ Association” (Amicale) to organise social events, and developed friendship relationships among “relais”.

In Indonesia, IPPA youth projects involved youth right from the project initiation. As mentioned above, many of the first IPPA youth projects were often initiated by youth themselves and since then, efforts have been made by management (generally composed of young people) to involve volunteers in all aspects of the projects including objectives and strategy formulation. The democratic and participatory volunteer management system implemented in the Lentera project and described above (see section on management style) is centred on volunteers’ involvement in decision-making and good communication between management and volunteers. Monitoring methods and instruments such as FGDs and qualitative questionnaires with volunteers, regular meetings, volunteer retreats, are opportunities for volunteers to voice their satisfaction, dislikes with the project, formulate suggestions for future project direction and be part of the overall decision making process.

In all projects, as described above, peer educators have been well involved in the project implementation, planning and monitoring. However their involvement at the decision making level is lacking, except in the Lentera project.

The Lentera project provides a good example of youth involvement. Young people, including peer educators, youth volunteers and youth beneficiaries are involved in all aspects of project development and implementation, including decision-making. Young people are the main owner and stakeholder of the project and therefore they are fully involved from the project design to evaluation.

Peer educators’ opinions on their involvement

Peer educators often describe themselves as the “pillars” of the youth projects. “*we feel very involved*”. “*Nothing is done here without us*”. “*I would say that 90% of the work done here is done by us*” declared a sector peer educator in Ouagadougou. “*Something they (the programme managers) always tell us is “this programme is yours and we feel it”*” said a school animator. “*Little is done here without us,*” said one “relais” in Dakar.

Peer promoters interviewed in Sogakope also enjoyed the democratic decision making process established in the project. “*We are involved in everything*” said a peer promoter.

The only exception to the rule was the “relais” working in Richard-Toll who complained, “*managers do not ask for our opinion enough*”. They also complained about the lack of communication with the project managers. “*We don’t know what’s going on. They are opening a sewing shop here for girls but we don’t know anything about it*”, complained one “relais”. “*They only call us when they need us*” concluded one of the FGD participants.

For young people involvement seems to imply full participation in the implementation process only. However, a number of young volunteers, in Senegal for instance, are aware that they do not have any power in the project management and decision-making.

3.11 Community participation

In all youth projects, community awareness and involvement have been a priority. In Senegal, for instance, one of the objectives of the ASBEF “Youth for Youth” project is to “increase the number of parents and community leaders who have a positive attitude vis-à-vis youth SRH rights and needs by 5% per year in each community targeted” (ASBEF, 2000:8). Similarly, in Burkina Faso, one of ABBEF’s strategies is “to bring awareness and involve parents, teachers, school authorities, religious and political leaders in the implementation of the project” (ABBEF, 1995: 15). In all projects, both informing and involving the community are considered as key for project success.

Informing the community

Community members and parents are considered as projects’ “secondary” or “intermediary” targets. In all countries, several IEC “supporting activities” targeting parents and community members at large have been implemented since the project initiation. These supporting activities include 1. promotional activities designed to publicise the youth centres and the services they provide (seminars, one-day orientation, promotional material); 2. general SRH information events (e.g. “AIDS awareness week”, film projections, drama performances, radio programmes on youth SRH issues); 3. group discussions with parents and community leaders; 4. group discussions with womens’ organisations, professional organisations; 5. organised visits for parents and community members to the youth centres.

Involving community leaders

One of the greatest strengths of all programmes considered is the direct involvement and mobilisation of community leaders at various stages of the programme design and implementation. All programmes have established some sort of coordinating body (committee or steering committee) within the community that support the youth project in general and peer-education activities in particular. Steering committee members generally include political and traditional leaders, members of womens’ organisations, parents, and school teachers. They play a crucial role in the information and advocacy activities in their respective communities, and in doing the liaison between the project and the communities, they are also critical in facilitating peer education activities. As mentioned above, members of the steering committee are involved in peer educators’ selection, as well as the monitoring and the evaluation of their activities. In the informal sector, they also help peer educators locating their target groups, and organising their group discussions. “*We are well known in the neighbourhood, it’s easy for us to get a group of young people in one house and have the “relais” conduct his group discussion*” explains one member of the steering committee interviewed in Dakar.

In Dakar and Ouagadougou, ASBEF and ABBEF peer educators also work closely with high school teachers who are responsible for their recruitment, monitoring and evaluation. JACS

interviewed were really satisfied with the help they receive from guidance teachers. *“He helps us prepare our group discussions and get a room for our activities,”* said one JACS. *“He is an advisor for us. We are students after all, he looks after us and makes sure the activities do not disturb our studies”* added another one.

Working with opposition groups

Often operating in conservative religious culture, where the topic of youth sexuality remains a taboo topic, all projects considered had the foresight to target opposition groups in their sensitisation activities and involve religious leaders in their activities.

“Some members of the community did not understand what the project was about. They thought we were teaching youth how to have sex. To overcome this problem we approached the most opposed groups to the project, such as churches” explains the PPAG project manager in Sogakope.

The Lentera project has also involved religious groups since the beginning of the project implementation. Religious groups are invited to attend reproductive health seminars that describe the consequences of unwanted pregnancy among youth and the risks of unsafe abortions. The “opposition groups” are then invited to discuss how to resolve the issues. “Lentera staff found that those exposed to the messages are often sensitised to the issue and are more accepting of Lentera’s work.” (IPPF, 1999:17)

The youth projects reported in this study have focused on community participation and involvement as a tool to create community awareness and ensure high acceptance of the project. Community participation is a very strong asset in all projects and it is much appreciated by community leaders, religious leaders, teachers, parents, and local authorities who have been approached to be one of the main stakeholders of the projects.

As mentioned above the community is generally well informed about peer educators’ activities, and also well involved at the management level. The creation of steering committees, for example is a very successful approach in working with youth. Their role as facilitators, managers, and advocates is very important to create awareness and build the community ownership of the project.

In addition to the involvement of community leaders, the project targeted some opposition groups, particularly the religious leaders. In the same way, this study showed that opposition groups could play a crucial role in creating a favourable atmosphere and in avoiding serious obstacles to and assumptions regarding the implementation youth projects.

3.12 Impact of peer educators' activities

All project evaluation reports and tracking records examined point out to the success of peer educators and young volunteers in reaching their activity targets and providing youth with much needed SRH information and services. While an evaluation of the quantitative and qualitative impact of peer educators activities on their target groups is beyond the scope of this review, the purpose of the following section is to provide qualitative insights on the impact on peer educators' activities on communities and on peer educators themselves as well as the programme success and catalytic effect.

Impact on the community

Peer educators, programme managers and members of the community interviewed in Ouagadougou, Sogakope and Dakar were questioned about the community's reaction to peer educators' activities and how these activities have impacted upon community members.

All participants agree that the initial reaction of the community toward peer education programmes was negative or suspicious, that *"it was difficult at the beginning"*. Community members believed that the FPAs and peer educators wanted to *"encourage youth to have sex"*, *"spoil their children"*, *"favour perversion"*, mentioned one of PPAG's peer educator supervisors. *"Some people didn't understand that young men do that work (peer educators). They think ABBEF is for women, that it's not a place for men because it's a women's business"*, said one member of the steering committee in Dakar. Groups such as religious groups were especially opposed to the project. In Ghana, *"for the church if you have sex before marriage you committed a sin and that's the end of the message,"* explains the PPAG programme manager.

With the help of the steering committee and the IEC and promotional campaigns targeting parents, opposition groups and the community at large, community members started to modify their vision of the youth project and its peer educators and accept it.

FGDs participants and managers interviewed are unanimous about the fact that parents do not communicate with children about sexuality, because they *"are afraid"*, *"do not know how to do it"*, *"don't have time"*, *"don't have the right information to give"* and because it remains overall a *"taboo topic"* in the *"tradition"* or *"the Islamic religion"*. Although they do not communicate with their children, parents and older community members are concerned about the increasing prevalence of SRH problems among youth, especially teenage pregnancy and the propagation of the HIV virus. Once they know about the programme, parents encourage it. *"Group discussions with parents have been very beneficial. They don't know how to speak to their children, so they approve the programme and encourage us"*, explained the director of the youth centre in Ouagadougou. *"Some parents are now bringing their children to the centre if they have problems because they don't know how to deal with them"* noticed the ABBEF programme manager.

In all FGDs conducted among parents and community leaders, participants think very highly of the peer educators and consider them to be both professional and competent in their work. They believe that this opinion is now shared by many other members of the community *"Animators are respected in the community. If a young person speaks like an elder you have to respect him!"* said a community member interviewed in Ouagadougou.

Sensitisation and advocacy are needed at the beginning of youth projects to increase awareness and understanding of the special needs of young people in the community, and to change attitudes with respect to a number of harmful taboos and traditional beliefs. As result of this advocacy effort conducted in all projects sites, the peer education programmes are well known, accepted and appreciated by the community members, including, in some cases, the opposition groups.

It has been very beneficial to involve parents, teachers and community leaders in some of the project's IEC and advocacy activities. The impact of their involvement is sometimes very positive. For example, parents in some project sites are currently encouraging their children to visit the youth centres.

Impact on peer educators

Overall, the peer educators interviewed show a very high level of motivation and seem extremely satisfied with their work experience in the programme. When asked about how the programme has affected their lives and what the disadvantages and advantages of being a peer educator were, peer educators were prompt to point out several positive aspects.

A rewarding and valuable experience

First, peer educators participating in focus group discussions were unanimous to say that they value the information they got through their training and practice (see section on peer educators' opinion on training). Besides knowledge, peer educator experience has helped young participants gain status and self-esteem. Focus group participants were unanimous to say that, thanks to their peer education activities, they became "*popular*" and "*respected*" in their neighbourhood or in schools. The idea that they have become "*role models*" was often mentioned during the focus group discussions. "*People call me when they need advice, I feel important*" claimed one "relais" in Richard Toll. "*I am so proud to be a source of information for my friends*" says a Ghanaian peer promoter. Peer educators have gained status and popularity not only among their peers but among adults as well. "*Before, reproductive health topics were taboo. Not anymore now. I can now talk to elder with dignity!*" said a Ghanaian peer promoter who was applauded by other focus group participants.

Peer educators pointed also out that their work in the association has helped them develop communication skills and overcome their shyness in public. "*I was not social before, I was shy, now I can talk to my peers about anything*" said one peer promoter in Sogakope. Being peer educators has also helped them to make new friends and develop their social network.

Several peer educators feel that this work experience has taught them to "become responsible", "to become real adults". "*I will have to be a father one day, be the head of a household. Thanks to this experience I will be able to better educate my children, better manage my family*", said one JAS.

Finally, peer educators also like the job because they “*feel useful*”, they “*help make peoples’ life better*” and “*participate in the country’s development*”. “*It helps me realise that being a humanist is important, fighting for a noble cause is worth it*”, said a female JAS interviewed in Ouagadougou.

Changes in sexual and reproductive behaviour

Although questions asked during FGDs about the effect of peer educators’ activities on their sexual and courting behaviour made them laugh, several peer educators agreed that their work experience had also changed their intimate life. “*Before I did not know AIDS, now I know how to use condoms*” said one peer promoter from Sogakope. “*For me a healthy girl could not be infected with HIV. Now that I know about AIDS, I protect myself*”, said one JAS working in Ouagadougou. Several other participants also mentioned that because they feel like a role model for their peers, “*they cannot be seen doing nonsense*” with girls (or boys).

While girls were more discreet about the effect of the programme on their private life, they also admit it had affected it. “*Before I did not know anything about contraceptive methods and use. I have got a child when I was in school. We also were taking any drugs to avoid pregnancy*”, said one female peer promoter in Sogakope.

Besides increasing their knowledge and gaining a special social status and self-esteem (becoming popular, respected, role models, being proud, etc) peer educators have developed their communication skills and, importantly, they have already adopted a responsible behaviour vis-à-vis their own SRH life. It has been stated that peer education programmes are preparing the new generations (males and females) to be more involved in the SRH programmes and also more open about sex education, family life education and the use of SRH services.

3.13 Programme success and catalytic effect

All programme managers and community members interviewed believe that the peer education approach is a success. This success is often illustrated by the programme performance. All FGDs participants believe that peer educators’ work has increased significantly the level of SRH knowledge among youth in the community and promoted “healthier sexual behaviour”.

As mentioned above, in all four countries, the youth projects are considered to be pioneering in the field of youth SRH. Their experiences have been a source of inspiration for other youth initiatives both governmental and non-governmental in their respective countries. In Burkina Faso, for instance, the ABBEF “Youth for Youth” project is now well known, accepted and appreciated. One of the greatest achievements of the project is to have been taken as a model by the Burkinabé government, which decided to open 10 new youth centres based on the ABBEF approach. In Indonesia, the Lentera project has been referred to as a model for youth programme management. Its management style has been adopted by other IPPA Chapters (branches) and local NGOs.

The youth projects in the four countries, including peer educators and young volunteers, are now considered as a resource for local NGOs, youth organisations, sporting and cultural organisations and women’s groups. Project managers are facing an increasing demand for

sharing their expertise of working with in-school and out-of-school youth and organising training and seminars for local NGOs working in SRH. The reputation of the projects has even crossed national frontiers. In Dakar and Richard-Toll, for example, the youth centres received the visit of FPA representatives from Mauritania and Guinea, who wanted to replicate the ASBEF experience.

Peer education programmes reported in this study are pioneers in the field of SRH. They are qualified as a successful approach to working with youth. Therefore these experiences have been a source of inspiration for other organisations in the visited countries to replicate or share the experience of FPAs, including governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The examples of Burkina Faso and the Lentera project (see above) are success stories for IPPF.

Peer educators and youth volunteers are often approached by NGOs and other local agencies to participate as expert resource persons in the field of youth SRH. Some FPAs are currently sharing their expertise of working with youth with a number of organisations and act as executive agencies for other NGOs in implementing their training activities, advocacy strategies and development of IEC material. The reputation of peer education programmes has even crossed national frontiers and many other FPAs have planned to visit and learn from the field experiences of peer education programmes implemented in Senegal, Ghana, Burkina Faso and Indonesia.

3.14 Major constraints

While all peer educators interviewed were overall very pleased with their involvement in the youth projects, some negative issues and obstacles have been pointed out.

First, in all FGDs, participating peer educators recognised that it is a time consuming activity, “*a full time job*”, as one of the Burkinabé JACS explained, “*It (the job) sometimes affects my class work. When you have a meeting in the evening you sometimes have to choose between the meeting and your homework*”. Other peer educators complain that they have to work at night or that they spend lots of time waiting for young people to show up to the discussions. Peer educators working in the informal sector felt that geographic distances to cover added to the time consumed by the programme.

Second, although being a peer promoter is a source of a good status among peers, some peer educators had experienced teasing from their peers. “*At the beginning people were calling me Dr ASBEF!*” said one “relais”, laughing. Other nicknames include “*condom girl*” (“*la capotière*”) or just “*ABBEF*”. “*Some youth say you are a pervert because you carry condoms*”, mentioned a FGD participant in Ouagadougou. “*Sometimes you sell a condom to a guy and he asks you if he can try it on you!*” said one female peer educator from Richard-Toll. Overall, peer educators did not seem too disturbed by this teasing. “*They don’t mean bad, they are just teasing, after a while they stop*”, said one of them. However, some peer educators find this attitude embarrassing and possibly harmful to their own reputation.

Third, although peer educators interviewed agreed that “things are changing” they still experience some resistance in the community, especially coming from elderly, uneducated parents, and sometimes school authorities. “*Sometimes parents tell us we are spoiling their*

children”, complained one of the Ghanaian peer promoters. “Last week I was supposed to go to a social centre for girls to do a lecture on STIs and AIDS. The head of the centre was religious and she did not want me to speak about condoms during the speech” explained one “relais” from Dakar. “Some school directors do not allow you to talk about certain topics also” added another “relais”. Participants confirm that once people are informed about the project goals and once they know more about peer educator activities, they become supportive. As one “relais” in Richard-Toll summarised it “those who still disturb us are the ones who are not informed about the programme activities”.

Finally, peer educators are so keen in their work that several mention how they sometimes get disappointed by people’s behaviour, and discouraged by the slow pace of youth behavioural changes in their community. “You do all this work and some day you hear that a young girl in your neighbourhood has become pregnant, it’s discouraging”, says one male JAS interviewed in Ouagadougou.

In summary the main constraints pointed out by peer educators and programme managers are as follow:

- Peer education is time consuming and is seen by educators as a full time job. This could affect particularly students and pupils who are involved as peer educators.
- Some of the educators have experienced criticism and ridicule from some of their peers who call them nicknames related to sex, condoms, contraceptives, etc. Sometimes, the educators find this behaviour upsetting, especially when it harms their own personal reputation.
- Despite the acceptance of the project by the community, peer educators still experience some resistance in the community, especially from elderly, uneducated parents, school authorities, and people who are not aware about the project activities.
- The slow change of youth behaviour and the persistence of some SRH problems among young people, such as unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortion, STIs, etc., can be disappointing and discouraging for peer educators.

3.15 Suggestions for improvement

The opinions expressed during interviews with programme managers, community representatives, and peer educators are shown in Table 10, Table 11 and Table 12 respectively.

As seen in Table 11, Table 12 and Table 13, all participants interviewed stressed the need for more training and refreshers. Two types of training are desired. The first type is closely linked to peer educators daily activities and includes additional training and refresher sessions in SRH issues, counselling and communication skills. Community members and programme managers in Ghana also suggest training in monitoring and evaluation for peer educators’ supervisors. The second type of training is linked to the “*professional career*” of peer educators, especially out-of school ones, and includes vocational training; supporting part of apprenticeship costs, establishing contact with potential work places. Training in computer skills for both peer educators and youth in general and opening a cyber café within the centre was also often

suggested. In the same vein, “relais” in Richard-Toll believe that getting a “*sort of diploma*” at the end of the training or “going to conferences” could help them in their professional future.

The cyber café is also perceived as an avenue to “*increase contact and exchange with other youth programmes*” in Africa or abroad, a demand that was formulated several times during discussions.

In all three countries visited, community members and programme managers suggested to increase the number of peer educators recruited. Programme managers also wished they could train more peer educators and increase the geographic coverage of outreach activities. Community members interviewed in Ouagadougou and Dakar believe that information campaigns among parents and opinion leaders need to be intensified.

Income generating activities was also a suggestion made by several programme participants in all groups interviewed. Programme managers at ABBEF suggest making the theatre troupe professional to generate income. Other suggestions include opening a small café in the youth centre where youth can eat and drink (like in Ouagadougou), opening a cyber café, organising parties for youth in the community where participants pay a small fee, creating “*info boxes*” (where youth can seek information but where peer educators can also set up small businesses). With the exception of PPAG, where both peer promoters and their supervisors suggested increasing the monthly allowance given to peer promoters, participants did not mention financial incentives. As seen in Table 12, overall peer educators are not concerned about financial reward but rather wish they had more training, materials (individual kits especially), more contact with other peer educators, uniforms or bags to be identified, and bicycles. Not surprisingly, “relais” in Richard-Toll would like to be more involved in the decision making process (see section on Peer educator involvement above).

Table 10: Suggestions made by programme managers interviewed for improving peer educators’ performance

ABBEF, Ouagadougou	ASBEF, Senegal	PPAG, Ghana
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the theatre troupe professional (income generating) • Create “info boxes” in the sectors run by peer educators • Vocational training for JAS • Computer training for JACS and for centre clients (at a small cost) • Increase geographic coverage (more sectors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training, refreshers • Exchange of experience • Stress communication skills in the training or refreshers • Train more peer educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational training for peer promoters • Support part of their apprenticeship • Increase the monthly travelling allowance • Training in monitoring and evaluation for peer promoters and supervisors

Table 11: Suggestions made by community members interviewed for improving peer educators’ performance

ABBEF, Ouagadougou	ASBEF, Senegal	PPAG, Ghana
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensify information campaign among parents • Increase the number of Animators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of “relais” • Create a drama troupe • More training for “relais” (learn to answer opposition group arguments) • More IEC campaigns for opinion leaders • Cyber café 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of peer promoters • Recruit more peer promoters from churches • Income-generating activities • Better training, refreshers • Training in monitoring and evaluation for steering committee • Closer collaboration between peer promoters and steering committee

Table 12: Suggestions made by peer educators during focus-group discussions for improving their performance

JACS, and JAS Ouagadougou	“Relais”, Richard-Toll	“Relais”, Dakar	Peer promoters, Sogakope
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycles or motorbikes • A better and bigger Youth Centre • A bigger library • A meeting room for peer educators • Being able to be a peer educator more than 2 years • To exchange with other peer educators: in Africa and abroad • Uniforms to be identified • A budget to initiate activities (parties.) • Conduct information sessions outside Ouagadougou • Individual material kit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training in counselling • Professional training • Diplomas at the end of the training • More activities for young people in the community • Go to conferences • Meet other peer educators (Dakar) • Be involved in the library management • Open a cyber café • A bicycle • A small café in the centre • More material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bags or uniforms to be identified • Be more involved in decision making • Career plan • Additional training (in counselling) • Diploma at the end of the training session • More material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the incentive • Christmas bonus • Bicycle repair • Career plans • Contact with work place, to find a job • More material • More training

4. KEY LESSONS FOR SUCCESSFUL PEER EDUCATION APPROACH

The present review of five innovative peer education programmes has identified several key lessons and useful tips for successful peer education programme design and implementation. While generalisations are sometimes difficult to make for different social and cultural settings, several conclusions and recommendations based on Vision 2000 Fund experience can be put forward:

4.1 Project formulation

- ❖ In formulating youth programmes, the peer education component has to be strongly integrated with other aspects of the youth project, and be part of the overall project philosophy. Reaching young people through a holistic approach is confirmed to be a very successful approach and the peer education component is proved to be the corner stone of the “Youth for Youth” strategy in each project.
- ❖ The peer education approach is very relevant to target all sub-groups of youth: in-school, out-of-school, mainstream youth, marginalised groups, and youth at risk, such as street children, drug abusers, prostitutes, transvestites, etc. The identification of target groups should always be based on the identification of the specific needs of young people, preferably through baseline surveys and needs assessment studies in the project sites.
- ❖ This study has shown that there is no one particular model of peer education programmes. All reported experiences have been designed to respond to specific needs and to guarantee feasibility within the community. How to achieve project objectives and which target groups the programme is willing to reach, are the main elements to be taken into consideration in the identification of the strategy to be adopted.

4.2 Selection procedures

- ❖ The selection of peer educators should not be the responsibility of programme managers only. In order to increase the acceptability of peer educators either in schools or at the community level, selection process should involve teachers, community leaders, religious leaders and other youth organisations. This approach proved its success as peer educators involved in the five projects have been highly accepted and respected within their own communities and schools.
- ❖ Clear selection criteria should be established prior to recruitment and the opinions of older peer educators and target groups on “what makes a successful peer educator” should be taken into account. This approach will help to set up more realistic criteria and guarantee the acceptance of peer educators within the community.
- ❖ In selecting peer educators, attention should be paid to the following key attributes: candidates acceptance of programme philosophy, “personality” attributes, and socio-demographic characteristics. The willingness to work as volunteers, the acceptance of the FPA’s objectives, goals and organisational systems, the ability to communicate on issues related to SRH, and being accepted and respected within the community, are identified as the main criteria for selection of peer educators. Therefore, the age limit (25 years) is not seen as a big issue and most importantly, peer educators should be able to give clear

information and messages, be trustworthy and discreet, be tolerant, available, dynamic, assertive, act as a model for youth, and able to control a group discussion.

4.3 Training of peer educators

- ❖ Strong initial training, lasting at least 7 to 10 days, and focusing both on theoretical and practical issues is an important element of a successful peer education training programme. The initial training is seen as very important to equip peer educators with the necessary knowledge, skills and motivation.
- ❖ Involving medical personnel, outside resource persons and experienced peer educators in the training of future peer educators adds to the quality of the training.
- ❖ Planning frequent additional training and refreshers in SRH and communication skills for trained peer educators is crucial to ensure quality in peer educators' work and to keep peer educators motivated and committed.
- ❖ A completed training curriculum should cover not only a large range of SRH issues but also social and psychological aspects of sexual relationships (gender, sexual abuse, etc.), skills training (communication and counselling skills), project management, and organisational values training (familiarisation with project philosophy, the FPA's strategies and programmes, etc.). These topics will help trainees to increase their knowledge, develop their personality, and equip them with the necessary communication and management skills.
- ❖ Attention should be paid to both the content and the format of training and refreshers. Friendly atmosphere during training and participatory type of training (role play, sketches, etc.) are greatly appreciated by peer educators.
- ❖ A formal training evaluation involving both quantitative (pre-post test) and qualitative (feed back from participants) data should be carefully planned. Data collected needs to be analysed to determine training needs and improve future training practices.
- ❖ Practical aspects of training and field experience should not be neglected and should be integrated into peer educators' initial training or by allowing "peer educators trainees" to work for a short period in the field before or shortly after formal training. This is important because generally peer educators are very young and need to improve their communication and educational skills before being fully engaged in the community work.

4.4 Peer educators' activities

- ❖ Involving peer educators and other youth beneficiaries in the planning process and development of action plans for peer education activities is perceived as the key for successful programme implementation. The involvement of peer educators in the elaboration of their own activity plan will increase their sense of responsibility and autonomy as well as their management skills.
- ❖ A clear activity plan provided weekly or monthly, as well as clear identified targets to be reached are key elements to ensure that peer educators know what is expected from them. The objectives of peer educators' activities should also be in line with the short and long

term project objectives. Good planning will also lead to good reporting and therefore better assessment of programme performance and impact.

- ❖ While it is necessary to conduct different types of activities and send different messages to sexually active and not sexually active youth, the difficulty in determining who is sexually active and who is not and the risk of sending contradictory messages, call for some caution. Basic information on contraception and access to contraception should not be denied to any age groups, even if there are differences in the emphasis put on certain SRH aspects for certain groups. If young people are sexually active at early age, as it is the case in the countries considered by this study, sending mixed messages could cause confusion among youth if peer educators promote abstinence and practising safe sex in the same time.
- ❖ A successful peer educator should have the skills to act as informer, communicator, counsellor and community-based provider of condoms and other contraceptive methods. Peer educators usually face various problems and needs among youth and therefore it is important that they have the capacity to provide help and support to young people upon request.

4.5 Educational material and tools

- ❖ Availability and diversity of adequate educational and demonstration materials need to be secured to ensure high quality education and maintain peer educators' motivation. An individual kit for each peer educator should be available. This includes for example, flip charts, demonstration models (pelvis, penis, etc), a sample of contraceptive methods, reference materials, and handouts, etc.
- ❖ Peer educators should be involved in the development of educational material. It has been noted that the experience gained by peer educators in the course of the programme implementation enhanced their capacity in terms of IEC material development and setting appropriate messages and tools.
- ❖ Some material should be developed in the local language in order to make educational activities friendly to all categories of young people; both educated and not educated youth.
- ❖ Evaluation of the educational material and tools should be carried out systematically. It is important to design educational tools, which are the most accepted and liked by young people.

4.6 Monitoring and evaluation

- ❖ Monitoring and evaluation of peer educators' activities need to be carefully planned. Monitoring procedures should not only include field visits, activity reports, and regular meetings, but also FGDs and qualitative surveys with both beneficiaries and peer educators as a way to get more relevant information about how the project and the peer educators are doing and what the urgent needs to improve the programme are.
- ❖ Both process and impact evaluations have to be planned using both implementation and outcome indicators as well as quantitative and qualitative data. The evaluation tools need to be well formulated and address specific issues of peer education outputs and outcomes. It needs to be put in a context that takes into account the needs of the project, stakeholders

and the constraints of cost and time. Otherwise, there is a risk that the evaluation becomes lost in its search of programme understanding.

- ❖ Data collected for monitoring and evaluation purposes needs to be compiled, entered analysed and disseminated systematically. This is important to check on a regular basis the programme achievement and performance and to make sure that the programme is on the right track. The comparison with baseline data will also help to track the evolution of the programme impact and constraints.

4.7 Management of peer education programmes

- ❖ Adopting a democratic, egalitarian, open management style and creating a youth-friendly environment are successful strategies to improve the level of communication between peer educators and programme managers, to ensure more efficient monitoring and evaluation, and to increase peer educators' motivation and retention rates.
- ❖ Having a young management staff, supervising peer educators is very helpful in promoting egalitarian, democratic, and youth friendly management style.

4.8 Motivation and reward system

- ❖ Reasonable travelling allowance, and some other forms of motivation for all peer educators (fixed amount per activity, percentage on condoms sales, or non financial "presents") are very important to maintain high level of peer educators' motivation and also prevent dropouts.
- ❖ The special reward system for best peer educators does not have to be financial. Reward and motivation systems should be discussed first with peer educators themselves to make sure that any decision will not be "discouraging" rather than encouraging for them.

4.9 Involvement of peer educators

- ❖ Involving peer educators at various stages of the project design, implementation and evaluation, and creating a "feeling of project ownership" among peer educators is proved to be a very successful strategy for peer education programmes.
- ❖ Peer educators' involvement in the decision making process should go beyond the daily implementation of project activities and their opinions and suggestions should be taken into account systematically (using frequent FDGs, meetings, retreats or qualitative surveys). This will enhance the commitment of peer educators and improve the programme management.

4.10 Involvement of the community

- ❖ Community involvement is vital for the success of peer education programmes. IEC campaigns and promotional activities for community members, including parents, as well as community participation in the project implementation are of utmost importance for any peer education approach. In addition, working with opposition groups in the community secures a higher level of project acceptability and sustainability.

- ❖ Involving community leaders and teachers, through a steering committee for example in every aspect of community and school peer educators' work is proved as a real element of success in creating awareness and building the community ownership of the project.

4.11 Responding to the peer educators' needs

- ❖ Giving peer educators the opportunity to access vocational or professional types of training, exchange visits with other peer educators, and implement income-generating activities are other suggestions for improving programme impact on peer educators and increasing peer educators' commitment and motivation.

REFERENCES

- ABBEF (1995) *Projet Jeunes pour Jeunes*. Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. 26 pages.
- ASBEF (2000) *Project de creation de centre de santé de la reproduction des jeunes à Dakar et à Richard-Toll*, Version révisée, Dakar, Sénégal. 46 pages.
- Baldo M (1998) "Peer education: a successful strategy with some constraints". *Sexual Health Exchange* (4) 1-3.
- Birdthistle I and C Vince-Whitman (1997) "Reproductive Health Programmes for Young Adults: School-Based Programmes" *FOCUS on Young Adults Research Series*, Pathfinder International, May 31.
- CERPOD (1996) *Youth in danger. Reproductive health in Sahel*. Findings of a regional study in five West African countries. Bamako, Mali. 25 pages.
- Fee N and M Youssef (1996) "Young people, AIDS, and STIs: peer approaches in developing countries". In: *The Global AIDS Policy Coalition*, edited by Jonathan M. Mann and Daniel J.M. Tarantola, *AIDS in the world II: global dimensions, social roots, and responses*. New York, New York, Oxford University Press, pp. 247-8.
- Friedman, H. L. (1994) "Reproductive Health in Adolescence". *World Health Statistics Quarterly* 47(1): 31-35.
- FOCUS on Young Adults, Pathfinder International (2000) *A guide to monitoring and evaluating adolescent reproductive health*. Programmes Tool series 5 452 pages.
- IPPA (1994) *Youth project: Component B Lentera Project*. Yogyakarta, project proposal for submission to IPPF Partnership Challenges Fund, Jakarta, Indonesia. 98 pages.
- IPPF (1992) *Strategic Plan: Vision 2000*. London, 32 pages.
- IPPF (1998) "Youth information and counselling centres", *Mid-term evaluation report*, London, 65 pages.
- IPPF (1999a) *Projet "Jeunes pour Jeunes", rapport d'évaluation finale*. 57 pages.
- IPPF (1999b) *Lentera youth project, final evaluation report*, London, 29 pages.
- IPPF (1997) *Monitoring and Evaluation: lessons learned from the Lentera Project*.
- McCauley, A P, Salter, C, Kiragu K; Senderowitz J (1995). "Meeting the needs of young adults". *Population Reports*, Series J, No.41 Baltimore: Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Population Information Program.
- Meekers D and Calvès A E (1997) "Main girlfriends, girlfriends, marriage, and money: the social context of HIV risk behaviour in sub-Saharan Africa", *Health Transition Review*, supplement to volume 7 pp. 361-376.
- Morgan, D L (1988). "Focus groups as Qualitative Research". *Qualitative research methods series no 16*. London: Sage Publications.
- PPAG (1998) *Family Health Programme for the underserved population of the Volta region*, proposal submitted to Vision 2000 Fund; Accra, Ghana. 26 pages.
- Senderowitz Judith. (1995) "Adolescent Health: Reassessing the Passage to Adulthood" *World Bank Discussion Papers*, No 272, January.
- Senderowitz Judith. (1997) "Reproductive Health Outreach Programmes for Young Adults" *FOCUS on Young Adults Research Series*, Pathfinder International, May 31



International
Planned
Parenthood
Federation

vision2000ofunds

Peer education is a way of promoting sexual and reproductive health to young people, by young people. It is now used by many organisations around the world.

This research is the first in a series to document the lessons learnt through IPPF's Vision 2000 Fund projects. It draws on the experiences of five youth projects in four countries – Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana and Indonesia – to make practical recommendations for designing and implementing peer education programmes.

Regent's College
Inner Circle
Regent's Park
London NW1 4NS, UK

Tel: +44 20 7487 7900
Fax: +44 20 7487 7950

E-mail: info@ippf.org
Web: www.ippf.org