

# Program Summary

## **Midlands AIDS Service Organisation (MASO): Youth Alive Initiatives Project**

The Midlands Aids Service Organisation (MASO), a Zimbabwean NGO, started the Youth Alive Initiative Project in 1996. The program targets 10- to 24-year-old, in- and out-of-school youth in urban and rural areas of the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. It aims to encourage safer sexual practices among youth, reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the general population, and promote positive living among people who have been infected and affected.

To achieve these aims, volunteer teachers are trained to lead youth clubs. Young people become members of the clubs voluntarily, and those who attend are trained by the teachers in peer education and adolescent sexual and reproductive health issues. These youth then disseminate information among their peers to encourage life skills development, communication, and behavior change. This dissemination takes place either on a one-to-one counseling basis or during outreach activities. These activities involve performances for youth and other community members. The main focus of the clubs and outreach activities is on abstinence.

The teachers and peer educators are also trained in counseling about child abuse to equip them with skills to respond to children's needs and problems.

The program has put together a number of manuals and materials that can be obtained from the MASO offices (see MASO report, Part D).

To date, more than 10,000 youth and 1,000 adults have benefited from the program at an estimated cost of US\$71 per youth per year. Of the 16 UNAIDS benchmarks for effective programs, the program was found to have successfully met 11 and partially met 3, and 2 were not applicable.



# Midlands AIDS Service Organisation (MASO): Youth Alive Initiatives Project

## PART A: DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

### Program Rationale and History

An HIV prevalence survey conducted in 2000 by the Zimbabwean Ministry of Health and Child Welfare showed that 27.8 percent of the youth in the 15- to 19-year-old age group were HIV positive. These high figures convinced the Midlands AIDS Service Organisation (MASO) that a program to combat the spread of HIV among youth needed to be set up.

In developing the program, two main sources of information were used. First, the findings from a needs assessments conducted by UNICEF in 1996 were used (see Needs Assessment section of this chapter for details). Second, MASO borrowed ideas from an initiative that had been established by its sister organization, the Matebeleland AIDS Council in Bulawayo district.

Before starting the program, consultative meetings were held with officials from the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. They all agreed that such a program would be useful in curbing the HIV/AIDS epidemic in schools. Meetings were also held with parents, community members, teachers, and youth to explain the idea behind the program activities and allow discussion of them before they were set up.

The program itself began in 1996 with the setting up of clubs in 12 primary schools in Gweru district. A further 19 primary schools and 10 secondary schools were added in 1997; in

The program has chosen this focus because it believes that life skills enhancement allows the youth to develop skills necessary for them to avoid high-risk situations and also empower them with negotiating skills for safer sex.

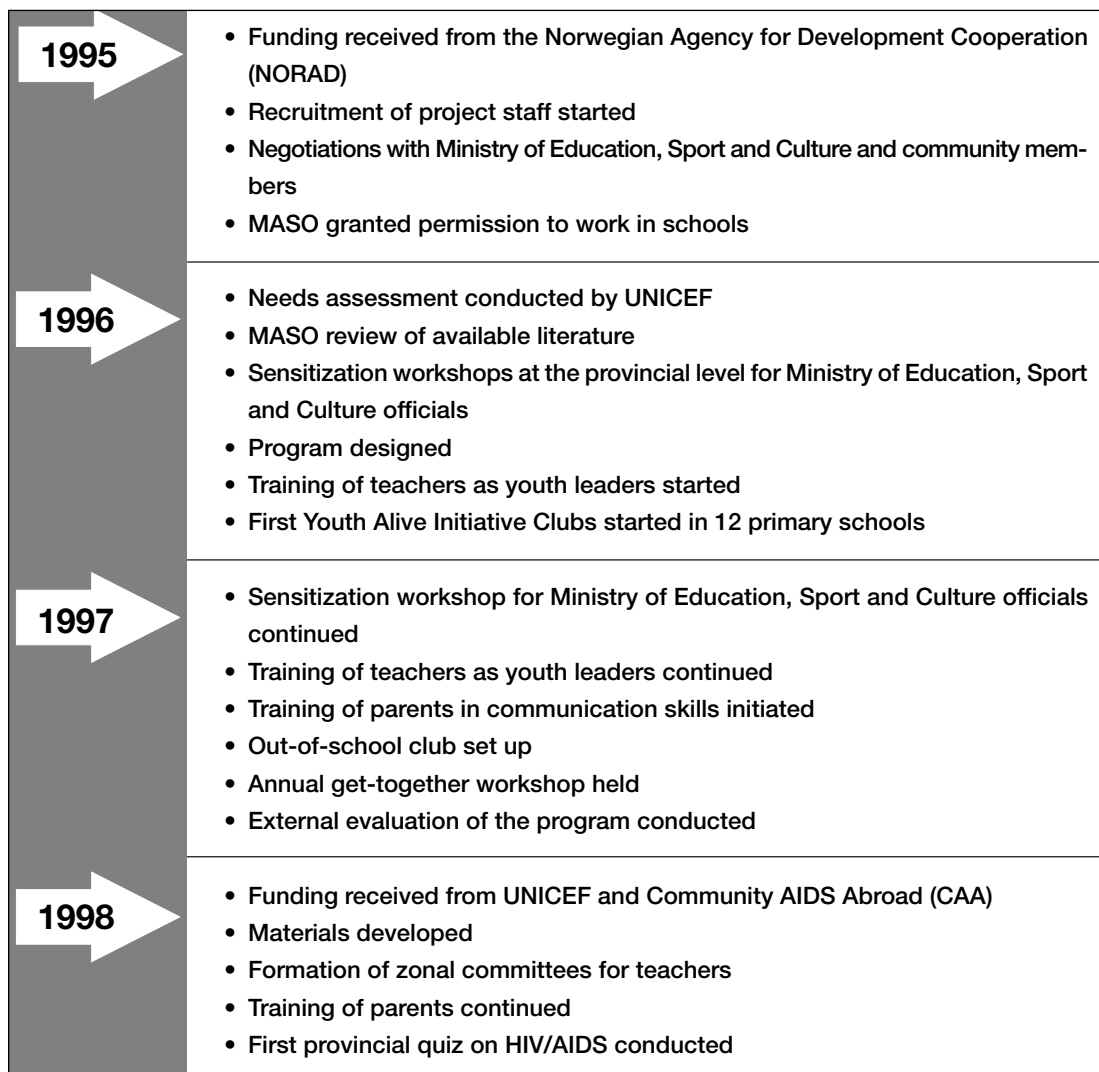
*Program officer*

2000, the program expanded to Kwekwe district, with 20 primary schools and 11 secondary schools recruited.

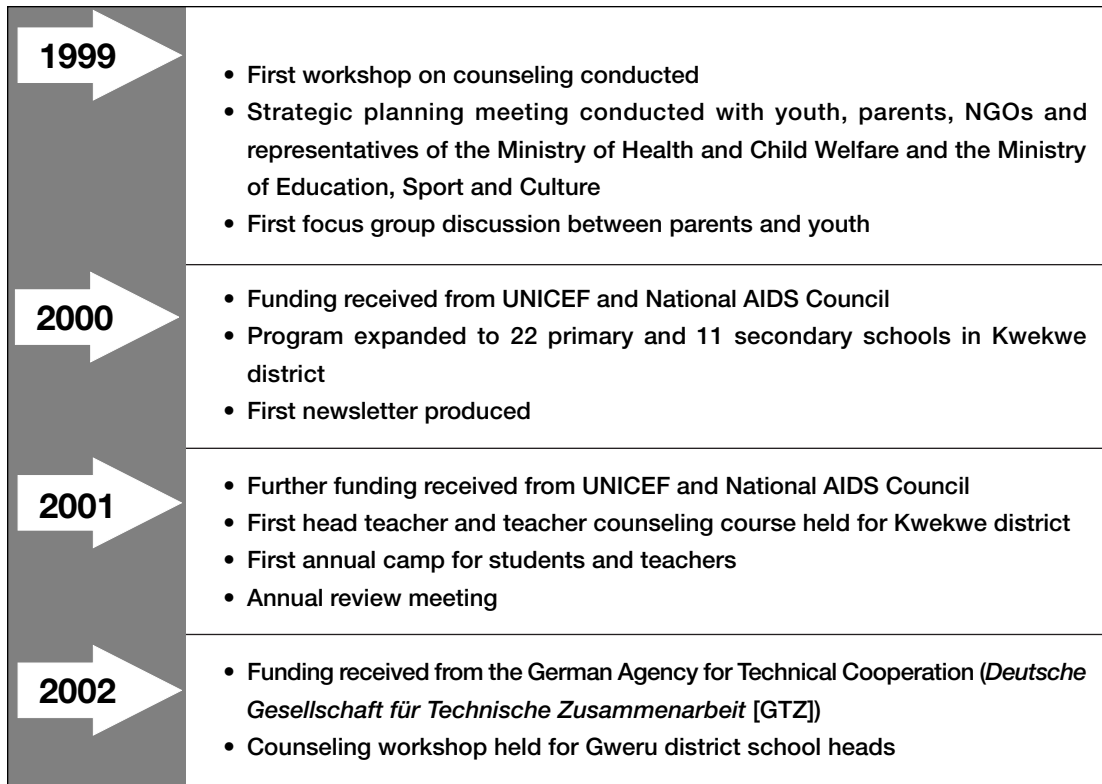
Both in- and out-of-school children can attend the clubs, in which a number of activities take place — including peer education, quizzes, poems, drama, songs, dance, preparations for community outreach, and production of a newsletter. The idea is that club members will be trained as peer educators and hence disseminate knowledge about HIV/AIDS and messages of behavior change to the wider community, and, in particular, their peers.

An evaluation was held in 1997 by an external consultancy agency, and a further evaluation was conducted by MASO in 1999. The evaluations examined the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the project and generally found positive results. However, because there was no baseline study, it is difficult to know how effective the program actually has been.

MASO intends to expand the clubs to other districts, subject to continued funding.



**Figure 1. Time Line of Major Program Events**



**Figure 1. Time Line of Major Program Events**

## Program Overview

### Aim

The main aim of the program is to equip youth between the ages of 14 and 24 years with the necessary life skills to cope with everyday life-tyle issues. This will contribute toward reducing sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, and other related problems.

### Objectives

According to the program officer, the program objectives are to

- facilitate youth initiatives to prevent STIs and HIV/AIDS;
- disseminate information that is accurate, up-to-date, and clear to the target audience;
- promote a change to safer sex behaviors by target groups; and
- promote positive living among the infected and affected and ensure consistency on proven strategies of coping.

### Target Groups

#### *Primary Target Group*

The primary targets are youth aged between 10 and 24 years in 74 schools (and one out-of-school club) in Kwekwe and Gweru districts who attend the Youth Alive Initiative Clubs. The program covers both rural and urban areas.

**Secondary Target Group**

The secondary targets are the teachers who run the clubs and those who are not members but who attend the peer educators’ outreach activities (see below).

**Site**

The program is based in schools for in-school youth. Out-of-school youth conduct their activities in community halls, schools, or wherever they can find facilities.

**Program Length**

A youth can participate in the program for a maximum of 10 years and a minimum of 4 years, depending on when he or she joined the program. According to the program officer, the majority of youth who started the program in 1996 are still there. The program officer thinks youths need to attend for at least five years to gain adequate knowledge and skills to protect themselves from HIV infection and child abuse. The program itself has been operating for eight years and has the potential for continuing for at least another five years.

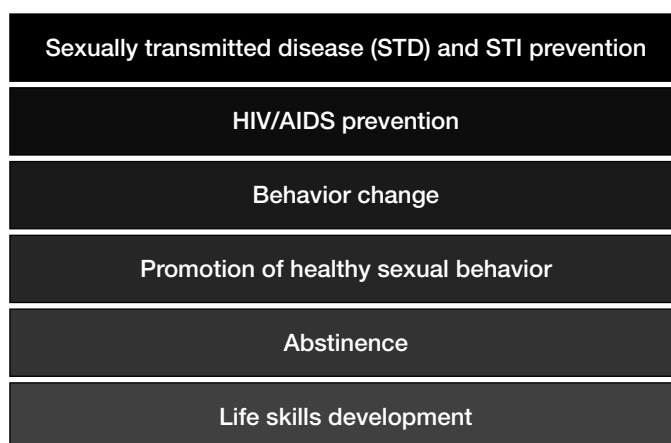
**Program Goals**

Figure 2 shows how the program officer ranked the program goals. The program focuses on behavior change and life skills enhancement through the involvement of youth and community members. The idea is that youth listen to their peers (peer educators), and by involving themselves in drama and other activities, they begin to understand issues about HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, their active participation gives them ownership of the program, and hence more incentive to maintain it.

The program emphasizes to youth that abstinence before marriage is the most effective way of preventing HIV transmission.

**Approaches**

According to the program officer, peer education is the best approach for considering the needs, ideas, and feelings of youth because peers understand each other better than does anyone else within the community.



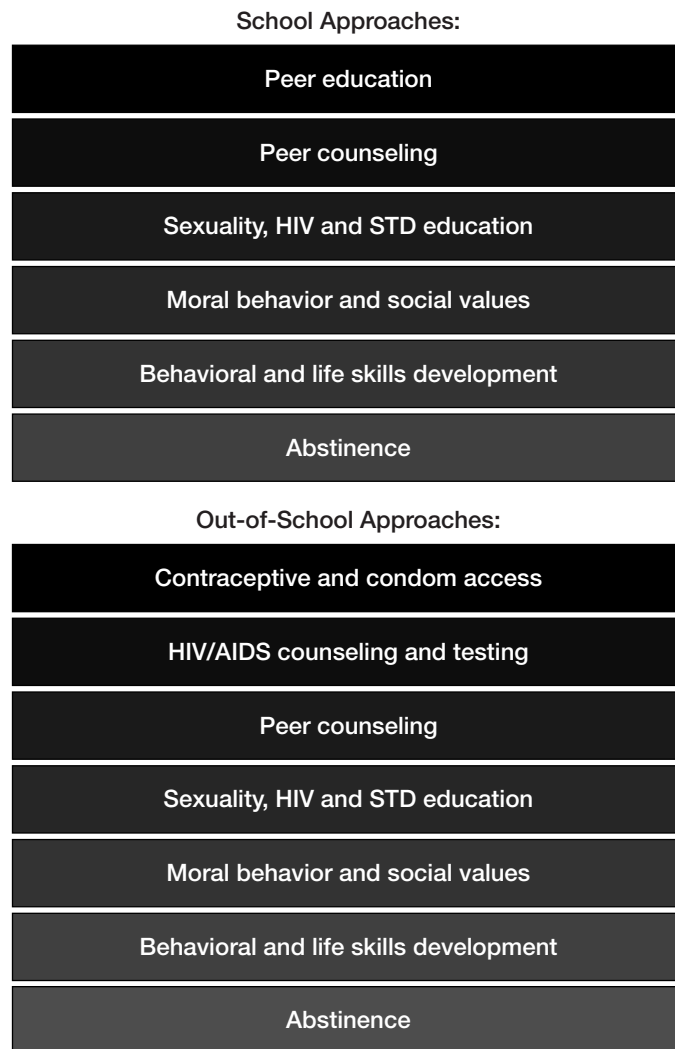
**Figure 2. Program Goals Ranked in Increasing Importance by the Program Officer**

The main difference between the in-school and out-of-school youth programs is that in-school youth are not taught about contraception, including condoms.

**Activities**

According to the program officer, group discussions, drama, songs, and role play are the most effective methods of disseminating information to the youth and the community. This is because active involvement helps people to remember and internalize the messages, which in turn is more likely to lead to behavior change.

The program officer also felt that lectures are the least effective methods of disseminating information to the youth because they just listen and participate little. However, there was no evidence that one activity was necessarily more effective than the other.



**Figure 3. Program Approaches Ranked in Increasing Importance**

### Components

The program consists of two main components:

1. Youth Alive Initiative Clubs and
2. outreach activities.

#### Youth Alive Initiative Clubs

The members of the Youth Alive Initiative Clubs for in-school youth meet once a week in the school during their spare time to discuss HIV/AIDS issues. This is done with supervision from

The peer approach helps youths to learn from each other and correct any misconceptions. The idea is that youth can produce their own ideas and messages.

youth leaders, who are teachers trained by MASO. The meetings are scheduled to take an hour, but may last longer.

In the meetings, youth are taught new topics on HIV/AIDS by youth leaders and then discuss them. They also discuss their plans for community outreach programs for the next week and review what happened in the previous week. Much time is spent practicing drama, poems, quizzes, and songs that they will perform for nonmember pupils and the community during the outreach activities. Youth also identify their fellow peers who may need as-

#### Program officer

sistance (for example, in the form of money for school fees or other support) and discuss how they can help.

The peer educators come up with all the ideas, but the youth leaders provide them with any information they require, and they also offer their support and guidance on how to plan the outreach activities.

Like their in-school counterparts, out-of-school youth also meet once a week with youth leaders to discuss HIV/AIDS issues and plan their community outreach schedule for the week.

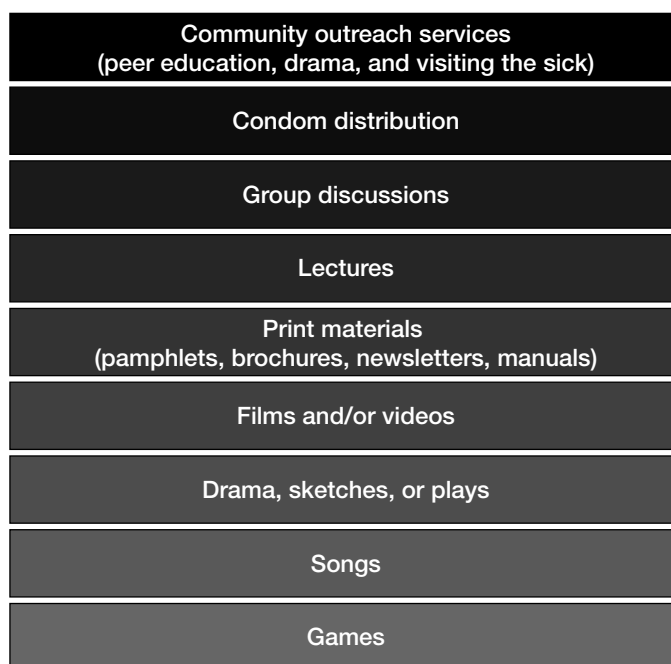


Figure 4. Program Activities Ranked in Increasing Frequency of Use



Out-of-school youth also meet every day to carry out outreach activities. As well as those activities done by in-school youth, out-of-school youth also conduct home, church, and beer hall visits; hold community meetings; and distribute literature on HIV/AIDS and condoms. They also distribute food (given to them by MASO) to people living with HIV/AIDS and sell food to those who can afford it.

Monthly feedback is given to the MASO program officer by both peer educators and youth leaders. Any plans for the month that need MASO support are discussed in these meetings.

### Case Study

John is a member of the Youth Alive Initiative Club based at Midlands State University. Today the club has organized a focus group to discuss the issue of sex and peer pressure. The focus group discussion is going to be led by Chipo, a trained peer leader.

The group is made up of six male and five female students. Chipo felt that today's attendance was unusually low, possibly because students had just received their pay, so they had gone shopping.

The discussion started with the girls accusing the boys of forcing them into sex without their consent. A heated argument followed, but Chipo controlled the group by asking them to list the environments in which sex takes place. They were also asked to list the conditions that motivate them to have sex.

This list was discussed and analyzed. It was concluded that both boys and girls should try to avoid these environments because they lead young people to having sexual relations. It was also concluded that both boys and girls misunderstand each other: Boys think that if they do not have sex with their girlfriends, the girlfriend will think that they are backward; girls do not want to disappoint their boyfriends.

**Youth leaders.** The youth leaders are volunteer teachers who have been trained in peer education, adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH), and counseling. There are usually two per school: one male and one female. They meet with the peer educators during club time, although many of them are happy to answer questions whenever they are free. The main role of the youth leaders is to run the clubs and train the peer educators. They are also responsible for conducting one-to-one counseling with youth who request it.

In addition to being responsible for the clubs, youth leaders are also responsible for referring child abuse cases to the police and youth-friendly organizations in the province, and to health clinics if the young person may have contracted an STD. Out-of-school youth leaders also do some community activities along with the out-of-school youth.

MASO organizes quarterly networking meetings for youth leaders from different schools. These are usually planning and review meetings, where progress reports from each school are given and problems are presented to MASO for discussion and consideration.

**Peer educators.** There are approximately 60 peer educators in each school. All peer educators are members of a Youth Alive Initiative Club. The peer educators conduct talks with their peers on different topics selected by the youth themselves. Peer education is conducted in two ways: on a one-to-one basis during a youth's spare time and in community outreach activities.

In group discussion, youth are free to bring out their concerns and suggest solutions to deal with the problems. In drama, the youth are able to portray what happens to them in real-life situations and therefore are able to bring to the fore problems that they are facing and that the adults do not know about.

**Program officer**

### ***Outreach Activities***

Peer educators conduct outreach activities as a way of reaching more youth. These might be conducted after school or in other schools and colleges (that do not have a Youth Alive Initiative Club) within the locality, as well as in community meeting areas. These activities can take a variety of forms:

- Drama and role plays are used to bring out real-life situations. The performances are followed by discussions of the problem portrayed so that the young people can learn from the stories. The audience is also encouraged to suggest possible solutions to the problem.
- Videos on various topics are used to stimulate discussions.
- Posters, leaflets, and picture codes are also used as aids to discussions.
- A newsletter for young people, *MASO Youth Alive Initiative*, is also produced. Youth contribute articles on HIV/AIDS (including poems) to this newsletter.
- Lectures and talks are presented to different youth groups and adults in the community.
- Interschool competitions are organized to integrate the community.
- Visits to give support to sick people on home-based care are made.

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## **PART B : IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM**

### **Needs Assessment**

A needs assessment was carried out by UNICEF in 1996, but it was not done specifically for MASO. Rather, UNICEF wanted to conduct an analysis of the needs of youth before deciding whether to allocate funds to the region.

In-school and out-of-school, rural and urban youth aged 10 to 24 years old were asked what they knew about HIV/AIDS, where they had learned this information, and what they did in their spare time. Youth were also asked what they thought was needed in terms of sexual reproductive health (SRH) education. The major findings were:

- Young people's knowledge about HIV/AIDS was high.
- Youth were not comfortable discussing HIV/AIDS issues with their parents.
- Youth obtained most of their information from the radio and print media.
- Unemployed youth spend most of their time loitering.
- Youth are happiest with messages they have produced themselves.
- Youth would listen to peers of their age.

MASO used the idea that youth can learn from one another and that they can produce their own messages and solutions to problems when designing the program. See appendix 3 to this chapter for further details.

## Program Materials

The program materials took an average of four months to develop, produce, and distribute. MASO; the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture; the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare; and the community's youth were all involved in the materials' development. The materials were produced in English and the local language to enable every youth to understand the messages.

Materials are also obtained from the local health clinics, the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, and other organizations working with youth.

## Club Materials

MASO has produced four manuals for use by the peer leaders in the clubs. These manuals are described below in the Training Materials section.

### Posters, Videos, and Leaflets

MASO has also produced leaflets, videos, and posters. The messages in these are designed to ensure continuity and consistency of messages. The youth were involved in the design of these materials.

Topics include abstinence, how to avoid drugs, and healthy eating as a way of avoiding infection or staying well if infected. The focus is on abstinence until marriage. These materials are used in both the clubs and the outreach activities. (Please see Available Materials in part D of this chapter.)

### Newsletter

MASO also produces a newsletter, *MASO Youth Alive Initiative*. It is produced monthly and is compiled by MASO staff from articles submitted by youth. These articles can be poems, essays, and reports about events undertaken by the youth. In-school and out-of-school club members receive the newsletter.

## Training Materials

As well as being used for training youth leaders, peer educators, and school heads, the manuals described below are also used in the Youth Alive Initiative Clubs.

*Participatory Approaches to Community Development* is primarily used by youth leaders. It informs them on how to lead the youth in the clubs in a way that ensures they are all actively participating. The manual is divided into four chapters covering these topics:

1. introduction to participatory approaches and their uses,
2. techniques and tools for collecting and analyzing data for participatory approaches,
3. how to conduct good-quality training, and
4. conducting participatory field work.

*The Counseling Training Manual for Schools* was designed by MASO and is used to train youth leaders, school heads, and peer educators in the counseling skills they need to talk to students, peers, and community members about HIV/AIDS. It is divided into sections that give guidance on

- the youth leader's role in counseling,
- techniques for and types of counseling,
- child abuse and how to identify it,

### AIDS the Killer

AIDS is not passed  
By living together  
By eating together  
Or by playing together.

It is also not spread  
By shaking hands  
By kissing

By sharing glasses or  
drinking mugs  
By swimming together  
By mosquitoes or other insects  
By giving blood at a  
blood centre or donor clinic.

But AIDS is spread  
Through SEX with  
An INFECTED person.  
So be smart and say no to sex!

*By Beatrice Muvuya*

*Grade 6C*

*Mkoba 4 Primary School.*

- how to spot a child who may have problems and what to do about it, and
- how to help children through bereavement.

*Communicating About AIDS* covers learning to communicate, listen, and question. Each area is dealt with in depth, and practical advice is given.

*Facts About HIV/AIDS* discusses HIV transmission, the course of progression from HIV infection to AIDS, signs and symptoms, and prevention. It also provides worksheets and guidelines to help work through the topics.

Copies of these manuals are available. Please see Available Materials in part D of this chapter.

## **Staff Selection and Training**

### **Youth Leaders**

- Youth leaders are volunteer teachers. There is one male and one female teacher in each club. When more than two teachers volunteer in a school, the youth decide which teachers they want.
- They are trained by MASO in peer education so that they are able to train the young people as peer educators. They are also trained on how to run the clubs. This involves training in planning club activities, motivating peer educators, obtaining materials, and finding contacts in the community, including other NGOs and government institutions, who can help. The training usually takes one day.
- The peer education training covers knowledge of HIV/AIDS, its transmission, signs and symptoms, and the cultural aspects of the disease.
- After the initial training, youth leaders attend three-day refresher courses every three months.
- Youth leaders are also trained in basic counseling skills so that they are able to deal with problems that the young people may face. This training is conducted by MASO and takes one week.
- The counseling training sessions generally cover topics such as peer pressure, abstinence, facts about HIV/AIDS, supporting each other in difficult and emotional issues, and coping skills.
- Some youth leaders are also trained as trainers of trainers so that they can train more youth leaders. Their training covers presentation skills, communication skills, and participatory methodologies, and it lasts four days.

### **Peer Educators**

- The peer educators are the only staff who are members of the Youth Alive Initiative Clubs. Each club has approximately 30 students as members.
- The peer educators are trained by the youth leaders for one week.
- The training is the same as that received by the youth leaders (see above), although less intense.
- Three-day, quarterly refresher and update sessions are conducted for peer educators by youth leaders and MASO.
- They are also trained in counseling by the youth leaders for 10 days.

### **School Heads**

- The school heads are oriented on the importance of the Youth Alive Initiative Clubs.
- They are trained for 10 days in counseling by a MASO program officer so that they are able to deal with problems that their students might have.
- They are also trained by MASO in basic information on HIV/AIDS.

## Setting Up the Program

Before MASO set up the program, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare were informed about the initiative. They all gave their consent for it to go ahead.

A three-day sensitization workshop for school heads was also conducted to inform them and encourage them to participate in the program.

## How to Set Up a Youth Alive Initiative Club and Outreach Activities

The following steps are taken to set up the Youth Alive Initiative Clubs:

- A needs assessment is conducted by UNICEF to determine the knowledge and needs of the community regarding HIV/AIDS and their myths, conceptions, and attitudes toward the condition. The findings are then used to develop an appropriate program.
- MASO approaches school heads and teachers to form Youth Alive Initiative Clubs in schools.
- MASO recruits youth from within the school to join the clubs. MASO staff visit youth clubs and associations to recruit young people who are out of school.
- Committees are formed of representatives of the youth, parents, and teachers for each club. These committees meet quarterly to review program activities.
- Teachers asked to volunteer to become youth leaders. One male and one female teacher are chosen from each school to head the club.
- Volunteer teachers are trained to become youth leaders during a one-week workshop. In this workshop, they are also trained as counselors.
- Materials to be used in the program are developed by the youth, teachers, and MASO.
- Club meetings are conducted once per week to discuss issues that have arisen during the course of the week and prepare outreach activities.
- Outreach activities are organized by the youth leaders. They make arrangements with schools or community centers to be visited. Alternatively, community members approach the youth leaders and ask the club to come and give a performance.
- The MASO program officer regularly visits the project to give support and monitor progress.

Communication between us and our parents on sexual matters is generally not encouraged within our society. Lack of communication often results in misconceptions since there is no opportunity for clarifying or dispelling them.

**Youth**

## Program Resources

Peer educators and youth leaders can go to the MASO offices to make photocopies and pick up any materials they need. As well as having the training manuals, posters, videos, and leaflets, MASO also has other HIV/AIDS-related materials from the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare; the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture; and NGOs.

## Advocacy

Both MASO and the community believe that community involvement is critical because youth behavior is affected by what happens in the community. If the community appreciates young people's problems, they will create an environment that is youth-friendly, which will enable youth to solve their problems. It may also encourage community members to act as role models for the youth.

Sensitization meetings in which the benefits of the program to the community were highlighted were conducted with officials from the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture;

parents; school heads; and teachers before the start of the program. This has resulted in the program enjoying support from the community.

The club committees, composed of teachers, parents, and youth representatives, ensure that the community expectations are met in the program, and that community members have a say in the content of the program.

### **Program Finances**

To date, US\$325,245 have been received from donors to the project. The donors include NORAD, UNICEF, CAA, GTZ, and the National AIDS Council. More than 10,000 youth and 1,000 adults have benefited from the program.

During 2001, 2,000 youths and 300 adults have been involved in the program. The average cost per youth is approximately US\$71 per year (that is, 2002 funding of US\$143,784 divided by the current 2,000 youth beneficiaries).

See appendix 4 to this chapter for more details on program finances.

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## **PART C: ASSESMENT, CHALLENGES, AND LESSONS LEARNED**

### **Challenges and Solutions**

#### **MASO Director**

##### *Involvement of Youth*

Involving youth in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating fosters a sense of belonging and encourages commitment to the goals of the program. Working with youth as peers is more effective because they are able to relate well to each other. The importance of youth is further emphasized because there are few adult role models for youth to look up to within the community.

##### *Lack of Technical Expertise*

Training materials should be standardized so that all of the peer educators receive the same training. There is also a need for a standard monitoring and evaluation procedure.

##### *Stigma and Cultural Taboos*

AIDS still carries with it a huge stigma, and the culture does not permit open discussions on sex. Therefore, it is difficult to cover HIV/AIDS adequately in the schools because its controversial nature means it is given little time or importance.

**Socioeconomics**

There is a lack of human and material resources, and the current unstable political and economic situation just makes matters worse.

**Continuity**

The out-of-school youth and the teachers are very mobile, looking for jobs and better opportunities. Therefore, there is a high turnover rate of both youth leaders and peer educators.

I don't like to use condoms because I think they might reduce my manhood.

**Youth**

**Sustainability**

Use of the existing school structure ensures that the human resources, and many of the material resources, necessary to carry out a program are automatically available. This also provides easy access to a large number of youth. The use of local peer educators and other local and government structures ensured that the program would continue to go on even if MASO were to pull out. These factors help secure sustainability.

**Evaluation**

Two evaluations of the program have been conducted, one in 1997 and one in 1999.

**1997**

An evaluation of the in-school and out-of-school programs was conducted by an independent private consultancy in 1997. Interviews were held with youth, school heads, and teachers, and focus group discussions were held with parents and youth. The main aims of the evaluation were to determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the program.

There were three main findings of the evaluation:

- The youth who participated in the MASO Youth Alive Initiative Clubs had more techniques available to them to help them avoid risky behavior. This was largely due to the participatory nature of the activities used in the clubs, such as anthems, poems, drama, plays, and competitions. Club youth were also less likely to be found loitering and doing nothing productive.
- Peer education has been effective, not only in reaching the youth, but also in reaching the community leaders and parents.
- There were too many objectives and activities to be undertaken in the program for it to be effective. However, it was very difficult to measure whether the program was having a positive impact.

The program has had a positive impact on the youth and the community they live in. Participating schools mentioned that the program had benefited them as there were signs of more responsible behavior from the children who had joined the clubs.

**Head teacher**

It is not clear what changes have been made to the program as a consequence of these findings.

**1999**

MASO undertook an evaluation in 1999 in collaboration with the Gweru multisectoral AIDS team, with support from UNICEF. The study looked at two main things:

- youths' impressions of the program and of sex education generally, and
- the impact of the program on youths' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior toward sex, including what they did in their spare time and where they went for information about sex.

The study covered both rural and urban areas and took the form of focus group discussions and self-administered questionnaires. A total of 241 female and 234 male youths participated.

The study found that many factors that put youth at risk were still there. For example, there was high unemployment in both rural and urban areas. The majority of the young people had a boyfriend or girlfriend: Even though they said they did not believe in sex before marriage, there was an indication that many of them were practicing unsafe sex and that condoms were not promoted within the society. A general lack of communication, particularly between different generations, probably added to the many misconceptions the youth still had. However, because no baseline data were available from before the program implementation, it is difficult to judge whether the program has improved the situation.

As a result of this evaluation, the program was enhanced further to serve the needs of the youth and community. See appendix 5 to this chapter for more details.

### UNAIDS Benchmarks

	Benchmark	Attainment	Comments
1	Recognizes the child/youth as a learner who already knows, feels, and can do in relation to healthy development and HIV/AIDS-related prevention.	✓	The youth are involved in most program activities, from planning to material development, and in performances such as drama and songs.
2	Focuses on risks that are most common to the learning group and that responses are appropriate and targeted to the age group.	✓	UNICEF undertook a needs assessment that MASO took into account when designing the program. The materials produced in the program are not age specific.
3	Includes not only knowledge but also attitudes and skills needed for prevention.	✓	Besides teaching youth about HIV/AIDS, the program also involves them in income-generating activities that can empower them economically and reduce their risk of infection. The youth are encouraged to discuss what changes are necessary if they are to avoid risky behavior.
4	Understands the impact of relationships on behavior change and reinforces positive social values.	✓	The program takes into consideration the issue of peer pressure and uses peer education to promote behavior change.
5	Is based on analysis of learners' needs and a broader situation assessment.	Partially fulfilled	An evaluation was conducted soon after the program was initiated to examine the extent to which the needs of youth are taken into consideration. The program takes into account that poverty is often the cause of vulnerability. The income-generating activities are set up to prevent this.



	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Attainment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>6</b>	Has training and continuous support of teachers and other service providers.	✓	All staff involved in the program are trained in managing clubs, peer education, and counseling. Refresher courses are held quarterly. MASO staff visit the project sites and schools from time to time to offer support.
<b>7</b>	Uses multiple and participatory learning activities and strategies.	✓	Participatory learning techniques – such as drama, songs, dance, poems, and role of plays – are used in the program.
<b>8</b>	Involves the wider community.	✓	The program involves the wider community in planning and implementation. This has been done through sensitization and planning workshops.
<b>9</b>	Ensures sequence, progression, and continuity of messages.	Partially fulfilled	The way the training manuals are designed ensures that there is continuity of messages. There is no age-specific targeting of materials.
<b>10</b>	Is placed in an appropriate context in the school curriculum.	Not applicable	There is a link between the school curriculum and what is taught in the Youth Alive Initiative Clubs, although more topics are covered in the clubs.
<b>11</b>	Lasts a sufficient time to meet program goals and objectives.	✓	The program runs for 10 years, which may be sufficient time to meet program objectives. However, because of youth mobility, some may leave the area before acquiring the necessary skills for behavior change.
<b>12</b>	Is coordinated with a wider school health promotion program.	Not applicable	The program is school based. However, besides lessons on life skills and HIV/AIDS, there are no lessons that focus on health. The program does not regularly involve itself with local clinics or other health-related institutions, but youth both in and out of school collect some leaflets from clinics on HIV/AIDS and STDs.
<b>13</b>	Contains factually correct and consistent messages.	✓	The materials that have been produced by MASO have been edited by experts from the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture to ensure that they contain correct messages.

	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Attainment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>14</b>	Has established political support through intense advocacy to overcome barriers and go to scale.	✓	Advocacy meetings are continually being held with political leaders. The government is supporting the program through the National AIDS Trust Fund from the National AIDS Council.
<b>15</b>	Portrays human sexuality as a healthy and normal part of life, and is not derogatory against gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.	Partially fulfilled	The program acknowledges that sexuality is a normal way of life.
<b>16</b>	Includes monitoring and evaluation.	✓	The program places importance on monitoring and evaluation. Monthly and quarterly meetings are held to review the progress of the program.

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## **PART D: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Organizations and Contacts**

MASO was formed as a volunteer organization in 1991 by citizens of the city of Gweru in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe who were concerned about the growing HIV/AIDS crisis. The organization seeks to provide emotional, physical, and spiritual support for persons living with AIDS (PWAs) and their families and friends. To prevent the spread of HIV infection, it also provides support and guidance for those who feel they are at risk.

More information on MASO and its activities can be obtained from

Director  
 MASO  
 30B 7th St.  
 P.O. Box 880  
 Gweru, Zimbabwe  
 Telephone: 263-54-21029 or 263-54-21937  
 Fax: 263-54-25237  
 E-mail: maso@adtech.co.zw

## Contributors to the Report

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We appreciate the help of the following people in providing much of the information in this report:

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Mr. Michael Matimura — Program officer, MASO  
Sr. Bhebhe — Youth leader, Midlands State University  
Victor Mundara — Peer educator  
Beatrice Mwale — Peer educator  
Fortunate Chinanga — Peer educator  
Tobias Gushura — Peer educator

## Available Materials

For information on how to obtain these materials, please see color insert in this report.

*The Counselling Training Manual for Schools*  
(order number: MASO01)

*Participatory Approaches to Community Development: A Trainer's User Guide*  
(order number: MASO02)

“Peer Education Training: Timetable”  
(order number: MASO03)

“Module 1A: Communication”  
(order number: MASO04)

“Module 1B: Effective Communication”  
(order number: MASO05)

“Module 3: Facts About HIV/AIDS”  
(order number: MASO06)

“Module 4: Facts About STDs:  
(order number: MASO07)

“Evaluation Report”  
(order number: MASO08)

“Orphans Sensitization Workshop; Program Timetable”  
(order number: MASO09)

“School Heads Sensitization Workshop; Program Timetable”  
(order number: MASO10)

“Annual Report 1998”  
(order number: MASO11)

“AIDS Is Our Problem”  
(order number: MASO12)

“Orphan Care Program”  
(order number: MASO13)

“Enrolment Certificate”  
(order number: MASO14)

Poster: “Healthy Eating in the Midst of HIV/AIDS, and Some Suggestions”  
(order number: MASO15)

Poster: “Smart Girls”  
(order number: MASO16)

Poster: “Smart Boys”  
(order number: MASO17)

Poster: “Girls and Boys and AIDS”  
(order number: MASO18)

***The following videos are also available directly from MASO (see contact details in part D):***

*More Time*: Feature film produced by Media for Development (MFD) Trust, Harare, about a teenager whose life spins out of control: Thandi has to learn that playing with love may mean playing with her life. For copies, contact Media for Development, [mfdadmin@mango.zw](mailto:mfdadmin@mango.zw) or [www.samara.co.zw/mfd](http://www.samara.co.zw/mfd).

*Everyone’s Child*: The message is that “everyone can do something to support orphaned or stressed children, and can do it well. We have the resources. The problems people experience can be overcome — in particular, the physical and emotional needs of children.” (MFD, Harare)

*Neria*: A young woman loses her husband, and her brother-in-law invokes tradition to inherit all of her possessions yet makes no attempt to care for his late brother’s family. When he tries to take the children as well, Neria fights back and seeks justice. (MFD, Harare)

*The Silent Epidemic*: STI/AIDS documentary produced in Uganda.

*Time to Care: The Dilemma*: (Uganda: Ministry of Health/USAID). Television drama, produced by the Ugandan Ministry of Health and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), about the consequences of a married man bringing an STD into his family after a fling with an old girlfriend.

*Time to Care: Face It*: In the sequel to *Time to Care: The Dilemma*, the characters present mixed reactions to a newly introduced counseling and testing service in the community.

*Side-by-Side: Women and AIDS in Zimbabwe*: (Vision Films/Harvey McKinnon. English and Ndebele Versions). This short film, produced by Vision Films/Harvey McKinnon in both English and Ndebele versions, follows two women — a social worker and a theater director — as each uses her skills in mobilizing the community to overcome the effects of AIDS.

*Karate Kids*: A cartoon aimed at city kids, especially those living on the streets. Karare says, “Anyone can get AIDS. So we must protect ourselves and protect our friends.” Produced by the National Film Board of Canada and Street Kids International, it can be ordered from [nfbkids@nfb.ca](mailto:nfbkids@nfb.ca).

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## APPENDIX 1. MASA PROGRAM: STAFF ROLES

### Main Program Staff Roles

#### Program Officer

- Coordinates the program at district level;
- provides technical support to youth leaders in running the Youth Alive Initiative Clubs;
- trains school heads, youth leaders, and Youth Alive Initiative Club members in counseling;
- trains Youth Alive Initiative Club members as peer educators;
- conducts refresher courses for youth leaders and club members;
- provides support to the out-of-school youth program projects; and
- initiates networking activities with other NGOs.

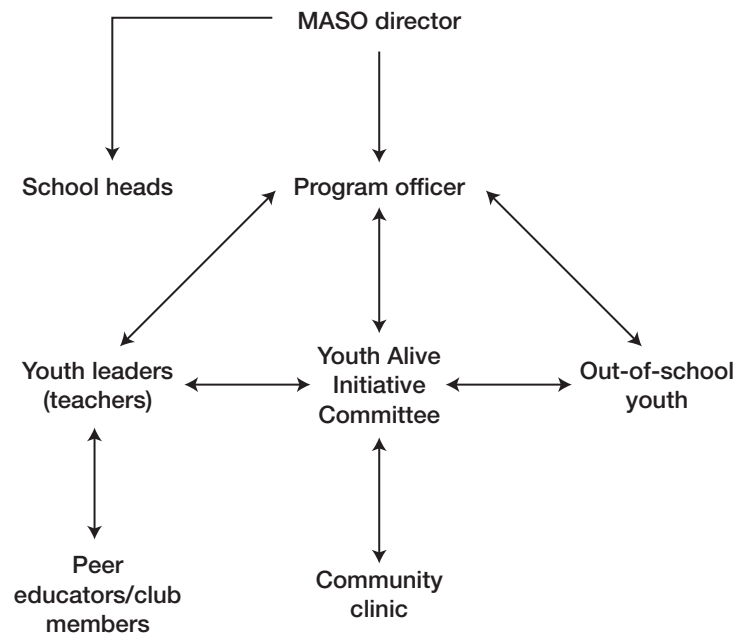
#### Youth Leaders

- Train Youth Alive Initiative Club members as peer educators,
- ensure that club members meet weekly,
- provide counseling to club members and other youth, and
- participate in the parent, youth, and youth leader committee activities.

**Peer Educators**

- Are responsible for the day-to-day running of the clubs,
- provide peer education sessions to other youth,
- function as role models for peers, and
- carry out outreach activities.

**NGOs: Regional and District Education Offices**



*Figure A.1. Staff Structure*

## APPENDIX 2. STAFF DATA

	Number of Staff	Position/title	Gender
Full-time and paid	1	Project officer	Male
Volunteer staff, other than peer educators (not receiving allowances/incentives)	200 teachers 140 parents	Youth leaders	50% female and 50% male
Volunteer peer educators (not receiving allowances/incentives)	30	Peer educators	20 male and 10 female

## APPENDIX 3. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

	Urban youth (%)	Rural youth (%)
Unemployed	62	78
Have a boyfriend/girlfriend	63	63
Do not believe in sex before marriage	74	69
Believe in sex on mutual agreement	16	16
Have felt peer pressure to have sex	44	21
Cannot identify someone who is HIV+	56	73
Have seen someone with AIDS	67	54
Can list three safe sex choices	65	65

## APPENDIX 4. PROGRAM FINANCES

A breakdown of expenditures for 2001 shows that of the US\$143,784 given to the program (NORAD, US\$90,500, National AIDS Council, US\$9,985.50; UNICEF, US\$10,533.71; and the rest from MASO program funds), the money was spent as follows:

<b>Spent on</b>	<b>Amount (US\$)</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>
AIDS literature and publications	49,212.67	34
Training expenses	23,954.18	17
Salaries	32,969.96	23
Vehicles	13,260.73	9
Other expenses	24,386.55	17



## APPENDIX 5. EVALUATION RESULTS

### Out-of-School Program

- **Relevance:** The youth program was found to be relevant because the youth targeted would otherwise be idle if there were no income-generating projects and therefore would be at a very high risk of HIV infection. Also, the rapid change in culture, loss of cultural values, experiments in drugs and alcohol, and peer pressure make fertile ground for the MASO program.
- **Efficiency:** The training of trainers approach, targeting peer educators, community leaders, and parents, used in the program has given leverage and mileage to the resources. More people are reached. The program also uses existing political and social structures, such as nursing officers, councillors, chiefs, church leaders, village community workers, and other government structure.
- **Effectiveness:** It was found that there was consistency between objectives, strategies, inputs, and outputs. The program design has been formulated from the identified needs. It was found, however, that there were too many objectives and activities of the program. From focus discussions with parents and youth, it was evident that the program had a positive impact. However, the evaluation noted that impact was not easily measurable.
- **Sustainability:** The evaluation concluded that the program had laid some foundation for future sustainability through the effective use of community mobilization, participation, and community ownership strategies. The use of local peer educators and other local and government structures has helped the program to anchor firmer roots within the community. Financially, the program was not sound, because most costs were funded by donors.

### In-school program

- **Relevance:** The prime objective of “catching the youth before they catch AIDS” was found to be relevant in reducing HIV/AIDS among school-going youth. Students become sexually active as early as 10 years old. The MASO program was found to be more dynamic than the ministry’s sex education curriculum. This was largely due to the participatory nature of the strategies through such activities as anthems, poems, drama, plays, and competitions.
- **Efficiency:** This program has managed to tap the existing school structure and requires minimal resources, motivation, and supervision.
- **Effectiveness:** The program began well and has gathered momentum. The teachers and parents at participating schools mentioned that they had benefited because there were signs of more responsible behavior from the youth who had joined the clubs.
- **Sustainability:** The program activities tapped into an existing school structure and were satisfactorily run with minimal supervision from MASO. Ownership of the program was rooted in the beneficiaries, and indications were that they were involved in planning the program activities.

