

Presentation delivered during the Second Technical Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS/STI

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How can young people contribute to the implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan?



Background and Policy Position

- Globally, half of those infected with HIV are young people between the ages of 15 and 24.
- Evidence-based health promotion and HIV/STI prevention programmes **FOR AND WITH** members of affected groups [including youth...and other relevant populations] whose quality of life can be improved by reducing vulnerability and eliminating risk.



"Reduction of Vulnerability and Eliminating Risk"



- Design and implementation of targeted programmes for youth in HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support, e.g availability of "youth friendly" sexual and reproductive health services, complimented by confidential counselling and a structured referral system, where relevant.
- Age-appropriate sexuality education (inclusive of HIV/AIDS/STIs) in a context of life skills building and delivered through a variety of dynamic and interactive, multi-cultural, multi-media approaches.



"FOR AND WITH"

Opportunities for youth participation in the implementation of CLAs:

- CLA2.2: Planning Interventions for vulnerable groups:

i. Engage youth as **PARTNERS** not just **BENEFICIARIES**

e,g: Prevention media campaigns designed by and/or in consultation with adolescents and youth (from concept to creation) produced and featuring the "faces" voices and words of young persons.



"FOR AND WITH"

Opportunities for youth participation in the implementation of CLAs:

- CLA3.4: Ensuring services for specific vulnerable groups identified in the national health sector strategy.
 - i. Capitalize on existing peer-peer education and support the development of new youth-led initiatives (public, faith and community based programmes) that promote sustainable activities in HIV/AIDS prevention and management. Youth ACTION is POWERFUL!



In Closing...

Understanding our stakeholders:

- “Youth” are a dynamic, heterogeneous group, and should be targeted and engaged at multiple levels;
- Health promotion strategies that target adults are not wholly transferable to adolescents and youth.

