

YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DIALOGUE AND PROGRAMMING

GOOD PRACTICES FROM EASTERN
EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



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In order to document the wealth of experience accumulated in the area of youth-related work in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region, UNFPA's Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECARO) identified experiences, lessons learned and good practices related to youth participation in programme and policy dialogue. This was the first initiative of its kind led by EECARO. The report was prepared by Aynabat Ananmuhamedova, Special Assistant to the Director of UNFPA's Division for Oversight Services, who undertook a detail assignment with EECARO for the purpose of developing this document. Karen Daduryan, Regional Team Coordinator, and Marija Vasileva-Blazev, Youth Programme Specialist, coordinated the process and provided contributions. UNFPA country office staff from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Turkey, and in particular Natalia Cojohari, Sara Cekalic, Fatma Hacioglu, Tamar Khomasuridze,

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

HIV/AIDS

Human Immunodeficiency Virus/
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

IPPF

International Planned
Parenthood Federation

RO

Regional Office

SRH

Sexual and Reproductive Health

SRHR

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

UNCRC

United Nations Convention on the Rights
of the Child

UNFPA

United Nations Population Fund

UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund

WHO

World Health Organization

NGO

Nongovernmental organizations

YAP

Youth Advisory Panel

YFS

Youth-friendly Services

COAR

UNFPA Country Office Annual Report

ICPD PoA

Programme of Action of the
International Conference on
Population and Development

EECA

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

EECARO

Regional Office in Eastern Europe and
Central Asia

RHIYC

Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth
in the South Caucasus

Y-PEER

Youth Peer Education Network

CPAPs

Country Programme Action Plans

AWPs

Annual Workplans

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



THIS REPORT WAS COMMISSIONED BY THE UNFPA REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA (EECARO) TO PRESENT GOOD PRACTICES FROM UNFPA ON THE INVOLVEMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN PROGRAMMING AND POLICY DIALOGUE, ADVOCACY EFFORTS AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES IN THE REGION.

The objective was to collect evidence demonstrating that involving young people in programming can produce stronger programme results, including improvements in knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors; and that policies affecting youth are stronger and more targeted when youth are consulted. The review includes examples, lessons learned and good practices that focus on UNFPA-supported youth programme activities during 2009-2011.

The methodology included a preliminary desk review of UNFPA programme documents and related evaluation and study reports; a web-based survey to collect detailed information about youth programme interventions, primarily focused on involvement of youth in policy-making and programming; and relevant surveys and interviews with stakeholders.

The assessment identified six good practices from Moldova (two cases),

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Turkey and Kyrgyzstan, presented here with conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. This should provide information to UNFPA and other organizations in the EECA region to develop evidence-based policy advocacy for youth-focused initiatives; contribute to institutional memory and organizational learning; and guide future programming and policy dialogue on youth development issues.

The report found insufficient documentation of past work on youth-focused activities in UNFPA country offices, national institutions and NGOs, and Y-PEER networks. Information related to programme planning, needs assessment, progress reports, and monitoring and evaluation would have been useful. Such information could provide a context for better analysis of the relevance, effectiveness and impact of new youth programmes. UNFPA country offices should improve their documentation of the development and implementation of youth-focused initiatives. This could include strategies used to implement the programme or project, budget planning and provisions, important events and internal discussions during implementation, as well as feedback from implementing partners and youth participants. (See recommendation 1.)

The review also identified a weak connection between the outcomes of youth-focused activities and those of the country programme, specifically the Country Programme Action Plans and Annual Work Plans. This significantly hinders the measurement of long-term outcomes of youth-focused activities. The youth component of programmes tends to be treated as a cross-cutting issue, integrated in sexual and reproductive health or population development programme components. This issue is closely connected to the overall quality of programme design, the monitoring and evaluation framework, and youth-specific programme indicators, targets and baselines. UNFPA country offices should address the need for a robust results framework specific to the objectives of youth programming, with the goal of setting clear baselines and targets. Such a framework would ensure strong positioning of youth issues within the UNFPA programme. The EECA regional office will provide strategic direction to the country offices for developing such a results framework, managing the quality assurance process and monitoring implementation. (See recommendation 2.)

The assessment concluded that youth programming based on participation of youth in all aspects of youth development is challenging. These programmes need to be flexible, evidence-based, context-driven, culturally appropriate and addressed at both the policy and service-delivery level. They should consider the needs of the most underserved youth population groups and promote accountability mechanisms at national and sub-national levels. All country programmes in the EECA region included interventions for young people and were delivered with different levels of success. The common barriers identified were cultural and religious factors as well as insufficient development capacity and accountability mechanisms, which in many instances led country offices to seek new programme approaches. While UNFPA support is noted in areas of policy formulation, more emphasis is needed on policy implementation. Engaging youth and



implementing youth policies require institutional capacity development, stronger inter-sectorial coordination, and advocacy for a supportive environment for young people. This includes the leveraging of public funds for policy implementation. Another challenge for youth-focused programming is sustaining the results, which requires ongoing UNFPA support for consolidation of policies and strengthening of national and sub-national capacities beyond a programme cycle.

UNFPA country offices are encouraged to strengthen youth programming by drawing on past experiences and taking advantage of existing expertise within the organizations, agencies and institutions already dealing with youth development. This will help identify

possible areas of cooperation. Integrated and joint programming should be explored, particularly in countries with limited funds, such as middle-income “C” category countries. The identification and dissemination of good programming models across country offices, including through south-south collaboration, will enhance overall programme effectiveness. (See recommendation 3.)

Finally, UNFPA country offices are advised to identify and document successful implementation modalities, including specific approaches, management tools and advocacy strategies that have led to more meaningful youth participation in policy dialogue and programming. (See recommendation 4.)

“YOUTH PROGRAMMING NEEDS TO BE FLEXIBLE, EVIDENCE-BASED, CONTEXT-DRIVEN, CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE AND ADDRESSED AT BOTH THE POLICY AND SERVICE-DELIVERY LEVEL.”

INTRODUCTION



THE SIX CASE STUDIES BELOW PRESENT GOOD PRACTICES ON THE PART OF UNFPA TO GET YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED IN PROGRAMMING AND POLICY DIALOGUE IN THE EECA REGION. IT IS HOPED THAT THE REVIEW WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF FURTHER EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY ADVOCACY ON YOUTH-FOCUSED INITIATIVES AND GUIDE FUTURE PROGRAMMING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT.

OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

The reviewers set out to collect evidence demonstrating that involving young people in programmes can produce stronger programme results and that policies affecting youth are stronger when youth are consulted. The review focused on UNFPA-supported youth programme activities in the 20 countries of the EECA region during 2009-2011.

The methodology included a preliminary desk review, survey and interviews. The preliminary desk review was conducted to identify youth-focused programme interventions from the relevant

programme documents produced by the UNFPA country offices in 2010-2011 as well as other available case studies and evaluation reports. (See Annex 4.) The practices identified through the desk review were further examined against the key criteria recommended by the *UNFPA Guidance on Sharing Good Practices in Programming*, such as relevance, innovation and impact. Two additional criteria – availability of documents and effectiveness – were added to the assessment grid to test whether the reported practice was based on evidence of effectiveness; the quality of the planning process against clearly defined objectives; and the extent to which implementation facilitated achievement of intended results. Annex 2 provides details on the assessment criteria and the questionnaires.

The web-based survey was launched to collect detailed information about youth programme interventions. It was primarily focused on involvement of youth in the policymaking process and programming. The collected data was consolidated, and the overall results guided the selection of five countries for further interviews. The interviews were conducted in each country with three different groups of stakeholders: UNFPA programme staff working on youth-focused programming; representatives of youth organizations involved in the good practices reported in the survey; and national institutions and civil society organizations involved in the youth programmes. Based on research and findings, six good practices from Moldova (two examples), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Turkey and

Kyrgyzstan were identified. They are presented in this report, together with conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.

A. YOUTH PARTICIPATION: CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS¹

The term youth participation, used interchangeably with youth involvement, adolescent participation and children's participation, is defined as follows: "Involving youth in responsible, challenging action that meets genuine needs, with opportunity for planning and/or decision making affecting others, in an activity whose impact or consequences extends to others – outside or beyond the youth participants themselves." (U.S. National Commission on Resources for Youth). In the past decade youth development programming shifted from treating youth as a problem to considering them as resources and competent members of society. It was thought that young people should be given an opportunity to contribute to the development and implementation of programmes designed for their benefit. Participation of youth and adolescents in decision-making was also recognized as a basic human right.

In recent years, the involvement of youth has expanded from participation in peer education, youth advisory boards and youth focus groups to integration of youth into programming, including advocacy, governance, policy development and evaluation. Many scientific studies have recognized the benefits and greater impact that youth can bring to a project. The evidence collected through evaluation of youth

programmes has demonstrated that involving youth not only ensures a rights-based approach to young people, but can also lead to stronger outcomes. In the sexual and reproductive health fields, increased youth participation has helped to improve knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors. The benefits of youth participation, in general, have included: better relevance and effectiveness of programmes; greater sense of ownership of programmes; increased leadership capacity of young people; new and synergistic approaches stemming from adult-youth partnerships; greater credibility of youth in leading implementation; improved understanding of young people's perspectives and values; exchange of contributions; mutual recognition of capabilities and experiences of youth and adults; and mutual recognition of one another as allies. Yet involving youth can be a challenging endeavor requiring a greater understanding of youth and adult viewpoints, as well as what constitutes true and meaningful youth participation.

Meaningful youth participation must be based on a clear understanding of different kinds and levels of youth participation. In the *Ladder of Youth Voice*, developed by Roger Hart, a sociologist who worked for UNICEF, youth participation is described as a ladder. At the bottom are manipulation and tokenism, which do not constitute real participation. At higher levels, young people initiate, direct and share decision making with adults. Meaningful youth participation is notable for two important characteristics: Young people must be given responsibility and decision-making power. Second, partnerships between youth and adults should be an equitable working relationship based on the perspectives and skills of youth and the experience and wisdom of adults. Each party must have an opportunity to make suggestions and decisions. Achieving this balance can be challenging in various political, cultural and geographical settings.

Other challenges that may impede meaningful youth participation include high turnover rates among youth; the extra costs of youth involvement, including training, transportation, equipment, space and materials; preferences for different management styles; differences in types of schedules and communication styles; and failure of institutions to plan adequately for organizational capacity to accommodate both adults and youth.

The Youth Participation Guide: Assessment, Planning, and Implementation, published by Family Health International (FHI) in 2008, provides a deeper analysis of the subject and a broad outline of the challenges, benefits and opportunities.

1. UNFPA follows UN definitions for different groups of young people: adolescents (10-19 years old, with early adolescence defined as ages 10-14 and late adolescence ages 15-19), youth (15-24 years old) and young people (10-24 years old).





B. UNFPA APPROACH TO YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH

Adolescent and youth development and health were identified as critical development agendas by the Commission on Population and Development in its Resolution 2012/1 on adolescents and youth, dated 27 April 2012². The resolution calls upon countries to ensure that health care programmes and approaches do not constrain the access of adolescents to appropriate services and information; safeguard their rights to privacy, confidentiality, respect and informed choice; respect cultural values and religious beliefs; and provide legal, regulatory and social support to reproductive health information and care. The resolution urges governments to create comprehensive and evidence-based educational opportunities for young people on sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, and gender equality. It requests governments' commitment to pay particular attention to adolescents, girls and young people living with HIV, and other marginalized and vulnerable young people.

UNFPA has been working on youth issues since the 1990s. The UNFPA Strategic Plan 2008-2011, extended to 2013, provides strategic direction for all UNFPA programmes and identifies women's reproductive health and adolescents and youth as two key deliverables. As regards the latter, the UNFPA's programme response focuses on strengthening national capacity for incorporating young people's needs into national development plans and policies and young people's participation in policy dialogue and programming (outcome 1) and ensuring access to and utilization of quality health services (HIV and STI prevention, SRH) and sexuality education for young people, including marginalized population groups (outcomes 4 and 6)³. UNFPA's new strategic focus builds on its long-term expertise in demography and sexual and reproductive health and rights and its strong capacity for policy advocacy and communications. In adolescent and youth policies and programs, UNFPA works in partnership with other organizations of the UN system, such

as ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UN Habitat, UNICEF, UNAIDS, WHO, UN Women, UN Economic Commissions and the World Bank.

UNFPA's efforts are further guided by the Adolescent and Youth Strategy, which outlines policy and programme strategic priorities through its five prongs: 1) enabling evidence-based advocacy for comprehensive policy and programme development, investment and implementation; 2) promoting comprehensive sexuality education; 3) building capacity for SRH service delivery including HIV prevention, treatment and care; 4) taking bold initiatives to reach marginalized and disadvantaged adolescents and youth, especially girls; and 5) promoting youth leadership and participation.

The 2011 Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) Regional Conference, *Investing in Youth: Path to Accelerated Development*⁴, organized and hosted by the UNFPA regional office in Istanbul, recognized that challenges

for engagement and representation of youth in national development programmes and policy formulation still exists. In a number of countries in the region, poor economic growth constrains young people from entering the workforce. This results in average regional unemployment rates for youth being among the highest in the world. Young women and ethnic minorities are among the most vulnerable groups suffering from unemployment and under-representation in society and the economy, including within education systems.

After decades of economic struggle, the region still has rising illiteracy rates and an overall reduction in school enrollment, especially among girls. This, in turn, affects the health status of young people, who are compromised by insufficient awareness of healthy SRH behaviors, increased risk-taking coupled with inadequate health services, and poor access to youth-friendly preventive and curative services. Incidence of HIV in the region is the fastest-growing in the world, driven largely by increases in injectable drug use and transactional sex, particularly among youth. Sexual transmission of HIV remains an increasing concern throughout the region, as is the rising incidence of sexually transmitted infections. While abortion and contraception may be widely available to adults, access to services in appropriate settings for youth is highly limited⁵.

Commitment to youth development and legal protections to address young people's needs vary widely across the region. Policy formulation processes are constrained by political, cultural and religious factors and resource limitations. Lack of age- and sex-disaggregated data, as well as inadequate evaluation of the impact of youth policies and programmes, have significantly limited the analysis, development and adaptation of youth-focused policies. To address this challenge, governments have been asked to establish national, regional and global partnerships on youth issues to ensure the exchange

of best practices and effective implementation of youth policies and programmes.

UNFPA, in partnership with other international organizations, provides ongoing support to national governments and civil society organizations in developing specific, evidence-based youth policies and youth development programmes in many countries of the region. The participation of youth in policy dialogue and programming is seen as critical for the quality of policies and the future

generation of leadership. Within the region, the participation of youth varied considerably from country to country depending on historical, political and cultural factors, and depending on the role of youth in recent political transitions. The evidence from previous UNFPA programmes in the region suggests that while involvement of youth in programme formulation and policy-making processes is increasing, there remains a significant risk that youth participation is approached as nominal, tokenistic or manipulative, rather than meaningful and productive.

“WHILE INVOLVEMENT OF YOUTH IN PROGRAMME FORMULATION AND POLICY-MAKING PROCESSES IS INCREASING, THERE REMAINS A SIGNIFICANT RISK THAT YOUTH PARTICIPATION IS APPROACHED AS NOMINAL, TOKENISTIC OR MANIPULATIVE, RATHER THAN MEANINGFUL AND PRODUCTIVE.”

2. The full text of the resolution is available at: <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=E/2012/25&Lang=E>

3. Strategic Plan - Midterm review: Development Results Framework, INDICATORS METADATA version of 15 August 2011

4. Conference outcome document is available at: <http://eeca.unfpa.org/webdav/site/eeca/shared/Regional%20Youth%20Conference%20Concluding%20Document%20-%20English.doc>

5. The information reviewed included data provided by recent Human Development Reports of relevant countries.



GOOD PRACTICES
FROM THE EECA REGION

COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

GEORGIA EXPERIENCE

FROM PARTNERING WITH YOUTH TO YOUTH LEADERSHIP



THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

Georgia is a country in the Caucasus region, bounded to the west by the Black Sea, to the north by Russia, to the south by Turkey and Armenia, and to the southeast by Azerbaijan. As with many post-Soviet countries, after independence in 1991 Georgia suffered for most of the 1990s from poverty, economic and social disparities, and political difficulties. The country has been further weakened by civil war and armed conflicts, resulting in the deterioration of the socio-economic situation and displacement of about 300,000 people. The government that came to power after the Rose Revolution in 2003 has introduced democratic and economic reforms.

YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS

According to 2006 Population Reference Bureau data, young people aged 10-24 constituted about 24 percent of the total population in Georgia. Recent data provided by the National Statistics Office of Georgia were similar: young people aged 10-24 constituted 20.4 percent of the total population in 2012. There are several factors contributing to the decline, which is mostly caused by a low fertility rate and external migration related to economic conditions and security issues. Overall, one in four young people

entering the labor force is unable to find a job. On average, it takes six to eight years for youth to become employed after leaving school. More than a third of young people up to 35 years old reportedly live in poor families⁶. In 2009, UNFPA supported the national Adolescents RH Survey. The survey found that 70 percent of 13 to 19-year-olds had sexual experience. The adolescent birth rate was 4 percent in 2011, which is relatively high compared to other countries in the region. This finding was complemented by data from the Reproductive Health Survey of 2010, which concluded that although the median age of marriage among women remained relatively high, approximately 50 percent of births occurred in women below the age of 25. According to the Women's Reproductive Health Survey in 1999-2000, there was an average of 29 pregnancy terminations per 1,000 women in the 15-19 age group. This number declined to 10 over 2007-2010, which indicates a positive trend of a decreasing abortion rate for this age group. Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are increasing in Georgia, as is infertility, which places the country among the highest ranking countries of the former Soviet Union in those categories. Furthermore, the Adolescents RH Survey found insufficient awareness and knowledge among adolescents about reproductive health; high frequency of premarital sexual relations among youth; and acknowledgement by adolescents and parents of the need for education concerning issues of reproductive health. It also highlighted the need to develop age-differentiated school programs on RH, which should start in schools at age 7-8 in the form of seminars and conversations. Both compulsory and elective courses should be offered.

The findings of the above-mentioned surveys suggest that attention is needed to the two most urgent SRH problems facing young people today: sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancies. Sexual debut generally begins at an earlier age than in the past, but young people have

inadequate information about safe sex and contraception. Channels for information on SRHR are limited to the media, Internet and peers. Schools do not include this information in the curriculum and health service providers lack skills to counsel young people. Overall, SRH information available for young people is of questionable content and quality. Access to SRH services, including contraceptives for young people, is not supported by the national budget, thus leaving young people without means to protect themselves from unintended pregnancies and STIs, including HIV. Contraceptives are expensive, and there are indications that many young people do not trust the quality or the confidentiality of the limited reproductive health services that are available.

Despite its currently low HIV prevalence, Georgia is considered to be at high risk for an expanding epidemic due to widespread intravenous drug use and population movement between Georgia and neighboring high-prevalence countries such as Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

With support from UNFPA and UNICEF, the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia led the process of Youth Policy Development. The participatory process brought together 140 stakeholders at the First National Conference on Youth Policy to present recommendations to government sector representatives. The results of the conference served as a basis for the youth policy document, which addressed health, participation and citizenship, poverty and social protection, and education, work and mobility. UNFPA has facilitated policy formulation through advice on effective policy interventions. It has also taken the lead in the development of health policy and ensured youth participation in the process. The youth policy document was approved and signed by the government of Georgia in August 2012.

UNFPA STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

UNFPA began its work in Georgia in 1993 and launched its first five-year country programme 13 years later. Its focus has been improvement of reproductive health services and national data collection, including its use and dissemination, as well as cross-cutting issues of gender equality, young people's needs and HIV/AIDS. The current country programme (2011-2015) is mainly focused on provision of technical and operational support to expanding youth-friendly RH services, SRH education and development of a youth policy.

In 2006, UNFPA in Georgia joined a three-year, sub-regional initiative whose action unit was based in Georgia called the Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in the South Caucasus (RHIYC). The objective of the initiative was to improve the reproductive health and rights of the most vulnerable young people in the three South Caucasus countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. It included four main components: improving communications and education about youth SRH for young people; strengthening access to youth-friendly health services and contraceptives; advocacy; and research. The project implementation was grounded in a comprehensive, multifaceted and partnership-based strategic approach.

Within this project, UNFPA Georgia developed a three-tiered strategy aimed at ensuring youth participation in the following components of the project: youth-friendly services, youth-friendly education and communication; and policy dialogue and advocacy to address youth SRHR. This approach emerged as a key factor in strengthening youth participation in UNFPA programming, increasing the capacity of youth in advocacy, and building partnerships.

⁶ National report, *Generations & Gender Survey Georgia II wave, 2009*

STEP 1: INVOLVEMENT OF YOUTH IN EVIDENCE-BASED ADVOCACY FOR YOUTH SRHR.

UNFPA put special emphasis on data collection to be used for development of information and education campaigns on SRH, HIV and AIDS issues. Several studies commissioned by UNFPA resulted in up-to-date information about youth health issues. The data was used for development of peer education methodology and a condoms social marketing project, introduced to increase access to quality SRHR information and products for young people.

Since 2002, UNFPA has facilitated the mobilization of youth and adult groups in a large number of youth awareness-raising activities on RH&R, HIV/AIDS, healthy lifestyles, gender issues and youth-friendly RH services, which were conducted within the framework of the International Year of Youth and 7 Billion Actions campaign in Georgia. UNFPA engaged representatives of the Youth Advisory Panel and youth NGOs in the development of information and education programmes for students in the Georgian summer camp Patrioti (Anaklia). Young people, together with media representatives, organized the annual Journalist and Youth contest on best media production about youth policy. This has increased awareness among

students, civil society and decision makers about the urgent need for the policy. Young people were given an opportunity to contribute and build capacity through youth-led and youth-implemented knowledge-sharing and awareness-raising activities. Similar contests on best media coverage of youth-related topics and youth awareness-raising activities were organized in selected schools and universities.

Young people were further involved in the development of the curriculum for the training of trainers (ToT) for peer educators; they also facilitated some sessions and helped develop youth SRHR curriculum for schools. Trainings were also provided for vulnerable youth and adolescents (street children, IDPs) on HIV prevention, stigma, discrimination, RH&R and gender issues.

Additionally, the youth advisory panel was involved in annual reviews and evaluations of the UNFPA country programme and provided recommendations for annual programming events. Young people participated in the monitoring of youth-friendly RH centers at three universities in Tbilisi.

In 2006-2008 UNFPA involved young activists in organizing advocacy events with the participation of prominent



youth advocates including the first lady of Georgia, Sandra E. Roelofs, as well as representatives of the ICDP and the media, celebrities and winners of the Miss Student Face national competition and the Olympic Games. Young activists participated in organizing town hall meetings to advocate for youth SRH in all regions of Georgia.

UNFPA gave priority to establishing an inter-country collaboration on youth SRHR. In partnership with the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development, it brought together members of the government, civil society, youth organizations and the media from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia for annual youth reproductive health forums and South Caucasus youth festivals held in Georgia to promote healthy lifestyles, youth-adult partnerships, policy dialogue and knowledge sharing. Within the framework of these events, a variety of educational and promotional activities were organized to prioritize issues concerning youth and their health and advocate for increased government commitment. A significant development was the extraordinary Declaration of Commitment on the promotion of Youth SRHR in the South Caucasus, which was elaborated and signed by parliamentarians, representatives of governments, civil society and youth.

STEP 2: BUILDING A NETWORK TO INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO WORK WITH YOUTH AND ADULTS

In its program to support youth-friendly service provision, UNFPA, in addition to building the capacity of medical personnel to deliver those services, has contributed to the establishment of 20 youth-friendly SRH medical and informational centers across the country. Young people actively collaborated with youth-friendly RH centers nationwide as young peer educators, strengthening linkages among youth information and medical centers. Furthermore, youth contributed to several studies and client assessments and monitored the centers' work. The results of these exercises served as the basis for future planning of activities.

Establishment of the national NGO GYDEA (Georgia Youth Development and Education Assistance) by young peer educators, activists and youth advisory panelists, with the support of UNFPA, helped to sustain the efforts and build on the results achieved through past activities. The capacity of the NGO was strengthened by various trainings, especially those focused on project management and development, and on male involvement in advancing gender equality and ending violence against women. GYDEA participated in the Georgia Youth Forum on MDGs and contributed to youth recommendations for achieving MDGs in the country. GYDEA members contributed to a number of activities aimed at raising awareness in key population groups about SRHR issues, including ToT for young peer educators and capacity-building trainings on communication and advocacy skills for newly recruited Y-PEER (Youth Peer Education Network) members. The trained peer educators are currently serving in the areas of SRHR, HIV/AIDS, STIs, drug abuse, and gender and gender-based violence among youth.

In another major outcome, UNFPA-supported inter-country collaboration among youth activists led to exchange trainings, youth fellowship programmes, international summer camps and web-based social networking.

As mentioned in the section above, the summer camps proved to be the most efficient and cost-effective way of delivering appropriate messages on sensitive topics. Over 2006-2011, more than 50,000 young people from different countries have received training on youth SRHR through informal educational sessions conducted by peer educators at summer camps in various regions of Georgia. This innovative approach permitted the inclusion of vulnerable young people from different regions and countries, including those from ethnic minority groups and socially unprotected families.

STEP 3: BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN YOUTH POLICY DIALOGUE

Since 2010, UNFPA has partnered with the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia and UNICEF in the development of a national youth policy. The participatory process brought together around 140 key stakeholders, who met at the First National Conference on Youth Policy to present recommendations to government sector representatives. The results of the conference served as the basis for a draft policy document addressing health, participation and citizenship, poverty and social protection, and education, work and mobility.

UNFPA used this opportunity to engage young peer educators and youth activists in the policy formulation process. As members of the working groups, young people, together with adult experts, participated in consultations and provided advice on effective policy interventions, specifically in the areas of health development and social protection. Young people were also involved in the development of action plans. These led to a comprehensive policy document that reflected the broad spectrum of youth development issues, including youth SRHR, STIs and HIV prevention. The paper was approved by the government in 2012. In another step to include young people in policy dialogue and advocacy, the Georgia Parliament in 2010 created a working group of youth organizations, led by the deputy chairman of Parliament, to review a broad range of policy issues connected with the MDGs, including youth SRHR and HIV prevention. This process was helpful in increasing the leadership capacity of young people, generating new ideas from both adults and youth, and improving understanding of adult and youth perspectives.



RESULTS

The education and communications component of the UNFPA strategy led not only to increased awareness about issues of youth SRHR, but also contributed to building the leadership capacity of young people. The young activists who received training from UNFPA and participated in programming formed a core group of highly committed and motivated activists; this played a critical role in the establishment of Y-PEER, now comprised of more than 550 young people in Georgia. Select members of the network have taken part in regional capacity building events – for example, the Advanced Regional ToT in Peer Education and Civic Engagement – which has further strengthened the organization. In order to expand the network of peer educators, 60 new young people (including IDPs) were trained in 2011 according to UNFPA standards.

The EECA regional office supported UNFPA Georgia's employment of a local youth coordinator for the SRH/HIV/AIDS component. This enhanced the

coordination of project implementation, management and monitoring of youth-targeted activities, including overall coordination of Y-PEER activities, partnerships with youth-friendly RH centers and development of youth policy.

Peer educators played a significant role in popularizing and promoting the youth content of websites and development of web forums. They developed interactive tools and quizzes for the website of RHIYC, which became increasingly popular with more than 15,000 visitors in 2008. Maintaining the site does not require significant funding, making it a cost-effective tool to reach more young people. The Georgia Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) provided ongoing feedback and recommendations during the development of the UNFPA country website for Georgia.

Peer educators, together with adult specialists, participated as trainers, guest speakers and facilitators in many training sessions and educational seminars for youth organized in schools, health care units and communities. Involving young people in information-

sharing and educational activities has created a sense of ownership among Y-PEERs, helped adults and youth better understand and value young people's perspectives and contributions, and created a background for adult-youth partnerships. As of now, there are more than 1,000 trained health care providers; around 2,000 trained teachers, parents and community leaders; as well as 20 youth-friendly medical and information centers.

CHALLENGES

Youth issues have not been considered in Georgian policy development for years. Taking into account the youth-centered programs already underway, UNFPA's advocacy efforts at the policy level will continue, both to keep youth issues a priority and further involve youth in policy dialogue. In 2012, UNFPA continued its support of the development of an action plan addressing issues identified in the youth policy document. Promoting the right of young people to participate at all levels of policy development, implementation and monitoring will facilitate the implementation of such plans.

The Georgia youth-friendly RH service model could be further replicated throughout Georgia to target primarily rural youth in remote and underserved regions. Despite the progress made in the provision of YF RH services, further efforts are needed to ensure broader coverage, adequate funding and institutionalization. In this regard, more balanced distribution of peer educators all over the country is needed to empower young people from all regions to exercise their right to quality RH and STI and HIV-prevention services. Based on the successes of the past six years, UNFPA anticipates that the Georgian model of international summer camps could be used as a means to involve and strengthen Y-PEER networking both at the local and global level. However, extra efforts are needed to address the issues of limited human resources and turnover of peers due to the demands of education and employment. More emphasis is needed on monitoring and evaluating the national network and using and sharing lessons learned and good practices among the networks of different countries.

As web-based information-sharing and education about youth SRH has developed in Georgia, many such sites have become very popular with users. However, the content, visibility and functioning of the sites, as well as their alignment with global networks, require better management and quality control.

Another challenging area of youth participation in policy dialogue and programming is the lack of monitoring and evaluation. In many UNFPA country programmes, the youth component is treated as a cross-cutting issue in population and development or reproductive health programme activities. Therefore, youth-focused programming can't be easily measured. The current assessment has revealed that it's not possible to state with certainty the direct and indirect costs of youth-focused interventions and their impact. Although UNFPA involves youth in annual programme reviews and evaluations, a lack of appropriate documentation of monitoring and evaluation activities limits the proper assessment of the effectiveness of youth interventions.

LESSONS LEARNED

Judging by the successes of more than six years, it is anticipated that the Y-PEER network shall be used as a means to involve young people at the local and global level. Involving young people in every stage of the programming (planning, implementation and evaluation) increased their sense of ownership of the results and motivated them to engage more actively.

Further advocacy efforts shall be directed at expanding and strengthening the network of peer educators. Goals include a more balanced distribution of peer educators all over the country and better engagement with vulnerable and out-of-reach groups of youth, including those most at risk. The experience of working with vulnerable population groups has underscored the need for the special skills of peer educators, focal points and coordinators, extra resources and the involvement of individuals from such underserved groups to ensure representativeness and sustainability.



“AS OF NOW, THERE ARE MORE THAN 1,000 TRAINED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS; AROUND 2,000 TRAINED TEACHERS, PARENTS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS; AS WELL AS 20 YOUTH-FRIENDLY MEDICAL AND INFORMATION CENTERS.”

THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

Turkey is a large, middle-income country located in southeastern Europe and southwestern Asia, bordering the Black Sea between Bulgaria and Georgia, and bordering the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea between Greece and Syria. The country is recognized as the sixth largest economy in Europe and the 16th in the world. Turkey is already a member of the EU Customs Union and is negotiating for full EU membership. With its large, young and well-educated population of approximately 77 million, it is considered one of the most dynamic and attractive markets for world investors, with opportunities in a wide variety of sectors.

Despite these positive trends, there remains a gap in social policies and services, with inequalities in development opportunities for all population groups. The 2011 Human Development Report presented Turkey's Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2011 as 0.699, which places the country in the high human development category, yet below the average HDI for countries of the high category group and the countries of Eastern

Europe and Central Asia. Turkey has a Gender Inequality Index of 0.443, which ranks the country as 77th out of 146 countries. This reflects the development inequality between men and women in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and economic activity. In Turkey, only 9.1 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and 27.1 percent of adult women have reached a secondary or higher level of education compared to 46.7 percent of their male counterparts. For every 100,000 live births, 23 women die from pregnancy-related causes and the adolescent fertility rate is 39.2 births per 1,000 live births. Female participation in the labor market is 24 percent compared to 69.6 for men.

In a country with such a large and rapidly growing young population (26 percent), youth obviously have the potential to play a vital role. However, the development of this potential is challenged by the lack of an adequate institutional and policy framework that guarantees opportunities for young people in quality, accessible education, health, employment and participation in civil society.



YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS

Today, young people in Turkey face the challenge of building their capabilities and making the right choices with regard to their sexual and reproductive health. Data from the national Youth SRH Survey indicate that the level of young people's knowledge about SRH is low and leads to risky behaviors. Young people have limited access to accurate information on sexual and reproductive health, health risks and available services. The current school curriculum provides minimum information about SRH. Only one in 10 young people has accurate information about HIV/AIDS; two-thirds of young people who have heard of HIV/AIDS said they would feel uncomfortable being in the same room with a person who was HIV-positive; and almost every young person stated a need for basic information and health services related to SRH.

GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Some aspects of youth development needs are addressed in the current national policy framework. The government has recently initiated changes in some educational areas and institutions. It has established local youth councils and programmes to support disadvantaged groups such as disabled youth and conducted some sport and exchange programmes within EU initiatives. However, the need for a better defined national youth policy and stronger national support for young people remains inadequately addressed.

TURKEY EXPERIENCE

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES FOR
PROMOTING YOUTH SEXUAL AND
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

UNFPA STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Previous efforts aimed at the education system show that SRH education can be integrated in school curricula through effective advocacy only. Activities can be successful only if young people themselves demand such change; however, most of them are not aware of or empowered enough to advocate for their SRH rights. With the aim of strengthening youth-adult partnerships and youth leadership, UNFPA in Turkey partnered with the Y-PEER Turkey network to find innovative approaches to promote youth SRHR. The promotion strategy was based on: building capacity of youth leaders to participate meaningfully in the design, production, implementation and utilization of promotional materials and events; and increasing the capacity of young leaders to build partnerships with mass media, celebrities and other influential groups to promote the SRHR of youth.

One of the success stories was the first national youth advocacy campaign, called A Youth Story (AYC), launched in 2007. UNFPA supported this intervention as part of its fourth country programme 2006-2010. The campaign laid the groundwork for further integration of young people into a larger and multi-pronged approach to promote youth SRH issues.

A YOUTH STORY ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN

The Youth Story campaign is a result of a partnership between UNFPA and Youth for Habitat, one of the biggest youth networks in Turkey working for young people's participation in governance at the local level for years. The campaign also ran in association with Levi's, MTV Turkey and other partners. The short-term goal was to create awareness and demand among young people for sexual health education. In the long run the campaign aimed at reaching policy makers and creating a supportive environment for the integration of comprehensive SRH education in school curricula. The campaign included the following components:

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INFORMATION WEBSITE

A virtual setting (www.birgenclikhikayesi.com) was developed to help young people find answers to their private questions, participate in web-based interviews and quizzes, and watch and listen to fun videos, games and music while they are learning about SRH, including STIs, sexuality, gender issues and contraceptives. By 2010, the website was the leading platform for young people to gain quality SRH information, and ask questions and learn about recent activities of the campaign. The website has served as a hub for young women looking for information on reproductive health, pregnancy and safe abortion services.

“THE CAMPAIGN WAS THE FIRST NATIONAL YOUTH SRH ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN IMPLEMENTED THROUGH A TRUE YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIP.”



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

With the participation of young people, A Youth Story was carried out in universities, school fests, sports organizations and youth festivals all over Turkey. Youth leaders from different partner organizations took leading roles in the development and dissemination of leaflets and promotional materials.

ADVOCACY, PEER EDUCATION AND WORKSHOPS FOR YOUTH

Young people from 30 provinces were trained to disseminate information about SRHR among youth. These young people acted as advocates, reaching their peers and policy and decision makers to create awareness of young people's SRHR. They organized street events and university festivals, visited local decision makers and got their pledges to support youth SRHR education in schools in their cities. During 2010, these young people organized several activities in 73 cities under the I WANT TO LEARN campaign, which promoted incorporating comprehensive SRHR education in formal education. They collected thousands of signatures on streets to support sexuality education in schools.

Some remarkable elements made this advocacy unique in Turkey:

- A first: The campaign was the first national youth SRH advocacy campaign implemented through a true youth-adult partnership. Young people were involved from the planning phase, developing content and taking an active role in implementation.
- Led by youth: UNFPA supported the engagement of two youth coordinators to manage activities among the partners and organize festivals and trainings at the local level. Coordinators closely worked with young people to identify activities, review the project and monitor results. Periodic meetings were also organized by the implementing partners to review the project with the young people involved in the campaign. Decisions made in those meetings directly affected activities.
- High-profile publicity: One innovative approach developed by the young people was engaging national celebrities, such as singer Koray Candemir and the popular TV presenter Defne Sarısoy, who became campaign spokespersons for two years.



The celebrities led media activities and were involved in training and field activities to promote the project and mobilize youth interest.

- National outreach: As a result of these efforts, advocacy trainings have been held in more than 50 provinces and seven regions since 2007. In addition to these trainings, workshops on SRHR, gender equality, discrimination and stigmatization, and HIV/AIDS were held for the benefit of all social sectors and decision makers in the provinces.
- Continuity: Three years after its launch, the website was revamped after consultations with young people. Young people were given an opportunity to contribute to the development of the new interface and content through an online survey, which was also developed and managed by young people. Following the consultation, a new, more user-friendly interface was created, with new sections and blogs designed by young people. The website is still up and running.

“ONE INNOVATIVE APPROACH DEVELOPED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE WAS ENGAGING NATIONAL CELEBRITIES AS CAMPAIGN SPOKESPERSONS”

THE MASCULINITY IS AN EXCEPTIONAL CONDITION EXHIBITION

This photo exhibition was created by a Y-PEER educator who later became the Y-PEER Turkey focal point. The project was organized by the Turkish NGO Volunteers of Society with the support of UNFPA. The photographs of university students highlighted issues of gender inequality in Turkey by calling attention to inequality in various aspects of daily life. The powerful images suggested that gender inequality stems not only from inadequate policies and programs, but also from public opinion and the historical tradition of patriarchy in Turkey. The exhibition was launched in 2009 and rolled out in 23 cities and 55 different exhibition areas. Two websites were set up for online viewing: www.erkeklikistisnaibirdurumdur.com and www.erkeklikistisnaibirdurumdur.com/2013_online_sergi.html. By 2010, the show had been seen in 60 different spaces in 26 cities; by 2011, it had reached 70 spaces in 40 cities and five foreign countries: Romania, Poland,

Greece, Italy and France. In 2012, the show was seen in 36 cities in Turkey and Romania alone.

Through this innovative approach, youth were able to raise consciousness about gender roles and concepts, the inequality between genders and gender-based discrimination, women's rights and freedoms, and the disparity between women and men's roles in daily life. They also focused public attention on the importance of collaboration with civil society organizations that carry out women's studies in local areas.

PEER THEATRE PROJECT

This project was created to share information about the behavior and attitudes of young people toward their sexuality, reproductive behavior and gender issues. A combination of the “education” and “entertainment” elements has been used by civil society organizations since the 1970s. This approach, also known as “learning while entertaining” or “entertainment while learning,” has become very popular in Turkey since the 2000s,

and proved to be an effective model for programmes on youth sexual and reproductive health. UNFPA and Y-PEER Turkey, with the support of the H&M fashion retailer, organized an exceptional theatre-based training module. The Turkish State Theatre Actors Association (DETIS) was selected to be the national institution for delivering theatre-based education for the Y-PEER network. Two members of the association received training in theatre-based educational programmes for youth (Y-PEER Advanced Theatre Training in Sofia, Bulgaria, 19-25 June 2010). Following that, the actors, with the support of the UNFPA country office and Y-PEER members, conducted a national training for young people and performed a 30-minute performance on HIV/AIDS. The group also organized three rollouts, which reached 150 young people in one city. This technique, not often used in Turkey, was popular with young people, who also benefited from after-performance discussion with actors and Y-PEERs.





RESULTS

The launch of the website helped clarify the scope of demand for information about SRH among young people. The questions raised by young people revealed the urgent need for comprehensive research to better understand the socio-cultural factors affecting young people's knowledge and attitudes toward SRH.

An integrated approach based on formal education and behavioral techniques (such as peer education and youth-friendly RH services for counseling and treatment) proved effective. A Youth Story has an important role to play in this approach; however, the campaign has been suspended for now due to budget constraints and a recent change in the political environment that discourages young people from engaging in such activities. But the website is still running.

CHALLENGES

A change in government agencies dealing with youth issues has affected youth-related programmes. In addition, the conservative environment has made it challenging to attract sponsors for youth SRHR activities because these issues are no longer a priority. Youth SRH issues are seen as potentially risky. Regardless of the high level of interest in these advocacy activities, UNFPA in Turkey has spent a great deal of time looking for funding to expand the ongoing projects and build on what's already been achieved.

“BY 2010, THE WEBSITE WAS THE LEADING PLATFORM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO GAIN QUALITY SRH INFORMATION.”

LESSONS LEARNED

Using social media to support website content and to disseminate messages has been very useful. The campaign's Facebook pages showed a growing number of members, as did the Twitter page. However, even more social media channels must be used to reach larger groups. It has been very challenging to encourage young people to write on SRHR-related issues for the Young Writers section of the website, for instance. It is still difficult for them to write on taboo issues; nonetheless, the section has presented different points of view on youth SRHR from a youth perspective.

NGOs and policy makers played an important role in various projects and advocacy activities for young people. But youth participation at all levels of programming has the most critical value. The experiences in Turkey showed that, as time passed between activities, the number of youth activists engaged in projects decreased. To improve project performance, it is very important to keep young people motivated and engaged in projects.

Although young people planned and conducted their own information-sharing activities in the schools, there was a lack of reporting on these activities to implementing partners. Such youth

activities must be supervised and documented by the adult focal points (teachers) in the schools, whose responsibilities and missions must be clearly identified.

A Youth Story website should be promoted as an SRH resource in youth-related work. The interactive collaboration should be a model for NGOs, academicians, governmental institutions and universities. The website should be supported with new materials such as online learning tools.

Succession planning strategies are needed to ensure the long-term survival of local and national youth networks. One of the contributing factors to sustainability are activities that are developed and implemented by young people. The trainings offered by the Y-PEER network (at the local, national and international level) are examples of best practices in this area; they also play a role in effective succession planning. Mentoring is another key element in succession planning. In the end, young people themselves must be in charge of these networks if they are to survive. Working with marginalized populations requires the special skills of peer educators, focal points and coordinators; one such area is the use of nondiscriminatory language. On the other hand, the development

of educational activities and resources for marginalized populations also needs to involve individuals from those populations in order for those programs to be successful. Developing these skills through involvement in educational activities for general youth populations is an appropriate stepping stone in this process.

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA EXPERIENCE

THE ROLE OF Y-PEER NETWORK IN HELPING VULNERABLE GENERATIONS

THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

Since its independence in 1992, followed by a devastating war that lasted until late 1995, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has been facing the dual problem of rebuilding a war-torn country and introducing market reforms to its formerly centrally planned economy, although literacy, life expectancy and education levels have remained relatively high. The country has a bicameral legislature and a three-member presidency composed of a representative of each major ethnic group. The state-level government's power is highly limited; the country is largely decentralized and comprises two autonomous entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, and a self-governing administrative unit, the Brčko District, under the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Federation of Bosnia and

Herzegovina is complex and consists of 10 federal units, or cantons. The country is a potential candidate for membership in the European Union.

A significantly divided society and the memories of war have affected many young people, specifically regarding expectations about their future. The country is affected by poverty, especially in rural areas, and young people have a sense of having diminished opportunities. On the other hand, young people are exposed more than ever to media images glorifying experimentation, risk-taking and promiscuity. In the absence of adequate role models, youth-friendly services and comprehensive sexuality education, youth vulnerability is almost inevitable. Several programmes in recent years have addressed young people's sexual and reproductive health.

YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS

The total population is estimated at 3.9 million, and young people aged 15-30 constitute 23 percent of the total population. Following the 1992-1995 war and subsequent hardships, there has been massive emigration of working-age people. Although it is not clear how many young people live in rural areas compared to urban areas, it is apparent that there are many inequalities between the two populations.

The last population census was conducted in BiH in 1991, offering some data on youth SRH issues. By some indicators, young people are engaging in sexual intercourse for the first time at a younger age; nearly 50 percent of young people below the age of 15 are sexually active. Knowledge of SRH issues and HIV-related risks is generally



poor; 52 percent of youth do not use contraception. Given the lack of data on prevalence rates and overall lack of relevant statistics, the quality of surveillance systems for HIV and STIs appears to be weak. The dominant ways of transmitting HIV infection are through heterosexual and homosexual-bisexual intercourse and drug abuse injection. From 2002 to 2006, the number of people living with HIV has increased, as well as the rates of substance abuse among young people. Some reports indicate that limited knowledge of STIs and HIV/AIDS and the rare use of protection during intercourse are the main causes of the increasing vulnerability of youth. The Roma population in BiH is one of the most vulnerable groups, with young Roma people even more difficult to reach due to their customs, laws and early marriage practices.

GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Overall, the national health care system is still considered unfriendly and bureaucratic, providing limited and unequal access to its services; meeting young people's health needs remains a challenge. The government is currently focused on reducing poverty levels and improving health distribution in the overall population. However, reforms of the health care system have not been clearly defined. In addition, little research on this subject has been conducted to date to guide policy and programming. Consequently, a strategy to address the health needs of young people does not exist. In the past decade, a number of governmental and nongovernmental projects were launched to address the health of young people, but youth sexual and reproductive health represents an area of health care that is in particular need of development in BiH.

UNFPA STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

UNFPA's ongoing project to improve youth sexual and reproductive health seeks to partner with the government to secure access to quality social and health services for young people and strengthen the capacity of the BiH Y-PEER network and Youth Advisory Panel (YAP). Achieving these objectives depends on expanding the Y-PEER network and engaging new members from all parts of the country, including youth from rural areas. Special attention has been given to engaging the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, youth from ethnic

minority groups, poor families and youth with disabilities.

The long-term objective of the UNFPA programme strategy has been to facilitate behavior change of young people in the area of sexual and reproductive health. Programme goals include increasing the number of young people informed about SRH; increasing contraception and condom usage; and improving young people's communication and negotiation skills with regard to sexual matters and healthy relationships.

UNICEF led an assessment of adolescent access to information

and health services related to HIV/AIDS and STIs. The findings suggest that risky behaviors among youth are linked to the lack of a policy framework and youth-friendly, accessible health counseling services. Although young people don't normally think about preventive health care, the hierarchical and inaccessible health care system in BiH, which provides mainly medical care rather than guidance and advice, may make the situation worse. In 2002, Y-PEER BiH was created from scratch out of a clear need: young people were asking for sexuality information, and there was a need to talk about issues of concern to them.

The strategic focus of the current UNFPA programme (2010-2014) is to improve youth sexual and reproductive health by working with the government to secure access to quality social and health services for young people and to empower them further by supporting the Y-PEER network and the YAP.

The implementation process involved the development and launch of the Y-PEER website in 2011 to provide basic information on sexuality. The content of the website was developed through the joint work of the adult and teen/young adult educators. Most users find the website through search engines, other websites, magazines or referrals from friends, parents, guardians, family members, health care providers and clinics, as well as other SRH education programs and resources. The website contains comprehensive sexuality, health and relationship information, external resource lists for individual topics and a blog.

Another part of the programme involved peer education activities

in schools and other places where young people gather, as well as a public education campaign. During these events, young activists developed and distributed educational and promotional materials about reproductive health, distributed condoms and organized consultations on SRH. Referrals to medical institutions were established through youth information centers connected with local centers for anonymous, voluntary and free testing for HIV.

RESULTS

Y-PEER content has been used in outreach programmes by numerous sexuality educators, health care providers, counselors, therapists and other workers and agencies serving youth. Y-PEER has become a model for other youth programs, such as the youth-friendly services supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and UNDP in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the beginning, UNFPA supported the establishment of youth-friendly services in four cities only – Banja Luka, Mostar, Brčko and Bihac – where, through youth information centers, young people could seek advice and receive counseling. These cities were chosen for reasons of geographical and ethnic service distribution, as well as to target large concentrations of youth. UNFPA successfully applied the world model of YF services: Services were provided through the public health service (primary health care centers) and were free of charge for young people. These centers provided an open and democratic space for young people, where they could socialize, learn and receive help.

UNFPA organized a roundtable



“Y-PEER CONTENT HAS BEEN USED IN OUTREACH PROGRAMMES BY NUMEROUS SEXUALITY EDUCATORS, HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, COUNSELORS, THERAPISTS AND OTHER WORKERS AND AGENCIES SERVING YOUTH.”



with members of grassroots NGOs and governmental institutions to discuss the country programme action plan 2010-2014 (outcomes 1-4) and the memorandum of understanding between UNFPA and the Parliamentary Group for Population and Development (PGPD). Y-PEER members were invited to present youth health needs and to advocate for youth programmes and policies to be included in the annual work plan for 2012.

These activities enabled members of Y-PEER BiH to develop the skills and knowledge to maintain an active presence in the country, conduct training and recruit new members into the network. Young people, through consultations and work with medical staff including gynecologists and psychologists, contributed to youth-friendly treatment for young people. At these centers, young people received professional medical counseling, free contraception, and treatment and information. In 2010 alone, 50 peer presentations were held in three project locations; there were 90 peer counseling sessions; 60 referrals were made to youth-friendly medical centers and voluntary counseling and testing centers; 32 new peer educators were trained; and two workshops were held to integrate peer education and SRH into the school curriculum. Despite financial constraints, the youth SRH project activities were smoothly managed both programmatically and financially through the end of the year.

In 2011, the Y-PEER network expanded its membership, and 30 new peer educators were certified. An evaluation of the impact of Y-PEER education in some five schools led to additional guidelines for future Y-PEER activities.

CHALLENGES

The fragmented administrative setup of the country, differing competences at different levels of governance and political infighting presented significant challenges. Data production is often duplicated or triplicated, and is not compatible with international standards. A divided society and high poverty, especially in rural areas, remain critical obstacles.

LESSONS LEARNED

UNFPA BiH believes that the sexual choices young people make should be well-informed. The few examples of youth-friendly services developed through UNFPA-supported programmes should be strengthened and expanded, particularly in smaller communities. In order to provide appropriate guidance and counseling to young people, UNFPA support to youth-related programmes shall focus on revising school curricula to include SRH education. There is a need for developing opportunities for youth to share ideas and strategies about broadening the Y-PEER system, including measures to retain members. More effort is needed to develop age-appropriate counseling services, including telephone help lines and web-based SRH information, particularly for rural youth, and to launch a major nationwide information campaign about sexual and reproductive health in the schools. More guidance is required to develop partnerships for youth-related work between the media and teachers, youth and social workers, and health promoters and peer educators. This work must address young people with special needs, including the disabled and LGBT, especially with regard to sexual preference and choice. Resources must be mobilized for extra

activities, such as training of regional Y-PEERs. The visibility of youth SRH shall be increased at the national level, for instance, by operationalizing the Y-PEER BiH website.

The advisory approach in youth-focused activity has proved to be successful with young people, especially when the goal is behavior change. This needs to be maintained in all future activities.

The Y-PEER network of BiH foresees a high turnover of members, and therefore it is necessary to create a system that will ensure the sustainability of the programme. That could be addressed by the creation of an NGO that will eventually be able to mobilize funding for its activities, with a special focus on sexual and reproductive health issues for youth.



MOLDOVA EXPERIENCE



THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

The Republic of Moldova is a landlocked country located in Eastern Europe between Romania to the west and Ukraine to the north, east and south. According to the latest data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics, the total population is estimated at 4 million, which includes Transnistria, a breakaway territory along the border with Ukraine. More than half the country population – 58.6 percent – lives in rural areas. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the service delivery sector of the economy has increased to 75 percent as the industrial and agricultural sectors have declined.

In 2009, Moldova was described by the European Parliament as the poorest country in Europe in terms of GDP. The 2011 Human Development Index was estimated at 0.733, placing Moldova below the regional average for the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The country aspires to join the European Union, and has implemented the first three-year Action Plan within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP).

Young people aged 10-24 in Moldova account for 26 percent of the total population, with more than 55 percent living in rural areas. Recent opinion polls⁷ showed that the most acute problems experienced by young people were low income, unemployment and lack of health care. While there were many employment opportunities in the country, they were seen as not attractive for young people in terms of social packages and income level. That has caused many young people to leave the country to secure economic stability. Youth from rural areas, especially young people with disabilities, were particularly affected by the lack of educational and economic opportunities.

The national legal framework on youth, adopted in 1999, required changes to address the gaps in national development needs.



These changes were necessary to open new opportunities for young people in the employment sector, housing, economic development, mobility, access to information, and participation and involvement in the decision-making process. But basic legislation related to youth was amended in recent years to the detriment of young people – for instance, the exclusion of a mandatory 3 percent annual allocation for youth programmes from state and local budgets. Thus, the state withdrew much of its financial obligation to support youth activities.

YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS

Although they are full of promise and a source for innovation, youth in Moldova remain more vulnerable than their peers in other European countries. With approximately one third of the labor force leaving Moldova in search of new work and life opportunities, a large number of adolescents live alone, with neighbors or with grandparents. In addition, insufficient support from the government and cultural bias have resulted in a situation in which many youth are left to face sexual and reproductive health problems by themselves. This has led to risky behaviors, such as drug and alcohol abuse and smoking. Knowledge

of safe sex behavior continues to be low, resulting in unwanted teen pregnancies and high STI incidence. Only 38 percent of young people aged 15-24 have comprehensive knowledge about HIV/AIDS. Although the proportion of young people who have sexual intercourse at an early age is relatively small, contraceptive use and knowledge are disproportionately low. The rate of abortion among adolescents aged 15-19 was 9.1 percent in 2010.

7. Presented by the Center of Sociological Survey and Marketing Investigations CBS/AXA, Moldova.



GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

The need to urgently address the above-mentioned challenges and improve legislation on youth was taken up by the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the National Youth Council of Moldova, a national umbrella of youth NGOs. The year 2008 was proclaimed as The Year of Youth by presidential decree. The government of Moldova established a special programme of youth activities for 2008, which engaged with the European youth agenda and various youth-related programmes already adopted by Moldova's European neighbors. Youth policy development was seen as a top priority. The legislative framework for the new national youth policy included the 1999 national youth law, the national youth strategy of 2009-2014 and the law on volunteering adopted in 2010.

To advance health development, the government signed a partnership framework with the UN country team and international and bilateral donors to achieve poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals. The national health policy is currently under development and will provide an overarching framework for complex, multidisciplinary interventions to address the health and well-being of the population. The ministries of Health, Education and Youth are the primary agencies responsible for the youth development agenda. The National Youth Council was established in 1999 to represent a forum for youth and maintain relations with national and international institutions dealing with youth issues. The council facilitates various program activities, training, and lobbying and consulting services. Member

organizations include national youth organizations and regional youth councils.

The following sections present two good practices from UNFPA programme assistance in Moldova: the first strengthened leadership of the Y-PEER network in advancing the youth development agenda; the second led to increased participation of young people in the development of the new youth law.

STRENGTHENING Y-PEER NETWORK: FROM PARTNERSHIP TO LEADERSHIP

UNFPA STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

UNFPA programme support to Y-PEER started in 2004 and resulted in the transition from sporadic peer activities supported by UNFPA to an organized national programme that involves partnerships with NGOs, schools and local administrations, and the government. The peer education model has been widely considered one of the most effective youth development models and as such was adopted by a number of organizations in Moldova. While many groups were involved, the most critical actors were the Family Planning Association of Moldova, which provided SRHR education;

the national NGO La Strada, which focused on education regarding the prevention of human trafficking and domestic violence; the National Resource Centre for Young People, which specialized in education on HIV/AIDS prevention among young people; the Child Rights Information Centre, which works in the field of children's rights; and the NGO Positive Initiative, which works in the field of HIV/AIDS and drug use in Moldova, with a focus on most-at-risk populations.

UNFPA launched its first country programme in 2007, which included a specific component aimed at increasing the availability

of counseling and information services on SRH and HIV/STIs prevention among young people. In seeking to increase the number of young people informed about SRH and behavior change, UNFPA focused its programme efforts on strengthening the capacity of the Y-PEER network in project management, fund-raising and partnership building with national civil society organizations. The long-term objective of UNFPA support to the Y-PEER network in Moldova was to increase the number of young people informed about SRH and contribute to behavior change. The short-term objective was to invest in

strengthening and expanding the Y-PEER network so it could be a leader in youth development. As a result, Y-PEER enlarged its network in rural areas by establishing and training new Y-PEER teams. It also attracted interest from local authorities by developing and implementing youth activities and facilitating broad partnerships.

UNFPA's strategic approach addressed specific issues related to Y-PEER capacity and sustainability, with the objective to expand and strengthen its visibility and credibility in promotion of youth SRH issues.

The programme approach included the following steps:

STEP 1

Introducing standards. Establishing standards in peer education was one of the big challenges. It involved capacity building of young people and advocacy efforts aimed at the government. This has led to adoption and approval of Y-PEER standards for peer education for the Moldovan network. In addition, the standards have been endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

STEP 2

Scaling up good practices and enlarging the network. The network started in the capital and was quickly extended and replicated in other regions. The capacity building of local youth leaders led to the establishment of regional teams in different parts of the country, which became part of the bigger network. To increase motivation, Y-PEER members came up with the idea of awarding the most active and innovative local teams some low-cost incentives at the end of the year.

STEP 3

Strengthening leadership and coordination of the network. As Y-PEER Moldova has grown, the leadership of the network and communication with Y-PEERs around the country have become too much of a burden for the national focal point in charge to manage alone – even with the support of a UNFPA reproductive health and youth associate and a Y-PEER fellow in the UNFPA country office in Moldova.

Moreover, members of the network have recognized the necessity of formally designating responsibilities among themselves and developing a comprehensive organizational structure. UNFPA reacted by providing advanced training on programme management, including planning, implementation and evaluation of youth activities, human resource management and leadership. Special meetings have been organized to assist Y-PEER members and to discuss public

“THROUGH SUPPORT FROM UNFPA, THE Y-PEER NETWORK IN MOLDOVA HAS DEVELOPED ITS OWN GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE TO INCREASE LEADERSHIP AND FACILITATE BETTER COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION OF PEER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES COUNTRYWIDE.”

relations issues and fund-raising opportunities. During the second phase of development, the Y-PEER network called a General Assembly meeting in 2011 and decided to adopt a new leadership and management structure: programmes, mass media and communications, human resources, and regional development. For each department, a leader and a team were elected, and terms of reference were developed. Such delegation of authority and responsibility better facilitates communication and coordination.

By involving young people in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of activities, UNFPA has strengthened the leadership of the Y-PEER network. Y-PEER is now fully responsible for developing the newsletter *Without Taboo*, designing and implementing educational campaigns such as *Pro Health* in schools and *Informed and Protected* in summer camps, and organizing a annual Social Theatre Festival. Moreover, Y-PEER, with a support of UNFPA, developed a monitoring and evaluation mechanism, which consists of report templates for each activity, written confirmation from local authorities on the type of activity and number of people involved, and semi-annual and annual progress reports.

UNFPA has engaged Y-PEER members in meetings, working groups and roundtables on RH issues with national and international partners, NGOs and other UN agencies to ensure that youth issues are taken into consideration during decision making. This has facilitated more dialogue between Y-PEER and its partners and led to new partnerships with local authorities and NGOs. As a result, in some communities local authorities

provided office space for Y-PEER activities, and in others, local authorities offered accommodations and lunch during training courses. The partnership with NGOs has increased fund-raising opportunities. (See Results section.)

RESULTS

Through support from UNFPA, the Y-PEER network in Moldova has developed its own governance structure to increase leadership and facilitate better communication and coordination of peer education activities countrywide.

The fund-raising capacity of the Y-PEER network was strengthened, resulting in new projects that were supported through one grant from UNDP (44,000 USD) and two grants from the EECA Regional Office (25,000 USD).

Y-PEER network expanded in other regions of the country by building new Y-PEER groups and increasing the outreach of informational campaigns. It has increased its visibility and credibility among other NGOs and local administrations. Y-PEER has partnered with two national NGOs: Resonance and Moldova's Family Planning Association in fund-raising and project implementation. Members of the network have been invited by local governments to planning meetings for youth activities aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles.

UNFPA has contributed to confidence-building measures in Transnistria, the breakaway region of Moldova, and succeeded in building dialogue between young people on both sides by creating social theatre clubs and bringing everyone together for the Social Theatre Festival in 2010 and 2011.

CHALLENGES

Wide inequalities in opportunities for young people in urban and rural areas remain, which has required a different approach in programming. In rural areas, not all teams had facilities available to plan and organize activities. The situation is changing, however, with the development of youth-friendly health clinics in all districts of the country.

There is a need to diversify activities and develop innovative ways to promote SRH messages in order to mobilize young people and motivate them to get involved.

Another challenge is the opposition of the religious community to promoting SRH education for young people, as well as the reluctance of some school administrators and parents to get involved.

The turnover of Y-PEER members is quite high; thus, it is necessary to invest in capacity building for new members and retention strategies for current members. It is very hard to evaluate the contribution of the Y-PEER network to behavior change in young people, especially in terms of qualitative indicators.

Although UNFPA in Moldova has implemented most of its plans on time, the challenge concerning funding still exists. Some planned activities, such as the training of new peer educators, will depend on the availability of funds. Fund-raising and partnerships with other organizations remain among the biggest challenges to the further development of the network at the national and international level. Efforts to boost the level of available funding should be shared between UNFPA headquarters, the regional office and country offices.

A related issue is the capacity of the Y-PEER network in fund-raising and its ability to avoid future financial dependence on UNFPA.

LESSONS LEARNED

Involving young people in every stage of programming (planning, implementation and evaluation) has increased their sense of ownership of the results and motivated them to engage more actively. Capacity building training offered by UNFPA in organizational management has led to the establishment of the governance structure of the Y-PEER network by its members.

The partnerships of the Y-PEER network with youth NGOs has provided a broader impact for activities and ensured synergistic results. Strengthening the network through regular Youth Advisory Panel meetings (coordinators who meet bimonthly) and the General Assembly (which brings together all members of the network annually) has increased efficiency and strengthened team spirit.

Utilizing social media tools such as Facebook and other social networks has proved an effective communications strategy for Y-PEER networking, and can also serve as a platform for attracting new members.

Peer education activities have proved to be a perfect complement to public reproductive health services, which are provided by the Ministry of Health through two different channels: youth-friendly health services (YFHS) and reproductive health offices.

Support from the Ministry of Education, along with the help of UNFPA, has facilitated Y-PEER access to schools and increased the number of schools covered by peer education sessions.

Youth-adult partnerships, in which adults were assigned to supervise activities, have led to better coordination of the network at the district level and increased the sustainability of activities. Coordination and communication among network members could be further strengthened through regular team building and outdoor activities.

Linking educational activities organized by the Y-PEER network and services provided by the reproductive health offices and YFHS increased the impact of the activities, as well as the sustainability of the network.

However, the Y-PEER network needs to rethink its strategy in order to concentrate more effort on reaching out to the most vulnerable young people, including those in public boarding schools and rural areas, and those who aren't involved in public educational and social programmes.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUTH LAW BY AND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



UNFPA STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

UNFPA assisted in the development of the Youth Law through technical expertise and financial contributions for consulting with young people. UNFPA further facilitated youth engagement in policy revisions and their alignment with existing public policies. Opportunities were created to include young people from all over the country in four regional public debates, consultations with the youth branches of political parties and a youth conference. Comments collected during the debates were published in a series of press releases and disseminated through the media; they were then incorporated in a new policy document. Young people were also consulted on different implementation mechanisms and provided their views on various policy frameworks, including regulations for existing youth institutions such as national youth resource centers and local youth

councils. During the course of the consultations, the need for a new law – not just amendments to existing law – became clear in order to create a more sustainable legal framework.

UNFPA's strategy was aimed at creating a supportive environment for the participation of young people. The strategy focused on:

- Creating a space for youth to take part in consultations and public debates about the new legislation and encouraging them to take ownership of the process;
- Involving youth in the development of implementation mechanisms for the legislation; and
- Supporting youth in the development of advocacy and leadership skills.

The key principle of UNFPA's support was to ensure a transparent and inclusive process for different youth groups, including those with disabilities, from different political groups and from rural and remote areas, so that the new law would address the needs of all youth groups.

The implementation mechanism was developed by an expert group consisting of young people, in consultation with the Ministry of Youth and UNFPA. Public debates and social media ensured participation of young people; all stakeholders including youth organizations, ministries, political parties and the media were involved. To keep public attention focused on the importance of the legislation, every step of the process was followed by press conferences, press releases, and TV and radio talks with representatives of both youth and public organizations.

STEP 1: ASSESSING THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Four public debates in the north, south, center and UTA Gagauzia regions were organized to consult with young people on their needs, which were then reflected in the new Youth Law. For each public debate, a youth organization from the respective region was responsible for the organizational process, which in turn strengthened their capacity. Comments during the debates were published in a series of press releases and disseminated on news and media portals, serving as advocacy documents to promote new provisions of the law. Other efforts were focused on:

- Elaboration and distribution of informative brochures on youth policies, which dealt with the concept of youth policies, institutional and organizational actors responsible for their implementation, and ways in which local youth can get involved in the promotion and implementation of these policies.
- Public debate on the new law with student organizations, parliamentary and nonparliamentary political parties and youth organization wings. The involvement of the youth organizations of political parties was an innovative approach to advocate for the Youth Law in Parliament.

STEP 2: MAKING THE VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE HEARD

A youth expert group conducted working meetings and consultations with each ministry of government to present the results of the public debates with young people and to promote the new law. These meetings strengthened the advocacy and leadership capacities of the young people involved. The youth expert group succeeded in organizing the meetings at the level of vice ministers, who were in charge of political support for the draft law.

A national conference organized in February 2012 by the National Youth Council with the support of the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation and UNFPA brought together parliamentarians, ministers, vice ministers, youth workers, youth NGOs, international institutions and young people to discuss the new draft law and the consultation process with young people.



RESULTS

The inclusion of young people in the process of law development not only strengthened their capacity in communicating with public authorities at the local and national level, but also led to different thinking and approaches by national authorities in the development of the framework.

This exercise also brought unanticipated results. The Youth Capital initiative was started for the first time in Moldova, bestowing the title of Youth Capital on a competitive basis to a provincial city for the best one-year plan of action on how youth can work together with public authorities. This increased youth participation in the decision-making process at the community level and led to partnerships with public authorities. This project, which has been underway since 2010, can eventually be assessed as a potential good practice.

As of now, the draft legislation has been developed and is in the process of being approved by

Parliament. The implementation mechanisms include frameworks for regulating regional resource centers for youth and local youth councils, and for creating a governmental commission on youth policies. The Youth Capital initiative has proved to be one of the most effective mechanisms for promoting the partnership between young people and local public authorities.

Cooperation between youth organizations, public institutions and the political parties has been established. There has been active involvement of youth, youth organizations and youth workers in the process of adopting the draft law on youth. Young people's advocacy capacity has been strengthened, and leadership skills have been developed.

CHALLENGES

The following challenges arose in the course of implementing this initiative:

Although youth have been considered a priority for the country, at the time of the development of the youth policy only a few studies were available in the field. In the period 2000-2008, UN agencies commissioned some important studies on youth, mainly focused on social protection, health, migration and social exclusion, but there was a lack of more recent studies. No information was available about young people's leisure time, values, culture or other important aspects of development needed for a comprehensive policy.

The political environment in which the process took place – two electoral campaigns and a referendum – affected its development. Youth wings of political parties had little familiarity with youth policies, nor was there international experience to rely on. The challenge was partially addressed with workshops devoted to different aspects of youth policies, including European and international efforts to build the youth wings of their political parties. Still, it was challenging to achieve a consensus among the political parties.

LESSONS LEARNED

Involving young people in decision making and programme development can be used as a model for the promotion of young people's broader right to full citizenship and participation in social development.

Involvement of young people in decision making required different approaches. There was a danger that for any consultation or exercise, local authorities would opt for those who were easiest to reach. As a result, the needs of some groups, particularly those who were most excluded and marginalized, were overlooked. Standard outreach methods may not be enough to reach some groups.

Robust youth participation can challenge negative stereotypes of young people that otherwise persist in the community. For youth themselves, active and equal participation in decisions affecting their lives provided hope and dignity, fostering a better understanding of community and sense of belonging. Furthermore, the involvement of young people in this legislative process introduced them to a range of other skills – public speaking, budgeting, leading projects and committees, and networking. Peer-based techniques were shown to be a good way to develop young people's skills and receive their honest and open opinion.

Some stakeholders viewed youth participation in a traditional way, harking back to a time when young people were not considered full and active partners. Evidence-based benefits and good practices should be highlighted to recognize young people as valuable assets, resources and competent members of the community.

Providing meaningful opportunities for young people to be involved in shaping youth policies was a long process that took time, resources and commitment. It did not require much of a financial investment but rather a change in the culture and attitudes of society.

The full participation of young people in the development of the Youth Law was a practical example of how youth needs can be incorporated into public policies.

The new legislation should be supported until it comes into force. Identifying political supporters will be crucial to accelerate the adoption of the law in Parliament. Young people can be instrumental in monitoring and evaluating implementation of the law and its provisions.

A public campaign to encourage youth participation must not only target young people and decision makers, but the entire society. In order to ensure equal participation of all young people, the special needs of disadvantaged groups must be taken into account.



“TO KEEP PUBLIC ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LEGISLATION, EVERY STEP OF THE PROCESS WAS FOLLOWED BY PRESS CONFERENCES, PRESS RELEASES, AND TV AND RADIO TALKS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH YOUTH AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS.”

KYRGYZSTAN EXPERIENCE

DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL YOUTH
POLICY (2012-2015)

THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

Kyrgyzstan is a landlocked mountainous country located in Central Asia. It is bordered by Kazakhstan to the north, Uzbekistan to the west, Tajikistan to the southwest and China to the south. Kyrgyzstan is officially a democratic unicameral federal republic. The revolution of April 2010 resulted in the adoption of a new constitution and appointment of an interim government. The election of a Kyrgyz president was held in November 2011.

The total population was estimated at 5.4 million in 2010⁸. Although there has been a modest recovery in the past few years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, unstable economic growth has led to high levels of poverty: 43 percent in 2009⁹. Income inequality has risen. Youth unemployment remains high: about 70 percent compared to the total unemployment rate, which is about 17 percent¹⁰. Poverty is particularly acute in rural and mountainous regions, such as the Naryn Oblast. Agriculture and industrial production is small and undiversified, which



has left the country vulnerable to natural disasters and external shocks, such as financial crisis, drought and floods. The country is ranked 126th out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index, placing Kyrgyzstan towards the bottom for the region and situated between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in Central Asia. The transition to a market economy and elimination of services historically provided during the Soviet Union has had a tremendous impact on public services, including education and health. Access, distribution and quality of basic public services and infrastructure such as running water, health and education remain insufficient.

YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS

Young people of Kyrgyzstan represent a significant proportion of the country population – over half of the total population is under the age of 25, and about 30.2

percent is between 14 and 28. As in many post-Soviet states, youth in Kyrgyzstan face the challenges of social, economic and administrative barriers to their development as active members of the society. During the transition period, the state no longer could guarantee the rights of youth to employment and education, or provide special benefits. Since its independence, the country has faced the need to

create policies to meet the needs and enhance the potential of youth to influence social and economic development of the country and improve their well-being in the future. The state youth policy was viewed as a guiding document, which will provide opportunities for youth development, self-fulfillment and self-expression.



“YOUNG PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY FROM RURAL AREAS, HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO VOICE THEIR NEEDS, WHICH WERE INCORPORATED INTO THE YOUTH POLICY CONCEPT DOCUMENT.”

8. Men and Women report 2010

9. http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Table5.pdf

10. National Human Development Report 2010

GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

After the 2010 revolution, in which young people played a key role, the Kyrgyz government established the Ministry of Youth to emphasize the importance of the role of youth in deciding future national development. The newly established entity was faced with the challenges of defining key strategic directions and developing a new policy framework. The government had been working on a legal framework for youth policy and implemented two national programmes for youth development during 2006-2008: Jashtyk and Kyrgyzstan Jashtary. The country adopted a variety of youth policies and laws related to education, vocational training, health and social protection. Youth issues have been addressed through various government programmes in such spheres as education, social security, sports and employment, while an overall, comprehensive and systematic approach has been lacking.

UNFPA STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

In response to the need for a comprehensive youth policy, UNDP in Kyrgyzstan and the Ministry of Youth initiated the development of a new youth policy based on needs assessment conducted by the ministry in 2011. The process was supported by a UN thematic group on youth in Kyrgyzstan, consisting of UN agencies working on youth issues. UNFPA coordinated local hearings, discussions and mobilization of youth activists in the development of the policy concept. Involvement of young people at every stage of development was crucial for producing a policy that reflected the needs of young people and created opportunities for young people's ownership of the policy. Young people who participated represented local communities and departments of the Ministry of Youth, national NGOs, youth activist groups and young focal points from local administrations (ayil okmotu).

Meaningful participation of youth representatives was implemented through a series of concrete steps:

LOCAL HEARINGS AND CONSOLIDATED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

UNFPA, together with UNICEF, UNDP and the Soros Foundation, organized local hearings in all provincial districts (oblasts) of the country and gathered more than 200 representatives from different youth groups, NGOs and local administrations. At these meetings young people reviewed the youth policy concept and provided their recommendations. Furthermore, four young activists were nominated from each oblast to participate in the National Forum to be held in the capital city of Bishkek to present their comments on the draft document. The nomination and selection process was

organized by young participants themselves based on candidates' communication and presentation skills and their social position at the local level.

THE NATIONAL YOUTH FORUM

This forum was organized to facilitate discussions among young representatives about the proposed youth policy. The discussions and debates were focused on key concerns raised by young people, such as age requirements. After the daylong debates, the young people prepared a consolidated note with recommendations on the youth policy concept, which was later presented at the National Youth Conference.

THE NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

This conference, which coincided with the end of the International Year of Youth and International Day of Youth, gathered young leaders, parliamentarians and government representatives. Active support from the UN thematic group ensured broad participation and involvement of young people in the policy development process. Young people presented their recommendations to top officials and made valuable contributions to the final youth policy document.

RESULTS

Despite the instability of the political situation in the country and the recent restructuring of the Ministry of Youth, the final document (a road map to youth policy through 2015) was approved on 25 September 2012 along with a related national action plan. Currently, UNDP is leading the development of youth municipal policies with active participation of young leaders from 30 ayil okmotu. This initiative is supported by the Ministry of Youth. UNFPA, the Soros Foundation and several national youth organizations are actively involved in the development process. Another initiative to enhance implementation of the state youth strategy was begun by a coalition of eight youth-led national organizations and is supported by UNDP, Soros and the USAID/Jasa.kg project. UNFPA will support this initiative under its joint UN youth thematic group activities.

Consultations among concerned stakeholders led to the following results: (i) young people, especially from rural areas, had an opportunity to voice their needs, which were incorporated into the youth policy concept document; (ii) young people had a greater sense of ownership of the policy document because they were involved from the beginning; (iii) the experience young people gained during the development process will help them implement the policy document and facilitate their feedback about further improvements in youth policies.

CHALLENGES

Social norms in Kyrgyzstan still support the dominance of elders, who determine education and employment opportunities for youth. Young people are still seen as objects rather than subjects of government policy and programs. In many instances youth-focused programs were developed without taking into consideration the opinions and interests of young people. This has affected the youth development process and limited the ability of young people to contribute constructively to policy-related discussions, especially when adults take advantage of social norms that defer to elders. In addition, rural/urban inequalities in access to and quality of education and information coupled with language barriers have significantly limited the ability of rural young people to contribute to policy development.

Youth issues are still not a priority in most national development strategies and programs in the country. The lack of government commitment is evident; less attention is paid to the problems of youth overall. In addition, cooperation among organizations working with youth is weak.

LESSONS LEARNED

All meetings and discussions with young people at the local and national level were facilitated by young activists themselves, which undoubtedly increased their ownership of the youth policy document. The youth strategy document should be widely distributed and discussed with a broad range of young people. There is a need for adequate funding to involve more youth groups, including those most at risk. It is important to focus more capacity-building efforts on all groups of young people to increase their understanding of policy-related issues and actively involve them in decision-making processes.

PART IV: CONCLUSION

UNFPA defines a good practice as a method or technique developed during programme implementation that demonstrates superior results. Good practices generally meet the following four criteria: (1) relevance to UNFPA programming and operational/management areas; (2) innovative approaches or ideas for solving problems; (3) demonstrated impact on programme delivery and its long-term results; and (4) potential for further application to other contexts and programmes. There are three levels of good practices: promising, demonstrated and replicated. The case studies described in the previous sections demonstrated some evidence of effectiveness and have been replicated in several countries. There is broad agreement among international experts on a number of aspects of youth-focused programming, which are relevant to UNFPA and if applied, can bring the highest return for the EECARO community. In order for good-practice programmes to be beneficial, they must be comprised of two elements: a good-practice database and partnerships that

connect people to people. These evolve constantly and require setting up clear procedures and infrastructure, which require planning, resource allocation, monitoring and documentation. It is important to have a panel of peer reviewers to evaluate a potential good practice and seek input and feedback from clients.

In this regard the EECA Regional Office is in an advantageous position to assume leadership of knowledge-sharing in the region by providing timely guidance, monitoring and documentation of good practices. It can take the lead in organizing initiatives, such as the regular mapping of activities, maintaining inter-country dialogue about on-going youth programmes, coaching programme staff on good practices, and creating a regional good-practice database. This will help country offices better perform in the future.

The following section summarizes specific challenges and recommendations resulting from this assessment.

LACK OF DOCUMENTATION

The most critical challenge is the lack of sufficient documentation and institutional knowledge in UNFPA country offices, national institutions, NGOs and Y-PEER networks about the details of past youth-focused activities. Ideally, this information could have been produced by documenting planning processes, such as needs assessment, justification of objectives, descriptions of results, and monitoring and evaluation. This information, had it been available, may have provided background for more in-depth analysis of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of youth programmes.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

UNFPA country offices shall improve documenting the development and implementation of youth-focused initiatives. This may include implementing strategies used at different phases of the programme or project, budget planning and provisions, important events and internal discussions, as well as feedback from partners and youth participants.

QUALITY OF RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The second major challenge observed during this review is the weak connection between the outcomes of youth-focused activities and the related outcomes of country programmes, specifically the CPAPs and AWP. This significantly hinders the measurement of long-term outcomes of youth-focused activities, as in many countries the current CPAPs do not reflect youth-specific outcomes directly. The youth component of programmes tends to be treated as a cross-cutting issue integrated in other programs focused on sexual or reproductive health or population development (for instance, the promotion of male participation in SRH activities or the overall empowerment of women and girls). This issue is closely connected to the overall quality of programme design, the monitoring and evaluation framework, and the quality of youth-specific programme indicators, targets and baselines.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

UNFPA country offices shall address the need for a robust results framework specific to the objectives of youth programming; this includes setting clear baselines and targets. The results framework shall ensure strong positioning of youth issues within the UNFPA programme and provide further guidance on the development of an M&E framework and measurement activities. The EECA Regional Office shall provide strategic direction to the country offices for developing such a results framework, managing the quality assurance process and monitoring its implementation.

As an example, an effective monitoring and evaluation framework might include the following indicators:

- A knowledge base on youth participation (available/used)
- Presence of young people in decision-making bodies (number, quality, in UN and government bodies, support)
- Young implementers of programmes (number)
- Young people consulted in planning and review process (number, duration, quality of consultations, follow-up)
- Youth-led initiatives supported (how many, how much)
- Capacities of young people developed (issues, number, through mentorship, internships, youth-initiated activities)
- Access of youth to services (youth centers)
- Diversity of youth involved (backgrounds, geography, age)

YOUTH PROGRAMMING AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Past experience shows that programming for young people is a challenging task that needs to be flexible, evidence-based, context-driven, culturally appropriate and engaged at both policy and service delivery level. These programmes need to address the needs of the most underserved youth population groups and promote accountability mechanisms at national and sub-national levels.

All country programmes in the EECA region carried out interventions for young people with different levels of success. Cultural and religious factors, as well as insufficient development capacity and accountability mechanisms, hindered implementation to some extent, which in many instances led country offices to seek new programme approaches in order to overcome obstacles.

In areas of policy formulation, while UNFPA support is noted, more emphasis is needed on policy implementation. Future support for programs needs to be approached through institutional capacity development, strengthening inter-sectorial coordination and advocating for a supportive environment for young people, including the leveraging of public funds for policy implementation.

Sustainability of results is a challenge for all youth-focused programming, requiring continuous UNFPA support for the consolidation of policies and strengthening of national and sub-national capacities beyond a country programme cycle.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

UNFPA country offices need to strengthen their design of youth programming, drawing on evaluations of past programming. This must be complemented with expertise from organizations, agencies and institutions that specialize in youth development, with an eye toward enhancing knowledge sharing and areas of cooperation and complementarity. Alternatives for integrated and joint programmes need to be explored, as they appear to be effective, particularly in countries with limited funds, such as middle-income, “C” category countries. The identification and dissemination of good programming and practices across country offices, including through south-south collaboration, shall enhance overall programme effectiveness.

The practices presented in this paper need not all be included in specific country programmes. The countries themselves, with UNFPA’s support, need to make informed decisions as to which practices and strategies are most relevant and could help them achieve their desired results.

Nevertheless, the good practices identified in the present assessment shall be used as a model for development, which can be adapted and implemented elsewhere. This will require developing new guidance documents, documenting lessons learned and facilitating similar assessments. As regards implementation strategies, the practices of appointing a youth officer with responsibility for project implementation and monitoring; involving youth fellows in the implementation, monitoring and reporting of activities from the beginning of the programme cycle; and providing youth with adequate opportunities to be fully involved and eventually lead the activities, are recommended as effective strategies for advancing UNFPA programming for and with young people.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

UNFPA country offices need to identify and document successful implementation modalities, including specific approaches, management tools and advocacy strategies that led to more meaningful youth participation in policy dialogue and programming.

The assessment of good practices needs to continue and become an ongoing mechanism at the regional level, supported by implementation manuals and perhaps integrated into ongoing training programmes and curricula. “There are plenty of pockets of success, which we don’t recognize and document due to a lack of capacity, time or motivation. That’s where we need to invest more efforts,” said colleagues in the UNFPA country office in Ankara, Turkey.

“THE GOOD PRACTICES IDENTIFIED IN THIS ASSESSMENT CAN BE USED AS MODELS, TO BE ADAPTED AND IMPLEMENTED ELSEWHERE.”





ANNEXES



ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

DETAILS OF ASSIGNMENT DOCUMENTING EXPERIENCES, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DIALOGUE AND PROGRAMMING IN THE EECA REGION

BACKGROUND

The ICPD Programme of Action emphasizes involving young people in programme design and implementation as a way to increase the relevance and effectiveness of programme interventions. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child also endorses the rights of young people to participate as fully as possible in their society.

The concept of young people's participation has tremendous potential if concrete ways are devised to put it into practical action. Empowering young people to be their own agents of change and claim their rights creates citizenship and contributes to society's well-being.

Young people's participation in programming activities means giving increased responsibility to young people. Ownership in a programme is strengthened when young people are involved in all aspects of the process, from the conceptualization, needs assessment and design to implementation and evaluation. The process can be used as a channel to bring young people's concerns to the policy table and make a case for investing in their development.

UNFPA pays special attention to youth participation in its programming and advocates for youth involvement in policy

dialogue, advocacy efforts and national development processes. In particular in EECA, UNFPA has forged youth-adult partnerships; has put in place various institutional mechanisms for incorporating young people's input into policy and programming processes (i.e. youth networks, youth advisory panels, fellowship programmes, youth forums, etc.); and has provided capacity building of young people to make them advocates for their own rights and development issues.

While young people's participation in the EECA region has certainly increased over time, there is a need to go even further in strengthening the participation of adolescents and youth in policy dialogues, programme planning and implementation from a rights-based approach.

Since UNFPA in EECA has extensive experience in this area, we would like to take stock of the results, identify obstacles and document good practices.

To this effect, EECARO will create an opportunity at its office in Istanbul to assign UNFPA staff with experience in this area, and more importantly in documenting good practices, to document country-specific experiences of successfully incorporating young people and their perspectives in design and delivery of policies and programmes.

TASK	DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME ¹¹	DEADLINE
DESK REVIEW OF RELEVANT REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS (I.E. COARS) TO IDENTIFY AT LEAST TWO COUNTRIES AND EXAMPLES FOR DOCUMENTING GOOD PRACTICES	Brief one-page concept notes for the selected countries	25 July – 3 August	3 August
DEVELOP A TEMPLATE FOR CAPTURING THE GOOD PRACTICE EXPERIENCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNFPA'S GUIDELINES IN SHARING GOOD PRACTICES	Template for capturing the good practice experience	25 July – 3 August	3 August
COMMUNICATE WITH SELECTED COS AND DEVISE A PLAN AND SCHEDULE FOR GATHERING INPUT AND REQUIRED INFORMATION	Detailed plan and schedule for gathering input and required information	6 – 10 August	10 August
DEVELOP TOOLS/INSTRUMENTS FOR GATHERING INFORMATION	Tools/instruments for gathering information	13 – 17 August	17 August
COLLECT THE NEEDED INFORMATION (TRAVEL TO THE COUNTRIES IF NEEDED)		20 – 31 August	31 August
DRAFT GOOD PRACTICE CASE EXAMPLES FROM THE SELECTED COUNTRIES	At least two draft good practice reports	3 – 7 September	7 September
COORDINATE PEER REVIEW OF THE DRAFTS (DISSEMINATE DRAFTS, COLLECT COMMENTS)	Collect comments on the draft reports	10 – 28 September	28 September
REVISE DRAFTS AND PREPARE SECOND DRAFT TO BE EDITED	At least two second draft good practice reports	1 – 12 October	12 October
COORDINATE EDITING AND PROOFREAD THE FINAL EDITED MATERIALS	Edit and proofread good practice reports	12 – 31 October	31 October
PREPARE SHORT NARRATIVES BASED ON THE GOOD PRACTICE CASES TO BE FEATURED ON EECARO'S WEBSITE AND THROUGH FUSION PLATFORM FOR GOOD PRACTICES	At least two short narratives for web	12 – 31 October	31 October

SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT AND DELIVERABLES

The purpose of this assignment is to support EECARO in documenting country-specific experiences of successfully incorporating young people and their perspectives in design and delivery of policies and programmes.

More specifically UNFPA staff through this assignment will:

- Review relevant reports and documents (i.e. COARs) and identify countries and examples for documenting good practices in youth participation
- Develop a suitable template for capturing good practices in accordance with UNFPA's guidelines in sharing good practices
- Communicate with respective COs and devise a plan and schedule for gathering input and required information
- Collect the needed information (travel to the country if needed)
- Write good practice case examples from the selected countries

Prepare short narratives based on the good practices cases to be featured on EECARO's website and through the Fusion platform for good practices

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Template for documenting good practices
- At least two good practice examples documented and prepared for publication (in Russian and in English) with the purpose of raising visibility of results and knowledge sharing among countries in the region and beyond
- Feature stories based on the good practice examples prepared for the EECARO website

DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The proposed duration is two months, commencing on or after 9 July 2012.

REQUIRED SKILLS

The incumbent should have:

- Experience in youth programme design and implementation and in particular, youth participation;
- Extensive experience in documenting good practices and developing tools for this purpose;
- Good knowledge and understanding of EECA regional context and programmatic issues;
- Excellent writing and editing skills;
- Very good command of Russian and English.

11. UNFPA staff person selected for this assignment has other obligations related to her current position with DOS from September 10 – 28 and will be attending a field mission at that time. For that reason it has been agreed to extend the timeframe of the assignment (originally planned for two months) until the end of October in order to ensure completion of the tasks outlined in this ToR.

ANNEX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE



TABLE 1: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

CRITERIA	QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION METHODS
AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Does the good practice/AWP provide sufficient information on the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> objectives of the intervention targets budget duration and any other relevant data Does the good practice/AWP describe the results obtained or progress made? Does the good practice/AWP provide indicators to demonstrate the results obtained and reflect on how the outputs are expected to contribute to long-term objectives? Was the evaluation conducted? What conclusions, findings and recommendations did that evaluation produce? 	<p>Desk review of COARs for 2010-2011 and evaluation reports (if available)</p> <p>Interview/focus group discussions with programme managers, key partners and youth participants.</p>
RELEVANCE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Are the objectives of the youth-focused programme/project adapted to the needs of the population? To what extent are the objectives of the youth-focused programme/project component in line with the priorities of national policies and programmes? To what extent is the implementation of the youth component of the country programme aligned with 2012-13 UNFPA strategic plan outcomes and outputs (outcomes 1, 5 and 6)? Do outputs and activities in the AWP reflect this corporate priority? To what extent has work with the government to advocate for increasing health, education and livelihood investments for young people (including adolescents) been prioritized? Is the country office focusing on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, in particular adolescent girls? 	
EFFECTIVENESS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does the practice (AWP/activity) meet the criteria of youth participation (steps 4-8 in the ladder of participation)? To what extent did the practice (AWP/activity) contribute to establishing youth-adult partnerships (YAP)? To what extent did the practice (AWP/activity) contribute to development of leadership capacity of youth people? To what extent did the practice (AWP/activity) contribute to an increase in the youth decision-making role? To what extent did the practice (AWP/activity) contribute to development of organizational capacity (commitment to YAP, mentoring & skill-building opportunities, clear goals and responsibilities for youth and adults, etc.)? To what extent did the practice (AWP/activity) contribute to an attitude shift toward youth and adults? 	

CRITERIA	QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION METHODS
INNOVATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is innovative about this approach? 2. How is it described and analyzed? 	
IMPACT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To what extent has the particular approach taken in this practice led to changes in policy/behavior/practices? 2. Did young people who participated in the project/activity influence the policy/programmers? 3. How were decisions/programmers/projects improved by involving young people? 4. How did the organization/country office benefit from involving young people? 5. If the evaluation was conducted, does it mention impact and how it was analyzed and/or scored? 	
REPLICABILITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To what extent is the potential application and replicability of the project/practice to other settings stated/described (quantitative and qualitative description of “what and “how”)? 2. Are the lessons learned (positive/negative) identified and sufficiently described? 3. What were the critical elements that contributed to scalability? 4. Indication of average unit cost (definition of unit cost is TBD) 	

**QUESTIONNAIRE
(USED FOR WEB-BASED SURVEY)**

1. Your reporting unit (CO)
2. The project/programme title
3. Describe the planned activities (Indicate reference document)
4. Describe the planned results (Indicate reference document)
5. Duration of activity
6. What exact steps have been undertaken by UNFPA to ensure youth involvement/participation in that activity?
7. Is this documented? If yes, please indicate reference document(s). Please explain.
8. What are the key achievements of UNFPA programmes in the area of youth participation?

Is there a document/evidence in support of this?

Is there information gathered through M&E activities, studies, surveys, reviews/communications (both electronic and paper-based) or any other programme/project documentation?
9. Total budget allocated for implementation of activity for duration.
10. The amount of expenditures for actual duration.
11. What was the effect/impact of youth participation? Please select from the list below and provide brief explanations. Explain your definitions. Is this documented?

11.1 Improved relevance and effectiveness of the programme/activity
11.2 Enhanced participants' (youth) sense of ownership
11.3 Increased leadership capacity of youth
11.4 Stimulated new, creative ideas from both adults and youth in programme development
11.5 Established credibility of youth-oriented ideas and youth-directed implementation
11.6 Helped adults and/or youth better understand and value young people's perspectives and contributions
11.7 Increased adults' recognition of young people's capabilities and experiences and vice versa
- 11.8 Increased youth acknowledgment of adults as allies and vice versa
- 11.9 Increased budget allocations and earmarked resources for youth in national/UNFPA programmes
- 11.10 If other, please specify
12. What participation stage (degree) would you assign to your activities, based on your own assessment? Please select from the list below and provide brief explanations of why.

12.1 Manipulation
12.2 Decoration
12.3 Tokenism
12.4 Assigned but informed
12.5 Consulted and informed, adult-oriented
12.6 Adult-oriented, shared decisions with youth
12.7 Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults
12.8 Please explain

ANNEX 3: SUMMARY OF CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY	
GEORGIA: FROM PARTNERING WITH YOUTH TO YOUTH LEADERSHIP	
SUMMARY OF THE PRACTICE	Involving youth in evidence-based advocacy for youth SRHR, building a network to increase capacity of youth to participate in civil society and youth policy dialogue
DURATION	2007-2011
BUDGET	130,000 USD approximately (for youth component of CP)
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER(S)	UNFPA, Parliament of Georgia, nongovernmental sector, national institutions, private sector organizations
TOOLS AND RESOURCES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reproductive Health Survey, Georgia. Tbilisi, National Centre for Disease Control and Medical Statistics/Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs/UNFPA/USAID, 2010. 2. Reproductive Health Survey, Georgia. Tbilisi, National Centre for Disease Control and Medical Statistics/Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs/UNFPA/USAID, 1999. 3. Adolescents' Reproductive Health Survey, Georgia. Tbilisi, UNFPA, 2002
CONTACT PERSON (S)	Tamar Khomasuridze, Assistant Representative (khomasuridze@unfpa.org), Natalia Zakareishvil, National Programme Officer, HIV/AIDS (zakareishvili@unfpa.org), UNFPA country office in Georgia

CASE STUDY	
TURKEY: INNOVATING APPROACHES FOR PROMOTING YOUTH SRHR	
SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT	Building capacity of youth to participate in program design and build partnerships with media, celebrities and others to promote SRHR of youth.
DURATION	2007-2011
BUDGET	102,400 USD
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER(S)	UNFPA, Parliament of Georgia, nongovernmental sector, national institutions, private sector organizations
TOOLS AND RESOURCES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turkish State Theatre Actors Association (DETIS) 2. Youth for Habitat NGO and Youth for Habitat International Network, an umbrella organization operating at the international level through a secretariat with focal points and resource persons in every region. 3. H&M, global retail fashion company
CONTACT PERSON (S)	Fatma Hacioglu, Reproductive Health Programme Assistant, UNFPA country office in Turkey (hacioglu@unfpa.org)

CASE STUDY		BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (BIH): THE ROLE OF Y-PEER IN HELPING VULNERABLE GENERATIONS
SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT	In a country affected by past war, unstable governance and increasing levels of poverty, the UNFPA programme support led to expansion of the Y-PEER network, which engages new members from all parts of the country, including youth from rural areas, marginalized groups, different ethnic minority groups, and youth with disabilities. The Y-PEER network became an important player in the promotion of SRH needs of youth, institutionalization of peer education and inclusion of SRH into the educational programmes for youth and adolescents.	
DURATION	2010-2011	
BUDGET	65,089 USD in 2010, 43,150 USD in 2011	
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parliamentary Group for Population and Development BiH NGO, Partnerships in Health, Sarajevo Demokratski centar Nove Nade, Bihac (DCNNBI) NGO, Zdravo da ste, Banja Luka OKC Abrasevic, Mostar 	
TOOLS AND RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link to Y-PEER website http://y-peer.ba/home Link to Facebook page Y-PEER BiH Link to Y-Peer network Bosnia and Herzegovina promotional video clip: www.youtube.com/watch?v=xX-MTtgCiqE Link to Y-Peer youth event, the MTV Street Dance Challenge: http://inthenews.unfpa.org/?p=9433 	
CONTACT PERSON (S)	Faris Hadrovic, Assistant Representative (faris@unfpa.org), Sara Calkic, Sexual and Reproductive Health Assistant (calkic@unfpa.org), UNFPA country office in Bosnia & Herzegovina	

CASE STUDY		MOLDOVA: MOVING FROM PARTNERSHIP TO LEADERSHIP IN STRENGTHENING Y-PEER NETWORK
SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT	Through strategic approach to capacity building developed by UNFPA, the Y-PEER network in Moldova has made a gradual transition since 2007 from a UNFPA-influenced and supported group of young activists to an independent network with increased capacity in decision making and programming. This has been achieved by addressing specific issues related to Y-PEER capacity, sustainability, visibility and credibility in promoting youth SRH issues.	
DURATION	2010-2011	
BUDGET	84,940 USD in 2010, 52,950 USD in 2011, approximately	
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Education Ministry of Youth and Sport, national youth NGOs: National Youth Council of Moldova, Resonance, Certitude, Family Planning Association Local public administrations National women's health center Ana 	
TOOLS AND RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on Y-PEER activities for 2010 and 2011 COAR 2010, 2011 Annual Reporting Form for Youth Programming for 2010 (used by UNFPA) Report on UBW funds for Y-PEER activities for 2011 Project report, <i>Improving the Sexual and Reproductive Health of Adolescents and Young People in the Commonwealth of Independent States, including the Central Asian Republics</i>, within the framework of Finnish government-supported project, 2010 Project report, <i>Youth have the right to have reproductive health education in school</i>, UNFPA - Y-PEER advocacy grants, 2010 Y-PEER Network in EECA region, Evaluation Report, 2011 	
CONTACT PERSON (S)	Natalia Cojohari, Reproductive Health and Youth Associate, EECARO, Moldova CO, cojohari@unfpa.org	

CASE STUDY		MOLDOVA: DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH LAW BY AND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT	Young people of Moldova participated in the process of amending the state Law on Youth and the development of implementation mechanisms. By playing an equal part in consultations and public debates, the young people developed a strong sense of ownership of the policy and increased their advocacy and leadership skills.	
DURATION	2010-2011	
BUDGET	9,600 USD	
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Youth Council of Moldova - leading agency Ministry of Youth and Sport of Moldova Youth organizations, local youth councils, youth resources centers Parliamentarians (advocates of new Law on Youth) Mass media (TV, radio) German Marshall Fund, USA through a grant-making fund called the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation UN DESA 	
TOOLS AND RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports of the National Youth Council of Moldova, <i>Youth participation in the process of elaboration, adoption and implementation of the Law on Youth</i>, 2010 and 2011 The new draft Law on Youth Terms of reference to contract National Youth Council of Moldova Links to media coverage available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-1A8Ox34bs 	
CONTACT PERSON (S)	Natalia Cojohari, Reproductive Health and Youth Associate, EECARO, Moldova CO, cojohari@unfpa.org	

CASE STUDY		KYRGYZSTAN: DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY 2012-2015
SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT	For the first time, young people in Kyrgyzstan were given an opportunity to participate in a meaningful way in the development of the national Youth Policy concept. The recommendations provided by young groups have been incorporated into the final concept document.	
DURATION	2010-2011	
BUDGET	15,000 USD	
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Youth, UN Thematic Working Group members (UNICEF and UNDP Youth Program) Soros Foundation 	
TOOLS AND RESOURCES	KYR2R208, STI/HIV/AIDS Information/Services, and KYR2P201, Population development strategy, UNFPA projects	
CONTACT PERSON (S)	Meder Omurzakov, Assistant Representative (omurzakov@unfpa.org.kg) Asel Turgunova, Youth Program Specialist, UNFPA country office in Kyrgyzstan (turgunova@unfpa.org.kg)	



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