

**Program Summary**  
**HEALTH COMMUNICATION PARTNERSHIP**

**YOUNG EMPOWERED AND HEALTHY (Y.E.A.H.) PHASE I AND II**

Funding source and dates: HCP Associate Award, 3.5 million, 2004 - 2007

Major partners: UAC, CDFU, Straight Talk Foundation, Save the Children, MFDT

To address the growing need to improve health behaviors and outcomes among young people, USAID/Uganda supported the birth of a national social and behavior change effort called Young Empowered and Healthy (Y.E.A.H.) under the auspices of the Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC). Y.E.A.H. is implemented and managed by a partnership of two Ugandan organizations—Communication for Development Foundation Uganda (CDFU) and Straight Talk Foundation—and is advised by a Technical Advisory Team (TAT) and five Youth Advisory Groups (YAGs). HCP has been providing technical assistance and support to Y.E.A.H. since its inception in 2004.



Now entering its third year, Y.E.A.H. draws on lessons learned from Ugandan and international experience to effectively create a protective environment for SRH among young people and to enable them to adopt positive SRH behaviors. The goal is to trigger measurable behavior change including: delayed sexual debut; secondary abstinence; partner reduction; increased use of ARH/SRH services; increased use of contraceptives, including condoms; delayed age of marriage; decreased incidence of gender based violence; improved testing and disclosure of HIV status; and increased completion of primary education and beyond.

Y.E.A.H.'s underlying conceptual frameworks, "Pathways to a Young people-Friendly and Gender Equitable Society," chart the continuum of social change at four levels: creating enabling environments; improving social services support; engaging communities; and involving young people and men. It illustrates how communication interventions lead to initial outcomes, subsequent behavioral outcomes, and, over time, sustained health and education outcomes. Y.E.A.H. is guided by six strategies: giving young people a voice; building a national coalition for coordinated BCC for young people; creating a visible young people brand; starting up quickly; employing entertainment-education approaches; and challenging gender norms.

Through Y.E.A.H., HCP is assisting the community of organizations working with young people in Uganda to design and implement two phased high-profile, multi-channel strategic communication campaigns under the Y.E.A.H. brand. The first phase campaign, launched in early 2005, focuses national, community and individual attention on the issue of transactional sex. The "Something for Something Love" campaign employs a centerpiece radio serial drama "Rock Point 256" to model individual and social change over time, together with radio spots, print materials, and interactive community based activities to stimulate dialogue and action. During 2005, HCP assisted Y.E.A.H. to conduct formative research and design a strategy for the second phase campaign on masculinity and male gender expectations. This second campaign, dubbed the "Be a Man" campaign, will launch during 2006.

Y.E.A.H. is structured to achieve three key results: positive behavior changes adopted; community participation increased; and, capacity of local institutions to design, coordinate and manage BCC efforts and activities increased. To achieve each result, Y.E.A.H. is focused on the following objectives:

1. To empower young people to manage their sexuality in ways that reduce their risk of HIV, STIs, early unplanned pregnancy, and dropping out of school
2. To promote utilization of available services for young people, including voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) and SRH services
3. To build support among adults for SRH education among young people and to increase constructive parent-child and teacher-pupil communication, especially about SRH

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4. To stimulate community-owned processes that create a supportive environment for health, sexual and reproductive health among young people, and an environment conducive to keeping young people in school
5. To identify and advocate against social and cultural practices that increase young people's risk of HIV, unwanted pregnancy, dropping out of school, and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS
6. To build capacity to support, strengthen, and sustain coordinated behavior change communication interventions by and for young people in Uganda
7. To promote and facilitate among men gender equitable behaviors that will contribute to the reduction in the incidence of HIV and improvements in the health and well being of both men and women
8. To promote gender equitable norms and encourage the acceptance of them as ingrained in socially acceptable male constructs and roles.

Each phase of the Y.E.A.H. initiative has been developed through a consultative process involving young people and other stakeholders in SRH. The first phase is titled "*Something for Something Love*" and focuses on sexual exploitation, defined more specifically as transactional sex. The second phase will overlap with the first and focuses on masculinity and male gender norms.

Over the past year, HCP has focused on strengthening the capacity of the Y.E.A.H. Implementation Unit (IU) to implement the first phase of Y.E.A.H. and design the second phase. With technical assistance from Media for Development Trust, Y.E.A.H. produced 39 more episodes of the campaign centerpiece radio serial drama entitled "Rock Point 256." Y.E.A.H. broadcast the first 48 episodes on 10 radio stations across Uganda. Y.E.A.H. also launched the "*Something for Something Love*" Campaign nationally in January 2006, in Kampala, and regionally during four separate launches during February and March. Y.E.A.H. also initiated a radio drama contest aimed at stimulating community dialogue about transactional sex and instituted a letter management system for listeners letters. In collaboration with the three major daily newspapers, Y.E.A.H. organized a national journalism contest, inviting young people to write articles on their experiences with "*Something for Something Love.*" The best writers will have their articles published, and receive recognition and prizes during a high profile ceremony in Kampala during July, 2006. Materials that reinforce the "*Something for Something Love*" messages, including radio spots, comic books, posters, fact sheets, branded exercise books, billboards, and street poles, were also produced and disseminated.

In collaboration with GTZ and the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, Y.E.A.H. finalized and disseminated the Life Choices interactive DVD and facilitators guide to youth serving organizations and networks. Y.E.A.H. also conducted training of trainers for young people on how to use the Life Choices tool, on management and leadership skills, and in Y.E.A.H. activity reporting requirements.

In June 2005, Y.E.A.H. conducted qualitative research to understand Ugandan definitions of masculinity and to identify behaviors and practices used to express masculinity in sexual relationships, fatherhood, reproductive health, and violence. Using results from this data, Y.E.A.H., with technical assistance from Instituto Promundo, designed the second phase campaign strategy, focusing on masculinity and promoting gender equitable norms. The "Be a Man" Campaign will stimulate men and women to redefine socially acceptable male behavior, create safe spaces for young men to question traditional views about manhood, and encourage delayed sexual debut, faithfulness, and HIV testing and disclosure of their results with their sexual partners. The overall objective of the Phase 2 campaign is to promote and facilitate 'gender equitable' behaviors among men, behaviors that will contribute to the reduction in the incidence of HIV, and to improvements in the health and well-being of both men and women. These 'gender equitable' behaviors include: 1) Partner reduction and faithfulness valued by men and women 15 – 50 years old; 2) Fewer men having multiple sexual partners; 3) Fewer incidents of gender based

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violence and; 4) Improved testing and disclosure of HIV status among sexual partners. In late 2005, HCP assisted Y.E.A.H. to develop a short training course for trainers from male-dominated workplaces, uniformed services, schools and community groups to stimulate introspection and discussion about masculinity and male gender norms that put young people and married couples at risk of HIV. HCP also assisted Y.E.A.H. to produce radio and television spots for broadcast during the 2006 World Cup.

Day-to-day management of *Y.E.A.H.* activities are conducted by the Y.E.A.H. Implementation Unit (IU) run by CDFU with technical assistance and financial support from HCP. The IU is housed at CDFU as an autonomous entity with its own identity and staffed with personnel from both CDFU and Straight Talk Foundation. It draws on the resources of both organizations for assistance with materials development and distribution, radio production, logistics, administration, research, monitoring and evaluation, and training. Technical Advisors (Cheryl Lettenmaier, Donna Sherard, and Irene Kulabako) from HCP provide technical assistance to the IU and the TAT.

**Recent highlights:** On June 9, 2006, Y.E.A.H. launched the Be A Man campaign for young men during the World Cup broadcasts on UBC. Television spots will be aired during commercials of all of the World Cup's 35 games. The spots will be followed by radio ads, training sessions and discussion groups with men, newspaper articles, radio programs, and messages on the popular radio drama series *Rock Point 256*.