



**Commonwealth Youth Programme Regional Centre for Africa**  
**COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT**

**YAPL-SHEP CONSULTATIVE MEETING REPORT**  
**8<sup>TH</sup> – 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2008**

The Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods (YESL) programme called on a Young Ambassadors of Positive living (YAPL) - School Health Educational Programme (SHEP) consultative meeting with an objective to share experiences on positive living and its effects on the delivery of the programme. Further objectives included Identifying what needs to be done for YAPLs living positive in terms of building their capacity, take proposals on how CYP can better the YAPL-SHEP programme and support the YAPL initiated activities in their respective communities. The meeting was attended by 14 ex-YAPL volunteers among them 4 are HIV.

<b>Day One</b>	<b>Monday 8th Dec 2008</b>
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### **1. Self Introduction**

The ex-YAPL volunteers were given an opportunity to introduce themselves. The introductory session gave the participants an opportunity to acquaint themselves with each other. The self introduction was guided by the points below:

- Name
- Expectations of the meeting
- How you learnt about the YAPL-SHEP Programme
- How you are affected by HIV/AIDS

Below are some of the sentiments expressed by some volunteers:

“I didn’t know how much life there was after one discovers that they are infected with the deadly virus of HIV.” (Irene Phiri, 27 year old, HIV positive, from Kapiri Mposhi)

“Knowing my status has helped me in my work as a YAPL quite a lot because when I meet people who are HIV positive, I try to encourage them to accept their status and not live in denial. I tell them that I am also HIV positive but they refuse because am very healthy, I don’t look sick. I have helped a lot of



people come to accept their status. They have been encouraged by seeing me. I even show them my medicine. My message to young people is abstinence, I always emphasis the ABC of life. **A** stands for Abstinence, **B** for be faith and **C**, for condoms.” (Mable Mufwaya, 27 year old, HIV positive, from Kapiri Mposhi)

CYP heard so many touching stories about how affected the participants were by HIV/AIDS. These young ambassadors are indeed ready to make a difference. Their positive qualities of being hard working, possessing the ability to seize the right moment to talk about the HIV/AIDS scourge, their courage, and willingness to learn from their failures is indeed an indication that they are ready to make a difference.

## **2. Who we are (Commonwealth Secretariat)**

Steve Nyondo gave a brief introduction of “**who we are**” stating that: CYP is an international development agency that works to give young people aged between 15-29 the skills, confidence and avenues to create a better future for themselves and communities. CYP works directly with member government on a range of political, social and economic issues.

The above statement generated so many questions and this prompted the meeting to move on to an open discussion on CYP.

## **3. Open discussion on CYP**

The floor was open for discussion. So many questions about CYP were brought to the fore. Such as:

- What is the selection criterion for the CYP Diploma course administered by ZIBCT, and why is it only offered in Lusaka?
- Does CYP sponsor young people for professional courses?
- Why did CYP partner with SPW, instead of implementing the Programme itself in the various placement schools?
- Is CYP still going to Partner with SPW in future placements, and what is its position on the issue of allowances?

By the end of Day one, participants were clear about the many questions which they had about CYP.

#### 4. Distribution of questionnaires

The YAPLS were given Questionnaires to fill in and the information was to guide CYP on how their field experiences were. Among other questions, the YAPLS were to relate a brief life experience of how HIV/AIDS has affected them as individuals and their families. A blank A4 sheet of paper on which they were to write their answer was attached at the end of the questionnaire. This marked the end of day one.

**Day two MONDAY 9th DEC 2008**

#### Proceedings:

##### 1. Open discussion on questionnaires

- Field experiences
- Challenges
- Proposals for YAPL-SHEP
- Sustainability proposals
- How CYP can work with YAPLS as:
  - Ex-Volunteer Network
  - Individuals
- Identification of training needs for capacity building-YAPLS
- Personal plans

##### 1.1 Challenges

On day two CYP was privileged to know some of the challenges which the ex-YAPL volunteers faced. One major challenge was that of accommodation. Listed below are some note worthy challenges they faced while in placement and the proposed action which should be taken:

- Poor accommodation
- Transport arrangements
- Training manuals
- Allowances are too little

**Action;** *proper prior arrangements should made before YAPLS are placed into their respective placement schools. There is need to increase the allowance and the amount allocated for community outreach. The k300 000 does not suffice for most of the shortcomings encountered during placement.*

## **1.2 Project Proposals**

A lot of project proposals were brought to the fore. However, these were taken note of:

Gladys proposed for Mobile Community sensitisation and the introduction of an educational programme with radio and TV aimed at sensitizing and empowering young people. A project which she feels will really be effective. She said that she is ready to start this project upon receiving funding.

Spencer proposed reviving the female football team which was formed as a way of reducing female vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. The new mines which have been opened in his district (mumbwa) have resulted in high levels of HIV/AIDS in the area as men have moved from bigger cities to mumbwa in search for livelihood. Women have fallen victim to these circumstances. The football team meant to bring most women together and before every football match or during training a discussion of about 1 hour was conducted. During these discussions women were empowered with the needed skills and HIV/AIDS issues were raised. This reduced female vulnerability to HIV/AIDS in the area.

Irene Phiri, who is a member of a library in Kapiri proposed for sourcing the library with HIV/AIDS related material. She further stated that YAPLs should be trained to be counsellors as they are always in contact with the infected.

## **1.3 YAPL Capacity Building needs and Personal Plans**

The YAPLs have brilliant future plans. Most of them want to continue their HIV/AIDS advocacy programmes in their respective communities with the support of CYP. Others plan to enrol in institutions of higher learning while those who have already been accepted intend to finish their respective courses.

## **2. Closing remarks by James Douglas Odit- Regional Director**

The participants had an opportunity hear Closing remarks by Mr. James Douglas Odit, Regional Director, CYP RCA. Mr. Odit commended them for their continuous contributions to the fight against HIV/AIDS in their respective communities. He encouraged them to continue with the good work and assured them of CYP RCA's continued support.

He said "Our beautiful nation is one of the worst affected by HIV and AIDS. Young people, especially girls, are bearing the brunt of this disease. This epidemic is mercilessly mowing down are youth and hollowing out our communities. The brilliance of YAPL/SHEP programme is that it actively involves young people to fight back against HIV and AIDS. This same programme is being replicated in other African countries, so from the top to the tip of Africa, young people are taking responsibility for their own destinies by promoting HIV and AIDS awareness in this form of advocacy programme."

The YAPL-SHEP consultative meeting was moving and full of enthusiasm. The youth obviously enjoyed themselves and enjoyed being a part of an advocacy group whose objective is to ensure an AIDS free future for young people.