



Youth Visioning for Island Living 2012-2013
Project proposal on HIV and AIDS in Mauritius

[Adolescent Non-Formal Education Network]

PROJECT DOCUMENT

[Capacity building on HIV/AIDS and allied behavioural risk factors for facilitators and adolescents from ANFEN schools across the Republic of Mauritius including Rodrigues]

Summary.

The conduct of youth-led activities to empower out of school youth, raise awareness on HIV/AIDS and spread and sustain the fight against stigma and discrimination in Mauritius, including Rodrigues.

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Section I - Project Implementation Strategy

1. **Organization or group submitting the project.** [Explain the background, important activities or projects already developed by your organization or group and why you are interested. Please specify who are the project leaders, their gender and age and contact information]

The education system in Mauritius remains an elitist system of education although various reviews have been attempted so far to make it more child-centred. The system has not been able so far to cater for children and adolescents with mixed abilities and slow learners resulting in a substantial number of dropouts, failures and low passes from the primary cycle leading to the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE). The CPE is the final primary cycle examination and opens the gate to secondary education. These dropouts and failures end up six year of primary schooling with very few able to write and most of them unable to read. Every year these adolescents were adding on to the cohort of vulnerable and street children. A recent encounter with the adolescents of ANFEN indicates that most of them have a great deal of learning difficulties often with the English language in particular. Medium of teaching is at present in English. An attempt at using the local Creole language as medium of teaching is being piloted at the moment.

In 2000, under the initiative of UNICEF, 4 NGOs joined forces to form a network named ANFEN (Adolescent Non-Formal Education Network). Today ANFEN is a dynamic network of 20 NGOs across Mauritius and Rodrigues providing non-formal education to over 1000 vulnerable school dropouts (website: www.anfen.mu). ANFEN's Vision is to ensure that early school drop-outs become responsible citizens of society. The common factors with these adolescents are:

- Unsuccessful in completing their Primary school education. It is a fact that, even after 7 years of schooling, many still cannot write their own name. The causes include:
 - A primary school curriculum that is more academic than child centred,
 - The automatic promotion system,
 - Overcrowded classrooms,
 - A lack of a monitoring system to detect and rehabilitate slow learners,
 - A lack of communication between parents and teachers, and
 - A lack of proper nutrition that impacts on the academic development of the adolescent
- Traumatized and lack of self-esteem because of their history of failures at Primary level. They feel looked down by the rest of society and as a result they become anti-social elements.
- Given the lack of formal education, they are prone to being exploited by the labour market.
- They are mainly from dysfunctional families: some incarcerated or even sick/dead in relation to drugs;
- General health problems that are direct attributes of malnutrition.
- Many live in an environment where they are exposed to alcohol, drugs, child abuse and domestic violence
- Sexual unawareness, such as the risks of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Lack of social, moral and spiritual values.

ANFEN's vision is to ensure that early school drop-outs become responsible citizens of society. And its objectives are, inter alia, to build capacity for mentors through the provision of personal and professional development training so that they are able to promote the social economic integration of early school drop-outs.

ANFEN has been successfully organising at a national level over the last 10 years, many events of interest to the young in the "ANFEN" network. Among these are: an annual sports day and football tournament, a biennial exposition of the ANFEN youth art production with an art competition on various themes, this year's theme being the environment. It is also proposed that greeting cards be produced with the prize-winning art works.

Project leaders will be mentors at each of the seven schools who have agreed to participate in the UNESCO project: they are both male and female and of mixed ages. Priority for the present project will be given to those under 30 years wherever possible.

2. **HIV/AIDS and the human rights based approach.** [Explain how your project refers to one or several of the action areas and why you consider you are having recourse to a human rights based approach]

At the very onset, among others, one of ANFEN's objective is to ensure that the "Right to Education" as stipulated by Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is respected. Beyond the right to education, the young has the right to have precise and timely information so that they are better prepared to take the right decision towards responsible behaviour when facing at-risk situations, in particular alcohol, drug, at-risk sexual behaviours.

HIV/AIDS is a preventable infection. Many of ANFEN's youth come from dysfunctional families and exposed at times to risky parents' behaviour. Some parents are injecting drug users (IDUs) others are ex-IDUs under methadone substitution therapy. Poverty and precarity are also part of the denominator and the temptation of making easy money often lurks at the horizon. Youth will need to fully understand the HIV infection, its modes of transmission in general and also within the Mauritian context. Relevant information on their sexual and reproductive health and a sound knowledge of their own respective physical, biological and emotional vulnerabilities are essential to empower them to adopt safe behaviours. They need to be aware of the fact that stigma and discrimination (S&D) exists in the field of HIV, its negative impacts and learn not only to develop resilience but also to enroll as an active partner in the fight against S&D.

3. **Objective, results and activities**

Overall Objective

To build capacity among ANFEN youth to enable them become ambassadors to self-protection and by extension to peer protection from vulnerabilities to HIV/AIDS

Results

1. Preparation of 2 contextualised HIV/AIDS training packages to respond to training needs of ANFEN youth mentors and ANFEN youth and implementation of same followed by HIV thematic youth-led production.

Activities

Activity 1.1:

Meeting with 5 specific on-the-field NGOs working with vulnerable groups, including NATReSA ((National Agency for the treatment and rehabilitation of substance abusers), with ANFEN mentors and with a group of ANFEN youth to discuss on proposed content and training methodology

- Groupe Tan Nu la Voix: grass root CSO for both HIV positive and HIV negative IDUs; contact person=Mr A.N Peerbuccas/ phone (230)7951655/ no mail address
- Chrysalide: NGO for FSW; contact person = Marlene Ladine/georgette Talary (230) 4525509 / crysalid@intnet.mu
- MOH field coordinator for GBT; contact person= M. Chellapermal (230) 9726510 / bethel@intnet.mu
- PILS: NGO for Prevention and Information in the field of HIV/AIDS; contact person G.Rostom (230) 761 83 43 /g.rostom@pils.mu
- NATReSA: contact person= Mrs 'Vimla Jadunundun' (230) 2089037/ vim.jadu@gmail.com

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and other NGOs may be roped in as per needs.

Activity 1.2: Preparation of training packages for ANFEN mentors and for ANFEN youth by consultant. The training content will be, a priori, as follows:

1. Sexual and reproductive health issues: knowing our body, their function and importance of safeguarding its integrity
2. Peer pressure; resisting negative peer pressure and reinforcing positive peer pressure
3. Biological vulnerabilities
4. STIs
5. Teenage pregnancy and its implications
6. Sexual abuse and PEP
7. Drug and drug abuse and addiction: its effect on health and socio-economic life and relationships
8. HIV/AIDS: understanding the infection and its modes of transmission, its evolution
9. HIV situation in Mauritius
10. Understanding Stigma & Discrimination and fighting it

Activity 1.3: Follow-up meetings and finalisation of training packages after discussion and comments from mentors, NGOs and other relevant partners

Activity 2: Training of 20 mentors

Activity 3: Training of 50 trainees

Activity 4: Competitive production based on one HIV/AIDS theme by each of the seven schools and supported by the trained group of mentors

4. **Impacts.** [Explain how your project aims to improve or enhance the HIV/AIDS targeted situation or population]
 - Adapting preventive education to the Mauritian youth needs and contexts,
 - Encouraging responsible behaviour and
 - Reducing HIV vulnerability,

5. **Alliances.** [Add the partners you will work with for the project implementation. Please indicate their contact information]

PILS: NGO for Prevention and Information in the field of HIV/AIDS; contact person G.Rostom (230) 761 83 43 /g.rostom@pils.mu
MOH: contact person of harm reduction strategies = Mr Corceal Sewraz (230) 2542395/ sewraz42@hotmail.com
Mr Sam Lauthan= ex -minister of Social security and champion of the fight against illicit drug and providing psycho-social support to adolescents
Mr J. Appavou, Youth Officer, Ministry of Youth, appavooj@yahoo.com

6. **Associated risks.** [Explain the envisioned risks associated to the project execution]

Difficulty to release mentors and trainee youth: the risk is mitigated in that it is envisaged to do it over a school period where there is no examination constraint on mentors and no examination stress on ANFEN youth. New Coordinator in 2013 may have difficulty to cope with project coordination: It is hoped that those with the institutional memory will help over the transition period.

7. Identify which of the following outputs your results contribute to and indicate how:

- A. **Prevailing misinformation regarding HIV-AIDS among youth minimized through delivery of effective and comprehensive programmes.**

Outputs:

- (i) Most effective means of addressing gaps in existing HIV/AIDS education identified from a youth perspective.
- B. Informal local, regional and interregional exchanges on HIV-AIDS issues conducted through social media, networks and cultural events.**
- Outputs:*
- (i) Locally organized youth-led events and HIV-AIDS information linked to cultural expression through artistic production.
- C. Comprehensive and appropriate HIV-AIDS information and awareness work undertaken, incorporating the principles of universal access, scientific basis, gender equality and a human rights-based approach.**
- Outputs:*
- (i) Locally relevant and culturally appropriate HIV-AIDS training workshops for youth held to augment their capacity to self-protection and peer protection on HIV/AIDS issues while promoting human rights-based approach
- D. Sexual transmission of HIV reduced, including among young people, men who have sex with men and transmission in the context of sex work:**
- Outputs:*
- (i) Strengthened capacity of young people, and youth mentors, key service providers and partners to develop and implement HIV prevention programmes with at least one that provides adequate information to help develop non-judgmental and non-stigmatizing attitude
- E. Punitive laws and practices around HIV transmission, sex work, drug use or homosexuality that block effective responses reduced**
- Outputs:*
- (i) Evidence on stigma and discrimination and its impact is developed, and used to inform ongoing programmes among youth and youth mentors in similar settings.