



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MADAGASCAR

SUCCESS STORY

Youth Help Prevent HIV/AIDS

Helping youth take a lead in the battle against HIV/AIDS



Malagasy scouts preparing for a community outreach event to help fight against HIV.

The USAID-funded Ankoay project is now considered an HIV/AIDS prevention model for youth by Madagascar's National AIDS Committee.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Madagascar has been less affected by HIV/AIDS than many of its neighbors, but recent data suggests the epidemic could spread and that Malagasy youth are at risk. In a 2003 survey of girls under 15, 1.64 percent were HIV-positive. A survey of 15- to 24-year-olds in a mining region found that 72 percent of respondents had more than two sexual partner in the previous year.

In cooperation with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, USAID is funding an initiative to curb this trend. Known as the *Ankoay* or eagle initiative, the program educates youth about HIV/AIDS and teaches them how to become community leaders in HIV/AIDS prevention by promoting behaviors such as abstinence. To encourage participation among young people, groups compete as a teams to earn the distinction of Ankoay status. The teams

are required to complete a series of life skill exercises, a peer education program, and community outreach activities.

The Ankoay initiative incorporates a diverse mix of educational methods, which speak to a variety of learning styles and personality types. To successfully complete the program, youth groups work through twenty highly participatory activities, developing skills such as decision-making, goal-setting, and effective communication. One of these activities is designed to promote individual reflection — the "Youth Passport" includes a role play kit containing scenarios of typical situations youth encounter. As youth act out the dramas included in the booklet, they connect emotionally to vital issues in a safe environment. Once a youth group reaches Ankoay status, it assumes a role of community leadership in the fight against AIDS and celebrates its success with a festival. Media broadcast the news around the country, generating enthusiasm for the program.

The program was designed for youth between the ages of 15 and 18. Originally launched in 2005 through the federation of Malagasy scout troops, the program has expanded to include other youth groups, sports teams, and schools. The Ankoay project is now considered a HIV prevention model for youth by Madagascar's National AIDS Committee.

Photo: Samlénet