



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



ISSUE BRIEF

Healthy Choices for Youth

As a key implementer of the President's Emergency Plan for HIV/AIDS Relief, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) supports prevention programs that follow ABC guidelines. "ABC" refers to **ab**stinence, **b**e faithful, and **c**orrect and consistent use of **c**ondoms. Individual interventions are designed to recognize the crucial differences among target groups and to address them appropriately in the context of local cultures. As the only 100-percent-effective way to prevent sexual transmission of HIV, the practice of abstinence until marriage needs to be a key message, especially to youth. Pairing abstinence education with messages about the future and the importance of monogamy is crucial since half of all new infections occur in the 15–24 age group, and multiple concurrent sexual partnerships are the main driver of generalized epidemics.

In 2004, USAID announced \$100 million in new grants under the *Abstinence and Behavior Change for Youth* program. This initiative will expand activities in support of abstinence until marriage, fidelity in marriage, monogamous relationships, and avoidance of unhealthy sexual behaviors among youth aged 10 to 24. The initiative recognizes the important role that parents, families, community- and faith-based groups, and other key leadership within all sectors play in positively supporting healthy choices for youth.

Below are descriptions of USAID's partners under this program.

The **Adventist Development and Relief Agency** (ADRA) provides community development and disaster relief in more than 120 countries worldwide. As part of the Emergency Plan, the *Abstinence and Behavioral Change for Youth* program will expand ADRA's current activities in Kenya and Tanzania, reaching more than one million youth aged 10 to 24 with abstinence and fidelity messages by September 2009. www.adra.org

The **American Red Cross** (ARC) works with a global network to bring emergency relief and improved living conditions to vulnerable people in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, the Pacific, the Americas, and the former Soviet Union. As part of the Emergency Plan, ARC's *Together We Can* project will scale up proven HIV/AIDS peer-education methodology for youth in Tanzania, Haiti, and Guyana. Through an interactive eight-hour curriculum, together with culturally appropriate community-mobilization approaches, the program will reach 766,000 youth to encourage delayed sexual activity, secondary abstinence, and safer behaviors. ARC will also build the capacity of national Red Cross societies and selected local branches to implement effective youth HIV-prevention programs. www.redcross.org



Source: OGAC

President George W. Bush greets Ugandan youth during a trip to Africa.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) serves the poor in 99 countries on five continents through programs in emergency relief, HIV/AIDS, health, agriculture, education, microfinance, and peace building. As part of the Emergency Plan, CRS' *Avoiding Risk, Affirming Life* project will work with faith- and community-based partners in Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Uganda to encourage abstinence until marriage, secondary abstinence, and fidelity in marriage. Drawing upon extensive prevention experience in more than 30 countries, CRS will enable a robust, locally driven response, including parishes, parents, caregivers, church leaders, women's groups, and youth clubs. While youth will be the focus, adults (especially older males) will also be targeted with messages of fidelity and sexual responsibility as a means to protect vulnerable youth. The project will directly

reach 957,125 youth and 395,360 adults with interactive messages on abstinence and mutual fidelity. www.crs.org

Food for the Hungry helps some of the world's most disadvantaged people in 47 countries through child-development programs, agriculture and clean-water projects, health and nutrition programs, education, micro-enterprise loans, and emergency relief. As part of the Emergency Plan, Food for the Hungry collaborates with eight other Association of Evangelical Relief and Development Organizations under the *Healthy Choices Leading to Life* project. This program aims to empower churches, schools, and other community-based organizations to provide youth and adult stakeholders with the skills, information, and strengthened community-level social structures necessary to reduce HIV transmission and risky behaviors among targeted youth and adults in Ethiopia, Haiti, Mozambique, and Nigeria. The five-year project will build upon existing faith-based networks to reach more than 1,389,000 youth and children and 243,800 influential adults via direct contact, and an additional 55 million people through television and radio messages. www.fh.org

FreshMinistries is an ecumenical, faith-based nonprofit organization working to improve people's lives and to bring hope to those living in distressed conditions. As part of the Emergency Plan, the Anglican Church (as represented by FreshMinistries), the Church of the Province of South Africa, the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, and other partners are implementing *SIYAFUNDISA* ("Teaching Our Children"), a five-year project to reduce HIV/AIDS incidence by promoting abstinence and fidelity in South Africa, Mozambique, and Namibia. The program will be implemented through 100 parishes in the first year. Approximately 132 parishes will be added annually, serving approximately 150,000 youth and 50,000 adults each year. www.freshministries.com

HOPE worldwide is a nonprofit, faith-based charity that provides education, medical services, and programs for disadvantaged children and the elderly in 75 countries. As part of the Emergency Plan, HOPE *worldwide* seeks to enhance local HIV/AIDS prevention through abstinence, faithfulness, and the reduction of harmful sexual behavior for youth and other groups. Community action teams include parents, teachers, and learners who develop local strategies to reinforce behavior

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change among the youth. The project aims to promote abstinence and behavior change among 592,480 youth and parents in Botswana, Côte D'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa, and will be carried out in schools, churches, youth groups, sports clubs, and other faith-based organizations. www.hopewww.org

The **International Youth Foundation** (IYF) works in nearly 70 countries to improve the conditions and prospects for young people. As part of the Emergency Plan, IYF's *Support to HIV/AIDS Prevention through Abstinence and Behavior Change for Youth* program will work through the *Empowering Africa's Young People Initiative*, which involves 16 indigenous sub-grantees in Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Interventions will reach more than 500,000 youth and 200,000 adults to change knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors toward abstinence and faithfulness. IYF will focus on four strategic objectives and will aim to address the crosscutting themes of gender, youth participation, local capacity building, local ownership, and sustainability. www.iyfnet.org

Pact is a networked organization that builds the capacity of local leaders and organizations to meet pressing social needs in dozens of countries around the world. As part of the Emergency Plan, Pact will implement the *Youth and Children with Health Options Involving Community Engagement Strategies (Y-CHOICES)* program. Focusing on community involvement in helping children and youth make educated choices about behaviors that affect their health, *Y-CHOICES* will provide youth, their families, and their communities with improved information, services, and skills supportive of lifestyle choices and behavior change. In Ethiopia, Pact aims to bring abstinence and faithfulness messages to more than 700,000 secondary students. In Zambia, Pact will work with 66 local partner organizations to develop age-appropriate information, education, communication, and behavior-change-communication materials on abstinence and fidelity that address risk factors directly relevant to Zambian youth, especially young girls. www.pactworld.org

PATH collaborates with diverse public- and private-sector partners to provide appropriate health technologies and to create sustainable, culturally relevant solutions, enabling communities worldwide to break longstanding cycles of poor health. In support of the Emergency Plan, PATH's *Scouting for Solutions*—a strategic—skills- and dialogue-based project—will promote abstinence until marriage, fidelity, monogamous relationships, and avoidance of unhealthy sexual behaviors among Scouts in Kenya and Uganda. In partnership with national Scouts Associations, PATH will reach an estimated 400,000 girls and boys aged 12 to 15 years with intensive and repeated messages and activities. By building on Scouts Associations' existing structures and programs, the project will quickly and effectively scale up state-of-the-art HIV education for these youth, their families, and their communities. www.path.org

Salesian Missions provides education and technical training for impoverished children and youth in more than 128 countries. Salesians carry out activities in many countries that have profoundly experienced the impact by HIV/AIDS, with a focus on training vulnerable and at-risk youth to take care of their health through abstinence, fidelity, and addressing harmful gender norms. In support of the Emergency Plan, Salesian Missions will implement the *LIFE CHOICES* program at existing Salesian youth centers, schools, parish outreach facilities, centers for orphans and vulnerable children, and community/social outreach programs in Kenya, Tanzania, and South Africa. The project aims to reach 169,000 youth. www.salesianmissions.org

Samaritan's Purse seeks to meet the needs of victims of war, poverty, natural disasters, disease, and famine. Its *There is Hope* project will mobilize, equip, and train older youth and Christian grassroots youth leaders who work with youth to educate them and to prevent new HIV infection. The program aims to mobilize, equip, and train older youth, pastors, women, and youth leaders to speak truthfully without increasing HIV/AIDS stigma to youth, and to care for these youth by mentoring them and involving them in community service to vulnerable households. The project plans to work in more than 480 communities in Mozambique, Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia, and to reach more than one million youth, youth leaders, and parents with awareness messages, home-based-care training, micromedia campaigns, mentoring, and/or a life-skills and character-based education. www.samaritanspurse.org



Mobilizing Youth For Life: Kenya Rongai Youth Development Outreach

World Relief uses sports clubs like this one sponsored by Rongai Youth Development Outreach in Kenya to reach out-of-school youth with the empowering message of abstinence.

World Relief works in 24 nations on four continents equipping communities and churches to help victims of poverty, disease, hunger, war, disasters, and persecution. As part of the Emergency Plan, World Relief's five-year *Mobilizing Youth for Life* project will scale up well-established HIV-prevention activities for youth in Haiti, Kenya, Mozambique, and Rwanda, encouraging abstinence until marriage, fidelity in marriage, and everyday healthy choices. Working through partnerships with 8,000 churches and 4,800 schools and community organizations, World Relief plans to reach more than 1.8 million youth, 15,000

volunteers and peer mentors, 16,500 pastors and teachers, and 70,000 parents. World Relief will also help to establish 1,750 youth clubs to provide continued social support. www.worldrelief.org

World Vision is a Christian relief and development organization dedicated to the well-being of all people, especially children, through emergency relief, education, health care, economic development, and promotion of justice. In partnership with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Communication Programs, World Vision's *Abstinence and Risk Avoidance for Youth* (ARK) project will combine the reach and power of the faith community with the weight of proven public-health and communication methodologies. The project will be implemented in Haiti, Kenya, and Tanzania through four faith-based organization partners, a national and a regional civil society network, and a training institute. ARK aims to encourage behavior—primarily abstinence and mutual monogamy—that will reduce risk among youth of becoming infected with HIV, with a focus on creating supportive family and community environments. It will also have programs to help sexually active youth reduce risk. A predominant theme will be to create behavior change through small groups and peer support, and to link abstinence and fidelity intervention activities to a continuum of care where available. www.wvi.org