

Life Planning Skills

A CURRICULUM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN AFRICA

GHANA Version

Facilitator's Manual

AFRICAN YOUTH ALLIANCE 2003



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The Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) is an international, non-profit, nongovernmental organization whose mission is to find and implement solutions to critical health problems. PATH is widely recognized for its collaborative work with local and international partners and its success in building and sustaining public- and private-sector partnerships. PATH shares knowledge, skills, and technologies with governments and nongovernmental partners in low-resource settings around the world. For PATH, "appropriate" technologies and interventions are those that meet critical health needs in an affordable and culturally acceptable manner. PATH has 21 program offices in 14 countries.

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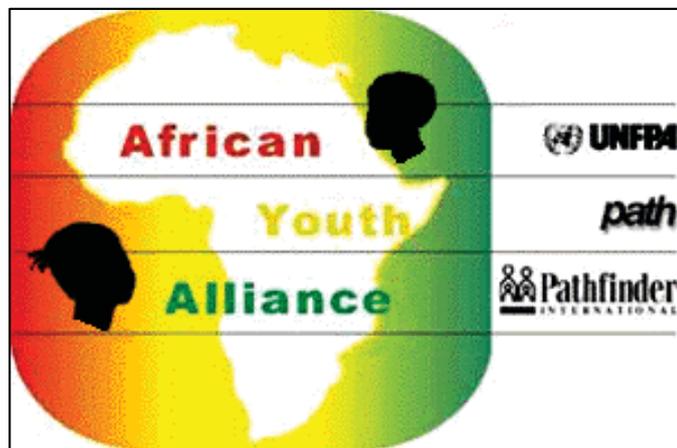
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Program for Appropriate Technology in Health

LIFE PLANNING SKILLS

A CURRICULUM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN AFRICA GHANA VERSION



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The LIFE PLANNING SKILLS (LPS) curriculum for the African Youth Alliance (AYA) in Ghana is the result of the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health's (PATH) behaviour change communication work on the AYA project.

With input from many partners in Ghana, PATH and PATH consultants wrote this Ghanaian version of the LPS curriculum for youth. The curriculum was adapted from a previous version of a curriculum developed by PATH. That version was developed based on several other PATH training curricula, including *Toward the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation: Communication for Change - A Curriculum for Trainers of Public Health Workers, Community Health Organizers, Youth Advocates, and Teachers* (Seattle, WA: 2001). *Advocates for Youth's Life Planning Education: A Youth Development Program* (Washington, DC: 1995) was also an important resource for the preparation of the LPS curriculum. The curriculum was field tested by the Kenyan Association for the Promotion of Adolescent Health (KAPAH), the National Family Welfare Council of Malawi, and Frontline, a youth-serving nongovernmental organization (NGO) in the Dominican Republic. Shurnell Andersson of CARE Botswana helped adapt this Ghanaian version, which incorporates comments from the trainers and youth who have used previous versions.

The units and most activities remain essentially the same, but have been modified to reflect findings from the baseline survey of youth in Kumasi, Ghana, conducted in 2002. Comments and suggestions from Youth Development Foundation (YDF) staff and peer educators also have been incorporated into each of the activities. The final product was then field tested with out-of-school youth in Kumasi by a team of YDF staff and volunteers. Feedback and information gleaned from local trainers and participants, as well as baseline data and focus group discussion research conducted by the PATH evaluation consultant, Dr. Oladimeji Oladepo, MPH, Ph.D. were also incorporated into this publication.

The development of this curriculum was made possible through a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for the AYA project, a five-year project (2000-2005) being implemented in four African countries: Botswana, Ghana, Tanzania, and Uganda.

The AYA project focuses on reducing the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDS, and reducing the rate of teenage pregnancy and unsafe abortions, as well as increasing the age of an adolescent's first sexual encounter. The project focuses on youth between the ages of 10 and 24, a time when young people begin to make potentially life-altering decisions that affect their sexual behaviour and reproductive health. A key AYA strategy is to work with young people to build the knowledge and skills they need for positive behaviour change, through LIFE PLANNING SKILLS education and other behaviour change communication methods. Other AYA strategies include:

- Advocating with policymakers and community leaders to ensure support for adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH).
- Developing and expanding youth-friendly services to ensure youth have access to quality health care that meets their needs and respects their concerns.
- Networking, lobbying, and integrating ASRH into livelihood programs.
- Coordinating with existing initiatives at district and national levels to maximize overall impact.
- Building national capacity and expertise to address ASRH and sustain successful programs.

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ARV	antiretroviral
ASRH	adolescent sexual and reproductive health
CV	curriculum vitae
EEV	employment, entrepreneurship, and volunteerism
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IUD	intrauterine device
LPS	life planning skills
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NTF	notes to the facilitator
OC	oral contraceptive
OHT	overhead transparency
STI	sexually transmitted infection
TB	tuberculosis

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INTRODUCTION FOR FACILITATORS

Welcome to the LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum! This curriculum is designed to help youth in Ghana face the challenges of growing up, to help them make decisions about their sexual health, and to prepare them for work in the future.

The challenges affecting youth today are all too visible. The growing numbers of teenage pregnancies, school dropouts, drug use, and social, sexual, and reproductive health problems like date rape, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) are all indicators that many youth are simply unable to cope. Youth leaders can help young people by providing them with the right information and skills to adopt healthy behaviours and to stay safe through the ever changing and challenging time of adolescence.

For young men and women, adolescence is a time filled with excitement, new feelings, many unanswered questions, changes, and difficult choices. Young people must begin to think about the skills needed for their future in the world of work. They will need to know the facts about their own sexuality and learn skills to help them plan for happy futures and healthy lives.

During this time, they will have relationships with peers of the same and opposite sex. At the same time, they will need to have respectful, loving relationships with family members and will need to learn about making decisions on their own. Young people must also learn to deal with new feelings about sexuality, their physical and emotional changes, and how to make responsible decisions about reproduction and parenthood.

The LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum is a simple guide that focuses on three important issues young people face:

- Recognizing the importance of adhering to values.
- Learning more about how their bodies function, and dealing with sexual and reproductive changes, feelings, and behaviours.
- Thinking about and planning for their future.

The LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum can help young people find out who they are now, where they are heading, who they hope to become, and how to get to where they want to be.

It provides many activities that facilitators can use to help young people:

- Gain information about themselves and their sexuality, including how to prevent pregnancy and avoid STIs and AIDS, and to learn more about preparing for the world of work.

- Look at their feelings about growing up, gender roles, risk taking, sexual behaviour, and friendship.
- Practise making decisions, setting goals, communicating clearly, negotiating for their own health, and not giving into negative peer pressure.

Some Assumptions

The LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum is based on certain assumptions such as:

- Young people can learn to be safe. They can learn how to avoid unplanned pregnancy and STIs, including HIV. This is possible through choosing abstinence, which means deciding not to have any sex, or postponing sex for moral, religious, ethical, or health reasons.
- Young people who choose not to practise abstinence can also stay safe. They can use methods of birth control/contraception, such as always using condoms correctly. They need to know that condoms can be used with other methods of contraception, and if used correctly, will prevent unplanned pregnancy, and STIs, including HIV.
- Young people in Ghana can learn to make good choices and decisions if they have complete factual information, healthy attitudes, and good decision making, communication, and planning skills.

With the use of this manual, adults and experienced youth leaders can work with young people, and help them develop the skills they need to make healthy decisions and to communicate more responsible life choices clearly. “Experiential learning” —learning by doing—is a good way to help young people gain new information and skills, through participation in practical exercises and exploring real-life scenarios.

Existing programs for young people could incorporate any or all parts of these LIFE PLANNING SKILLS exercises into their ongoing activities.

It is important to recognize that facilitators leading the training activities play an important role, and can directly affect the success of the programme. Since topics that are hard to deal with may come up for discussion (including sexuality, rape, violence, or exploring values), facilitators should first ensure that they:

- Really enjoy working with young people.
- Have good communication and group facilitation skills.
- Can use a range of different teaching techniques.
- Are informed about human sexuality, basic health issues, and local job training opportunities.
- Respect the views of young people, even if these views are very different from their own.
- Enjoy helping others to grow, and are enthusiastic about the learning environment.
- Are non-judgmental.
- Are comfortable discussing sexuality issues and other issues that deal with human relationships.
- Have a sense of humour!

In using this manual, it is assumed that facilitators may want to add or change questions in exercises and spontaneously explore other issues as they arise, depending on the needs of the group.

Curriculum Objectives

The full LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum is designed as a series of units, each between three and three-quarters to nine hours long. The main curriculum objectives are to provide Ghana youth with a chance to:

- Learn more about themselves, what they like to do, what they are good at doing, how they feel about key issues, such as family and personal values, and to identify what influences their developing feelings and choices.
- Identify what they want to happen in their lives, help them work towards building good futures by planning for work and deciding about parenthood, and help them to meet their goals.
- Strengthen their knowledge and skills in three areas: sexuality, planning a family, and communication.

The LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum is produced in two parts: A Facilitators' Manual and a Participants' Workbook.

Facilitators' Manual

This is made up of three sections to make it easier to use in the field. Each section contains the following elements.

- Units
- Activities
- Purpose/Objectives
- Time Required
- Materials Needed
- Procedure: Steps to Follow (within each activity)
- Key Points
- Linking Sentences/Concluding Notes

SECTION ONE: WHO AM I?

This section looks at the young person as an individual. It examines the different aspects of growth and development that an adolescent goes through and helps young people understand themselves.

SECTION TWO: WHERE AM I GOING?

In this section the focus is on the young person as a male or female and how s/he relates to others.

SECTION THREE: HOW AM I GOING TO GET THERE?

This section deals with a range of issues that affect the plans that young people make and how adolescents should prepare to cope with these issues in a way that allows them to have a better chance at achieving their goals.

Throughout the curriculum, the words “participants,” “adolescents,” “teens,” “youth,” and “young people,” are used at different times, each meaning the same thing. Each activity shows a list of materials that are needed. A few activities require advance preparation.

In some cases, activities reappear in different units, for example, “Good Decision Making.” This is done to cover situations where the facilitator may be doing different units with different groups. However, if you are working with the same group of participants and have covered the activity in a previous unit, there is no need to repeat it in subsequent units. Just refer participants to it and refresh their memories through discussion.

The Presentation Notes section included in some units is factual information that participants need to know. The facilitator is not expected to copy this word for word on the chalkboard or flipchart, but to know it well enough to give the information to the participants, using whatever method is appropriate.

Each activity has a set of Key Points at the end that is used to summarize the activity. These are the main points that participants should take away with them from the workshop.

Linking Sentences are also provided at the end of each activity. These are to make the connection between activities. As with the presentation notes, the facilitator is not expected to learn or use these word for word, but should use these as a guide to make sure that each activity is properly wrapped up before moving on to a new one.

Each unit has **Concluding Notes** at the end. As with the presentation notes and linking sentences, the facilitator is not expected to learn and repeat this word for word, but to understand the context well enough to give appropriate closure.

Some activities include **Posters**. These should be prepared in advance, either on a flipchart page, chalkboard, or by making an overhead transparency (OHT).

Notes to the Facilitator(s):

NTF:

From time to time you will see text that looks like this—presented in a text box and in bold letters. This is to draw your attention to special information pertaining to a particular activity.

Participants' Workbook

This is an activity book that is used by participants throughout the training. There are three sections to correspond with the facilitator's manual. Each section consists of:

- Purpose and Objectives
- Units
- Activities
- Lessons Learnt
- My Commitment

The workbook contains facts and exercises on the different activities and issues addressed. The workbook is designed for use with literate and in-school groups, as it requires a lot of reading, writing, and skill analysis. Each participant gets to keep her/his workbook.

This facilitators' manual also contains the workbook activities. Many of them can be adapted for use with participants who have little experience reading and writing.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FACILITATOR

How to Use This Curriculum

This curriculum is for use with youth ages 10 to 24. You can change activities to adapt to the needs of youth of different ages, or different ethnic or educational backgrounds. If you are using this curriculum with young people who are out of school, or with youth who have a lower literacy level, try to cover the whole curriculum from start to finish. Some guidelines for working with out-of-school or semi-literate youth are included below.

It is always useful to give the participants a pre-training questionnaire to see what they think the training will be about or to assess their level of knowledge and skills. A sample of a pre- and post-test questionnaire is included on pages 26-28. During the final evaluation of the workshop, find out if the workshop was what they had expected it to be.

Ideally, the same group of youth should be taken through the entire curriculum, but if this is not possible, be sure to choose activities you feel are the most relevant for the group based on your needs assessment.

It is advisable to complete an entire unit and not select specific activities at random.

On the first day of the program, write the curriculum objectives on a chalkboard or flipchart to share with the participants. Discuss these with participants and check how they feel about these objectives.

Tips for Planning your Workshop

To design and conduct a programme that meets the needs of youth, you need to do the following:

- Be very familiar with the entire curriculum, including suggested participatory techniques.
- Determine the amount of time you will need for your session. The amount of time given for each activity is only an estimate; use more or less time as needed.
- Collect pictures or articles from local magazines and newspapers to use during the workshop. These can be used to illustrate gender roles, peer pressure, and sexuality as presented in local media.
- Before the session begins, prepare any handouts or other materials that may be needed.
- Introduce each unit of the curriculum and each activity by talking about the objectives and what you hope to achieve during that session.
- Have a **Question Box** or **Anonymous Wall** available throughout the training for participants to “post” their anonymous questions. These are

questions that they may be embarrassed to ask in front of the group. Make sure, however, that any questions posted are addressed within the workshop or responded to accordingly.

Background Information

It is not expected that each facilitator will be knowledgeable in all areas of LIFE PLANNING SKILLS. Information continues to change and develop rapidly, hence trainers continue to be challenged to improve their knowledge and skills base.

In recognition of this, the curriculum includes some background information at the end of Unit 9: HIV and AIDS. This is to enable the facilitator to have a better understanding of HIV and AIDS so that s/he feels competent and confident to discuss different aspects of the disease and respond to the questions that participants may raise.

The background information does not cover everything about HIV and AIDS, hence the facilitator is challenged to continue improving her/his knowledge and skills base.

Setting the Stage: Ground Rules

Before you start the activities in the LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum it is important to create a “safe space” for participants to speak freely and openly about sensitive issues and personal experiences. Developing a set of rules, called **ground rules**, will help set up a model of acceptable group behaviour and help youth feel more comfortable sharing with each other. This activity is done once at the start of the workshop with a new group, if the group is going through the entire LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum. If the group changes, ground rules should be set with each new group.

It is useful to write the list of ground rules on flipchart paper and hang the list where the participants can see it during the entire workshop.

Ground rules may include:

Confidentiality	What we share in this group will remain in this group and will not be told to others outside of the group.
Respect	We should respect others’ opinions and experiences, even if they are different from our own or if we do not agree with them.
Openness	Be open and honest, but do not talk about someone else’s private life. Give an example, or talk more generally, without identifying the person in your story.
Non-judgmental Approach	It is OK to disagree with another person's point of view, but not to judge or put down

another person because s/he does not think or feel the same as you do.

Use “I” Statements

Using an “I” statement makes sure that the view you are expressing comes from you and only you, and that you are speaking for yourself, and not for the group. For example, “I do not want to marry before I have a job.”

Right to Pass

Although this programme encourages participation, individuals do have the right to “pass” on a particular issue if they do not wish to take part in the discussion or share their view. It is OK to say, “I’d rather not do this particular activity” or “I do not think I want to answer that question.”

Anonymity

It is OK to ask a question, without having to identify yourself. Tell the participants about the Question Box/Anonymous Wall.

Acceptance

It is OK to feel shy or embarrassed; even adults feel uncomfortable when they talk about sensitive topics like values or sexuality. Accepting these feelings is part of the process towards overcoming them.

There may be other ground rules the group may want to develop. Try to encourage the group to come up with their own set of ground rules. You can always start them off by giving them an example.

Guidelines for Working With Out-of-School or Semi-Literate Youth

Each group of youth is different. It is important that the facilitator takes time to assess the group’s needs so that the most effective ways of meeting these needs are adopted. To adapt the activities in this manual for young people with limited experience with reading and writing, follow the principles and guidelines below.

Key Principles:

Be creative. You can find fun and exciting ways to implement the same activity or a completely new activity to achieve the objectives.

Involve the group. Invite the participants as much as possible to help with any preparation that needs to be done, including getting the room set up, preparing materials, etc.

Use audio-visuals as much as possible. This includes posters, pictures, drawings, models, local materials identified by the group, etc.

Guidelines:

- Use simple and local language and terms as much as possible.
- Use group work and sharing a lot.
- Let members of the group answer questions and summarize as much as possible, using their own vernacular and terms.
- Use real-life examples when trying to make a factual point.
- Use normal, everyday things as part of the training resources where possible, e.g. paper, tins, buttons, sticks, etc. Get the group to collect these if and when needed.
- Ask a person from the group to repeat or copy what you have said or done to check that the group understands.
- Use youth interactive activities such as:
 - Playing games; card games are good. These may need to be developed from scratch depending on the issue. Let the group help with this, if possible, by letting them:
 - Identify the activity
 - Collect and cut up pictures
 - Cut or paste/glue cards
 - Making collages (pictures made from cutting up small pieces of papers and sticking them on a board or other solid backing).
 - Making up songs and poems using facts. This makes the facts easier to remember, especially if the participants make up their own songs or poems and teach the group.
- Encourage and allow the group to share experiences so that they can learn from each other.
- Use local folklore, stories, and proverbs that relate to life experiences of value formation, teaching, and learning.
- Encourage demonstrations where they are applicable. Be guided by the group's needs.

FACILITATION TECHNIQUES

Experiential Education

Learning by actively doing an activity is called “experiential” education because the youth are experiencing part of what they are learning. Experiential activities in the LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum are designed to help young people gain information, examine attitudes, and practise skills.

In experiential education participants do something and then talk about the experience together. They make some general statements about what they learnt and try to relate the new information to how they could use it in the future. Experiential learning is participant centred. Your role as facilitator is to:

- Monitor and manage the environment to make sure that each person in the group gets the chance to actively participate.
- Keep discussions on track so as to achieve the activity’s objectives.
- Clarify, summarize, and conclude discussions and activities, making sure that facts are given.
- Assess participants’ acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Role of a Facilitator

A facilitator should:

- ✓ Be patient.
- ✓ Show that s/he is a learner too.
- ✓ Build on participants’ experience.
- ✓ Be sensitive to what is happening in the group.
- ✓ Deal with issues raised in the group.
- ✓ Encourage participation.
- ✓ Use simple language.
- ✓ Keep the group on the topic.
- ✓ Be a good listener.
- ✓ Be aware of all the members of the group.
- ✓ Keep eye contact with group members.
- ✓ Be enthusiastic.
- ✓ Plan the activities in advance.
- ✓ Be empathetic.
- ✓ Have a sense of humour.

A facilitator should not:

- × Dominate the group.
- × Intimidate people.
- × Take sides.
- × Jump to conclusions.
- × Be prejudiced.
- × See her/himself as the expert.
- × Put participants on the spot.
- × Create a long dialogue with one participant.
- × Lose her/his temper with a participant.
- × Be biased.
- × Facilitate discussion if s/he is uncomfortable with the topic.
- × Criticise a participant’s personal belief.
- × Allow participants to dominate or intimidate each other.

Specific Techniques

The LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum uses several facilitation techniques, and you may be more comfortable with some than with others. Feel free to modify any of the techniques presented to suit your audience, but do not be afraid to try new techniques described here, for example:

1. Warm Up/Ice-breaker/Energizers

Using quick games (five to ten minutes) to relax or energize a group

Warm ups generate a lot of energy and laughter in a group. They can be an easy, fun, and informal way to learn each other's names. Sometimes participants think warm-up games are childish and are at first reluctant to join in. However, after overcoming initial reluctance, participants usually enjoy taking part in warm-up games.

As well as being used at the start of a workshop, warm ups can be used when the group's energy is low, for example after a meal or after a difficult session.

2. Brainstorming

Generating a large number of ideas in the shortest possible time, with total group participation

For example, a group could brainstorm on their "expectations of the workshop," calling out all the expectations they have of the whole workshop or just the unit being covered at the time. These could then be written down on a flipchart or chalkboard and referred to at the end of the unit.

Procedure:

- a. Decide on a topic.
- b. State the topic and time limit for the exercise clearly to the group.
- c. Appoint a recorder to list all the ideas as they are mentioned.
- d. State the rules clearly and enforce them as the brainstorm proceeds.
- e. Restate the topic and time limit to keep the group on track.
- f. Indicate when the time is up.

Note that in brainstorming, the points raised by participants are listed **without discussion**. When all the points have been given, it is useful to have a general discussion about the issues raised.

3. Working Around the Circle/Round Robin

Making sure that everyone in the group gets a chance to speak

When working with groups, it is important that the group leader, although taking responsibility for the exercises, should not be seen as the expert handing out information. Everyone in the group should get a chance to speak.

The circle is a useful way of ensuring that everyone gets a chance to speak. It is important to establish this early on; an appropriate time for this could be while establishing the ground rules for working together. The principle is that if something is being discussed “in a round” this means that everyone has something to say in turn and that nobody should speak or interrupt while someone else is speaking.

Working around the circle is not a good exercise for groups of more than 12 people as it can take a long time. However, with large groups the circle technique can be used for small groups reporting back to the main group.

4. Working in Pairs

Allowing pairs to discuss their opinions about a topic before sharing them with a larger group

Participants can “buzz” (talk) in pairs prior to brainstorming. This is another useful way of making sure that everyone participates in the discussion.

Another way of using this technique is to divide the group into pairs and allocate a set time, usually five minutes per person. This means that each member of the pair should talk for five minutes about the given subject. While one person is talking the other listens but does not talk except when seeking clarification. The idea is for both members of the pair to have a chance to talk and to listen. The facilitator keeps check of the time and tells participants when to start, when to change over, and when to stop.

This technique is especially useful for participants to get to know each other at the start of a new workshop. Pairs can be asked to find out the name, place of birth, and one interesting thing about the other person. In this instance, it is a good idea to let the group know before they begin the exercise that each person will have to report back on what their partner has said. Pairs can agree on what they do and do not want to have repeated in the group.

When participants have worked in pairs the information gained from that paired work can be reported to the large group by working around the circle (round robin).

When using this method, each pair may be asked to contribute one piece of information, from which a list is created for debriefing in the larger group. However, sometimes reporting back may not be necessary.

5. Small Group Discussion

Working in small groups of no more than eight people

Group discussion is a technique often used in training. The skills needed by the facilitator will include the ability to question, explain, clarify, draw out, and sum up information. If these skills are used effectively, the group will be able to discuss the issues and reach conclusions themselves. Small group work can increase involvement and participation and reduce dependence on the group leader.

In group discussions, the participants work together for a longer period than when working in pairs. The facilitator can move from group to group providing assistance if this is appropriate.

The facilitator can present an issue, for example, “telling my spouse that I am HIV-positive,” and small groups can look at the advantages and disadvantages of this, i.e. participants in the small groups can draw on their own knowledge. The group’s findings can then be reported back to the large group either verbally or on a flipchart. Again group members can say what they do and do not want to be reported to the larger group.

The facilitator can then sum up and draw out the common threads. By referring to the group and drawing on their understanding the facilitator can clear up any misconceptions.

6. Questionnaires/Quizzes

Using a wide range of questionnaires as a basis for group discussion

A wide range of questions can be used as a basis for group discussion or to enable individuals to reflect on their attitudes towards a given topic. Multiple choice, true or false, or open-ended questionnaires can be used.

7. Case Studies

Designing a very brief story/situation relevant to the issue being explored by the group

This is a useful and non-threatening way to illustrate and bring to life very important issues. Case studies can generate discussion on sensitive topics and can also provide an opening for participants to talk about their own situation if they want to.

Procedure:

- a. Develop or locate a case study relevant to the issue that is being explored by the group.
- b. Divide the group into smaller groups.
- c. Each small group can be given the same case study. If you have more than three groups different case studies around the same issue can be discussed.
- d. Distribute the case studies to the groups.
- e. Provide questions for the group to discuss. Each group should write their responses on a flipchart.
- f. Ask each small group to present their findings to the large group.
- g. Facilitate a large group discussion on the outcomes, making sure that all the members have the same information.

8. Role-Play

Giving participants parts of a story to act out—often unrehearsed

Procedure:

- a. Introduce the issue and clarify the objectives of the role-play.
- b. Ask for volunteers or choose people you think will play the parts well.
- c. Give the actors their roles and let them discuss the role-play before actually doing it. This can be about ten minutes.

Observers should reserve their comments and/or questions for discussion at the end of the role-play.

9. Drama

Using the medium of drama as a learning tool

Drama is a useful technique for large groups and a useful learning process for those actually involved in creating the drama. Actors are given a topic or issue to work with, and then create a drama based on that particular issue to perform to the large group. General discussion should be encouraged at the end of the drama. Specific questions can be designed to keep the group focused.

10. Songs

An exciting way of spreading and reinforcing key messages

Songs can be used in a number of different settings, for example:

- At the beginning and end of a drama.
- At the start of a workshop.
- As an introduction to a topic of education.

Groups can also make up their own songs.

11. Videos

Showing participants a story or documentary illustrating the issue being explored

As with any other method of training, the use of videos needs input from the facilitator and discussion with the participants. Before showing the video the facilitator should already have looked at the video and be able to give a brief outline of what is to be shown. Participants are encouraged to note any points they would like to raise for discussion at the end.

12. Continuums

Finding out how people feel about a topic based on their knowledge about that topic

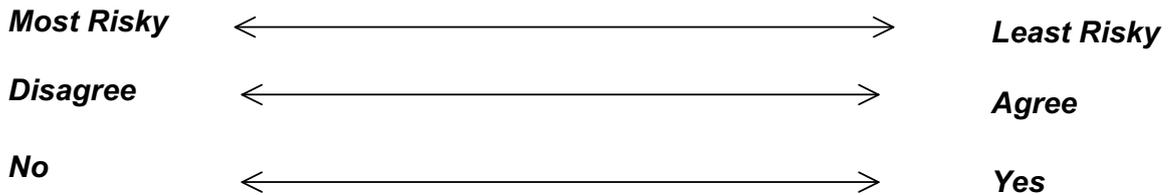
When examining people's feelings about an issue, values, attitudes, and information are continually changing. Very few questions can be answered with a straight yes or no response.

Continuums involve placing people or cards along a line. For example, when considering risks associated with different sexual practices, particular activities

can be placed along a line from “most risky” to “least risky” depending on the relative safety of each.

Participants are then invited to place themselves at that point on the line where they are in terms of their understanding or belief about the issue. Sometimes it is useful to have an “undecided” or “unsure” card along the line, as this allows people the chance to share their concerns and reach some understanding or clarity.

A CONTINUUM



13. Story Telling

Using stories to evoke responses, feelings, values, and attitudes of participants

Procedure:

- a. Tell the story. When it is finished ask participants to discuss their understanding and feelings about the story. This can be done through pair work or small group work.
- b. After about five to ten minutes of discussion, the facilitator may ask participants to comment (if the group is large, comments can be taken from selected pairs).
- c. As each comment is raised, a discussion can take place around it.

Stories should be developed for each particular situation and setting.

14. Picture Codes

Using a set of pictures to tell a story about a particular community problem

A picture code is a poster-sized illustration that presents one familiar problem that a community or a group has strong feelings about. It is used in a group situation to raise questions and to generate discussion. A picture code always illustrates the problem or issue and is used at the beginning of a problem-solving session to focus the attention of the group.

15. Story Board

A sequence of pictures used to tell a story about a particular problem

Whereas picture codes are used to highlight one particular problem or issue facing a community or group of people, a storyboard is used to raise questions of how one situation can lead to another. It can also help generate discussion.

16. Cycling Around the Newspaper/Flipchart Paper

Asking participants to share views on more than one issue

When working with large groups there are occasions when facilitators may want to find out a group's level of knowledge, beliefs, or attitudes about various aspects of a subject or their experiences on certain issues. On such occasions a large group discussion can be difficult to handle.

An alternative is to use a technique called "Cycling around the newspaper or flipchart paper."

Procedure:

- a. The facilitator writes each aspect of an issue on a separate piece of flipchart paper and places the papers where each participant can see them and read them.
- b. Each participant then moves around, reads the different headings and writes her/his personal feeling or belief about the issue.
- c. Each participant does this until s/he has written on each piece of flipchart.
- d. When using this exercise the facilitator should note that participants usually need less time at each piece of paper towards the end of the cycling. This is because by this time most of the points would have been written down.

17. Debate/Panel Discussion

Asking participants to present advantages and disadvantages of an issue or several points of view of it

Debate and panel discussion are two similar techniques that provide a forum for discussion. In a debate, the advantages and disadvantages of an issue are presented, while in a panel discussion several viewpoints on an issue, and not necessarily conflicting viewpoints, are presented.

Debate

A question, issue, or problem is presented. The issue should have a strong positive and negative aspect that the debaters can argue for and against. There are two teams, each of which argues for a different side of the issue.

Panel Group Discussion

A number of panellists speak about their viewpoints on a chosen subject to an audience. The audience is given an opportunity to ask the panellists questions after their presentations.

The debaters or panellists should think about their input beforehand so they can offer useful insights. The comments of the speakers may spark a discussion among the participants.

Competition should not be encouraged. There should be no winner or loser, as there are arguments for and against every issue; participants should accept that everyone has the right to her or his own opinion.

18. Devil's Advocate

Deliberately putting forward an undesirable or unpopular point of view to stimulate discussion

This technique involves a participant who acts as a “devil” who advocates risky behaviour or undesirable attitudes. The other participants question and argue in an attempt to defeat the devil’s argument, unaware of the deliberate intention of the devil. The person who takes the role of the devil must be a capable speaker and have the necessary strength of character to raise an unpopular opinion.

Devil’s advocate is most often used when dealing with areas of behaviour and temptation. This technique helps participants to judge some of the behaviour choices they have to make, and think up alternatives where necessary. In arguing with the devil, participants develop skills to help them reason why they do or do not want to behave in a particular fashion. After using this technique, the facilitator must point out to participants that the person taking the role of the devil is not necessarily speaking her/his own opinion, but is only playing a role. Otherwise participants may be reluctant to volunteer for the role.

The technique of devil’s advocate is not restricted to one devil arguing with a large group. The devil’s advocate could also be used to illustrate a peer group asserting pressure on an individual.

19. Poetry

Using poetry to allow the participants to reflect and share their views on related issues

A facilitator may use existing poems about a topic to provoke discussion, or may encourage participants to express their own thoughts and feelings by writing a poem. When using lines from an existing poem, the facilitator should design a list of questions for the group to answer. These questions can be discussed in small groups.

In summing up, the facilitator can ask participants to identify the most important lesson they think the poem is presenting to them.

20. Letter to the Editor

Using anonymous letters to address similar problems that participants may have, but do not want to talk about

A variation on the case study technique is the use of letters that appear on “problem pages” in local magazines and newspapers. These pages are very popular and relevant letters from this section can be used as case studies. People generally write to “problem pages” because they cannot, or prefer not to approach anyone about their problem, or because they find it easier to write their problem than to talk about it.

21. Lecture/Presentation

A formal presentation made to a group by an individual speaker

A lecture is a structured and orderly presentation of information, opinion, theory, or fact delivered by an individual speaker or panel. However, lectures can involve audience interaction and participation by allowing time for comments, questions, and feedback. The creative use of visual aids can help capture audience attention.

These are just some of the many different participatory techniques that are used in experiential learning workshops. The facilitator is free to use other techniques, especially if they are geared to bring out maximum participation from the youth.

The Workshop P.I.E.

Each LIFE PLANNING SKILLS workshop consists of three processes: **P**lanning, **I**mplementation, and **E**valuation. Together, these processes make up the workshop P.I.E.

Planning

There are three main components to planning every workshop:

1. The Participants
2. The Workshop
3. The Facilitators

For each component, the following should be considered:

1. The Participants

- What are the attitudes, understandings, and skills that participants are likely to bring to the workshop?
- What expectations will the participants have of the workshop? How much exposure do the participants have on the topic?
- What do you want your participants to have discussed, know, or be able to do by the end of the workshop?
- Do you think there will be conflict in the workshop and have you thought of mechanisms to deal with this?
- How will you deal with participants who arrive late?
- How will you ensure that people do not dominate group discussions?

2. The Workshop

- Preparation and planning are important, however, be flexible, relaxed, and creative.
- If the workshop is to include a Saturday, check if most of the participants are prepared to work on a Saturday. Allow enough time for people to travel to and from the workshop.
- If the workshop is residential, find out if participants are prepared to stay and whether they will be prepared to work in the evening. Be sure to find out if provisions for childcare at the workshop venue are needed.

Workshop checklist:

- ✓ Venue booked, keys on hand
- ✓ Participants know where to go
- ✓ Venue is familiar—know where power sources and light switches are located
- ✓ Caretaker available if needed
- ✓ Support material and equipment prepared, checked, and functioning
- ✓ Registration form and name tags prepared
- ✓ Appropriate seating arranged
- ✓ Reference material prepared
- ✓ Adaptors and extension cords available and in working order

- Make sure that your budget will cover the number of participants expected and other workshop costs.

Other key points to consider are:

- Is the venue easy to get to or will transport have to be provided?
- Is the venue booked?
- Will you register people when they arrive? Do you need registration forms?
- Will participants be given materials—a folder, programme, pen, etc.? If you are not giving them materials, do they know what to bring?
- If you are using electrical equipment such as overhead projectors, videos, etc., have you checked that the equipment is working and whether you need to bring extension leads or adaptors?
- What type of scheduling conflicts might arise for facilitators or participants, particularly during certain times of the month or with holidays?

Making Workshops Work

Welcome and Introductions

Spend some time getting to know each other. Begin the session by welcoming the participants and introducing yourself and any co-facilitators. Briefly describe your own background, where you are from, why you are there, your education and training in the field of youth development and ASRH, and what you plan to do in the workshop.

Give participants a chance to introduce themselves, and depending on the size of the group and time available, you may ask them to briefly share some personal information as well. These are activities that are very helpful with new groups. Start on time and if refreshments are served, make sure they do not infringe on the workshop time. This should be the case in all the workshop activities, not just the first one.

Aims of the Workshop

State the objectives of the curriculum as described in the Introduction above. Remember to write these on flipchart paper and leave them up for the duration of the workshop.

3. The Facilitators

Some important questions to ask include:

- Will more than one facilitator be needed for the workshop?
- Do you need to include other facilitators in the programme planning or make them aware of specific information before the workshop?
- Will facilitators who are not leading a particular session take part in that session?
- Is there a need for a balance of male and female facilitators?
- Have provisions been made to record the workshop proceedings if need be?

- Does the facilitator have expectations concerning pay, transport, accommodation, food, etc. and what are they?

Implementation

The LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum gives a detailed plan of activities to address the different issues and objectives. Remember that you have the flexibility to adapt any of these to suit your group and the resources available to you, including time. The important thing is that learning should take place on the issues in a way that can influence and change behaviour of the group.

REMEMBER!

It is likely that whilst discussing sensitive issues such as HIV and AIDS, some of the participants may have emotional responses, which they may need to talk about. These should not be dealt with in the context of the group, but individually. Sometimes information may be required that you can provide. However, if the problem is highly emotional it would be best to refer the person to an experienced counsellor.

Evaluation

The purpose of an evaluation is to assess if:

- Objectives of the programme or activity were met.
- Information imparted was understood.
- The curriculum met the stated expectations of the participants.
- Any new information was learnt.
- The facilitator was effective in conducting the programme.

Evaluation of the LIFE PLANNING SKILLS curriculum is done mainly at the end of each activity, as well as at the end of each unit and at the end of the entire curriculum. The “Conversation Circle” is used at the end of each unit as it works well with young people and is easy to implement. Note that this is effective with groups of 12 or less. Instructions for working with larger numbers are included in the activity.

Make sure to give each group the questions to answer or write them where the entire group can see them.

Here is a list of evaluation techniques that you can choose to use during the workshop.

1. Mood Meter

At the beginning of the workshop, prepare a chart called the “mood meter.” The mood meter is an instrument for the group’s own daily measurement of the mood and atmosphere of the session. It may, or may not, be directly related to the content of the workshop.

Prepare a chart on newsprint with the total number of activities for that day or the morning, or afternoon, depending on what you are measuring. Write these in a vertical line. In the horizontal columns for each training session, draw at

least three different mood symbols, for example, faces showing happiness, indifference, or frustration/anger.

Participants should place an X or a dot in line with the emotion they are feeling at the end of each session. This mood meter can be used to discuss the energy level of the group and/or the reasons for success or failure as the programme progresses.

Example of Mood Meter

UNIT	MOODS	PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES (X)
What my values tell me to do	 Happy/Satisfied	
	 Frustrated/Upset	
	 Bored/ Indifferent	
Sexual abuse and family violence	 Happy/Satisfied	
	 Frustrated/Upset	
	 Bored/Indifferent	

2. Flash Feedback

Participants and facilitators should sit in a circle. Ask the group a direct question, such as: “How did you feel about the day today?” or “What two new things did you learn today?” Each person gives a personal opinion in a very short statement, going around the circle. It is called “flash” feedback because of the speed of the response time. It should not take more than 30 seconds for each person to answer the question. No discussion is allowed as the “flash” is going on.

3. Evaluation Committee

At the beginning of each day, two or three participants are chosen, or volunteer, to evaluate the day's events. They may use any technique to gather information from the other participants. Normally, facilitators and the evaluation committee

meet immediately following the day's activities to assess evaluation findings and prepare to present the results before the next day's activities begin.

When using any evaluation technique, you should always ask the group for comments and respond to any issues that arise.

4. Questionnaires

Another form of evaluation is to develop a questionnaire to be completed by participants. This can be used to measure a range of knowledge, skills, and experience or to determine participants' expectations of the course. Questionnaires can be given at different stages of the workshop, depending on what the facilitator wants to measure.

Samples of different workshop questionnaires are included at the end of this section on evaluation. Each can be adapted to meet programme-specific situations.

The facilitator's role is always to ask the opinion of the participants and permit a variety of ideas to be stated during the evaluation process. Remind the group to be constructive in their criticism, and to look for ways to improve the programme.

For groups with little experience reading and writing, questionnaires can be administered verbally by the facilitator. Participants can form teams of three to five people, and answer questions verbally as a group. For pre- and post-tests of knowledge, teams can score points for correct answers.

5. Scaling

A scale from 1 to 10 is used to measure how participants feel about specific issues, for example, in a final evaluation to assess any expectations and fears that were raised at the beginning of the workshop. In this example, the questions to be asked might be:

- Were we able to avoid the following fears?
- Were we able to accomplish our expectations?

To answer these questions, each participant places an answer for each question on a scale from 1 (the poorest) to 10 (the best). The points are then added up and discussed. This can also be used to assess other factors of the workshop such as:

- Workshop venue and facilities
- Content of activities
- Knowledge and skills gained (pre-post test for these)
- Daily schedule
- Duration of activities and training

Sample Questionnaires

A. PRE-WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____

Address _____

1. What do you do? Circle one.

a. Student

b. Employed

c. Other _____

Note: For low-literate groups the following may be written up on newsprint, and collective answers taken in an open session.

2. Why do you think you were invited to attend this training?

3. What do you understand life planning skills to mean?

4. What do you expect to learn during this workshop?

5. What fears, if any, do you have about participating in this workshop?

6. Have you ever participated in a workshop on life planning skills before?
Circle one.

Yes

No

If yes, where? _____

When? _____

7. What did you learn during that course?

B. PRE/POST TEST EVALUATION

Here is a sample of a questionnaire that can be used as both a pre- and post-test evaluation. It can be modified to suit the respective group. Photocopy enough copies to give to the participants before you begin the training and again after you have completed the training. Be sure to discuss the results with the participants so that they can see their own growth or improvement.

INSTRUCTIONS: Circle the letter of the one correct response.

1. Three of the following are body fluids known to spread the virus that causes AIDS. Which one is **not**?
 - a. Blood
 - b. Sweat
 - c. Semen
 - d. Vaginal secretions

2. Three of the following are important things to know about before using a condom. Which thing is **not** so important?
 - a. Whether it is made of lambskin or latex rubber
 - b. Expiration date or date of manufacture
 - c. Size
 - d. Whether it has a tip to catch semen

3. Which one is the most common way of transmitting HIV?
 - a. Sharing needles
 - b. Breast feeding
 - c. Having unprotected sex with an HIV-infected person
 - d. Receiving a transfusion of HIV-infected blood

4. Which is the **best** way to protect yourself from an STI?
 - a. Reduce number of sexual partners to no more than two
 - b. Have only one sexual partner
 - c. Use a condom
 - d. Abstain from sex

5. Being assertive means all of the following **except**:
 - a. Standing up for your own rights
 - b. Dominating others by telling them what they should or should not do
 - c. Expressing feelings in a positive way
 - d. Respecting yourself

6. The most commonly abused substance among youth is:
 - a. Alcohol
 - b. Weed (marijuana)
 - c. Tobacco
 - d. Cocaine

7. Three of the following are things you can do to prevent sexual threats and violence. Which one is **not** very helpful?
 - a. Avoid secluded places
 - b. Decide sexual limits and tell them to your partner
 - c. Cry and plead for your life
 - d. Do not accept gifts

8. Which of the following contraceptive method or methods are **most** effective to prevent unwanted pregnancy and STIs?
 - a. Oral contraceptives (the pill) and condom
 - b. The condom alone
 - c. Spermicide and condom
 - d. An IUD and condom

9. The most likely time a girl/woman can get pregnant is:
 - a. Around the fifth day of her period
 - b. Immediately after her period
 - c. Just before her period
 - d. Around 14 days before her next period

C. FINAL WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible. You do not have to write your name on the sheet.

What one thing about the workshop did you like?

What one thing about the workshop were you not happy with?

What new knowledge did you learn through this workshop?

How are you going to use this knowledge/information?

What new skills did you learn through this workshop?

How are you going to use these skills?

How does what you learnt in this workshop influence you to change your behaviour?

THANK YOU!!