## 

**M5-T1-H1-Overview of Peer Education**

**Benefits of youth leadership created through peer educators:**

* Strong leadership skills help young people to make positive decisions in their own lives, to resist negative peer pressure and to avoid risky behaviours. Leadership skills bring a strengthened sense of self and build confidence. At the community level, young leaders are more able to act as effective role models to their peers and influence them positively.
* The competencies that make a good leader are the same qualities needed for a young person’s successful transition to adulthood.
* Peers offer an entry point. For example, in communities where sex is stigmatised, young people are less likely to talk to adults about their issues. However, they are more likely to approach their peers with questions, research shows this is even more likely once they have participated in a programme such as Dance for Life - they are seen as peer role models. If young people are already talking to their peers, there is an opportunity to make sure their peers are trained to educate in SRHR so these conversations become meaningful and effective. The role of mentors is really important in this.

**Quotes from ODI evaluation of Restless Development’s Youth Empowerment Programme in Karamoja, Uganda:**

*‘The peer education model provides unique access to youth and communities*...*Peer educators represent a continuous presence in communities and are able to ground programme activities in local priorities, language and concepts. Peer educators provide Restless Development with a valuable network able to share information, mobilise communities, and broker relationships with and between youth, government, service providers and others. This network is increasingly recognised as a valuable resource by others. In Moroto and Napak districts, government and NGOs have engaged Restless Development peer educators to support their own outreach work. For example, UNICEF works with peer educators to coordinate advocacy efforts while the Community Development Officer in both Districts regularly mobilises youth through the peer educator networks.’*

*‘Peer educators act as nimble relationship brokers at local level. District officials report that Restless Development provides a valuable, informal monitoring service on sub-county government structures. Community Development Officers note that Restless Development‘s support to help profile and register youth groups is highly valued. Village health teams note that peer educators are supporting local referral systems and leading sensitisation activities. Restless Development should map these connections across the different sectors and identify how to maximise the peer*

*educator network.’*

**Spotlight on the benefits of peer education in Tanzania and South Africa:**

The impact of Restless Development’s overseas partner organisations on the delivery of peer educator programmes is well documented through evaluations and research, a copy of which is available to share on demand. These include: a) External Evaluation of Youth Peer-to-Peer Sexual and Reproductive Health programme in the Southern Highlands, (Tanzania, 2011) ; b) External Evaluation of the Teacher Aids Action Programme, (Zambia, 2011); c) Mid-term evaluation of the Youth SRH and HIV prevention programme (Zimbabwe, 2011); and d) Evaluation Report: Youth Empowerment Programme (Uganda, 2013).

An independent external evaluation in 2011 in Tanzania – which is running similar youth-led SRHR programmes to our work in the Eastern Cape in South Africa, found that in our target communities compared to those communities where we have not worked, we have achieved significantly:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Key Finding (highlights)** | **Control** | **Restless Development** |
| **SRHR** | | |
| Comprehensive HIV prevention knowledge | 65% | 94% |
| Treatment for sexually transmitted infections | 8.3% | 4.3% |
| Voluntary Counselling and Testing | 43.2% | 75% |
| Teenage pregnancies | No reduction | 88% reduction |
| **Decision making** | | |
| Young people involved in family decision making | 30% | 50% |
| Gender equity on village and ward AIDs committees | 2:1 (in favour of men in 2010) | 1:1 (in 2011) |
| **Livelihoods** | | |
| Young people earning income through self-employment | 39% | 66% |
| Out of school youth saving 4% of income | 0% | 86% |

In South Africa, in 2015, South Africa’s peer education programme has been evaluated externally in the Eastern Cape – in two of the districts by Mthente Research and Consulting Services.

96.1% of surveyed youth acknowledged that SPW South Africa Trust’s peer education programme helps young people improve their economic situations. Similarly, 80.6% of respondents indicated that they were enrolled in school or planning to attend university with the support of the programme.

In OR Tambo, 71.4% of respondents felt that training provided by Restless Development had helped them enrol in tertiary education and Trainings provided on livelihoods was rated positively with 97.1% of respondents acknowledged that the volunteer interventions had helped them to improve their economic situation.

94.6% of surveyed beneficiaries confirmed having been provided with information and training on HIV prevention with 90.7% indicating that SRHR information and training provided by SPW South Africa’s programme had been helpful in raising their awareness. 88.4% also confirmed that the information provided by SPW South Africa had led them to personally change their behaviour with regards to practicing safe sex.