



Case Study: Apprendre à Vivre (Learning about Living)

Oxfam Novib partners: One World UK , Butterfly Works

Country: Senegal

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I. Summary

After the success of Learning for Living in Nigeria, our partner One World UK now implements this program in Senegal. It offers information for young people on sexual and reproductive health rights in an innovative fashion through ICT and SMS text messaging. In the first six months after the start already 4,000 text messages with questions were send, well above all expectations.

II. Full description

Aim

Half of the population in Senegal is under 18 years old. Most young people are not well informed about sex and related issues, due to tradition and taboos. The project aims to inform and educate young people through innovative ICT applications about their sexual and reproductive health rights.

Context

Also in Senegal young people are becoming sexually active at a younger age. They need more and better information about relationships, sex and HIV/Aids. However, talking about these subjects remains a taboo. As youth receive very little answers to their questions about sexuality, they remain badly informed. Dominant norms and values, religious tendencies, classical education systems and ageing learning methodologies but also ignorance of parents and teachers, play a key role in the obstacles to proper awareness about sexual and reproductive health rights. The information that is currently provided (formal and informal) is incomplete, contains half truths and affirms stereotypical norms.

The overall goal of Apprendre à Vivre (Learning for Living) was to use ICT tools to develop and implement a project that will provide information and life skills necessary to foster behavioural change among young people. The way to achieve this is by encouraging a reduction in high-risk behaviour which may lead to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, unplanned pregnancy, complications from unsafe abortions and maternal mortality. By empowering young people to get sexual and reproductive health information on their own terms, and by promoting alternatives to social norms that accept violence against girls and women, the project seeks to address some of the important challenges that young adolescents are facing. It uses innovative technologies that provide a 'safer space' for learning and interacting.

Why did Oxfam Novib get involved?

The Learning about Living program was launched in Nigeria in February 2007. It has proven to be very successful in reaching youth in appealing ways, give sufficient information and teach life skills to enable them to make their own choices. Because of this, Oxfam Novib asked One World UK to test the feasibility of such a program in Senegal. The results of this study were positive, based on the high rate of access to information and communication technology (ICT), Oxfam Novib's broad-base partnerships in the country as well as access to the education sector. It was decided to launch a two-year pilot.

Methodology

One World has attempted to ensure strong participation from different stakeholder organizations, from civil society to government to private sector. It insists on local ownership as well as handing the program over to local organizations, and has been mainly building the eLearning and Mobile phone platforms. Teachers, counselors and users have been trained on these tools. One World has also involved the Senegalese radio.

Results

Fitting in the Senegalese context, the program improves the teaching and sexuality education as well as life skills, to empower young people to make informed decisions. The curriculum development and implementation is being led by the Ministry of Education alongside key Senegalese civil society organizations. Butterfly Works worked hand-in-hand with RAES, a local Senegalese health and education organization, to build the multi-lingual info-cartoon e-curriculum. This includes scenarios voiced in French and Wolof by local youngsters. A number of 143 teachers in 10 schools in the regions Dakar and Ziguinchor were trained by the end of 2010 to use the eLearning platform. Of those 25 were trained as Master Trainers, capable of stepping down the training to their colleagues. A further 84 youth peer educators were trained, 20 of whom also became master trainers. Lessons started in January 2011.

The platform provides on-demand information and services through trained counselors. In 2010, the major components (SMS and email question-and-answer service) were embedded within the structure of a major civil society partner. Private sector companies – including one of the largest telecom companies in the country – have offered no or low-cost support.

Since the public launch in February 2011, the BiplInfoAdo has received well over 75,000 unique text questions, far exceeding the expectations. In order to run the service, One World recruited and trained 5 counselors to provide accurate information and counseling.

Using a participatory method developed by RAES, One World has created radio programming by and for young people to develop their own effective communication tools. This must ensure that messages developed and distributed will be suitable and understood by the local communities. Working with a trained group of 10 young people and 5 local radio hosts, the radio programming was distributed throughout the country.

Policy and practice changes

Innovative participatory media systems enable young people in Senegal to improve their life chances. There is increased gender equality, by reduced prevalence of sexual violence against women and positive alternatives to gender constructs that assume male superiority. Progress is achieved towards the Millennium Goals through providing young people with opportunities to understand the rights of girls and women, accurate and unbiased reproductive health information, life skills that empower girls to protect themselves from gender-based violence, unwanted pregnancy and its associated mortality, and HIV/Aids, as well as life skills that empower boys with positive models of sexual behaviour.

III. Lessons learned

So far the Learning about Living has appeared to be a great success in Senegal. Oxfam Novib is currently discussing a follow-up and scale-up project with One World. The scale up will be used to emphasize the needs for youth outside the cities.



Learning about Living is now successful in Nigeria, Senegal and Morocco. Extension to Mali and Egypt is being investigated.

Tips and more

Always continue to be aware of opportunities. One World UK is a partner that asks for additional support and funds, which is good because Oxfam Novib then gets a better idea of the needs and progress of the projects.

IV. Read on..

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HD0UuPW5ifE>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqCwQ7y4GCs>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzwGWBf3kGI>

<http://www.infoado.org/2011/11/11/etude-de-faisibilit-learning-about-living-sngal/>

<http://oneworldgroup.org/mobile4good-lal-senegal>

V. Colophon

Partner: OneWorld UK is one of the 13 centers of the OneWorld Network, a worldwide participatory media network. The speciality of OneWorld UK is innovating e-media tools and platforms to support communities of civil society organisations and global citizens. OneWorld UK is partner of Oxfam Novib since February 2007.

Project: ON's project number: A-100140-02, project period: 01/12/2009 - 30/11/2011, financial contribution Oxfam Novib: € 700,000 with an additional grant of € 142,876

ON's bureau/field office dealing with the project: West Africa

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Source: annual report 2010, scale-up proposal 2012, email correspondence between One World UK and Oxfam Novib

Aim of the Case:

Selling: for fundraising

Telling (for sharing insights and trust) and Learning (for sharing and learning from experience)

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This case was used for the public year report 2011