



**MODULE:
COMMUNICATION WITH A PASSION**

**RESOURCE PACK FOR YOUNG VOLUNTEERS
IN THE IPPF EUROPEAN NETWORK**

September 2008

Acknowledgements:

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Introduction

The MA should support and encourage its young volunteers to be part of changing the world they live in by influencing young people and adults to promote choices regarding the sexuality and sexual and reproductive health. One of the corner stones of what the Member Association does is communicating messages through advocacy to try and influence decision maker to improve sexual and reproductive health for all people.. Young people are the ideal spokespeople to raise concerns about adolescent reproductive and sexual health issues and young volunteers can play an active role in this. They know what their peers are worried about and can bring a unique voice to debates around these issues. They know what works with youth in their community, and what doesn't. Young people are also probably far more concerned about the well-being of youth around the world than are some policy makers.

Good and effective communication is essential to all aspects of the work of the Member Association. It is important that both the internal communication – how we communicate to each other on a day to day basis within the MA – and the external communication – how we communicate to the outside world – are effective and working. To increase the likelihood of success in the advocacy efforts the MA engages in, staff member and volunteers must transmit their messages in a way that ensures that listeners understand the intent of the message. Similarly it is just as important that staff and volunteers can interpret other speakers' messages as intended. An effective communication climate is characterized by an open atmosphere where everyone feels free to express their feelings, thoughts and ideas and where people listen to and respect each other.

This training module is designed to give a brief introduction to communication of young volunteers of the MA.

Objectives

By the end of the module participants will have:

1. a clear understanding of the concept of communication and advocacy
2. gained awareness of issues and challenges facing communication work in practice

Sessions

1. Good and bad communication
2. Communication and change
3. Being a spokesperson for the MA
4. What do you say: preparing messages

Proposed time schedule

Time	Themes/objectives	Facilitation methods	Resources/materials
15 minutes	1.1 Good & bad communication	Group work Role play	Flipchart markers
45 minutes	1.2 Acting it out	Group work Role play	
60 minutes	2. Communication and Change	Group work	Exercise 1
break			
30 minutes	3.1 Being a spokesperson for the MA – communication at a party	Groups work Plenary	Handout
30 minutes	3.2 Communication in a formal setting	Group work	
lunch			
	4. What do you say energizer	Group work	
60 minutes	4.1 What do i feel comfortable talking about	Group discussion	Strips of papers with messages, exercise 2 handouts
60 minutes	4.2 Preparing for opposition	Role play	

Exercises

In the separate exercises folder you will find the following:

- Exercise 1: Become a change maker
- Exercise 2: Messages of the opposition

Handouts

For handouts you can use the following:

- Handout 1: What do we say
- Handout 2: Example of message
- Handout 3: How to Prepare

Resources

For resources relating to communication you can use:

1. IPPF toolkit: messages
2. How well do I communicate
3. Using the Media
4. Speaking in front of a group

Session 1:

Good and bad communication

Session 1.1 . What is good and bad communication

Good communication is not the same as simply giving information. It involves exchanging ideas listening to others, respecting other's opinion and involving the very people you are communicating to.

Aim: For the volunteers to think through what characterises good and bad communication

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Flipchart pens

Steps:

1. Divide the volunteers into small groups of 2-3 people
2. Ask the groups to brainstorm examples of times in your life when you have experienced good or bad communication. The examples can be very broad and general: it could relate to school, church/mosque, politics, or be more personal and be about relationships.
3. Let each group share some of their examples in plenary. Make two columns on a flipchart labelled "good" and "bad" and record key words from the examples given in the appropriate column. Finish the exercise with looking at the list of good examples and discuss in plenary.

Facilitator's notes:

Sample list for "good" communication:

- Listen to what people say
- Invite questions
- Be aware of people's concern
- Understand words and concepts that people commonly use
- Share ideas and information in a way that help people understand and correct misunderstandings
- Build on what people already know
- Stick to important points and not "overload" people with information
- Be specific about what people should do
- Motivate people

Session 1.2. Acting it out

Aim: To identify what is effective communication for both a sender and receiver of information

Time: 45 min

Steps:

1. Start this activity with two role-plays to reinforce the introduction. The first role-play should demonstrate ineffective communication skills. The second should demonstrate good communication skills. The content can be about anything; something from their daily lives.
2. Select another facilitator or one of the participants to help you present the role-play. Make sure you have allocated a few minutes before the session starts to decide on the situation and the roles you are playing. Use the same situation for both role-plays. The topic can be anything. For example, a manager who gives vague instructions for an assignment or a volunteer who takes credit for what another volunteer has done.
3. Take no longer than 1-2 minutes for each role-play. No introduction is necessary.
4. In the first role-play, both parties should demonstrate poor listening and speaking skills. Examples include:
 - Angry or defensive tone of voice
 - Interrupting the speaker
 - Lack of eye contact/ rolling the eyes
 - Sarcastic manner and tone
 - Poor body language
 - Lack of clarity expressing a position/opinion
5. The second role-play, both parties should demonstrate good listening and speaking skills. Examples include:
 - Making eye contact
 - Good tone voice
 - Positive body language (sitting up straight, nodding head in agreement)
 - Paraphrasing the speaker
 - Not interrupting
 - Asking for clarification
6. When the role-plays are completed, ask the participants to think about what they observed in the scenarios with respect to language, communication styles, body language, etc. What were the specific behaviours that increased or decreased the level of trust between the two parties?
7. Write the following on a flipchart:

Effective communication techniques	
Sender	Receiver

Session 2:

Communication and change

Aim: helping volunteers to figure out how they would like to become involved in the MA

Time: 60 min

Material: Exercise 1

Steps:

1. Explain that everyone has a “vision” — an idea of what you want your world to be. Your world might be your local community, your country or the whole world. Your vision can be as local or global as you like. We’ve all got different visions relating to our different experiences of life. Working it out will help guide you, whatever action you may take.
2. Here are four questions that will help you identify your passions and interests. Jot down some points and put it in a safe place. A few people are going to ask you for your vision along the way, and by answering it well, they’ll take you seriously. If they believe in you, they’ll give you their support.
3. Give the volunteers 15 minutes to start answering the questions. Encourage them to write down whatever they think of. Explain that they don’t have to commit to anything now and that they can think more about the questions at home. Let them sit in small groups and share their thoughts, clarify that it’s ok not to share anything if you don’t want. Let the groups feedback in plenary.
4. Give positive feedback and encouragement to anyone who shares ideas. End the session with giving some examples of how youth volunteers have been involved previously.

List of Examples of how you can be a change making volunteer

- Talk with your friends, parents about issues of sexual and reproductive health you are passionate about
- Organize discussion and information evenings about topics related to SRH for other youth
- Give a speech or presentation in your school/ university
- Write on Facebook; websites or in newspapers/journals
- Participate in campaigns promoting comprehensive sexuality education in schools
- Perform theatre/drama presentations, followed by discussion
- Show video/movie presentations, followed by discussions
- Distribute information, education and communication materials
- Distribute condoms
- Demonstrate condom use
- Encourage and teach other young people how to negotiate safer sex
- Participate in local, national and international youth fora
- Attend awareness raising activities, such as the World AIDS Day
- Participate in media campaigns
- Write letters or petitions to local politicians about SRH issues

Young volunteers represent their MA and can be a spokesperson for their MA in formal and informal settings, in private and public places. In each situation they need to be able to share the vision, values, ideas and activities of the MA.

Facilitator’s notes:

This session can only work if participants have had already an introduction in the vision and work of the MA.

Session 3:

Being a spokesperson for the MA

3.1. Communication at a party

Aim: To give participants training and experience of talking about SRH issues with their peers.

Time: 30 minutes

Steps:

1. Let all participants individually imagine the following scenario:
Imagine that you are going to a party tomorrow. At the party somebody comes up and asks what you did yesterday. You explain that you took part in this training. The person wants to know more about why you are involved in this and why it is important. What will you say?
2. After 5-10 minutes ask the participants to form pairs and practice the scenario on each other.
3. Discuss in plenary: How did it feel? What was easy? What was difficult? What questions do you think young people in your community will ask when they learn that you are volunteering for the Member Association?

3.2 Communication in a formal setting

Aim: To give the participants training and experience of talking about SRH issues in a more formal setting.

Time: 30 minutes

Steps:

1. Explain the importance of having clear and simple messages. The message should preferably be no longer than a few sentences about what they want to do related to the issue. Explain the elevator test and ask the groups to try to make their messages pass this test.
2. Divide the volunteers into groups of four and ask each group to prepare how they would represent the MA to try to formulate a clear and simple message about it.
3. Ask the groups to share their messages in plenary and give feedback.

Facilitator's notes

What is an elevator speech? It's a message that provides a brief overview of an organization, project or vision. The pitch is so called because it can be delivered in the time span of an elevator ride. You should be prepared to give this statement to anyone who will listen. "Elevator speeches" aren't always delivered in an elevator. They can happen while standing in line at a coffee shop, at a meeting or a party, or any other time you have just a short time to tell someone important the main concepts of your project/vision.

Why use an elevator speech? It is important to be able to quickly introduce what you want to do. You only have a few moments to make a first impression. Investing time in developing and rehearsing an elevator speech could make the difference between gaining a new supporter and walking away empty-handed.

What are the key elements of an elevator speech? Your elevator speech should have three elements:

1. Who you are
2. What you do
3. How you do it

And, there are three steps you need to take when developing your elevator speech:

1. **Prepare, prepare, prepare** – This is a short speech that needs to sound like it's being delivered off-the-cuff. That means you need to put a lot of work into writing, editing and practicing. Then, once you've completed the process, go back and edit and practice some more.
2. **Avoid jargon** – Keep it simple. Avoid using terminology that is meaningless outside of your industry or organization.
3. **Tell a story** – Avoid a dry recitation of facts. Listeners will retain more of what you tell them if you share a story.

Session 4: What do you say: preparing messages

Energiser

Make sure participants do this energiser without realising that it is a metaphor for approaches in communication. In pairs, one participant should form a clenched fist. Their partner needs to open the clenched fist. Most participants will immediately try to force open their partner's fist! Demonstrate that there are easier ways! For example, hold out your hand to shake hands with them and often the fist will open automatically, or give them a gift which they have to receive with an open hand. Explain to them only after they have finished that this is like when want to get your message across: you have to know when to be aggressive and when to be subtle and persuasive – when to shout and when to whisper.

Session 4.1. What do I feel comfortable talking about

Aims: To help the participants explore what they feel comfortable talking about

Time: 60 minutes

Material: Strips of paper with statements, Handout 1

Steps:

Before embarking on communication for change activities, it is important that participants feel confident about what it is they are discussing with others. Remind participants of the importance of promoting young people's sexual and reproductive health rights. Also explain that the opposition groups or individuals are always waiting to challenge them on these issues and so being prepared is the key to success!

1. Print the following statements in large letters on cards / sheets of paper.
2. Place them randomly on the floor and get participants to walk around reading them.
3. Participants should then pick up one statement that they would feel comfortable talking about as a spokesperson for the MA. They can form groups if more than one person chooses the same statement. Participants need to decide who will be the person(s) they will be talking with or to.
4. Get feedback on why they would feel comfortable. Pull out key themes on a flipchart.
5. Return the statements to the floor and repeat the exercise with something they would not feel comfortable about.
6. Encourage a free exchange of ideas and show appreciation for everyone's inputs.
7. Give handout 1 with suggestions for messages

Statements:

"Needle exchange programmes are good for preventing HIV among people who inject drugs."

"People who are HIV positive should also be able to have sex."

"Homophobic practice is unacceptable."

"Same sex couples should be able to have children."

"It's OK to be gay."

"Young people should learn about sexual pleasure."

"All young people should be taught about their reproductive systems, e.g. menstruation and how babies are born."

"Good sex is safe sex."

"Abstinence only programmes don't work."

"Boys can say 'no' too."

"Young men suffer violence too."

"Girls should learn to say 'yes' and 'no'."

"Contraceptive services should be made available to young, unmarried women."

"Emergency contraception should be available to all young women."

"You have the right to choose whether or not to have an abortion."

"Everyone can have an abortion."

"Young people shouldn't be forced to get parental consent to access contraception"

4.2. Preparing for opposition

Aims: To help participants to experience how to respond to the opposition

Time: 60 minutes

Material: Exercise 2, Handout 2

Steps:

1. Explain some of the barriers you might face in undertaking these actions in your community. Individuals and groups (friends, parents, teachers) for example:
 - You might be ignored
 - You might not having all the resources you need
 - You might not have enough allies
2. Ask the group to sit in 2 rows facing each other. Each person thinks of a typical opposition claim to the work of the MA or to young people's sexual and reproductive health rights (see Exercise 1 for examples)
3. In the first round the participants on the left side will ask the question/make the claim and those on the right should respond. This debate will continue for 2-3 minutes
4. In the second round, the participants on the right will then ask the question/make the claim and those on the left should respond. This debate will continue for 2-3 minutes
5. By moving places, the debates can continue for as long as there is time
6. At the end, discuss how it felt and whether the person in front of you determined how easy or hard it was to engage in the debate. Remember the more you practice the better you will be!
7. Give Handout 2 with possible responses and handout 3 with tips to prepare

Facilitator's notes

Preparing for debates

Identify your opposition. Learn about their arguments and activities. Prepare counter-arguments that are accurate and honest.

Assess the risks

Emphasize that the actions of participants do not cause harm to themselves or others. Stress that participants should ask their supervisor at the MA about the possible risks they may not have considered. Some possible risks may include:

- Social stigma or discipline, at home, school, or in the community;
- Hostility or even physical harm by someone opposed to your actions;
- Financial or legal consequences.

