



Taking Root

Branching Out

**The development of
young key population-led
organizations in the
Asia-Pacific region**

Based on selected cases from Youth LEAD, the Asia-Pacific Regional Network of Young Key Populations, and its partners in Indonesia, China, Cambodia, and Nepal



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Published by Youth LEAD with support from the Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund

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Designed by: Laframboise Design

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Thank You

Youth LEAD, Asia Pacific Network of Young Key Populations

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Youth LEAD

At a glance

At its conception as a pilot project, Youth LEAD had entered novel territory and is in consistent effort to bring attention to the challenges faced by young key populations (YKP) in the Asia-Pacific region. The intergovernmental agencies, community-based networks, and civil society organizations that supported Youth LEAD's establishment contributed to building a platform where YKP could connect, share ideas, and learn from each other. They not only facilitated a safe space for YKP to openly discuss their needs and challenges, but also hopes and aspirations, tapping into their talents, and envisaging the world they would want to live in. Over the years, through much collaboration and support from technical experts, academics, donors, and dedicated young people themselves, Youth LEAD has become an active and engaged regional participant in the response to HIV, and has successfully advocated for the meaningful participation of YKP in numerous decision-making processes. Youth LEAD aids YKP in implementing projects in the region, and lends technical capacity to their organizations, continuing to empower generations of young leaders.

A great deal of the hard work was done by young key populations themselves, and Youth LEAD's accomplishments are truly a testament to them and the incredible family that the network has become. With a small secretariat, brilliant young leaders from across Asia and the Pacific have been able to support each other through thick and thin. Youth LEAD connected young people, some of whom had no prior international exposure or regional connection when it came to HIV, human rights, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Through peers and many valued collaborations with youth and adult individuals and organizations, Youth LEAD has become a visible platform for change and lends technical capacity to YKP in the Asia-Pacific region, building their strength through engagement, leadership and communication, a cornerstone of its success.



“Youth LEAD asked us what our plans for the future were, how we envisaged ourselves as leaders, how we wanted to bring about change for our friends and communities. Nobody had ever asked me that before. I think just thinking about that changed me as an individual.”

Youth LEAD focal point, China



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Acronyms

7Sisters	Coalition of Asia-Pacific Regional Networks on HIV/AIDS
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APN+	Asia-Pacific Network of People Living with HIV
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IATT-YKP	Interagency Task Team on Young Key Populations
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
MSM	Men who have sex with men
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PLHIV	People living with HIV
PWID	People who inject drugs
SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization
YKP	Young Key Populations
Youth LEAD	Youth Leadership, Education, Advocacy, Development

Youth LEAD

About this report

When young people are meaningfully involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies, services and programs that affect them, initiatives become more effective and impactful (Family Health International, 2005) Meaningful participation comprises active involvement in planning, implementation and evaluation of policies and programs. This would be even more crucial for young key populations (YKP) whose needs are unique and who face additional challenges, such as in participation or accessing services, than youth from the general public or adult key populations (IATT, 2014). YKP are in a great position to address their own issues from their perspective, and to contribute to adapting initiatives to more efficiently respond to their needs. More than ever, YKP-led organizations are critical to advancing public health and human rights in a comprehensive response to HIV. For this, they require technical and financial support.

Six years since its inception, Youth LEAD has made palpable presence on HIV platforms in Asia and the Pacific, and globally as the voice of young key populations from the region. It has continued to strengthen as a YKP regional network, expanding in reach and scope, with recognized contributions to the response to HIV, from the very grassroots level all the way to the highest decision-making authorities in the field. Youth LEAD, its focal points, and affiliated organizations and networks have been catalysts of change and empowerment for YKP and they have achieved this through advocacy, engagement with national and international authorities, capacity building for YKP, and by building partnerships.

At national level, some of Youth LEAD's focal points in the Asia-Pacific region have gone on to establish networks of their own, participate in decision-making, and have brought about positive change for their communities.

This report attempts to capture the development phase of young key population-led organizations as selected among Youth LEAD's focal points largely funded as the sub-grantees of the Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund (RCNF), observe the varying levels of success of this process, and identify common elements and challenges. Furthermore, this report aims to produce recommendations for donors and stakeholders wanting to support a comprehensive response to HIV and keen to engage with YKP.

Finally, recommendations from this report can help guide YKP in establishing networks for themselves and their peer, in the process promoting and exercising the right to equal participation for YKP.





For the purposes of this report, members and coordinators of select country focal points that received funds from Youth LEAD through the Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund were interviewed. This was anonymously collated, and comments from various stakeholders were added; stakeholders who had witnessed the growth journey and development of these YKP-led organizations. National and regional concept notes, financial reports, and activity outputs were also consulted. Personal and community transformations, leadership, organizational capacity development, expanding regional connectivity, influencing laws and policies, and meaningfully engaging with diverse national and regional stakeholders were all observed to varying degrees in the documentation process of this report. To be chronologically inclusive and to capture the varying degrees of success pertaining to organizational development, China, Cambodia, Indonesia and Nepal were selected from amongst Youth LEAD's national focal points to be featured in this report. China and Indonesia were selected as two countries that were with Youth LEAD from the very start, were part of Youth LEAD's initial funding cycle, and whose YKP-led organizations have performed well in environments and circumstances conducive to organizational development and growth, details of which are highlighted in this report. Nepal was also present since the beginning and received funds from Youth LEAD. However, the organization has not been able to develop as far as others, and was included specifically for this reason, to help identify some challenges faced by YKP. Finally, Cambodia was selected as a country that was not part of the initial funding cycle of Youth LEAD's and yet in an even shorter time frame than the aforementioned three, has performed exemplarily well. The Philippines and South Korea were part of Youth LEAD's initial RCNF funding cycle in 2013 (along with China, Indonesia and Nepal). However, their organizations existed well before Youth LEAD and their inclusion would alter the scope of this report. A more detailed report could cover all recipients of RCNF funds through Youth LEAD. Another suggestion for an even more grand vision would be covering all country members and national focal points of Youth LEAD regardless of directly receiving funds, but who have nonetheless attended Youth LEAD's Annual General Meetings, have provided input for multitudes of processes, have received technical capacity, and have been engaged on numerous platforms, spanning 20 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Many YKP focal points originally started as volunteer outreach workers or staff with grassroots or adult key population organizations in their respective countries. Through regional intergovernmental and donor collaborations, they became involved regionally with Youth LEAD by attending meetings or participating in trainings or workshops. In the process, joining a network of YKP from across the region and learning from each other about needs and challenges in different countries. Over a rather short period of time (particular to this report, 2013-2015) many of the young people interviewed had become vocal activists, advocated for positive change for their communities, reverberated change in their countries, and had built capacity for other YKP to empower future generation of leaders.

Youth LEAD

About Youth LEAD

Youth Leadership, Education, Advocacy and Development (Youth LEAD) works with and for young people who are members of populations that due to a variety of reasons including punitive laws, criminalization, societal discrimination and stigmatizing policies, are among the most likely to be exposed to HIV, but at the same time, whose meaningful engagement is key to a successful and comprehensive response to HIV (UNAIDS, 2014). For Youth LEAD, young key populations (YKP) include young gay men and other men who have sex with men, young people who inject drugs, young people who sell sex, young transgender people and young people living with HIV. Crosscutting populations like young women and girls are always considered YKP and are a major focus of Youth LEAD's efforts.

Youth LEAD does not recruit members, but rather empowers young leaders who subsequently bring about change in their countries and in due time build capacity for future generations of leaders. Youth LEAD is not hierarchical and its remarkable family of dedicated focal points from across Asia and the Pacific is as integral to its direction and composition as the network's secretariat; the two are intertwined and interdependent.

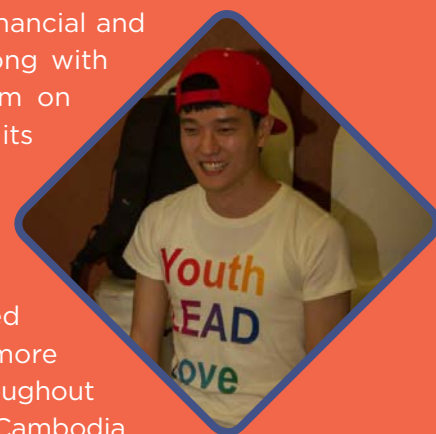
Youth LEAD's vision for Asia-Pacific is for a region where the human rights of YKP are respected and the impact of HIV and AIDS is mitigated through their meaningful involvement in gaining equal and equitable access to HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support. In its mission, Youth LEAD seeks to be the catalyst of change and empowerment for YKP through capacity building, advocacy, and the expansion of partnerships between local, national, and regional YKP organizations. Youth LEAD advocates for greater participation and the meaningful involvement of YKP at all levels of HIV policy, programming, and decision-making processes.

Youth LEAD was founded in 2010 as a pilot project funded by UNFPA under the Coalition of Asia-Pacific Regional Networks on HIV and AIDS (7Sisters), including the Asia-Pacific Network of People Living with HIV (APN+), which hosted Youth LEAD and provided valuable fiscal support.



The meaningful involvement of key populations in a comprehensive response to HIV had been made clear by evidence and promoted by UNAIDS, UN co-sponsors and community-based partners (Consolidated Guidelines on HIV Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment and Care for Key Populations, WHO, 2014), but the unique needs and vulnerabilities of young key populations were less explored and remained largely unanswered. The nature of activities which increase exposure of young people to HIV are considered sensitive and taboo in many countries in the region. Youth LEAD was established at a pivotal time in the response to HIV and had a niche void to fill, where the needs of YKP were starting to be openly discussed. Subsequently, it received financial and technical support from UNAIDS, UNESCO and UNICEF, along with other members of the Asia-Pacific Inter-Agency Task Team on Young Key Populations. Youth LEAD continued to prove its capacity as an organization, strengthen, increase in size and expanse, and be recognized as a regional platform for YKP.

In 2012, Youth LEAD also started working towards independence, galvanized in 2014 by becoming its own registered foundation in Thailand. As of early 2016, Youth LEAD had more than 40 dedicated YKP focal points in 19 countries throughout the region, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. Efforts from all have contributed to the network's resilience, growth, expansion, and marked success, with much collaboration with partners and support from diverse stakeholders, including the Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, 7Sisters, APN+, NORAD, David and Lucille Packard Foundation, AHF and other stakeholders.



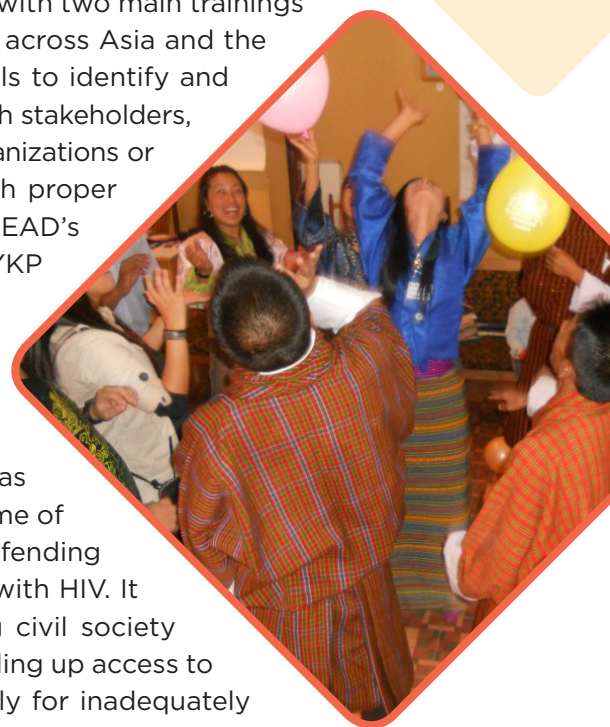
Spotlight NewGen

A cornerstone of Youth LEAD's achievements instrumental to its growth and expansion is NewGen, a leadership, advocacy, and communication short-course designed by YKP for YKP, with creative education experts from the University of Melbourne, and technical and financial support from the Inter-Agency Task Team on Young Key Populations, including UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, International HIV/AIDS Alliance, and Save the Children. NewGen started as a 5-day short course comprising HIV knowledge, communication capacity, and leadership skills all delivered through fun, informative and engaging activities: a testament to the young people involved in its design and implementation. Since 2011, NewGen has been adapted, updated and modified with two main trainings of trainers, and many national and sub-national rollouts across Asia and the Pacific. The short-course gives young people many tools to identify and communicate their needs, be more confident, engage with stakeholders, become empowered agents of change, and establish organizations or influence change within their existing organizations with proper framework and structure. The idea for many of Youth LEAD's national focal points to get together and promote YKP rights, participation and needs was born at NewGen.

About RCNF

The Robert Carr civil society Networks Fund (RCNF) was established in recognition of Dr. Robert Carr for his lifetime of work devoted to progressing the response to HIV and defending the human rights of key populations and people living with HIV. It was launched in July 2012 with the aim of supporting civil society networks worldwide in addressing critical factors for scaling up access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, particularly for inadequately served populations.

In 2013, Youth LEAD, with technical support from its stakeholders and using recommendations collectively identified by its members and focal points, compiled a concept note and applied for the first round of the then newly established RCNF. Youth LEAD was selected in the first round; the only youth-led organization in the world to have been granted this opportunity. Being entrusted with the responsibility and autonomy to handle such funds and implement activities gave Youth LEAD credibility as a regional youth-led network, and in many ways boosted its spirit as a relatively new organization, particularly one driven by YKP. RCNF support gave Youth LEAD the ability to expand beyond its traditional donors and to directly support its focal points and their projects; with 6 initiatives proposed in 5 countries in the first round: China, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, and South Korea.



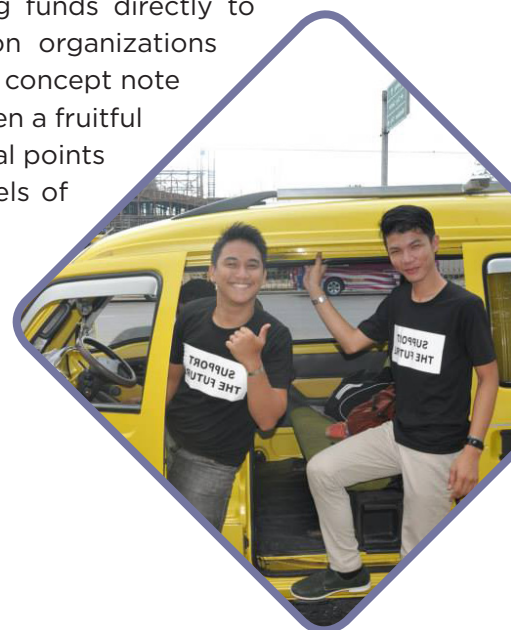


Youth LEAD used the funds with 3 main objectives: 1) to increase leadership skills, develop organizational capacity, and build network sustainability; 2) to strengthen YKP networks and promote strategic partnerships in the region; and 3) for regional- and national-level advocacy influencing laws and policies that increase vulnerabilities of YKP. However, not all Youth LEAD sub-recipients benefitted the same, whether from the first or subsequent rounds of funding, and the varying results could be attributed to different combinations of organizational composition, stakeholders, partnerships, and country contexts.

Through its flexible support to Youth LEAD and its partners, RCNF has contributed to expanding the representation, engagement and participation of YKP in the response to HIV in the Asia- Pacific region, and by extension, globally. Many Youth LEAD focal points interviewed for this report mentioned how receiving technical assistance and capacity from Youth LEAD along with funds from RCNF changed everything for them in terms of activities, building confidence, credibility in successfully engaging with national authorities, and for engaging with the Global Fund process. They noted the catalytic role RCNF played in the inception, strengthening and expansion of their organizations, for YKP in their countries, and for personal transformations.

Focus Global Fund

Through the 2015 Special Initiative by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (The Global Fund, GFATM) in partnership with RCNF, Youth LEAD was able to include more partners in countries as recipients, such as in Pakistan, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Myanmar and Vietnam, particularly in order to increase participation of young key populations in the Global Fund process. One of the streams within this Special Initiative is channeling funds directly to regional and global networks to support key population organizations and networks to better engage with the Global Fund, from concept note development to implementation and appraisal. This has been a fruitful collaboration for Youth LEAD whose participating YKP focal points have successfully engaged with Global Fund at many levels of decision-making and programming.

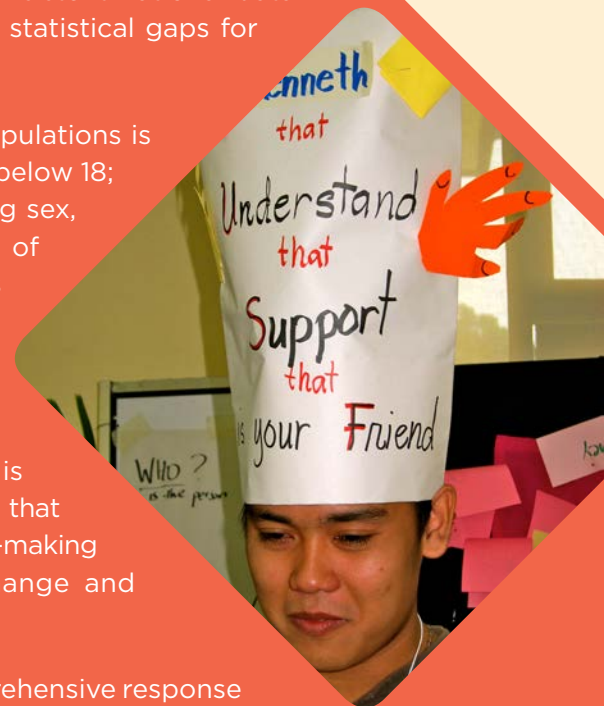


The need to support YKP

When Youth LEAD was founded, evidence presented by the Report of the Commission on AIDS in Asia indicated that 95% of all new HIV infections among young people occurred among most-at-risk adolescents, including young key populations (UNAIDS, 2008). Even though the numbers may have changed since then, the dynamics of HIV and its response still remain very much the same (UNAIDS, 2015). In 2014, young people ages 15-24 living with HIV in Asia-Pacific constituted 12% out of all people living with HIV in the region while the proportion of the new infections amongst same youth group constituted of 35% of all new infections (AIDS Data Hub). It is known that considerable proportions of key populations are young people (UNAIDS, 2014). Yet inconsistent national data disaggregated by age and gender leaves large regional statistical gaps for young key populations.

Available information on size estimates of young key populations is extremely limited; this is even more so for young people below 18; even though many young people start having sex, selling sex, and injecting drugs well before the legal threshold of 18 years, even before 15 for some (UNAIDS, 2014). This highlights the need for comprehensive information for (and about) YKP and access to evidence-informed prevention, testing and treatment services, even though in many countries in Asia and the Pacific, laws, policies and practices are not supportive (UNESCO, 2014). This is exactly why Youth LEAD and its stakeholders believe that YKP-led networks and the participation of YKP in decision-making processes are integral to bringing about positive change and informing a comprehensive response to HIV.

However, beyond contributing to and comprising a comprehensive response to HIV, young key populations can make other great contributions to their communities and to society at-large, as capable leaders and agents of change. This is the potential that Youth LEAD saw and continues to see in young key populations, and the aspirations that it invigorates. Even though Youth LEAD's efforts are in the context of HIV, the impact that the network and its generations of leaders have had in the region expands much further to activism, diplomacy, policy, human rights, social justice, research, academia, and corporate social responsibility. Many of its focal points have become empowered decision-makers and leaders. Youth LEAD firmly stands by its belief that young key populations deserve the same chances as other young people in society, and builds capacity for them to communicate, participate, demand and lead, always with a bottom-up, inclusive and non-punitive approach.



While some countries in the region may still not even directly mention YKP or feel uncomfortable addressing topics they consider taboo, such as sex work or injecting drug use, other countries have gone on to include YKP networks and capacity building activities like NewGen in their strategic and programming frameworks for HIV. Many of these national authorities have seen first-hand the potential for building capacity for YKP to be directly involved in decision-making and implementation of programs in the response to HIV.

National strategies for HIV prevention, testing, treatment and care can risk not reaching YKP if they solely focus on young people from the general public or if they assume YKP would equally benefit from interventions addressing adult key populations, and without having their age-related barriers answered. This is something that we at Youth LEAD advocate for regionally and at grassroots level. YKP access to comprehensive HIV prevention, care, information and services can aid in stemming the HIV epidemic in our region and elsewhere.

- Youth LEAD Secretariat

The development of select YKP-led organizations in the Asia-Pacific region

Case 1: Fokus Muda, Indonesia

Young cohorts of people who inject drugs, men who have sex with men, transgender people, sex workers and people living with HIV from Indonesia have been present and engaged with Youth LEAD since its inception, and were among its core founding members. They were all individually engaged in different capacities with key population communities and networks in the response to HIV in Indonesia.

They would go on to establish one of Youth LEAD's model networks, Forum Populasi Kunci Usia Muda (Fokus Muda), and become a regional YKP success story, closely mirroring Youth LEAD's own development as a YKP-led network.

Setia Perdana, Ayu Oktariani, Sally Atyasasmi, Surya Arie and Oldri had realized in their line of work with adult key populations that there was a great need for YKP to address their unique challenges in Indonesia and to take charge of leading change for their peers and communities. However, they felt that they did not have all the capacity, collective leadership, and communication skills to do so. They identify attending Youth LEAD's inaugural NewGen training of trainers in 2012 as a turning point for their movement to collectivize and solidify; for gaining awareness of YKP issues at the regional level; for gaining regional connectivity through Youth LEAD; and for valuable skills in leadership, advocacy and communication.



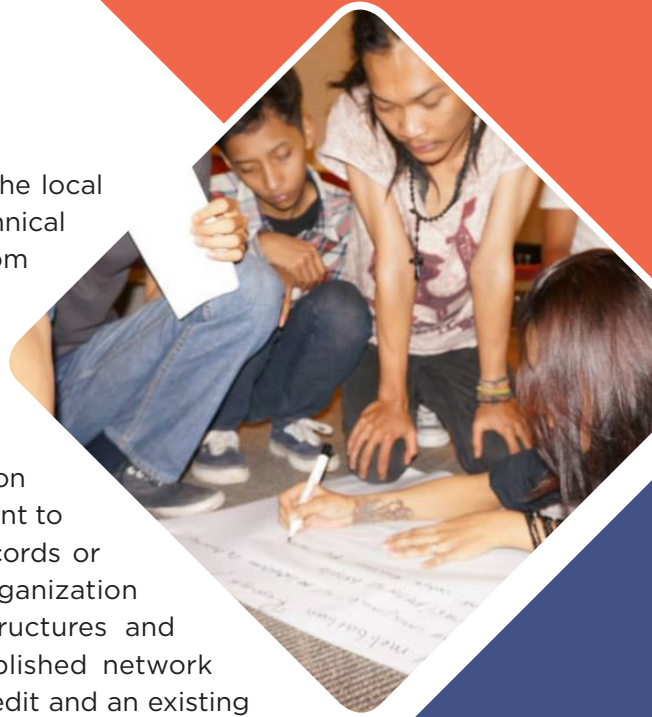
In combination with a clear vision, strong grasp of the local context, and well-defined needs, along with technical support from Youth LEAD Secretariat and peers from across the region, the seeds for formally establishing a YKP network in Indonesia were planted.

A key step in Fokus Muda's development and contribution to their early-on establishment was receiving fiscal support from an established organization with a reputable background. Donors could be hesitant to give funds to a brand new organization without records or without an existing relationship. As well, a new organization itself may not yet have well-defined financial structures and operational mechanisms in place. Having an established network already active in a related field with audit-worthy credit and an existing relationship with various donors, in this case the Indonesian Women Positive Network and Indonesia Drug Users Network (PKNI), helped Fokus Muda receive funds and disburse them with due diligence and bookkeeping. Keeping good records of activities and financial report has been a standard of operation for Fokus Muda since.

Fokus Muda decided for a first major activity to adapt NewGen to the Indonesia context and planned a national training of their own, to bring YKP from different population groups and regions together to discuss needs on a common platform, to embrace differences and celebrate similarities, and to come up with solid recommendations for advocating change and for presenting to stakeholders, including the National AIDS Commission (NAC) of Indonesia. Out of this national training and with technical capacity from regional partners, Fokus Muda members were able to collectively develop an internal governance and organizational structure, and have a strategic plan with achievable and realistic goals and objectives, contextualized to their needs. In this early step, they benefitted from Youth LEAD's regional connectivity and the available technical capacity through Youth LEAD's vast.

“Most opportunities we came across were mostly focused on external programs and activities, but we were only getting established and we needed to show accountability and strength to donors and stakeholders. We needed to have a strong vision and strategy for the future. We needed to build personal and organizational capacity.”

- Setia Perdana, Fokus Muda coordinator and Youth LEAD Indonesia focal point



Youth LEAD

Early-on Fokus Muda had recognized the need to develop organizational capacity, wanting to start off with a solid foundation. They needed to mobilize funds for building internal capacity to continue to develop as a nascent organization. However, most funds they had come across at that time covered mostly external activities. They worried that solely focusing on external activities could risk spreading Fokus Muda thin before it has had time to internally mature and take roots. Upon their participation in Youth LEAD's proposal development for the first round of RCNF and subsequent selection as a sub-recipient, their velocity and strength as a network exponentially expanded. Fokus Muda ensured that some of the initial funds received through Youth LEAD were allocated to developing internal capacity. They attributed a great part of their strength as a national YKP network to having received RCNF funds that were used for this purpose, along with technical assistance and regional connectivity from Youth LEAD, which helped develop Fokus Muda's capacity as a national YKP-led network.

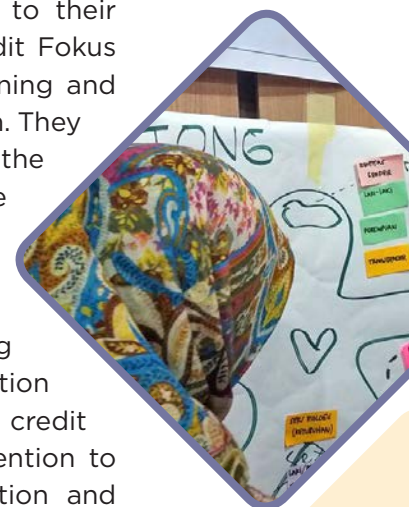
Since receiving the first round of funds, Fokus Muda's support from Youth LEAD has incrementally increased each year based on their good performance and timely reporting. They cite this as a recommendation for donors who may be reluctant to trust a youth-led organization with large funds from the start. Fokus Muda suggests that funds could initially begin small with some going for building organizational capacity and others earmarked for key identified activities, inclusively and collaboratively of course. Based on performance and garnered trust, funding could then be incrementally increased over time, both for core and activities.



For Fokus Muda, having a strategic plan with clearly defined objectives, having internal capacity and a governance structure, successfully implementing activities, and forming partnerships, with financial and technical support from Youth LEAD, all helped to boost their profile as a nascent organization and prove their capacity. They attribute this to being able to grow roots, and at the same time branching out. Fokus Muda was also able to leverage receiving international funds as a sign of credit and credibility to reach out and connect with national authorities in Indonesia.

By 2014, Fokus Muda was registered as an independent organization in Indonesia. Regional membership in Youth LEAD, other community-based networks, and intergovernmental organizations gave Fokus Muda further negotiation strength to successfully collaborate with new and old partners, subsequently mobilize further funds, and engage in national HIV processes, particularly with the National AIDS Commission of Indonesia (NAC). They successfully engaged with NAC on developing the 2015-2019 National HIV Strategic Plan of Indonesia, where YKP are for the first time specifically addressed in strategy and programming frameworks. Charismatic leadership, dedicated members, partnerships with diverse stakeholders, government engagement, and policy influence have helped Fokus Muda's development and continued success.

The National AIDS Commission of Indonesia attributes prioritizing YKP in prevention, testing, treatment and adherence services in Indonesia to their partnership and collaboration with Fokus Muda since 2012. They credit Fokus Muda with giving much input and meaningfully contributing to planning and decision-making processes, prioritizing YKP in the 2015-2019 action plan. They have seen value in empowering YKP through this process, optimizing the role that peers could play, and developing a comprehensive response that includes key communities, with Fokus Muda as a main partner. They have also included Fokus Muda in many multisectoral strategic processes like thematic working groups at national, provincial and district levels. They have also made efforts to support and include young people living with HIV in various processes, involving them in the transition from pediatric to adult treatment, care and adherence services. They credit Fokus Muda for influencing policy and practice change to bring attention to giving young people access to comprehensive prevention information and services, including sexual and reproductive health services without age or marriage status as barriers. NAC has made great strides where possible in making services YKP-friendly, as well as promoting data disaggregation and strategic information relating to YKP and HIV surveillance.



“In collaboration with Fokus Muda, NAC and related stakeholders have overseen policy to protect YKP, made guidelines for their inclusion, and implement capacity building programs for YKP, as well as developing YKP-friendly services, and empowering the response to HIV in Indonesia to respond to the needs of YKP. NAC made Fokus Muda partner to develop YKP-friendly service in several province in Indonesia to increase YKP coverage and access. We plan on developing more programs for YKP and involving more stakeholders to create environment conducive to responding to their needs. Fokus muda is the only forum/organization in Indonesia which unites YKP from all groups, such as PLHIV, transgender, MSM, PWID and sex workers.”

- National AIDS Commission of Indonesia

When asked about the way forward, a concern raised by Fokus Muda was sustainability. Firstly, many YKP are increasingly aware that HIV is not necessarily a global development priority as it was two or even just one decade ago. For example, HIV had its own dedicated Millennium Development Goal with large allocated funds between 2000 and 2015, but is now only one indicator shared with other health concerns under a general Health Sustainable Development Goal for 2016 onwards. There is also a palpable dwindling of funds in the HIV sector, for civil society, and even for intergovernmental authorities. Youth LEAD, is proactively accounting for this change in the funding spectrum by expanding scope of work, such as by partnering with different organizations or by taking on activities relating to human rights or sexual and reproductive health and rights in addition to HIV. Fokus Muda is doing the same and preparing accordingly, and they encourage their colleagues and counterparts from elsewhere in the region to do the same.



The second concern for sustainability can be inherent to all youth organizations, and that is the process of aging out. Other than secretariat members, technical advisory groups or consultants, Youth LEAD's governance structure states that focal points can remain with the organization until the end of their 29th year. This is to ensure that the network remains driven by young people. However, if not planned for properly, organizations could risk losing charismatic leaders and network connections along with organizational memory when a key member ages out. Specifically for this reason, Youth LEAD has made major efforts to continuously include younger generations of leaders and activists, and encourages its focal points, including Fokus Muda, to do the same and continue to train and invest in future generations. Fokus Muda has made great strides towards this and the original coordinators have all gradually taken on advisory roles as they have moved on to other endeavours themselves, but remain on hand to provide input and lend guidance when needed or requested.



Alexa and her path to CCM

As a young trans activist, Alexa was part of Fokus Muda's core working group from the beginning. She wanted to build her capacity, learn from other young leaders, gain more knowledge, and engage as an active youth. Fokus Muda was an ideal platform for that; she could be herself, speak her mind, and grow as a leader and activist. Alexa was among a group of nominated YKP to build understanding on how to maneuver the rather complex Global Fund process, one where many young people, and seasoned activists, can be lost. The 2015 Special Initiative by the Global Fund in partnership with RCNF aimed to increase the engagement of communities and key populations in the Global Fund process. RCNF channeled funds to Youth LEAD to specifically focus on YKP's involvement with Global Fund. With perseverance and dedication, by proving her knowledge, showcasing capacity and engagement, and by being a vocal advocate for her own trans community and other YKP, Alexa became the Indonesia Country Coordinating Mechanism representative of key populations and the chair of the technical working group on HIV. A young person, and even more so, a young trans activist holding such an esteemed position is not common. This is a direct result of her and Fokus Muda's efforts when given space, support and opportunity.

Case 2: Vectoring China

Being aware of ongoing trends in the relevant field of work, matching priorities with key players, partnering with established organizations, and a bit of regional push and coordination were successful elements that aided the development of Youth LEAD's focal points in China. They have worked towards increasing leadership skills and developing organizational capacity; strengthening YKP networks and promoting strategic partnerships; and advocacy influencing laws and policies that increase vulnerabilities of YKP to HIV. This has been in line Youth LEAD's own objectives.

Youth LEAD China or Vectoring started by trying to inform supportive environments for young men who have sex with men by conducting a large survey across China on a variety of real-life concerns contextualized to local settings. This aimed to strengthen collaboration between YKP and other key population groups in China, inform programming, for negotiations with authorities, and to increase YKP participation on youth platforms and in national discussions relating to HIV. The first round of funds received from RCNF through Youth LEAD were partly allocated to conducting this research and producing digital, social media, and other informational materials.

Similar to Youth LEAD itself or Fokus Muda in Indonesia, Vectoring started as a pilot project with Yunnan Sexology Association (YSA), a consortium of academics and researchers doing collaborative work since 2004. The coordinators of YSA were cognizant of global and particularly regional discussions relating to increasing involvement of YKP in the response to HIV. YSA saw value in meaningfully involving YKP in the response to HIV and agreed to host and fiscally support the nascent YKP movement in China. Nancy Zhang, a young activist with YSA who would later establish Vectoring, felt that her vision to work with marginalized populations vulnerable to HIV, particularly her fellow young people, matched that of the coordinators of YSA. With encouragement from regional authorities to uphold China's national commitments to young people, and much regional push in the HIV sector to work with YKP, Nancy caught the momentum at a good time for her own and subsequently, her YKP network's establishment and development. Vectoring's story of development is one of opportunity, connectivity, hard work, and a bit of 'right place at the right time.'



“A platform allowing grassroots and community activists from diverse back- grounds to come together is very useful for engaging with the HIV response in China, especially for YKP to combine efforts and be taken seriously. Technical support, international resource mobilization, regional connectivity, and integration helped us establish ourselves, gain credibility, and work towards our goals as an organization to improve the lives of YKP and reduce their vulnerabilities.”

- Nancy Zhang, Vectoring China Coordinator and Youth LEAD China focal point

Youth LEAD

Nancy had hoped that the meaningful participation of YKP in the response to HIV would be best for responding to YKP's needs, inform provision of services and information for YKP, build capacity, and eventually change policy to make more supportive environments. In order to work



towards these aims, Vectoring felt a strong need for developing leadership as a group of YKP and for building organizational capacity. Similar to Fokus Muda in Indonesia, the stage for Vectoring was set after Nancy along with four other YKP focal points from China attended Youth LEAD's NewGen regional training in Bangkok, gaining vital skills in leadership and communication, and learning from their counterparts from across the region. The participants from China connected with each other, started plans for their unique YKP-led network, and dedicated much effort to successfully mobilizing resources (including from UNAIDS, UNESCO and UNICEF) for increasing activities, expanding scope, and working towards realizing the vision of Vectoring. They made sure to allocate funds specifically for advocacy and building internal capacity as a new organization, which they had previously found more difficult to come by compared to funds for activities, such as service delivery.

Vectoring attributes a large part of their development and successful accomplishments to regional connectivity through Youth LEAD, and appreciates the important role that global and regional networks can play by bringing different YKP together; allowing them to learn from each other and encourage each other's work. Vectoring used the Youth LEAD community space, whether online or offline, to develop their organizational strengths, and with much input and technical capacity from colleagues across the region, to develop a strategic plan and governance structure. For Vectoring, RCNF and its unique bottom-up approach through Youth LEAD, allowed them to work with grassroots activists in China, connect, collect, learn, and be able to strengthen as a unified YKP platform. Having received international funds, being supported and sponsored by regional intergovernmental authorities, along with a solid governance structure and a strategic plan in place allowed Vectoring to negotiate with national authorities with confidence and credibility, lending additional validity to the value of having YKP representatives in policy and programming framework discussions.



It was a proud moment for Vectoring to be invited to engage with the national strategic plan process and enter a platform with academics and government agencies planning the future of the response to HIV in China. For the first time, YKP and their unique needs are now specifically addressed at the national level and Vectoring actively advocates for a friendly, supportive and sustainable political, cultural and economic environment for all YKP in China.

Case 3: Youth LEAD Cambodia

An element that stood out most prominently for the development of Youth LEAD Cambodia was their ability to build and foster fruitful collaborations with others, particularly individuals and organizations attentive to the unique needs of YKP. This helped reinforce Youth LEAD Cambodia's establishment, development and expansion. Their development, even though not the same trajectory per se, contains elements similar to the development of Youth LEAD focal points in China and Indonesia.

Chanthorn Phorong, Buthorn Kong, and Dalish Prum had all worked with different key population organizations and NGOs individually and were already seasoned young activists before coming together. With Youth LEAD's regional platform and its technical support, along with NewGen's leadership and communication capacity development, they identified a large void for answering YKP's unique needs in Cambodia, and decided to take change into their own hands. Similar to Indonesian Women Positive Network for Fokus Muda and Yunnan Sexology Association for Vectoring China, local key population and prominent community-based organizations KHANA and the Cambodian Community of Women Living with HIV (CCW) were instrumental for Youth LEAD Cambodia's establishment, early-on financial management, and internal organizational technical capacity. While CCW provided fiscal management, KHANA lent technical assistance. It is important to have supportive and constructive established organizations provide help and guidance without unwarranted interference and taking away autonomy.

Similar to Setia from Fokus Muda Indonesia and Nancy Zhang from Vectoring China, Chanthorn Phorong was working with KHANA when he was introduced to the Youth LEAD family and became more connected with the regional YKP movement. His driven and charismatic leadership was pivotal for making Youth LEAD Cambodia the fastest growing network in Youth LEAD. He based this on a strong foundation of technical support and guidance from KHANA and other adult key population networks, along with fiscal hosting and financial management. Youth LEAD Cambodia facilitated community-driven and grassroots forums for YKP to dialogue, meet peers, connect, identify needs, and make recommendations to national stakeholders and decision-makers, such as the National AIDS Authority of Cambodia and related ministries. This process was assisted with expertise of regional YKP context through Youth LEAD and support from intergovernmental national agencies in Cambodia. This led to introduction and integration of YKP issues in the National HIV/AIDS Response and National Youth Action Plan of Cambodia. Chanthorn has not been shy to reach out and connect with concerned parties, and to invite expertise for collaboration and enhanced partnerships. This has responded fruitfully and aided in the establishment and development of Youth LEAD Cambodia.





“Despite that fact Youth LEAD Cambodia has been new in the country, they hold strong and clear expertise on YKPs, they have been so active at the national and sub-national levels in shaping the design and creating friendly spaces that encouraged young leaders to actively engage in sharing their experiences, success stories, good practices, challenges and perspectives about new ideas and innovations on HIV, and engaging young people representing different groups of key populations. With the excellent commitments of all members of Youth LEAD Cambodia, they’ve worked very hard to provide capacity development to the community youth and NGO partners, transferring the knowledge and experiences gained from the capacity development at regional level thanks to their peers to a very relevant local level.”

- Nimol Soth, UNESCO Cambodia

Youth LEAD Cambodia has successfully contributed to building individual and institutional capacity for young key populations across the region. They have successfully connected with stakeholders at grassroots and community levels, but also nationally and regionally, a cornerstone of their efforts for increasing the participation of YKP in decision-making. Youth LEAD Cambodia considers forming partnerships, grassroots knowledge building, community networking, and national-level advocacy for needs and change as key steps instrumental to their growth and significant presence.

Youth LEAD Cambodia believes that having had a solid work plan contextualized to local needs based on lessons-learned regionally through their peers, and with technical support from Youth LEAD secretariat, helping them fruitfully approach UNAIDS, UNESCO and other partners in Cambodia. Encouragement and liaison from regional intergovernmental offices helped connect YKP with national offices of these agencies based on their familiarity with NewGen, long-existing working relations with Youth LEAD secretariat, and involvement in regional YKP platforms. Youth LEAD Cambodia also built and sustained collaborations nationally, whether as partners or for specific activities, with various other networks working with entertainment workers, people who inject drugs, men who have sex with men, transgender people, and people living with HIV, including women’s groups.

Similar to Indonesia and China, international funds received through Youth LEAD and trsuted to Youth LEAD Cambodia helped add credibility and representation to the Cambodian YKP organization when negotiating with national authorities. It also further empowered them to engage with other YKP communities in Cambodia. These included 2 national YKP forums held in 2014 and 2015, to hear from their YKP counterparts from across the country and be able to capture the real needs on the ground for negotiating with stakeholders and advocating for change. These forums also helped identify key areas of need for strengthening advocacy, building capacity where needed, and making clear recommendations for best allocating resources.

“In 2011 when we started, no one was talking about YKP in Cambodia. Now just 5 years later, YKP is everywhere in the HIV response and we have made it into our national strategic plan. Youth LEAD and RCNF were very important for bringing our issues and needs to partners and stakeholders, but also for proving our seriousness to national authorities.”

- Chanthorn Phrong, Youth LEAD Cambodia Focal Point Coordinator

Following donor mapping exercises and discussions with Youth LEAD secretariat, RCNF funds for Cambodia were specifically earmarked for increasing YKP engagement in the HIV response. A later entry upon a more established regional platform for YKP and with greater existing regional evidence for increased YKP involvement meant that Youth LEAD Cambodia was more easily able to mobilize funds, both for internal development and for activities. The RCNF funds for Youth LEAD Cambodia were therefore channeled towards increasing YKP engagement in niche technical areas, that is 1) the Global Fund New Funding Model; and 2) Cambodia National Strategic Plan processes.

Youth LEAD Cambodia succeeded in including YKP in the 4th HIV/AIDS National Strategic Plan of Cambodia; with YKP specifically addressed and furthermore, Youth LEAD Cambodia mentioned as a partner. To them, and similarly to the entire Youth LEAD family, YKP being included as their own target rather than just youth cohorts of adult key populations or as general youth, was the result of tireless effort, and a regional and national success story. Youth LEAD Cambodia feels that having received external and particularly international funds for this niche area of work with YKP, having been technically strengthened as a network with structure and strategy, regional engagement with civil society and intergovernmental bodies, and having forged strong partnerships helped them more easily engage in influencing government policy and national processes.



“Small organizations like us can’t apply or receive funds from global or even regional donors as we don’t have the technical capacity or the financial means to receive it. At the beginning we worked very hard, without any money, so we make sure Youth LEAD Cambodia survives. Once we had proof of this commitment and this work, then we could approach local partners, governments and international organizations to get more support to make sure we can expand and remain viable. This has worked well for us.”

- Chanthorn Phrong, Youth LEAD Cambodia



Case 4: YKP LEAD Nepal

Youth LEAD connected with young people from key populations in Nepal, including young people living with HIV, from the onset. YKP LEAD Nepal started to take root in 2011 with a consultation meeting bringing youth volunteers and young members of key population groups together to identify their needs on a mutual platform and to make recommendations for engaging with stakeholders and national authorities for improving conditions for their communities. YKP LEAD Nepal was provided with the same technical and financial opportunities as focal points from Indonesia, China and Cambodia, but they have not been able to develop as far or accomplish relatively as much.

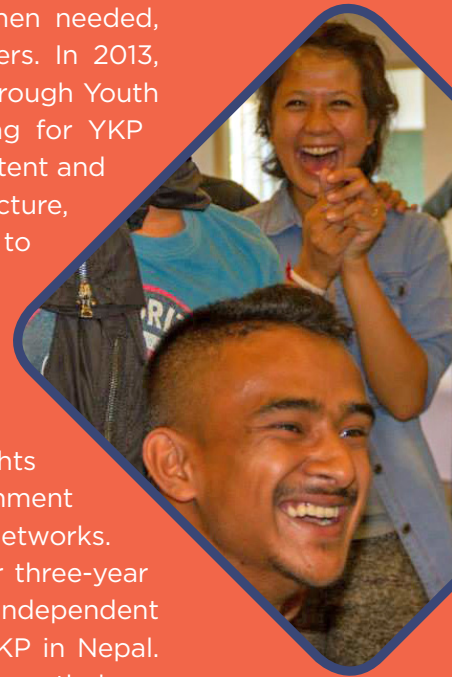
Young people can do many things, but being YKP in Nepal is still big taboo for our society and people don't think we belong as part of change making. I wish they would accept and include us as who we are, and give us equal opportunity. This is what we have to keep working towards, but it's hard. In Nepal government always talks about young people and their needs, but not young key populations. They label us as sex workers or drug users or positive, and it's been difficult for us to move past that. May be they don't trust us or can't take us seriously."

- Sara Thapa Magar, YKP LEAD Nepal Coordinator and Youth LEAD focal point

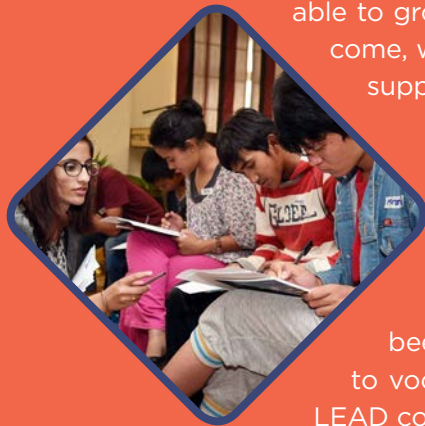
When they started, there were some young people from key populations involved in the response to HIV in Nepal, mostly as outreach workers or volunteers, particularly with harm reduction groups or with young people living with HIV. Many of them worked in silos and were not connected with their colleagues. YKP LEAD Nepal recalls that attending regional meetings and events, such as those organized by Youth LEAD, is actually what brought them together and introduced them to each other across the HIV response in Nepal. Eventually, the YKP came together to organize a humble national consultation in December 2011 with support from Youth LEAD, UNAIDS and UNICEF. In a safe space facilitated by peers and community members, YKP openly discussed their every day needs, challenges and barriers. These discussions were used to produce recommendations to take forward and engage with stakeholders. The YKP movement in Nepal started as a loose working group, but they had no formal structure and needed capacity in management, leadership and communication, as well as information and knowledge.



With UNICEF funding to respective key population groups to build capacity for young and adolescent key population members, and with the National Federation of Women Living with HIV (NFWLHA) as their host and fiscal support, YKAP Nepal (now YKP LEAD Nepal) was established. Youth LEAD secretariat was able to provide or mobilize technical guidance from across the region when needed, as well as connectivity to other regional networks and stakeholders. In 2013, YKP LEAD Nepal also started directly receiving funds from RCNF through Youth LEAD. Much of the funds from Youth LEAD went to core funding for YKP Nepal, but unlike Indonesia, China and Cambodia, without one consistent and driven leader and with delays in formalizing organizational structure, governance and strategy from the start, they were not been able to expand, grow and develop as much as others. Plenty of resource and technical assistance has been provided from Youth LEAD and other stakeholders, but this has not help the network take root as strongly or branch out as far.



Even still, YKP LEAD Nepal has visibly advocated for the needs and rights of YKP and has tried as much as possible to engage with government authorities and form collaborative partnerships with adult and youth networks. In their unique and difficult context, YKP Nepal has developed their three-year organizational strategic plan and is in the process of registering as an independent network. It just seems that change has been slower to come for YKP in Nepal. Overall, two major barriers that have reportedly hindered their growth have been: 1) their difficulty in mobilizing their own funds without relying on external resources; and 2) difficulty in engaging with government authorities. Many organizations and individuals, young and adult alike, have leveraged their skills, resources, and contacts to improve the environment for YKP in Nepal to be able to grow and progress. Even though development has been slower to come, without unwavering regional support from Youth LEAD and local support from NFWLHA, even this may not have been possible.

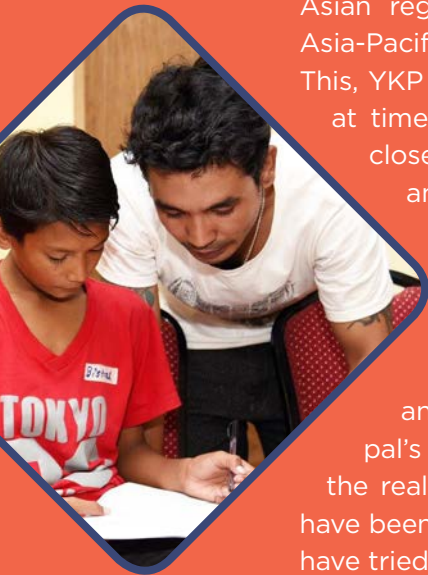


Between 2011 when the YKP came together, and 2013 when funds from RCNF were received, YKP Nepal had not been able to mobilize any core funding and the organization's growth and expansion was essentially paused. They have made effort to catch up with others since 2013, but change has been slow. The network itself feels that they have not been able to vocalize their needs or demand resources as much as their Youth LEAD counterparts from other countries. They still need to build a strong investment case for YKP with local evidence and credibility. They feel the need to curb the spread of HIV among young key populations by improving strategic information for and about YKP in Nepal, by protection of human rights, by promoting gender balance, and by giving equal and equitable access to all YKP and young people for HIV and sexual and reproductive health services. However, they have not been able to generate as much interest in this or having them meaningfully involved elsewhere among authorities.

According to YKP LEAD Nepal, it is additionally hard to reach YKP with social media or online campaigns due to poor internet infiltration in Nepal, particularly in the more remote mountainous regions. This has posed as another large barrier. Youth LEAD has always used social media to its advantage for information outreach and for campaigning among young and mobile individuals. Many of YKP LEAD Nepal's members and fellow YKP do not have regular access to the internet, a computer, or a smartphone, and this has definitely hindered their expansion in the digital age, especially when it comes to youth mobilization. After five years, YKP LEAD Nepal is still working on building a solid online platform and an offline resource centre where YKP could come together and advocate for their needs, even though convening regular meetings has been an annual priority and occurrence, with funds specifically allocated, in order to inform and engage with stakeholders and present pertinent needs.



As previously mentioned, another challenge cited by YKP LEAD Nepal is the lack of a strong working relationship with government authorities, even though they have reportedly made numerous attempts to include them in information dissemination and at events. They feel that even though government authorities have acknowledged their needs and priorities in meetings, this has not always translated into action either. And with less regional proximity to Youth LEAD Secretariat and regional UN offices in Bangkok, it has been more difficult for YKP Nepal to uphold regional obligations or pressure authorities to meaningfully include them like other country cases. It should also be noted that for some intergovernmental organizations, for example UNICEF, Nepal falls under South Asian regional offices in country coalitions and is less integrated with the Asia-Pacific inter-agency task teams and HIV movement based out of Bangkok. This, YKP Nepal cites as a barrier to the regional push and connectivity that has at times moved things along faster for other Youth LEAD focal points. The close proximity and working relationship between Youth LEAD secretariat and regional offices in Bangkok (e.g. UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF), including membership on many common working groups and inter-agency task teams, has definitely had a positive impact for other recipients.



YKP LEAD Nepal was happy to share that in the face of their barriers and challenges, they have managed to secure a seat as a convener for Nepal's national HIV strategic plan 2016-2021, and aim to provide input about the real needs and challenges of YKP at grassroots- and national-level. They have been able to learn much from their counterparts from across the region and have tried to adapt best practices to the context of Nepal when possible. Without Youth LEAD's connectivity, the Nepal team feels they would have even less access to the wealth of information, peer support, and technical capacity available to them from across Asia and the Pacific. They aspire to connect with more YKP and adult key populations in the country, build and foster solid relationships with government authorities and decision-makers, bring awareness to the crucial role that YKP can play for their communities and for bringing about positive change, and the value that they can add to a comprehensive response to HIV.

Conclusion and recommendations

The establishment and subsequent development of YKP-led organizations as selected amongst some of Youth LEAD's recipients, to varying degrees reflect the regional YKP network's own history and progress. That is, many started as pilot projects bringing YKP together from different communities, groups and regions. These organizations filled a niche at that time and responded to an urgent void, that was for bringing attention to the unique needs of YKP in the Asia-Pacific region, and promoting their meaningful involvement in all steps of a comprehensive response to HIV. As nascent organizations, they needed hosting or fiscal support from established organizations with good standing with donors, to be able to receive funds and successfully disburse and manage them. Receiving these initial funds, allocating some to internal organizational development and some for activities, along with performing well and achieving objectives, helped many YKP-led organizations take root and gradually branch out.

The organizations highlighted in this report boosted their credibility by expanding in partnerships, reach and membership, by increasing connectivity, and by collaborating with diverse stakeholders, donors, experts and authorities. These elements in turn helped to mobilize more funds for most, leading to organizational growth in size, reach and activity. These organizations have already or are in the final steps of becoming independent in their respective countries, building capacity for others as experienced leaders and YKP technical experts. Key challenges identified included lack of connectivity, lack of government support, poor regional integration concerning donors and intergovernmental authorities, lack of initial or sustained core funding, and sustainability in general as youth-led organizations. Crowning achievements for all included participation, and for some the full inclusion of YKP for the first time, in national governmental processes, such as on national strategic plans and with national AIDS councils.

All participants interviewed for this report cited personal, organizational and community leadership capacity development and transformations as some of their greatest achievements, largely aided by their involvement as leaders and activists in the HIV movement facilitated by Youth LEAD. They also unanimously expressed their gratitude to RCNF for harbouring this growth and organizational transformation. They greatly appreciated the role that Youth LEAD Secretariat and regional authorities played in linking them with respective country offices, in leveraging Youth LEAD's recognized position as the voice of YKP in the region, and for giving that extra push needed sometimes to get things rolling.



Recommendations for donors and stakeholders

Meaningfully involve

- Involve YKP at all levels of policy and decision-making that affects them and their communities
- Promote the inclusion of YKP in planning, implementation and evaluation of programs and projects, comprising a comprehensive response to HIV
- Receiving international funds for activities or organizational development can lend valuable credibility to a YKP-led organization

Facilitate platforms and safe spaces

- Help YKP and YKP-led organizations to create online and offline platforms where they can come together and safely interact with their peers
- Consultations and general assemblies can bring YKP together regularly to openly discuss needs and challenges, and to share good practices
- Solid recommendations for advocacy and policy change, as well as for informing programming can come out of these gatherings/platforms
- YKP may not be aware of the vital role they can play in the response to HIV and may need support and technical capacity from peers and experts
- NewGen is one example of a platform where YKP can come together, collect, share ideas and learn from each other, with numerous success stories from across the Asia-Pacific region

Build capacity

- Providing technical support and organizational management skills training courses can set the stage for strong YKP leaders and YKP-led organizations

- Leadership and communication skills are key for a nascent YKP-led organization's establishment and subsequent growth
- NewGen is one proven example for building leadership, advocacy and communication capacity with and for YKP

Support

- Fiscal support and financial management from an established organization are crucial for a YKP-led network to get started
- Core funding is particularly important for budding YKP-led organizations
- Funding can be allocated to organizational capacity development and to activities based on needs and priorities
- Funding can be incrementally increased over time based on needs, history, performance, credit and delivery
- Support and sponsorship from regional and global authorities can give negotiation strength and build credibility for YKP-led organizations when negotiating with local authorities

Connect

- Push from regional and global bodies as well as intergovernmental authorities can play an important role in promoting the meaningful involvement of YKP in national and subnational-level decision-making processes
- International and regional authorities can connect YKP leaders at national level with their country offices to improve their involvement and inclusion
- Many YKP leaders in the Asia-Pacific region started as volunteers or outreach workers with various NGOs and adult key population networks
- Help connect YKP with other community-based, national and intergovernmental stakeholders

Recommendations for YKP-led organizations

Read up

- UNAIDS and Global Fund, as well as international and regional NGOs, can digitally connect you with a great deal of up-to-date information
- Responding to ongoing health and development trends can be great for nascent organizations to align with donors, governments, academics and other stakeholders
- A bit of 'right place at the right time' can go a long way
- Responding to trends can also be great for leveraging support and building/sustaining partnerships
- Inform your strategy, leave room for flexibility

Mapping

- Do your donor/resource mapping homework
 - Any and all combinations of national, regional and global donors could be tapped into
- See where donors fit under your strategic objectives and where you fit under theirs
- Existing personal connections or professional relations can be important for connecting with donors and stakeholders
- Funds should be earmarked for both developing internal organizational capacity and for activities – taking root, branching out

Connect

- Set up a consultation meeting bringing various young key populations from different groups together to identify needs, challenges, opportunities, and strengths

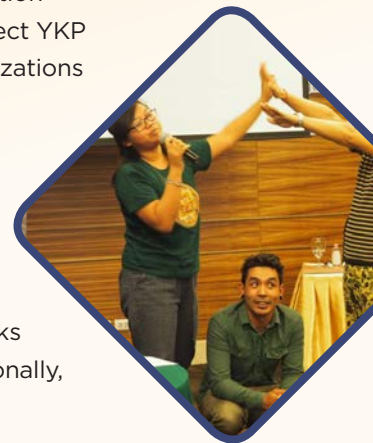
- Could approach key population groups for young volunteer or staff members that could participate in this meeting
- This is crucial for identifying needs, making strong and succinct recommendations, and for connecting with stakeholders to advocate for change later on
- The identified needs can also inform your strategy, objectives and activities

Find a host

- Fiscal support and financial management are particularly important early-on for being able to receive funds and manage them properly
- Established key population networks, communities of people living with HIV, or affiliates of Global Fund could be a good place to start and they may already be aware of the value YKP add
- Proof of capacity, such as participation in a recognized leadership program could help engage and garner support
- Regional YKP or adult key population networks could be asked to connect YKP with willing key population organizations in-country

Boost your credibility

- Credibility for a budding YKP movement is vital
- Build your credibility by forging partnerships with existing networks and reputable organizations, nationally, regionally and globally
- Attend meetings and recognized workshops or courses
- Diversify activities when established and expand your scope
- Build a habit of good documentation and communication
- Develop strong governance and strategic plans
- Promote continuous learning and development



Engage

- Countries have national HIV commissions or authorities that oversee the response to HIV, commonly under overarching ministries (e.g. ministry of health)
- This could be a great entry point for promoting meaningful participation of YKP in the response to HIV
- Working with national HIV/AIDS authorities can help build supportive and inclusive environments for YKP, inform policy and programs, and bring about positive change
- Look at your country's National Strategic Plan
 - Are YKP mentioned? Are their needs specifically addressed?
 - If not, this is a great entry point
 - Find evidence on why YKP's needs and challenges are unique and why their meaningful participation is important
 - Use evidence from other countries in the region that have included YKP in their strategic plans
- Having a solid strategic plan as an organization, credibility, connectivity at national and regional levels, and a strong governance structure can add negotiation strength and boost your profile

Develop organizational capacity

- Finding support for building and strengthening internal capacity is integral to the establishment and growth of an organization
- Find workshops or trainings that help in building individual and organizational communication, leadership and management skills

Expand your scope

- Great for responding to ongoing trends
- Could help forge new partnerships with different organizations and groups
- Can aid in sustainability in the face of dwindling HIV funds while opening up other sectors and opportunities

Sustainability

- "Aging out" can be an issue for YKP- and youth-led organizations
- Develop an internal policy from within your governance on transitioning
- Continuously empower the next generation of leaders, e.g. capacity building workshops
- Plan for transition of leadership without losing contacts and organizational memory



Resources

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