



Economic empowerment

Addressing the social context of young people

Why is economic empowerment so important?

Education must deal with the broader context of sexual behaviour. Economic disadvantage significantly affects young people's sexual behaviour and experiences in a number of ways. The first thing that springs to mind is exchanging sex for money, goods or favours, but recent research shows that a wide range of risky behaviours is affected by poverty. In addition to the fact that being from a poorer household increases the likelihood of exchanging sex, it also

- raises a young woman's chances of experiencing non-consensual sex
- increases the likelihood of multiple sex partners (both men and women)
- lowers the chances of secondary abstinence
- decreases the likelihood of condom use during the last sexual intercourse and
- lowers the average age of first sexual experiences.

Furthermore, impoverished young people, especially young women, are the most disadvantaged when it comes to discussing sensitive topics such as condom use with their sexual partners. Enhancing negotiation and communication skills is a starting point, but young people also need strategies for building economic and social assets.

What DSW is doing

As part of DSW's Youth-to-Youth (Y2Y) programme, youth clubs are given assistance in identifying viable income generating activities (IGAs). Young people receive training on the development and management of IGAs, and specialised skills training, if necessary. They are then provided with a small start-up funding, as a no-interest loan. Once the initial investment has been recouped and the loan repaid (which is then used as seed funding for another club), the clubs themselves decide how best to use the proceeds of their activities to further support club activities.



German Foundation for
World Population (DSW)

Economic empowerment

Addressing the social context of young people

Income generating opportunities cover a wide range of activities, including traditional bee-keeping, poultry-rearing and basket weaving, but also theatre and internet cafés. Through the provision of transport services, public showers, barber's shops and the like, IGAs also benefit entire communities by filling gaps in and supporting essential community services.

Economic empowerment: A practical example

One youth club in Uganda chose poultry as an IGA. Roosters and hens were purchased, and after selling enough eggs and chicks to repay the loan, club members decided to give each of the young people involved in the IGA one hen and one rooster for their own use. The remaining livestock was kept and maintained by the club, with proceeds funding club activities. In this way, a simple IGA

- contributes to improved nutritional status and income at household level
- supports on-going club activities and
- raises the profile and status of the club and club members within the community.

For more information on DSW's Y2Y programme, visit www.youth-to-youth.org.



German Foundation for
World Population (DSW)