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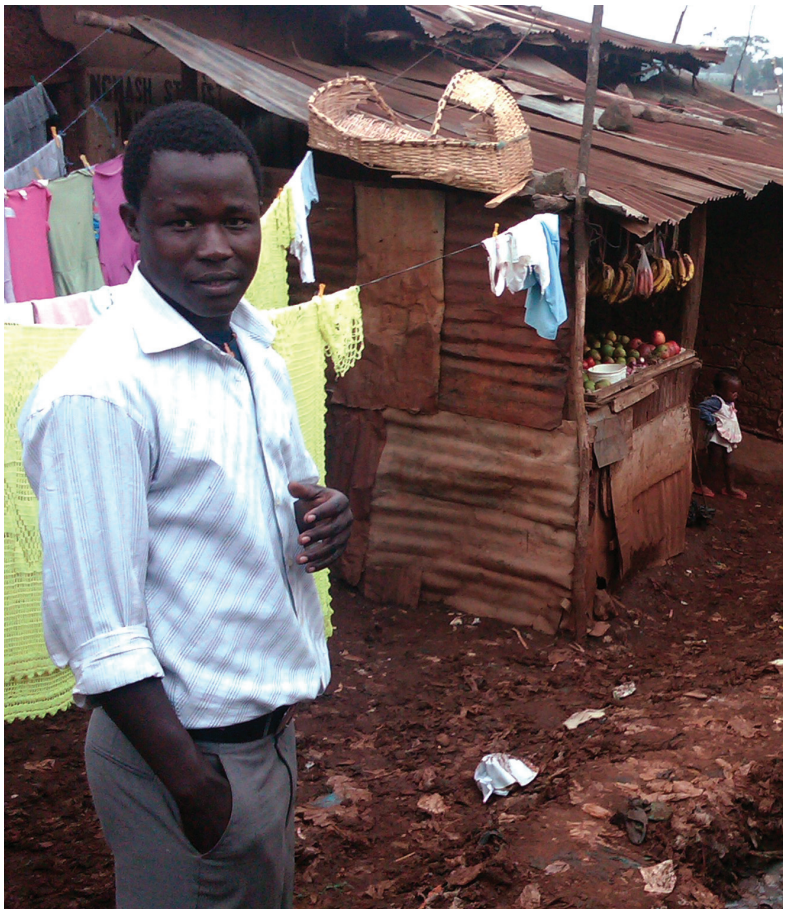
Empowering Youth Around the World



Paul grew up in Kibera, East Africa's largest slum on the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya, where running water and electricity are scarce and young people face extreme obstacles just to stay healthy and stay in school. Teen pregnancy rates in Kibera are well above the national average and 10-25 percent of the population is living with HIV/AIDS. To address these challenges, Planned Parenthood Global joined forces with Carolina for Kibera (CFK), a nonprofit focused on health, social development, and economic empowerment that organizes sports activities for local youth. Planned Parenthood Global and CFK recruit local teens like Paul to lead workshops at team practice sessions to educate youth on what to expect during puberty and how best to avoid unwanted pregnancy, HIV, and other sexually transmitted infections.

When CFK built a clinic in the center of Kibera, Planned Parenthood Global worked with staff to include high-quality reproductive health care, with a focus on youth-friendly services. In addition, CFK trained local teens to serve as community health workers, providing HIV testing and basic contraceptive services to people in the hardest-to-reach pockets of the slum, and referring those who needed more serious care back to the clinic. Now a college student, Paul is one of thousands of teens trained by Planned Parenthood Global partners around the world to manage a caseload of their peers, providing reproductive health supplies and information to other young people who would otherwise have no access to pregnancy and STD prevention.

Youth Peer Providers

Throughout the world, young people remain particularly vulnerable to unintended pregnancy, unsafe abortion, and STDs, including HIV/AIDS. They are often powerless in their societies to exercise their rights to access information and services, and face cultural taboos around young people and sexuality. To address these inequities, Planned Parenthood Global's Youth Peer Provider model combines curricula from community health worker and peer education models. Participants undergo extensive training and work under the ongoing supervision of medical professionals. While many peer education programs train young people to offer information, referrals to health centers, and condoms, Planned Parenthood Global's Youth Peer Provider model goes a step further, recognizing that in the rural areas and urban slums where Planned Parenthood Global's partners work, information doesn't mean much without access. Participants are trained in basic contraceptive counseling and provide clients — friends, classmates, and acquaintances — with consistent

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access to modern pregnancy and STD prevention methods, including birth control pills and condoms. They provide these services in discreet settings, often at the client's home, ensuring the privacy of their clients, many of whom avoid the formal health care system out of fear of being recognized by family members or neighbors, or shamed by judgmental medical staff.

Reaching Youth Where They Are

Planned Parenthood Global works with partner organizations in eight countries in Africa and Latin America to bring sexual and reproductive health education and services directly to hard-to-reach communities. For example, in Ethiopia, young people trained by our partner organization reach out-of-school youth through street theater performances and community health fairs.

In Latin America, we work with a youth association in rural Guatemala that leads regular sex education festivals during recess at schools across the country, and hosts a weekly radio program responding to questions about sexual and reproductive health issues called in and texted in by young people. Most recently, they successfully lobbied the Ministry of Health to let them build and run a youth-friendly clinic inside the local public hospital. Planned Parenthood Global supports this work by providing financial and technical support, including guidance on goal setting, program planning, and procuring supplies.

The Global Generation

More than any generation before them, young Americans today see themselves as connected to the world beyond the United States. High-speed internet, mobile technology, the 24-hour news cycle, and immigration, all contribute to this new global identity. In the U.S., Planned Parenthood Global works to engage high school and college students across the country by connecting them to the global reproductive rights movement and raising awareness of the impacts of U.S. foreign policy. Planned Parenthood Global provides opportunities for young people to be educators and advocates of the need for contraception, Pap smears, and other preventive health care, as well as safe abortion. We use social media, grassroots organizing events, and tap into Planned Parenthood Federation of America's national network of peer educators and youth supporters to ensure that the next generation is armed with the facts to call for better U.S. foreign policy and ready to mobilize when opponents of reproductive health and rights propose legislation aimed at restricting young people's access to information and services.