



Organizational Capacity Statement

Mission:

Youth Empowerment Development Initiative (YEDI) is an adolescent health organization that educates, empowers, and inspires youth and community development in Nigeria using sound, proven models that get results.

Organizational Capacity:

YEDI is a non-profit organization with a local board and all Nigerian staff founded in 2011. YEDI has reached over **127,000 young people** across four states and in over **500** schools and community sites, with evidence-based programs designed to build young people's assets, facilitate their access to health services, and promote their adherence to healthy behaviors. YEDI currently employs 30 full-time staff and over 240 volunteer youth peer mentors (Coaches). YEDI has offices and project sites in **Lagos** and **Abuja** and implements additional activities in **Akwa-Ibom** and **Ogun States** through strategic partnerships with and technical assistance to indigenous CBOs with shared values. The YEDI model trains young adult mentors as community change agents to implement age appropriate and gender-sensitive curricula that combine soccer metaphors and activities with high impact health information that engage youth and break down cultural barriers. YEDI brings deep experience in **adolescent sexual and reproductive health, HIV prevention, testing, and linkage to care, gender-based violence prevention, malaria prevention, positive youth development, and community mobilization.**

Through its **strong financial management, M&E, and program delivery systems**, YEDI has managed a portfolio of grants from partners as diverse as ExxonMobil, MAC AIDS Fund, FIFA's Football For Hope, African Women's Development Fund, Society for Family Health, and UNFPA through the Lagos State Government. YEDI manages an annual operating budget of **USD 555,308** and has successfully passed **5** external annual audits. Through agreements with state-level Ministries of Education, and creative partnerships with schools YEDI has been able to work in schools with young people to supplement health and life skills education programs.

YEDI is an implementing partner of **Grassroot Soccer, Inc.**, an international NGO that has reached over **2 million young people since 2002** in over 50 countries with evidence-based adolescent health programming through sport. Grassroot Soccer has managed large-scale projects from donors and partners such as USAID, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Ford Foundation, The US Peace Corps, Elton John AIDS Foundation, and Johnson & Johnson and developed institutional partnerships with UNAIDS and UNICEF, among others.

Evidence-based Approaches and Programs:

YEDI's overall approach is guided by Grassroot Soccer's sport-based behavior change methodology, whereby community-based mentors are trained to deliver interactive curricula that increase knowledge and positive social connections, build youth **SRH and life skills assets, facilitate access to health and social services, and support adherence to medical treatment and positive protective behaviors.** YEDI's interventions contribute to UNAIDS' global **90-90-90** and **FP2020** targets, and YEDI indicators are aligned with PEPFAR and WHO standards. As part of Grassroot Soccer's global network of partners and in collaboration with a variety of research institutions and funders, YEDI's suite of curricula and programs have been informed by **27 research studies in over 20 countries.**

Area of Impact: Building Health Assets

Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women with SRH and Education Life Skills

YEDI has developed highly acclaimed programs and curricula to strengthen the SRH and educational assets of adolescent girls and young women between the ages of 10 and 19. YEDI trains and manages trusted female mentors (Coaches) aged 18-25 to create a safe atmosphere for learning and to improve girls' knowledge of SRH issues, including HTS, gender-based violence (GBV), and family planning/teen pregnancy prevention. The program reaches girls through in-school, out-of-school programmes and five-day holiday camps held annually. USAID has specifically highlighted the methodology YEDI uses as an evidence-based approach, and supports delivery of this curriculum through the DREAMs Initiative in South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Two independent evaluations of these gender and sexuality programs indicate consistent improvement in **self-esteem, self-confidence, and increased uptake of HIV testing and SRH services among participants.**

Promoting Pro-Social Behavior Among Boys and Young Men

YEDI is uniquely positioned to engage boys and men on issues related to their health and finding innovative ways to drive demand for health services. YEDI uses school settings, out-of-school programmes, and 5-day holiday camps as the foundation upon which life skills programming can be layered and integrated for boys and young men. The life skills practices and curricula use activities to spark conversations and self-reflection around social gender norms, sexual violence, substance abuse, power, and other sensitive topics. YEDI has evidence-based, adaptable content available for boys 10-19 and young men 20-29 (through its partner GRS). With funding from Laureus Foundation, YEDI and GRS are currently conducting a 12-month mixed methods evaluation on the single-sex SKILLZ Boy program in Nigeria for boys 13-19, and anticipate that learnings from the evaluation will be integrated into future curriculum updates and that the program will be rolled out across GRS sites globally in 2018.

Improving Household Malaria Prevention and Treatment Practices

YEDI believes that adolescents can take a leading role in preventing malaria at the home and community level and all core YEDI programs (both single-sex and mixed-sex) integrate evidence-based malaria content into their curricula. YEDI's malaria work uses soccer-based themes and activities to improve knowledge about malaria prevention methods and tackle gaps in knowledge and common myths and misconceptions, distribute bed nets, and increase uptake of treatment and adherence to medication to prevent drug resistance. In 2014, an external mixed-method evaluation of YEDI's malaria work **showed significant improvements in malaria-related KAPs, particularly around willingness to promote malaria prevention to family members, LLIN use and maintenance, malaria treatment adherence, and self-reported household LLIN ownership.**

Area of Impact: Increasing Access and Adherence to Health Services

Linkages to HTS and other High Impact Health Services

YEDI facilitates linkages to high impact SRH services through community mobilization and complete referrals facilitated by coaches through clinical accompaniment and follow up. YEDI supports uptake and facilitates access to a range of SRH and HIV prevention and treatment services, including but not limited to HTS, STI and GBV. Coaches conduct home visits to provide parents, guardians, and community members with information about community health events and medical services and support.

Supporting Youth-Friendly SRH Services

YEDI is currently in partnership with the Lagos State Ministry of Health with a mandate to manage three UNFPA-supported Lagos State Hello Lagos Centres for the provision of youth-friendly services to vulnerable adolescents. By managing the Centres and offering both structured SKILLZ programming and events, YEDI provides **safe space for both in-school and out-of-school youth in the Lagos community to access SRH services, and trusted youth mentors and support groups that support adherence to health services.**

Community Mobilization and Outreach

YEDI uses soccer as a platform to mobilize communities around HIV testing, malaria prevention, and to generate demand for SRH services. YEDI implements high volume soccer tournaments during international commemoration days (such as World Malaria Day and World AIDS Day) that double as community health events. These platforms serve as unique service delivery points for biomedical service providers to offer outreach services to youth and the community.

Area of Impact: Improving Youth Livelihoods

Empowering the Next Generation of Urban Young Professionals

In 2013, YEDI launched a program called "Urban Achievers" aimed at engaging, encouraging, and providing necessary skills needed for the job market and support YEDI Coaches to serve as "positive deviants" and leaders in their communities. Urban Achievers is a well-rounded program that creates a platform for graduates, undergraduates, skilled, and unskilled unemployed youth to acquire financial literacy, entrepreneurship, employability, and education skills to achieve success in their lives. YEDI works in partnership with private and public sector partners across Nigeria to identify employment gaps and link Coaches to appropriate opportunities. The program also promotes dialogue between youth and community stakeholders to raise awareness around and address the issue of urban youth unemployment in Nigeria.