

**Creating an Enabling Environment for M&E (CEEME) Community of Practice**  
**Case Scenario for Webinar**  
**July 25, 2013**

**The following brief case study describes a real life example of one program's approach to establishing an enabling environment for proficient project implementation. Please read the case study and provide your perspective on the discussion question at the end of the case study. You can write your comments, suggestions or questions in the chat box of the webinar page.**

### **Implementation Best Practice: Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Project**

The government of a small land-locked country in Africa was deeply concerned about an alarmingly high rate of teenage pregnancy that was highlighted in a major report released by the Ministry of Health. The Prime Minister established a multi-sectoral national task force that recommended the design of a youth-focused sexual and reproductive health program jointly led by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education. The task force identified champions, including youth representatives, and they aggressively spent time to raise awareness about the issues related to teenage pregnancy among government officials, donors and in the communities. A broad group of stakeholders were involved in the planning process to generate a four-year program with clear targets and measurable results. The task force also established an implementation secretariat with small units in the districts and the program started as a pilot in four of the ten districts in the country, with only modest funding guaranteed initially. Local donor agencies were impressed with the level of commitment, leadership and ownership that the government had demonstrated, and one of the agencies interested in the reproductive health and rights of young people pledged additional financial resources.

Coordination and communication between the national secretariat and district personnel was strained and difficult at the beginning. A joint consultative retreat identified several bottlenecks, including lack of clear reporting arrangements between the two levels, and lack of a strong, visible role for young people and community members in project implementation. An agreement was reached on how to move forward on both issues including how to mobilize youth representatives in the districts. Follow-up meetings were also scheduled to report on progress.

Teams of youth corps were carefully selected, trained and supported to assist with on-the-ground implementation of program activities. In addition, local administration, chiefs and community leaders agreed that youth corps members could be recruited from the localities where the project would be operating, which proved cost-effective and enhanced local ownership. Also, ideas, achievements and successes were celebrated periodically both nationally and at district level.

Communication among the donor agency's office, the relevant government ministries, local authorities and the target communities was improved through regular meetings to provide feedback on progress. A communication strategy was also developed to ensure information was shared internally and externally, including the use of various media to publicize the program. This included a competition amongst district members of the youth corps to come up with a catchy slogan for the program. Furthermore, the project enjoyed the support of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who helped by mobilizing funds from the Government of the Netherlands, and it also received in-kind contributions from the local business community. The project was very successful and within four years expanded to the whole country. Because of the success of the project, its experience was replicated in several other African countries.

**Discussion Question:**

1. What were some of the key factors that contributed to the successful implementation of the project?