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## Sustaining and Developing Human Resources for HIV Prevention: Utilizing Volunteers for a National HIV Education Program for Kenyan Youth

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### BACKGROUND

While HIV prevention services should be scaled-up in regions most impacted by HIV, funding for these programs is scarce. Financial assistance alone can foster dependency and decrease program sustainability. Utilizing unpaid labor (volunteers) for human resources in HIV prevention delivery can increase cost-effectiveness, but it has also been criticized as being potentially unethical or unsustainable for long-term programming. Successful models for utilizing volunteerism do exist, but little is documented about their best practices.



Volunteer professionals from DePaul University conduct a TOT workshop for volunteer teachers in Kenya

### METHODS

A volunteer-driven partnership between DePaul University in Chicago, United States, and the Kenya Episcopal Conference-Catholic Secretariat (KEC-CS) in Nairobi, Kenya, is an example of how volunteerism can be ethically and sustainably utilized for human resource development in HIV prevention. This partnership — which is supported by the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Kenya and coordinated by the American International Health Alliance's HIV/AIDS Twinning Center — utilizes volunteers to develop, implement, and evaluate a nationwide school-based HIV prevention intervention for Kenyan youth between the ages of 11-14. Monitoring data are presented to demonstrate the economic benefits of volunteerism and best practices to sustain it.

### RESULTS

Partnership quarterly reports for the 2011 fiscal year demonstrate the high level of volunteerism sustained by this partnership, as well as the wide impact of these volunteer efforts. During 2011, the partnership leveraged more than 552,644 volunteer hours from over 22,000 school administrators and/or teachers across all regions of Kenya along with professional and technical experts from the United States. This enabled the program to reach 99,196 youth in more than 1,611 primary schools with the relatively limited annual budget of \$750,000USD — or a cost of \$7.56USD per youth reached with HIV prevention education.

All volunteers on the project are employed within the collaborating partner institutions, but not specifically for the HIV prevention education project for which they are volunteering. Non-monetary incentives for teachers — such as public recognition in their schools and local parishes, facilitated professional development trainings in their local Diocese, and professional certification — help motivate teachers to continue their level of volunteerism. Additionally, KEC-CS partnered with the Kenyan Ministry of Education to give government-level, professionally-endorsed educational certification to qualified teachers, helping to facilitate their professional development and further increase motivation to continue volunteering.

### CONCLUSIONS

Despite legitimate concerns, volunteerism can be appropriately utilized to deliver HIV prevention programming. The following is



DePaul professional volunteers deliver capacity-building workshops with Kenyan expert volunteers and program staff in Nairobi, Kenya.



Kenyan volunteers receive capacity-building trainings from professional volunteers and partnership program staff at DePaul University in Chicago.

a list of recommendations for organizations and partnerships on how to sustainably and ethically utilize volunteers:

- Leveraging human resources within existing infrastructure ensures that volunteerism can be sustained because volunteers are employed within the institutions for which they are volunteering.
- Partnering with the public sector (e.g. the Ministry of Education) helps establish meaningful professional development opportunities and non-monetary incentives to volunteers.
- Utilizing a Training-of-Trainer (TOT) model can easily diffuse prevention programs and required trainings through existing infrastructure.
- Using programmatic funds to provide administrative support and volunteer coordination ensures that volunteers can focus their efforts where it is most needed and relevant, without overburdening them with administrative tasks.
- Focusing professional volunteer efforts on capacity building, rather than solely on direct service delivery, ensures the most efficient and sustainable use of technical and expert-level volunteerism.
- Partnering institutions that have a shared vision and mission can help facilitate volunteerism among professional and technical experts within each institution.

Table 1: Volunteer Hours Leveraged and Number of Youth Reached Each Quarter, 2011

Year-Quarter	Volunteer Hours				Youth Reached
	KEC – National	KEC – Diocese	KEC – School	DePaul	
2011-Q1	2,724	17,882	117,256	350	23,538
2011-Q2	2,356	17,882	117,256	350	28,348
2011-Q3	2,291	17,882	117,256	400	18,702
2011-Q4	3,211	17,882	117,256	410	28,608
Totals	10,582	71,528	469,024	1,510	99,196
		551,134	552,644		

