UNFPA Thailand Youth Advisory Panel 2008-2009 Report

who we are?
what we do?
UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.

UNFPA - because everyone counts

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Foreword

It gives me great honor to present the UNFPA Thailand and Young Advisory Panel 2008–2009 Report. This report reflects the voice of young people and demonstrates the impact of their involvement in critical programmes and policies, related to adolescents and youth reproductive health.

UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) works across sectors with partners and young people, primarily to promote and protect the rights of adolescents and youths to promote healthy, safe and productive lives. In information, education, communication and other contexts, in conjunction with the recommendations of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) endorsed by many governments, including Thailand. To realize this hopes, we must view young people not just as a future but as competent, active and productive citizens in skill-based society who achieve their goals, think critically, make their life situation, express their views, and participate in decisions that affect them.

In 2008, UNFPA Country Office Thailand adopted an approach to youth involvement. Through the establishment of the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP), YAP has allowed UNFPA, to engage youth in policy development and programmeing, to help build the capacity of young people and strengthening their leadership and technical skills, to better address sexual reproductive health issues, and sensitize other adults of the necessity in youth participation.

The Panel member has grown as agents of change, determined to contribute their energy, creativity, and insights to the goals and progress of national development, which will certainly go beyond their roles as YAP.

This Report is an introduction to YAP – “Who they are” and “What they do”. It highlights YAPs, work experience and initiative, and the personal impacts of the experience as told by each member. Through their leadership opportunities, YAP strengthen voices been in the community, further development of the livelihood and wealth of young people.

It is hope that this Report will be used by policymakers, educators, and youth programme practitioners, to learn more critical roles in youth engagement and learn lessons in the development of young people sexual reproductive health from the perspective of young people themselves. I also hope that this report will enhance understanding of the benefits, needs, and contributions of young people and the global impact they can have when support is given.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to YAP members for their dedication and contribution in sharing their meaningful journey and achievements of UNFPA Country Office Thailand for implementing and supporting the preparation of this report.

Najib Asati,
UNFPA Regional Office in Thailand
YAP Vision

We, YAP, have had the opportunity to address and advise on issues that affect young people’s sexual and reproductive health and rights. Through this experience, we have identified the following, which we strongly advocate and developed, contribute to the comprehensive development in the health and rights of young people.

We fully support and plan to diligently work towards achieving the following:

1. YAP would like young people in Thailand to pay more attention and better understand their sexual reproductive health and rights.
2. YAP would like kindhearted adults to support and provide opportunities for young people to demonstrate their fullest potential, and express their opinions and make decisions on matters that affect their sexual reproductive health and rights.
3. YAP would like communities to create enabling environments optimal for young people to safely express themselves.
4. YAP would like to see schools, public health facilities, and local administrative organizations support and provide sufficient quality sexual and reproductive health information, services, and counseling to young people, including pregnant teens, out-of-school youth, young sex workers, young migrant workers, and young people living with HIV/AIDS.
5. YAP would like to encourage schools, public health facilities, and non-governmental organizations programming on young people to adopt and invest in peer-education, a process in which young people can seek friendly advice from their peers, as a method of effective health promotion.

the ABC’s of YAP Experience

Since our establishment in June 2008, UNFPA has supported us in meaningful participation of programmes, policies and activities that contributes to improving young people’s sexual and reproductive health and rights in Thailand. This support aligns with UNFPA dedicated commitment to its Framework for Action on Adolescent and Young people to tackle 1). We have made the most of the opportunity, made it fun in our own style, and made a big step towards that partnership between young people and adults. We have identified some of our work and achievements that are fundamental to our panel, and are as basic as the A-B-C’s.

- Advise and advocate on emerging issues, programmes, policies, and actions of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights that affects young people to ensure that the reality of young people’s lives and needs are reflected.
- Building up Capacity in sectoral knowledge, technical know-how and skills to enhance ability to achieve mandate strategically with confidence and agility.
- Cooperate with networks of partners and key stakeholders working in area of youth sexual reproductive health to share lessons learnt, consolidate resources, and work together as a powerful force.
Advise and Advocate

Youth Reproductive Rights Survey:趣猫icted surveys to gauge the level of peer awareness of their reproductive rights. After analyzing the data gathered, we realized that most of our peers do not know their rights to reproductive health information and services, and many do not know the terminology commonly used in reproductive health. This set the baseline for our work, including advocacy initiatives to raise awareness amongst our peers and other young people in our networks of their sexual reproductive rights.

KPID Plan of Action on Young People: Assessed the International Conference on Population Development (ICPD) Plan of Action on young people and Thailand’s progress in fulfilling its promise. We addressed the key gaps in creating universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, education and information for all young people at ICPD+15 national consultations and regional review meetings.

Peer Education Programme: Visited UNFPA supported school peer-education programme in Lamphun province and met with teachers and peer-educators of the programme. Based on our observations and discussions, key recommendations such as the need to customize peer-education training curricula to varying types of schools and the need to peer-educators to trainees of various types of schools and the need to prepare training materials for cultural and educational purposes for peer-educators and community leaders for reproductive health awareness.

National Standards of Youth Friendly Services: Reviewed the draft of the national standards and provided input as a Ministry of Health official. Our recommendations included the need to involve youth participation in the design of the standards and for more specific and clearer standards to avoid interpretations. We included these recommendations in the draft and suggested them to UNFPA for further follow-up.

Building up Capacity

Basic Reproductive Health 101: Acquired knowledge on the effectiveness and methods of different contraceptive, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of different STIs and HIV/AIDS; symptoms of pregnancy; and life skills including negotiation and risk assessment. The session answered our burning questions related to sexual reproductive health — and provided us valuable accurate information to better fulfill our mandate.

Professional Ethic: Gained simple tips on ethics of respecting other individuals in the professional setting and displaying courteous behaviors. We learned how to give handshakes, how to properly introduce and greet others, how to dress for business functions, how to be courteous during a business dinner, and how to be a good conservationist (the importance of being a good attentive listener). This experience helped us gain confidence in bridging positive relations with our adult partners.

Advocacy Writing: Trained to frame advocacy messages mindful of the audience, tone, and precision of key message. This skill has assisted us in delivering more effective and concise messages and recommendations.

Participatory Focus Group Approach: Learned how to apply theatre as a community community media to conducting participatory focus groups in problem solving, critical dialogue, cultural learning, and community mapping. We applied the process of image theatre and community mapping during our trip to Lampang to better identify key challenges of peer-educators, and assess their demands for youth friendly health services.

Gained from National and Regional Forums: Received invaluable opportunities to participate in national and regional meetings, workshops and conferences that has allowed us to enhance our sectoral knowledge, gain best practices from other programmes and countries, strengthen our networking skills, boost our confidence in speaking English, and foster our personal growth.
Cooperate & Networking

Youth Alliances: collaborated with other young people involved in promoting and supporting the well-being of young people. We explored partnership opportunities with YPSR to strengthen the substance of sex-education in Thailand, and worked with the National Youth Council to draft the Thaneich Youth Declaration. Working with other young agents of change has influenced our work and visions, to ensure that the diverse needs of young people are included.

Cooperation with the local and central government on agendas to strengthen the sexual and reproductive health of young people. We designed and facilitated a sex education and life-skills rally for the training of youth Clubs in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health, Department of Health, Division of Reproductive Health, and contributed in the Lampang Provincial Public Health Office Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) programme annual work plan.

We have worked together with the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand (PPAT) on the 15th Anniversary of the International Conference on Population Development (ICPD+15) and its commitment to young people, particularly their rights to sexual and reproductive health information, counseling and services. [https://www.plannedparenthoodthai.com]

Table 1: UNFPA Framework for Action on Adolescent and Youth

The Framework for Action was developed to contribute to the comprehensive development in education, livelihoods, and citizenship of adolescents and youth. It also functions as a guide and strategic position of UNFPA’s support for Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH). The Framework consists of the following four key areas:

Key 1: Supportive policy making that applies the lens of population structure and poverty dynamics analyses.

Key 2: Gender-Sensitive, Life-Skills-Based Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Education.

Key 3: Sexual & Reproductive Health Services

Key 4: Young People’s Leadership and Participation
The Four Keys

Key 1: Supportive policy making that applies the lens of population structure and poverty dynamics analyses. UNFPA will focus public policy on young people and incorporate their voices in national Millennium Development Goal (MDG)-based development and poverty reduction strategies.

Key 2: Gender-Sensitive, Life-Skills-Based Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Education: UNFPA will take a lead in facilitating the provision of comprehensive, gender-sensitive, life-skills-based SRH education in schools and community settings.

Key 3: Sexual & Reproductive Health Services: UNFPA will promote a core package of health and sexual reproductive health services and commodities that will include, at a minimum, contraceptives, HIV prevention, and maternal health services.

Key 4: Young People’s Leadership and Participation: UNFPA will give special attention to working with “youth” young people through meaningful youth-adult partnerships. This includes the commitment and support given to the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP).

The Four Keys can be visualized as a pyramid - the apex is the Key on Policy, Population and Poverty, the base of the pyramid comprise of the two Keys of Sexual Reproductive Health Education and Services. Youth Participation is a cross-cutting component of all Keys and strategically positioned at the core of the pyramid. The two-way arrows indicate that each key feeds into and reinforces one other.

Personal Experiences

> “YAP has provided me with a wonderful opportunity, allowing me to become good both at receiving new ideas and offering my own ideas. YAP has provided me with various opportunities to learn from other YAP team members about the subject of reproductive health, enabling me to realize the importance of child and youth rights, to gain interpersonal skills and to comprehend life and workplace necessities. Moreover, YAP has given me an opportunity to be held friendly and to actually work on independent ideas. This has allowed me to change greatly and learn more. Not only do we have a lot of fun working as a team but we’ve also really worked well together. Being with YAP is definitely a time to remember as well as an invaluable life experience. More importantly, it makes me stronger. Thank you, everyone, for creating YAP United Nations, the people of the world, my lovely mentors at YAP who have given me this opportunity, advice, and good guidance to my life. I’m hoping our good things will happen to everyone.”

— Aanchal Maurya (India)

— Aanchal Maurya (India)

> “This is the first day of our experience in the Global Youth Partnership. I found out that it was very welcoming. The next day we were introduced to the various committees and I have been assigned to the team. I was so thrilled to see the number of young people and to be here. It was really hard to make friends and not speaking English was a challenge. We had to do much learning about the world and language. It was so much learning about the people, the world, and our culture. Our team was a mix of different nationalities with different experiences, roles, and challenges. I was able to learn from working with YAP in the role of a team member.”

— Kunjita Khawarkh (India)
不具合

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I applied to be in a YAP team member because I wanted to represent Thai youth in conveying problems to adults, making them understand and provide assistance. I was given this opportunity by UNFPA in which my potential has been recognized to work on sexual and reproductive health issues. Being a YAP team member allows me to realize the importance of reproductive health. I learnt about it in the spirit of understanding that I had to nudge adults to discuss the matter with people. Because if this, I have been able to learn more about how to emit part of my youth to other people. This is because YAP is the first time I had opportunity to share knowledge on issues that are not new or important. More importantly, I have received friendship from my counterparts in YAP. We work like brothers and sisters, always helping to each other, consulting with one another when pointless arise, whether for personal or professional reasons. Moreover, as in YAP team members, I was given an opportunity to attend an Advanced Training for Trainers in Peer Education Program, in Jordan. For this reason, I became a YAW Internal Trainer Educational focal point in Thailand. Currently, I will continue working hard in the peer education field, through various networks and providing peer education. Another memorable experience was the 5th Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights, at Beijing, China, in which we shared our experiences with YAP team members from other countries, as well enabling us to work on the international stage.

La-Ongklae Boodikesethan (Pai)

La-Ongklae Boodikesethan (Pai)

YAP Personal Experiences

Nichay Jiang Kong

Nurul Sofia

Nurul Sofia

YAP Personal Experiences

YAP Personal Experiences

Little interview (ThongPai)

Little interview (ThongPai)
YAP has provided me with such a unique experience. I have been able to travel the world, get to know other people, and learn about new cultures. I have also been able to develop my skills and work on real projects.

I had the opportunity to work on a project with people from different backgrounds and this has been a great learning experience. I have been able to improve my communication skills and work effectively in a team.

I have also had the chance to meet some amazing people, including my fellow YAP members, who have become my friends. I have also had the opportunity to work with some of the world's leading companies.

Overall, my experience with YAP has been incredibly rewarding. I have learned so much and made so many new friends. I would recommend YAP to anyone who is interested in gaining valuable work experience and making new connections.
So many experiences and learning opportunities have come to me following the day I became part of the YAP team. We shared both fun and tough times at work and with our good spirit we fulfilled our mission. One of the most memorable experiences for me was the Advocacy Training workshop in which I had both great joy and learning. We learned how to write well and grab people’s attention to our writing. The guest speaker was dedicated and very sexy because she wanted us to adopt the skills! Another wonderful experience was the time we visited in Lampaung: everyone was so tired, but the air was always filled with joy and laughter. We also made visits to some schools there, everyone was hard at work, staying up late during mealtimes. Being part of YAP allowed me to realize that youth working together can really make a difference—through cooperation information becomes accessible.

Another important thing young people should do is encourage each other to work together. I have a thought about a question: if you were 10 years old and you were given YAP, you would make a difference. Our experience is that in that case, each would do a different thing. Apart from that, we are teaching young people to respect each other, to share, to be kind, to do well in their lives, to do well in the classroom, and to do well in everything.

YAP allows me to discover that there are many great activities waiting for us. In addition to pursue ones of school or college. Being part of YAP makes me conscious and ready to provide social services to others. Moreover, I came across people who need help of young people through working with other YAP team members as well as the young people. I told about my experiences with different people and communities. I told about the benefits that young people can gain through working in YAP programs. I also told about the challenges they face and how they can overcome them. I also told about the importance of teamwork and cooperation in our work.

Theresa Susisnotta
20 years old
Residents of YAP
YAP Family Center

YAP Personal Experiences