Playing for life

SPORT POUR LA VIE®

ABENGOUROU
ABIDJAN
Abobo • Adjamé • Marcory • Koumassi
Treichville • Port-Bouët • Yopougon
SAN-PEDRO

BACKGROUND

According to the AIDS Indicator Survey (AIS 2005), 4.7 percent of Ivorians are HIV infected. And over 85 percent of them were infected during unsafe sexual practices.
Ivorians have early sexual activity and a low perception of HIV infection risk. Indeed, three women out of four and one man out of two state they had their sexual debut before 18. Only 39 percent of girls and 52 percent of boys interviewed state they used a condom during their last risky sexual relation (AIS 2005).

Therefore, youth are the priority target of various HIV/AIDS prevention programs. They need to be informed very early on HIV/AIDS-related risky behaviors in order to improve their attitudes towards safe behaviors.
One of the most effective means to reach youth and catch their attention is to talk to them through what they love most, i.e. sports.
In Côte d'Ivoire, sport is the preferred recreation of youth. Most Ivorians including youth love soccer. Over 500 soccer training centers among which 250 are affiliated to the Ivorian Soccer Federation (Fédération Ivoirienne de Football/FIF) were registered in Côte d'Ivoire in 2005.

The power of mobilization and communication of soccer in Côte d'Ivoire increased with the first-ever qualification of the national soccer team "Les Eléphants" for the World Cup 2006.

This is why the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs launched the Sports For Life Program Initiative to build upon the enthusiasm for soccer to sensitize youth and involve them in HIV/AIDS community outreach activities.

WHO ARE WE?

Sports For Life (SFL) is a behavior change communication program involving a series of interactive activities aiming at encouraging youth to explore HIV/AIDS issues and get the necessary skills to lead a safe life and manage the risk represented by HIV infection.
Sports For Life is an initiative of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs (JHBSPH/CCP) based in Baltimore, USA.
The SFL Program was launched in Côte d'Ivoire in August 2006 by the JHBSPH/CCP Country Office with the financial support of PEPFAR (President Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief) and USAID.
SFL develops youth resilience, in empowering them with the required tools to adopt and maintain safe standards of life. The SFL participatory games and activities create "coaching-supportive moments" that help inspire speech and discovery among the participants.
This interaction encourages open dialogue among boys and girls on health issues and enables SFL coaches to provide an attractive and effective training based on games.

OUR STRATEGIES

Sports For Life builds on five programmatic pillars:

- The training of coaches
- The training of captains (young peer educators)
- Community mobilization through outreach activities pro vided at school and in the neighborhood by captains and coaches
- Mass outreach/events through media, sport or cultural activities (sport tournaments, cultural events)
- Advocacy and securing partnerships and funds

SFL Objectives:

- Improve youth knowledge, attitude and behaviors to HIV prevention
- Increase HIV/AIDS –related communication
- Break HIV/AIDS stigma and stereotypes
- Bring young people to make HIV/AIDS informed decisions
- Educate youth in HIV/AIDS prevention skills, including abstinence and being faithful
- Involve youth in HIV/AIDS outreach activities in their community
- Ensure an enabling environment for a significant interaction and high involvement of participants
- Involve private companies in fighting HIV/AIDS while providing them an opportunity to promote and improve their corporate identity as a citizen company.

Outreach activities carried out by captains in neighborhoods.

Target audience:

- Young girls and boys ages ten and up
- Teachers, coaches and youth educators, youth leaders ...
- Private, public organizations and NGOs working in youth welfare.

OUR OUTCOMES

- The program is present in eight (8) boroughs of Côte d'Ivoire: Adjamé, Port-Bouët, Yopougon, Treichville, Koumassi, Abobo, Abengourou and San-Pedro

- 246 coaches have been trained to date, out of which over 200 are in service and supervising youth teams on the field, in about one hundred sites in Abidjan (63), Abengourou (12) and San-Pedro (11)

- 1,581 captains trained in 48 sites in Abidjan in 2007-2008

- 1,200 captains being trained in Abidjan, Abengourou and San-Pedro in 2008-2009
  Over 10,000 people sensitized to HIV voluntary testing and over 1,500 HIV-tested people

- Over 20,000 youth and adults sensitized in HIV/AIDS

- Over 36,000 people exposed to HIV prevention messages during sport events

- Hiring of the international soccer player TOURÉ Yaya Gnégnéry of FC Barcelone and Alain GOUAMÉNÉ (Technical Department of the Ivorian Soccer Federation) as SFL Program Ambassador and Champion, respectively.

- Sports For Life received the Award 2008 for the Best Program in HIV/AIDS Multimedia Strategy in Africa.

OUR TOOLS

The Coach's Guide is the training tool used to train coaches and captains. It includes interactive games and sport games that enable to develop analogies between field game situations and everyday life situations and youth everyday life situations.

The Captain's Guide is a reference guide enabling captains to lead Sports for Life activities in their communities.

The Parent's guide is an information booklet on the SFL program designed to facilitate parents' communication with their children on sensitive issues like sexuality and HIV/AIDS.

The "Extra Time" Magazine is an educational material developed as a sports magazine in support of other SFL work tools. It serves as a workbook for captains.

The advocacy booklet aims at securing partnerships and funding. It is a material designed for advocacy with private and public companies. It comprises a brochure called "Playing to win" that introduces the program to various partners and community leaders.

Posters: they highlight the Program Ambassador TOURÉ Yaya Gnégnéry, an international soccer player and the Program Champion, Alain GOUAMÈNÉ, who are used as role models to deliver HIV/AIDS prevention messages to youth and young adults.

The SFL coach's kit: provided in a sports bag, the kit contains the equipment and material required by the coach to carry out his activities on the field.

The Internet site : www.sportpourlavie.ci

OUR PARTNERS

SFL is based on the involvement both of the private sector and the public sector by means of partnerships.

• Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps is a Canadian-registered NGO, a partner of the sports equipment manufacturer Nike. Mercy Corps supported the SFL program with sports equipment and material amounting to $ 308,000, in 2007.

• MEN/PEPFAR

The MEN/PEPFAR Project is an HIV/AIDS project developed in schools. It results from a partnership between the State of Côte d'Ivoire through the Ministry of National Education and the American Government through the PEPFAR Fund.
MEN/PEPFAR is a Sports For Life implementing partnership.

• LOCAL NGOs

About six NGOs are partners to the program: ANYP, Rose blanche, Wawadou, Réel santé, IST, Ruban rouge, UNAJECI.

OISSU :

The Ivorian School and University Sports Office (Office Ivoirien des Sports Scolaires et Universitaires), a public agency of the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Recreation. It is the agency in charge of sports development and management in schools and universities in Côte d'Ivoire.

RIP+ :

The Ivorian Network of People Living With HIV/AIDS Organizations (Réseau Ivoirien des Organisations de Personnes Vivant avec le VIH/sida). RIP+ and the SFL Program have established since 2007 the "Leaders Tournament" that takes place every year, during the commemoration of the International AIDS Day. This activity combines a soccer tournament and Voluntary Counseling and Testing.

CECI :

The Consortium of Côte d'Ivoire companies fighting against AIDS (Coalition des Entreprises de Côte d'Ivoire contre le sida). It is a grouping of companies and structures representative of the private sector in Côte d'Ivoire involved in HIV action.

FIF :

The Ivorian Soccer Federation (Fédération Ivoirienne de Football), is the main partner of the SFL Program in the program implementation in soccer training centers.

SUPPORTING US

How to join us in fighting HIV/AIDS?

In becoming a volunteer with the Sports For Life Program

Volunteers' (coaches) daily commitment is the most valuable asset of the program.

To become a volunteer, you must have been proposed by your organization. A training is then provided to each volunteer to become a Sports For Life Coach. The workshop aims at sharing with the volunteer the stakes and principles underlying SFL Program actions.

In becoming a partner NGO

Local and international organizations working on the field are encouraged to try the SFL approach. They just need to send a letter and a project to us. The SFL program and the NGO will later define a collaborative framework that will establish the responsibilities of each structure during the development of the program by the NGO.

In becoming a donor for Sports' For Life

Donations in kind and trade in goods are the most needed (billboards, gadgets, TV or radio space, information booths).

SUPPORTING US...

You can join us in fighting AIDS :

In joining our partners network with :

- Financial support
- Logistical support

AND WE PROVIDE YOU :

- The opportunity to use billboards, wall signs or other media vehicles during the competitions organized by SFL
- The opportunity to mark the training material of coaches and youth (balls, shirts, bags, etc) with your logo or your trademark.
- The opportunity to participate in SFL soccer tournaments to carry out POP operations, benefit from billboards, dress teams with shirts bearing your logo.

CONTACTING US...

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