

January 28, 2007



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Project Outline

Title: Youth Media Club

Location: 8 Districts of Thua Thien Hue Province, Vietnam

Period: October, 2002 to September, 2005

Funding Agency: AusAID, Australia

Total Funds Allocated: USD206,062

Implementing Agencies: Plan Vietnam and Thua Thien Hue Province Youth Union

Acronyms

Acronym	Description
CCCS	Centre for Consultative Communication and Services of CPFC
CCO	Children's Consultation Office
CMB	Children's Management Board
CPFC	Committee for Population, Family and Children
CPO	Country Program Outline
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN)
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
DoCI	Department of Culture and Information, Government of Vietnam
DV	Digital Video
FY	Financial Year
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPA	National Programme of Action for Children 2001-2010
ROC	Rights of the Child
TOR	Terms of Reference
UBR	Universal Birth Registration
UN	United Nations
VoV	Voice of Vietnam
YMC	Young Media Club
YU	Youth Union

Executive Summary

Background of the Project

This 3 year project, funded by AusAID, was designed to enhance the awareness of child rights through the more effective deployment of mass media at the broader national and provincial level, and through actively engaging children in the production of appropriate mass media products, at the community level. The medium for engaging children was the Young Media Club, and ten such clubs were set up in Hue Province. There were two at the provincial level in Hue City, and another eight in different districts of Hue province. An ambitious program of outputs, for television, radio and print media was specified, and largely met. An initial base line study was conducted, as was a mid term evaluation, followed by the final evaluation which these pages document. While Plan Vietnam retained a monitoring role as well as an active capacity building role, the implementing partner was the Youth Union of Hue Province.

Overview

Bringing such a child-centered project to fruition is likely to be an empowering experience for anyone associated with it. More than anything else, that sense of empowerment was the common thread of emotion that we could identify, among Young Media Club (YMC) members, their parents, their peers, and among those in supporting organizations. This theme also permeates the voices of the children in the Case Studies we have presented. (Section 1.3)

There has been leveraging of the grant funding through the services rendered by the Youth Union, the Voice of Vietnam and the many other Government Departments and organizations who have been involved passively or actively with this project. The children of the Young Media Clubs (YMCs) have been avid supporters of the concept and seem to have imbibed fulsomely from the opportunities presented. As a concept, the Young Media Club (YMC) has much to commend it.

Methodology

Based on the extensive documentation provided, we designed structured interviews (See Section 2.1 and Appendix B) for all interviewees, and additionally, some exercises for the children, to measure ability and elicit guidance. Between the 22nd of Dec., 2005 and 6th January, 2006 we conducted 45 interviews, some with groups of children or adults. Guided by the five criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, we identified and quantified for impact the relevant sentiments expressed, subject to the limits of translation and our own expressive power, into numerical values. We recorded these sentiments into a spreadsheet, and categorized them according to one of 20 source categories (Section 3.1.1), citing the source documents, and our subjective assessment of weighting of these statements. We tabulated relevant sections from this spreadsheet into tables to support our evaluation outcomes. (e.g. See Section 3.2.2)

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference document specified (See Section 1.4) that evaluation be conducted on the basis of the five criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the Young Media Clubs supported by Plan Vietnam in Thua Thien Hue (TTH) Province. We were also asked to assess whether the YMC project contributed to the objectives set in Plan Vietnam's Country Strategic Plan for Vietnam (2000-2005), and to the Vietnam Government's strategy on promotion of child participation. We were required to define the opportunities and challenges of the YMC model in terms of the promotion of child participation in mass media, and to provide recommendations for development of strategies to enhance further child rights promotion and advocacy. Finally, we were asked to determine if the project should be taken forward in some way, and if so, in what manner.

The Five Criteria

Relevance

We defined for our analysis, the meaning of relevance to be indicated by the extent to which stakeholder's needs are addressed.

Eighteen responses from nine source categories represented sentiments that impacted on the relevance of YMCs. Of these all nine were categorized as expressing support or strong support for the relevance of the YMC.(Section 3.2.2). Significantly, one group of respondents whose sentiments supported the idea of relevance were from the peer group of YMC members, although they were not YMC members themselves.

Effectiveness

We have defined Effectiveness to mean the extent to which the actual outputs meet specified outputs. Given that we only interviewed a small sample of the 150 members, the subset of evidence available for effectiveness (See Table 3.2) was very limited. However, tabulations of the outputs were available both from the Core Group and from the Annual Reports. Although in some cases, the number of outputs is less by about 60% in the instance of training sessions for the management of meetings, there are a significant number of instances where the targets have been met or are not more than 20% less than the original quantity envisaged.(See Table 3.3)

The National Programme of Action for Children 2001-2010 (NPA) warns generally of the danger of stressing on quantity of products thereby putting at risk the quality when it says, "The overemphasis on quantitative indicators and on success has affected the achievement of qualitative indicators."¹ In point of fact, this may well have occurred. These targets are possibly over-ambitious given that the duration of media training programs was typically 2 days each for print, radio and Television (TV). Additionally, the limited time available to YMC members after meeting academic requirements is inconsistent with the demands of some of the outputs targeted. (See Section 3.3.7)

We are satisfied that the program was effective, as an adequate rationale for the discrepancy between targeted and actual outputs exists. We are concerned however, that many of these outputs may not have mainstreamed issues of Youth or the Rights of the Child, as had been implied by the original Grants Proposal.

Impact

We have defined Impact as the extent to which the change desired by the Project, has been achieved. Forty seven of the 54 citations are positive about the issue of impact across a wide spectrum of stakeholders (Section 3.4.2.1). However, authoritative sources have made critical observations that deserve attention (See Section 3.4.2.1). They have pointed to issues of non representation of minorities, the disadvantaged and of marginalized groups, and of the need to project the messages that children generate, with fidelity and respect. They point to the need for effective management of time by YMC members. Finally, they suggest the development of a methodology by which Plan Vietnam's vision could be complemented by the partner's vision, and point to the need to build capacity in both Plan Vietnam staff and staff of the partner tasked with coordinating YMC operations so there is common ownership of the belief that what children have to say has value and meaning for society. In similar vein, one interviewee (Section 3.4.3) pointed out the need to recognise that at the commune level expectations should be low, although access is needed; YMC products should reflect need more than quality; children should be given diverse ways of expressing themselves; defining an appropriate methodology is key to the process and YMCs should be structured to foster the talents of children.

Efficiency

We have defined Efficiency to be a complex interplay of quality, quantity, and impact taken against cost and time. Our conclusion is that though the outputs expected were not wholly achieved, the quality and quantity of

¹p.14/66

actual outputs was adequate to fulfill the Pilot's primary requirement of demonstrating viability and outlining directions for change.

There do remain questions about the appropriacy (Section 3.5.4.2) of the quantity of products expected, and of the quality achieved, given the limited amount of training provided in media product creation, and given the staccato nature of the scheduling of YMC activities. Such short bursts are rarely conducive to collaborative creative activity that a film or a radio program may require. For the future, it may be advisable to separate the processes of output generation and of output dissemination to make the YMC project more efficient. In addition, the YMC Core Group has provided suggestions for improving operational efficiency (See Section 3.5.3), which should be considered, along with other optimisations, for incorporation into any new initiative for continuation.

Sustainability

We have defined this as - Perceived need plus ability to continue when grant funding concludes.

From one perspective, the genesis of the YMC project within a national program of action (See Section 3.6.2.1) may provide some sort of guarantee of sustainability. However, there are differences between the Hue project and its previous incarnations. It has been pointed out that while the intention is that the Government will eventually support YMCs as part of the Youth Union initiatives, support is needed till at least 2007 from Plan Vietnam specifically for equipment, and, for defining better methodologies for operation. (See Section 3.6.3)

The children and other interviewees have specified various ways in which resources can be generated. We support the view that some attempt should be made by YMCs to generate resources independently. However, in the current manifestation of the YMC, children have little time to devote to anything other than fulfilling quantitative targets. Any future model could benefit from incorporating a revenue generation element.

In summary, we recommend the current YMCs in Hue province be provided continued support for two years, although Plan Vietnam may consider incorporating operational changes which address some of the issues raised earlier. These are cited in Section 8.1.

General Findings

In this section, we will briefly cover various other findings. In Section 4, we have addressed the requirements of the Consultant's Terms of Reference (TOR) with respect to consistency with Plan Vietnam's Country Strategic Plan for Vietnam 2000-2005 (CSP) and the issue of contribution to the Government's National Programme of Action for Children 2001-2010 (NPA).

In Section 5, we have looked at the opportunities and challenges ahead. While this covers a range of issues, we wish to prioritise the issue of safe and ethical practices in children's projects. We have also brought up the issue of identity for the YMCs, which could be important to scaling, and of the issue of affirmative action if we are to bring ethnic groups, and other disadvantaged sections of the population, into the YMC fold.

Conclusions

In concluding we take the view that this was a Pilot Project. The purpose of a pilot is to demonstrate viability, and provide guidance on directions for change so that a better, more effective model can be replicated across a larger area. This YMC model has demonstrated for the first time, that this work can be conducted successfully at district level, and that those at the commune level could benefit from the impact that YMCs create.

It remains our belief however, that the empowerment that we cited as the primary theme at the start of this document is a function of the process the children experienced rather than the products generated. We believe that the YMC model would benefit from a more coherent structure, and from a better specification of the product line, focusing on quality and on collaborative development, in a manner that makes more effective use of the time and the resources available. We recommend that any new YMC model should seek to create a wider audience for a YMC type of experience.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Acknowledgements

We were privileged to receive support that was both competent and comprehensive from all quarters. We are particularly mindful of the excellent coordination provided by Ms. Le Quynh Lan, Child Rights Coordinator, and Mr. Tran Phu Sy, YMC Project Officer, Hue, who both worked closely and intensely with us, and provided us valued insights into the project and into the Vietnam context. We benefited greatly from the translation services offered by Mr. Phan Dinh Hiep in Hue, and Ms. Hong-Anh Tu in Ha Noi.

We are grateful to Ms. Deepali Khanna, Country Director for invaluable guidance, succinctly and precisely rendered. We have been moved by the enthusiasm of the many agencies who are currently either associated with this project or who have expressed their intent to be associated, and appreciate greatly the time, and the perspectives they have graciously provided us. Of particular value have been our extended discussions with the Staff of the Youth Union at all levels. Observing the intensity of their enthusiastic support for the YMC project has been enervating. We feel the need to single out the efforts of Ms. Lan Minh, Director, The Voice of Vietnam, whose role as a “grandmother” to the YMC movement has been an inspiration.

This acknowledgement would not be complete without expressing our gratitude to the wonderful children, both YMC members and their non YMC peers, that we had the pleasure to interact with during our stay in Vietnam. Our memories of Vietnam will always be “rose tinted” by our interactions with them.

1.2. Underpinnings

In conducting this Evaluation, we have been mindful of the difference between an audit and an evaluation. Principally, we have chosen to accept evidence that was made available without querying its validity. Instead we concentrated our efforts on determining whether the results conformed to those expected, and to determine if the broad objectives have been reached within the specified resources of both time and money.

At this stage we have felt it prudent to accept the validity of the relationship between the operational design and the objectives, as that should properly be a matter for consideration only when evaluating a proposal for a project. However, in the context of the learning space generated by the implementation of the project we have sought to use the lessons learned, for visualizing the road ahead.

As this was a pilot phase confined to the one province of TTH we had to ask ourselves if the YMCs represent a scalable mechanism for future growth, and to determine the extent to which these can be tuned to meet a wider demand. Issues such as project management, integration of far flung units, coherence of outcomes, and the role of supporting agencies represent important elements in this scalable visualization.

Overall, we have worked on the assumption that along with the TOR specifications, these principles define our mission and also lay out the scope and the reach of our work.

1.3. Case Studies

We include the following case studies to provide a broad based understanding of the empowerment that has been displayed by those associated with the YMC project. The first case study is about a YMC member at Hue City. The second is about a member of the Children’s Consultation Office (CCO) who will shortly be graduating, and the third is about a young man from Nam Dong who joined the YMC more recently.

1.3.1. Ms. Hoang Thi Hue

Ms. Hue is fourteen years old, and has a brother eight years older. She has been with YMC for two fun-filled years. During this time, she has acquired many skills including the confidence of dealing with people. A keen interest in Journalism and a zeal for making others aware of child rights has led her to have one newspaper article published as well as one program on radio. One of the television programs she helped make has been shown on television.

Violence against children is an area of particular interest for Ms. Hue. She recognizes the challenge of diluting parental violence against children, and feels that violence by teachers against students is on the one hand, seen in a positive light by some parents, but on the other hand it vitiates the teacher/student relationship. However, she is equally concerned about violence perpetrated by children against other children.

Ms. Hue narrated the interesting process by which she got to represent Vietnam at an International Conference on Violence Against Children at Bangkok during her tenure with the YMC. It started with her being selected as one of 20 children to attend a workshop in Ha Noi, on the basis of a presentation she made about what she would do if selected to represent Vietnam. She was one of two selected at Ha Noi to represent Vietnam at the Bangkok Conference. At Bangkok, the children engaged in a discussion on forms of violence to determine the main themes of their presentations. Ms. Hue found that keeping pace with the conference presentations was a challenge, but came away with the conviction that children are inherently creative and the process of communication allows them to exchange information and experiences and thereby help each other.



Ms. Hoan Thi Hue

Ms. Phan Thi Bao Tran

Mr. Ng Uyen Kien Trung

1.3.2. Ms Phan Thi Bao Tran

Ms Tran is fifteen, and used to dream of being a journalist. She is now a member of the CCO and would like to have a career as a Diplomat. She has a brother at University, a sister who works as a teacher at a kindergarten and another sister who teaches English at a University. Her ambition is to study at a university in the US, or Australia, so she has been studying English for six years and is looking for scholarships. She loves to sing and play the piano.

Ms Tran was one of two children chosen to represent Vietnam at an international conference in Melbourne, Australia on “Children as Partners”. She was selected on the basis of a submission in English. She was joined in Melbourne by participants from the Philippines and India. There were several hundred participants at the conference and she was part of a team that joined the documentary team to make a film about the conference.

Ms. Phan seems to have enjoyed her stint with YMC, and is hopeful that the future will provide children with better capacities and more opportunities. She believes the YMC experience was very empowering and the memory of her Melbourne experience will be with her for ever.

1.3.3. Mr Nguyen Kien Trung

Mr. Nguyen is 14 years old and in Class 7. He wrote an article, sent it to the YMC and became a YMC member on that basis in the summer of 2004. His motivation for joining the YMC was to make friends, travel, and, to

learn to communicate. He has two older siblings and comes from a family where both parents are working.

Mr. Nguyen's dream is to undertake doctoral studies in either Maths or Physics. He expresses a great love for the two subjects and does well at school in both these areas. He maintains that his motivation to study Maths and Physics is unrelated to his success with them. He spends about 20 hours a week on YMC work, over and above the scheduled time for YMC meetings, and creates at least one piece of writing per month for publication. Some of the time is spent at the Youth Union Office doing peer reviews and reading up.

CCO members provided him with training in writing skills, and he still telephones them for support, though largely as a last resort.

1.4. The Evaluation Objectives

These are reproduced from the Consultant's TOR

1. To evaluate the relevant, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability of Young Media Club supported by Plan Vietnam in Thua Thien Hue Province.
2. To assess whether the programme/project contributed to the objectives set in Country Strategic Plan of Plan Vietnam in Vietnam period 2000-2005 and Government strategy on promotion of child participation
3. To define the opportunity and challenge of YMC model toward the promotion of Child participation in mass media
4. To provide recommendations for strategies development to enhance further child rights promotion and advocacy
5. To write up the new proposal for the model of Young Media Club.

The first four issues are the subject matter of Chapter 3 to Chapter 6 of this report. The new proposal, cited at Item 5 will be addressed in a separate document.

2. Evaluation structure and format



2.1. The Methodology

The key components of our methodology are that we:

1. Studied the documents provided to us
2. Drew up and modified templates for structured interviews using concept mapping software with one consultant asking questions and one writing up
3. Added or removed items from the template depending on the information provided during the interview
4. Conducted interviews with various stakeholders and those connected with future expansion
5. Identified key issues on the basis of Desk Study and interviews
6. Scanned concept maps and quantified statements in the context of the five evaluation criteria.
7. Assigned numerical weighting values to statements representing indicators for the five evaluation criteria.
8. Keyed in intensities based on stated definitions.
9. Specified identity of documents referencing 6-8 above.
10. Entered all data into spreadsheet.
11. Analysed data on basis of issue, intensity and source.

To illustrate the interview methodology we have attached a document at Appendix B which provides an explanatory narrative of a concept map for a structured interview.

In addition, we conducted role play exercises with some of the YMC members interviewed. We conducted the scalability exercise with one group from Nam Dong and one from Hong Xuan, and we conducted an exercise involving the generation of a radio program with one group from Phong Dien.

2.2. Interviews

A total of 45 interviews were conducted. Appendix A provides a brief description of the interviewed person or group and the location of the interview. A breakdown of these interviews is as follows:

1. Interviews with Plan Vietnam Staff - 5 interviews representing all levels of the organization involved with the YMC project.
2. Interviews with YMC members, Non YMC students, and parents - 11 interviews
3. Interviews with persons and organizations in a position to comment on YMC operations - 22 interviews
4. Interviews with persons and organizations not in a position to comment on YMC operations but in a position to advise on future plans for YMCs - 7

The results of interviews with Plan Vietnam Staff have not been taken into account in quantifying feedback on the five criteria cited for the evaluation process.

2.3. The Schedule

This Study was conducted during the period 22 Dec., 2005 to 7 January, 2006. During the period 23 Dec., 2005 to 28 Dec., 2005 we were based in Hue and on the remaining days we operated out of Ha Noi.

2.4. The Desk Study

Our study of the literature provided us the following specific issues to investigate:

2.4.1. Criteria for Selection of YMC Members

This issue remains an area for concern. While this has been specified in various documents, there remain some discrepancies in the descriptions of criteria elicited from the children and from various stakeholders. Such criteria should be clear, transparent and public. Ideally, YMC members should themselves be involved in both selecting members and in handling the Appeals procedure. The overall performance of YMC members supports the view that the children have the capacity to do this, though it may be necessary that procedures be documented and monitored. Where partners have complementary agendas, these can be reflected in the criteria for membership. By definition, the criteria of selection for membership of the Children's Management Board (CMB), is well defined.

2.4.2. Tenure of members in YMC, CMB and CCO

The duration and conditions under which membership is extended or maintained currently remains obscure. It is advisable that the conditions of membership should be clarified and documented.

2.4.3. Gender Imbalance

There is a gross bias in favour of female children. It is hard to determine the reasons for this bias when the criteria for selection remain obscure. We have endeavoured to address this in Section 5.2.2

2.4.4. Absence of representation for ethnic minorities and the disadvantaged

In spite of reluctance by many stakeholders to pronounce an opinion on this issue, it would appear that the small selection of YMC members is not very representative of the larger population of potential beneficiaries. However, it would seem that empowerment is to a significant extent an outcome of the YMC process. The Mid Term Evaluation refers to the “remarkable difference in communication between children participating in the project since the first year and since the second year”.¹

We believe, as expressed by Mr. Dang Nam, Director of the Centre of Consultative Communication and Services, that ethnic non-representation is one of the most significant issues facing children. Hong Xuan YMC members also spoke of discrimination against ethnic people when asked their opinion on the most significant problems facing children. Of the 290 children who experienced the privilege of YMC membership, only 1 was from an ethnic minority group. However, 80 were from the ranks of the disadvantaged but there were no children with disabilities. (See Appendix D)

Given the empowering role of YMC membership, it would seem appropriate to include in any future design, the selection of ethnic minorities in the proportion of their representation in society, possibly as a policy of affirmative action, to help resolve the problem.

2.4.5. Time and YMC

Time seems to be at a premium for many of those engaged in YMC activities as well as for those who manage YMC activities. The constraints of time appear to be connected to three parties:

2.4.5.1. YMC Members

Indicator	Attribute	Intensity	Source Category	Source Identifier
Time Spent in YMC activity=20 hrs/month	7	20	1	03
Average time spent on YMC activities = 20 hrs/month	7	20	5	11
Average time spent on YMC activities = 45 hrs/month	7	45	1	05

Table 2.1.: Interview Responses - Time spent in YMC activities additional to schedule

The above shows that both types of YMCs, represented by a Source Category of 1, as well as non Plan Vietnam YMCs represented by a source category of 5, spent 20 hours or more in YMC activities.

2.4.5.2. Youth Union (YU) staff in charge of YMCs

Our interviews with the dedicated staff of the YU who among, other things were put in charge of YMCs, indicated that time was at a premium. The Mid - term Evaluation Report² indicated that given the absence of prior experience in working with children in a participatory manner, YU staff would face difficulties. These have been made worse by the relatively high turnover of such staff.

We were generally impressed by the dedication and time spent by YU staff engaged in YMC activities. Children both at provincial and district level seemed to know them well and hold them in high regard. Two YMC members who had graduated also joined the interview sessions.

2.4.5.3. Plan Vietnam Staff

Our interviews with those who currently work with the YMCs as well as those who have worked with YMCs in the past, indicate that they have been hardworking, diligent, and dedicated. Their efforts would benefit from greater exposure to successful models of child lead media projects worldwide. Future designs of YMCs could

¹p.16 subsection c) - Mid Term Evaluation Report

²para “Club Managerial Staff” - page 12

look at better utilization of modern communication methods, electronic mail, and Voice Over Internet Protocol as instruments both for effective management and for better utilization of time. In similar fashion, an overall design which is better targeted at the objectives one wishes to achieve, could include procedures for partner interaction and YMC management which could make for a more productive environment.

3. Evaluation of Relevance, Effectiveness, Impact, Efficiency and Sustainability of YMCs

3.1. YMC Evaluation on the Five Criteria

In conducting this evaluation, we interviewed a wide range of stakeholders. These interviews were structured in advance but additional issues were raised as needed. In order to provide meaning to this work we have endeavoured to tabulate responses, albeit subjectively formed from our perceptions at the interview, to provide evidence in respect of the five criteria on a 1 to 5 Likert scale of weighting.

In doing so, we have identified key aspects of the response that support a particular criterion, and along with the Likert value, have also cited the Source Category as well as the Source. The Source can be identified from the Source Identifier provided in Appendix A. This identifies the specific group or individual who was interviewed. The Source Categories are provided below:

3.1.1. Source Categories

- 1:** Member YMC Member
- 2:** Members of CCO
- 3:** Non YMC Peer Group of YMC
- 4:** New YMC members
- 5:** Non Plan Vietnam YMC members
- 6:** Director, Voice of Vietnam
- 7:** YMC Core Group Member,
- 8:** District Peoples Committee
- 9:** Parent, YMC member
- 10:** School Principal/Deputy Principal
- 11:** Youth Union Representative
- 12:** Department of Culture and Information (DoCI) representative
- 13:** Committee for Population, Family and Children (CPFC) representative
- 14:** YU staff in charge of YMC
- 15:** Radio/TV station Representative - Provincial
- 16:** Director, Centre for Consultative Communication and Services (CCCS), CPFC, Ha noi
- 17:** Parent, Non Plan Vietnam YMC member
- 18:** Secretary Communist Youth Union
- 19:** UNICEF representative
- 20:** Dr. Long - Mid term evaluator

3.2. Relevance



3.2.1. Defining Relevance

Relevance is defined as the extent to which stakeholders needs are addressed.

3.2.1.1. The Scale in the context of the instance

1: stakeholders needs are negatively impacted

3: stakeholders needs are not impacted

5: stakeholders needs are effectively addressed

3.2.2. The Evidence from YMC interviews

Indicator	Intensity	Source Category	Source Identifier
Would like to be a member	4	3	04
Expected Personal Gain - self reliance, confidence, ability	4	3	07
All students would join if ability not a factor	4	10	16
All students prepared to allocate 4 hrs Saturday afternoon	4	10	16
Personal gain - confidence, ability, improved relationships	4	1	05
Personal gain - improved writing skills + earnings	4	1	05
Would love to be a member	4	3	04
Willingness to spend SatPM+Sunday for YMC activities	4	3	07
Children empowered thru their capacity to express	4	6	12
YMC concept - Growth from 2 to 42 YMCs with 2500 children	4	6	12
YMC products currently used as reference materials in school	4	10	16
Own Expectations from YMC met and exceeded	5	2	01
Personal - YMC has changed direction of life	5	5	11
Integrate YMC activities into school if equipment + training available	5	10	16
Relevance to school - research element + prizes won	5	10	17
Good for presentation skills + complementary to school work	5	11	18
Willingness to dedicate 15% of CPFC media time for childrens ROC contributions	5	16	29
Intent - cover all provinces by 2010 and fund all YMCs through YU	5	18	32

Table 3.1.: Interview Responses - Indicators of Relevance

Table 3.1 shows that there were positive responses from widely dispersed groups of YMC and non YMC stakeholders as well as members of the CCO, within the student population. These support the view that the YMC is a concept that has a significant or very significant impact on the needs of these members in their capacity as stakeholders in the YMC process. Overall, YMC could be said to be relevant in the context of the great majority of current stakeholders.

3.3. Effectiveness



3.3.1. Defining Effectiveness

The extent to which actual outputs meet specified outputs.

In point of fact, the Grant proposal states

“By developing local youth to utilize the mass media to share and express their views, it is expected to raise public awareness concerning the rights of children, as well as issues that are directly affecting youth in Central Vietnam”¹

For this reason, Rights of the Child (ROC) have been affiliated to the specified products.

3.3.1.1. The Scale in the context of the instance

1: scope not utilized for ROC in YMC products

5: scope fully utilized for ROC in YMC products

3.3.2. The Evidence - Interview Analysis

During the interview sessions we received some evidence about YMC products, but their affiliation with Child Rights appeared to be limited.

Indicator	Attribut	Intensity	Source Category	Source Identifier
Created Radio(1)	2	0	1	03
Created - 20 articles	2	0	1	06
Created TV(1)Radio(1)Newspaper(1) articles - ROC	2	4	1	02
Created TV(12) Radio (12)	2	4	1	05

Table 3.2.: Interview Responses - Indicators of Effectiveness

From this it can be seen that only a very limited number of articles could be seen to be relevant in the context of child rights. Where the Intensity is cited as Zero it indicates that we were unable to determine if this related to child rights. All these interviews were with Source Category 1 i.e. YMC members. However, this remains a very small sample of the total response. Hence, the issue of the child rights context has to be carefully considered in any future model or expansion of the existing model.

3.3.3. The Data - YMC Core Group

The YMC Core Group provided the following information about YMC products from the YMCs created under this grant proposal.

Data Provided

1. Provincial and technical training
 - a) 11 gender equity
 - b) 12 ROC
 - c) 10 sessions and meetings management
 - d) 1 training course on Child Participation for YU officers
 - e) 15 sessions on TV facilitation
 - f) 1 session on life skills
 - g) 1 session writing skills
- h) 8 communication events for HIV/AIDS
2. 3 competitions - “I am a Young Reporter” - 634 articles received
3. 3 competitions - “Future Reporter” - 5716 articles submitted
4. Visits of YMC members
5. Other events
 - a) International children’s day etc
 - b) Gifts for children in need of special protection

¹Section 2.3 para 2 of AusAID NGO Project Proposal - Youth Media Club

- c) Mid Autumn festival for 150 members
 - d) Collaborative work e.g. Universal Birth Registration (UBR)
 - 6. Over 1000 individuals registered as students
 - 7. 2 YMC members attended an international conference on “Children as Partners” in Melbourne, Australia.
 - 8. Fund-raising activities in media
 - 9. Some children liaise with High Level Govt. bodies on issues as well as deputy Premier
 - 10. Children give feedback at above venue
 - 11. Leaders of YMCs meet senior diplomats
 - 12. Various other visiting YMCs
- Source** Meeting with Core Group on 23 Dec., 2005 at Youth Union Office in Hue.

3.3.4. Listing of expected vs actual outputs

The following data was gathered from the reports submitted.

Product	Expected Quantity	Achieved Quantity (FY05 Annual Report and Plan Vietnam inputs)
TV programs	130	134
Radio Programs	288	183
Print Media Articles	180	177
Training Sessions - Modern Media Techniques	27	22
District based Information, Education and Communication (IEC) sessions - ROC and gender issues	54	40
Training Sessions - Community Managed Projects Methodologies	3	3
Training Sessions - Management of Meetings	30	10
Provincial Competitions - Youth Issues	6	6
Newsletters printed	>6000	8600
Program Information Brochure	1	0 (film instead)
Exchange Visits conducted	20	17

Table 3.3.: Record of Outputs Based on Final Report

3.3.5. Analysis of products reviewed

In depth analysis of four radio programs and three videos was conducted to adjudge their technical quality, content (relevance to child rights) and program design to achieve the project objectives. (See Appendix C) We have refrained from looking at the adult involvement as currently the final post-production is handled by adults at the radio and television stations. The products are judged on a scale of 1-5 where 5 represents the best that children can potentially achieve (keeping their age and capacity in mind) and 1 presents the other end of the spectrum.

Category	Tech Quality	Content	Product
Radio Programs	3	3	3
TV Programs	2	3	3

Table 3.4.: Summary of Output Quality

As Table 3.4 shows, the quality of outputs is somewhat less than desired. We considered this issue and came to the conclusion that it either was a function of infrastructure, capacity or time.

3.3.6. Infrastructure and Capacity

Few districts in Vietnam have their own Television and Radio stations. The responsibility of providing technical training to the YMC members at the district level goes to the staff of these stations. Additionally, these stations also extend to YMCs the post-production facilities and airtime to broadcast their programs. (See Figure 3.1) At the district level, the existing Television and Radio stations are equipped with limited and dated equipment. Radio programs are recorded, edited and broadcast on normal tape. TV programs are shot on Digital Video by YMC members but the footage is edited and telecast on Video Home System (VHS). Globally these formats do not qualify for broadcasting. Any future design of YMC, if aimed at global audiences may need to invest in the infrastructure and staff capacity of Radio and TV Centers.

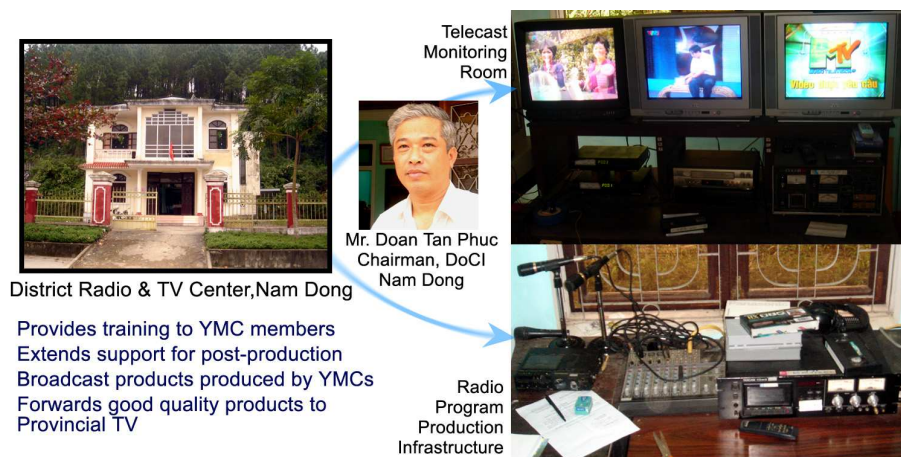


Figure 3.1.: Support Potential at the Nam Dong District Radio and TV Center

3.3.7. The Role of Time

Paucity of time is a recurring issue with YMC members (See Section 3.5.4.2 and Section 2.4.5). YMCs located in districts without TV Stations have added implications on their time as their products need to be routed to the Provincial Television station through the CCO. Figure 3.2 indicates the time that these YMC Members invest in the production of a single TV program. Apart from the investment in time, these YMCs also have little control over their products as the CCO coordinates with the Provincial Television station. Production standards of the Provincial TV station are higher than the District, and most films offered by district level YMCs are unable to get allocation of airtime. This results in low motivation and contributes to the low realization of project targets.

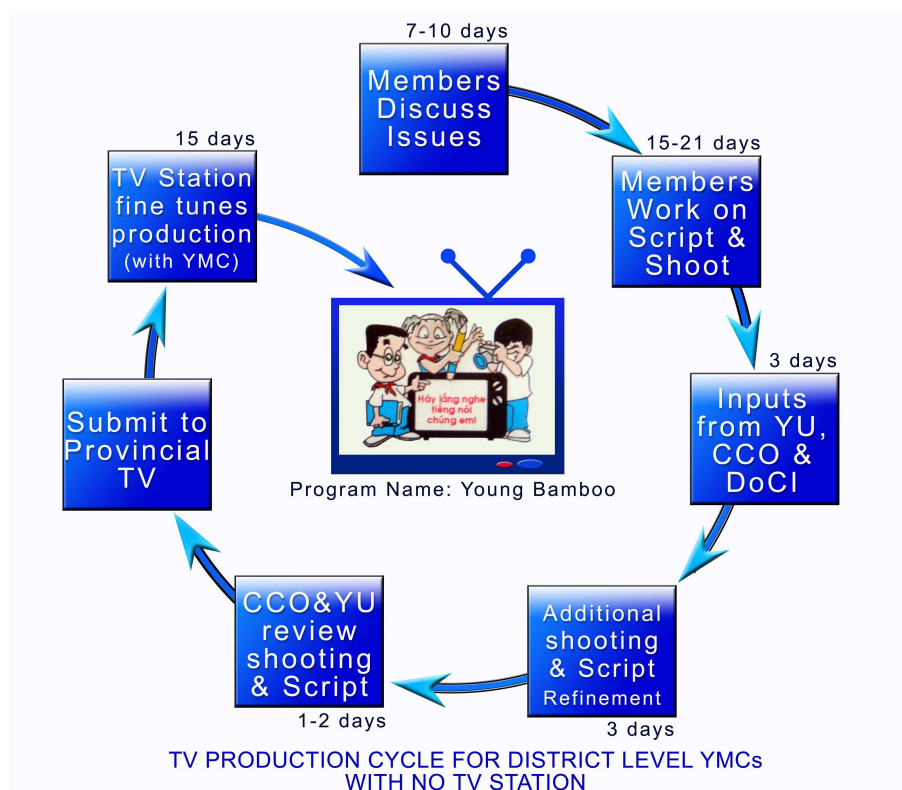


Figure 3.2.: Time to produce a TV film

3.3.8. The Issue of YMC Identity in Media Products

Currently, there is no structuring or format specifications for YMC media products. This leads to quality which is more variable than it needs to be, and it also implies that YMC media products do not carry a distinct identity, which could build a committed audience of regular consumers.

3.3.9. Other Outputs specified in grant proposal

The Grant Proposal specified two other performance indicators as follows:

1. 75% of District based Youth Union Members show understanding of the Rights of the Child
2. 66% of district youth can demonstrate awareness of publicity on youth issues.

In practice, the baseline survey appears to indicate that among the sample population, 82% had heard or read of the rights of the child, and in respect of 10 of the 17 rights that the survey investigated, the awareness of the children responding was more than 75%.

3.3.10. Conclusions

It could be argued that the number of outputs required is too large. We have already looked at the constraints of time in Section 2.4.5 and Section 3.3.7. These constraints are compounded by the limited availability of media slots in a nation that is only now beginning to recognise the issue of child rights in media terms. Given also the limited amount of training provided to YMC members - typically a 2 day course each for TV, radio and writing - it is remarkable that the targets have come so close to being achieved. In general, we believe that the

YMC project has delivered on effectiveness as here defined, although it remains debatable whether the outputs mainstream the issues and render the impact envisaged in the original grant proposal.

3.4. Impact



3.4.1. Defining Impact

The extent to which the change desired by the Project, has been achieved.

3.4.1.1. The Scale in the context of the instance

1: change is opposite to that desired

3: no change

5: significant change in direction desired

3.4.2. The Evidence - Interview Analysis

Indicator	Intensity	Source Category	Source Identifier
Ethnic minorities poorly represented in YMCs	1	16	29
Impact on time - clash with classes & Unexpected field visits	2	9	15
Historically teachers have filtered student output for YMC products	2	16	29
Impact - children tend to become "professional" hence hard to return to normal environment	2	16	29
YMC implementation not consistent with Plan Vietnam's vision	2	20	33
Void is capacity of Plan Vietnam and YU staff in the area of child rights	2	20	33
Recall of provincial level TV schedules	4	1	05
Recall of provincial level Radio schedules	4	1	05
Recall of YMC products, timings and frequencies	4	1	06
Recall of YMC products	4	3	07
Perception - YMC impacted awareness of childrens issues	4	5	11
Recall - Bulletin and TV programs	4	9	22
YMC impact on family relationships	4	17	30
Represented Vietnam at Natl. Conf Ha Noi	4	1	02
Recall of Radio Prog(1)	4	1	03
Recall of District level TV schedules	4	1	05

Indicator	Intensity	Source Category	Source Identifier
Recall of District level Radio Schedules	4	1	05
Believe YMC to be an empowering experience	4	2	01
Recall of Bulletin articles	4	3	04
Positive Impact - parents re own children	4	5	11
Positive Impact - parents re other children	4	5	11
Impact on school performance	4	9	15
Impact on family relationships	4	9	15
Impact - relationship with siblings improved	4	9	22
Impact on teachers - authoritative to collaborative	4	10	16
Personal - feel children are capable of working on their own	4	10	16
Impact on YMC members - behavioural change - self regulation	4	10	17
Personal - shown value of non academic work for students	4	10	17
Total school population impacted by YMC=5000 out of 25000	4	11	18
Impact - change of org. awareness in DoCI and in programming	4	12	19
Impact - Yes, Parent of poor and handicapped children now pay more attention	4	12	31
Recall - YMC outputs	4	13	26
Recall - District and provincial TV	4	14	24
Intention to invite YMC representation + consider YMC model in national strategy for child participation	4	16	29
YMC impact on child - more confident	4	17	30
Contrast to Non YMC children - YMC members socially aware + role models	4	17	30
Represented Vietnam at Intl. Conf. Bangkok	5	1	02
Positive Impact - children's problems in community	5	1	05
Positive Impact - parents re own children	5	1	05
Represented Vietnam at Intl. Conf. Melbourne	5	2	01
VinhPhuc YMC stimulated by Hue YMC visit	5	5	11
YMC member - Govt Delegation - Cambodia - ROC	5	6	12
YMC member - Joined Minister CPFC - United Nations (UN) forum(2003)	5	6	12
YMC feedback to CPFC for National Program of Action	5	6	12
YMC Feedback - Min of Ed. - resulted in ban on tuitions	5	6	12
Male Parent - Behaviour change - discuss more and order less	5	9	22
Female parent - Behaviour change - daughter is now friend	5	9	22
Impact on YMC members - ROC + transfer of knowledge to action	5	10	17
Community impact - demo value of children acting independently	5	10	17
Personal Impact - remarkable changes in personal perception	5	13	21
Organizational impact - Mid Aut. Festival - integrate ROC issues	5	13	21
Recall - TV, Radio and Bulletin	5	14	23
Personal change in behaviour - I speak to her(daughter) more like a friend	5	17	30

Table 3.5: Interview Responses - Impact indicators

status Open

3.4.2.1. An assessment of the data

In assessing the Table above we observe:

1. The vast majority of citations 47/54 are positive about the impact of YMCs.
2. The critical statements come from two sources:
 - a) The Mid-term Evaluator
 - b) The Director, Center for Consultative Communications and Services, CPFC
3. In a sense, both are neutral parties with great respect for the concept of YMC as an effective instrument. The issues that they allude to, may need to be considered in the event of any expansion or further support for the YMC model.
4. Principally, they make the following points:
 - a) Ethnic minorities are poorly represented - a recurrent theme
 - b) The message children wish to project should be respected and projected
 - c) Time management by YMC members is crucial - a point repeatedly made also in the Mid-term Evaluation
 - d) A methodology should be designed which incorporates Plan Vietnam's vision and the partner's vision.
 - e) Plan Vietnam and Partner staff have to build capacity in the area of child rights to inherit the belief that children have something to say, and what they say and do, can contribute to the well being of society.

3.4.3. Feedback

Mr. Dang Nam, Director, Center for Consultative Communications and Services, CPFC gave us an extended and frank interview. As someone relatively remote from the YMC implementation in Hue, we rate his input as being relatively impartial and frank. We concur with his basic premise that the empowerment is in the process rather than the product. His views on improving the Hue model for YMCs can be summarized as follows:

Commune Level: Access is needed but expectations should be low.

YMC products: These should reflect need more than quality

Diverse Expression: Children should be given several ways of expressing themselves.

Methodology: Defining an appropriate methodology is key to the process

Primary Issue: The YMCs should be structured to foster the talents of children

3.4.4. Conclusions

The project has had significant impact on those whom it has touched. The major argument against this project is that it has not touched enough, or not touched equitably. However, the project has directly impacted 290 young people who have spent some time with the YMCs, and of these 80 have come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Bearing in mind that this is a pilot project, which is designed to elicit issues that can go to design a better project, this has succeeded admirably in both demonstration of viability and in defining new directions for improvement.

3.5. Efficiency



3.5.1. Defining Efficiency

Efficiency in this context could be said to be a complex interplay of Quality, Quantity, and Impact taken against Cost and Time.

3.5.2. Efficiency - Time Relationship

The project concluded on Schedule with specified indicators being largely fulfilled as indicated in Section 3.3.4.

3.5.3. Pointers on Efficiency - YMC Core Group

The YMC Core Group indicated that improvements in efficiency could be made through:

- Reducing costs
- Improving quality of output
- Generating revenue
- Capacity building enhancement
- Sponsorship
- Collaborations
 - Between YMCs
 - With other agencies
- Mapping
 - Issues
 - Feedback
 - Action

3.5.4. Efficiency - a discussion on quality, quantity and impact vs cost and time.

3.5.4.1. Quantity

The annual reports testify, and the mid term Evaluation confirms, that the quantitative indicators have been largely met. We have examined the issue of Impact in Section 3.4 and in general we can conclude that the project has had an impact on its intended population i.e. the children and their parents, and on many other adults whose awareness of child rights has been enhanced.

The total cost of the project is substantial if one was to cost services provided by the Youth Union, supportive parents, schools and the Department of Culture and Information, the CPFC, the Department of Education, the Peoples Committee, Plan Vietnam Staff, and others such as the Voice of Vietnam. This appears to indicate that the grant has nucleated a much larger network of resources to serve the ends the grant proposal envisaged.

This leveraging of the financial support provided can be seen to be a factor of efficiency. Simply stated, the project has directly touched approximately 300 children over the space of three years in ten YMCs dispersed across a wide spatial and topographical diversity. The indirect impact of this has been spoken of by many who appeared to have been stimulated by the TTH example e.g. the Ha Noi YMC, which was stimulated by the visit of a CCO member from Hue.

3.5.4.2. Quality

Quality, of course, remains a straggler in a three horse carriage. While the talents of the children are indisputable in many cases, as is the nature of support provided by stakeholders, and the quality of training which appears to have been provided by reputable authorities, there remain residual issues of quality. Such issues remain as challenges for any further extension of the program or for scaling it up.

This lack of quality is attested to by the low level of recall for programs providing print, radio or television dissemination. Some of the elements of recall for which YMC members, new members, and non YMC students were tested included, name, scheduled date, time, and content. Recall was medium to poor, which often conflicted with the overall enthusiasm for the project.

Our own examination of products produced by the YMCs confirmed that if the sample we were shown was representative then it would be easy to accept the hypothesis that recall was diluted by the absence of quality in the products produced.

Associated with the issue of quality is the issue of access. This applies particularly to print materials, and to the timing of radio and television broadcasts, the frequency of repeat broadcasts, and the duration of the program. While there were cases where a non YMC member indicated that she would sometimes borrow the printed bulletin to read humorous parts to her mother, it remains clear that the children would wish to see a much more graphic element within a more exciting presentation, which is more readily accessible to the children and to the parents.

The rationale for this void in quality is hard to determine. The issue does lend itself to the argument that when children are working for a few hours at a time per week, then outputs conducive to a collaborative environment could not be successfully concluded in short bursts of effort separated by relatively long periods of alternative activity. In addition, in many cases, creative collaborative work does imply that any didactic element should be shrouded in entertainment value, and this is clearly not the case, in the products examined. Finally, we would ascribe this also to the very limited training provided viz. 2 days courses each in video, audio and writing. Given that context of training, it may appear remarkable that children could generate the quality of products they have done.

3.5.4.3. Impact

Impact has indeed been the high point of this project. The effects recounted by a range of stakeholders have been definitive and supportive. The fact that YMC members have, in the context of child and youth issues, represented Vietnam at International Conferences, accompanied ministerial delegations to a UN forum, and

provided feedback for the National Program of Action, and stimulated a ban on tuition through feedback to the Ministry of Education (See Table 3.5), represents decisive indicators of impact at the public level. The feedback from parents and from the children themselves are distinctive in indicating clearly a positive impact on family life and individual empowerment of the YMC member.

3.5.5. Conclusions

While there do remain issues of quality, the level of efficiency has been at acceptable levels. The timely completion of the project with the majority of outputs achieved, signifies one component of efficiency. This is supported powerfully by the very significant impact the proposal has had on its many stakeholders who have contributed generously in terms of time and resources.

3.6. Sustainability



3.6.1. Defining Sustainability

Perceived need plus ability to continue when grant funding concludes.

3.6.2. The Evidence

3.6.2.1. Prior Evidence

This is of four types:

1. The Memorandum of Understanding signed in November, 2002 after the start date of the project, between the Provincial CPFC, Provincial Youth Union, TTH Radio and TV, cites the Provincial Pioneer Council as the body for implementing the project. That document states, inter alia in Article 6 of Section B, that efforts will be made to “to seek for supports (finance or in-kind, equipment) from other social organisation, domestic and international non-governmental organisations for the operations of the YMC.” Hence, it can be assumed, and subsequent statements from the Core Group indicate, that there is both the desire and the means to support the project in Thua Thien Hue Province, and NGO support is, in principle, supplementary.
2. The second item of evidence that can be observed is that the concept of the YMC is well established in the programs of the Pioneer Club movement in schools. [Ho Chi Minh Association, 2005] However, the precise role envisaged by the Youth Union through its Pioneer Club, which had been tasked with implementing the YMCs in TTH under the terms of the Memorandum, could be possibly conceived as being different from that specified for this Project.

3. The report on the Young Media Club provides an adequate statement of sustainability when in including the 10 clubs of TTH under its purview it states [Voice of Vietnam, 2005]:

“Now, the YMC system has been present in 20 provinces and cities with 41 clubs and 2500 members. VoV² YMC members are issued membership cards signed by VoV leaders, provided uniforms and they perform in strict compliance with principles and the target For Children’s Rights and Obligations stated by the CRC. YMC members go in line with the Club Regulation and they are provided training and technical support by professionals or are enabled to participate in field trips, Child rights training courses and empowered to realize their right to speak their own voice in mass media”

4. The fact is that the funding stopped in September, 2005 and the functioning of the clubs is apparently undisturbed, as we observed during our visit in end December, 2005.

3.6.2.2. The evidence - Interview analysis

Indicator	Intensity	Source Category	Source Identifier
Can have activities to keep YMC running	4	2	10
Sustain YMC as Imp. problems remain to be solved	4	3	04
Can allocate time, computer access and camera for YMC	4	10	16
Will sustain - due practical value and children's enthusiasm	5	10	16
CPFC willing to work with Plan on joint proposal for future YMC model	5	16	29
Support from Plan in methodology and equipment needed till 2007	5	18	32

Table 3.6.: Interview Response - Indicators of Sustainability

3.6.3. Conclusions

While it is true that the project and the children involved in it could initiate innovative ways of generating resources to keep the existing ten YMCs in operation for a significant period of time, it is also true that many of the reforms suggested, and the strategies for expansion may not be feasible if the Youth Union were to support this entirely on its own at this stage.

The assertion by the Secretary of the Hochiminh Communist Youth Union, during our interview, that they would probably only need support from Plan Vietnam till 2007 would indicate that what is called for is bridging support for the ten YMCs in Hue till 2007. He had also indicated in the same interview that contributors to the Voice of Vietnam Bulletin are paid USD 7 per full page and for Provincial TV are paid a sum of USD 250. Other authorities have cited the financial contribution needed for annual support of a YMC being of the order of USD3000. Hence, it would appear logical that if issues of quality can be overcome, YMCs should be able to earn a significant part of their current expenses. This logic is however not scalable, and the Secretary’s assertion is also contingent on governmental collaboration.

²Voice of Vietnam

4. Consistency with CSP 2000-2005 and Govt. Strategy on Promotion of Child Participation

4.1. Plan Vietnam's Country Strategic Plan 2000-2005

CSP 1 cites 7 issues which comprise its focus. Country Program Outline's (CPOs) are framed on the basis of these issues.

Issue 1: Lack of access to adequate education The role of YMCs has been to proselytize the need for education, and to show that marginalized and differentially enabled children can also be good performers in the academic context, as this is a frequent topic in YMC media products. Hence, it is feasible that the demand created will lead to greater access.

Issue 2: Lack of access to adequate health care This is an issue that is closely linked to awareness and YMCs could have played a significant part. However, there is no evidence that the articles, radio programs and TV programs produced, addressed issues of health care in a significant way.

Issue 3: Low opportunities for employment and productivity growth for the poor This issue also has limited relevance for the YMC and was therefore not addressed.

Issue 4: Vulnerability of the poor, especially marginalized groups Some of the voids raised under this issue, were frequently cited by YMC members as being an area of potential activity. This included the issue of street children as well the issue of land mines, particularly in mountainous areas.

Issue 5: Limited access to good quality water, sanitation, and shelter While this is an issue that is related to child rights, it was not clear how many of the outputs related to this. In particular it would appear that many YMCs tend to operate independently and the integrated assessment of YMC outputs is undertaken along with the other 32 YMCs at least for radio programs through the Voice of Vietnam.

Issue 6: Inadequate community participation in child-focused development The objectives under this issue relate largely to altering adult perceptions to allow increased adult participation in child-focused development. There is a perceived behaviour change among the parents of YMC members which gives promise of such adults beginning to contribute to child focused development.

Issue 7: Lack of solidarity among Plan families, sponsored communities, and donors. In this context, Plan Vietnam's country objectives for 2005 were:

1. To increase the percentage of Foster Child families who demonstrate awareness, sensitivity and understanding about their Foster Parent and across cultures, from 32.9% to 75%.
2. To increase awareness of child rights among Plan communities, children and partners from 30% to 70%.
3. To involve 90% of children in all Plan communities in activities

4.1.1. Impact of the YMC project

The principal influence of the YMC project has been to demonstrate the impact that YMCs can have on the issue of child rights on YMC members, their peers, parents and communities. It is perhaps a reflection of this impact that today YMCs are being seeded in Plan Vietnam program units. While it lies beyond the scope of this evaluation to assess the percentage change, it is true that many of the interviews reflected changes in various indicators on these issues. Ideally a baseline survey could have been conducted to assess changes with regard to the earlier baseline survey.

CPFC has recently commissioned a survey of child rights in various provinces including Hue. The results of this survey are expected to be available shortly and its findings may provide a valid answer to the question of impact.

4.2. Consistency with Govt. Strategy on Child Participation

4.2.1. Relevance and the broad perspective

From a broad perspective, the NPA 2001-2010 defines the child rights based approach in terms of six principles. The sixth principle is reproduced below from Page 4/66 of the Foreword:

6. Children have the right to express their opinions on issues that affect their lives.

This project clearly falls within the realm of this requirement.

4.2.2. Specific Instances of contribution

4.2.2.1. Children's participation and opinions

In discussing the constraints on achievements with regard to Children in especially difficult circumstances, the NPA states:¹

However, 25 per cent of the child population does not have access to radio and television and access to Internet and foreign information sources has been limited. Children's participation and opinions have not received much attention.

In this case, the large number of outputs, and initiatives such as the broadcast of YMC radio programs on loudspeakers in villages and communes has contributed to the ability for children and adults to benefit from these views. Section 3.4 shows clearly that children's participation and opinions have been heard through the medium of the YMCs.

4.2.2.2. Clubs

The NPA makes specific mention of the role of organizations such as the YMCs and says:²

The mass media and the activities of the Youth Clubs and Young Journalists' Clubs have helped to educate the public and children about children's rights. The Committee for Protection and Care of Children from the central to grassroots levels has improved resource mobilisation and, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Culture and Information, the Pioneers' Council and other ministries, is making efforts to educate the public in children's rights. Literacy and physical education are being promoted in many schools, however the quality of communication products remains poor.

The evidence gathered during the interviews and collated in Chapter 3 clearly demonstrates that the YMCs have fulfilled the role envisaged. It also supports the view that problems with the quality of communication products is not unique to the Hue YMCs.

¹p.4/66

²p.9/66

4.2.2.3. Capacity and Quality

In Section 2, the NPA makes reference to the challenges for the next decade. ³

The skills and capacity of the administrative management system in the formulation of plans at provincial level and below are still weak. The overemphasis on quantitative indicators and on success has affected the achievement of qualitative indicators.

The YMC project has clearly built capacity in both the YU staff and in all those associated with the management of the YMCs particularly in the Core Group through its training modules and the introduction of quality practices. While this remains an area of concern, measures have been taken to address such concerns.

³p.14/66

5. Defining Opportunities and Challenges in the context of the promotion of Child Participation in Mass Media

5.1. Opportunities

There is enormous scope for the promotion of child participation in Mass Media in our opinion. It has, however, several pre-requisites:

1. Producing products for the full spectrum of media for local, national and international audiences. .
2. Generating awareness among Senior Media Staff and relevant government ministries and departments, about the need for invoking children's views
3. Assuming an adequate supply of quality materials, negotiating fixed media slots and creating dedicated media space.
4. Reducing the cost of print materials while increasing circulation and making the products more topical in local contexts.

5.2. Challenges

5.2.1. Building capacity in partner organizations and within Plan Vietnam

After interaction with Plan Vietnam staff and after conducting structured interviews with both present and former staff, it would appear that further training could be usefully provided in the areas of child rights and child participation, so that there is a greater "buy-in" from within Plan Vietnam, and YMCs could benefit from this effect.

Similarly, within the population as a whole and therefore within partner organizations there remains an inadequate awareness of the extent to which children should be free to specify their own mechanisms within a defined framework of action. This problem is compounded by the relatively high turnover rates among those who act as facilitators in this project.

Our observations indicate that individuals who work closely with the children are better able to understand their needs and capacities. Such individuals include parents, school staff such as the principal and vice-principal of the Junior Secondary School, and Madam Lan Minh, of VoV. All these individuals have had intensive exposure to the impact of the YMC process on children. Their beliefs and responses were markedly different from those with less experience, who acted as facilitators for the children in the YMC work.

5.2.2. The Gender Imbalance

There is a significant gender imbalance in favour of females. We see this as emanating from the selection process which uses writing skills as a primary criterion of selection. This may be exacerbated by tendencies of parents to possibly set higher achievement targets in more discrete areas of performance such as the sciences

and mathematics, traditionally favoured by male children, thereby making less time available for YMC type of activities. The Baseline survey conducted as part of this project found¹:

The survey figures show that 10.2% of the female children wrote news and articles for the mass media agencies while only 4.4% of the male children did so. This reflects the superiority of activeness, enthusiasm and skill of the female children against the male children.

This would support the view that male children would be more likely to be filtered out of a selection process that relies on a test of journalistic writing ability.

5.2.3. The issue of quality

Quality is an issue that is more general than the Hue YMC project. The National Program of Action 2001-2010 states

The mass media and the activities of the Youth Clubs and Young Journalists' Clubs have helped to educate the public and children about children's rights. The Committee for Protection and Care of Children from the central to grassroots levels has improved resource mobilisation and, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Culture and Information, the Pioneers' Council and other ministries, is making efforts to educate the public in children's rights. Literacy and physical education are being promoted in many schools, however the quality of communication products remains poor.

The issue of quality of the Hue YMC project has been discussed in Sections 3.3.5 and Section 3.5.4.2.

5.2.4. The issue of available time

This has been addressed extensively in Section 2.4.5 and to a secondary extent in Section 3.5.4.2.

5.2.5. The issue of Identity

How does one define a YMC? When does a children's club become a YMC? Is a YMC defined by its place in a CMB/YMC structure? How does one differentiate Hue YMCs with 15 members and the Ha Noi YMC with 30 members?

The issue of identity remains a perplexing question, as does the related issue of how decisions are made regarding membership of the YMCs. Some of the feedback from the children indicated that inter YMC competition could be a stimulant to enhancement of quality. However, competition is meaningless unless there are criteria which attach to the identity of the YMC.

There is however, one common criterion, and that is the selection process based on a written output and other behavioural requirements. This does then create problems when it comes to looking at YMCs at the commune level, where as has been noted, our expectations of quality will have to be muted. (Section 3.4.3).

If the YMC model is to be scaled to other provinces and at some level interaction and competition between YMCs is desired then criteria for defining what a YMC is, will bear thinking about.

5.2.6. The issue of affirmative action

Plan Vietnam's programs are aimed at the most marginalized and vulnerable children. Hence, minorities, children with disabilities, and children from poor households especially boys, are examples of categories that are not adequately represented. Some solutions will have to be found to these important questions that have been raised by more than one authoritative source.(See Section 2.4.4).

¹p. 44/68

5.2.7. The issue of ethical and safe practices

Working with children has many implications. The safety of children is paramount and guidance should be explicit both to the child and to those who facilitate the activities of children, in the interests of the broader program of Child Protection. While no incidents appear to have taken place, we have questioned YU representatives about the issue. The replies received indicated that there were no written guidelines in place. Hence, the absence of any documented guidelines for children and facilitators is a concern that needs to be addressed.

6. Recommendations for development of strategies to further enhance child rights promotion and advocacy

In summarizing what has been extensively discussed in the earlier chapters, we would say

1. Producing products for the full spectrum of media for local, national and international audiences. .
2. Generating awareness among Senior Media Staff and relevant government ministries and departments, about the need for invoking children's views
3. Assuming an adequate supply of quality materials, negotiating fixed media slots and creating dedicated media space.
4. Reducing the cost of print materials while increasing circulation and making the products more topical in local contexts.
5. Integrate YMCs into a coherent program of action with schools so that YMC members act to value-add the efforts of their peers in the school environment.
6. Broadly speaking, separate the process of creative design from the process of dissemination.

7. Findings and Issues arising from the Evaluation

7.1. Findings

The broad findings of the project that have not been addressed earlier are:

1. The project benefits from a close association with the Youth Union as an implementing partner.
2. The role of the CCO as a glue across the ten YMCs is important and commendable. We were impressed by the competence, commitment and humility of such appropriate role models. We believe they could play a more effective role in a modified model in respect of their contribution to their peers in schools.
3. There are certain voids (See Section 8.1, Section 3.5.4.2, Section 3.3.7) which will have a magnified response when extending this model. These therefore need to be addressed in the design of a more scalable model. We conclude that the current model should be modified before scalability is attempted.
4. Technical support personnel appear to have other full time responsibilities and these impact on support for YMC activities.
5. Additional opportunities for empowerment need to be created for non YMC members. The empowerment of YMC members is clearly discernible in their presentation, analysis, and communication skills when compared to the abilities of their peers. Our belief is that the empowerment is largely in the process and we would recommend a wider opportunity for engagement for more young people. This should be addressed in any re-design of the YMC model.
6. Within the context of Vietnam, the policy of extending this empowerment to the communes is necessary, and this initiative should become part of a wider integration of Hue YMCs into the common YMC structure. This will allow the desired networking, coherence, and collaboration processes to be put in place to yield results whose depth and coverage is amplified.
7. The YMCs will benefit from a more integrated structure of functioning and of management
8. YMC activities will benefit from using Junior Secondary Colleges as rural venues for serving communes
9. Mechanisms and systemic processes can be streamlined to provide both coherence and networking to allow YMCs to not only engage in awareness programs but also engage in problem solving initiatives in appropriate domains.
10. Performance monitoring, recording and feedback processes should be integral to the structure of a new design for YMC operation.

7.2. Scalability Issues

The following were indicated by YMC members of Nam Dong District (Source 05). Their input in response to an exercise within the interview process brings out children's perspectives on the complex issue of scalability and are included here for that reason.

Question Stem If we were to have many more YMCs spread around Vietnam and also increase the number of YMC in TTH, what in your opinion would be:

1. the principal challenges that one would face
 - transportation
 - equipment
 - formation of structure and capacity
2. the infrastructure you would recommend for each YMC and whether all YMCs should have the same infrastructure.
 - keep existing structure but create a competitive environment
 - extend down to communes
 - increase collaboration with non members
3. how can you generate additional resources for YMCs
 - by selling products
 - local access to resources
 - ask for subsidy on expenditure from businesses
4. the changes you would make to allow the YMCs to be more useful to children and youth
 - increase communication events
 - increase interaction with people
 - should reach down to poorer people and children in need
 - get business to fund increased activities and support for poor children
5. the role that CMBs should play in such a system
 - coordination
 - support
 - advice
6. Current role of CMBs
 - 1(no value) - 5 (very valuable). On this scale their CMB was estimated at 4

8. Conclusions of Final Evaluation

8.1. Existing YMCs under AusAID program

If possible, some bridging assistance should be provided to enable the ten YMCs in Hue to be sustained for a further period of up to 2 years as too much has been achieved to allow the impact to falter. However, steps should be taken to ensure that:

1. Selection processes for YMCs are clear, transparent and public
2. There should be a representation of ethnic groups in relation to the population
3. The outputs reflect child rights themes
4. Quality of outputs is evaluated on a 3 monthly basis to conform to specified levels of quality
5. Quantity of outputs required is reduced from the present rate
6. Outputs truly reflect children's efforts.
7. Partner's staff are trained in the area of child rights and in building capacities in children
8. Turnover of staff involved in managing YMCs is reduced
9. Staff in charge of YMC should be conducting this as a primary task.
10. There is a structured pattern of management, training, and outputs which link the various YMCs
11. YMCs facilitate the collection of data on issues of impact and of needs in respect of child rights as a joint effort and such data is collected and analysed and the results sent to YMCs for dissemination.
12. Outputs should be cited to be in areas related to child protection and development and annual reports should categorize those outputs into categories relevant or not relevant to Child Protection.
13. There is a better male/female balance in the membership. Currently it seems that the focus on writing and journalism is something that could be deterring male applicants. The selection process involves competitions in writing. Better criteria for selection should be drawn up to give access to a wider range of skills.

8.2. Program of Expansion

As Secretary Doan Van Thai (see Source ID 32, Appendix A) stated in our interviews, the Youth Union has a clear plan for extending the YMC concept to all 64 provinces. The primary assistance sought from Plan Vietnam is in methods, and practices and for a limited period in the supply of equipment. This is an appropriate strategy for Plan Vietnam. Any new proposal should endeavour to outline better methods and practices, which may be considered for presentation to Government for inclusion in the wider YMC program.

A. Sources and Identifiers

Source Identifier	Description	Group Size	Location (Province)
1	Ms Phan Thi Bao, Member, CCO	1	Hue
2	Ms. Hoan Thi Hue, Member YMC	1	Hue
3	Mr. Ng Uyen Kien Trung, Member YMC	1	Hue
4	Non YMC members	2	Hue
5	Nam Dong YMC members	5	Hue
6	Hong Xuan YMC members	5	Hue
7	Dong Xuan School non YMC members	9	Hue
8	Phong Dien YMC - new members	8	Hue
9	Phong Dien YMC - older members	12	Hue
10	Children's Consultative Office (CCO) members	7	Hue
11	Vinh Phuc Non Plan Vietnam YMC members	10	Ha Noi
12	Mme Lan Minh, Director, Voice of Vietnam	1	Ha Noi
13	Core Group YMC	3	Hue
14	Mr. Tran Quoc Viet, Member Phong Dien District People's Committee	1	Hue
15	Mr. Nguyen Thoi, Parent of YMC member	1	Hue
16	Mr. Tranh Than, Principal, Junior Secondary School	1	Hue
17	Ms. Tran Thi Hoa, Deputy Principal, Junior Secondary School	1	Hue
18	Mr. Doan Ky Coi, Secretary, District Youth Union	1	Hue
19	Mr. Nguyen Thi, Deputy Director, Dept. of Culture and Information	1	Hue
20	Secretary, District Youth Union	1	Hue
21	Mr. Nguyen Ve, Officer in Charge, CPFC, Nam Dong	1	Hue
22	Father: YMC member and Mother: YMC member	2	Hue
23	Ms. Nguyen Thi Minh Hue, YU Staff member in charge of YMC operations	1	Hue
24	Mr. Ho Xuan An, Youth Union in charge of YMC operations	1	Hue
25	Ms. Tran Thi Kim Loan Member of Core Group, Treasurer and Quotations Monitor & Ms Nguyen Thi Bao Quyen Member of Provincial Commission on Pioneer Council Linked to Core Group	1	Hue
26	Le Duc Hy, Officer in charge, CPFC, Hue	1	Hue
27	Mr. Nguyen Binh Khiem, Deputy Director, Provincial Radio & TV station	1	Hue
28	Ms. Hoang Thi Thuy Lan Sec. District YU Vinh Phuc and delegaton	>11	Ha Noi
29	Mr. Dang Nam, Director, Center for Consultative Communication and Services, CPFC	1	Ha Noi
30	Father: member of non Plan Vietnam YMC	1	Ha Noi
31	Mr. Doan Tan Phuc, Chairman of DoCI, Nam Dong	1	Hue
32	Mr. Doan Van Thai, Secretary of the Hochiminh Communist Youth Union	1	Ha Noi
33	Dr. Tran Thap Long, Mid Term Evaluator	1	Ha Noi

B. Report based on concept map of structured interview

B.1. Hong Xuan YMC Members

Interviewed on 26th Dec., 2005 from 1430 to 1730

B.2. The Members of the Hong Xuan YMC

Name	Number	Age	Class	Gender
Nguyen Viet Nguyen	1	14	8	Male
Nguyen Thi Ngoc Diep	2	16	10	Female
Nguyen Thi Thuc Giang	3	13	7	Female
Nguyen Thi Nhat Linh	4	15	9	Female
Le Thi Hoai Nhi	5	15	9	Female

B.3. The Issues

Specific issues were put to the students and their views were sought on those and related issues. These issues and views are described in this Section.

B.4. The CCO

When asked about the role of the CCO, one member indicated that they had had their last interaction with the CCO about one month ago and typically interacted with the CCO about 10-15 times per year.

B.5. Training received

This question was put to Member 2, who indicated as follows:



Figure B.1.: Member 2 on Capacity Built by YMC

When asked about additional training that may be required Member 2 answered as follows:



Figure B.2.: Member 2 on Additional Training required by YMC members

B.6. Recall of YMC products

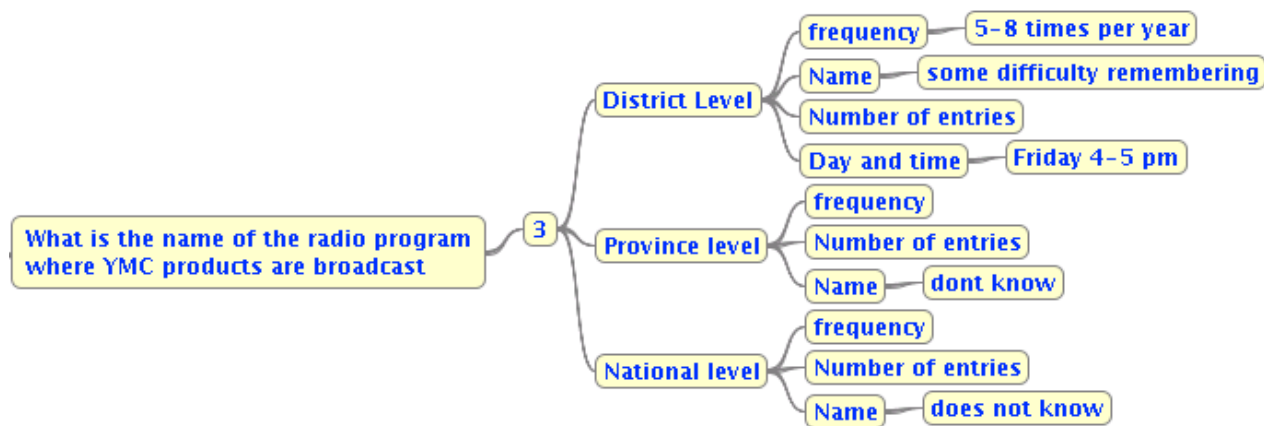


Figure B.3.: Member 3 recalling YMC products broadcast on Radio

B.7. Deriving priorities for funding

Member 4 when asked replied as follows:



Figure B.4.: Member 4 indicating funding priorities

B.8. Deriving non-funding priorities

Members 1 and 2 when asked what they would change in the YMC, which would not require funding indicated:

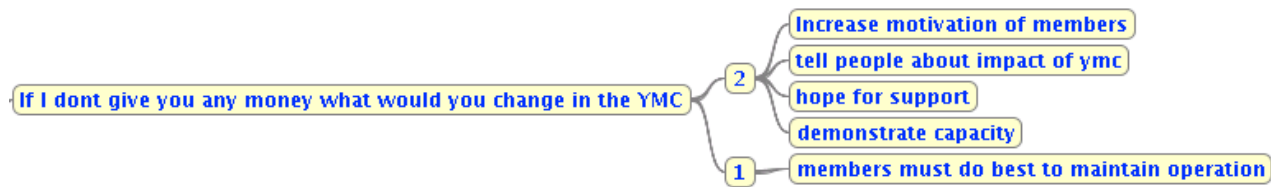


Figure B.5.: Members 1 & 2 deriving non-funding priorities

B.9. Perceived Role of YMC

Members 1,3 and 4 when asked about the role of the YMC indicated as follows:

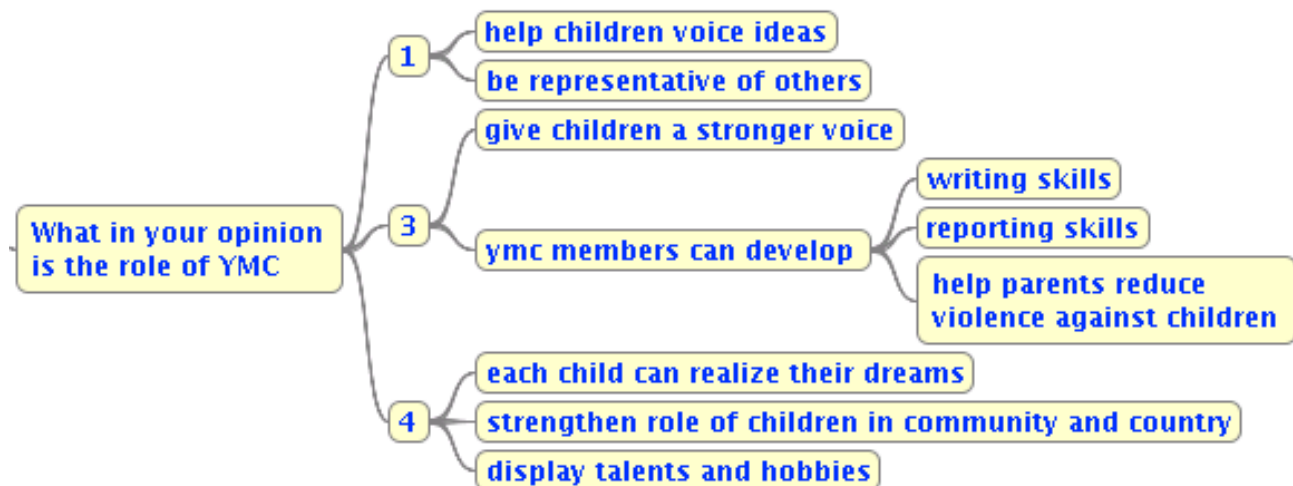


Figure B.6.: Members 1,3 and 4 expressing views on the Role of the YMC

B.10. Success in filling YMCs perceived Role

When asked about the degree of success to which the perceived role had been filled, the answers from the 5 members present were:

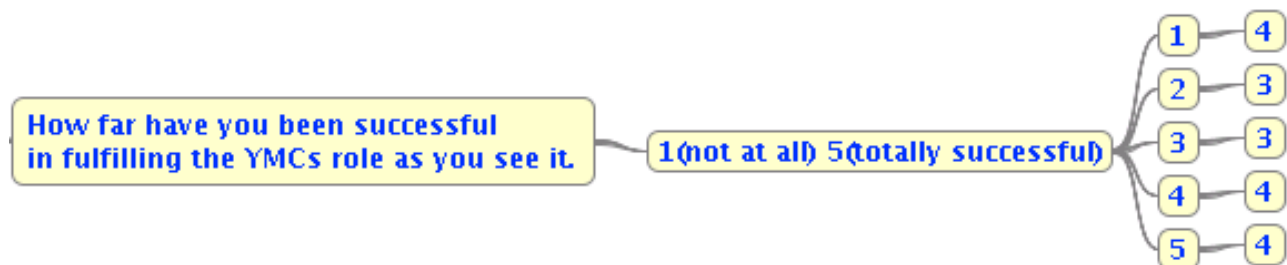


Figure B.7.: Members present expressing personal views on the success of YMC in filling perceived roles

B.11. Distribution of YMCs when scaling up

We endeavoured to determine from the members their view on the distribution of YMCs between province, district and commune in a scaled up scenario.

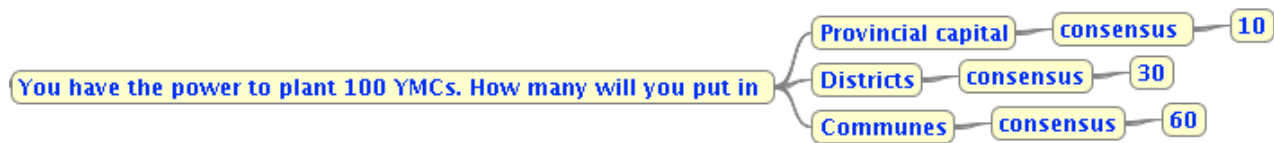


Figure B.8.: Consensus of distribution of YMCs in a scaled up scenario

B.12. Significant problems facing children

We tried to understand from the perspective of the children what they saw as the principal problems facing children. Their views were indicated as follows:



Figure B.9.: Members indicating significant problems facing children

B.13. Solving child rights related problems

Members were asked to contribute to ways in which child rights problems could be solved. The following represents views shared with us:



Figure B.10.: Suggestions from Members for addressing child rights problems

B.14. Making YMC products popular

We tried to elicit from the group what could be done to increase the popularity of YMC products. Their response was as follows:

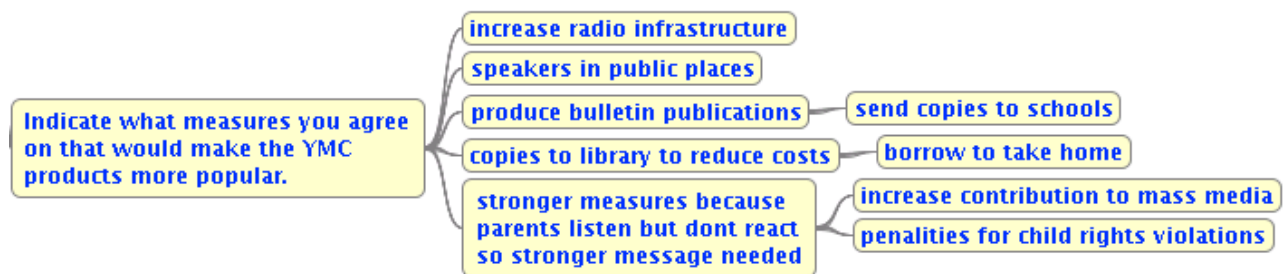


Figure B.11.: Members consensus on how to make YMC products more popular

B.15. Behaviour Change in parents

The final objective of child rights is closely related to behavioural change. We tried to determine if the Members had been successful in carrying the message of child rights into their own homes and whether this had had an impact on the behaviour of parents in terms of their response towards their own children and towards other children. The children were unequivocal as the following Figure shows.

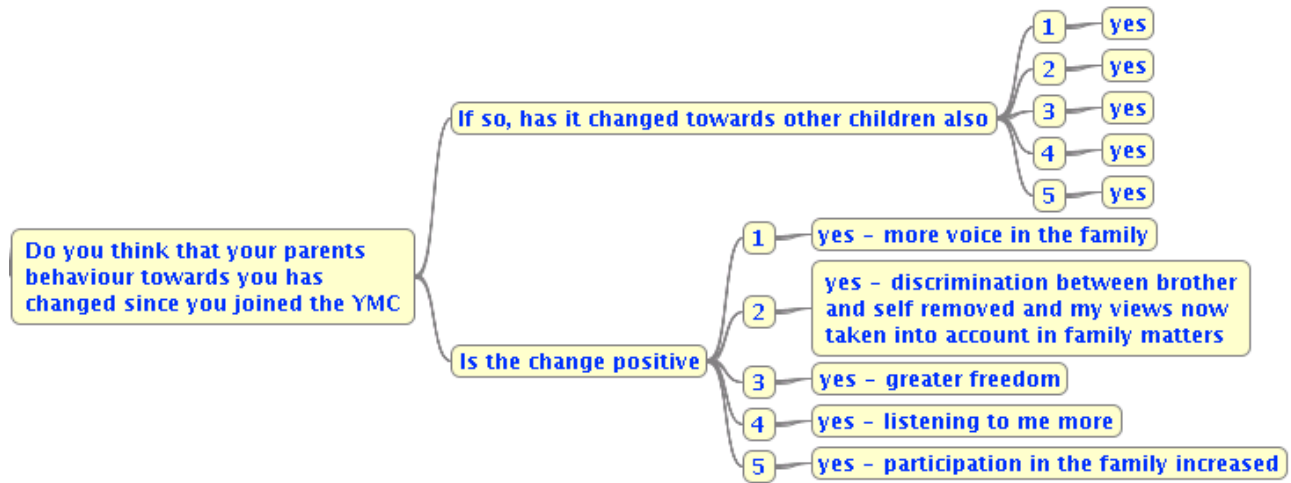


Figure B.12.: Member 3 recalling YMC products broadcast on Radio

B.16. Exercise

The following pre-prepared exercise was used to get feedback from the children about the problems of scaling up both the number of YMCs and the variety of locations. The Members were allowed time for discussion and provided answers as a group.

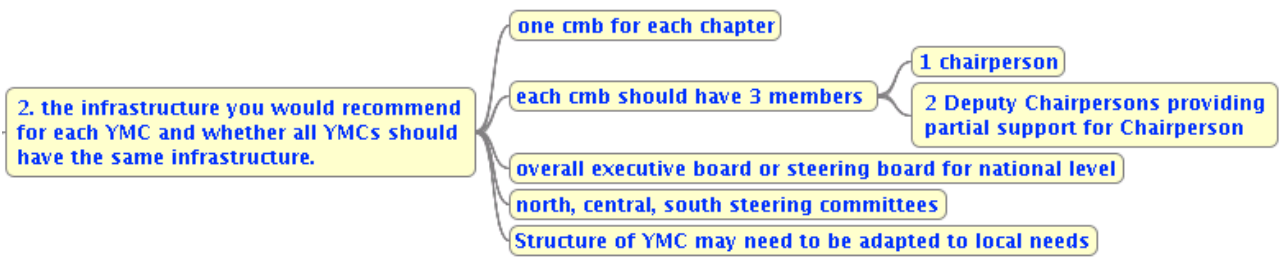
B.17. The Circumstance

If we were to have many more YMCs spread around Vietnam and were also to increase the number of YMCs in TTH, what in your opinion would be:

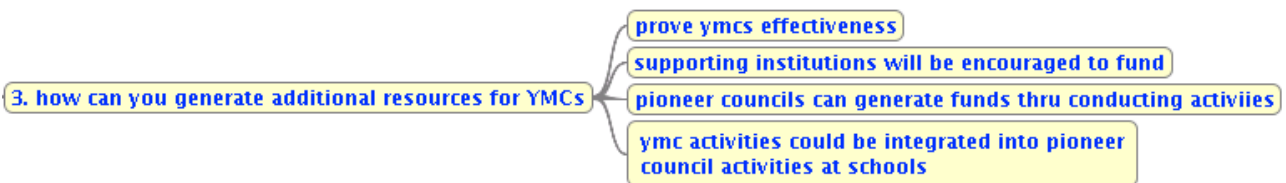
Question 1



Question 2



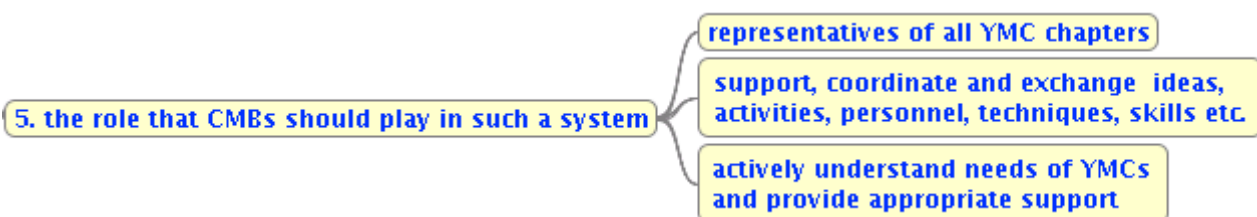
Question 3



Question 4



Question 5



C. Details of Analysis of YMC Electronic Media Product

C.1. Radio Programs

Radio (Technical Quality)	Rating
Narration (Anchors)	4
Audio Recording	3
Mixing	1
Overall Rating	3

Radio (Content)	Rating
Alignment with child rights	3
Quality of Reports	3
Variety within content	3
Overall Rating	3

Radio (Program Design)	Rating
Effectiveness in generating awareness on Child Rights	3
Appeal to target audiences sensibilities	3
Cater to general information needs of the target audiences	3
Overall Rating	3

C.2. Television Programs

Television (Technical Quality)	Rating
Script & Narration	3
Audio Recording	1
Shooting	3
Editing	1
Overall Rating	2

Television (Content)	Rating
Alignment with child rights	3
Quality of Program	3
Variety within content	NA
Overall Rating	3

Television (Program Design)	Rating
Effectiveness in generating awareness on Child Rights	3
Appeal to target audience's sensibilities	3
Cater to general information needs of the target audiences	3
Overall Rating	3

C.3. Structure of Huong Tra Young Radio Special (Vol XVI) on the occasion of new school year

Duration	From	To	Description
15 sec	0:00:00	0:00:15	Title Music
9 sec	0:00:16	0:00:25	Intro over music
10sec	0:00:26	0:00:36	Music
4:54 sec	0:00:38	0:05:32	Intro to sections of the <u>Prog + News</u>
1:20	0:05:33	0:06:53	Song
10 sec	0:06:54	0:07:03	Intro to Article 1
1:35	0:07:04	0:08:39	Article 1: HIV/AIDS
16sec	0:08:40	0:08:56	Music
9sec	0:08:57	0:09:06	Intro to Article 2
2:37	0:09:07	0:11:44	Article 2: How Youth Should Spend Money
10 sec	0:11:45	0:11:55	Music
9 sec	0:11:56	0:12:04	Intro to Article 3
2:27	0:12:05	0:14:32	Article 3: The Good Student
10sec	0:12:06	0:12:16	Sign off

C.4. Structure of Phong Dien District Radio Program

Duration	From	To	Description
40sec	0:00:00	0:00:40	Signature Tune
7 sec	0:00:42	0:00:49	Intro to <u>Programme</u>
1:01 sec	0:00:50	0:01:51	News (Largely about YU activities)
9 sec	0:02:00	0:02:09	Music
2:23	0:02:10	0:04:33	Article 1: Love that exists between children and their grandparents
13 sec	0:04:34	0:04:47	Music
2:02	0:04:48	0:06:50	Article 2: Dream of a Street Boy (life of Street Children)
14 sec	0:06:51	0:07:05	Music
2:11	0:07:06	0:09:16	Article 3: Bond that exists between children and their parents
7 sec	0:09:17	0:09:24	Sign Off
3:10	0:09:25	0:12:26	Song

D. The YMC Membership Profile

The following YMC membership profile was provided by Plan International at our request, by email communication between 26 January, 2006 and 10 February, 2006.

SN	The Issues on which questions were put to Plan Vietnam	Answers Provided
1	Total number of children exposed to YMCs during project	290
2	Total number of children from ethnic minorities	1
3	How many comprised disadvantaged children	80
4	How many were handicapped children	0
5	Number of girls comprising membership in January 2006	102
6	Number of boys comprising membership in January 2006	48
7	Minimum age of YMC members	12
8	Maximum age of YMC members	17
9	During the project how many members left within 1 year of joining	42%
10	During the project how many members left after 1 year and before 3 years	30%
11	During the project how many stayed till the final age of membership	28%

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[Ho Chi Minh Association, 2005] Ho Chi Minh Association (2005). Program on young pioneer detachment and children movements. p.5.

[Voice of Vietnam, 2005] Voice of Vietnam (2005). Report on young media club model. p.2.