FUTURE RESEARCH PRIORITIES ON PEER EDUCATION

In 2020, the Get Up Speak Out for Youth Rights! (GUSO) programme commissioned a study centred on the voices of those who have first-hand experience of designing, managing and implementing peer education in sexual and reproductive health programmes, including peer educators themselves, which identified the following priorities for future research.

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES
– How does being a peer educator affect a young person's relationships and engagement at different levels of the socio-ecological model?
– What are the 'ripple effects' of peer education at the individual, interpersonal, organizational and community levels?
– Are there differences between the way that peer educators of different genders experience the effects of their involvement in peer education?
– Can peer education contribute to norms changes in relation to gender? If so, how?

ACTIVATING YOUNG PEOPLE'S CIVIC PARTICIPATION
– How has being a peer educator changed young people's understanding of their role in the world?
– How has being a peer educator changed young people's life intentions and aspirations?
– Are there any unintended or negative consequences that result from being a peer educator and/or a politicized, active citizen?
– How do trained peer educators engage with political processes and social movements? What linkages exist between peer education programmes and those processes/movements?
– What role could/does peer education play in the context of advocacy and accountability for young people's SRHR?

CONTRIBUTION TO MULTI-COMPONENT PROGRAMMES
– What contribution - beyond numbers of services provided - does peer education make to multi-component SRH programming?
– How does peer education act as a link pin or 'enabling force' within a programme?
– Practically, what are the linkages between peer education and other programmatic components such as services?
– What other factors, beyond peer education, impact on the 'success' of the other components to which peer education is supposed to contribute?
– How does the meaningful engagement of young people as peer educators affect an overall programme?
– How is the role that peer education will play within multi-component programming decided? And by whom?

LEVEL OF INVESTMENT AND DESIGN QUALITY
– How do the levels of investment in peer education (as either a standalone intervention or as part of a multicomponent programme) correlate with observed outcomes?
– How is the 'optimal' model designed for each context where peer education is implemented? What contextual factors need to be taken into account?
– How does a gender transformative approach to the programme design affect its outcomes? And what are good ways of defining monitoring and evaluation frameworks that capture sufficient/appropriate evidence of root gender norm change or other successes of a gender-transformative approach?
– How do peer educators' confidence levels, training, compensation and support impact on their ability to carry out their work effectively?

RESISTANCE AND BACKLASH TO PEER EDUCATION

- What risks are young(er) peer educators exposed to in their SRHR work? How are they mitigated? What is needed to develop strategies that safeguard their wellbeing and standing in their community as well as maintaining an enabling environment for SRHR?
- What are good strategies to double check that SRHR peer education interventions challenge harmful gender norms, instead of replicating them (recruitment, training, planning, shadowing and other support models, monitoring, evaluation and linking up with other programme components)?
- What is the key guidance that should be shared with young peer educators in responding to attacks from anti-rights groups (suggest measures both on and offline)?
- What alternative and additional strategies are used or desired to build the confidence and leadership of female peer educators in SRHR (without triggering backlash)?
- What are the accompanying interventions that help prevent and mitigate backlash (e.g. work with SRH providers, community leaders, intergenerational dialogues)?

Additional findings are available in the report *Asking the Right Questions. Existing evidence and research agenda for youth peer education in SRHR programming*