



A Case Study of the GOJoven Youth Leadership in Sexual and Reproductive Health Program: Securing Sustainability

INSTRUCTOR TEACHING NOTES

These teaching notes are designed to be used in conjunction with, and aid instructors in leading class discussion about, “A Case Study of the GOJoven Youth Leadership in Sexual and Reproductive Health Program: Securing Sustainability”.

Teaching Objectives

Use this case to start discussions about:

- Program planning, monitoring, and evaluation
- Youth leadership development and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Stakeholder interests
- Sustainability
- Organizational power dynamics
- Organizational development

With the help of the context and data provided in the case, students can analyze what they would and would not do to advance the sustainability of the GOJoven leadership program’s aims, and then explain why, and how. More concretely, students should be able to:

- describe the key immediate and longer-term challenges that the GOJoven program faces (from the vantage point of different stakeholders),
- order those challenges from most important to least important (on the basis of immediacy, severity),
- come up with a set of main possible solutions, and
- justify (make an argument supported by evidence for) their preferred solution.

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Class Plan

Use this case in courses or classes on program design and strategy; monitoring, evaluation and learning; replication/scale-up and sustainability strategies; youth leadership¹; and sexual and reproductive health. Students should consider the responsibilities and challenges of funders (Summit), technical assistance agencies (PHI), and recipients/implementing organizations (PHI/GOJoven), inherent in funding transitions and how they can best be handled.

One way to launch discussion is by having students describe the key actors and stakeholders, and the factors within GOJoven's external environment (e.g., the political landscape, local economy, grant-maker funding patterns, etc.) and its internal environment (i.e., organizational structure; staff, Fellow, and Alumni experience and capacity, etc.) that affect GOJoven's ability to achieve longer term sustainability.

Before the class:

Instructors can help students to clarify their thinking by assigning a short (online) writing exercise ahead of the class. Help students prepare for class by having them submit a brief (~250 word) online post in response to one or several of the questions listed at the end of the case study.

Results of the student assignment can help the instructor identify topics to emphasize as well as students to call on for discussion of particular topics.

In-class questions:

Structure class discussion drawing on the questions below.

QUESTIONS

(These can be used for pre-class writing assignments or in-class discussion)

Background understanding

1. Describe the GOJoven Model.
2. How would you define sustainability?
3. What were the roles of PHI and Summit in supporting GOJoven?
4. What challenges was the GOJoven model facing in 2011 when Kathy first talked?
5. GOJoven is a program within a larger sexual and reproductive health policy ecosystem. Briefly describe the significant actors and/or stakeholders within this ecosystem.
6. For each of three main stakeholder groups (Alumni and Fellows, PHI, and the Summit Board)
 - a. How would each describe the goals of the GOJoven leadership program?
 - b. How closely do their descriptions and prioritization of GOJoven objectives match up? (Are they each trying to sustain and/or scale up the same thing?)

¹ If relevant to the class, there are multiple aspects of youth leadership that can be examined further (youth development, youth empowerment, the value of training and professional and leadership development, youth as agents of change). Please see the list of additional resources on p. 19 of the GOJoven case study for further background.

GOJoven Objectives and Sustainability

7. What are some of the factors within GOJoven's external environment and its internal environment that affect GOJoven's ability to achieve longer term sustainability?
8. Give examples of how youth programs face different and more sustainability challenges than programs involving older populations.
9. How might The Summit Foundation's decision-making differ if it were aiming at organizational sustainability versus sustainability of SRHR outcomes?
10. What approach would you use to best sustain and expand the impact of the GOJoven youth SRHR leadership program in the region? Why?
11. What were you doing between ages 18-29 and how ready would you have been to start up and run a new organization?

Evaluation

12. What are some of the (many) challenges in trying to assess the long-term, population-level impacts of individual global health projects?
13. How would you go about beginning to assess whether the GOJoven Youth Leadership Program was on the right track? Given limited resources for evaluation, what might PHI do?
14. What might be some of the types of signs or measures to use to see if the GOJoven program was having short- and longer-term impacts?

The following are possible points to raise during the class discussion of the case.

(Organizational) Sustainability and its possible definitions

Project sustainability and replication (scaling up) are common goals for donors and implementers. However, there are multiple possible definitions of sustainability and of replication for a given objective, project, and/or organization. It is important to be clear about what specifically you want to sustain and scale. Many definitions of organizational sustainability emphasize the financial aspects:

- becoming self-sufficient through earned income sources (the sale of goods or services), rather than sole reliance on foundation grants.
- ability to attract multi-year, unrestricted funding.
- having a diversified revenue stream
- understanding and funding a nonprofit's full costs, including direct and indirect costs.

See Table 9 in the GOJoven case study appendix for more information.

Other definitions of organizational sustainability are more holistic and go beyond financial survival. To be sustainable, organizations have to produce outcomes that are documented (often quantified), and worth continuing (from perspectives of key stakeholders, including those with funding), as well as to have the allied financing. A sustainable organization:

- has the ability to fulfill the organizational mission over the longer term (leadership, organizational strength, clarity of mission)
 - knows its long-term goals; has a strategy to meet those goals; effectively uses the financing it has to achieve its goals; and attracts the type of financing that enables it to achieve its long-term goals²
1. How do you assess the challenges for sustainability of the six scenarios reviewed by the GOJoven Alumni in 2011 (Table 8 in the GOJoven case study appendix)?
 2. Are there other possible scenarios for a sustainable GOJoven program that you could suggest?

Possible instructor comments:

Throughout, The Summit Foundation has had goals for the GOJoven Youth Leadership Development program that were in tension with each other. This complicates internal discussions of sustainability.

- Some key Summit Board members' primary focus has been to achieve SRH population level outcomes ('moving the needle on teen pregnancy', STI reduction).
- Other board members' intentions were more to create a cadre/cohort of young leaders in the field of sexual and reproductive health who would be voices for policy reform and leaders of programs.
- The Foundation has not resolved its conflict between its aim to create a field of youth leaders in SRH in Central America and its desire to have population level SRH outcomes.
- Another Summit Foundation goal was to shift program ownership between developed and developing countries (the global north and global south). What might be the reasons to do this?

In addition to the scenarios discussed by Kathy and Esther in 2011 at the first GOJoven Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting (Table 8), the following are a series of possible scenarios that incorporate some aspect of sustainability.

- a) Country-level presence of a cohort of GOJoven Fellows and Alumni, and their participation in and impact on advocacy (youth voice, leadership, engagement, etc.), service delivery, programmatic outcomes
- b) Ongoing training of youth leaders using a model with some degree of fidelity to the GOJoven leadership model - participatory youth SRHR leadership development, experiential learning (leadership action plans), connections to organizations and leaders in the SRHR field, etc.
- c) Existence of independent and active GOJoven Alumni organizations in each country
- d) Existence of active GOJoven Alumni associations plus ongoing provision of youth leadership training using an (adapted) GOJoven model
- e) A group of strong, well-qualified, and active Trainers of Trainers who are being called on to train and facilitate SRHR education and capacity building for other youth, adults, education and health service providers, policy makers.

² Edgington, N. (2017, March 9). What Is Nonprofit Sustainability? *Social Velocity*. Available at: <https://www.socialvelocity.net/2017/03/09/what-is-nonprofit-sustainability/>

Evaluations and their uses

Possible instructor comments:

Evaluation findings are useful to different actors for different purposes. Having clear and mutually agreed upon and understood program objectives is a key first step in designing a program and also for evaluating it. It is not unusual, however, for different stakeholders to have different understandings of objectives.

1. Can you describe some possible ways that different stakeholders here might use the results of an evaluation?
2. What evidence would be conclusive for whom? Why?
3. What might be some of the challenges in evaluating whether GOJoven was having an impact on policy and programs in the four geographic locations where it was based?

Possible instructor comments:

The aims of Summit and the Alumni differ somewhat. Foundations and other funders typically support youth interventions with sector-specific aims. However, the aims and interests of youth and young leaders themselves often spill over these sector boundaries, ranging beyond teen pregnancy prevention or environmental protection, and tackling other issues important in the young person's life at that point (such as employment, further career development, etc.).

Evaluations can be useful to funders for multiple purposes: to strengthen implementation of a project they've funded, to decide whether and in what form to continue funding for a project, to use results to market the project to gain support from other donors. One classic funder 'exit strategy' is to cap off funding for a project with an evaluation and then to call it a day.

Challenges to sustainability, particularly in youth programs

Possible instructor comments:

Very different types of life experience and capacity exist among the GOJoven Fellows and Alumni, and between Fellows and Alumni and PHI/Summit. Among Alumni, this diversity of experience and the low levels of formal education of some Alumni made the creation (and operation) of formal organizations a challenging process. Few GOJoven Alumni had experience with what NGO creation and legal registration entailed; many lacked familiarity with formal organizational management dynamics and processes; and some had never worked within an NGO. Further, creating effective youth-adult partnerships is difficult and requires advance planning (esp. given the additional foundation-grantee power dynamic). In particular, effective youth-adult partnerships, such as that between Summit, PHI, and Fellows must account for youth gaps in experience and knowledge. Simply treating youth like adults doesn't equate to respect or to an approach that will achieve program outcomes.

Furthermore, power differentials and the associated dynamics can diminish communication and the development of solutions. A number of different types of power dynamics are present in this case scenario.

1. What are some of the chief power differentials that you see in the relationship between stakeholders? How might these power differentials affect the ability of all concerned to come up with sustainable approaches to local ownership and sustainability of programs?
 - (between people from high income and low-income countries; between donors and implementers/recipients; due to differences in educational levels, ethnicity, age, gender, etc.)
2. What features of the design of GOJoven work to mitigate power differentials?

Sustainability - financial

1. In May of 2012, what steps might Summit or PHI take to facilitate a sustainability process?
2. What types of technical assistance might Alumni in each country benefit from?
3. With respect to resource mobilization, how might the organizational form GOJoven takes affect the ability to raise funds? What might be the relationship between GOJoven being branded as a free-standing program and the task of raising additional funding for the program moving forward (resource mobilization)?
4. Looking at the history of GOJoven, how might the timing of the involvement of other donors affected efforts to diversify funding and to reach longer term sustainability?

Possible instructor comments:

Some donors, like Summit, prefer to fund organizations that are from the country in which they are based, rather than from external international organizations. This often stems from a commitment to building national capacity, autonomy and sustainability. Further, there are often differing cost and capacity considerations involved in funding a national group versus a US organization.

With hindsight, both Summit and PHI would have preferred to have had other funder participation at the start. The fact that Summit and PHI did not bring in other donors at the outset of the program – at the earliest design phase – turned out to be problematic.

EPILOGUE: 2013-2018

INSTRUCTOR TEACHING NOTES

Follow-up Writing Assignment Options (Epilogue)

QUESTIONS

1. (How) have the tensions between training new cohorts of fellows and pursuing population level reproductive health outcomes been balanced?
2. What recurrent challenges do GOJoven Alumni associations face?
3. What steps can Summit and PHI take to support GOJoven Alumni associations moving forward?

The following are possible points to raise during the class discussion of the epilogue.

Challenges to sustainability

Possible instructor comments:

There is a tension between ensuring the continued creation of new cohorts of young Fellows (preventing disappearance of youth leaders/'renewing the pool of youth leaders') and achieving policy and programmatic impacts in their countries.

There is a tension between having GOJoven Alumni engagement on a volunteer basis in fostering/training new cohorts of Fellows & in carrying out policy advocacy and training work in SRH field **VERSUS** Alumni's need to earn income, and work at their own organizations.

- GOJoven Alumni associations' adapted model depends on harnessing the social/political commitments of Fellows.