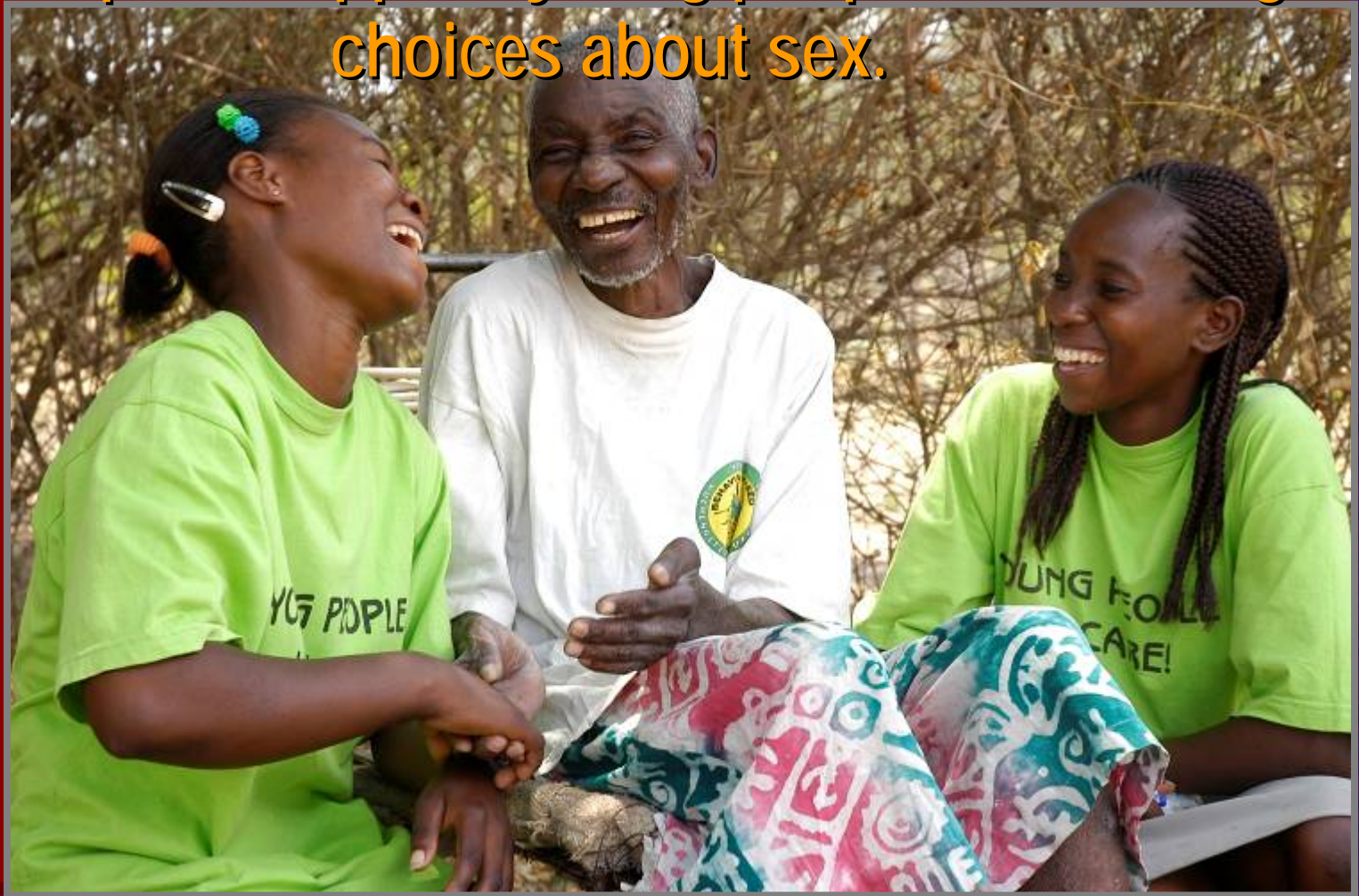


# Young People We Care (YPWC), Zimbabwe

With adequate support, young people can make good choices about sex.



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# Zimbabwe

- HIV prevalence
- Age of sexual debut
- Condom use
- Number of orphans; % of orphans who are adolescents
- Environment – polarized politically, about 80% unemployment (depending on your source – government says 9% unemployment)

# Young People We Care (YPWC)

- ❑ Linking prevention with care
- ❑ Training volunteers around HIV and AIDS throughout Zimbabwe
- ❑ Programme has been going on for 2½ years with successive increment of YPWC clubs.
- ❑ Its being implemented in towns, growth points, rural areas and farming communities
- ❑ YP now expressing views about how they want to live their lives

# Stepping Stones

- ❑ Being introduced - starting June 2006
- ❑ Will complement YPWC
- ❑ Understanding of sexual abuse and gender issues to be strengthened



# Key Good Practices

- ❑ Volunteers as role models
- ❑ Well trained staff and volunteers
- ❑ Patrons key – must be committed, supported and exemplary
- ❑ Parents' (or guardians') trust and support must be engaged
- ❑ Community and key stakeholders support key

# Views of YPWC volunteers



- ❑ Sex has been painted as bad (even though they know it is not)
- ❑ The young people are in need of love and want to be in mutually respectful relationships
- ❑ They are mindful of a positive environment (education, employment, community services)
- ❑ Marriage came 3rd in their list of goals (baseline essays) after employment and education
- ❑ YPWC has strengthened their communication skills and expectations of relationships

# Condoms

- ❑ Young people need different methods at different times in their life. Condoms are one method of protecting against HIV and unplanned pregnancy – giving young people practical choices
- ❑ Providing dual protection against pregnancy, STIs and HIV
- ❑ YPWC volunteers discuss how to store condoms safely and privately
- ❑ The young people worry that they may not be 100% effective
- ❑ They cite some barriers to use of condoms
  - Spontaneity of sex
  - Inappropriate venue, limited time, etc
  - Can't be seen as preparing for sex (if one moves around with condoms)
  - Crowded living arrangements and so difficult to store

# Conclusion

- With adequate support and choices, young people can make informed decisions about sex – this helps to reduce unplanned pregnancy (& consequently unsafe abortions) STI infections and HIV.