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Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change **YABC**  
**YABC in China**  
**2013-2015**



中国红十字会  
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## I. Project Background

In line with the Youth Policy and Youth Engagement Strategy of International Federation, the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) has developed the Youth Engagement Strategy of the Red Cross Society of China, which consists of four key areas under two topics. One of the very important areas is "Propagation of Humanitarian Values". The "Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change" (YABC) project, which is being implemented by youth representatives from RCSC Headquarters, is a very important part of Red Cross efforts to propagate humanitarian values and has received the "Youth Award" from the International Federation. The RCSC is planning to develop the project further.

The latest documents of East Asia Youth Network was established in Beijing during the second Asia Pacific Youth Summit in October 2014, which further emphasized the importance of Youth Network. Considering the vast expanse of China, the RCSC is supporting the gradual development of a countrywide youth network, using the YABC project as an entry point. In August 2014, the RCSC Headquarters held a YABC training session for 87 youth peer educators from across China, establishing youth networks connected to the YABC Project. It was later discovered that in many cases a single peer educator covered all Red Cross Youth Activities in a whole province. These peer educators felt that their task was too big and that their efforts yielded no results. In response to these constraints, cooperation has been established with provincial and municipal authorities as well as higher learning institutions, focusing on reaching college students through the YABC project.



## II. Project Overview

The first phase of the RCSC YABC Project extended from July 2014 to August 2015 with a budget of more than USD150,000. 237 YABC peer educators were trained through five YABC training sessions. Since the peer educator training took place, they have conducted more than 1,000 hours of peer education across China, using the toolkit course more than 800 times in less than one year.

To provide maximum coverage of the project the RCSC provided at least one YABC peer educator for every provincial-level unit. RCSC Beijing Branch, Shanghai Branch and Tianjin Branch, Tianjin Foreign Studies University, University of Science and Technology Beijing and Shanxi Jinzhong University were selected as pilot units. The RCSC Beijing Branch, Shanghai Branch and Tianjin Branch combined the YABC Project with local efforts to cultivate Red Cross youth leaders, carrying out a series of key personnel training camp activities. Tianjin Foreign Studies University and Shanxi Jinzhong University decided to give students credits for attending YABC and first aid courses. University of Science and Technology Beijing established YABC as a compulsory orientation course for freshmen. At the same time, Associate Professor Xing Chaoguo of the University of Science and Technology Beijing has combined the YABC toolkit with courses for social work teams and also used YABC teaching materials for classroom lectures.



## III. Project Implementation

### (I) Project philosophy

1. Combining the YABC project with China's efforts to establish regional Red Cross youth networks where YABC peer educators serve as its core members, establishing YABC activities as core tasks in the initial stage and creating favorable conditions for the promotion, development and growth of both regional Red Cross youth networks and YABC activities.
2. Combining the YABC Project with the development of youth leadership by making the YABC toolkit a compulsory part of training for youth leaders of RCSC, at the same time integrating the course into the activities of Red Cross organizations in various universities where they will support professional team building activities with Red Cross features.
3. Working with universities to establish YABC as core orientation course for freshmen and give students credits for taking it. This will support efforts to advocate and propagate the ideas of non-violence and peace among common university students through the YABC project.
4. Combining the YABC Project with the training of junior staff and other Red Cross activities, as well as promoting the Seven Fundamental Principles and YABC Philosophy among the young staff of the RCSC.
5. Combining the YABC Project with the disaster preparedness and reduction work among youth. This includes integrating YABC experience activities into the training of emergency response teams to help disaster rescue team members and volunteers better recognize and follow the Seven Fundamental Principles.



## (II) Project approaches

1. Training peer educators. In order to let more youth benefit from the YABC Project, more peer educators are needed. In the initial stage, therefore, the main objective is to train a large number of peer educators.
2. Selecting key regions for implementation. Since China is a large country with a vast territory, it is not realistic to carry out the YABC Project in a large area in a short period. Therefore, we selected pilot regions and universities, with a focus on Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin, where the YABC peer educators are trained to carry out YABC activities in higher learning institutions.
3. Approaching the classroom education of higher learning institutions. An agreement of cooperation has been reached with University of Science and Technology Beijing, Tianjin Foreign Studies University and Shanxi Jinzhong University to carry out YABC activities in classes in the form of orientation education for freshmen for which they get credits.
4. Achieving results in study activities. We worked with the Sociology Department of University of Science and Technology Beijing to study the YABC. Project-related effect evaluation and mode exploration in China.

## (III) Project actions

1. Overall situation. The RCSC has proactively followed up on its commitment to support youth activities after receiving the "Youth on the Move Award" in 2013. The RCSC attaches high importance to the implementation of YABC activities, and has trained 237 YABC youth peer educators in the past two years. For details, please refer to the following table:

Time	Training Venue	Number of Peer Educators	Outlay
June 19-25, 2014	Hong Kong	26	RMB50,000
July 24-31, 2014	Shanghai	87	RMB300,000
September 1-7, 2014	Beijing	28	RMB100,000
January 23-30, 2015	Tianjin	32	RMB100,000
August 3-10, 2015	Beijing	64	RMB200,000



YABC peer educators training in Shanghai in July 2014



YABC peer educators training in University of Science and Technology in September 2014



YABC peer educators training in Tianjin in January 2015



YABC peer educators training in Beijing in August 2015



2. The distributions of the peer educators in China in different province.

Province	Number	Province	Number	Province	Number
Beijing	107	Zhejiang	1	Hainan	1
Tianjin	29	Anhui	2	Sichuan	3
Hebei	3	Fujian	1	Shanxi	1
Shanxi	8	Jiangxi	1	Gansu	1
InnerMongolia	1	Shandong	1	Qinghai	1
Laoning	2	Henan	1	Ningxia	1
Jilin	2	Hubei	1	Xinjiang	2
Heilongjiang	1	Hunan	1	HongKong	42
Shanghai	27	Guangdong	1	Macau	7
Jiangsu	2	Guangxi	1	TOTAL	252

3. Pilot run

● The implementation of YABC Project in Beijing

The YABC Project has provided the youth who have participated in the project with basic skills and knowledge on how to identify vulnerable populations in communities and improve the living conditions of marginalized groups. As a key area for implementing the YABC Project, Beijing now has a core team of more than 100 YABC peer educators. The first training session for key Red Cross personnel at universities took place in November 2014. Red Cross branches in many other universities are eager to carry out



such activities for the Red Cross staff in their universities, and core teams of YABC peer educators in Beijing region are working on further improvement in their implementation of their YABC plans. So far, altogether 18 YABC training activities have been carried out in Beijing, during which 40 people have been trained each time. It is estimated that another seven training sessions will be held by the end of 2015. These activities have achieved expected results in disseminating knowledge of International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and deepening Red Cross key personnel's understanding of their National Society. Participants have been satisfied with activities and the information they have received. The YABC Project is sowing the seeds of non-violence and peace in the minds of more and more Red Cross youth.

- The implementation of YABC Project in Tianjin

The RCSC Tianjin Branch initiated the project in January 2015. The branch has 29 peer educators and integrates its YABC project with training for freshmen. Altogether over 90 training sessions have been carried out in 12 universities. At the same time, the Red Cross Organization of Tianjin Municipality carried out two training sessions for Red Cross Youth key personnel, making the YABC Project an important carrier for the capacity building of youth. In order to make full use of existing YABC peer educators, the RCSC Tianjin Branch also organized regular exchange and review meetings for peer educators to continuously improve their training capacity and skills.



- The implementation of YABC Project in Shanghai

The RCSC Shanghai Branch started YABC training in August 2014, and now it has 27 peer educators. Altogether 13 activities for 589 people have been carried out. The training in Shanghai focused on capacity building for campus student peers and newly instated volunteers and members of Red Cross branches in schools. In the meantime, joint YABC activities have been frequently held by universities. Eight such inter-collegiate activities are combined with the establishment of youth networks in Shanghai municipality.



#### 4. University work



##### ● The orientation education for freshmen at University of Science and Technology Beijing

The University of Science and Technology Beijing combined the orientation education for freshmen with the YABC Project, integrating the two and developing corresponding course themes. They include: Theme 1: "Today we get to know each other" - for establishing a sense of trust; Theme 2: "I have a home" - for finding a sense of belonging; Theme 3: "It is you after all" - for knowing yourself and others; Theme 4: "My college, my choice" - for understanding the college life and majors; Theme 5: "Youth blossoming in college" - for planning college life.

YABC peer educators were deeply involved in the process through sincerity, warmth, respect, care, inclusion and openness. Their skills in showing sympathy, supporting, clarifying and listening helped participants to show their feelings and relate to the other students with sincerity. At the end of the activity, peer educators and team members discussed the rules of the team and the need to commit to them in order to ensure continuous and orderly implementation of team activities.

The implementation status and effect of orientation education for freshmen has a direct impact on the quality of life and self-development during their four years of college. In reference to the values, philosophy and work methods of the YABC Project, growth development team work and orientation for freshmen was organized. The first "ice-breaking" activity aimed at establishing deep-level trust, enhancing the sense of class and fostering a sense of belonging moving on to the developing skills for better understanding of oneself and others. Activities also included getting to know the college and the majors that are being offered. All activities, including sharing, discussion and mediation helped team members to better understand themselves, learn from others, gain experiences, boost self-confidence, and cultivate and improve their adaptation to college life. Activities represent a significant addition to core education for freshmen by providing the tools and methods that support them in the development of a more positive, harmonious and productive way of thinking.



##### ● The YABC peer education activities at Shanxi Jinzhong University

Shanxi Jinzhong University divided YABC activities between seven different themes in 2014. Nearly 100 participants attended peer education activities in two classes every Wednesday and Thursday and were introduced to the basic YABC philosophy. A "Handicap Competition" was held on October 29. On November 5 "Non-violence" was chosen as a theme. On November 12 the theme was "Labeling" and on November 19, there was focus on three modules, including "Communication, Active Listening and Understanding", "Suggestions for Your Friends" and "When a Chick Talks to a Duck". Videos such as "Elevator" also provided food for thought on methods for exchange and communication. As part of the last YABC peer education activity of the semester on November 26, organizers focused on the theme of "The Most Important Person".

In 2015, "Jigsaw Puzzle", "Completing the Picture" and "Communication, Active Listening and Understanding" activities were organized as part of the YABC initiative. Sixty participants attended the peer education activities in two classes on Saturdays and Sundays respectively. On April 18, YABC peer education activities started officially. Two volunteers spoke about the Red Cross and the overall structure of the YABC Project. The "When a Chick Talks to a Duck" and "Circle, Square and Triangle" activities helped participants perceive the importance of communication and active listening. On April 26, the event was themed "Non-violence" and included the "Completing the Picture" activity. On May 10, the "Parking Lot" toolkit was used in the activity. On May 17, the theme of the event was "Mutual Integration of Society" included an activity named "Jigsaw Puzzle" to provoke people's thoughts. On May 24, the theme was "Cooperation and Consultation, Arbitration and Mediation", and adopted the "Rural Disputes" activity to help participants play different roles in the face of conflicts and disputes. On May 31, the theme was "King's Feast", during which participants experienced cultural differences and the importance of intercultural dialogue, integration and exchange among different cultures. At the last YABC peer education activity of this semester held on June 6 there was a focus on social mobilization.



● The YABC elective course of Tianjin Foreign Studies University

Tianjin Foreign Studies University combined the YABC Project and First Aid contents into an elective course of 36 class hours and two credits. The course included face-to-face theory teaching, practical operation, peer education activities, experience-oriented learning and covered issues such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, trauma nursing and other common illnesses that can be addressed with Red Cross First Aid. The course also covered the philosophy and methods of YABC activities. In order to guarantee training results, the number of trainees was limited to 50 for a campus. The course consisted of 18 classes, and YABC activities were covered from the 13th class.



Thirteenth class: The overview of YABC Youth Peer Education Project (face-to-face theory teaching, experience-oriented learning) introduced the objectives and philosophy, forms and methods, toolkits, activity cases and major results of YABC peer education, as well as the relationship between the Seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Movement and the YABC Project.

Fourteenth Class: YABC Youth Peer Education Activities. Topic One (peer education activities, experience-oriented learning): YABC peer education activities focused on "Sympathy" and "Cooperation and Consultation", allowing students to experience and reflect on the contents.

Fifteenth Class: YABC Youth Peer Education Activities. Topic Two (peer education activities, experience-oriented learning): "Active Listening" and "Coping with Setbacks" subjects were used to carry out YABC peer education activities, allowing students to experience and reflected on the contents.

Sixteenth Class: YABC Youth Peer Education Project skills (face-to-face theory teaching, experience-oriented learning): introduction to the responsibilities and skills of peer educators, such as how to design, implement and assess YABC peer education activities, as well as the steps, tools and considerations for carrying out peer education activities in communities.

Seventeenth Class: YABC Youth Peer Education Activities. Topic Three (peer education activities, experience-oriented learning): "Inner Peace" and "Multiple Culture" subjects were used to carry out YABC peer education activities, during which students experienced, perceived and reflected the contents, and then they conducted exchanges and discussions afterwards.

Eighteenth Class: Evaluation of YABC youth peer education activities classes. Student peer educators submitted YABC activity plans in line with the theory they had learned and the activities they had participated in. They also designed and organized a peer education activity.



## IV. Project Outcomes

1. The Red Cross Youth Network has initially taken shape on the basis of the work of YABC peer educators. After five peer educator training sessions, the peer education network has taken its initial shape in China. Referring to the regional peer education distribution table in 3.2 session, it can be concluded that the higher number of peer educators in the pilot province and municipality is in line with their work arrangements. For example, the RCSC Beijing Branch established the Beijing Red Cross Youth Network on the basis of many peer educators, and formed the YABC work team for organizing the implementation of YABC Project among university Red Cross branches in Beijing. The network-based working modalities is conducive to further promoting and comprehensively implementing the YABC Project, strengthening communication between universities and peer education, helping YABC activities become more suitable for the various needs of universities.



2. The YABC Project has been closely linked to youth development and capacity building of National Society. After one year's exploration, the RCSC has closely linked the YABC Project to the capacity building of Red Cross youth leaders, and integrated the YABC Project into the training for key personnel in schools. During the three-day Red Cross Youth Key Personnel Training Camps held in Beijing in 2014 and 2015 respectively, more than 80% of the courses were designed with YABC concept and approach. The RCSC Tianjin Branch also organized a University Red Cross Youth Key Personnel Training Camp in 2014, incorporating YABC activities. The RCSC Dalian Branch organized a University Red Cross Youth Key Personnel Training Camp in October 2014, using YABC activities in more than 80% of its courses. In the Nationwide Red Cross Youth Key Personnel Training Camp organized by the Red Cross Headquarters and concluded in July 2015, there was also one day dedicated to YABC activities. It is obvious that the YABC Project has established an inextricable relationship with the capacity building of youth. During the activities, participants have not only experienced YABC values and ideas, but also improved their communication and management capacities. Such improvements not only have laid a solid foundation for the youth's future career development, but also will have positive influence on their careers and even their entire life.

3. The YABC Project became an elective course in universities. In Tianjin Foreign Studies University and Shanxi Jinzhong University, the YABC Project and First Aid Training have become an elective course. Students taking this course will be granted with corresponding credits after satisfactory evaluation. The influence of YABC Project will be further expanded with such a mode of propagation. The installation of an elective course has expanded the coverage of YABC Project, and the 16-week-or-so elective course has helped students explore the value propositions, thought processes and skills of YABC Project in a more comprehensive manner. In this way, participants understood the YABC Project better and internalized the values conveyed by YABC activities to change their own behaviors and drive behavioral changes in a voluntary or involuntary manner. It is estimated that the promotion of YABC activities and the communication of YABC values will become more independent and efficient, and will influence more people.

"The training gives me a unique sight into what YABC is and better equips me to conduct the peer education in my school and community with the YABC toolkits. In spite of high intensity and insufficient sleep, the youth Leadership training of RCSC is still one of the best trainings I have ever experienced. I believe it is a lifelong benefit for me."  
—Peer educator

"Empathy, Non-violent communication, non judgement, dropping bias, respect for diversity.....these words, which seemed obscure to me before, have become familiar and vivid now. I realize that these skills are so closely connected with our daily life. The world could be more harmonious if people think and act with respect and inclusiveness. I would like to devote myself to be a peer educator and together with my friends to promote the YABC and humanitarian value."  
—Peer educator

4. The YABC Project entered the orientation education for freshmen. At the University of Science and Technology Beijing, YABC activities have been closely linked to the orientation education for freshmen. A "Shell Youth Social Workers" was established in the university to take care of YABC activities and orientation education for freshmen. University freshmen consist of a large group of 18

20-year-olds, who are in the key stage of forming their personal values, and tend to absorb influences and internalize them as their own values. The combination of YABC Project and orientation education for freshmen echoed and leveraged such a development law of human being. In activities with team building atmosphere and role, freshmen experienced the ideas of YABC Project unconsciously, which encouraged them to think about the contents in practice and finally make them part of their own values. In subsequent college life, freshmen will embody these values in their behaviors and may influence more people around them. Besides, after entering the society, these

freshmen will become the strongest driver of social behavioral changes. Hence, it is a worthwhile attempt to combine YABC Project and orientation education for freshmen, and this initiative may have very good long-term effect.

5. The YABC class mode is rather novel. It is highly interactive and of self-reflection effect, attracting students to participate in it to obtain new knowledge and utilize propagation methods. In the classrooms of Chinese universities, there lacks interactive teaching and there is not much interaction between students and teachers. But the YABC Project changed such a classroom tradition. The peer educators were on the equal footing as peers, they only acted as leaders. During YABC activities, participants need to go through role-play, discussion and teamwork before understanding the contents, which could not be instilled by peer educators through lecturing. This is complementary to the traditional classroom teaching. Such a novel form has received wide recognition from the youth, and it also plays an active role in promoting YABC activities.

"The true objective of YABC is not to create a peaceful garden for one to escape from reality, but to set up a relative safe environment where we could open the heart and mind, to find out the reality of the world and the limit of our soul. I really enjoy it and continually gain courage from this kind of peer to peer support and exchange. Sometimes it is warm and encouraging, sometimes it could be provoking and even uncomfortable, yet it always helps guide my journey ahead."  
—Trainee



6. The survey data, which is gathered before and after training, showed that participants had significant improvement in their Red Cross-related knowledge and true self-reflection. The Red Cross societies in Chinese universities often organize abundant activities, but these universities are not aware of why they should carry out such activities and how these activities echo with the fundamental principles of Red Cross Movement. Before the implementation of YABC activities, few people would dig into the reasons for and purposes of these activities; and the basic knowledge about Red Cross Movement

was only touched superficially. With the progress of YABC activities, more and more university Red Cross societies realized the close link between day-to-day activities and Red Cross Movement Fundamental Principles and Red Cross Knowledge, and started to consciously leverage such a link. Meanwhile, during the activities, organizers have paid more and more attention to individual words and actions, as well as reflected on their thoughts and behaviors. And the self-reflection and self-correction have imperceptibly influenced participants to change their behaviors. From this perspective, the implementation of YABC Project is of great significance and has already produced initial results.

7. The Beijing YABC team has met the needs of Beijing universities for YABC Project to a certain extent since its inception. Apart from carrying out routine YABC activities, Beijing YABC team has also been actively training peer educators every year, making it possible for YABC activities to be carried forward. As the number of peer educators increased, the YABC toolkit has also been continuously improved in practice, making it more suitable for China's current situations and more capable of addressing the urgent problems of universities. Besides, the work of Beijing YABC team made it possible to collect and feedback YABC-related information in a timely manner. The assessment of peer educators has been improving continuously to render strong guarantee to the quality implementation of YABC Project. At the same time, the communication between Beijing YABC team and Red Cross societies and peer educators in other provinces and municipalities has also promoted the progress of YABC Project in Beijing or across China.



## V. Difficulties and Challenges

### 1. Peer educators

Insufficient number of Peer Educators. China has many provinces. There remains a large gap between the number of existing peer educators and the needs of various regions for YABC Project. Peer educators need time in their own growth. Training a large number of peer educators in a short period may compromise detailed communication and sufficient preparations, thus failing to guarantee the quality of training.

Peer educators need to further understand the toolkit and concept notes, so that they can handle sharing and Q&A session more expertly. In addition, emphasis on the interpretation of activity rules will give participants more time to think; this will better facilitate participants' full understanding of the contents and implications of these activities.

Peer educators are difficult to recruit. Beijing is the region with the largest number of YABC peer educators, but not many of them are always active, and the number is not enough to meet the common needs of universities in Beijing region.

### 2. Universities

Though universities are enthusiastic in conducting the YABC activities, they still face the challenges like the shortages of facilities, space, money and manpower who could help organizing these activities. For example, the funds for conducting YABC peer education in universities are normally raised by university Red Cross societies themselves, so that maintenance of the regular activities is not guaranteed. This has limited the initiative scale to a certain degree.



## VI. Links



relevant video links