

[Module 1: Introduction to adolescence and to adolescent health - Adolescent health and development with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health - Assignment](#)

[Delice Gwaze](#)

[Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research, Versoix, Switzerland](#)

WHO defines adolescence as "a period in which an individual undergoes major physical and psychological changes resulting in enormous changes in the person's social interactions and relationship". UNFPA, WHO and World Bank have formulated their frameworks for action in trying to solve and prevent adolescent health related problems. This paper seeks to summarise their plan of action respectively.

[World Bank. World Development Report 2007. Development and the next generation. Washington: World Bank; 2007.](#)

Its framework uses a three strategic direction that is through opportunities, capabilities and second chances. These three will be used throughout the five stages of transition in adolescent life. It seeks to expand access to education and improve health care service and by letting the young articulate for the kind of assistance they want. It also encourages to have the young people's capabilities be developed and to make young people decision making agents themselves. It also advocates for the development of effective systems that will cater for young people to get back to their feet after making bad choices.

Five stages of transition

Stage 1-Learning after primary school

It encourages the government to formulate policies that will make young people continue with school by preventing early marriages, entering into labour force early and dropping out of school early. Governments are urged to make access education affordable and emphasis should be put on analysing the curriculum as research shows that pupils are not learning as they should and also to avoid irrelevant training by matching the curriculum to the industry.

Stage-2 starting a productive working life

The government should formulate policies that should avoid young people from inactivity; the policies should make sure that young people are treated fairly as they do not have experience, ensure that poor families are not forced to have their kids start work early before acquiring basic skills.

Stage- 3 growing up health

Governments should formulate policies that can help young people manage these risks especially if they make people more aware of the long term consequences of their behaviour.

Stages-4 forming a family

Governments should be involved in maternal health services and they should ensure equal distribution and access to resources and prevent early marriages.

Stage 4-Exercise citizenship

Governments should encourage young people's political participation and involvement in social organisation which are essential for good governance.

[UNFPA. UNFPA framework for action on adolescents and youth. Opening doors with 4 keys. New York: UNFPA; 2007.](#)

It uses 4 keys in its frame work for action and it aims at contributing to the development of adolescents comprehensively and it seeks to meet the MDG on poverty reduction, MDG 2 on education, MDG 3 gender equality, MDG 5 on maternal mortality and MDG 6 on HIV prevention.

KEY 1-It encourages public policy to focus on young people and to include their issues in national MDG based development and poverty reduction strategies as this helps ensure that the future generation is well taken care of from all angles.

KEY 2- It encourages advocacy on improving the quality of education systems, postponing age at marriage. It also seeks to include Sexual and Reproductive Health education in school curriculum and in informal education programmes. It also encourages educational interventions through a gender equality promotion and skills approach that will equip both girls and boys.

KEY3- It puts emphasis on Sexual and Reproductive Health services and commodities for example contraception, universal access to HIV prevention and maternal health services. It also seeks to address issues of accessibility and affordability and also target the disadvantaged especially those out of reach i.e. the married and unmarried girls. It also encourages collaboration with NGOs and community based organisations in doing community outreaches and activities but it stresses that these should not be isolated projects but national programmes.

KEY 4- It puts emphasis on the young people themselves, it encourages governments to work with young people through youth-adult partnerships and also include young people's input into planning, programme implementation and monitoring. It also pushes for young people to advocate for their own rights through capacity building and working with young people's networks and coalitions.

[WHO. Strengthening the health sector response to adolescent health & development. Geneva: WHO; 2009.](#)

It uses a 4- S framework for strengthening the health sector in response to adolescent health and development.

1. S-1 Gathering and Using strategic information

WHO discovered that data is scarce, not available, does not inform policy and programme development and where data is available it is not disaggregated by sex and age. It advocates that ministries should facilitate systematic collection, analysis, dissemination and use of data for the purposes of advocacy and informing policy and development.

2. S-2 Developing supportive evidence informed policies

It states that national Sexual and Reproductive Health strategies should include guiding policies based on evidence on what and how the programmes should be implemented in order to specifically address the needs and problems of adolescents.

3. S-3 Scaling up the provision of health services and commodities

It mentions that the ministry of health should play a leading role in guiding the provision of health services to adolescents both within and outside government. It also emphasizes that

there should be programmes aimed at expanding the coverage and improve the quality of health services for adolescents.

4. S-4 Strengthening other sectors

It seeks to work together with the government's national ministry of health through national Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV programmes as the leader in trying to implement its plan of action. Engaging with other players in the society is also emphasised for example NGOs, private sector and government bodies.