

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

Gabriela Tavciosa
University Pediatric Clinic, Skopje, Macedonia

World Bank. World Development Report 2007. Development and the next generation. Washington: World Bank; 2007.

Globally, the number of people aged 12-24 years has reached 1,5 billion, 1,3 billion in developing countries. These people are the future of every country.

The overview of this document informs us about the three policy directions of the World Bank for helping young people, especially in developing countries: expanding opportunities, enhancing capabilities and providing second chances.

If governments worldwide want to have good citizens and parents, strong community leaders and productive workers, they must invest in young people through:

- High-quality education because providing basic education with basic skilled young people is not enough in business world, and despite the higher percent of young people finished the primary school each year, children are not educated as they should be. Young people must have advanced skills and higher level of education if they want to be competitive at the work-market.
- Adequate work for young people according to their level of education.
- Health care, because beyond illnesses, adolescence is the period of life when young people have initial sexual activities. Also, many injuries are caused by violence and accidents among adolescents.

Because youth is a vulnerable period of life when young people establish their identity and participate in social life of community, policy makers should make possible for them to feel important and to be tolerated with people of other ethnic or race affiliation. As future community leaders, young people must know what the duties of citizenship are.

Young people must be supported by good policies and institutions which will give them second life chance to recover from bad decisions, either by them or by others.

Although, these issues do not cover all youth's problems our duty is to help adolescents in their development as much as we can. All countries are not equally successful in finding solutions for youth's problems.

UNFPA. UNFPA framework for action on adolescents and youth. Opening doors with 4 keys. New York: UNFPA; 2007.

The framework for action on adolescents and youth" published by United Nations Population Fund carries out four keys for opening the door for young people. This framework allows different countries to take a common action for improving the life of young people through suggestions for issues that concern them like sex and reproductive health, education, livelihoods and citizenship. The keys which will provide access to education and health services for youth, uphold the right of marginalized groups and will solve many other youth's problems are:

- Key 1: Supportive policy making that applies the lens of population structure and poverty dynamics analyses.
- Key 2: Gender-Sensitive, Life-Skills-Based Sexual and Reproductive Health Education.
- Key 3: Sexual and reproductive health services.
- Key 4: Young people's leadership and participation.

These keys could be viewed as a safe space where young people and adults listen each other, talk about their concerns, express their views and support.

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

The first four pages of this document introduce us its aim and give answers of some questions like why we have to improve the investment in the health and development of adolescents. Prevention of adolescent's deaths, well-being of many adolescents with HIV, preventing health problems that occur later in life, economic benefits are the answers of that question. Health sector, government, nongovernmental organizations and private sector are involved in these concerns.

All countries, especially developing countries, must improve their efforts targeted toward adolescents and adolescents' health. The first step is gathering information from research studies, national surveys or established health information systems. Unfortunately these data are not available in many countries. The second step is using this information for making strategy for strengthening the health sector response to adolescents. The next step is involving as many adequate institutions and organizations as possible in providing health services. The last step is strengthening the other sectors such as education and civil society bodies in their contributions to adolescent health.