

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

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

The work was produced through the collaborative efforts of the staff of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

The report comes at a time when the world has to cope with the peculiar demands and health challenges of a worldwide population of 1.3 billion for people aged between 12-24 years. The report very clearly shows how investing in young people contributes to their good health as well reducing poverty especially in developing countries.

The report is based on expert consultations and survey even though evidence in some instances was patchy and often unsupported by data.

The potential of young people to greatly influence the future of their nations was highlighted. To ensure this happens, the report presents three strategic directions for action i.e. providing youths with opportunities to develop skills, use the developed skills productively as well as the capabilities to make good decisions in reaching their opportunities and a second chance to recover from bad decisions by them or by others.

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

The 1.5 billion people in the world today between 10 and 25 years old require special investments, this is worsened by the vicious cycle of poverty, early pregnancy and loss of educational and employment opportunities in which they are trapped.

This framework for action by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) is in response to the need to contribute to the development of adolescents and youth in very broad ways. The framework articulates the position and contribution of UNFPA on adolescent sexual and reproductive health. Critical areas addressed by the fund includes: poverty reduction, education, gender equality, and maternal mortality and HIV prevention.

To fulfill its vision UNFPA will concentrate on 4 key areas of:

1. Supportive policy making as it applies to demographics and poverty dynamics
2. A gender sensitive approach to sexual and reproductive health
3. Provision of Reproductive health services and lastly
4. Young people's leadership and participation

WHO. Strengthening the health sector response to adolescent health & development. Geneva: WHO; 2009.

Adolescence is a period in which an individual undergoes physical and psychological changes. It presents with both opportunities and risks.

The full range and nature of health challenges of adolescents is highlighted.

This framework recommends the scale up of health services and commodities that are intended to specifically respond to the needs of adolescents and to be friendly to them.

Justification for investing in adolescent health and development cuts across sound public health advantages, demographic reasons, human rights as well as economic reasons. In spite of the foregoing, lack of accurate and up-to-date data on health of adolescents still hinders well informed policy.

WHO therefore advocates that the health sector should play a leadership role in coordinating responses to addressing adolescent health problems and stresses the need that a multi-sectoral approach offers the best opportunity for success.

A systematic process has been developed by WHO for strengthening the health sector's response to adolescent health in individual countries and specifically for scaling up health service provision to adolescents, this requires efforts at National, district as well as health facilities level.