

Module 4: Adolescent pregnancy - Adolescent health and development with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health - Assignment

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Is adolescent pregnancy a public health priority in D.R. Congo?

Yes. Adolescent pregnancy is a public health priority in D.R. Congo. The following official statistics on adolescents support this assertion:

- Unwanted pregnancies (among adolescents): 30%
- Unsafe abortion (among adolescents): 16.2%
- Adolescent mothers: 20%
- Precocious marriages (15-19 years old): 24.3%

These four data explain the high maternal mortality reported by our country (between 800 – 1200 maternal deaths/100.000 living births) and the high infant and perinatal mortalities rates presented below:

- Infant mortality: 125‰
- Perinatal mortality: 80‰

I think also that these data do not reflect the reality, as we have not a rigorous system of data collection at national level. Probably, rates are higher.

Assignment Story

- The contributing factors: the story does not give details on this 16 years old girl's life. Coming from Guyana (a developing country), we can suppose that she is from a poor family (low income), her level of education is low and she has not the right information on sexuality.
- The family and the community can prevent this by empowering girls to make the right decisions at the right time. To do so, the girls need the right information about sexuality (what means to have sex, its impact on health, on school-attendance, on economy, on life prospects...); they need to know where to seek quality health services.
- The Ministry of Health can reorient the health care system to meet the needs of girls by developing adolescent-friendly public health facilities/clinics.

Assignment document

1. [Camacho AV, Chandra-Mouli V. Adolescent pregnancy: a global perspective. Paper presented at: Training Course in Sexual and Reproductive Health Research; 2010 Sep 18; Geneva.](#)