

Module 5: HIV/AIDS and young people - Adolescent health and development with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health - Assignment

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Young groups to be targeted in Sudan

1. Female sex workers (FSW). The prevalence of HIV infection among FSW 4.4% (national survey 2002).
2. Tea –sellers, include a large number of young people. The prevalence of HIV among tea-sellers is 2.5% (national survey 2002).
3. Secondary schools' and Universities' students (ranges of ages 14-22 years).
4. Indigenous displaced people and refugees.
5. Prisoners, military, policemen and long-distance truck drivers.

Factors which make the groups vulnerable to HIV infection

- For sex workers and tea-sellers, the main drivers are socio-economic in origin. All of the lowest-income class, with no access to basic education and other sources of income. Some of the tea-makers are widows, divorcees or husband's income cannot cover the minimum requirements of livelihood.
- Some students start to practice sex earlier. They are either lacking knowledge or have insufficient knowledge on the ways of HIV transmission. In addition, they are lacking the life skills to protect themselves from STIs including HIV infection. Some students never saw a condom, but heard about it. A reasonable number of university students not living with their parents feel free to smoke and initiate earlier sexual intercourse, putting themselves for risky sexual behaviors.
- Military and policemen sometimes used to live for a long time in the conflict areas far away from their spouses. All the conflict areas near the borders with countries with high prevalence of HIV infection (e.g. Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, etc). Some of them initiate practicing sex in the areas surrounding the camps, subjecting themselves to STIs +HIV infection. The same scenario with long-distance truck drivers.
- Many victims of the civil wars in some of Sudan neighboring countries with high prevalence of HIV/AIDS (Eritrea – Ethiopia conflict, Congo Central Africa) have fled in large numbers to Sudan.
- Drought, famine in addition to civil wars in Southern Sudan in 1980s and later in Darfur 2003 have caused large numbers of its population to be displaced over the common borders with Sudan where HIV/AIDS are prevalent. The majority of that population

moved later to Northern Sudan to form ones of the largest camps in the history of Sudan. In these camps young people constitute the largest segment.

Proposed Interventions for HIV Infection Risk Groups

To develop and implement such interventions among young people in Sudan is a challenge, because related data on HIV infection prevalence among young people was not disaggregated by the age in the single national survey 2002.

For all above mentioned risk groups, provision of comprehensive knowledge on HIV infection is mandatory.

Information to acquire knowledge should focus on how young people can protect themselves from STIs +HIV transmission.

The other cross-cutting intervention is dealing with life skills development for all vulnerable groups.

For commercial sex workers and tea-sellers, we need to address structural determinants, such as alleviating poverty. Arranging for them training on sewing, painting etc, to acquire the needed skills for that. In addition to that developing a revolving funds project can help them to improve their economic status.

We have to help young people to have access to quality health services and commodities for HIV prevention and treatment. Health facilities should be friendly –settings for young people, ensuring privacy and confidentiality. The health services providers should be well trained to be well oriented and centered to young people needs.

Young people need safe and supportive environment. The needs of young people are defined as rights in the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

We have to support young people to be able to access and use of life skills. We have to help them to live, learn and earn in environments that are free from conflicts gender bias to have at the end a healthy, appropriate adult life.

Assignment document

1. [Ferguson J. HIV/AIDS and young people. Paper presented at: Training Course in Sexual and Reproductive Health Research; 2010 Sep 26; Geneva.](#)