Reframing adolescent sexual and reproductive health

A rights and strengths-based approach to research and interventions

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Adolescence
• Vulnerability
• Danger
• Risk
• Capacity
• Partnerships
• Leadership
Young people are Diverse
Every woman – including adolescents and young women - has a right to the highest attainable standard of health and to safe reproductive health choices, including contraceptive services and safe abortion care.
YOUNG WOMEN BEAR THE GREATEST BURDEN FROM UNSAFE ABORTION

21.2 MILLION WOMEN worldwide have an unsafe abortion each year, almost all in developing countries.

Almost 50% are young women ages 15–24.

70% of all women hospitalized for complications of unsafe abortion are UNDER AGE 20.


“Unsafe abortion has eaten into our society, gradually destroying the lives of young women, as people have closed their eyes at the issue hoping it will disappear; but on the other hand they are also directly and indirectly worsening the situation.”

-- Young woman in Nigeria (Youth Coalition 2007)
Does she have the right to decide?
Principle of Capability

“Young people who understand that they need to protect their reproductive health, and who request reproductive health services to that end, can be considered capable of receiving reproductive health counseling and services without parental oversight.”

Cook and Dickens, 2000
Attitudes towards youth partnerships

Youth = objects
Youth = recipients
Youth = resources
Youth = partners

To
For
With

Nothing for us without us!
Hart’s Ladder of Participation

1. **Manipulation** - adults use young people to support their own projects and pretend they are the result of young peoples' inspiration.
2. **Decoration** - young people help implement adults' initiatives.
3. **Participation for show** - young people have little or no influence on their activities.
4. **Young people are assigned tasks and informed how and why they are involved in a project.**
5. **Adults make decisions, young people are consulted and informed.**
6. **Adults' initiative, joint decisions.**
7. **Young people's initiative and leadership.**
8. **Young people's initiative, decisions made in partnership with adults.**

www.dobrezycie.org/en/publications/youth-participation
Abortion for young women in Zambia

Lindsay Memory Mwansa, Eddie Njobvu and Nana Zulu
Youth team inputs

- Facility baselines and improvements
- Training and support on youth-friendly services
- Partnership-defined QoC
- Peer mentoring and capacity building
- Multidisciplinary advisory council
Proportion of young women 24 and younger receiving UE services

- **Oct-Dec 2012**: 25%
- **Jan-Mar 2013**: 49%
- **Apr-Jun 2013**: 25%
- **Jul-Sep 2013**: 49%
- **Oct-Dec 2013**: 48%
- **Jan-Mar 2014**: 34%
- **Apr-Jun 2014**: 48%

**Graph Key**
- **Intervention**
- **Comparison**
48 young women at 5 intervention facilities

Most were:
- Unmarried
- Attending school
- Some secondary education

17% had prior abortion

28% currently using contraception

Primary reasons for TOP:
- Not ready for child
- Still in school

Client exit interviews
“I wasn’t judged; I was treated like a mature person who knows what they are doing”

-Young woman in intervention facility
151,548

Young women aged 24 and younger received uterine evacuation services in Ipas-supported facilities in FY14*

- Bangladesh
- India
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- Pakistan

- Bolivia
- Mexico
- Central America
  - Nicaragua
  - El Salvador
  - Guatemala
  - Honduras

- Ethiopia
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Malawi
- Nigeria
- Sierra Leone
- Zambia

**Africa Alliance** (regional program)
- Tanzania
- Uganda
  - **Francophone Africa (emerging)**
Almost 1 out of every 10 women Ipas serves with a UE procedure is under the age of 20.

3 out of every 10 women Ipas serves with a UE procedure are between 20 and 24 years old.

Note: Based on all procedures with age data (N=394,177). Age data for Central America and Ethiopia are not included.
Recommendations for successful youth-adult partnerships

Involve us from the word “GO”
Resources on young women and abortion

YOUTH ACT FOR SAFE ABORTION
A training guide for future health professionals

Abortion care for young women: A training toolkit
Katherine L. Turner, Evelina Börjesson, Amanda Huber and Candas Mulligan

Abortion Attitude Transformation:
Values clarification activities adapted for young women
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