Adolescent Sexual & Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings
Zaatari Youth Task Force
27/08/2019
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Session ONE

What is adolescent sexual & reproductive health (ASRH)?
What is Adolescence?

Period from 10 – 19 years of age:

• Very Young Adolescence: 10-14 years

• Middle Adolescence: 15-16 years

• Older Adolescence: 17-19 years

Common references:
- Children under 18
- Young People 10-24
- Youth are generally referred to as 15-24 years
What is Adolescence?

- Period between childhood and adulthood
- Visible physical, behavioral and psychological change
- Increase feeling of independence especially independence from adults
Adolescents are not a homogenous group!

Certain adolescents are always at high risk, regardless of the situation:

• Pregnant adolescents
• Orphaned adolescents
• Adolescent heads of household
• Marginalized adolescents:
  • Adolescents living with HIV
  • Adolescents with disabilities
  • Adolescents who identify as LGBTI
  • Adolescents belonging to indigenous or migrant groups
Why prioritize adolescents and young people during emergencies?

“Demographic imperative”:

• Today we have the largest generation of young people the world has ever known

• There are now 17.2 million refugees under UNHCR’s mandate – half of them under the age of 18 and a large proportion. Youth (aged 15-24) also constitute a large proportion of populations affected by forced displacement (UNHCR, 2015)
What is sexual & reproductive health?

“A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and its functions and processes. This implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so.”

International Conference on Population & Development (ICPD), Cairo 1994

“Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual right of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled”

World Health Organization (WHO), 2006
**Why is ASRH important?**

**Important Facts about ASRH:**

- We start our reproductive life cycle during adolescence with puberty

- Each year about 15 million girls are married before the age of 18 years and 90% of births to girls aged 15-19 years occur within marriage (UNFPA, 2015)

- AIDS is now the leading cause of death among young people ages 10-24 years in Africa (AVERT, 2018)

- An estimated 23 million adolescents age 15 to 19 years living in low and middle-income countries have an unmet need for modern methods of contraception (Darroch et al., 2016; MacQuarrie, 2014).
Why is ASRH important?

• Every year, estimated 21 million girls ages 15-19 years and 2 million girls under 15 years become pregnant in low income countries. (UNFPA, 2015)

• It is projected that adolescent pregnancies will increase globally by 2030 with the greatest proportional increases in West & Central Africa. (UNFPA, 2013)

• Complications during pregnancy and childbirth is the leading cause of death for 15-19 years old girls globally. (WHO, 2016)

• The risk of pregnancy-related death is still twice as high for girls aged 15-19, and five times higher for girls aged 10-14, compared to women in their twenties. (UNFPA)

• Unmet need for family planning is highest amongst 15-19 year-olds, and youth aged 15-24 account for just under half of all unsafe abortions worldwide (UNFPA, 2012)

• Babies born to adolescent mothers face a much higher risk of dying than those born to women ages 20-24 years, including 50% higher risk of being still born. Newborns of adolescent mothers also have high risk of low-birth weight (WHO, 2014)
ASRH Rights are Human Rights

- Freedom from Harmful Practices
- Equality in Marriage
- Consent to Marriage
- Health
- Education & Information
- Freedom from violence
- Privacy
- Decide Number & Spacing of Children
- Freedom from Discrimination

Adolescent Sexual & Reproductive Health
Adolescents' Human Rights are Protected by International Law

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Constitution of the World Health Organization
- 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development
- 1995 Beijing Conference
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

During the 2016 World Humanitarian summit, UN member states signed on to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Youth Compact, pledging to reach first those who are furthest behind. (Source: World Humanitarian Summit. Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action. 2016.)
Questions/Comments
Session TWO
Meeting ASRH Needs in Humanitarian Settings
Why focus on ASRH in humanitarian situations?

In humanitarian emergencies adolescents face:

• losing family, social, educational and religious structures
• high risk of child-marriage
• high risk for sexual violence
• increased consensual or coerced sexual activity
• high risk for forced recruitment to armed groups
• limited access to health services
ASRH is seldom addressed in emergencies

Even in “normal” settings, adolescents face barriers that prevent them from accessing health services:

• Individual
• Socio-cultural
• Structural
Certain adolescents are always at high risk, regardless of the situation:
- Very Young Adolescents (VYAs)
- Pregnant adolescents
- Orphaned adolescents
- Adolescent heads of household
- Marginalized adolescents:
  - Adolescents living with HIV
  - Adolescents with disabilities
  - Adolescents who identify as LGBTI
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Operational research on gaps in ASRH funding & programming in humanitarian settings

• Conducted in 2011-2012, published in December 2012

• 1) Program Mapping
  • Based on >200 responses, 37 programs focused on the SRH needs of 10-19 year-olds in humanitarian settings since 2009
  • Among the 37, only 21 offered at least two methods of contraception. None were from acute emergency settings.

• 2) Funding Analysis
  • Between January 2009 – October 2012
  • Among a total of 2,638 health only 37 included some element of ASRH
  • Proposals for ASRH through humanitarian funding streams constituted less than 3.5% of all health proposals per year
  • Among the 37 programs, only 32% received any funding: 7 programs were fully funded and five were partially funded.

• Report further shared good practices and recommendations for donors/governments, organizations and the cluster system.
Questions/Comments
Session THREE
Participation Tools
Participation Tools

• Meaningful participation of adolescents is key to ensure services are accessible and acceptable to them

• Consulting and involving parents and communities from the design phase of ASRH programs can lead to long-lasting impact
Levels of Participation

This criterion is intended to help you assess the extent young people have reached ‘full’ empowerment (as the end stage of young people’s engagement). It gauges to what extent young people have taken (or have been given) control of the programme/organization. Young People’s Participation is considered a process whereby young people gradually increase control over their own environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inform</th>
<th>Consult</th>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Empower</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young people may be informed, but they do not impact decisions.</td>
<td>Young people may be consulted, but they do not impact decisions.</td>
<td>Young people are consulted and their inputs are seriously considered.</td>
<td>Young people are in joint control with adults.</td>
<td>Young people have full control and this is recognized formally.</td>
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### Adolescent Participation (pg. 45)

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<th>During MISP Implementation</th>
<th>Comprehensive SRH</th>
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<td><strong>Who to engage</strong></td>
<td>- Adolescent leaders&lt;br&gt;- Existing adolescent groups and networks&lt;br&gt;- High-risk adolescents</td>
<td>- Adolescent leaders&lt;br&gt;- Adolescent groups and networks&lt;br&gt;- High-risk adolescents&lt;br&gt;- Adolescent advisory panels</td>
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<td><strong>Needs identification / program design</strong></td>
<td>- Participate in forums&lt;br&gt;- Identify suitable locations for making condoms available to adolescent males and females</td>
<td>- Continue to participate in activities carried out during MISP implementation&lt;br&gt;- Ensure integration of gender considerations at all stages of the needs assessment and program design</td>
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<td><strong>Program implementation</strong></td>
<td>- Share information with peers about the importance of seeking medical care for survivors of sexual violence&lt;br&gt;- Inform pregnant adolescents about where to seek skilled delivery care when they go into labor</td>
<td>- Be trained in community-based distribution and as peer educators and counselors&lt;br&gt;- Set up clubs that include activities especially targeted at most at-risk adolescents</td>
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<td><strong>Program monitoring and evaluation</strong></td>
<td>- Provide feedback on program implementation through participation in SRH coordination, GBV prevention task force and other similar forums</td>
<td>- Participate in monitoring of quality of SRH programs&lt;br&gt;- Participate in the evaluation of ASRH programs by contributing to the elaboration of the methodology, the analysis and the data collection process</td>
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Youth Adult Partnership

Integrates creativity and insights of adolescents with experience and knowledge of professional adults

• Equal partnership
• Both groups contribute
• Mutual respect!
Community and Parental Participation Tool
(pg. 48)

- ASRH Problem (1)
- Baseline ASRH Situation (2)
- Community Processes or Outputs (5)
  - Individual Change (4)
  - Structural Change (4)
  - Social Change (4)
- Goals (3)
Partnership Defined Quality for Youth Tool

Planning and Design

Building Support

Youth Defined  Exploring Quality  Health Worker Defined

Bridging the Gap

Working in Partnership

ACTION

IAWG  UNFPA  Save the Children
Other Participatory Techniques

• Participatory Ranking
• Community Scorecard for Young People
• Representation of young-people in decision-making groups, such as SRH Working Groups
• Creation of youth/adolescent WG
Questions/comments
Thank You

Photo Credit: Relief International