

ANNEX 6: Aide Memoire

Addressing the Reproductive Health Needs and Rights of Young People: The Contribution of UNFPA and IPPF

Country Evaluation Bangladesh

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The country team for the Bangladesh Evaluation of the UNFPA and FPAB wish to thank the two Country Offices, as well as BRAC, for their hospitality and cooperation during the evaluation process. Their participation in the organisation of the initial workshop, the arrangements for interviews and field visits have been welcomed and appreciated by the visiting consultants .

The methodology for the evaluation in Bangladesh included 3 local studies carried out by BRAC (a legal status study, a study of IEC material and a number of FGDs with adolescents). In addition the work was divided between two teams, with one taking the lead on UNFPA and the other on FPAB. The team reviewing UNFPA based their work on the annual reports and documentation of the UNFPA 5th Country Programme's sub programme on Advocacy, where four projects had a Youth and Adolescent focus. In addition documents from the EC/UNFPA initiative and the UNF funded project on adolescent girls were reviewed. The team reviewing the FPAB based its work on a review of the work plans and annual reports. Interviews were held with partners and fieldwork was undertaken in both the urban and rural areas.

The layout of the Aide Memoire corresponds to the ten core guide questions set out by the Steering Committee for the six country study.

UNFPA Aide Memoire

1. The extent to which the country offices promote the concept and practice of reproductive rights.

- UNFPA continues to pursue the ICPD POA & ICPD+5 recommendations.
- The UNDAF document, which takes a human rights perspective has provided the platform for the 6th Country Programme 2003-2005.
- The concept of Reproductive Rights is very new in Bangladesh, and during interviews it appeared that there are many different interpretations of how this can be applied to youth and adolescent reproductive health.
- A new module on Reproductive Rights has been introduced into the PSE curriculum.
- Although the ICPD goals and reproductive rights are addressed in project documentation and in the PSE initiative, reproductive rights are not the main focus in reproductive health for youth and adolescents.

Areas for improvement

- Working more closely with Rights based NGOs to gain a consensus on reproductive rights in the context of Bangladesh in order to better incorporate this component of the ICPD+5 strategy in projects.

- Encouragement should be given to using the rights based language with partners.
2. The extent to which consideration is taken of the different cultural *interpretations of reproductive rights* and the influence of social cultural, gender-specific religious and political factors on the *practice of reproductive rights*.
- The initial work on reproductive rights for adolescents and youth has addressed the *right to information* about reproductive health.
 - The socio cultural context, including gender, religious, political and community issues and barriers are considered in the work of the UNFPA and its partners in the Advocacy Sub-Programme, in the UNF funded project and the EC/UNFPA initiative in their work on adolescent RH.
 - There is very little visibility, in the Advocacy Sub-Programme projects reviewed, of Reproductive Rights for youth and adolescents, where the emphasis is on reproductive health.
 - BCC materials reviewed do not use the term “rights”.
 - The socio cultural environment, in which AYRHR is being addressed, makes it a complex, sensitive and monumental task that is being field-tested.
 - The most often heard explanation by the team of reproductive rights and ICPD+5 is that “age of marriage” is the main right to be addressed.

Areas for improvement

- More possibilities for the promotion of the concept of reproductive rights should be addressed in the appropriate context.
 - Rights issues should be addressed where possible in the on-going projects.
3. The extent to which UNFPA is effective in stimulating an enabling environment for policy development in the field of reproductive rights and health of young people.
- The advocacy programme has been effective in bringing the issue of AYRHR into the national policy arena.
 - An estimated 90% of the work in AYRHR is carried out with GoB through partners in 13 ministries (with the other 10% with civil society) and this appears to be the optimum strategy for stimulating an enabling environment in the policy process.
 - The strategy of implementing AYRHR both through projects in the Advocacy Sub-Programme and as a cross cutting issue makes it a large and complex task but it is appropriate.

Areas for improvement

- While the strategy is appropriate CO should also focus on linking policy to implementation and scaling up “good practice” initiatives.
4. The extent to which the work is characterised by a strategic approach in contributing to the response of governments and civil society to the RH needs of young people.
- The strategy of working with key partners in the Advocacy Sub-Programme is proving relevant and effective.
 - The core of UNFPA support is capacity development and this strategy appears relevant and effective.
 - The strategy of including the EC/UNFPA initiative and the UNF funded adolescent girls project in the UNFPA portfolio, has added value and strength to the work in AYRHR.

- The strategic approach is supported from both the EC/UNFPA initiative and the UNF funded project on adolescent girls, where both have undertaken baseline surveys that have indicated continued early marriage of girls, changing sexual behaviour patterns and the need for RH information.
- While a number of initiatives are strategic in contributing to the response of governments and civil society to the RH needs of young people, an overall strategy has not been developed.

Areas for improvement

- An overall strategy should be developed in the 6th Country Programme in preparation for the 7th Country Programme.
 - Regular monitoring and evaluation must be in place and UNFPA should also be aware of innovative approaches and “good practice” in the NGO sector.
5. UNFPA’s contribution to the development of policies, strategies, and programmes responding to the RH needs of male and female adolescents and youth, in particular unmarried, out of school, poor and rural young people.
- The UNFPA has played a significant role in putting population issues on the agenda in the development of the revised Population Policy, and in advocacy for the development of a Youth Policy.
 - The UNFPAs has been instrumental in the development of revised National curriculum and textbooks to include sexual and reproductive health.
 - UNFPA is actively involved in the review and monitoring of the HPSP.
 - UNFPA has been actively involved in the development of the PRSP and lobbied for RH, including life skills for adolescents to be given more priority.
 - The needs of male and female adolescents in relation to RH from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds have been widely researched.
 - The expressed need for RH information from adolescent males and females is addressed for both unmarried and married groups.
 - Not all RH needs, expressed in the youth assessments are addressed under the advocacy programme “new-generation family life education approach” or in other BCC material reviewed, where these cannot be addressed in the present cultural context.
 - Specifically, the expressed need for RH services for unmarried adolescents cannot be addressed in the present cultural context.
 - Organising SRH education through Youth Clubs does not appear to be a structured programme, although some designated project areas are better organised and monitored.

Areas for improvement

- The needs based RH BCC and service interventions need monitoring and evaluation.
 - A review of SRH education in Youth Clubs should be undertaken.
6. Competencies and skills.
- The employment regulations in the UN ensure that highly qualified and experienced cadres are recruited and employed for their posts.

- Competencies and skills for work in AYRHR have been identified as a new area where CST missions, consultancies and trainings have been undertaken and will be planned for the 6th Programme.
- There is an awareness of the need to involve adolescents and youth in the projects that are focussed on AYRHR.
- The Youth and Adolescent Brainstorming on RH for the 6th Programme shows “best practice” in relation to identification of needs for planning.
- The formation of the UNFPA Youth Forum (April 2003) will enrich the competencies of the CO in the formulation of policies, its overall strategy and projects involving adolescents and youth.
- The EC/UNFPA initiative with a broad skill mix (3 service and one non-service NGOs) enhances UNFPA competencies.
- BCC materials reviewed included high quality manuals, brochures and other media material.
- There appeared to be an overlap in the production of BCC materials between the different projects and the process of dissemination did not appear to be optimal.
- Retention of trained persons in the right position remains a problem.
 - Monitoring the production of BCC materials and ensuring that the distribution is more thorough.
 - Efforts to retain the trained persons in AYRHRs are made.

7. The participation and empowerment of male and female adolescents

- The projects in the 5th Programme Advocacy Sub-Programme, the EC/UNFPA initiative and the UNF project on adolescent girls show an awareness of the need to include both male and female adolescents and youth *participation*. This has included the RH consultation on concerns of youth, and the Adolescent Brainstorming for the 6th Programme.
- Participation of adolescents and youth is a strong focus in the NGO partnership work.
- Male and female adolescent and youth *empowerment* is addressed through the goal of increasing AYRH knowledge. Furthermore empowerment is linked to training and access to micro credit in a number of NGO activities.

Areas for Improvement

- “Best practice” in participation and empowerment of male and female adolescents should become a focus in scaling up from NGO activities to national level.

8. The extent to which UNFPA is gender sensitive in addressing AYRHRs

- UNFPA has an equal opportunities mandate and gender is addressed as a cross cutting issue in all the project work on AYRHRs and there are a number of projects that address this issue directly.
- Adolescent and youth involvement has reinforced the awareness that gender analysis is central to the need for information and services.
- Gender balance is not always present in partner organisations and this can be a hindrance to the effectiveness of the programme

Areas for Improvement

- Monitoring gender sensitivity in this area is maintained.

- Gender balance in partner organisations for AYRHR work should be improved for the effectiveness of the programme.

The areas of cooperation with FPAB

- The EC/UNFPA initiative has included FPAB as one of four partners in their work and there appears to be good collaboration.
- FPAB is one of the many national accredited and well respected RH service providers that is a partner in the AYRH projects and won the EC/UNFPA contract in a competitive bidding process.
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- Relevance, scope and effectiveness of co-ordination arrangements and partnerships
- UNFPA works with 13 ministries in its Advocacy Sub-Programme and also through the sub-programme is working with numerous NGOs as implementing agents. This method seems appropriate and relevant for the initial work of BCC in this area, in sensitising and advocacy.
- Initial support to services, through NGOs and the private sector, has shown some creative and successful initiatives.

The inclusion of the EC/UNFPA initiative and the UNF funded project on adolescent girls has increased the scope of the adolescent and youth portfolio and is relevant and effective. Working with numerous partners necessitates a co-ordination of reporting formats and procedures that is not always in place.

Areas for improvement:

UNFPA should work as a partner with their partners in a more sharing and learning mode. More attention could be paid to the co-ordination of procedures and reporting formats of partners.

FPAB Aide Memoire

11.5.03

II FPAB

1. The extent to which the country offices promote the concept and practice of reproductive rights.
 - a) FPAB has declared, in their 2001-2005 strategic plan, the aim to establish equal rights for women to enable them to exercise control over their own reproductive rights and reproductive and sexual health choices.
 - b) In practice FPAB addresses the issues related to reproductive rights (age of marriage, number of children, spacing) but in relation to reproductive health not as reproductive rights.
 - c) 'Reproductive rights' is not used as slogan or term in practice.

Area for improvement

- a) Use of reproductive rights (as term or phrase) directly in the programme.
 - b) Clarification of reproductive rights concept to FPAB staff and peer groups.
 - c) Use of reproductive rights (as term or phrase) in BCC materials (posters, leaflets, audio-visual material)
2. The extent to which consideration is taken of the different cultural interpretations of reproductive rights and the influence of socio cultural, gender-specific religious and political factors on the practice of reproductive rights.
 - a) FPAB does interpret the reproductive rights concept by focusing socio cultural, gender specific, religious factors.
 - b) These issues however are considered in relation to reproductive health and not reproductive rights.

Area for improvement

- a) Start using reproductive rights concept not only in relation to reproductive health but to individual rights.
3. The extent to which FPAB is effective in stimulating an enabling environment for policy development for police development in the field of reproductive rights and health of you people.
 - a) FPAB is involved and participates in different national health committees in Bangladesh.
 - b) 'Reproductive rights' is a very new concept in Bangladesh and not yet widely used in the reproductive health field.
 - c) As an experienced and pioneer organisation in the family planning field in Bangladesh, FPAB is not playing a leading role in promoting an enabling environment for policy development in the field of reproductive rights and health of young people.

Area for improvement

- a) As a pioneer in the family planning field FPAB can play a leading role in stimulating an environment to establish reproductive rights in the reproductive field.
- b) As FPAB is a member of different national health committees, it can use this lost opportunity to advocate reproductive rights.
- 4. The extent to which the work is characterized by a strategic approach in contributing to the response of governments and civil society to the AYRHRs.
 - a) FPAB is contributing in the community through addressing the needs of government and civil society.
 - b) Through innovative approaches like the Islamic research cell and debate competition in school and colleges FPAB addresses reproductive rights issues in relation to reproductive health.
 - c) FPAB works on a small scale through out the country (70 unions)

Area for improvement

- a) Through receiving more support from donors FPAB can expand their activities in the respective field.
- b) FPAB can share their experience and ask other NGOs to use their model (IRC & debate competition)
- 5. FPAB contribution of the development of policies, strategies and programmes responding to the RH needs of male and female adolescents and youth in particular unmarried, out of school, poor and rural young people.
 - a) FPAB is working with rural young groups in Bangladesh.
 - b) Organisation is also working with unmarried, out of school poor youth groups.
 - c) It also includes vocational training for youth in some areas.
 - d) Staff and activities have high acceptance in the community.
 - e) Staff are dedicated and motivated.
 - f) FPAB is working through innovative ideas like building partnership with Madrasah to reach Madrasah students.
 - g) SRH education sessions are “one spot only”, which is inadequate and inappropriate. For such sensitive and diverse issues, retention of knowledge may be poor if only one educational session is conducted. For many adolescents and youths can be difficult to conceptualise and understand SRH and to practice safe sexual behaviour after attending only one session.
 - h) Reproductive health services for adolescents and youths are inadequate and limited.
 - i) In the youth activities there is a high dropout of female youth organisers.
 - j) As a new and sensitive programme in the community, it needs more human resource support from the FPAB district level office.

Area for improvement

- a) More than one contact through educational sessions and regular periodical follow up will improve the quality of the programme.

- b) Visual materials should be used more frequently in the activities, which will help knowledge retention.
- c) More printing materials particularly booklets and brochures should be distributed in the field.
- d) A small booklet with SRH information could be provided to youth participants instead of soap and biscuits.
- e) To address high drop out of young female organisers, a mechanism can be developed to involve them in income generation activities (within or outside the organisation).
- f) In MIS format for health service age should be included.
- g) To improve supervision and monitoring in such a sensitive and diverse programme, human resources, particularly responsible for youth activities, should be employed at field level.

6. Competencies and skills

- a) FPAB staff and youth organizers are hard workers with complete dedication and commitment to the organisation and to the community.
- b) BCC materials developed by the organisation are timely, easy to understand and qualitative.
- c) Training of staff and youth organizers are inadequate and limited. No one interviewed in the field or at head office (staff, youth organizers) has received any exclusive training on adolescent and youth. However, adolescent care should be a component of SRH training. No medical officer or paramedic interviewed had received any training on STD syndromic diagnosis, which is crucial for STD clinical services. All staff had not yet received SRH training. Counsellors interviewed in the clinic did not receive any special counselling training on adolescent and youth.
- d) Overall the training component is weak and inadequate to address this sensitive and important issue.

Area for improvement

- a) Sufficient budget should be allocated for training at all levels (central, regional and local).
- b) Adolescent and youth care training should be given to staff and youth organizers working in the youth activities.
- c) Counselling training for counsellors in the clinics, and youth organizers should be given to improve their skills to serve the target group properly.
- d) Leadership training should be given to youth organizers to build their capacity.
- e) If FPAB can invest in human resource development, given the community based experience, staff motivation and high acceptance in the community, the outcome and impact of the programme will be more effective.

7. The participation and empowerment of male and female adolescents

- a) FPAB informally encourages and ensures adolescent participation in the decision making process of the programme.

- b) Through a volunteer strategy and a formal governing body both at field level and national level (national executive body) the organisation has ensured community participation and empowerment. This body takes part and contributes in policy making, reforming programme activities and making priorities when needed. However, participation of youth in these bodies is very limited or almost non-existent due to the selection process for committee membership.

Area for improvement

- a) Documentation is needed when any informal discussions take place with adolescent and youth regarding policy or programme activities.
 - b) In the governing body a special quota system should be introduced to ensure youth participation.
8. The extent to which FPAB is gender sensitive in addressing AYRHRs.
- a) In the national executive body and in the district level governing body female representation is present but it is not gender balanced.
 - b) At the community level while implementing youth activities, FPAB is gender sensitive and played an excellent role in terms of gender balance. In all youth activities (peers and targets), the organisation has paid special attention to ensure gender balance.
 - c) Within the organisation itself, gender balance is inadequate.
 - d) Gender training was not given to all staff in the organisation.

Area for improvement

- a) In the offices special attention should be paid for gender balance.
- b) Gender training should be provided to staff and youth organizers.
- c) In the governing bodies gender balance should be introduced.

9. The areas of cooperation with UNFPA

The relationship with UNFPA is good.

10. Relevance, scope and effectiveness of co-ordination arrangements and partnership.
- a) FPAB has an excellent relationship with government in the field and at the central level.
 - b) Scope of work in youth activities with Government and other stakeholders is vast and it can be effective.
 - c) FPAB has attracted other donors outside IPPF to expand and extend their activities.
 - d) For youth activities FPAB has been successful in motivating Government to make financial contribution.

FPAB is gradually progressing towards financial sustainability.