

Table 3: Consequences of Under-investment in Adolescents

Consequences of Limited Investments in Adolescent Reproductive Health & Reproductive and Development Rights

Reproductive Health Consequence	Contributing Factors	Consequences for Self	Consequences for Families, Society and National Development
Early pregnancy & childbearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early marriage ▪ Poverty (motivates early pregnancy/early marriage for economic and personal security) ▪ Gender discrimination/low value of girls/sense of identity and control/status based on roles as wives, mothers; low self-esteem ▪ Lack of information, education, counselling and services for prevention; lack of information about pregnancy risks at too young an age ▪ Inability to negotiate contraceptive use, fertility decisions, or postponement of pregnancy due to gender and age, sociocultural expectations ▪ Lack of reproductive rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risks of complications from pregnancy (obstructed labour, obstetric fistulas, anaemia/haemorrhage, death) ▪ School drop out ▪ Diminished employment and income-earning options ▪ Poverty ▪ Responsibilities, pressures of childrearing too much, too soon before socio-economic and psychological development ▪ Potential for self-development curtailed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher infant and maternal morbidity and mortality ▪ Higher health care costs ▪ Higher social welfare costs, especially in the case of single and unmarried mothers ▪ Abandonment of newborns ▪ Reduced prospects of eradicating poverty (as educational level of mother is key factor in breaking intergenerational transmission of poverty) ▪ Reduced skilled human capital for socio-economic development; less skilled workforce; reduced earnings ▪ Increased dependency of young mothers on male providers (even if abusive), related to persistent gender inequality and lack of women's empowerment ▪ Increased population momentum; reduced demographic bonus
Unwanted pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of reproductive rights ▪ Low access to contraceptive information, education, counselling and services. ▪ Myths and misconceptions about pregnancy and contraceptive safety ▪ Gender relations—'pregnancy is woman's responsibility'; attitudes of lack of male responsibility for pregnancy prevention or consequences; gender stereotypes—girls not equipped with negotiating and assertiveness skills; submissiveness and ignorance expected of girls ▪ Sexual violence ▪ Forced sex and forced pregnancy as weapons of war ▪ Poverty (less years of school, or more years out-of-school; less access to information or services, or to sexuality education; girls less informed about their bodies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recourse to abortion, including unsafe abortion (with high risks of maternal morbidity or death) ▪ Single and early motherhood ▪ Larger family size than the partners desire ▪ Reduced chances for self-development and skills-building to break out of poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced investments in children's needs and development ▪ Reinforcement of gender inequality—loss of socio-economic opportunities and women's full development potential ▪ Increased population momentum

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Reproductive Health Consequence	Contributing Factors	Consequences for Self	Consequences for Families, Society and National Development
Sexual Abuse, Violence & Exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and adolescents, especially girls, subject to sexual abuse and incest – silence kept from fear, lack of education, marginalization, lack of protection, and social norms and taboos Poverty (false promises of increased income for self and family) Sexual trafficking and slavery profitable; limited enforcement, corruption, etc.; lack of protections for at-risk or already enslaved girls Conflict and post-conflict situations (increased sexual abuse and rape because of fragmented social and family fabric) Low status of girls and young women; low self-esteem; male power and sociocultural legitimacy of sexual violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychological, physical and emotional trauma Unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, STIs/HIV/AIDS Impaired ability to establish trusting relations, intimacy, sexual relations; increased prospects of repetitively abusive relationships Reduced freedom, life in fear and violence, including freedom of movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistence of gender violence and sexual abuse of children and adolescents (violating universal values and human rights related to respect for human dignity, personal and bodily integrity, freedom and self-determination, and fundamental reproductive rights) Reinforcement of acceptability of violence Diminished educational attainment; increased absenteeism from work and reduced productivity and loss of income to employers Increased crime, reduced law and order, increased corruption (from sexual trafficking) Depression Slowed progress against HIV/AIDS
STIs/ HIV/AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of information on safer sex Gender discrimination/lack of decision-making power Lack of access to methods of protection Sexual abuse, violence and exploitation Poverty (leads to transactional or intergenerational sex) Multiple sexual partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Premature death or potential self-development curtailed Discrimination and stigma Increased poverty Infertility Cervical cancer and other sequelae of some non-fatal infections Orphanhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lost productivity and investments Hopelessness and anomie Agricultural, health, education and other systems fail Disruption of social and economic systems Overburden of health care system Destruction of family networks
Under-employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak job creation Low entrepreneurial skills Socio-economic exclusion Gender discrimination in employment and remuneration and unrecognized labour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of skills Unsafe exploitation Child labour, and sexual exploitation, Transactional sex Poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National stability and security harmed Economic growth and social development reduced Increased marginalization Low social mobility Poor health, nutrition and education
Low civil and social participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of settings/institutions for including young people Restrictions on girls' mobility and gender segregation Social and political exclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of opportunities to participate and voice concerns Inability to use democratic institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disenfranchised youth as a source of civil unrest Lack of inputs from young people in the development of policies and programmes Lack of social and political tolerance

Note: Points presented in bold type reflect issues addressed in the Millennium Development Goals