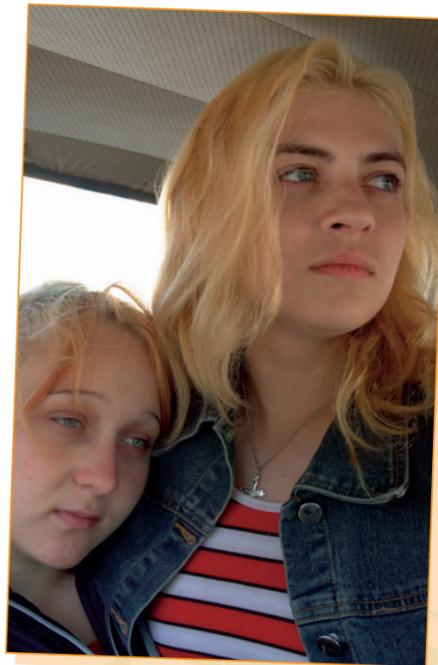


## A ROADMAP TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES** Four overarching principles guide UNFPA in its policy and programming work on young people:

- **Affirming a gender perspective** which, while recognizing boys' needs, preserves spaces carved out for girls, especially those who are poor and vulnerable.
- **Achieving social equity** by paying special attention to vulnerable and excluded groups of young people, in particular very young adolescent girls;
- **Protecting the rights** of young people, particularly to health, education, and civic participation;
- **Maintaining cultural sensitivity** by advocating sexual and reproductive health in understanding and engaging ways;



**POLICY FOCUS** The policy actions supported by UNFPA include:

- Positioning the adolescent and youth agenda within the larger development context of poverty reduction;
- Engaging in policy dialogue, analysis, and advocacy for young people's issues in the national development strategies, plans and processes of Sector Wide Approaches, Poverty Reduction Strategies, and the Millennium Development Goals;
- Building alliances and forging partnerships with governments, development partners, civil society, youth-serving organizations, youth networks and media in order to leverage resources for investing in young people, particularly those who are most vulnerable and socially excluded;
- Leveraging the global focus on HIV/AIDS to place adolescent sexual and reproductive health issues on the policy table and development agenda.

**PROGRAMMING FOCUS** The programming actions supported by UNFPA include:

- Advocating for an Essential Package of Social Protection Interventions for Adolescents and Youth comprising education, sexual and reproductive health services, and livelihood components;

- Meeting the "challenge" of reaching young adolescent girls and others left behind by traditional youth-serving programmes, thereby redirecting resources to those in most need;
- Leveraging its sexual and reproductive health expertise as an entry point for promoting social services and livelihoods (and vice versa) to ensure that the Essential Package is backed by a solid multi-sectoral plan;
- Proactively promoting partnerships to ensure that health and non-health components (such as basic education, vocational training, and employment) receive due policy and programme attention. Advocacy efforts will include mobilizing stakeholders at the national, regional, state, and community levels for creating an enabling environment for policy and programmatic interventions.



"To our Governments, we say that our biggest dilemma is why girls are discriminated against. Do something. Provide non-formal education programmes for adolescents who can't go to school. Include lessons on life skills in formal and non-formal education programmes. Eliminate child labour, child abuse, and all types of violence against adolescents, including trafficking. Don't just make laws; enforce them. Let us support you and join hands to fight the menace of drugs... To our parents (and other stakeholders), we say that we need you to listen to us, to our dreams, our experiences, our explanations. . . . Guide us; don't drive us."

- Young person's remarks at the UNFPA South Asia Conference on Adolescents, New Delhi, India, 1998

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man, and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl woman is treated with dignity and respect.

**UNFPA - because everyone counts.**

## UNFPA FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON ADOLESCENTS & YOUTH

OPENING DOORS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE: 4 KEYS

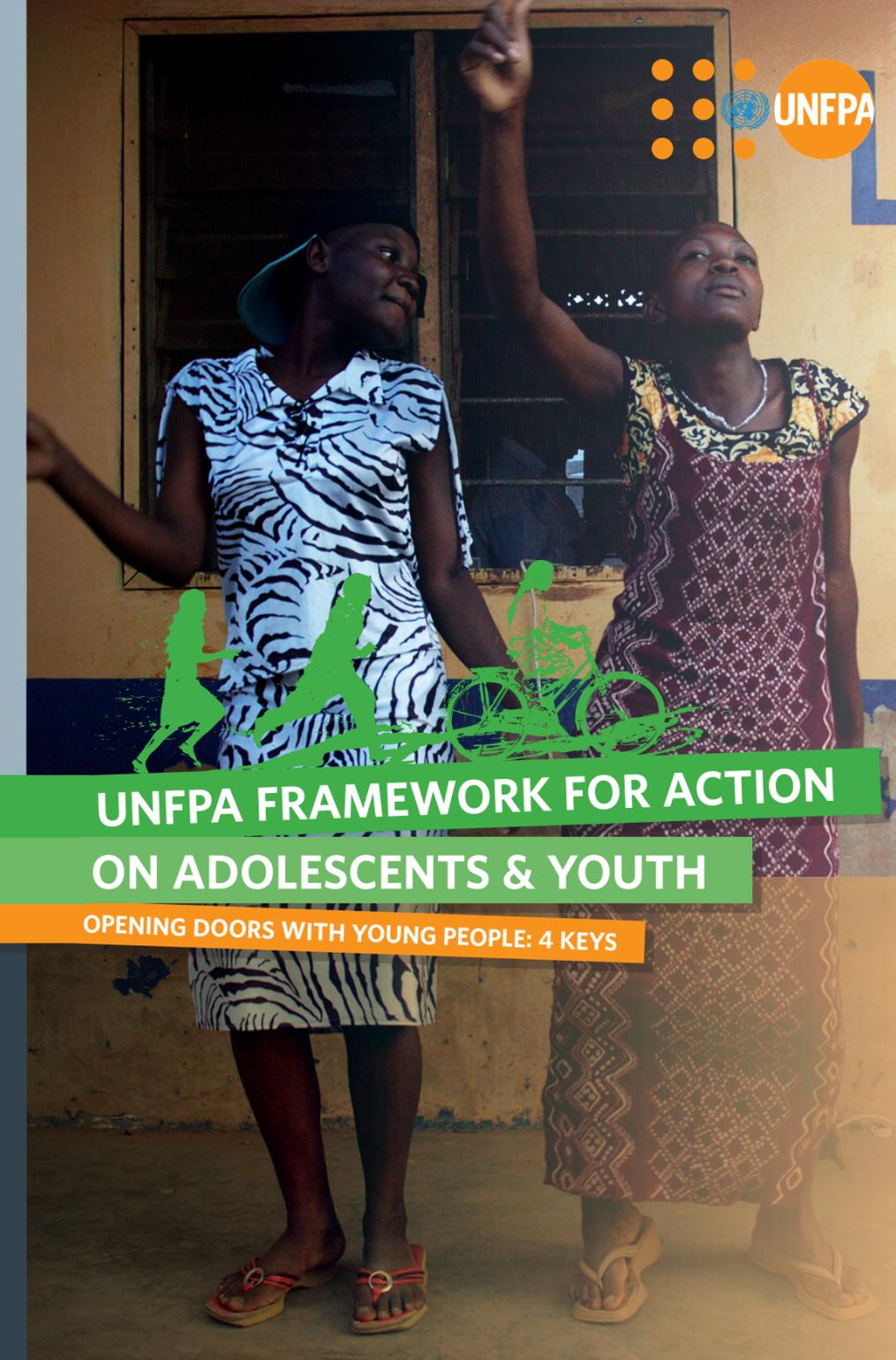
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## INVESTING IN YOUNG PEOPLE CAN HELP COMBAT POVERTY

**WHY NOW?** The case for investing in young people is clear. Nearly 1.5 billion people in the world today are between 10 and 25 years old. More than half of these young people survive on less than \$2 a day, while more than 100 million adolescents do not attend school. Fifteen million adolescent girls become mothers every year, and infant mortality rates are highest among mothers under 20 (with an average of 100 deaths per 1,000 live births). Six thousand young people are infected with HIV each day, most of them young girls in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Ratios of new female-to-male infections among those aged 15-24 years run as high as 8:1 in South Africa. These are not just numbers. These are the realities of young people at the crossroads. There is no time for further questions. It is time for action.

**NEEDS AND CONCERNS** UNFPA's work on young people aims to promote the comprehensive development of adolescents and youth. Sexual and reproductive health issues are key concerns; so are education, livelihood, and citizenship. UNFPA is committed to helping adolescents and youth, in particular adolescent girls who are left behind, gain access to opportunities. For countries experiencing or about to experience a demographic transition, and for countries showing a significant youth bulge, social investments in young people can help achieve a healthy, equitable, socio-economically productive and poverty-free society.

**GOALS** Through the Framework, UNFPA will support governments and partners to reach these goals:

- Empower adolescents and youth with skills to achieve their dreams, think critically, negotiate risky situations, and express themselves freely;
- Provide access to health, including sexual and reproductive health information, education, commodities, and services;
- Connect young people to livelihood and employment programmes;



- Uphold the rights of young people, specifically girls and marginalized groups, to grow up healthy, safe, and free of violence and abuse;
- Encourage young people to participate fully in their own countries' development plans as citizens;
- Recognize the right of young people to their fair share of education, skills and services, with a focus on economically disadvantaged, socially marginalized, and vulnerable groups.

In its efforts, UNFPA will cross boundaries between sectors and encourage new partnerships. This merging of approaches reflects a vision that sees young people's lives as they see themselves: as whole beings and actors in their own right.

## MAKING THE GOALS A REALITY

**THE FOUR KEYS** UNFPA has four keys to open doors with young people to reach these goals.

### KEY 1 SUPPORT POLICY DEVELOPMENT

By applying the lens of population structure and poverty dynamics analyses, UNFPA will focus public policy on young people and incorporate their issues into national development and poverty reduction strategies. To do so, UNFPA will:

- Support scenario-building exercises that demonstrate what could happen to poverty reduction if social investments in young people are made;
- Leverage data on young people for social development policies and poverty reduction plans;
- Analyze population structures and advocate a "demographic bonus" to be reaped from making social investments in young people, in particular poor and disadvantaged adolescent girls and boys;
- Undertake poverty diagnostics to map social vulnerability profiles of young people to reflect their diverse circumstances and needs.

### KEY 2 PROVIDE EDUCATION ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

UNFPA will take a lead in facilitating the provision of comprehensive, gender-sensitive, life skills-based sexual and reproductive health education in school and in their communities. To do so, UNFPA will:

- Deliver sexual and reproductive health education programmes that promote gender equality and build practical life skills to equip girls and boys for adulthood;

- Engage in policy discussions and advocacy on key education issues, such as school quality and the education system, zero tolerance for violence, postponement of marriage, and girls' retention in schools;
- Focus policies to include sexual and reproductive health education in school curricula and out of school programmes within the context of Sector Wide Approaches, Poverty Reduction Strategies, and education reforms.

### KEY 3 PROVIDE SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES

UNFPA will promote a core package of health (including sexual and reproductive health) services and commodities for young people. At a minimum, these will include counseling, contraception, HIV prevention, and maternal health services. UNFPA will also:

- Support service delivery models within the national programme context and not as isolated projects;
- Link efforts to promote universal access to HIV prevention, care, treatment, and support with efforts to scale up youth and adolescent friendly health services, especially for groups who are socio-economically disadvantaged;
- Maximize the reach of youth-friendly clinics to synergize with multiple channels, such as schools, social marketing initiatives, and activities targeting very young adolescent girls and others not benefiting by current programmes;
- Network with social services with NGOs, community-based organizations, and other sectors;
- Focus policy dialogue to promote an essential package of health services for young people, aiming for those who are out of reach, especially married and unmarried girls, and the costs involved.

### KEY 4 ENGAGE AND WORK "WITH" YOUNG PEOPLE

UNFPA will pay special attention to promoting young people's leadership and participation by working "with" young people through youth-adult partnerships. UNFPA will:

- Identify institutional mechanisms for incorporating young people's input into policy and programming processes, including planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation;
- Invest in capacity building and developing young leaders to advocate for their rights and development issues;
- Promote peer educators as agents of change in their communities and for transmitting messages of zero tolerance for violence, safe sex, and gender equality; linking peers with services; and allying with young people's networks and coalitions;



- Tap into the dynamism of youth movements and their communication networks for advocacy and action on issues of concern, such as HIV/AIDS and age at marriage.

### LINKING THE KEYS

Joining the four keys together is **the keychain: intergenerational alliances**. UNFPA will build and support intergenerational alliances to ensure the four keys open doors for young people. Safe spaces will be created and protected to allow young people and adults to reach a mutual understanding about young people's concerns related to the four keys and to promote concrete strategies to address them. These safe spaces will serve as forums for adults and young people to listen to each other and freely express their views, and they will allow young people to gain the support of adults to act on behalf of young people and in partnership with the young people themselves. UNFPA will identify dynamic adults to champion youth issues and influence other leaders, especially in arenas where young people have yet to gain access or on controversial issues shrouded by "gatekeepers." UNFPA will also promote intergenerational alliances that will function not only as platforms for building support on young people's issues, but as operational teams that will strategize and integrate young people's issues into policy and programming processes.