

Newsletter

January 2005



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News

Jamaica Approves New National Youth Policy

Jamaica recently approved a revised 2004 national youth policy. The policy articulates the importance of planning for the development of Jamaica’s human resources from birth onward; defines a common vision and framework for youth development; describes the roles and responsibilities of youth in their personal and national development; and serves as a tool for advocating for youth development issues. In the focal area of health, the policy places emphasis on the risk of early pregnancy, substance misuse, and HIV and other STIs. Objectives include promoting the provision of high-quality information to young persons on healthy lifestyles—including alternatives to risky behaviors such as drug use and multiple sexual partners—and

increasing access to and use of high-quality youth-friendly health services.

Source: *Youth Reproductive Health Policy Country Brief Series No. 1*, September 2004. View at www.policyproject.com/abstract.cfm/2164.

Read the new policy at www.youth-policy.com/Policies/Jamaica_National_Youth_Policy.cfm.

Uganda Reviews Consent Policy on HIV Testing for Minors

The Ugandan government is reviewing its policy on voluntary HIV counseling and testing for children following recommendations by experts that disclosure of a child’s serostatus should only be done by a person with whom the child feels comfortable.



The *youth-policy.com* newsletter includes recent news, events, and current policymaking efforts within the rapidly changing field of youth reproductive health. The *youth-policy.com* website, launched in 2004, is an online resource for improving youth reproductive health and HIV policies worldwide and is used by youth, policymakers, NGOs, donors, and technical experts.



According to current policy, a child (age 18 and under) cannot be tested for HIV without the consent of a parent or guardian. However, officials say the reality is that many children who lack parental support begin sexual activity early or have been caught up in war situations and been infected. Experts also agree that there is a need to address the special counseling and testing needs of disabled children.

Uganda has won worldwide acclaim for its anti-AIDS campaign, which has reduced infection rates from 30 percent in the 1990s to about 6 percent presently. An estimated 1 million people are HIV positive, 10 percent of whom are children. One million Ugandans have died of the disease since it was first diagnosed 22 years ago.

Source: *PlusNews*, October 2004

Read more about VCT policies for youth at www.youth-policy.com/content.cfm?page=vct.

Read policies from Uganda at www.youth-policy.com/compendium.cfm?get=.

Educational Programs Can Significantly Reduce Support of Female Genital Cutting (FGC)

An evaluation of village educational programs in Senegal and Burkina Faso revealed that women who participated have higher levels of knowledge and improved attitudes concerning gender-based violence, FGC, and reproductive health. Approval rates of FGC decreased significantly, but not all participants changed their attitudes about FGC. However, there was a significant and sizable decrease in reported cutting of young girls in Senegal.

Full Report: *The Tostan Program: Evaluation of a Community-based Education Program in Senegal*. View at www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/frontiers/FR_FinalReports/Senegal_Tostan%20FGC.pdf.

Full Report: *Experience from a Community-based*

Education Program in Burkina Faso: The Tostan Program. View at www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/frontiers/FR_FinalReports/BurkinaFaso_FGC.pdf.

Read more about FGC and youth policies at www.youth-policy.com/content.cfm?page=FemaleGenitalCutting and www.youth-policy.com/compendium.cfm?get=.

Mandatory Parental Involvement in Youth Contraceptive Decisions May Lead to an Increased Incidence of Teenage Pregnancy

A new study suggests that in the face of laws requiring parental involvement in family planning decisionmaking, about 50 percent of teenagers would discontinue use of clinic services. However, few teenagers would be deterred from having sex, according to “Confidential Reproductive Health Services for Minors: The Potential Impact of Mandated Parental Involvement for Contraception,” by Rachel K. Jones and Heather Boonstra. The research shows that teenagers would reduce their use of the most effective contraceptive methods and use less effective ones, such as withdrawal, or no method at all.

Source: *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, Volume 36, Number 5, September/October 2004. View at www.guttmacher.org/pubs/journals/3618204.html.

Read more about contraception and youth policies at www.youth-policy.com/content.cfm?page=Contraception and www.youth-policy.com/compendium.cfm?get=.

In Their Own Words: Practitioners Talk About Policy Impact

Uganda adopted a national adolescent reproductive health policy in 2004. Reverend Mwesigwa Simon, diocesan youth worker of the Anglican

Church of Uganda, commented on the policy's impact on the church's activities:

"As a result of the formulation of the Adolescent Sexual Health Policy, many dioceses in the Anglican Church of Uganda have committed themselves to ensuring an annual budgetary allocation for ASRH [adolescent sexual and reproductive health] activities. These dioceses include the Diocese of Kampala, Busoga Diocese, Sebei Diocese, South Rwenzori Diocese among others. In Sebei Diocese, for instance, youths have formed an advocacy music and drama group which communicates ASRH issues through drama and music to schools and parishes. They do this using the funds allocated to them in the Annual Diocesan Budget. As a result, many folks have changed their attitude towards female genital mutilation, a cultural practice that demeans the girls.

"One elder had this to say: 'We realized the danger this was causing our girls as they came up to express it in their plays. Most of us have abandoned the practice.'"

Events

Repositioning of Family Planning Conference in Accra, Ghana February 15–18, 2005

Participants from various African countries will be coming together to address the repositioning of family planning within their regional and cultural contexts. *Youth-policy.com* will also be featured at the conference as a tool for policymakers worldwide.

Contact: Nina Pruyin
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New on *youth-policy.com*

Streamlined Search Engine

Based on user feedback, we have streamlined the basic and advanced search functions. Check it out!

www.youth-policy.com/compendium.cfm?search=b

We welcome user feedback on this recent change and encourage you to contact us through the website link with your impressions and suggestions.

www.youth-policy.com/content.cfm?page=ContactUs

A Resource Guide for Young Women on HIV/AIDS

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) created a resource guide based on a February–March 2002 online discussion aimed at young women. Moderated on AWID's Young Women and Leadership listserv, this forum was designed as a means for sharing ideas and information, as well as for initiating debates on issues that affect young women in their particular contexts. The forum also provided a space for young women to articulate their visions and perspectives for the advancement of the women's rights and social justice agenda internationally.

Some of the topics covered include intersections among youth, gender, and HIV/AIDS; emerging challenges and successes in HIV/AIDS for young people (particularly young women); and ways in which young people can participate in addressing gender and youth issues in worldwide HIV/AIDS pro-

grams geared specifically toward young women who are leaders in their communities.

To download a copy of this booklet, visit www.awid.org/publications/ActNow.pdf or contact Shamillah Wilson, AWID, at Shamillah@awid.org, or Sisonke Msimang, UNIFEM, at sisonke.msimang@undp.org.

For details on how to access discussion archives, visit www.hdnet.org.

Source: SEA-AIDS eForum 2004: sea-aids@eforums.healthdev.org

Read more about HIV and youth policies at www.youth-policy.com/compendium.cfm?get=.

Female Genital Cutting

A new report funded by the USAID Interagency Working Group on FGC attempts to answer the following questions: What information exists on FGC and what information gaps are perceived by individuals and groups that work to eradicate this practice? PRB, FHI, PATH, FRONTIERS, and the Manoff Group gathered information from eight African countries (Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, and Uganda) where FGC is practiced.

Full Report: *Information on Female Genital Cutting: What Is Out There? What Is Needed? An Assessment*. View at www.prb.org/pdf04/InfoOnFGC.pdf.

Other publications on FGC can be found on the FRONTIERS website at www.popcouncil.org/frontiers/pubs/pubs_fgc.html.

Read more about FGC and youth policies at www.youth-policy.com/content.cfm?page=FemaleGenitalCutting and www.youth-policy.com/compendium.cfm?get=.

Just in! The May–September Monitoring Report of [youth-policy.com](http://www.youth-policy.com) Usership Results

See full report details at www.youth-policy.com/documents/yp_monitoring_may_nov_2004.pdf.

Please send your comments, questions, requests, and ideas to yrh@policyproject.com.

Both [youth-policy.com](http://www.youth-policy.com) and the newsletter are brought to you by the Adolescent Working Group, POLICY Project in collaboration with YouthNet/Family Health International.

To subscribe to the [youth-policy.com](http://www.youth-policy.com) newsletter, or to contribute ideas or feedback or ask questions, please email yrh@policyproject.com. For copies of publications, please contact the organization referenced at the end of the article.

Inclusion of publications and resources in the [youth-policy.com](http://www.youth-policy.com) newsletter does not imply endorsement.

The POLICY Project is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under Contract No. HRN-C-00-00-00006-00, beginning July 7, 2000. It is implemented by Futures Group in collaboration with The Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) and Research Triangle Institute (RTI). The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of USAID.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Newsletter



youth-policy.com Better Policy, Healthier Youth

News

Nigeria Approves a State-Level Adolescent Reproductive Health Strategic Plan

The state government recently approved its *Strategic Plan for Improving the Reproductive Health of Young Adults and Adolescents in Edo State, 2004–2009*. The plan was originally drafted by the 50-member Young Adult and Adolescent Reproductive Health Network, based on a comprehensive assessment of youth reproductive health status. The strategic plan has several critical activities, including social mobilization and advocacy, better access to youth-friendly services, youth involvement and participation, resource mobilization, capacity building and skills development, youth education and counseling, monitoring and evaluation, and ongoing research.

Source: *Youth Reproductive Health Policy, Country Brief Series No. 2*, October 2004. View at www.policyproject.com/abstract.cfm/2165.

See the strategic plan at www.youth-policy.com/content.cfm?page=papers.

Youth Weigh in on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

An international team of youth experts from various NGOs submitted the report “Youth

and the MDGs: Challenges and Opportunities for Implementation,” to Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the UN Millennium Project and Special Advisor to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The report provides examples of existing forms of youth participation, case studies on youth in development, and recommendations for including youth in the implementation of the MDGs at all levels. Some of the MDGs, such as the one aimed at combating HIV/AIDS, are directly related to youth reproductive health; others are indirectly related, such as the MDG to promote gender equality and empower women.

View at www.mdgyouthpaper.org/.

Read more about youth involvement in policy-making at www.youth-policy.com/content.cfm?page=principle2.

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In Their Own Words: Practitioners Talk About Policy Impact

With the support of the POLICY Project Small Grants Program, the Ukrainian NGO *Poryatunok* recently completed a successful advocacy project aimed at improving YRH services in the cities of Poltava and Kremenchug. Advocates persuaded authorities to open two new youth clinics in Poltava and one in Kremenchug, securing funding through the municipal budgets. Skvira Larissa of *Poryatunok* comments on her group's accomplishments:

“After our advocacy campaign, the mayor of Kremenchug ordered the establishment of an interdepartmental coordinating board to examine issues of implementation of the national reproductive health plan. Young people need high quality services different from those provided to adults both in form and content; such services should be tailored to youth needs for information about contraceptives and/or sexual health. After the advocacy campaign, city council deputies realized the importance of reproductive health and made a decision to set up a youth-friendly clinic funded from the city budget.

“Adolescents and young people come to the clinic to receive counseling, information, diagnostics, treatment, and rehabilitation. I hope that the clinic will greatly contribute to adolescent health in the city by providing quality medical and social care, implementing preventive programs, and encouraging young people to take responsibility for their own health. This will be social support for adolescents to enter into adult life.”

Events

The Architects of the Future: Young Diplomats and the Millennium Development Goals

April 26–28, 2005, United Nations, New York

This symposium will build the leadership capacities of youth from around the world and will engage them in dialogue surrounding the Millennium Development Goals, many of which directly or indirectly address youth reproductive health.

View at www.athgo.org.

Deadline Submission Review WPAY (World Programme of Action for Youth)

April 30, 2005

In October 2005, the UN General Assembly will review the achievements made in the implementation of WPAY, including the goal dealing with youth and health, specifically reproductive health including HIV/AIDS prevention. To have your input considered, download the booklet “Making Commitments Matter: A Toolkit for Young People to Evaluate National Youth Policy”

View WPAY at www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr/.

Download toolkit at www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr/documents/Toolkit.pdf.

African Development Forum V Devoted to Youth Issues

June 15–19, 2005, UNCC, Addis Ababa

The UN Economic Commission for Africa brings together stakeholders on Africa's development to discuss policy alternatives within the

overall theme of youth development issues. Sub-themes will also touch on youth and health, including the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Contact: Kwabia Boateng
kboateng@uneca.org,

View at www.unysa-uk.org/index.asp?pid=1.

New on youth-policy.com

37 New Policy Documents Available on Searchable Database

New documents include the Declaration of Antigua—Gender-Based Violence (2003), which proposes action points such as interministry participation and budget allocations aimed toward lowering the incidence of gender-based violence in Antigua; and the Uganda National Policy for Voluntary Counselling and Testing (2003)

See Uganda National Policy for VCT at www.youth-policy.com/Policies/Uganda_Nat_Policy_for_HIV_Voluntary_Counselling_and_Testing.cfm.

See Declaration of Antigua at www.youth-policy.com/Policies/DECLAR_OF_ANTIGUA.cfm.

New Links and Resources

Growing Up Global: The Changing Transitions to Adulthood in Developing Countries. Edited by Population Council researcher Cynthia Lloyd and published by the U.S. National Academies' National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, the report reviews the available research and presents policy and program recommendations. Chapter 4 of the report deals directly with sexual and reproductive health of young people including risk behaviors and their consequences.

See at www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/ExecutiveSummary.pdf.

African Regional Youth Initiative (ARYI). ARYI is a youth-led organization composed of over 100 youth and community-based projects fighting HIV/AIDS in Africa. ARYI's Youth Policy Group is active in eight countries, including Uganda, Liberia, and Rwanda. The mission of the Youth Policy Group is to promote and advocate for youth reproductive health policies and programs in Africa while empowering youth to participate in policy development processes.

Read more at www.aryi.interconnection.org.

Search the database for policies addressing HIV/AIDS and youth in Africa at www.youth-policy.com/compendium.cfm?search=b.

UNFPA's Global Youth Partners Initiative. This youth-driven advocacy initiative aims to rally partners and stakeholders to increase investment and strengthen commitments for preventing HIV infections among young people, especially among under-served youth.

Read more at www.unfpa.org/hiv/gyp/index.htm.

Read more about youth involvement in policy-making at www.youth-policy.com/content.cfm?page=principle2.

Arab Youth Directory (AYD). Developed by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the AYD gives an online overview of youth NGOs and the UN agencies working for youth and the ministries in the region. Several of the featured NGOs, such as the Egyptian Medical Women's Association, work directly on advocacy and awareness activities related to youth reproductive health. The directory also aims to build the capacity of youth NGOs, empower them to participate in the formulation and implementation of youth policies, and enable them to develop a mechanism for national and regional cooperation.

Read more at www.escwa.org.lb/ayd/index.asp.

Children Having Children. The 2004 edition of *Save the Children's State of the World's Mothers* focuses on teenage mothers. The report proposes a range of policy action points and emphasizes girls' education and improving the status of young mothers.

See at www.savethechildren.org/mothers/report_2004/images/pdf/SOWM_2004_final.pdf.

Read more about maternal health policies for youth at www.youth-policy.com/content.cfm?page=MaternityCare.

Search the database for related policies at www.youth-policy.com/compendium.cfm?search=b.

Investing in People: National Progress in Implementing the ICPD Programme of Action, Chapter 5: Adolescent Reproductive Health and Youth. This global survey summarizes responses from 169 countries on the steps they have taken to implement the Cairo Programme of Action, including measures related to adolescent reproductive health and youth.

See at www.unfpa.org/upload/lib_pub_file/284_filename_globalsurvey.pdf

Search the database for youth reproductive health policies by country at www.youth-policy.com/compendium.cfm?search=b.

At What Age?.....Are School-Children Employed, Married and Taken to Court? (second edition). This 2004 report analyzes legislation for over 150 countries on minimum ages for entry into work and marriage, age at which a child can be considered criminally responsible, and children's access to compulsory education.

See at www.right-to-education.org/home/index.html.

Feedback and Evaluation

Just in! The December 2004–March 2005 Monitoring Report of Usership Results

See full report details at www.youth-policy.com/documents/yp_monitoring_dec_feb_2005.pdf.

Please send your comments, questions, requests, and ideas to yjh@policyproject.com.

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USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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Better Policy, Healthier Youth

youth-policy.com

News

Peru Approves National Policy on Adolescent Health Policy

In February 2005, the Peruvian Ministry of Health approved new national guidelines on adolescent health. The guidelines promote universal access to integrated and differentiated health services, with a special emphasis on mental health and reproductive health.

For more information, visit:

http://www.policyproject.com/pubs/YRHCBSP/Peru_brief.pdf

Search the youth-policy.com database for more policies from Latin America addressing youth reproductive health issues.

New Study Examines Youth Reproductive Health (YRH) Policies in Europe

The European Commission is supporting a comprehensive analysis of YRH policies in 37 European nations. The results from the first stage of research, conducted by Lund University, will be released in late 2005. Additional results will be reported in the first half of 2006. The study aims to enhance efforts to advocate for comprehensive YRH policies at local and national levels.

Search the youth-policy.com database for European policies pertaining to youth reproductive health.

Online Discussion Forum Focuses on Youth Reproductive Health Advocacy

YouthNet, in collaboration with the Implementing Best Practices in Reproductive Health (IBP) Initiative of the World Health Organization, is coordinating an online discussion forum titled "Youth Advocacy Group." The forum, a follow-up to the February 2005 workshop, *Repositioning Family Planning in West Africa for Youth: Advocacy to Action*, held in Ghana, aims to enhance collaboration and information sharing. The community library and calendar allows members to share relevant documents and resource materials and to post upcoming events.

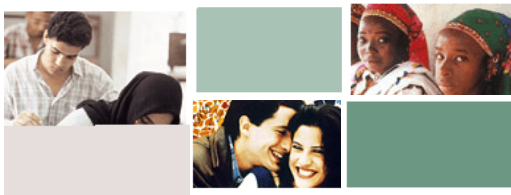
To join the online discussion forum, email Haguerehesh Woldeyohannes at

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In Their Own Words: Practitioners Talk About Policy Impact

Through support from the POLICY Project, CEPROMUN, an NGO based in Trujillo, Peru, recently carried out a participatory diagnosis of health needs of youth in the La Libertad region of northern Peru. Unplanned pregnancy and STIs emerged as major concerns for young people. Fanny Ruiz, regional coordinator for *ForoSalud*, an alliance of Peruvian civil society organizations working to improve health, commented on the impact the study has had on the policy and program environment:

“When the study results were presented to the municipal and regional authorities it was a real wake-up call. A year ago it wasn’t so easy to openly discuss the reproductive health problems of youth. The diagnostic study has helped sensitize health workers and municipal officials to the needs of young people. With the detailed plan developed on the basis of the study, policymakers have clear guidelines for action. Although many health staff still find it difficult to provide non-judgmental care to young people, greater attention is now being paid to the specific needs of youth. This study and the resulting follow-up plan also complement our other efforts to work for improvements in the overall health policy environment in La Libertad.”



Events



Inter-Agency Consultation on the Youth Development Index

July 18–19, 2005

London, United Kingdom

This consultative meeting was organized in collaboration with UNICEF by the Commonwealth Youth Program, the Youth Affairs Division of the London-based Commonwealth Secretariat. The meeting will involve youth experts from a variety of government and nongovernmental organizations to contribute feedback and ideas to the development of a Youth Development Index. The index will likely include YRH indicators.

www.thecommonwealth.org



3rd World Youth Congress

July 30–August 8, 2005

Stirling, Scotland.

The 3rd World Youth Congress in Scotland brought together 600 young activists involved in the field of sustainable development from 120 different countries. Discussions highlighted what young people are doing to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals, including the goals related to HIV/AIDS prevention and maternal and child health.

http://europa.eu.int/youth/news/index_1222_en.html



International Youth Day

August 12, 2005

This year's theme was "Making Commitments Matter – the Tenth Anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth." In addition, the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly held special meetings on youth issues.

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/iyd2005.htm>



Five Year Review of the Millennium Declaration by the UN General Assembly

September 14–16, 2005,
New York.

Millennium Summit+5 consisted of a high-level meeting of the General Assembly to review the progress that has been made in the five years since the finalization of the Millennium Declaration. Goal 5 "Improve maternal health" and Goal 6 "Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other infectious diseases" directly affect youth reproductive health around the world.

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

New Links and Resources

United Nations World Youth Report 2005: Main Findings and Recommendations

The UN Programme on Youth held consultative meetings in February 2005 to review achievements made since the 1995 adoption of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). The outcome documents, together with national evaluations, will form a

supplement to the Secretary-General's World Youth Report 2005. See the summary reports of the discussions and recommendations from the meetings at the link below.

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr05.htm>



YouthActionNet

YouthActionNet is an interactive website focused on the vital role that youth play in leading positive change around the world. Launched in 2001 by the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and Nokia, YouthActionNet serves as a virtual gathering place for young people to exchange ideas for how to make a difference in their communities. This website strengthens the existing skills of youth to be advocates for change on issues such as HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.

<http://www.youthactionnet.org/who>

Search the youth-policy.com database for policies addressing HIV/AIDS and youth.



Child and Adolescent Mental Health Policies and Plans

A module of the World Health Organization's mental health policy and guidance package for countries, this publication outlines the social and economic context for mental health, and provides guidance on developing and implementing a child and adolescent mental health policy and plan.

http://www.who.int/mental_health/policy/en/Child%20%20Ado%20Mental%20Health_final.pdf

Go to youth-policy.com to read about high-risk youth sub-populations, and inclusion in policymaking.

Protecting Youth from HIV/AIDS in the Developing World

The director of the Office of HIV/AIDS in the Bureau for Global Health at the U.S. Agency for International Development discusses the emphasis placed on youth and HIV prevention in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

http://www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PCAAB268.pdf

Search the youth-policy.com database for policies addressing HIV/AIDS and youth.



Going to Scale in Ethiopia: Mobilizing Youth Participation in a National HIV/AIDS Program

This case study from the Synergy Project and FHI describes how a participatory learning and action (PLA) process assisted youth in communicating with other young people and adults about sexual and reproductive health care

needs. This consultative process facilitated a national youth evaluation and needs assessment to affect national policy and services. The use of the PLA process is an example of an effective methodology for addressing the holistic sexual and reproductive health care needs of young people.

<http://www.synergyaids.com/documents/GoingToScaleInEthiopia.pdf>

Go to youth-policy.com to read more on youth participation in policymaking efforts and for policies addressing HIV/AIDS and youth.

Feedback and Evaluation

Just in!

The April 2005–June 2005 youth-policy.com Monitoring Report

See full report details on youth-policy.com. Send your comments, questions, requests, and ideas to yrh@policyproject.com.

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YouthNet is a global program funded by USAID to improve reproductive health and HIV prevention needs of youth ages 10 to 24. It is a joint project by CARE International, RTI International, and is led by Family Health International (FHI).

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