

Lessons Learnt & Implications for the Way Forward for Adolescents



#EndAdolescentAIDS

Nicola Skyers
Senior Medical Officer,
National HIV/STI Programme
Ministry of Health, Jamaica

ADOLESCENTS AND HIV

- Risky behaviours – multiple partnerships, transactional sex, lack of consistent condom use, low risk perception.
- Limited information on adolescent key populations and the 10-14 age group
- Structural and cultural barriers facilitate limited uptake of prevention/treatment services
 - Legislative framework
 - Economic state of the country
 - Inadequacy of social safety nets

Key Concerns from the Rapid Assessment – Who? Why? Where?

- Need an in-depth analysis of the estimates for the adolescent HIV epidemic – reported cases have traditionally been higher among girls due to reliance on ANC data
- Uptake in HIV Testing and Counseling - clearly a priority issue for the adolescent AIDS response
- Linkage to care – uptake of ARV and adherence to treatment



#EndAdolescentAIDS

Key Concerns from the Rapid Assessment - Who? Why? Where?

- Data on key populations in general is limited – serious challenges with generating information on “underground” adolescent populations.
- The 10-14 age group presents a particular challenge – data, service uptake, provision of services to meet the needs, etc.
- Mental health – early detection and response as a part of the mix of services for adolescents.



Key Concerns from the Rapid Assessment

- An effective response for adolescents demands a collaborative approach.
- The responsibilities are far more than the health system can cover -
 - Education
 - Youth
 - Protection
 - Civil Society including adolescents



Lessons Learnt from Phase 1

- Government Buy in/leadership is crucial. The Ministry of Health and the National Family Planning Board saw our participation in All IN as a tremendous opportunity.
 - Towards an evidence-informed, well articulated and multi-sectoral strategy for adolescents that take gender, location and levels of vulnerability into account
 - Already useful in Jamaica's negotiations with the Global Fund
- High Level engagement and buy-in (especially outside of the HIV sector) must be considered at the initial stage.
 - The Planning Institute of Jamaica is a critical part of the coordinating team due to their positioning in National Planning and Monitoring processes and as the guardians for Vision 2030 National Development Plan.

Lessons Learnt from Phase 1

- Participation of adolescents is a key component of the work and we are learning to do this better as we move through the process.
- Secondary data analysis does take time. The Jamaica Steering Committee has formed a M&E Sub-committee who were key to advancing this part of the process.
 - It helps to have people who are familiar with databases/studies leading this part of the process.
- All In is NOT all things for all adolescents.
 - While we are making the case for a more developmental approach to the adolescent AIDS epidemic, this platform is focused on reducing new HIV infections and ensuring an effective response for those infected.

Lessons Learnt

- The critical stakeholders are all represented through the steering committee. Through this mechanism, we have pulled together a strong lead team which has not necessarily been at the same table – but now have a common interest around the well-being of adolescents.
- It is envisioned that we will continue this very valuable partnership beyond the country assessment process.

THE WAY FORWARD

- Phase 1 will be completed and closed by end of June with a prioritization workshop involving the steering committee and other relevant stakeholders to determine how we strategize for Phase 2 of the country assessment.
- An adolescent technical working group will be pulled together as part of the National Family Planning Board's Human Rights and Enabling Environment team.

THE WAY FORWARD

- End result: A better articulated strategy for the AIDS response among adolescents and will feed into global frameworks (90-90-90/Fast Track)
- The All In! Country Assessment forms part of the process to achieving Goal 1 of Vision 2030 – the National Development Plan – a healthy and stable population - Adolescents are entitled to the highest standard of health.
- Jamaica will be better equipped to pursue targeted and evidence-based advocacy and action around access for adolescents and other key bottleneck issues identified in this pr

THANK YOU



.....
#EndAdolescentAIDS