ADOLESCENT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN TRANS-NZOIA COUNTY

Introduction

Trans-Nzoia County has a youthful population with people below age 15 making up nearly half (47%) of the total population (Figure 1). This is mainly because many more children are added to the population than people dying. This youthful population has implications on the County’s health and development agenda as it puts increasing demands on provision of services including health and education. One of the main areas of concern in Kenya is the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of adolescents and the extent to which their SRH needs are met. One in four (25%) people in Trans-Nzoia County are adolescents aged 10-19.

This fact sheet highlights the status of adolescent SRH in Trans-Nzoia County in relation to the national trends. The data are drawn from the 2014 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, 2012 Kenya AIDS Indicator Survey and the 2014 Basic Education Statistical Booklet.

Adolescent SRH Indicators

Age of sexual debut and first marriage

- Half of Trans-Nzoia County women (20-49 years old) and men (20-54 years old) first had sex by age 18 and 17, respectively; Therefore, both women and men in Trans-Nzoia County first have sex at the same age as the national trend.
- Half of Trans-Nzoia County women (25-49 years old) first married by age 20 and half of the men (30-54 years old) by age 25; the same as at the national level.

Teen pregnancy

- About 1 in 4 (23%) girls aged 15-19 years in Trans-Nzoia County have begun childbearing; higher than the national level (Figure 2). Specifically, 4.3% are pregnant with their first child and 18.9% have ever given birth compared to 3.4% and 14.7%, respectively, at the national level.
- Trans-Nzoia County’s age specific fertility rate for girls aged 15-19 (adolescent birth rate) is 103 births per 1000 girls; higher than at the national level (96).

Contraceptive use among adolescents

- Teenage pregnancies often result from low use of contraceptives and/or unmet need for contraceptives. In Trans-Nzoia County, 32% of currently married girls aged 15-19 use modern contraceptives which is close to the national rate of 37% (Figure 3).
- Unmet need for contraceptives among currently married adolescents in Trans-Nzoia is about the same as the national rate. About 22% of currently married girls aged 15-19 would like to avoid pregnancy but are not using a modern contraceptive method compared to 23% at national level.

Policy and legal context

Kenya has favourable policy and legal frameworks that promote adolescent SRH and SRH rights. These frameworks include but are not limited to the Constitution (2010), National Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy (2015), National Guidelines for Provision of Adolescent Youth Friendly Services (YFS) in Kenya (2005), the Children Act (2001) and the National Youth Policy (2007).

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HIV prevalence and prevention among adolescents

- County level HIV data are not yet available. At regional level, 0.5% of youth aged 15-24 in the former Rift Valley North, where Trans-Nzoia County is located, have HIV. This rate is 4 times lower than the national youth HIV prevalence rate (Figure 4). The region hosts one of the lowest HIV rate among youth and in the general population in the country.

- Consistent use of condoms during sex.
- 37% of never married young women aged 15-24 used a condom during their last sexual encounter. Whereas, 68% of never married young men aged 15-24 used a condom during their last sexual encounter.

- Female circumcision, commonly referred to as Female Genital Mutilation or Cutting is linked to obstetric complications and gynecological problems, and long-term negative effects on women’s wellbeing. It is also often linked to girl child marriage which also has long-term negative effects on women’s health and wellbeing.

- Trans-Nzoia County is one of the counties in Kenya where female circumcision is not practiced.

References