



Strengthening the health sector response towards sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of young people in Nepal

A component of the MoHP/GIZ Health Sector Support Programme

Background

The Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP)/GIZ Health Sector Support Programme (HSSP) has strengthened the health sector response towards sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of young people in Nepal through one of its components since 2007. The key cooperation areas include:

- developing the institutional response of the MoHP to SRHR of young people through introducing and managing adolescent-friendly services (AFSs) in public health facilities
- developing innovative and youth-friendly behaviour change communication (BCC) interventions
- documenting and analysing the lessons learned of new approaches introduced with a view to ensuring sustainability of successful interventions

The objective of the programme is to improve SRHR of young people, and more specifically:

Impact	To contribute to reducing the adolescent fertility rate (AFR) among 15-19 year old
Outcomes	To increase the contraceptive prevalence rate among 15-19 year old To increase the condom use during last sex among 15-19 year old To increase the satisfaction of young people with health services

Since November 2011, GFA Consulting Group (GFA) is contracted by GIZ to provide a continuation of the technical cooperation in this highly dynamic field of SRHR.

Cooperation and Steering

GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development is working in the health sector in Nepal in the framework of a sector-wide approach (SWAp) and in line with the National Health Sector Programme (2010-2015).

In the field of SRHR of young people, (GIZ and now GFA) is cooperating with a variety of stakeholders in the Ministry of Health and Population, most prominently with the Family Health Division (FHD), the National Health Education, Information and Communication Centre (NHEICC), the National Health Training Centre (NHTC), the Population Division and regional health directorates and district health offices.

These actors jointly steer the programme under the leadership of FHD at central and decentralised level. Technical advice to the programme is given by the ASRH sub-committee (consisting of organisations working on SRHR of young people) chaired by the FHD as well as by national and international short-term experts. Youth participation is ensured and where possible institutionalised during the development and implementation of services and BCC interventions.



Learning from experience

The programme puts a strong focus on learning as many of the outputs produced and adolescent-friendly interventions applied are innovative and therefore trialed for the first time in Nepal. With a view to sustainably scaling-up effective approaches, several operational studies have been and will be commissioned.

In 2007, a baseline was conducted on SRHR among young people in 5 districts (Bardiya, Dailekh, Surkhet, Jumla, Baitadi) to determine the knowledge, attitude and practice of young people in the field of reproductive health, HIV and health service utilisation. In these districts, the first elements of the newly developed national ASRH programme of the MoHP were piloted and in 2010 a process evaluation was conducted to determine the opportunities and obstacles to introducing AFSs through the existing public health structure. Based on the findings of the process evaluation, the national ASRH programme is now being finalised to support the scaling-up by FHD and other external development partners as of the next Nepali fiscal year (starting in July 2011).

Innovative BCC Interventions

Under the leadership of NHEICC and with a view to supporting health workers (and schools) in their role to provide information on sexual and reproductive health issues, a set of 8 Information, Education and Communication (IEC) booklets were developed. The IEC booklets – a method and product already applied in other countries with the support of GIZ – consists of questions raised by young people and youth-friendly, culturally-appropriate answers to those questions on a range of issues: menstruation, sex, friendship and love, sexual and reproductive rights, marriage, pregnancy and drug and alcohol misuse.

By the end of 2010, the NHEICC has provided these sets of booklets to the districts where the national ASRH pro-

gramme is being implemented by FHD. An evaluation of the impact of the IEC booklets is planned for 2012.

Similarly, the Join-in-Circuit on AIDS, Love and Sexuality - in Nepal under the name of SangSangai - has been implemented in Kathmandu valley and Dailekh district with the support of GIZ since 2008. About 17,000 young people have been reached with this innovative and youth-oriented communication method and the monitoring has shown a considerable increase of the participants' comprehensive knowledge about HIV and STIs as well as a changed attitude towards gender and people living with HIV and AIDS.

Outlook

Until mid-2014, the following activities are planned in the component on SRHR for youth:

- Scaling-up of the national ASRH programme in selected districts in the Mid- and Far-Western Regions of Nepal
- Costing the national ASRH programme and supporting demand creation to ensure an increase in uptake of AFSs
- Evaluation of the impact of the national ASRH programme on utilisation of and satisfaction with AFSs and health outcomes among young people
- Setting up a round table consisting of key stakeholders in Nepal to identify research gaps and priorities in the field of SRHR of young people in the light of new data available in 2011 (National Adolescent and Youth Survey, NDHS 2011, Nepal Census)
- Supporting NHEICC to develop a national communication strategy on ASRH and subsequently support its implementation
- Evaluating the impact of the Join-in-Circuit on AIDS, Love and Sexuality in order to improve its relevance to the needs of young people in Nepal and to subsequently support its scaling-up.
- Advocacy for SRHR of young people

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Health Sector Support Programme
Department of Health Services
Teku, Kathmandu, Nepal

T +977 1 4261404
F +977 1 4261079
E hssp@giz.org.np
I www.giz.de/nepal

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