

A GUIDE TO

# Monitoring and Evaluating Adolescent Reproductive Health Programs

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**FOCUS on Young Adults**

*Tool Series 5, June 2000*

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The FOCUS on Young Adults program promotes the well-being and reproductive health of young people. FOCUS is a program of Pathfinder International in partnership with The Futures Group International and Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. FOCUS is funded by USAID, Cooperative Agreement # CCP-A-00-96-90002-00. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

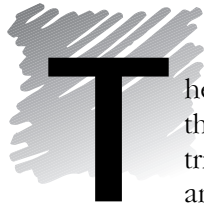
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The authors are indebted to the many people who contributed to the development and review of this Guide.

We wish to acknowledge the dedicated efforts made by several graduate research assistants working with FOCUS on Young Adults at the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, Department of International Health and Development. Stephanie Mullen began the detailed project of compiling program indicators. Gwendolyn Morgan prepared the appendices listing recommended references and Internet Web sites, and provided formulae for the Indicator Tables. Emily Zielinski assisted with the Indicator Tables and appendices.

Our FOCUS colleagues, Sharon Epstein, Lindsay Stewart, Barbara Seligman and Lisa Weiss, read early versions of this Guide and offered helpful suggestions. Their comments reminded us to keep in the forefront of our efforts the many program staff we hope will find this volume useful.

The authors would like to express their appreciation to FOCUS staff member Christine Stevens for her critical review and recommendations for reorganizing several chapters of the Guide. We would also like to recognize Laura Sedlock, whose accomplished editing did much to clarify concepts and blend the voices of the authors.

Ideas and concepts that shaped the development of this Guide were discussed at a FOCUS Research and Evaluation working group meeting in April 1998. Those who participated in the discussion included Lianne Brown (Tulane University), Nicola Bull (UNICEF), James Chui (UNFPA), Richard Colombia (Pathfinder International), Bruce Dick (UNICEF), Jane Ferguson (World Health Organization), Alix Grubel (John Snow International), Paula

Hollerbach (Academy for Educational Development), Marge Horn (USAID), Merita Irby (International Youth Foundation), Lily Kak (CEDPA), Rebecka Lundgren (Georgetown Institute for Reproductive Health), Matilde Maddaleno (Pan American Health Organization), Leo Morris (Centers for Disease Control), Lisa Mueller (John Snow International), Ian Tweedie (Johns Hopkins University Center for Communications Programs), Stephanie Mullen (Tulane University), Phyllis Scattergood (Education Development Center, Inc.), Annetta Seecharan (International Youth Foundation), Linda Sussman (USAID), Katherine Weaver (Pan American Health Organization), Ellen Weiss (Population Council/Horizons) and Anne Wilson (PATH).

Those who provided critical comments and feedback during the field review of this Guide include Jane Bertrand (Tulane University), Carlos Brambila (Population Council, Mexico), Eunyong Chung (USAID), Charlotte Colvin (The Futures Group International), Shanti Conly (USAID), Barbara deZalduondo (USAID), Joyce Djaelani (PATH Indonesia), Maricela Dura (Fundación Mexicana para la Planeación Familiar), Natalia Espinoza (CEMOPLAF Ecuador), Julie Forder (CARE Cambodia), Phyllis Gestrin (USAID), Evam Kofi Glover (Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana), Y.P. Gupta (CARE India), Lisa Howard-Grabman (Save the Children), Douglas Kirby (ETR Associates), Rekha Masilamani (Pathfinder International, India), Ruth Maria Medina (Population Council, Honduras), Dominique Meekers (Population Services International), Irene Moyo (JSI/SEATS), Nancy Murray (FOCUS on Young Adults), Mary Myaya (CARE Lesotho), Sonia Odria (Pathfinder International, Peru), Oladimeji Oladepo (Department of Preventive and Social Medicine, Nigeria), Anne Palmer (PATH

Philippines), Susan Pick de Weiss (Instituto Mexicano de Investigación de Familia y Población), Gabriela Rivera (Pathfinder International, Mexico), William Sambisa (PACT Zimbabwe), Jessie Schutt-Aine (International Planned Parenthood Federation), Alfonso Suarez (Fundación Mexicana para la Planeación Familiar), Oswaldo Tanako (Pan American Health Organization), John Townsend (Population Council/Frontiers), Laelani L.M. Utama (Pathfinder International, Indonesia), Pilar Vigal (CEBRE, Chile), Amy Weissman (Save the Children), Anne Wilson (PATH) and Kate Winskell (Global Dialogues).

Presentations and participant discussion at the YARH Measurement Meeting sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Division of Reproductive Health and FOCUS on Young Adults in September 1999 helped shape the discussion of data collection. In particular, presentations by Gary Lewis (Johns Hopkins University Center for Communications Programs), Paul Stupp (CDC Division of Reproductive Health) and Cynthia Waszak (Family Health International) were helpful in finalizing this Guide.

Health and Human Development Programs staff of the Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC), managed the review process under the able direction of Phyllis Scattergood and Carmen Aldinger.

EDC's Editing and Design Services, led by Jennifer Roscoe, was responsible for the production of this Guide, including design and coordination by Cathy Lee and revisions and copyediting by the editorial staff. Their creative input is very much appreciated.



## Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARH	adolescent reproductive health
BCC	behavior change communication
CEA	census enumeration area
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
FLE	family life education
IEC	information, education and communication
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MIS	management information system
MOS	measure of size
NGO	nongovernmental organization
PPS	probability-proportional-to-size
RH	reproductive health
RTI	reproductive tract infection
STD	sexually transmitted disease
STI	sexually transmitted infection
USAID	United States Agency for International Development



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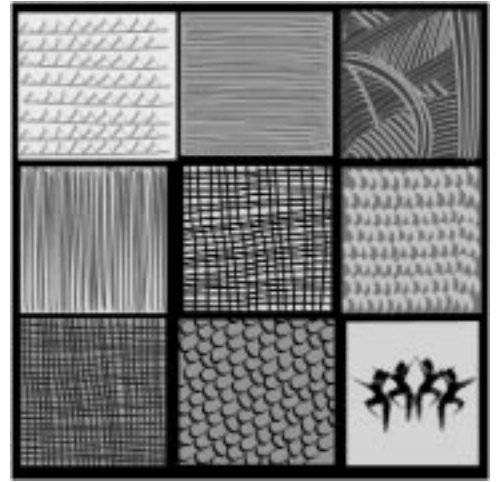
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# INTRODUCTION



**A**round the world, young people are growing up in an environment of dynamic change. For some, this complexity provides opportunity and choice; for others, it means a struggle for survival. Many young people have stamina and energy, curiosity, a sense of adventure and invulnerability. They are resourceful and resilient even under the most difficult conditions.

The period of adolescence is, however, a life phase in which young people are particularly vulnerable to health risks, especially those related to sexuality and reproduction: HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, too-early marriage and childbearing, sexually transmitted infections and poor nutrition.

How adolescence is experienced and affects reproductive health has largely to do with the timing and sequence of sexual initiation, marriage and childbirth; the degree to which the timing and sequence of these events are socially sanctioned or forbidden; and the number and availability of options regarding education, job training and employment. There is a great deal of variation worldwide, and even within countries, in the social and cultural values that shape these events. Close relationships between youth and their parents and extended family are particularly important in influencing youth development. Access to preventive and curative services, including contraception and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, are also important in ensuring the reproductive health of youth.

Youth development programs designed to help young people reduce their reproductive health risks reflect that variation. Many of these programs regard young people as a

critical resource for the future, and use creative strategies to tackle their complex problems. But many programs face limited funding, community resistance, non-supportive laws and policies or lack of experience. By knowing more about what works in youth programs and services, we can build strong programs that accomplish what they intend.

Reproductive health refers to the health and well-being of women and men in terms of sexuality, pregnancy, birth and their related conditions, diseases and illnesses. Many programs reaching youth are trying to achieve reproductive health goals that relate to critical sexual and reproductive health outcomes, such as:

- fertility: the number of pregnancies a woman has in her lifetime
- abortion: as it relates to fertility and to health complications for women who have unsafe or clandestine abortions

- illness: caused by sexually transmitted infections, reproductive tract infections, HIV and/or nutritional status
- mortality: primarily related to pregnancy and childbearing, including infant and maternal mortality, and also including AIDS-related deaths
- nutritional status: which impacts both women's health and that of their infants



## Note

### What do we mean by “youth”?

Programs reaching young people use different terminology to refer to youth. “Adolescents” is often used to refer to young people ages 10–19, “young adults” generally refers to those ages 15–24 and “youth” may refer to all young people ages 10–24. This guide encompasses each term and uses the phrase “adolescent reproductive health” (ARH) to cover each type of program.

---

## Why Monitor and Evaluate Youth Programs?

### Monitoring and evaluation shows if and how youth programs are working.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) can tell us if and how program activities are working. Program managers and donors want to be able to demonstrate results, understand how their programs are working and assess how the programs interact with other events and forces in their communities.

### M&E can be used to strengthen programs.

Program managers and staff can assess the quality of activities and/or services and the extent to which the program is reaching its intended audience. With adequate data, you can compare sites, set priorities for strategic planning, assess training and supervisory needs and obtain feedback from the target

audience or program participants. You can prioritize resource allocation, improve information for fund-raising, provide information to educate and motivate staff, provide information for advocacy and argue for the effectiveness of your program approach.

### M&E results can help institutionalize programs.

M&E results can help stakeholders and the community understand what the program is doing, how well it is meeting its objectives and whether there are critical needs inhibiting your progress. M&E results can be used to educate your board of directors, current and prospective funding agencies, local government officials and key community members—such as local leaders, youth and parents—who can help ensure social, financial and political support for youth programs. Sharing results can help your program establish or strengthen the network of individuals and organizations with similar goals of working with young people. It can also give public recognition and thanks to stakeholders and volunteers who have worked to make the program a success, and may attract new volunteers.

### M&E shapes the decisions of funding agencies and policymakers.

Funding agencies and policymakers are interested in monitoring and evaluation results for a variety of reasons. They need to make strategic choices about how to spend resources and to prove that the expenditure produces quality results. M&E results also help with decisions about identifying and supporting the replication or expansion of particular program strategies. M&E findings often reveal unmet needs or barriers to program success and can be used to lobby for policy or legislative changes. M&E results can raise awareness of youth programs among the general public and help build positive perceptions about young people and youth programs.

## M&E results contribute to the global understanding of “what works.”

The dissemination of M&E results—both those that show how your program is working and those that find that some strategies are not having the intended impact—contributes to our global understanding of what works and what doesn't in improving young people's reproductive health. This advances the field by building a body of lessons learned and best practices that can strengthen ARH programs around the world.

## M&E mobilizes communities to support young people.

Monitoring and evaluation results enable communities and youth to inform local leaders about youth needs and to advocate for funding. Results point to ways in which we can develop new and better systems of support for young people and identify additional community resources. They can increase the community's understanding of the potential and actual benefits of the program and its accomplishments, develop a sense of ownership through participation, improve coordination and mobilize support for youth and the array of programs that foster their health and development.

## Who Should Use This Guide?

This Guide is designed for program managers who monitor and evaluate adolescent reproductive health programs. Some examples of the people who might find this guide useful include the following:

- ▶ **Community-level program managers:** A manager of a community youth center's peer education program can use this Guide to set up a system to monitor implementation of program activities.
- ▶ **District-level program directors:** A director of a school-based family life education (FLE) program can use this



## Note

### Seeking outside help

Monitoring and evaluation is an essential aspect of youth reproductive health program development. However, many programs do not have the expertise to carry out some aspects of program evaluation, especially when evaluating large, complex programs. After reading this Guide, you may choose to seek technical assistance from local universities and research institutes who have the expertise to help you design and conduct an effective and efficient evaluation.

Guide to track progress in the program's implementation.

- ▶ **Municipal-level health managers:** A manager of a clinic's pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection (STI) reduction program can use this Guide to set up an evaluation that will track changes in the incidence of pregnancy and STIs among youth in the entire municipality.
- ▶ **State- or provincial-level health officials and managers of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs):** An official at the state level in a health system can use this Guide to compile data across districts, municipalities or other geographic areas or population groups to develop a picture of the current status of youth health, as well as changes over time.
- ▶ **Managers or technical staff of private voluntary or donor agencies:** A manager of a private voluntary agency can use this Guide to advise other organizations on how to improve their programs and how to set up a monitoring and evaluation system for youth programs.

## Origins of This Guide

This Guide draws on the expertise and experience of professionals in a variety of disciplines.

The family planning field has laid an important foundation for considering how to develop service delivery systems for adults and how to measure inputs, quality, access and program results. This Guide draws heavily on the contributions of USAID's The EVALUATION Project, which approaches evaluation with a focus on a program's systems and delivery and an extensive menu of reproductive health outcome indicators.

influences beyond individual knowledge, attitudes and practices, such as building healthy relationships and supportive communities and fostering skills development.

The FOCUS on Young Adults program's own contributions in reviewing youth program experiences in developing country settings are incorporated in this Guide. Those reviews have contributed to our presentation of "key elements" of program design and possible criteria for establishing measures of program quality and access.

## What Are Monitoring and Evaluation?

**Monitoring and process evaluation measure how a program is working.**

*Monitoring* is the routine tracking of a program's activities by measuring on a regular, ongoing basis whether planned activities are being carried out. Results reveal whether program activities are being implemented according to plan, and assess the extent to which a program's services are being used.

*Process evaluation* should be done along with monitoring. Process evaluations collect information that measures how well program activities are performed. This information is usually collected on a routine basis, such as through staff reports, but it may also be collected periodically in a larger-scale process evaluation effort that may include use of focus groups or other qualitative methods. Process evaluation is used to measure the quality of program implementation and to assess coverage; it may also measure the extent to which a program's services are being used by the intended target population.

***M&E results can help stakeholders and the community understand what the program is doing, how well it is meeting its objectives, and whether there are critical needs inhibiting your progress.***

This Guide also draws lessons from the field of HIV/AIDS prevention, with its open view of sexuality and sexual behavior and its understanding of the value of social and behavioral change theory in designing effective programs for young people.

The youth development field, which has identified a range of developmental needs and assets, urges us to measure social

### Outcome and impact evaluation measure a program's result and effects.

Outcome and impact evaluation measure the extent to which program outcomes are achieved, and assess the impact of the program in the target population by measuring changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, skills, community norms, utilization of health services and/or health status. *Outcome evaluation* determines whether outcomes that the program is trying to influence are changing in the target population. *Impact evaluation* determines how much of the observed change in outcomes is due to the program's efforts.<sup>1</sup>

This Guide has two parts, which are described below.

#### **PART I: THE HOW-TO'S OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

##### **Chapter 1: Concerns About Monitoring and Evaluating ARH Programs**

- Reviews challenges to and offers tips on measuring the effectiveness of youth programs
- Discusses how to be sure that your results are attributable to the program effort
- Previews ways this Guide can provide information and offer support

##### **Chapter 2: A Framework for ARH Program Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Considers the multiple factors that shape adolescence
- Introduces three major strategies used to improve youth reproductive health

- Discusses the Logic Model, an approach to designing an effective strategy

***This Guide is designed for program managers who monitor and evaluate adolescent reproductive health programs.***

##### **Chapter 3: Developing an ARH Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**

- Defines program goals, outcomes and objectives
- Helps you define the scope of your monitoring and evaluation effort
- Offers guidance on how to plan and conduct a monitoring and evaluation effort, using the rest of this Guide

#### **What Can You Determine Using Monitoring and Evaluation?**

<b>Monitoring &amp; Process Evaluation</b>	<b>Outcome &amp; Impact Evaluation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Whether program is being implemented according to plan</li> <li>➤ Quality of program</li> <li>➤ Coverage of program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Changes in outcomes, such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- changes in behavior</li> <li>- changes in knowledge and attitudes</li> <li>- changes in interactions with parents</li> <li>- changes in community norms</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Whether outcomes are due to program efforts or other factors</li> </ul>

##### **Chapter 4: Indicators**

- Defines and explains indicators
- Provides examples of how to select and modify indicators to match your program objectives and activities

<sup>1</sup> Outcome evaluations often measure short-term changes, such as changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. Impact evaluations are often conducted over a longer period and are able to identify changes in sexual and reproductive health outcomes in the target population, such as rates of STIs.

### **Chapter 5: Evaluation Designs to Assess Program Impact**

- Offers guidance on and considerations around the need for impact evaluation
- Reviews study designs you can use to carry out an impact evaluation
- Outlines the technical requirements and resources needed for each type of evaluation
- Presents options for initiating evaluations after a program is underway

***The information you collect through monitoring and process evaluation will also help you build the case that the changes were a result of your program, even if an impact evaluation is not feasible.***

### **Chapter 6: Sampling**

- Describes types of sampling methods and ways to determine which one is appropriate for your program
- Focuses on one commonly used sampling method: cluster sampling
- Reviews how to determine and calculate the sample size you need for your program

### **Chapter 7: The M&E Workplan and Data Collection**

- Reviews data collection steps
- Addresses ethical concerns
- Presents options for data collection methods
- Discusses tasks involved in developing an M&E workplan

### **Chapter 8: Analyzing M&E Data**

- Details how to process both quantitative and qualitative data
- Reviews mechanics of data analysis
- Discusses how to analyze and interpret data to draw conclusions about program design, functioning, outcomes and impact

### **Chapter 9: Using and Disseminating M&E Results**

- Reviews reasons to use and disseminate M&E results
- Describes how to use M&E results to improve your program's interventions
- Offers tips on how to disseminate results to priority target audiences
- Presents different formats for dissemination of results

### **Chapter 10: Tables of ARH Indicators**

- Presents four tables of ARH indicators
- Features indicators for each phase of a program (program design, program systems development and functioning, program implementation and program intervention outcomes)
- Describes how to use the Indicator Tables

**Glossary**

**Bibliography**

**Appendices**

- Sampling schemes for core data collection strategies
- Calculating sample size requirements
- Reference shelf of useful books
- Relevant Internet sites

**PART II:**

**INSTRUMENTS AND QUESTIONNAIRES**

- Offers guidance on adapting instruments for your M&E effort
- Provides sample data instruments
- Gives tips for collecting data through a variety of methods



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