

## THE NATIONAL POLICY ON THE HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN NIGERIA (2007)

*Summary of Sections that Most Apply to Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health:*

### **POLICY OVERVIEW**

Young people constitute about a third of Nigeria's population, and face considerable health and development challenges, which include high rates of unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, substance abuse, nutritional problems, and violence. The National Policy on the Health and Development of Adolescent and Young People in Nigeria, approved in 2007, seeks to promote the optimal health and development of young people between the ages of 10 and 24 in Nigeria. The key areas of intervention of this policy are sexual and reproductive health and rights, nutrition, accidents and violence, mental health, substance abuse, education, career and employment, spirituality, social adjustment and parental responsibilities.

### **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The policy's key objectives include to:

- Encourage advocacy efforts for increased political will and resource allocation for young people's health and development programs and interventions. Enhance the technical capacity, interventions, collaboration and coordination for the promotion of the health and development of young people
- Increase the access of young people to quality information, education, and youth friendly services
- Promote the meaningful participation of young people, families, communities, and institutions on youth issues

### **POLICY TARGETS**

The following targets were intended to be achieved by 2015:

- Increase the proportion of young people who have access to accurate and comprehensive reproductive health information and services by 50%
- Increase access of all young people to comprehensive youth-friendly health services by 50%
- Reduce the rate of marriage among young people under 18 years by 50%
- Reduce incidence of unwanted pregnancies among young females by 50%

- Reduce the maternal mortality ratio among young females by 75%
- Integrate family life and HIV/AIDS education into the curricula of all primary and secondary schools
- Achieve universal access of young people to basic education through junior secondary school
- Eliminate gender disparity in educational attainment among young people
- Eliminate female genital cutting/mutilation
- Reduce the proportion of young people with nutritional problems by 75%
- Reduce the incidence of substance abuse among young people by 75%
- Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS among young people

### **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The implementation of youth policy interventions is meant to occur at the three levels of government in accordance with the constitutional provision of health, and in line with the delegated responsibilities to each level of government in the National Health Act (2014). Due emphasis should be paid to interventions at the grassroots, targeting individuals, families, and communities with faith-based organizations and other civil society organizations, as well as to the private sector as an active partner.

While responsibility for the implementation of the policy is primarily that of the Nigerian government and peoples, the support and partnership of the donor community and other international development partners is also critical to achieving the objectives of the policy. Young people are also meant to actively and meaningfully participate in all aspects of policy implementation, including planning, resource mobilization, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of relevant programmes.

The policy defines the following key roles for institutions charged with implementation:

### **Role of the Health Sector**

- Develop programs and services for adolescents and other young people, coordinate inter-sectoral health activities, and monitor and evaluate the policy implementation process. The Federal Ministry of Health provides overall strategic support for the implementation of this policy while the State Ministries of Health (SMOH) provides leadership for the implementation of this policy.
- Integrate adolescent and youth-friendly services into primary health care, primary schools, social welfare and all other relevant activities within the purview of Local Government Area authorities.

### **Role of Other Sectors**

- The Ministry of Education should intensify efforts to achieve universal basic education and eliminate illiteracy, expand integration of Family Life and HIV/AIDS Education (FLHE), and scale-up of teacher training.
- The Ministry of Women's Affairs will promote awareness of young people's health and development issues among families, with a focus on women, at various levels.
- The Ministry of Youth Development shall establish and manage youth centers with relevant adolescent/youth-friendly services such as counselling to meet the needs of in and out of school adolescents and other young people.
- The Legislature should support implementation of the policy and advocates for the health and development of young people.
- The sectoral plans in government agencies should reflect relevant aspects of the policy as it relates to their mandates. Non-government sectors are also required to reflect relevant aspects of the policy in their programmes and plans.

### **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING**

Monitoring and evaluation constitute a major element of the policy. Government agencies are meant to monitor activities in the sector within their mandate, and according to the appropriate tier of government as indicated in the National Health Act and other policy guidelines. Government agencies and other partners are expected to submit quarterly reports to the Adolescent Representative Health Desk of the Gender Adolescent, School Health and Elderly Division under the Department of Family Health, Federal Ministry of Health, which serves as the secretariat of the National Adolescent Health and Development Working Group (NAHDWG).

**FOR A COPY OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON THE HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN NIGERIA, PLEASE VISIT:**

**Federal Ministry of Health Head Quarters Office, Abuja, Nigeria  
New Federal Secretariat Complex, Phase III,  
Ahmadu Bello Way, Central Business District,  
P.M.B 083 Garki, Abuja, Nigeria**

### **ABOUT CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE:**

Champions for Change (C4C) invests in visionary local leaders and organizations to sustainably improve health outcomes for women, children and youth in Sub-Saharan Africa. C4C achieves large-scale impacts through advocacy, leadership development, organizational strengthening, and grant making. In Nigeria, C4C's national network is advocating for improved reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent Health (RMNCAH). In Kenya, C4C works to prevent and combat Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) among young people through locally-led advocacy.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:**

**[www.championingchange.org](http://www.championingchange.org)**