

CHAPTER III

Understanding the Implications of Teenage Pregnancy

Expected Outputs

Participants will become aware of the impact that teenage pregnancy can have on their lives.

Participants will become aware of the gender dimension of teenage pregnancy.

I Am Having A Baby

Objectives To know the physical, psychological, social and economic implications of teenage pregnancy.
To know why teenage pregnancy occurs and how it can be avoided.

Materials Blackboard and chalk/whiteboard and markers.

Time 25 minutes.

Process Ask the participants to divide into 2 groups.

Ask group one to think about the physical and psychological implications of teenage pregnancy, and prepare to act it out in a 10- minute role-play.

Ask group 2 to think about the socio-economic implications of teenage pregnancy for their role-play.

Give both groups 20 minutes to prepare for their respective role-plays. Bring the groups back and present the role-plays.

Note the highlights or emerging concerns in both the role-plays. After both groups have presented, encourage them to clarify their doubts and questions.

You may use the following questions to facilitate a discussion:

- *What do you think about this exercise?*
- *How can one plan for pregnancy?*
- *In your peer group, how do you view pregnancy? Do you discuss its possibility and the possible consequences?*
- *In your opinion, would a pregnancy affect a man the same way as a woman? What would be different? What would be similar?*
- *Do women get the blame for becoming pregnant? Why?*
- *How would you help a friend who became pregnant because of negligence?*

Notes for the Facilitator

For younger mothers, there can be serious physical consequences since their sex organs are not mature, and this can cause difficulty during labor and delivery. There may be complications during pregnancy and childbirth that can result in death.

Babies born to a teenage mother have lower birth weights than normal deliveries.

Sometimes young girls are frightened of the consequences and attempt unsafe abortions (using coat hangers or sticks of wood). This can damage their uterus, resulting in problems with future pregnancies. In many countries, abortion is still illegal. Research the legality of this issue.

If a teenager is unmarried, they may experience mental anguish and trauma. Society and her family may look down upon her or pressure her to have an abortion. Her friends may ostracize and ridicule her. She may have to discontinue her education. Parents may try to force her to marry the father of the expected child, or someone else, to avoid shame and ridicule. The marriage may lead to problems, as both the girl and the boy are ill prepared for the responsibilities of parenthood. They may not be able to get a job or earn a living and may not be able to care for the child.

The consequences of teenage pregnancy are extreme for a girl. The best way of avoiding teenage pregnancy is to abstain from sexual intercourse. If two people do decide to have sex, they should discuss the means of birth control and protection. They might use a condom, the pill, or a female condom.

For facilitation of this exercise, gather information about the societal norms and practices on pregnancy. Also, get practical information on clinics and health centres where a young woman and man can seek guidance and help.

You can introduce the subject of contraceptives at this stage, but be aware of the cultural and religious dimensions of the subject. Subsequent exercises in this module will enable you to give information on contraceptive methods. Some of the exercises in Module III will show the participants the proper to use a condom using a dildo or a banana.