

CHAPTER VII: . Lessons learned

The key lessons learned from implementing ARH programmes come from the literature survey and key informant interviews.

On programme implementation

- ARH can be integrated in the curriculum, used as research and debate topics and as part of other requirements.
- Adolescent sexuality and RH concepts should be integrated into the curricula of vocational and technical institutions to reach a wider youth audience.
- Educators' and providers' facilitating skills should be improved to work with adolescents.
- ARH programmes should focus not just on the physical health of the youth, but also on their psycho-social health.
- Adolescents should be informed of the existence of ARH services and where these can be accessed.
- The community and local officials should be educated about the importance of ARH so that they will be more receptive and supportive to the

programmes initiated by government agencies and NGOs.

- Parents also need to be involved in ARH. They are the closest to adolescents and can provide guidance as needed. They must therefore be given knowledge and provided with communication skills.
- In every activity concerning adolescents, it will be helpful to also get feedback from parents.
- Budget limitations must not be seen as an ultimate constraint in implementing activities and programmes on ARH. There are innovative and creative projects that are also cost-effective.
- Government programmes need official endorsement for smooth implementation.
- More innovative information strategies should be used. For example, DKT Philippines has successfully penetrated the MTV generation through its ads and infomercials, which appeal to youth. They were able to educate without alienating the youth by using hip

language, music and images. DKT's infomercials on Frenzy Condoms appear on youth channels such as MTV and appear in youth magazines.

On strategies/ approaches to delivery of services

- Peer education is an effective strategy to reach adolescents. Adolescents open up more to their peers than to adults or parents.

- In counseling, adolescents do not open up at once. Leeway must be given because they usually open up weeks after the first contact for help.

- It is common for the youth to be uncomfortable the first time they hear about ARH, but they eventually open up to serious discussions.

- Some Christian churches give limited training to youth and provide sexuality

education. It may be advantageous to focus on working with the Catholic Church as well as other religious groups.

- It is possible to work with Catholic schools in terms of ARH as long as both sides are culturally sensitive. For example, instead of pushing for the campaign slogan "A-abstinence, B-Be Faithful and C-Condom" in Catholic schools, the "C" was labeled "live life like Christ" instead of "condom".

- If a service provider is effective, then teenage clients pass knowledge on to their friends, families and other teenagers and are actually practicing what they have learned.

- It is easier to mobilize the youth through IEC promotion, advocacy and cultural activities. These are appropriate avenues because they give them something to do and a way to ask questions.

