Youth Participation in Building Health
From Global Perspective to Local Action in Belize
Dr Susan Kasedde
UNICEF, Belize
• Child Advisory Body Members – Belize
• CRC Ambassadors, Belize
• Informed Teen Reporters, Belize
• Youth Advisory Movement, Belize
• Youth Advisory Group, Belize
• National Committee for Families and Children, Belize
• Statistical Institute of Belize
• Ministry of Health
• Ministry of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development
• Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports & Culture
• Department of Youth Services
• UNICEF, UNFPA, PAHO
• National Adolescent Health Technical Working Group
Global Vision for Health: Survive, Thrive, Transform

Today we have both the KNOWLEDGE and the OPPORTUNITY:

1. TO END PREVENTABLE DEATHS among all women, children and adolescents,
2. TO GREATLY IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING and
3. TO BRING ABOUT THE TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE needed to shape a more prosperous and sustainable future.
1 in 4 secondary school age children in Belize are out of school. 30% in rural areas 15% in urban areas (MICS, 2015).

Adolescents in the Caribbean have highest rates of unmet need for contraception, highest rates of attempted suicides

42% of world’s homicides occur in the LAC region each year. 220 children and adolescent deaths a day to domestic violence. (UNICEF 2018)

Inappropriate marketing, weak regulation of foods and sugary drinks. 1 in 3 children aged 5-19 years in LAC are overweight leading to early onset of diabetes, depression. (UNICEF SOWC, 2019)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Reductions in neonatal mortality slower than reductions in U5 mortality</th>
<th>GBV and inequality persist and in many countries gains have been lost</th>
<th>Significant increase in humanitarian crises including mass migration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Better data available on key threats to child and adolescent health</td>
<td>Recognition of lifelong &amp; transformative impact of investment in ECD</td>
<td>Recognition of crucial dividends from investment across the lifecourse</td>
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<td>Action</td>
<td>Access to health care critical for preventing premature deaths</td>
<td>Multisectoral action essential for impact</td>
<td>Mutual accountability and partnership essential</td>
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Specific Lessons on Adolescent Health

Challenges

- No standard for school health programmes
- Inadequate attention to gender norms in young adolescents (10 – 14)
- Quality of care in humanitarian settings
- Adolescent Mental Health

Strategic Priorities

- Establish evidence-informed strategies (AAHA)
- Provide comprehensive SRHR and counseling
- Prevent, treat and measure impact of anaemia in girls
- Strengthen adolescent HIV prevention and treatment programmes
- Menstrual hygiene management
- End child marriage and early unions
What are young people doing?
A LOT
DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT, MOBILIZATION & SOCIAL CHANGE

PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION & DISSEMINATION

PARTICIPATION THROUGH ARTS, THEATRE, INNOVATION AND TALENT TO ADDRESS SOCIAL NORMS AND CHALLENGES

ORGANIZED ADVOCACY & REPRESENTATION

PARTNERING WITH 6,364,698 U-REPORTERS IN 61 COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE

4,532 U-REPORTERS +87.3% THIS YEAR

59.7% AVG RESPONSE RATE

45% 1,834

55% 2,389

0-14 15-19 20-24 25-30 31-34 35+

65%
3 Things Should Not Be Without

Monitoring Air Quality

Children used a “laser egg” to monitor the air in their homes once in the morning and in the evening generating weeks of data.
What difference has youth participation made in Belize? PROGRAMME DESIGN

What Do You Think Should Be Prioritized to Improve the National Birth Registration System in Belize
What difference has youth participation made in Belize? CAPACITY
What difference has youth participation made in Belize? **ACCOUNTABILITY**
In summary: Youth Participation – a catalyst for impact

“If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupery


UNICEF, A Familiar Face: Violence in the Lives of Children and Adolescents