

Focus Group Discussion Guide for Adolescents/Youth¹

Date _____ Facilitator _____ Translator _____

Sex _____ Number of participants _____ Age range _____

[Click here](#) to review the protocol for Focus Group Discussions.

INTRODUCTION: I am interested in learning about some of the health needs of adolescents/youth living in your community. I would like to ask your permission to ask you questions about health care and other issues related to health care. You are not required to answer any questions. However, your answers will be confidential. The information will help us to learn more about the health and well being of young people in the community and to advocate for improved services and assistance. I expect our conversation to last about one and a-half to two hours.

I want to ask you a question about your general well being

Do you have everything you need for basic survival (food, water, shelter, and clothing, medical care)?

What are the main problems young people are facing in your community today?

What are the biggest fears among young people in your community today?

Do you feel safe in your community? If not, why not?

I want to ask some questions about school, work and activities

Do all of you attend school?

Do girls and boys attend school in equal numbers? If not, how is attendance different and why is it different?

¹ The World Health Organization defines adolescents as individuals between 10 and 19 years of age. The broader term "youth" encompasses the 15- to 24-year-old age group.

Do you know girls/boys who do not attend school? What are some of the reasons why girls/boys would not go to school or would stop going?

Do you work or know young people who work? What kinds of work do they do?

What activities are available to boys/girls? What are the kinds of things that you do in your free time? Are you a member of a local club or group?

Now, I want to ask some questions about relationships and marriage

Is it easy or hard for adolescents/youth to find romantic relationships in your community? How and why? Has this changed for people who have been displaced from their homes?

What age do people usually marry? Has this changed for people who have been displaced from their homes?

Is there a traditional marriage ceremony? What is it? Has this changed since people have been displaced?

Now, I have some questions about health and sexuality

What particular health concerns do girls/boys have? Has this changed for girls/boys who have been displaced from their homes?

If you had a health problem, what would you do first? Would you have a doctor to go to? Who else would you see?

Are there any centers that are just for adolescents/youth? Have you ever visited a center that is specifically targeted for youth? If yes, what attracts you to the center?

What if the problem concerned your sexual or reproductive health? What would you do? Would you go to see someone? Who would it be? Would there be people you could talk to about it? Who?

How did you learn about sex? Do you learn about reproductive health issues in school? If so, what kind of things do you learn? Do you learn things outside of school? Where? Are you interested in learning more?

Do girls/boys usually wait until after marriage to have sex? Has this changed for girls/boys who have been displaced from their homes?

Are adolescents/young people in your community having sex? If so, at what age do people start having sex? Has this changed for girls/boys who have been displaced from their homes? How are these relationships viewed by the family or the community as a whole?

Are there boys who have sex with boys?

Are condoms available to young people who are having sex? If so, from where? Are young people using them? Do girls use them? Do boys use them? If not, why not?

If a girl/boy is having sex and does not want the girl to become pregnant what does She/he do?

Can a girl get pregnant the first time she has sex? Can a girl get pregnant if she has sex only once?

What are the ways one can avoid getting pregnant? What are the modern ways? Are there traditional ways? Where would you go to get contraceptives? Anyplace else? Do

you have to buy them? Is it difficult or easy to get contraceptives? Why? Do you think that most of your friends are protecting themselves/their partners from becoming pregnant?

Sometimes girls are pregnant but they don't want to be. What do girls do when they are pregnant but do not want to be? Modern ways? Traditional ways?

Now I want to talk about STIs and HIV/AIDS

Have you heard of AIDS? Do you believe it exists?

Tell me all of the ways in which you believe a person can get AIDS?

Are girls/boys worried about getting AIDS? Do you think your friends are at risk of getting the AIDS virus?

Do you know of anyone with AIDS? Do you know anyone who died of AIDS?

What can be done to prevent AIDS?

Do you know of any infections one can get through sexual intercourse? What kinds?
(HIV/AIDS, Gonorrhea, Syphilis, Chancroid, Chlamydia, Genital warts, herpes, Hepatitis B, Vaginitis, Other?)

Is there anything a girl/boy can do to avoid getting STIs? What?

Can you tell by looking that another person has a STI?

What do girls/boys do if they think they have an STI? Do they see a health worker?

Is there a drug problem in your community? Which drugs? Intravenous? Alcohol abuse - Other? What can do young people do if they have a problem? Are there community resources for them?

I would also like to ask some questions about gender based violence

Do you know of girls/boys who have sex for money, protection or food?

With whom do they have sex? What do you know and think about this kind of situation?

Has this changed for girls/boys who have been displaced from their homes?

Do you think that any of your friends have frequented a commercial sex worker? If yes, a few, many, most all, of your friends?

Do you know of girls/boys who were forced to have sex with others (soldiers, teachers, others in position of authority)? Has this changed for girls/boys who have been displaced from their homes?

What do you think rape is?

If a girl/boy was raped here, who would she/he tell; who would she/he go to for help?

Do you know about husbands who are violent with their wives (e.g., beat or cut them)? Has this increased or decreased since displacement? Do girls/women look for help when this happens to them? If not, why not? Where and or who will they go to for help?

What services are available if a girl/woman has been beaten?

One last question....

Are there health services that you would like to have that are not available to you?

What are they? Which are the most important?