



Adolescent Research Day

“Nutrition & Reproductive Health from a Life-Cycle Perspective – Closing the Adolescent Data Gap to Achieve Sustainable Development”

23rd October 2017 at Crowne Plaza, Vientiane, Lao PDR

Background

In the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) there are specific indicators pertaining to targets specific or related to adolescents, boys and girls aged 10-19 years. Adolescent-specific targets include decreasing early marriage and early pregnancy, and broader issues relevant for adolescents include those of health and wellbeing, nutrition and food security, gender equality and partnerships. The complexity of these targets calls for multi-sectoral interventions and collaborations, however it also calls for evidence, best practices and innovation.

This year's regional Adolescent Research Day will be the second of its kind, hosted by the National Institute of Public Health (NIOPH) as a pre-conference to the 11th National Health Research Forum. The conference theme is “Health Research Capacity Strengthening toward Sustainable Development” and the specific adolescent research day theme is “Nutrition and Reproductive Health from a Life-Cycle Perspective – Closing the Adolescent Data Gap to Achieve Sustainable Development”.

Why do we need a specific day on adolescent research? Researchers, policy-makers and development partners at national and global level have identified a data gap with regard to adolescents and therefore the need for a specific day dedicated to capacity strengthening, problem definition and establishing collaborations across borders and institutions.

Why is this day hosted in Lao PDR? With the approaching LDC graduation, entering in the AEC, Lao PDR has identified the need to target young people, especially girls. This is also reflected in, a number of new policy documents such as the reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (RMNCH) strategy, the 8th National socio-economic development plan (NSED), the National Population and Development Policy (NPDP) and the Youth Policy that is currently being drafted. Evidence is more important than ever, sharing experiences, building partnerships and creating a venue for scientific discussions is timely and relevant.

The Focus on Nutrition and Reproduction from a Life-Cycle Perspective

When we think about nutrition we often think about young children and mothers, this notion is also reflected in the availability of data, programming and policy. By approaching nutrition from a life-cycle perspective, considering the increased risks and adverse nutritional outcomes of children born to mothers who start childbearing early or are at high risk of frequent childbearing, nutrition can be addressed at its root cause. Nevertheless, current research often ignore that many mothers are adolescent girls, that mothers are girls with limited or no access to family planning because they are adolescents, and subsequently do not consider their specific needs. Moreover, research and health interventions rarely take the increased costs and risks of adolescent pregnancy, adolescent malnutrition and anemia into account but looks at nutrition from a mother and child health perspective. Therefore, to break the viscous cycle of malnutrition, the linkages between nutrition and reproductive health is crucial and evidence is imperative, especially where we do not see evidence today, particularly adolescents.

Addressing the Adolescent Data Gap

Last years Adolescent Research Day focused on Sexual and Reproductive Health and invited speakers and researchers from Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar, Viet Nam, Australia, India etc. This years' conference will link back to last years' discussions, as well as take stock of new initiatives to close the data gap on adolescent nutrition as well as sexual and reproductive health. We will revisit the adolescent research agenda, disseminated on the SDG4A website last year that was drafted based on the discussions in the conference and how this has influenced the national research agenda of Lao PDR. Throughout the course of the day there will be dissemination of new research findings, discussions on means of implementing the research agenda and to identify remaining gaps and how to address these. In addition to researchers, the day will host potential donors and facilitate a panel discussion on how to mobilize resources for research on adolescents across countries and institutions.

Objectives of the Adolescent Research Day

This conference aims to create an academic platform in this region, taking in the perspectives of different countries and stakeholders, where evidence can be shared and research needs identified and addressed. By forming such a platform, identifying persisting data-gaps and understanding the donor environment, we aim to continue building regional networks, mobilize resources and generate quality evidence.

DRAFT AGENDA: Adolescent Research Day

“Nutrition & Reproductive Health from a Life-Cycle Perspective – Closing the Adolescent Data Gap to Achieve Sustainable Development”

23rd October 2017 at Landmark Hotel, Vientiane, Lao PDR

Session I: Setting the stage of adolescent nutrition and reproductive health

Objective: To set the stage of adolescent nutrition and reproductive health, highlighting the linkages and the potential synergies if the correct investments are made at the right time in the right way.

8:00-8:30	Registration	Secretariat
8:30-8:35	Welcome	Master of Ceremony
8:35-9:00	Welcome to the Adolescent Research Forum	VM Dr Phouton (Tbc) Ms Frederika Meijer, UNFPA Rep H.E. Mr Leo Faber, EU Ambassador (tbc) H.E. Ambassador of France
9:00-9:20	Keynote address: Adolescent Nutrition	Gilles Bergeron, ED, The Sackler Institute for Nutrition Science

9.20-9.30 Questions to key-note speaker

Session II: Short Communications – Adolescent Nutrition in the Region

Objective: To get a snap shot of the ongoing research in the region as well as to identify evidence and policy gaps with regard to adolescent nutrition and its linkages with reproduction (*Each speaker has 7 min + 3 min Q&A*)

Chair: Dr Sengchanh (NIOPH) and tbc

9:30-10:40	- Lao PDR	- WFP Gap analysis - Save the Children – SBCC Formative Research - NIOPH nutrition research in Lao PDR
	- Vietnam	- Vietnam Nutrition Institute
	- Myanmar	- Myanmar Nutrition institute
	- Thailand	- Mahidol University (tbc)

10.40-11.00 Photo session + coffee break

Session III: Nutrition & Reproductive Health from a Life-Cycle Perspective – A Panel Discussion

Objective: To view adolescent health from a life-cycle perspective focusing on nutrition and reproduction in light of the SDG Agenda

Facilitators: UNFPA + tbc

11:00-12:00	- Adolescent Health and linkages with nutrition	Gilles Bergeron, Sackler Institute
	- Adolescent Development/ Academic Performance and Learning	TBC

- Adolescent Behaviour	Dr Vanphanom/ Dr Essink (Tbc)
- Maternal Nutrition & IYCF (focus on adolescent mothers)	Save the Children
- Laos National Nutrition Strategy and where adolescents fit in?	Nutrition Centre (Tbc)

12:00-13:00 Lunch

Session IV: Progress in adolescent research and partnerships since the 2016 Adolescent Research Day

Objective: To give a brief update on the progress since the 2016 Adolescent Research Day, to encourage partnership and to review some of the new evidence that has come forth within adolescent sexual and reproductive health

Chair: Dr Souraxay Phommala (NIOPH) & Guus (MCNV)

13:00-13:10	Recap from last years' adolescent research day: SDG4A network and website The adolescent research agenda	Dr Sengchanh
--------------------	--	--------------

13:10-14:10	Regional/Country Perspectives (7+3 minutes each):	
- Lao PDR		Dr Viegna Khone (NIOPH), Dr Schuurmans (LICM Project)
- Adolescent pregnancy, early union and child marriage in Asia - a one size approach does not fit all		Jo Sauverine (UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Office)
- Cambodia		Population Council TBC

14.10-14.20	Partnerships on adolescent research – The Adolescent Girl Situation Analysis Framework	NIOPH/EU-LEARN, UNFPA and Plan International
--------------------	--	--

14.20-14.30	Forming Regional Partnerships for Resource Mobilization and Academic Depth	Facilitated by Mandira
--------------------	--	------------------------

14:30-15:00	Partnership Mingle + Coffee break Poster presentation/exhibition	
--------------------	---	--

Session V: Increasing Investment in Adolescent Research – A Panel Discussion

Objective: To foster partnership, identify available resources and to advocate for the importance of closing the data gap in adolescent research, especially focusing on nutrition and sexual and reproductive health

Facilitators: Dr Funkham (MoH) &

15:00-16:30	Ministry of Health	Dr Sengchanh
	National Science Council	DG
	Ministry of Planning and Investment	Tbc
	Academy	TBC
	EU	EU Regional Representative (Tbc)
	UNFPA	Ms Frederika Meijer

	Embassy Representative tbc	Tbc
	WFP	Tbc
	World Bank (tbc)	tbc
16.30-17.00	Discussion: Plan of action for adolescent research and evidence informed policy-making	Panel facilitators wrap up based on panel discussion
Session VI: Wrap-up of the day		
	Chair: tbc	
17:00-17:30	Sum up on the outcome of the research day and joint statement on the way forward	Dr. Sengchanh Kounnavong
	Comments and questions from the audience	
	Closing remarks	Ms. Frederika Meijer