

All in For Adolescents: Multi-Sectoriality at Work

For its 2017 report, the IAP reviewed some leading, emerging examples of national cross-sectoral, cross-ministerial policies and plans. We looked at whether participatory accountability mechanisms are built-in from the start to help keep implementation on track. While we found that the degree to which these accountability frameworks with civil society and young people's engagement have been fully developed and put into practice varies from country to country, all offer encouraging signals that the needed paradigm shifts are underway for adolescents' health and rights. Below we showcase a few, in addition to others mentioned in the report.

Costa Rica has developed a highly innovative confidential data-based system to track individual adolescent girls in real-time who are in need of pregnancy prevention services (17% of all childbirths in the country are to adolescents), including information, counselling, comprehensive sexuality education and contraception. The technology system links up the health, education and social security sectors in an integrated data system with the aim of reaching girls who otherwise have been falling through the cracks of services available.ⁱ

Mexico's National Strategy for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy was launched in 2015 with the goal of getting to zero on birth rates among 10-14 year old girls and reducing by half adolescent fertility among adolescents ages 15 to 19, with a focus on equity and human rights.ⁱⁱ The cross-sectoral approach covers education for adolescent mothers (including fellowships for low-income and indigenous pregnant girls and young mothers), comprehensive sexuality education, access to contraception and friendly health services, promotion of boys' shared responsibility in sexual matters, and to employment opportunities, as well as early detection of sexual violence for girls and boys--a component rarely seen in pregnancy prevention programmes. For its effective implementation and monitoring, the Government established a high-level inter-institutional group that includes the ministerial sectors of Population, Health, Education, Gender Equality, Social Development, Indigenous People, Youth, Children and Adolescents, HIV prevention, Social Services and Insurance for state employees, Social Security, and the Family; alongside UNFPA, UN Women, PAHO, UNICEF, a civil society network, a youth network, and a university. Sub-committees established include one specifically focused on monitoring and evaluation, and another on differentiated strategies for girls under 15. The strategy is also being replicated at state levels. The 2016 progress assessment, reporting against the goals and indicators framework across interventions, shows gains in education, with fewer adolescents out-of-school, increased access to sexual and reproductive health services, and improved detection and services for children and adolescents subjected to sexual violence.

Tanzania's National Plan of Action to Prevent and Respond to Violence against Children:ⁱⁱⁱ In response to one of the first national surveys on sexual violence against 13-17 year olds *in the world* (in 2011), the government implemented a three-year multi-sectoral costed plan for scaling up district plans involving the health, justice, social welfare and other sectors. National hotlines, 1,151 health providers trained from some 500 facilities, as well as magistrates, police and social welfare officers, and 700,000 children reached—are among its leading achievements, with built-in accountability participation from civil society to track implementation and expenditures. A revamped plan was adopted, drawing on the 2016 evaluation findings, which is expanding into more regions.

Uruguay's National Plan on Early Childhood, Childhood and Adolescence 2016-2020,^{iv} which forms part of the 20-year National Strategy on Children and Adolescents (2010-2030), is an example of inter-sectoral coordination involving the ministries of health, education, justice, child protection and civil society. It includes clear baselines, benchmarks and results for monitoring, dedicated consultation with civil society and adolescents themselves in the formulation, and coordination by an inter-sectoral commission. With a focus on addressing major inequalities, each ministry is expected to develop its own action plan, covering health, education, social inclusion (including through culture and art), violence, access to the judicial system, and attention to children and adolescents who lack family protection. Teen pregnancy is also addressed from a multi-sectoral approach, covering employment, housing, health and education; as are challenges for school drop-outs and working adolescents. Adolescent participation is to be promoted at various levels. In terms of budget transparency, indicators are under development to track sectoral resources for children and adolescents. Particularly worthy of note, the Government Office of Planning and Budget signed an agreement with the Consultative Honorary Council on the Rights of Children and Adolescents to improve tracking and assessment of national resource flows destined to these population groups.^v

ⁱThe *Salud Mesoamerica initiative*, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation:<http://www.sm2015.org/en/salud-mesoamerica-initiative/the-initiative/costa-rica-unifies-its-databases-to-help-prevent-adolescent-pregnancy,20863.html>

ⁱⁱ http://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/98138/ENAPEA_Marzo.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Submission to the IAP Call for Evidence by Together for Girls.

^{iv} Developed based on initial submission to the IAP Call for Evidence by the Ministry of Health of Uruguay. Plan Nacional de Primera Infancia, Infancia y Adolescencia 2016-2020. Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, Instituto del Niño y Adolescente de Uruguay, Montevideo, November 2016 (<http://www.claves.org.uy/web/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Plan-Nacional-de-Primera-Infancia-Infancia-y-Adolescencia-2016-2010.pdf>); and Plan Nacional de Acción 2016-2020 (<http://www.claves.org.uy/web/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Plan-Nacional-de-Primera-Infancia-Infancia-y-Adolescencia-2016-2010.pdf>)

^v <https://www.presidencia.gub.uy/comunicacion/comunicacionnoticias/consejo-consultivo-acuerdo-opp>