



Capacity building workshop for the Caribbean in using the *Global Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents (AA-HA!): guidance to support country implementation* for national programming

13-17 November, 2017

Concept note

Background

The Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health is leading the way in articulating the actions needed to capitalise on existing achievements from the MDGs, operationalise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and assure that the unfinished MDG agenda is addressed within one generation. Investment in adolescents brings a triple benefit: 1) healthy adolescents now; 2) healthy adults in the future; and 3) healthy future generations. To achieve the SDGs and harness this triple dividend from investing in adolescent health, WHO launched the [*Global Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents \(AA-HA!\): guidance to support country implementation*](#) in May 2017.

The AA-HA! provides step-by-step guidance for setting of national priorities, and translation of these priorities into plans and programs. As part of the global dissemination and capacity building strategy, WHO, in collaboration with other partners, is supporting capacity building workshops in using the AA-HA! guidance for policy development, national priority-setting, programming, and monitoring and evaluation.

The WHO efforts align well with the ongoing efforts being implemented by LAC partners to support the Region to implement the Global Strategy and accelerate progress towards improvement of the health and wellbeing of women, children, and adolescents. Within this context, PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNAIDS, World Bank, IDB and USAID joined forces to form the "Every Woman, Every Child" movement in Latin America and the Caribbean (EWEC LAC). In the first half of 2017, the partnership organized a regional socialization and consultation process around the Global Strategy, which included technical and sub-regional consultations, including one in the Caribbean in June 2017. During the Caribbean consultation, the stakeholders emphasized the importance of adolescent health as a priority.

The regional consultation process culminated in a high level meeting held in Santiago in July 2017. The Santiago Commitment to Action, resulting from this meeting, calls on stakeholders to, inter alia, reduce health inequities, consider and respond to structural social determinants of health, and strengthen political will and multi-sector efforts to ensure that every woman, child and adolescent in Latin America and the Caribbean not only survives, but thrives in a transformative environment.

Prior to the establishment of EWEC LAC, an initiative was launched in the Caribbean in 2015 called Every Caribbean Woman, Every Caribbean Child (ECWECC), following discussions between First Lady Simplicia Barrow from Belize, Special Envoy for Woman and Children, Dr.

Edward Greene, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for HIV in the Caribbean, and UNFPA, with the aim to respond to a series of critical problems that confront women, girls and adolescents in the Caribbean. Following several rounds of consultations, four priorities were identified: 1) reduce teen pregnancies; 2) eliminate violence against women, girls and children – including trafficking of women and girls; 3) reduce cervical cancer; and 4) eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV. This Initiative was formally endorsed by the CARICOM Heads of Government in 2016.

In 2008, PAHO Member States, including the Caribbean countries and territories, adopted the Regional Strategy for Improving Adolescent and Youth Health, and the Plan of Action on Adolescent and Youth Health in 2009. Since its adoption, more than 70% of the Member States developed adolescent health policies, strategies and plans including 13 Caribbean countries

However, despite the advances the region has made in adolescent health programming, there is a need to expand capacity of regional and national stakeholders in using the AA-HA! guidance for policy development, national priority-setting, programming, and monitoring & evaluation. It is envisaged that, in addition to development of new adolescent health policies and strategies, various countries will also embark on the process of updating their national strategies and plans, which provides opportunity for alignment of strategies and targets with the SDGs and the Global Strategy.

Rationale

WHO and PAHO, in collaboration with EWEC LAC partners, propose the training of a regional technical assistance pool of RMNCAH experts as well as country teams, in the use of AA-HA! guidance for national adolescent health priority-setting, programming, and monitoring & evaluation.

For the Americas, this capacity building process will be implemented in two phases: 1) a training for the English-speaking countries in the second half of 2017, and 2) a training for the Spanish-speaking countries in the first half of 2018, at which time the Spanish translation of the AA-HA! package will be available.

Methodology

A “nested” approach will be applied to the one-week activity, consisting of two and a half day of training for resource persons, and 2 days for country teams, organized as follows:

Dates	Activity	Objectives	Participants
Day 1 & 2 November 13-14	Training for resource persons	To build competencies of a regional pool of experts and technical resource persons in applying the AA-HA! guidance for national priority-setting, programming, and monitoring & evaluation.	Technical advisers regional partners Regional and country-level adolescent health experts
Day 3 & 4 November 15-16	Training for country team, with participation of the resource persons	To discuss regional priorities for programming in adolescent health, based on the AA-HA! guidance	Ministry of Health focal points adolescent health, mental health,

		To develop country road maps for the application of the AA-HA! guidance for county-level priority setting, programming, monitoring and evaluation, and costing of a priority package of adolescent health interventions	<p>substance use, health systems and services, etc.</p> <p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>Representatives of other relevant Ministries (i.e. Gender, Youth Affairs,)</p> <p>NGOs, civil society</p> <p>Youth-led and youth-serving organizations</p> <p>Youth leaders</p>
Day 5 (half day) November 17	Recap day with resource persons	<p>To consolidate lessons learned</p> <p>To agree on modalities for the provision of technical support to countries</p>	<p>Technical advisers regional partners</p> <p>Regional and country-level adolescent health experts</p>

Organizers

The meeting will be organized jointly by WHO and PAHO, in collaboration with UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO, and Save the Children as co-organizers, including the planning and facilitation of the event and follow up in selected countries.

Timeframe, venue and participants

The proposed date for the Caribbean activity is **13-17 November, 2017** (venue to be confirmed) A list of regional experts and countries will be prepared in collaboration with regional partners. Caribbean countries currently engaged in developing or updating of adolescent health strategies will be invited to participate, as well as key Caribbean partners such as CARICOM, CARPHA, the University of the West Indies, and the Network of Family Planning Associations.

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