

# Young Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health in South Africa

A Workshop for Health Care Personnel on Addressing the Sexual and Reproductive Health Service Needs of Young Women

## Background

Recent research conducted by Ibis Reproductive Health and partners indicated that health care workers would benefit from workshops providing technical information regarding provision of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services for young women and values clarification exercises highlighting the impact of their opinions on service provision. In 2009, Ibis and partners developed such a workshop and piloted it with health care workers in three clinics in Soweto, Gauteng Province.

Several of the workshop modules were adapted from colleague organizations' (including DISA Clinic, EngenderHealth, Pathfinder International, the Population Council, and the World Health Organization) existing training materials. For information about the research that informed development of the workshop, see Ibis's brief "Young Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health in South Africa: Service Availability and Health Care Workers' Opinions in Soweto."

## Workshop Overview

The workshop is designed to take place over three to five days and the objectives of the workshop are to:

- Explore health care workers' opinions of young women's sexuality and SRH and how these opinions positively or negatively impact the delivery of services for young people.
- Enhance health care workers' communication skills with young people and about SRH in general.
- Reinforce health care workers' counseling skills in the areas of family planning, HIV, gender-based violence, and termination of pregnancy.

The facilitator's manual includes instructions for preparing, implementing, and evaluating the following workshop modules:

- How Do I Feel about Adolescent Sexuality?
- How Do I Feel about Gender, Family Planning, and HIV and Other Sexually Transmitted Infections?
- Background on Young Women's and Girls' Sexuality and SRH in South Africa
- Let's Talk about Sex
- Sexual Identity and Orientation
- Communicating with Young People
- Answering Difficult Questions
- Gender-Based Violence
- Contraception refresher

Workshop materials include two pocket guides to enhance participants' communication and counseling skills and knowledge of SRH issues:

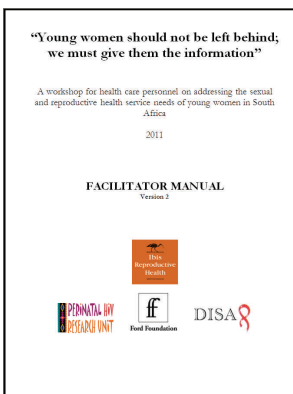
- "Answering Difficult Questions" is a bound pocket guide designed by Ibis with cards addressing different SRH issues.

An example from the guide is a card which reads, "What is oral sex?" The card provides a descriptive response to the question and outlines important tips for counseling a young client who wants to know about oral sex.

Other topics addressed include: circumcision, sex during pregnancy, masturbation, anal sex, same sex relationships, and over 20 more.

- Ibis staff also designed new cards on pregnancy options and gender-based violence for addition to the Population Council's "Balanced Counseling Strategy Plus (BCS+)" tool used for the contraception refresher session.

## Future Implementation and Replication of Workshop



Feedback provided via daily evaluation forms during the Soweto pilot in 2009 was entirely positive, with participants asking for the workshop to be replicated as much as possible. In follow-up interviews 6-8 weeks after the workshop, all participants mentioned feeling more comfortable talking about sex and sexuality generally. In addition, all had communicated to their colleagues about what they had

learned and had made the materials that they received available for their colleagues' use.

Ibis and partners will be re-piloting an updated workshop, based on the evaluation of the initial pilot, in Tzaneen, Limpopo Province, in 2011. Please contact Ibis regarding replication of this workshop. Ibis continues to work on revising and improving the workshop materials and exploring opportunities for broader implementation.



In partnership with:



Ibis Reproductive Health aims to improve women's reproductive autonomy, choices, and health worldwide.

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