Health & Wellbeing in Sierra Leone

Harnessing the Demographic Dividend Through Investments in Youth

The demographic dividend is the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population’s age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working age share of the population.

“A country with both increasing numbers of young people and declining fertility has the potential to reap a demographic dividend”

NATIONAL POPULATION
7,092 113

YOUTH POPULATION (15-35 YEARS)
2,794 883
39.4%

1,317,985
47.2%

1,476,898
52.8%

Source: DHS 2013

Good health is key to harnessing the demographic dividend.

To reap the benefits of the increasing number of young people in the population we need to improve health outcomes; improving child survival and reducing youth vulnerability. Improving access to sexual and reproductive health services including family planning. Ensuring that women are empowered to decide on the number and spacing of their children can accelerate the demographic transition.

Sierra Leone Youth have high fertility rates...

Age- Specific Fertility Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Fertility Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24 years</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 years</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-35 years</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The age-specific fertility rate measures the annual number of births to women of a specified age group per 1,000 women in that age group.

Source: DHS 2013

22% of adolescents girls have had a child.

Source: DHS 2013
Key Actions to promote Health & Wellbeing among Youth in Sierra Leone

• Improve access to **contraception**
• Establish and promote **adolescent and youth friendly reproductive health services**
• **Invest in health systems** including in human resources and infrastructure
• Scale up age-appropriate and culturally sensitive **comprehensive sexuality education** to avert complications and challenges associated with unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections
• Foster **inter-sectoral action** for health at all levels
• Create an enabling environment by empowering communities and **strengthening the role of men** in improving access to sexual reproductive health and reproductive service

Leh wi ep yong pipul fo mek Salone