



MY BODY, MY LIFE, MY WORLD OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Operational Guidance for *My Body, My Life, My World* was developed by UNFPA's Adolescent and Youth team (Technical Division, Headquarters): Sharafdzhon Boborakhimov, Satvika Chalasani, Danielle Engel, Bente Faugli, José Roberto Luna, Cécile Mazzacurati, Petar Mladenov, Bothaina Qamar, İrem Tümer, Alessia Ulfe and Ilya Zhukov. Module 7 was developed by Sergio Esperança, Åsa Forsgren and Katie Mitchell of UNFPA's Humanitarian Office. The work was done under the overall guidance of Anneka Knutsson, Chief of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Branch, and Julitta Onabanjo, Director, Technical Division.

The authors gratefully acknowledge the guidance and inputs provided by colleagues in the regional offices:

- Samir Anouti and Shadia Elshiwiy (Arab States Regional Office)
- Maki Akiyama, Heidrun Fritze and Jo Sauvarin (Asia-Pacific Regional Office)
- Maria Bakaroudis, Meron Negussie, Anandita Philipose and Renata Tallarico (East and Southern Africa Regional Office)
- Rune Brandrup (Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office)
- Neus Bernabeu and Allán Sánchez Osorio (Latin America Regional Office)
- Brian Kironde (Pacific Sub-Regional Office)
- Senan Hodonou (West and Central Africa Regional Office)

as well as participants of the Validation Workshop for their feedback:

- Babatunde Adelekan (Nigeria CO)
- Patricia Aguilar (Paraguay CO)
- Yasmina Al-Ghadban (Technical Division, HQ)
- Marcia Elena Alvarez (Ecuador CO)
- Soyoltuya Bayaraa (Technical Division, HQ)
- Paola Broll (Guatemala CO)
- Sergio Esperança (Humanitarian Office)
- Åsa Forsgren (Humanitarian Office)
- Junjian Gaoshan (China CO)
- Jaya Jaya (India CO)
- Isabelle Jost (Zimbabwe CO)
- Penelope Kasere, (Zimbabwe CO)
- Olfa Lazreg (Tunisia CO)
- Baktybek Kainazarov (Kyrgyzstan CO)
- Mary Marle (South Sudan CO)
- Joy Masheke Manengu (Zambia CO)
- Stephen Mawa (South Sudan CO)
- Elida Nuri (Albania CO)
- Blessing Nyagumbo (Zimbabwe CO)
- Bothaina Qamar (Jordan CO)
- Faith Osore (Kenya CO)
- Francelle Toedtli (Sexual and Reproductive Health Branch, HQ)
- Stine Vest Nielsen (Kenya CO)
- Adjoa Yenyi (Ghana CO)
- and other UNFPA colleagues.

Special thanks are extended to the editor of this Operational Guidance, James Baer, and to the graphic designer, Paolo Ciampagna.
Cover photo: UNFPA LACRO, Page 12: UNFPA WCARO.

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How to cite this publication: United Nations Population Fund (2022).
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December 2022

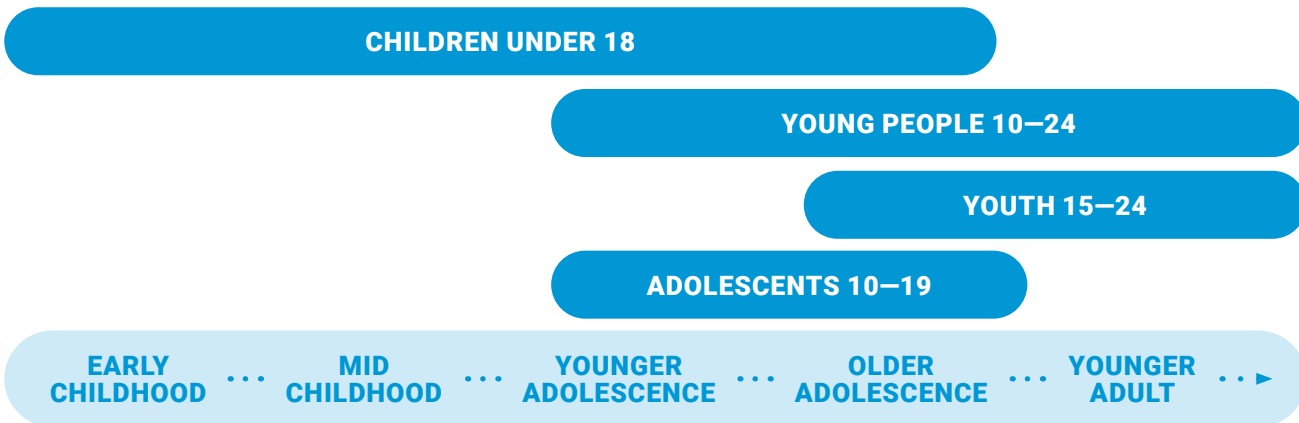


INTRODUCTION

In 2019, UNFPA launched *My Body, My Life, My World*, a new global strategy to ensure rights and choices for all adolescents and youth. The strategy puts young people – their talents, hopes, perspectives and unique needs – at the centre of UNFPA’s work. It recognizes that young people realizing their rights to make informed choices about their own bodies, their own lives and the world they live in is a matter of justice and a driver of a lifetime of returns. In doing so, it supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in alignment with the new United Nations Strategy on Youth as well as the UNFPA Strategic Plan.

My Body, My Life, My World embraces all adolescents (aged 10 to 19) and youth (aged 15 to 24), celebrating their rich diversity. It recognizes the heterogeneity of their needs and desires, and is fully committed to ending the inequities many still face. It accounts for gender, sexual orientation and ability status, and affirms sexuality as a positive dimension of personality. It also considers other intersections such as ethnicity, social status and religion.

WHO ARE ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH?



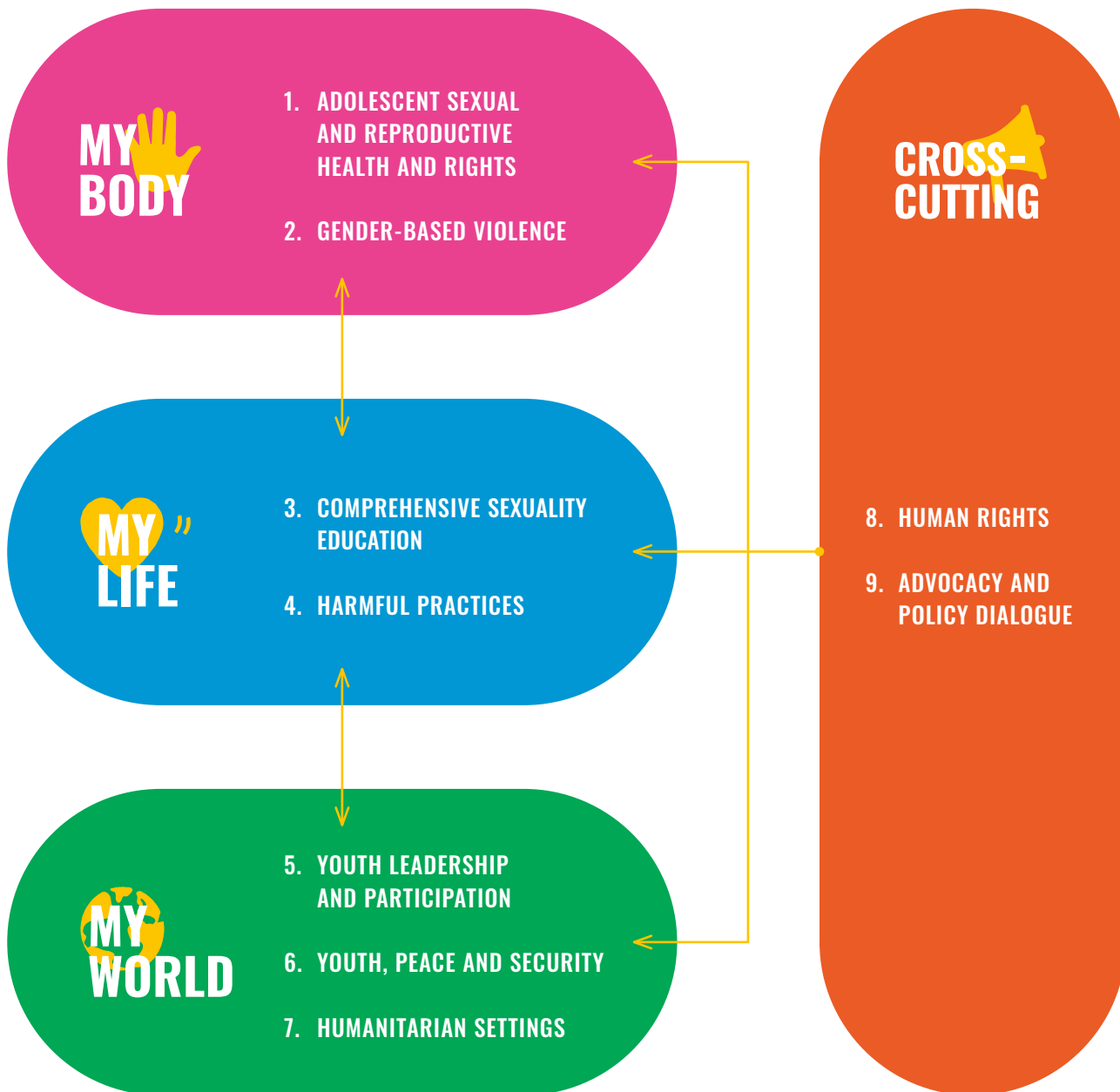
The strategy draws on sound evidence in designing comprehensive strategies to deliver rights and choices. Through a lifecycle approach, it builds on links between adolescence and youth and both earlier and later stages of life. The strategy applies across development, peacebuilding and humanitarian settings, and can be readily adapted to an array of contexts and cultures.



WHO IS THIS OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR, AND WHAT'S IN IT?

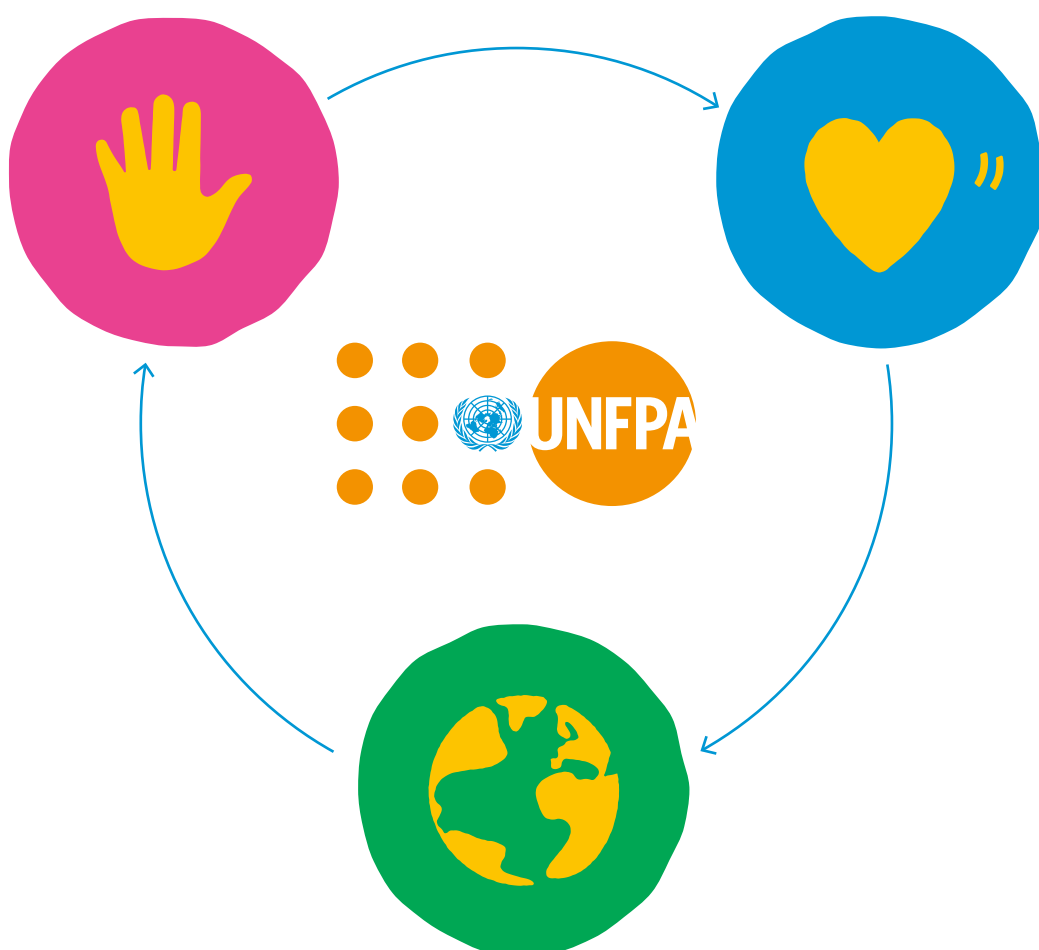
This Operational Guidance is designed primarily to guide the staff of UNFPA's regional and country offices in implementing the UNFPA adolescent and youth strategy. The Guidance can also be of use to youth-led and youth-serving organizations, governments, community leaders, UN entities, civil society, academia, the private sector and the media, which all have essential roles to play in realizing the objectives of the strategy.

The modules in the Operational Guidance provide a practical overview, essential tools and resources for the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes in nine areas.



Each module introduces and defines the topic, and explains why it is important to UNFPA's work and the well-being of adolescents and young people. It discusses effective approaches and describes how to plan and implement programmes, based on the experiences of UNFPA and its partners around the world. Some of the modules address misconceptions about topics that could lead to misunderstanding or opposition, or describe "do's and don'ts" for implementation. Links to relevant publications and other resources are provided.

This operational guidance includes a supplement, the Young People's Empowerment Index (YPEI). This is an advocacy tool to help national policymakers and programme managers measure progress on youth empowerment in six domains: sexual and reproductive health, gender and autonomy, educational empowerment, economic empowerment, youth policy and political participation, and safety and security.





HOW DOES *MY BODY, MY LIFE, MY WORLD* FIT WITH THE UNFPA STRATEGIC PLAN AND THE UN YOUTH STRATEGY?

UNFPA is committed to the implementation of consecutive strategic plans driving towards the achievement of three transformative results by 2030. These results are articulated in three outcomes – accelerating reductions in 1) unmet need for family planning, 2) preventable maternal mortality, and 3) gender-based violence and harmful practices – and they are advanced by six outputs, of which the final one is dedicated to Adolescents and Youth.

*Output 6: By 2025, strengthened **skills**¹ and **opportunities**² for adolescents and youth to ensure **bodily autonomy**³, **leadership**⁴ and **participation**⁵, and to build **human capital**⁶.*

1 The ability to use one’s knowledge effectively to do something competently.

2 Situations or conditions favourable for attaining a goal.

3 The power and autonomy to make choices over one’s body and future.

4 The transformational, values-based exercise of authority over others in the service of action and change.

5 An inclusive, intentional, mutually respectful partnership between adolescents and young people and adults in programmes and policies that affect their lives.

6 The knowledge, skills and health that people invest in and accumulate throughout their lives, enabling them to realize their potential as productive members of society.

The output on Adolescents and Youth of the Strategic Plan 2022-2025 is to be achieved through work on the key domains listed under Output 6 in the table on page 7. *My Body, My Life, My World* provides the broad frame for the work under these domains, and to help achieve other outputs and indicators in the UNFPA Strategic Plan.

The table shows each of the six outputs of the strategic plan, together with selected indicators. The coloured numbers indicate the modules of this Operational Guidance that are relevant to the indicators.

Output 1: Policy and Accountability

1.4 Youth sexual and reproductive health in policies

1 2 3 5 9

1.7 Supporting multi-stakeholder accountability mechanisms

2 4 5 9

Output 2: Quality of Care and Services

2.11 Benefiting from scaled-up services

1 2 4 9

2.12 Adolescent- and youth-responsive service provision

1 2 4 9

Output 3: Gender and Social Norms

3.2 Capacity for changing discriminatory social and gender norms

2 4 5 8

3.5 Promoting positive masculinities

2 4 5 9

Output 4: Population Change and Data

4.4 Assuring core population data outputs

9

Output 5: Humanitarian Action

5.3 Inclusion of women and young people in decision-making in humanitarian action

5 7 9

5.4 Youth and peace

6 9

5.5 Women and peace

6 9

Output 6: Adolescents and Youth

6.1 Operationalizing in-school CSE

3 9

6.2 Operationalizing out-of-school CSE

3 4 9

6.3 Youth participation in policy-making

5 9

6.4 Improving the skills of adolescent girls

1 2 4

6.5 Youth-led innovations in accelerating the transformative results

1 3 4 5

6.6 HPV vaccine roll-out

1 9

6.7 Strengthening evidence on youth aspirations for marriage, fertility and gender roles

1 2 4 5 9

Module 1: Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Module 2: Gender-Based Violence

Module 3: Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Module 4: Harmful Practices

Module 5: Youth Leadership and Participation

Module 6: Youth, Peace and Security

Module 7: Humanitarian Settings

Module 8: Human Rights

Module 9: Advocacy and Policy Dialogue



A CONTRIBUTION TO THE UN SYSTEM'S AMBITIONS ON YOUTH

Youth 2030, the UN Youth Strategy launched in 2018, mobilizes the United Nations to step up its work with and for young people. *My Body, My Life, My World* contributes to each of the five priorities for action.

UN STRATEGY

UNFPA STRATEGY

**ENGAGEMENT,
PARTICIPATION
AND ADVOCACY**



Backs meaningful and inclusive youth participation and empowerment, intergenerational platforms and the cultivation of leadership skills.



**INFORMED
AND HEALTHY
FOUNDATIONS**



Increases access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and address inequalities so adolescents and youth can make informed choices about their bodies and plan their lives.



**ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT
THROUGH
DECENT WORK**



Helps young people develop soft skills and have a better chance of decent and gainful employment.



**YOUTH AND
HUMAN RIGHTS**



Advocates for the rights of all adolescents and youth everywhere.



**PEACE AND
RESILIENCE**



Stands behind adolescents and youth as active partners in peacebuilding processes and humanitarian action.





PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING *MY BODY, MY LIFE, MY WORLD*

MY BODY, MY LIFE, MY WORLD...

→ ...PUTS ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH AT THE CENTRE

- ✎ Starts with what adolescents and youth want – the priorities they have articulated in various forums (programmes, consultations, networks, statements/outcome documents) supported by UNFPA and others.
- ✎ Directs resources to interventions where adolescents and youth are the direct beneficiaries, and/or where they are the implementers.
- ✎ Supports interventions, content and platforms that suit their conditions and interests.
- ✎ Ensures meaningful participation of young people in all decisions that directly impact them, including programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

→ ...IS BASED ON EVIDENCE

Uses evidence

- ✎ Promotes investments in interventions that are effective and have the potential for scale, based on a thorough understanding of the global and local evidence.
- ✎ Uses data to identify geographic hotspots of negative outcomes that require accelerated efforts (prevalence and burden).
- ✎ Use data and evidence to highlight the inter-relationships among various interventions for adolescents and youth and to encourage and support cross-sectoral collaboration to achieve common goals.

Generates evidence

- ✎ Invests in evidence-building for emerging and promising strategies for all substantive areas (adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights, comprehensive sexuality education, girls' empowerment, positive masculinities for boys, youth-led accountability and others).
- ✎ Ensures the collection of data disaggregated by age, sex, disability and other relevant sociodemographic factors.

Builds capacity for evidence generation and use

- ✎ Conducts and helps build local capacity for data analyses on adolescents and youth (using demographic and health surveys and the census in particular) to generate the evidence needed for policy development, programme commitments and prioritizing funding.

→ ...APPLIES A GENDER AND POWER LENS

- Understands that many of the outcomes of adolescents and youth, their peers and their gatekeepers, are linked to unequal and discriminatory gender norms and gender distribution of resources and power.
- Advances gender-transformative strategies and interventions, both structural and normative, at policy and systems level as well as at community and individual levels, rectifying inequalities in opportunities, resources and power.

→ ...IS ORIENTED AROUND THE LIFE COURSE

- Treats adolescence and youth as its own unique period of life that requires specific investments for short-, medium- and long-term impact.
- Understands and promotes investments during adolescence and youth as a phase of transition between childhood and adulthood. It is a phase into which young people can take what they learned and experienced in childhood, and – when empowered and equipped – from which they will take forward skills and assets for a lifetime of positive choices and outcomes.

→ ...LEAVES NO ONE BEHIND

- Recognizes that young people are not the same and that their needs change.
- Adopts an intersectional approach.
- Identifies and reaches marginalized adolescents and youth, including LGBTQ+ youth, young people living in poverty, young people with disabilities and young people living with HIV.
- Seeks to rectify inequalities by ensuring equity of opportunity.
- Understands that formal youth participation mechanisms, such as National Youth Councils, often may only represent the most privileged fraction of the youth population.
- Always strives to do no harm.
- Respects young people as rights holders.

For more information about the “leaving no one behind” approach, please see the [UNFPA operational plan](#) as well as this [technical note](#) of the Global Programme to End Child Marriage, which provides useful guidance that can be adapted to youth programming overall.



...IS APPLICABLE TO ALL SETTINGS

- ▶ The core ideas and principles of My Body, My Life, My World are applicable across all settings, with relevant adaptations in content, approaches, target populations, and desired change:
 - across the humanitarian-development-peace continuum
 - in low-income, middle-income and high-income countries
 - in rural, urban and peri-urban settings.
- ▶ Always starts by identifying activities, organizations, movements and initiatives already in place and led by youth.





