At A Glance

Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (AYSRHR)

Pathfinder envisions a world where all young people fulfill their aspirations, realize their rights, and act on informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive lives.

There are 1.8 billion young people in the world today — 600 million youth in Pathfinder countries. But for too long their specific health needs have been overlooked or misunderstood. Pathfinder recognizes this life stage as a critical entry point for promoting healthy attitudes, values, and behaviors that can guide the rest of their lives.

Pathfinder programs understand that young people are not homogenous and therefore, we implement a variety of age and life stage tailored approaches. These approaches consider factors which influence their lives at the individual (e.g., knowledge and skills), relational (e.g., engaging peers, partners, parents), social (e.g., school and work environment), and structural (e.g., services and government laws and policies) levels. We apply a positive youth development lens which normalizes adolescent development and supports the ability of all adolescents and youth, inclusive of marginalized groups such as young people with disabilities, in rural areas, or those living with HIV.

Quick Stats: Pathfinder Impact in FY2021

7,585,681 contraceptive visits for youth under 25 years

26,957 youth participants in education programs

13,537 youth participants in community-based events

4,654 youth received HIV testing and counseling

Strategies

Mainstream youth programming

Pathfinder mainstreams youth in all of our programs, not just projects with a youth focus. This means that young people’s needs are at the center of program design and that programming will consider multifaceted youth needs beyond use of contraceptive services.

Meaningful engagement of adolescents and youth

Pathfinder includes adolescent and youth inputs in the design and implementation of our programs, cultivating young people’s leadership and programmatic skills. Pathfinder considers the experience of youth and includes them in programming, not just as stakeholders, but as shapers of their own priorities.

Be systems oriented and responsive to the unique needs of adolescents and youth

Pathfinder understands the importance of a comprehensive health systems approach to providing adolescents and youth with high quality AYSRH services. This includes: providing youth-responsive services without bias, addressing misconceptions/lack of knowledge, gender and social norms, other health systems barriers while ensuring young people have access to the full range of health services available.

Design and implement age, gender, developmentally, and culturally responsive programs

These programs consider how youth learn about gender norms and adopt SRHR behaviors to set them up for positive experiences throughout their lives.
Youth-Responsive Access and Point of Care Readiness

We support quality youth-responsive sexual and reproductive health services. Pathfinder works with governments to recognize youth-specific needs and widen access through points of care that are tailored to youth and appeal to youth's interests, shaped by how they want to interact with services. This includes digital programming and self-care. Innovations for service delivery are youth-centered and youth have opportunities to hold service providers accountable.

Highlight: Beyond Bias
Burkina Faso, Pakistan, and Tanzania

Beyond Bias addresses the different types of provider biases and behaviors that translate—advertently or inadvertently—into barriers for youth who want access to contraceptive counseling and services. We use an innovative four-phase approach to gather insights, generate and test solutions, and support adaptation and scale up. In Burkina Faso, Pakistan and Tanzania, Beyond Bias has worked to:

- Deepen our understanding of provider bias and the way it’s shaped and enacted in each country and within public and private sector facilities.
- Develop, test, and refine solutions to address provider bias using human-centered design.
- Work with young people and their communities to transform norms surrounding sexual and reproductive health information and services.

Youth Agency and Choice

Pathfinder works to ensure that young people have increased knowledge, skills, intention, and agency to make healthy decisions about their SRHR. We support young people’s ability to hold and champion favorable attitudes and perceptions related to sexuality, gender-equity, and SRH rights and entitlements. In doing so, young people develop a better understanding of healthy relationships and agency to maintain respectful social and sexual relationships free of violence.

Highlight: Act With Her
Ethiopia and Jordan

Act With Her increases girls’ (ages 10-17) agency and facilitates healthy transitions to adulthood, including through puberty and secondary school, and—if they so choose—through sexual debut, employment, marriage, and childbearing. Act With Her also engages boys, families, and communities to shift inequitable gender norms, and works to increase the accessibility and use of key health, education, and other systems by adolescents.

Supportive Social Environment

Pathfinder considers the complex interplay between individual, interpersonal, household, community, and societal factors (structures, policies, systems) on AYSRH outcomes. We promote peer support and empowerment of young couples to communicate, learn, and decide together about healthy SRHR choices. We engage with community influencers, institutions, and health stakeholders to encourage their ability to publicly champion positive norms and to promote the right for all young people to access SRH services.

Highlight: Shukhi Jibon
Bangladesh

Accelerating Universal Access to Family Planning (AUAFP), known as Shukhi Jibon in Bangladesh, reaches those most in need of family planning services and information. In partnership with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), the project supports developing and deploying skilled, responsive, and respectful family planning (FP) providers; strengthens the delivery of quality FP services, especially for adolescents and youth, and postpartum women; and works with communities to transform norms around the use of family planning information and services.

- Provides technical assistance to establish or strengthen AYSRH services through introduction of up-to-date approaches and using whole site orientation to make facilities adolescent friendly and gender sensitive with the ability to serve as models for replication.
- Designs digital health tools for communication between provider and adolescent and youth clients.
- Works with young people and their communities to transform norms surrounding SRH information and services.
- Advances the government of Bangladesh’s FP2020 commitment to the right to health for adolescents, youth, and all Bangladeshis.

Pathfinder International is driven by the conviction that all people, regardless of where they live, have the right to decide whether and when to have children, to exist free from fear and stigma, and to lead the lives they choose. As a global health organization with locally led, community-driven programs, we support women to make their own reproductive health decisions. We work with local partners to advance contraceptive services, comprehensive abortion care, and young people’s sexual and reproductive rights in communities around the world—including those affected by poverty, conflict, climate change, and natural disasters. Taken together, our programs enable millions of people to choose their own paths forward.