

HOW THE EU AND TANZANIA CAN WORK TOGETHER ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

56%
OF THE POPULATION
<19 YEARS OLD

**ACCESS TO
SRHR REMAINS
CHALLENGING**

**ALMOST 1/3
OF 15-19 YEARS OLD
ALREADY GAVE BIRTH
OR WERE PREGNANT**

The status of young people in Tanzania

Tanzania is characterized by a **youthful population and rapid population growth**, with a **high total fertility rate** of 4.9 children per woman. Estimates reported a population of 57.3 million in 2017 (half of which women), with a consistent growth rate of more than 3 percent since 1990. About 56 percent of the population is under 19 years old, with the adolescent population (aged 15–19) projected to grow from 12 million in 2015 up to 33 million by 2050.¹

What challenges do young people face in Tanzania?

Young people in Tanzania **face many health challenges**, including HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, and the inability to access Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) information and services, which in turn contributes to **unintended pregnancies**.

HIV/AIDS remains one of the main causes of mortality and premature death in Tanzania, despite the steady decline in prevalence in recent years (from 7 percent in 2003 to 4.6 percent in 2018 in the 15–49 year-old age group). There are gender and age disparities, with higher prevalence among women (6.2 percent) than in men (3.1 percent), and about half of all new infections being reported in the 15–29 year-old age group.²

Teenage pregnancy also represents a major challenge for Tanzania: according to the latest available figures from 2015/2016, 27 percent young women (15–19 years old) already had a birth or were pregnant, up from 23 percent in 2010 and 26 percent in 2004–2005. An important factor contributing to higher teenage pregnancy rates, **child marriage** also remains a serious challenge in the country, as 36 percent of women get married before their 18th birthday.³

Low contraceptive use and limited access to adolescent and youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services are another driving cause of the high HIV infection and teenage pregnancy rates: the 2015/2016 survey indicates that the total use of modern contraceptive rests at only 32.4 percent, and is as low as 8.6 percent for adolescent girls aged 15 to 19.⁴

Why is it important to invest in youth empowerment in Tanzania?

The aforementioned obstacles and challenges young people in Tanzania face in the area of sexual and reproductive health need to be addressed. Tanzania needs to urgently fast track investments to accelerate progress in youth health and wellbeing, focusing in particular on young women and girls. Recently, the Government of Tanzania has put in place policies to address and tackle these challenges. Such policies include:

- the National Plan for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health & Nutrition, called “One Plan III” (2021/2022 – 2025/2026);
- the Health Sector Strategic Plan V (HSSP V July 2021 – June 2026);
- the National Accelerated Action and Investment Agenda for Adolescent Health and Wellbeing 2021/22 – 2024/25 (NAIA-AHW).

However, additional efforts and investments need to be put in place to effectively implement these strategies and sensitively implement sexual and reproductive health programmes for young people, to ensure all youth can lead healthy and self-determined lives, thus positively contributing to the development of their communities.

¹ World Bank, 2020. Tanzania Public Expenditure Review 2020.

² United Republic of Tanzania. Global AIDS Monitoring, 2020 country progress report

³ United Republic of Tanzania, 2016. Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey and Malaria Indicator Survey (TDHS-MIS) 2015-16.

⁴ Ibid.

KEY FACTS



57.3 million
population (2017 estimates)



4.9
births per woman
(2017 estimates)



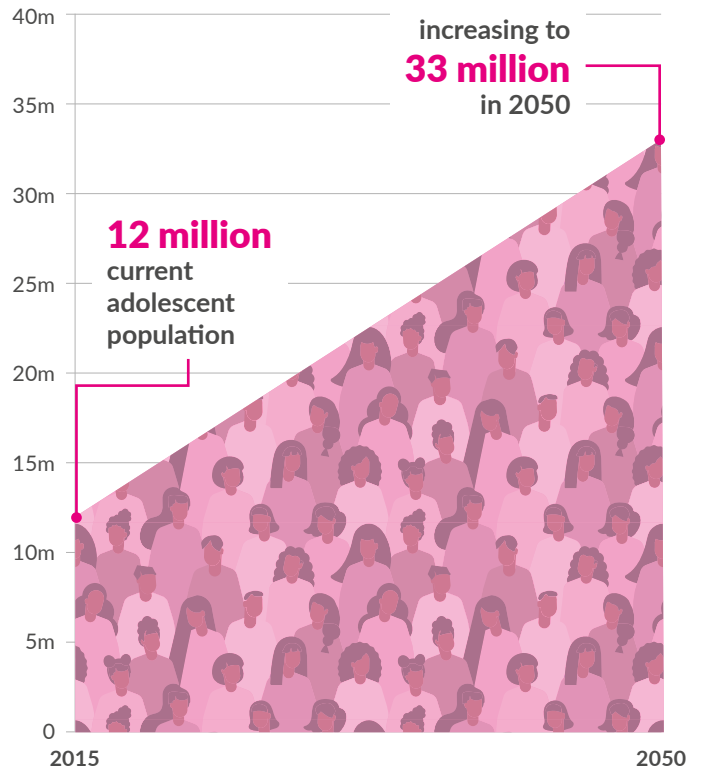
27%
teenage pregnancy rate
in 2015/16



8.6%
Modern contraceptive use for
adolescent girls in 2015/16

ADOLESCENT POPULATION

aged 15-19 (2015 estimates)



How the EU and Tanzania can work together:

- ▶ The EU should support the Tanzanian government's efforts to **fully implement the National Accelerated Action and Investment Agenda for Adolescent Health and Wellbeing 2021/22 – 2024/25 (NAIA-AHW)**, meeting its commitment to improve young people's health and wellbeing.
- ▶ The EU should consider **investing in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) programmes for young people** as a key priority area in its bilateral cooperation with Tanzania, following up on the commitments included in the new EU Gender Action Plan for 2021–2025 (GAP III).
- ▶ The EU should scale-up its support to **strengthen the national health system** to **ensure access to youth-friendly services** that address the negative outcomes of the COVID-19 crisis.
- ▶ The EU should provide **specific support to youth**, especially those employed in the informal sector, **to ensure they can access adequate health services**, in particular through the National Health Insurance.
- ▶ The EU delegation in Tanzania should **establish a Youth Sounding Board**, made up of representatives of young people, with the objective of ensuring young people's voices and needs are taken into account when developing and implementing programmes.