Young authors and researchers

- Adolescent and young peer researchers carried out and participated in analysing a lot of the studies reported here and young people peer reviewed and (co-)authored quite a few of the articles too.
- Papers cover studies from and activities in Australia, Bangladesh, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, UK, and USA and the Pacific.

What youth want to know about

- Adolescents and young people want to know about HIV, STIs, pregnancy, abortion, contraception, sexual and gender identity, communication in relationships, menstruation, sexual violence and coercion, stigma, bullying, discrimination. But above all, they want to know about sex and bodies. Long before they ever have sex, they want to understand and be able to talk about these issues with family, friends, peers.

Overarching messages of the papers

- Adolescents and young people want and need information with a sex-positive approach;
- Those providing it need specialist training; and
- Youth/adolescent leadership and involvement in policy and programmes are crucial.

Perspectives on youth needs/capacity

- Self-efficacy and the evolving capacity of youth to take decisions about their lives, health and health care, adolescent capacity to consent to transgender-related health care in Colombia and the USA.
- The importance of a positive approach to sexuality when young people seek information from sexual health programmes and learn about sexuality.
- Adolescents' access and adult gatekeeping to legal abortion services in Mexico City: differences at ages 12-14 and 15-17.
Youth involvement and activism
- Advocating for safe abortion in Rwanda: how young people’s activism and the personal stories of young women in prison brought about change.
- Participation and leadership in a peer support programmes and peer networks;
- Leadership at community level among their peers, e.g. running youth clubs, and
- Acting as peer providers of contraception and condoms to other adolescents and youth.
- Participation in “One Billion Rising” at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, USA

SRHR issues addressed
- Policy commitments vs. lived realities of young pregnant women and mothers in school in South Africa.
- Delays in termination of pregnancy among unmarried adolescents and young women attending a tertiary hospital abortion clinic in India.
- Young women’s experiences of side-effects from contraceptive implants: the conflict between fertility control and bodily control.
- When a girl’s decision involves the community: the realities of adolescent Maya girls’ lives in rural indigenous Guatemala

Sex, rights, services and HIV
- Fear and misconceptions about the risks of having sex among some adolescents born with HIV in Tanzania.
- Moving beyond the “male perpetrator, female victim” discourse in addressing sex and relationships for HIV prevention: peer research in Eastern Zambia
- Rights-based services for adolescents living with HIV: adolescent self-efficacy and implications for health systems in Zambia

Sexuality education
- Sex education in the eyes of primary school teachers in Brazil, using an innovative methodology for obtaining collective discourse.
- A sexuality education initiative involving teenagers, schools, parents and sexual health services in the USA.
- Integrating gender and rights into sexuality education: field reports on using it’s All One in five countries (China, Guatemala, Haiti, Nigeria, USA).
Sexual harassment and violence

- The extent of sexual harassment of adolescent girls and young women in Bangladesh by adolescent boys and young men
- Incredible extent of sexual abuse, sexual violence and exploitation of young women by adult men, relatives, employers and teachers in Tanzania.
- Pressure to enter early relationships and informal marriages in conflict and post-conflict settings in Uganda and the vulnerability of youth.

Bodies and products

- A study of introducing two new menstrual hygiene products – special cloths and pads – in a rural community in India.
- Use of youth of pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, energy and nutritional products to boost sexual pleasure, performance, appearance and health in Indonesia (chemical sexualities).

Crowdsourcing: a new methodology

- The use of “crowdsourcing” both to formulate the problems and generate solutions to youth leadership and participation in the AIDS response, a process in which “problems are broadcast to an unknown group of solvers in the form of an open call for solutions. Users – also known as the crowd – submit solutions”.

New for RHM: re visual/social media

- Three papers on visual and social media with links provided in the papers so you can watch as you read (online). They raise issues around sex & relationships that affect young people, from their own perspective. One from South Africa, is about using video, DVD and a mobile clip, exploring popular culture for social change.
- One from Ecuador about two videos, one with young people talking about sex and the other with three generations talking about what has changed in their lifetimes.
- One from Australia on young people’s reasons for using social media and the risk of sharing sexual health information, esp. on Facebook.
Three stills from “Girls at Risk”

**The most distressing paper**
- Young Tanzanian women faced major risks and risk-taking that undermined their ability to protect their own health and well-being: poverty that pushed them into having sex to meet basic needs; sexual expectations on the part of older men and boys their age; rape and coercive sex (including sexual abuse from an early age); and unintended pregnancy. Transactional sex with older men was one of the few available sources of income, making this a common choice for many girls. Yet parents and adult community members tended to blame the girls alone for putting themselves at risk. Men participated in the study as “community members” but weren’t challenged on their own sexual mores.

**The most positive paper**
- The extent to which young people seek out information about sex and sexual health from a huge range of sources – and they find it, though it may be full of misconceptions. The paper provides a picture of adolescents’ sexual feelings and concerns in relation to desire, pleasure, sexual power, masturbation, virginity, romance, love and dating, and arranged marriage – and how socio-sexual norms and taboos influence these. Curiosity of both boys and girls about sex was driven by a need and desire to know and understand, but also because it was exciting to read about and talk about sex. Young people were far from passive recipients of adult norms and messages on sexuality.

**Issues in current policy**
- Meeting the commitments of the ICPD Programme of Action to young people—miles to go and promises to keep…