Community Embedded Reproductive Health Care for Adolescents in Latin America (CERCA)

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ICRH
CERCA project

• European funded FP7 project, 4 years

• Main objective:
To improve sexual and reproductive health and health care of adolescents in Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua

• Specific objective:
To develop and test an intervention strategy that aims to improve sexual and reproductive health of adolescents in 3 Latin American cities
CERCA project – who?

• Partners in 3 Latin American cities:
  • Cochabamba (Bolivia): South Group (NGO)
  • Cuenca (Ecuador): University of Cuenca
  • Managua (Nicaragua):
    • CIES: Research centre of University of Managua
    • ICAS: NGO

• Partners in Europe:
  • Ghent University – ICRH: international coordinators
  • University of Amsterdam: qualitative research
  • Lithuanian University of Health Sciences
CERCA – why?

Adolescent fertility rate (Births per 1000 girls aged 15-19)

CERCA – how?

- Assessment ASRH in three countries / cities
- Cross sectional pre – intervention study
- Implementation intervention – ± 18 months
- Cross sectional post – intervention study

Axes

- Reinforced behaviour
- Knowledge
- Attitudes
- Skills
- External determinants
- Autoreflection

Objectives

- Improved communication on SRH
- Improved quality of and access to SRH information
- Improved access to existing SRH services
- Improved contraceptive use

Long-term outcomes: decreased teenage pregnancy rates
Hablemos de Sexualidad, sin Pelos en la Lengua

La Educación Sexual es un derecho de todos y todas, y una responsabilidad familiar.
CERCA – some important quantitative outcomes

- **Pre-intervention survey:**
  - A correlation between positive attitude towards gender equality and a more healthy and happy sex life among adolescents in Cochabamba and Cuenca

- **Impact evaluation study:**
  - Δ communication
  - Δ Use of SRH services
  - Δ Condom use

- **Scientific output:**
  - -> 6 scientific articles
CERCA – some important qualitative results

• Importance of working with extended family networks to improve ASRH in LA

• There is a need for non-hierarchical “spaces of dialogue” on issues of sex, sexuality and relationships, both uni-generational and multi-generational.

• Scientific output:
  -> 2 scientific articles
  -> 2 video’s on ASRH in Cuenca (Ecuador)
CERCA – some important qualitative results

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzFImeUWxvg
CERCA – some additional outcomes

• General – scientific documents:
  • 3 country reports
  • A strategy for promoting adolescent sexual and reproductive health in Latin America
  • A methodological model for developing, implementing and testing health promoting strategies
  • Report on translation of research in policy measures
  • Assessment Report on the use of Internet for Awareness Raising Activities
CERCA – some additional outcomes

• General:
  • Final international conference in Cuenca: > 800 participants and 45 speakers
  • Paper on reflections on the conference
  • Elaboration of the declaration of Cuenca and online petition — Improve Sexual and Reproductive Health of Adolescents in Latin America: http://chn.ge/1fobtSN > 500 supporters
  • Post hoc evaluation – funded by WHO → CERCA broke sex taboo
  • Invitations to international meetings on ASRH, WHO and UNFPA

CERCA – some additional outcomes

• Bolivia:
  • CERCA approach for sexuality education will be implemented in the Cochabamba school system as of 2014.

• Ecuador:
  • Establishment of a SRH health network in the Cuenca canton with a budget of $264,000 per year
  • Invitation to participate in the Global Early Adolescent Study (GEAS) – together with ICRH

• Nicaragua:
  • Commitment of ministry of health to continue to support CERCA activities.
The way forward

• Need for more implementation research on ASRH

• Need for (realist) evaluations of ASRH interventions:
  • Intervention design and development
  • Intervention implementation
  • Evaluation design and outcomes

• Need for longitudinal study on relation between gender norms/attitudes and ASRH (outcomes and wellbeing)

• Need for indicators to measure adolescent sexual wellbeing
Thank you!

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