

ADOLESCENT GIRLS' HEALTH AND PROTECTION IN PERU



© UNICEF_PERU

OVERVIEW

Thanks to the successful partnership between UNICEF USA and Zonta International, the second phase of the initiative has extended support to some of the most vulnerable areas in four regions of Peru (Huancavelica, Ucayali, Loreto and Northern Lima).

The adolescent population in the four regions presents different problems.

- **Huancavelica:** highest number of suicide attempts by adolescents (15-19 years old), mostly girls, due to undiagnosed and untreated chronic depression (80%).
- **Ucayali and Loreto:** highest rate of teenage pregnancy in the country (21.7% and 18.1%, respectively).
- **Northern Lima (Carabayllo and San Martín de Porres):** 11.5% of health consultations of the adolescent population residing in Northern Lima were related to problems affecting their mental health.

These problems must be identified and addressed in a timely manner in primary health care services in coordination with schools and the community so that the adolescent population, especially girls, have access to comprehensive health and protection services to prevent pregnancies and all kinds of violence. Obstacles to accomplish this are due to many public services being hit hard during the COVID-19 pandemic and the current context of socio-political conflicts, constant change of authorities and new emergencies caused by natural disasters and outbreaks of dengue fever.

SECOND PHASE RESULTS



157,000 students

in target regions and more than 1,300,000 (648,000 girls) nationwide have benefited from the violence prevention strategy in schools.



213 schools

in target regions and 2,184 nationwide are implementing violence prevention protocols and a toolbox to implement health promotion actions.



49 health centers

in Ucayali and Huancavelica have tools to collaborate with schools to protect students' mental health.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND RESULTS



COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE

Thanks to the collaboration of Zonta International and the technical assistance of UNICEF, communication materials were developed for students, teachers and health personnel to disseminate the benefits that adolescents can access free of charge to prevent, identify and address health risks. These materials have been officially recognized by the Ministries of Health and Education and are being disseminated nationwide, contributing to an increased coverage of comprehensive health care for students.

UNICEF has strengthened the capacities of 90 teachers from 20 schools and trained more than 80 professionals from 49 health facilities in Huancavelica and Ucayali. These trainings equipped participants in the use of screening instruments that allow them to identify and address mental health problems that may affect adolescent students in a timely manner. They were also trained in the prevention of suicide attempts and in referral flows to handle imminent suicide risks.

3,226

Adolescent girls who underwent the comprehensive health assessment in the prioritized districts in Huancavelica, Loreto, Ucayali and Northern Lima.

698

Adolescent girls screened for such risks in the prioritized districts in Huancavelica and Ucayali.

Fifteen schools in Huancavelica, Loreto and Ucayali have included health promotion aspects in their 2023 management tools, such as:

Comprehensive sexual education.

Menstrual health.

Nutrition.

Mental health and violence prevention.

Access to safe water.

As a result, schools are carrying out health promotion actions that benefit 6,047 students (2,978 girls):

- Implementation of spaces for counselling on sexual issues in schools, where the professional obstetrician of the health establishment provides care.
- Development of comprehensive health care campaigns for students in schools.
- Coordination with local government to improve water and sanitation services in schools.
- Refurbishment of schools for the promotion of menstrual health of female students.

TEENAGE PREGNANCY

UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Economy (MINEDU) and Finance in developing interventions for the prevention of teenage pregnancy.

UNICEF prepared a concept note for the development of a comprehensive pilot program for the prevention of recurrent teenage pregnancy to be implemented in the district of Nauta in Loreto.

Young mothers in this pilot program will gain support to care for their children in early childhood and promote caregiver and child mental health and wellbeing.

PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE

- With the support of Zonta International, UNICEF
- developed a Programme for the Prevention of Violence
- in Schools (PREVI) which was validated in 26 schools in
- Huancavelica and Ucayali.
- Through the strengthening of the alliance between
- UNICEF and MINEDU, an agreement was reached in
- 2023 to scale up to reach 2,128 schools including 178 in
- Ucayali, Huancavelica, Loreto and Northern Lima.
- The Government of Peru is investing around 15 million
- dollars in the implementation of PREVI, which is already
- part of MINEDU's National School Coexistence Strategy.

