

Healthier Adolescents through behavior change adolescent health promotion

Lao Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross
(Leeva Norporyengva)

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Introduction

To support Lao PDR's Sustainable Development Goals such as teenage pregnancy rate, Lao Red Cross (LRC) together with the Provincial Health Department (PHD) started the Integrated Primary Health Care Project (IPHCP) aimed to improve adolescent health in 14 rural schools in two of Luangprabang's poorest districts, Pakseng and Phonethong.

Objectives: Contributing to improved health and well-being of disadvantaged adolescents.

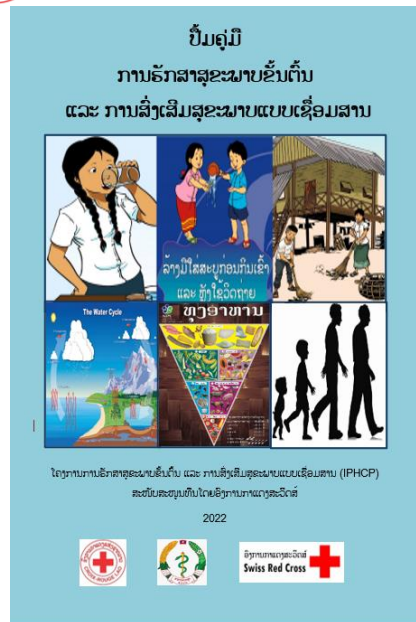


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Methods: Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey as baseline and extensive stakeholder coordination with Provincial Departments and District authorities led to the development of a coherent Behavior Change Adolescent Health Package (BCA-HP) curriculum.



Methods: Student volunteers receive BCA-HP training as well as training material and subsequently provide peer-to-peer health education to other students. Trained and equipped teachers further provided additional educational sessions within and outside of the classroom setting.



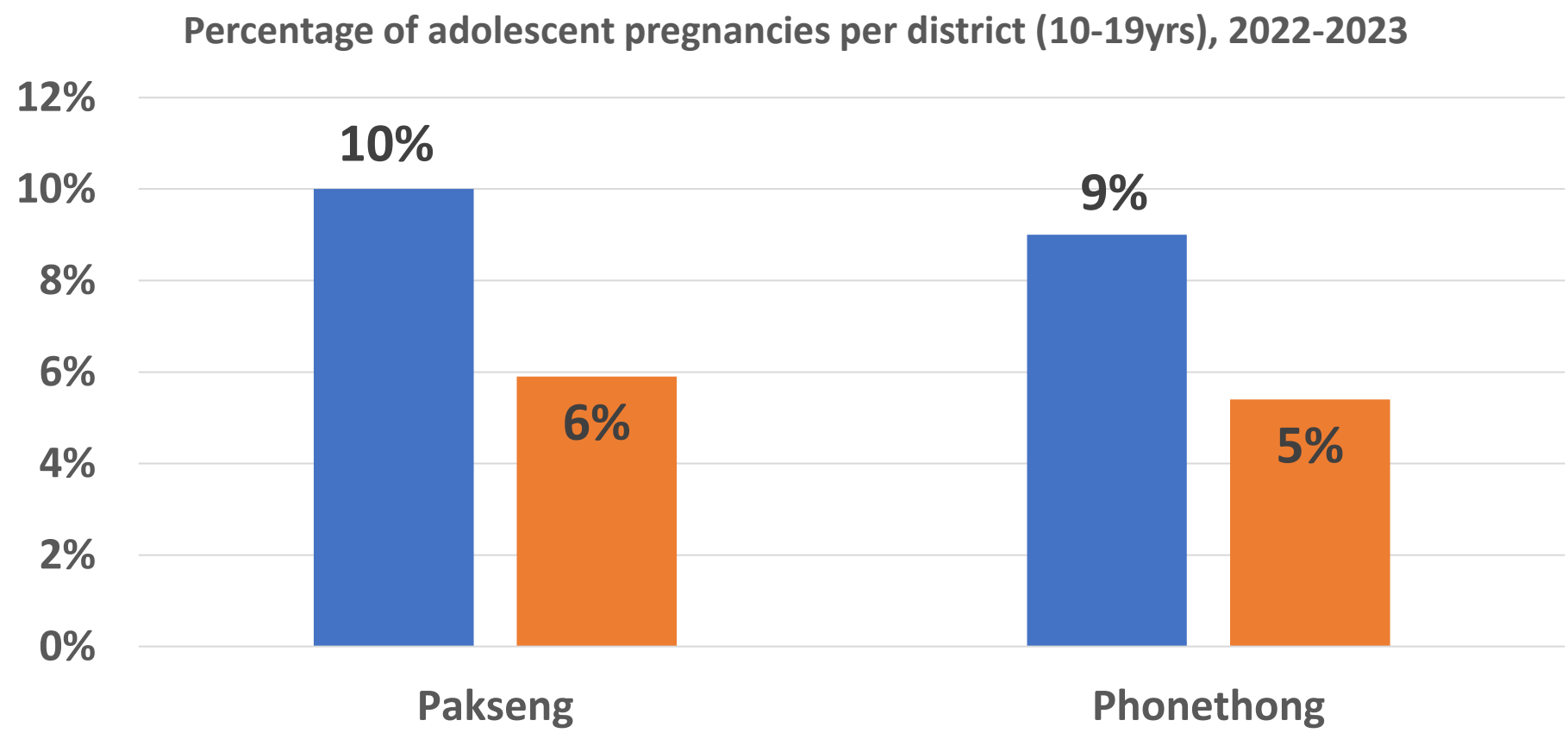
Methods: Beside the BCA-HP training, LRC also provide the first aid trainings, public speaking training, personal development / career planning and strengthening self-confidence of youth, garden training. Alight with knowledge, behavior practice is very important to change the adolescent behavior to healthier, LRC provided the Gravity Fed Water System and infrastructure construction as toilet, pad burner, hand washing station, water filter, waste burner, kitchen and garden at school. Closely collaborating with Provincial Health Department, District Education Office, District Health Office and Health Center to promote the adolescent health.

Methods: LRC monitored monthly, quarterly and semi-annually through fixed standard indicators on knowledge, health behavior change including water sanitation and hygiene. The PHD and health centers provided additional health promotion at village level, joined by school volunteers(Red Cross Youth or RCY). After the monitoring LRC conduct the WASH MC meeting (Water Sanitation Hygiene Management Committee) to reflect and then create the action plan





Results: A total of 350 adolescent students (59 percent girls; 41 percent boys) received training in year 2023, of whom 80 percent demonstrated significant improvement in their health understanding post-training. As an indirect result of combined efforts, the adolescent pregnancy rate was reduced from 100/1,000 to 59/1,000 in Pakseng and from 90/1,000 to 54/1,000 in Phonathong from 2022-2023.



Results

- A total of 522 adolescent students (299 girls and 223 boys) received training in menstrual hygiene management. All RCTV and RCY were trained and delivered education to students. 10 target schools had at least one separate toilet with an attached menstrual pad burner
- Handwashing with soap increased from 15% in 2021 to 53% of students in 2023)
- 11 out of 14 schools have established regular exchanges with the respective health center staff and VHV)



Conclusion

Adolescent health improved through health education and health promotion by youth volunteers at school and improved health service at health centers. Integrated and coordinated work between LRC, PHD and districts led to positive influence on national SDG indicators. Increased knowledge of healthy lifestyles in youth supported the reduction of the adolescent pregnancy rate.





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Thank you