



## Strengthen economic measures for families with low socioeconomic status to reduce teenage pregnancy rates

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### *Background*

The phase of transition from childhood to adulthood which usually happen between the ages of 10 and 19 called adolescence period. It is well known phase of opportunities and risk, an important individual period of growing that deal with physical and mental conflicts.

Teenage pregnancy remains a major issue in the healthcare system. Approximately more than 20 million adolescence girls specifically in developing countries getting pregnant. This is becoming a huge issue in public health as the death due to complication from prenatal and postnatal ranked as top two among adolescence girls' age.

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## Current situation

Pregnant teenagers are considered a high-risk patient because of high mortality statistic. They not only risk from complication of pregnancy but also bring adverse effect on future wellbeing for both mother and new born. It been estimated more than 70 thousand teenage girls die every year due to obstetric complication.

There are many factors that contribute to the reason certain teenagers not only become, but choose to be pregnant, regardless of opposing circumstances. These factors have much to do with the fact that times are continuously changing and so are people and their decisions. We could put long list of factors that lead to increasing of teenage pregnancy cases worldwide. Worldwide, adolescents suffer from a disproportionate share of lower education level, child marriage, employment attainment and a lot more.

# Adolescent childbearing is a mechanism that perpetuates poverty from generation to generation

The most prominent predictive factor is lower economic status of family or household. There is some evidence that parental income status could affect adolescent pregnancy prospects. Studies indicate that teenage pregnancy is more common in developing countries than in developed ones, in rural areas more so than in urban areas. This indicates that teenagers' socioeconomic background is a major contributing factor to teenage pregnancy.

Statistics shown those living in lower social income status areas were have higher percentage likely to suffered from early motherhood complication than girls in higher social income status. According to world statistics, 90% of teenage pregnancies occur in low- and moderate-income countries; these countries suffer high maternal and infant mortality rates, which ultimately impacts a country's socio-economic development.

Focusing in Malaysia, from the data registered from our health facilities shown that their huge gap between different social economic status. Most cases originate from Borneo region, particularly in rural areas where families from low economic income levels. Lower income household associated with lower educational attainment, so most of the girls age 10-19 years old unable to go to school. Moreover, there were higher numbers of cases among teenagers who were unschooled.

This data showed how families' socioeconomic affect the level of education provided to the children. Thus, indirectly lead to increase in various social problems such as teenage pregnancy.

## Up-stream

Malaysia is well known as one of countries with constitutional monarch and parliamentary democracy, so Malaysia has ministries that can be included as active party for the plan to strengthen economic measures for family with lower socioeconomic status in order to reduce teenage pregnancy rates.

### Ministry of education

Provide education too poor children in order to increase their education level and allow them to learn skills that can aid them gain higher salary career or own a business.

### Ministry of human resource

Focus on the poor via structured program and support to improve their current status. In addition, increasing productivity and diversifying sources of income of household

### Ministry of Housing and Local Government

Aid by providing facilities that can accommodate to their basic need in life such as health and education facilities.

### The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

Offer support to special needs and old age people especially in rural area.

### National Economic Action Council

Help strengthening a stable market price which make essential items such as food and basic appliance available to poor and reducing tax for the poor.

## Recommendation

As teen pregnancy rates continue to rise among adolescents in specifically in lower social income society, there is an urgent need for more prevention and intervention. Various act and plan have been structured to combat this issue. Focusing on heightened the economic status of population in Malaysia. It involved each level of societies.

Bil	Negeri	Kahwin		Tidak Kahwin		Jumlah
		Bersekolah	Tidak Sekolah	Bersekolah	Tidak Sekolah	
1	Sabah	4	4400	34	357	4795
2	Sarawak	77	2114	78	1127	3396
3	Selangor	198	895	93	300	1486
4	Johor	619	183	475	131	1408
5	Pahang	306	601	55	70	1032

Source: Ministry of Health statistic 2016

## Down-stream

Focusing on individual responsibilities as currently in modern area all the knowledge and information can be gain through the tip of finger. One can enrolled to any free courses that educate at safe sexual behavior and prevention of unwanted pregnancy among adolescent. Thus, effectively combat this issue and lower the rate as well. Apart from that, nowadays various NGO offer module and internship in order to help poor population to gain skills and knowledge that can be used to help increasing their socioeconomic status.

## Conclusion

Teenage pregnancy still remains a problematic part of a teenager's life, even though rates have steadily declined in recent years. It has a significant negative impact on a teen's sociability and development into a responsible adult. Many families find themselves in further financial hardship as a result of the costs of raising a child. The cycle of poverty will continue unless this intervention is done. Thus, the need for cooperation from various social institutions to join as a force in order to strengthen economic measures for families with lower socioeconomic status to reduce teenage pregnancy rates.

As outline in Sustainable Developmental goal as one of specific target to reach by 2030, to ensure global access to sexual and reproductive health services, which consist of education and knowledge regarding family planning. Undeniable this will require a lot of resources especially from teenager themselves. Thus, it solidified the need for higher and stable income to sustained better life for teenager.

A major initiative in the UN's Global Strategy for Women's, Children's, and Adolescent's Health, Family Planning 2020, calls for providing modern contraceptives to all women in order to prevent unwanted pregnancies and reduce the high teen birth rate in the world's poorest countries. Furthermore, these actions promote the UN's Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, which aim to eradicate poverty and enhance the quality of life for all. Apart from that, all three of the Sustainable Development Goals - Goals 3, 4 and 5 - which promote improved health and education, as well as gender equality, are heavily dependent on improving the lives and health of adolescent girls.

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