

CONCEPT NOTE

Faith, Community and Adolescent Wellbeing: Learning from Efforts to Address Teenage Pregnancy in Africa

Date	18 June 2026
Time	11:00 AM – 12:30 PM GMT 12:00 – 1:30 PM WAT 1:00 – 2:30 PM CAT 2:00 – 3:30 PM EAT
Format	Interactive Virtual Webinar (Zoom)
Theme	Addressing Teenage Pregnancy: Lessons, Challenges and the Role of Faith Actors
Convener	Faith to Action Network (F2AN)

1. BACKGROUND

Teenage pregnancy remains one of the most pressing social, health, economic, and development challenges affecting adolescents globally. While progress has been made in reducing adolescent birth rates in many countries, the burden remains disproportionately high in low- and middle-income countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 21 million girls aged 15–19 in low- and middle-income countries become pregnant every year, with nearly half of these pregnancies being unintended. Approximately 12 million adolescent girls give birth annually. Sub-Saharan Africa continues to record the highest adolescent birth rates globally.

Teenage pregnancy is both a cause and consequence of poverty, gender inequality, limited access to education, harmful social norms, child marriage, sexual violence, and inadequate access to sexual and reproductive health information and services. The consequences are far-reaching: adolescent mothers face higher risks of pregnancy-related complications, while their children are more likely to experience adverse health outcomes. Additionally, teenage pregnancy often interrupts education, limits economic opportunities, and perpetuates cycles of poverty and exclusion.

Across many communities, faith leaders and faith-based organizations play a significant role in shaping values, influencing community attitudes, supporting families, and responding to social challenges. Their reach and credibility position them as important stakeholders in addressing teenage pregnancy through prevention efforts, support for vulnerable adolescents, community dialogue, advocacy, and referral to appropriate services.

However, there remains a need for greater exchange of experiences, evidence, and practical approaches among faith actors working in different contexts. What interventions have shown promise? What challenges persist? How can faith actors engage constructively while respecting the dignity, rights, and realities of adolescents?

To contribute to this dialogue, Faith to Action Network (F2AN) will convene a regional webinar bringing together practitioners, researchers, faith leaders, and development actors from across Africa to share experiences, evidence, and practical resources.

2. WEBINAR OBJECTIVES

Overall Objective

To strengthen understanding and action among faith actors on addressing teenage pregnancy through evidence-based, context-sensitive, and community-driven approaches.

Specific Objectives

- To examine the current realities and drivers of teenage pregnancy in African contexts.
- To showcase practical experiences and case studies from faith actors across East, West, and Southern Africa.
- To discuss successful interventions, challenges encountered, and lessons learned.
- To identify resources, tools, and partnerships that can support faith actors in responding effectively to teenage pregnancy.
- To foster collaboration and knowledge exchange among faith-based organizations and stakeholders.

3. KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the key drivers of teenage pregnancy within different community contexts?
2. How are faith actors currently responding to teenage pregnancy?
3. What interventions have demonstrated positive results?
4. What approaches have been less effective and why?
5. How can faith actors engage adolescents, families, schools, and communities more effectively?
6. What role can faith leaders play in reducing stigma and supporting adolescent mothers?
7. What evidence, tools, and resources are available to strengthen faith-based responses?
8. How can regional learning and collaboration be enhanced?

4. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Enhanced shared understanding of teenage pregnancy trends and drivers in Africa —** Participants will have a clearer, evidence-informed understanding of the structural, social, and contextual drivers of teenage pregnancy, including gender inequality, poverty, harmful norms, and service gaps.
- **Documented cross-regional learning from faith actors —** Practical experiences, case studies, and lessons from East, West, and Southern Africa will be consolidated, highlighting both effective interventions and approaches that have not worked, including why.
- **Improved clarity on the role of faith actors in prevention and response —** Participants will deepen their understanding of how faith leaders and faith-based organizations can contribute to prevention, stigma reduction, adolescent support, and referral pathways in ways that are rights-respecting and context-sensitive.
- **Mapping of practical tools, resources, and existing initiatives —** Existing resources, toolkits, and programmatic approaches shared during the webinar will be identified and compiled for wider dissemination among faith-based and implementing partners.
- **Strengthened networking and collaboration among stakeholders —** The webinar will facilitate new and reinforced connections between faith-based actors, practitioners, researchers, and development partners working on adolescent wellbeing.
- Take forward at least one community or advocacy action to reduce stigma and improve adolescent wellbeing.

5. SESSION PROGRAMME

Time (Multi-zone)	Session	Description	Speaker(s)
2:00 – 2:10 PM EAT (11:00 – 11:10 GMT)	Welcome & Introduction	Moderator welcomes participants, introduces facilitators and shares the session objectives	Moderator
2:10 – 2:15 PM EAT (11:10 – 11:15 GMT)	Opening Remarks	Faith perspectives on adolescent wellbeing and the importance of collective action	Reverend Jane Ng'ang'a
2:15 – 2:30 PM EAT (11:15 – 11:30 GMT)	Setting the Context	Global and regional overview of teenage pregnancy Emerging trends and key drivers	Dr. Scholar Kaaria
2:30 – 3:00 PM EAT (11:30 AM – 12:00 GMT)	Panel Presentation	Regional experiences from faith actors across West, East and Southern Africa	Prof. Azizat Hamisi Mwatondo Rev. Norah Naitore
3:00 – 3:10 PM EAT (12:00 – 12:10 GMT)	Interactive Q&A	Open discussion on successful strategies faith actors have utilized to address teenage pregnancy	All Speakers (Facilitated by Moderator)
3:10 – 3:20 PM EAT (12:10 – 12:20 GMT)	Resources & Practical Tools	Existing resources for faith leaders and FBOs Opportunities for collaboration and partnership	Prof. Ezra Chitando
3:20 – 3:30 PM EAT (12:20 – 12:30 GMT)	Way Forward & Closing	Summary of recommendations and best practices Participants share collaboration opportunities via chat	Moderator

6. EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS

The webinar is expected to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders, including:

- Faith leaders and religious institutions
- Faith-based organizations
- Youth leaders and youth-serving organizations
- Sexual and reproductive health practitioners
- Gender and child protection practitioners
- Researchers and academics
- Development partners and donors
- Government representatives
- Community-based organizations
- Members of the Faith to Action Network