

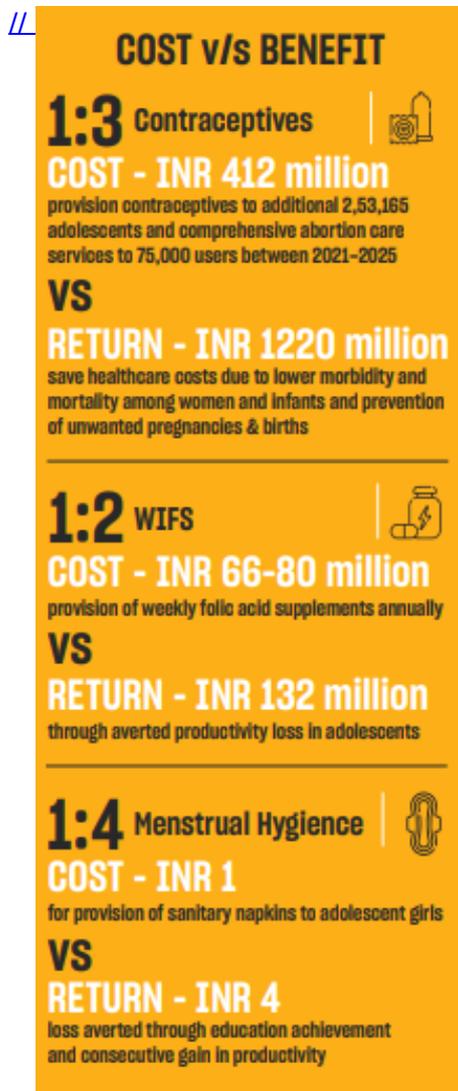


Adolescents' Sexual and Reproductive Health: Rajasthan

Why in News

Recently, findings of a study titled “Returns on Investment in Adolescents' Sexual and Reproductive Health in Rajasthan” were released.

- Adolescents are a **heterogeneous group aged between 10 and 19 years**, who are in different stages of development, live in varying circumstances and have distinct needs.



Key Points

- About Study**

- It examines the **economic and health benefits** that could accrue **from increased investment in adolescents' sexual and reproductive health-specific interventions** in Rajasthan.
 - The study has calculated the **benefit-cost ratio** to conclude that **for every Rs. 100 spent** on meeting the unmet needs of adolescents, there will be a **return of approximately Rs. 300** in terms of healthcare costs saved.
- It also explores the potential for **scaling up the services such as Access to contraceptives; Comprehensive Abortion Care (CAC); [Weekly Iron and Folic acid Supplementation \(WIFS\)](#); and, Menstrual Hygiene Schemes (MHS)** across the state.

▪ Adolescents in India

- **Population:** With **253 million adolescents** (which implies that every fifth person in India is an adolescent), India has an unprecedented opportunity to accelerate economic development and reduce poverty.
- **Challenges to Healthy Development:** A variety of factors that include **structural poverty, social discrimination, regressive social norms, inadequate education, and early marriage and childbearing**, especially in the **marginalized and under-served sections of the population**.

▪ The Case of Rajasthan

- **Adolescent Population:** The total adolescent population of Rajasthan is 15 million or 23% of the total population in the state. Of these, 53% are males and 47% are females.
- **Child Marriage and Adolescent Pregnancy:** It continues to be of concern in Rajasthan as more than one-third of the girls (35.4%) get married before 18 years of age and 6.3% in the age group of 15-19 years are already mothers.
 - This is significantly **higher than the national average of 27%**.
- **Impact on Mother and Infant**
 - **Birth-related Complications:** Adolescent mothers aged 10-19 years face higher risks of birth-related complications like **eclampsia, puerperal endometritis (uterine infection)** and other **systemic infections** than women of higher age groups.
 - **Risk to Newborn:** Babies born to adolescent mothers also face a **higher risk of low birth weight, prematurity, birth injuries, stillbirth and infant mortality**.
 - **Restrict Career Choices:** Health problems, lack of education and the responsibilities of parenthood combine to further **restrict the adolescent's future economic opportunities and career choices**.
- **Suggestions**
 - Development of **new standards and guidelines** to improve the quality of reproductive health services.
 - The State government should **prudently invest in ensuring that the working age population** is healthy and literate, and has access to resources.
 - While the adolescent-specific health interventions needed to be **sensitive to their requirements, nutrition supplementation programmes** should also be strengthened and scaled up.
 - **Increase in the modern contraceptive prevalence rate** for spacing methods from the existing 10.1% to 32% in the 2021-25 period.
 - Adoption of a **multi-faceted and innovative approach** to reach out to adolescents.

Initiatives Taken

▪ Rajasthan

- **Zero Teenage Pregnancy Campaign:** The aim of the campaign is to create greater

awareness around teenage pregnancy in Rajasthan and encourage stakeholders to make a strong commitment towards ending teenage pregnancy.

▪ **National Initiatives**

- **Adolescent Friendly Health Services Program:** [Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram](#) is there, where female adolescents are sensitised about their health.
- **Scheme for Adolescent Girls:** To facilitate, educate and empower [Adolescent Girls \(AGs\)](#) so as to enable them to become self-reliant and aware citizens.
- [Poshan Abhiyan](#) and [PM-Poshan Scheme](#) to address the issue of malnutrition.

[Source: TH](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/adolescents-sexual-and-reproductive-health-rajasthan>