


# Chapter 12

## Pathways to a Sustainable Future Through Adolescent Reproductive Health Empowerment

**Marie Grace Avelino Gomez**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0180-9875>

*University of the Philippines, Philippines*

**Samboy Dela Cruz Franco**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8317-2745>

*Philippine Department of Education, Philippines*

### **ABSTRACT**

*Adolescent reproductive health education is crucial in addressing the rising prevalence of teenage pregnancies in the Philippines, which has been recognized as a national emergency. Limited knowledge of sexual health and low contraceptive use among Filipino youth exacerbate socio-economic challenges, including poverty, unemployment, and environmental strain. This chapter explores the role of adolescent reproductive health in fostering sustainability by examining legal frameworks, educational strategies, and implementation barriers. Aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the chapter highlights the need for inclusive policies, youth-friendly healthcare services, and interdisciplinary approaches to empower adolescents in making informed reproductive health decisions.*

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-1280-4.ch012

## INTRODUCTION

The Philippines faces a significant challenge in addressing the increasing prevalence of teenage pregnancies, as it was dubbed a *national and social emergency* by the National Economic and Development Authority in 2019 (Cordero, 2024). This alarming growth affects the Philippine population, exacerbating pressing issues such as rising unemployment, higher poverty rates, limited housing opportunities, overcrowded transportation systems, overwhelmed healthcare and educational institutions, and sanitation and pollution crises (Patton et al., 2020). A probable cause of this issue is that only 37.8% of Filipino females aged 19-45 had adequate knowledge on sexual health, and only 28.57% used contraceptives (Palomeno et al., 2024). These challenges hinder the nation's progress toward sustainable development, underscoring the need for a multifaceted approach to empower Filipino youth through comprehensive adolescent reproductive health education. This book chapter explores the critical role of adolescent reproductive health in fostering sustainability, highlighting legal frameworks, educational strategies, and societal barriers while proposing actionable solutions to create a sustainable future (Philippine Legislator's Committee on Population and Development, Inc., 2024).

Adolescents represent a powerful demographic capable of driving transformative change when equipped with accurate reproductive health knowledge (Azzopardi et al., 2024). Empowering Filipino youth to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health is a vital step toward achieving sustainable development. Through comprehensive sexuality education, adolescents can gain insights into population dynamics, wise decision-making on sexuality, and the cultural, societal, and moral implications of contraceptive use (Keiting et al., 2021). Additionally, the promotion of delayed childbearing can enhance stability, reduce economic strain, and alleviate environmental pressures (Van der Heijde, 2020). By fostering informed and responsible decision-making, adolescent reproductive health education aligns with broader sustainability goals, enabling adolescents to contribute meaningfully to societal progress.

Existing Philippine laws and policies provide a foundation for adolescent reproductive health. The Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act (RA 10354) is a cornerstone legislation seeking comprehensive reproductive health services and education (Philippine Congress, 2012). While these laws represent significant progress, there remain gaps in their implementation, particularly in reaching marginalized populations such as those in extreme poverty, indigenous peoples groups, and persons with disabilities. Creating mechanisms to address these gaps is essential for ensuring that adolescent reproductive health programs are inclusive and effective in promoting sustainability.

26 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/pathways-to-a-sustainable-future-through-adolescent-reproductive-health-empowerment/380528](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/pathways-to-a-sustainable-future-through-adolescent-reproductive-health-empowerment/380528)

## Related Content

---

### Sustainable Watershed Management: A Novel Approach for Green Technology

Sonal Sareen Pathak and Sandhya Batalia (2022). *Handbook of Research on Green Technologies for Sustainable Management of Agricultural Resources* (pp. 188-199). [www.irma-international.org/chapter/sustainable-watershed-management/303699](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/sustainable-watershed-management/303699)

### Geospatial Data Infrastructure (GDI) for Sharing Agro-Climatic Information to Improve Agricultural Productivity in Nigeria

A. Ayanlade, M. O. Olawole, O. S. Ayanlade and O. Bolarin (2013). *E-Agriculture and Rural Development: Global Innovations and Future Prospects* (pp. 42-50). [www.irma-international.org/chapter/geospatial-data-infrastructure-gdi-sharing/72265](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/geospatial-data-infrastructure-gdi-sharing/72265)

### Beyond Compliance: Leveraging NFRD and CSRD for Transformative CSR Reporting and Stakeholder Empowerment in Corporate Governance

Matic ufar, Jernej Belak and Andreja Primec (2024). *Corporate Governance and CSR Strategies for Sustainability* (pp. 233-261). [www.irma-international.org/chapter/beyond-compliance/344403](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/beyond-compliance/344403)

### Integrating Sustainable Development Into Project Portfolio Management Through Application of Open Innovation

Hosein Daneshpour (2020). *Sustainable Business: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 773-790). [www.irma-international.org/chapter/integrating-sustainable-development-into-project-portfolio-management-through-application-of-open-innovation/232826](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/integrating-sustainable-development-into-project-portfolio-management-through-application-of-open-innovation/232826)

### Do Community Engagement and Fairness Matter in Local Acceptance of Wind Turbines in Tunisia?

Amal Ben Cheikh and Fatma Ezzahra Bakini Driss (2022). *International Journal of Social Ecology and Sustainable Development* (pp. 1-13). [www.irma-international.org/article/do-community-engagement-and-fairness-matter-in-local-acceptance-of-wind-turbines-in-tunisia/292073](http://www.irma-international.org/article/do-community-engagement-and-fairness-matter-in-local-acceptance-of-wind-turbines-in-tunisia/292073)