

Adolescent Mothers Against All Odds (AMAL)

Locally Developed, Globally Scaled

In response to the escalating humanitarian crisis in Syria, CARE, along with UNFPA, Syria Relief & Development (SRD), and other partners launched the Adolescent Mothers against All Odds (AMAL) Initiative. This initiative, stemming from CARE's gender-based violence regional strategy and global best practices in adolescent sexual and reproductive health (SRH) during emergencies, addresses the critical gap in access to SRH services for pregnant adolescents and first-time mothers.

Launched in March 2020, the AMAL Initiative, in collaboration with Northwest Syria's GBV sub-cluster, focuses on pregnant adolescents and first-time mothers in crisis-affected settings. It comprises a Young Mothers' Club, community dialogue groups, and engagement with healthcare providers. The initiative aims to not only meet immediate needs but also tackle gender norms and biases, involving adolescents in leadership roles through Adolescent Advisory Committees. **As the face of fragile contexts becomes younger, the AMAL Initiative seeks to contribute to the global dialogue on adolescent-responsive SRH and GBV programming.**

Story of Creation

AMAL was created in 2018 through collaboration with partners, as part of a Whole of Syria Adolescent Strategy, in response to the protracted humanitarian crises leading to increased early marriage, adolescent pregnancy, and their SRH/GBV impacts on poor sexual reproductive health and rights, and protection outcomes.

AMAL's program creation prioritized consultation and discussions with adolescent girls to identify the bottlenecks that highlighted the need for adolescent-specific interventions that address access to SRH information/services, and gender-transformative approaches.

This was the initial impetus that laid the groundwork for AMAL in Syria which began as Young Mothers Clubs, and later expanded into community dialogues, and health worker components to support an enabling environment for adolescents to exercise their SRH rights.



Key global impacts

- **23%** increase in support for girls' use of family planning
- **20%** increase in support for girls exercising reproductive rights
- **Doubling** of use of family planning, including contraceptives, among adolescents

Implementation sites

- Northwest Syria
- Northeast Nigeria
- Somalia



Key components

Young Mothers Club

Community Members

Health Providers

Community Advisory Group



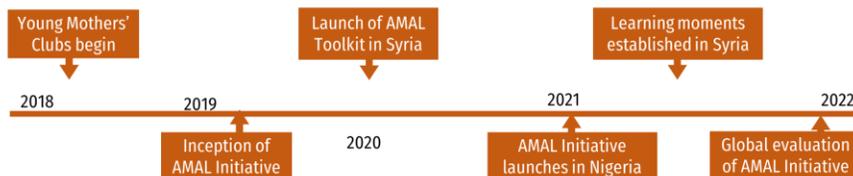
Story of scale-up

The initiative started as Young Mothers' Club in 2018, with subsequent adaptive learning based on feedback from the adolescents themselves, partners and in alignment with best practices using a socio-ecological model. The expanded AMAL model includes additional community and health provider components alongside the Young Mothers' Clubs, and the formation of Community Advisory Groups. The AMAL model leverages CARE's gender transformative approach and Social Analysis and Action tools.

In 2021, through UNFPA funding, CARE worked with local community members and stakeholders to adapt and pilot AMAL in NE Nigeria.

In 2022, with UNFPA support, CARE led the first ever global evaluation across Syria and Nigeria, and by 2023, three countries are implementing AMAL: **Syria, Nigeria, and Somalia**.

Evolution of AMAL



Learnings

- Adolescent-responsive programming is needed and feasible even in crisis settings.
- Addressing norms to create an enabling environment for adolescents does result in improved uptake of sexual and reproductive health services
- “With and for” adolescents should be a key programming principle even in fragile contexts

Impacts



Adolescents

Girls' self-esteem surged by 43%

A 50% boost in girls' confidence to seek healthcare services



Health Providers

Comfort levels increased by 32% among health providers delivering family planning to adolescents

Health providers showed a 19% increase in supporting girls' choices for family planning



Community

Community members exhibited a 21% increase in recognizing unequal norms, with a 31% rise in their interest to address them.



Health Services

Antenatal care visits saw an increase from 14% to 20%, contributing to maternal health

Births attended by skilled birth assistance increased from 8% to 23%, enhancing safe delivery

Postnatal care increased from 9% to 14%, indicating improved care for new mothers and infants

For more resources:

[Care.org](#), [here](#)

[AMAL Learning Report](#), [here](#)

[Failing Forward podcast](#), [here](#)

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