



Youth Resolution



Background

The year 2024 marks the 30th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) which was held in 1994 in Cairo. The Cairo Conference as it came to be known, defined a significant shift in priorities, away from population control to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) at the global stage. One of its most significant achievements was that it highlighted young people's sexual and reproductive rights, including their right to autonomy and decision-making, sexual and reproductive health education, and the provision of services connected to SRH. Thirty years later, interest in educating young people about improving their rights and well-being regarding sexual and reproductive health has grown significantly. The current generation of youth, with 1.8 billion individuals aged 10 to 24, is the largest in history. South Asia in particular is home to nearly half of the total youth population in the world which makes it crucial to ensure they realize their sexual reproductive health rights.

Preamble

More than 50 youth representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka convened for a roundtable consultation to deliberate on Youth Collective Action for Accountability for SRHR in South Asia. The consultation was co-organised by COPASAH (South Asia), The YP Foundation (India), Visible Impact (Nepal) and SAHAJ (India) from 12th to 14th June in New Delhi, India. The group was diverse in terms of gender identity, sexual orientation, caste, region, religion and ability. This document has been drafted by the delegates themselves and is primarily meant to engage with policies, programmes and related institutionalized structures relevant to SRHR at the local, national and global levels.

The South Asian subcontinent has some commonalities in both its social and cultural milieus and histories, as well as contemporary struggles. Many of our countries are grappling with economic inequality, unjust financial systems, divisive politics and repressive political regimes - we recognize that all of these have a bearing on our ability to actualize our sexual and reproductive rights, as well as to take action collectively for accountability. We recognize that local and country contexts – social, political, cultural and economic – have a bearing on the demands that advocates make, and a singular document cannot represent these comprehensively. While this document attempts to include key perspectives that were articulated by the group, it is essential that advocates contextualize it for use in their respective contexts.

This resolution begins with the values that the delegates consider central to our endeavours as SRHR advocates, goes on to state the commitments that we make, and finally ends with our demands from different actors.

We Affirm - Our Values

1. We affirm our belief in the principle that human rights are inherent to all, regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship, caste, religion, disability or any other status. Duty bearers who may be state or non-state actors, have the obligation to respect, protect, and fulfil the rights of rights-holders.
2. We affirm the principle of intersectionality, by which we recognize that people carry with them varied identities, that may either render them powerless or confer power on them, and that has a bearing on how they experience the world.
3. We affirm respect for all where each person has freedom of choice, individuality, privacy, autonomy and expression of oneself while being respectful towards others' lives.
4. We affirm the value of connectedness and solidarity in all our struggles.
5. We affirm enabling environments for youth that are safe, accessible, adaptive, creative, progressive, transparent and resilient
6. We affirm accountability for personal biases, behaviours, actions and consumption of resources and digital technology in order to ensure empathetic, mindful and sustainable living.
7. We affirm the reliability and accessibility of information where we fact-check before sharing and update knowledge resources regularly for the free flow of information.
8. We affirm positive living through ownership and promotion of overall health services, well-being and leisure.
9. We affirm the principle of self-development and determination through which we build our competencies and learn to take rejection and criticism constructively.



We Resolve - Our Commitments

1. AT A PERSONAL LEVEL, TO:

- a) Challenge personal biases and enhance understanding of diversity and intersectionality.
- b) Use language that is clear, respectful and relatable to everyone.
- c) Ensure efforts and actions are inclusive and accessible for all.

2. AT AN ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL, TO:

- a) Implement principles of inclusion, diversity, and equality in organizations, networks, and movements.
- b) Practice non-hierarchical, representative, and inclusive processes within organizations, networks, and movements.
- c) Be guided by the concept of "evolving capacities" vis a vis agency and rights, as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) in all our work with youth.

3. WITH MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS, TO:

- a) Engage governments, parliamentarians, human rights monitoring bodies, legal systems, service providers, mass media, and communities on youth SRHR issues based on the best interest principle.
- b) Strengthen cross-movement and cross-sectoral alliances to build solidarity and address youth concerns beyond SRHR.
- c) Disseminate information and mobilize efforts to improve SRHR accessibility through coalitions and networks.
- d) Maintain a balance between privacy and transparency in information and data access.
- e) Facilitate access to social welfare and protection policies, schemes and programs.
- f) Foster intergenerational dialogues and exchanges.

4. TO PROMOTE ACCOUNTABILITY:

- a) Demand accountability from state and non-state duty bearers to respect protect and fulfil all human rights.
- b) Foster a culture of accountability within organizations and movements, and establish multi-dimensional, accessible and confidential grievance mechanisms.





We Demand

FROM GOVERNMENTS, POLICYMAKERS, PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTERS & SERVICE PROVIDERS

1. Ensure effective, speedy and responsive universal implementation of policies and programs as mandated by various international treaties and commitments including Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), International Conference on Population and Development (1994) and Beijing Platform of Action, furthering sexual health and reproductive rights at all levels, including ensuring their accessibility to the most marginalized and vulnerable communities.
2. Provide a comprehensive package of SRHR services in publicly run health facilities, for young people in all their diversities, including gender-affirmative surgeries. Services must adhere to internationally accepted evidence-based quality guidelines and must evolve with scientific progress.
3. Ensure all SRH services are (1) *available*, (2) *inclusive and accessible* (3) *affordable* (4) *appropriate and rights-based* for all, but especially the most marginalized and vulnerable communities, including women, youth and adolescents, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ community, religious minorities, Dalit, Bahujans, Adivasi and Other Backward Classes, Indigenous Tribes, persons living in poverty, persons in rural and remote areas, and other persons facing multiple and intersecting forms of violence and oppression.

4. Capacitate and sensitize health care providers to ensure stigma-free, friendly, respectful services. Provide mechanisms to lodge grievances against providers who exhibit discriminatory behaviour and create platforms to ensure accountability of providers in a time-bound manner.
5. Eliminate barriers for adolescents in accessing SRH services, such as the need for guardian permission.
6. Ensure meaningful, substantive, and inclusive representation, participation, engagement, leadership and influence of youth and adolescents in decision-making at all levels, centering the most marginalized and vulnerable voices and their lived realities.
7. Ensure policy-making processes are community-led and community-steered from their inception to implementation to monitoring, to ensure alignment with socio-cultural, geographical, political, economic and linguistic contexts, and being mindful of community traditional knowledge and agency.
8. Ensure community-defined standards, metrics and monitoring and evaluation practices to assess the implementation and effectiveness of all programs and policies and their impact.
9. Take action against non-state actors and third parties (including private entities) that jeopardize the right to comprehensive sexual and reproductive rights, in accordance with the obligation to protect human rights.
10. Ensure substantive allocation of funding and resources for the provision of all services and initiatives furthering sexual health and reproductive rights, and ensure transparency.
11. Ensure collection, record and timely update of gender, sexuality and disability disaggregated data, both qualitative and quantitative, and inclusive of the most marginalized and vulnerable communities.
12. Strengthen collaboration and participation with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and social movements that raise demands for accountability

13. Proper legal mechanisms so that all individuals can exercise their SRHR including the right to safe abortion, freedom from violence and marriage equality without any discrimination and criminalization.

14. Strong legal frameworks for safety and security in the digital space.

15. Menstrual Leaves, free menstrual hygiene products in schools and health centers, and eliminating taxes on menstrual hygiene products

16. Integrate comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) based on International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE) with a rights-based approach in school curriculum and non-formal/lifeskills training package. Create universally accessible IEC Materials on SRHR.



We Demand

FROM UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER MULTILATERAL AGENCIES

1. Affirm implementation of international commitments such as the International Conference on Population and Development, Sustainable Development Goals, Summit of the Future, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, regional processes such as the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum and Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development, and their review at the national and local level.
2. Reaffirm calls to eliminate harmful practices in the region that curbs young people's sexual and reproductive rights (such as witch hunting, Chhaupadi and menstrual isolation, dowry system, early and child marriage, taboos on intercaste and inter-religious marriages, forced marriage for the queer community, female genital mutilation, son preference and female infanticide, widow restrictions, discrimination among queer communities, etc.)
3. Ensure meaningful engagement of youth in regional and international advocacy spaces, including in the design, attendance, and outcome harvesting of these processes. Eliminate barriers to such participation by repealing conditions that restrict visas such as requirement of bank balance, previous visit experiences, etc.
4. Advocate with Member States and stakeholders for increased funding for SRHR globally, especially for programs and organizations addressing the needs of the most marginalized
5. Formulate standard international guidelines for the provision of SRHR care, especially for newer and less established procedures such as gender-affirming surgery.
6. Set up robust monitoring mechanisms drawing on diverse sources of data, and establish systems to ensure the availability of disaggregated and publicly available validated data. Make provisions for alternate reports from CSOs in all reporting mechanisms.

7. Facilitate South-South cooperation among countries to support each other in addressing, linking and learning from experiences regarding SRHR in diversity.

8. Recognizing that the South Asian region is vulnerable to violation of SRHR due to climate change, ensure climate justice for the vulnerable population by implementing the loss and damage fund.

9. Advocate with Member States to reduce the digital divide between nations, including formulating and implementing international regulations on artificial intelligence and digital spaces.

10. Prioritize SRHR in conflict-affected and disaster-affected areas of the region.

11. Ensure that young people in diversity are guaranteed other rights such as rights to education, health, marriage, housing, water and sanitation, etc., that support their right to SRHR.



We Demand

FROM DONORS AND PHILANTHROPIES

1. Prioritize investments in organizations that are locally rooted, and engaged in grassroots interventions.
2. Allocate greater funding for the under-resourced but critical task of grassroots mobilization and movement building, to ensure that national and international advocacy is built bottom-up and with the participation of those most affected.
3. Make greater provisions for long-term, broad-based funding that allows for deeper and more effective engagement for movement building.
4. Adopt concrete inclusive measures to allow the most marginalized to access funding – such as accepting proposals in vernacular/regional languages, providing writing support to organizations to formulate proposals, and disseminating information about how to apply to the agency in different languages.
5. Ensure flexible funding to accommodate crises, and evolving contexts. Collaborate patiently while organizations navigate through domestic policies.
6. Ensure budget allocation for organization building – including bolstering administrative and other capacities
7. Ensure that grantee organizations that are led by those they represent, are given preference for funding.
8. Respect the autonomy, agency and expertise of grantee organizations, and provide support that compliments rather than overrides their skills.
9. Be aware of the socio-political and regional realities and challenges of the organizations you are donating to.
10. Analyze successes, achievements and outcomes qualitatively rather than only quantitatively.



We Demand

FROM COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES

1. Take action against caste and religion-based discrimination within the community, foster an environment that respects diversity and fraternity, and establish zero tolerance to violence and discrimination of all kinds.
2. Cultivate spaces that foster inclusion of diverse perspectives and recognize the intersectional identities of individuals, promoting acceptance without any expectation and a non-judgmental attitude.
3. Teach and instil values of empathy, understanding, and kindness from an early age, recognizing and respecting the individual identities and intersectionalities of each community member.
4. Create accessible infrastructure and safe spaces that encourage education, and pursue one's growth with freedom.
5. Ensure the provision of accessible family counselling and fostering spaces for intergenerational dialogue on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).
6. Promote free flow of knowledge and adaptability within the community, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to exercise their agency.
7. Promote peer-to-peer support and learning, balancing the needs and contributions of all community and family members to create a harmonious and supportive family environment.

We Demand

FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR

1. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) FUNDS

Increase and diversify CSR funds for SRHR, for example for access to safe abortion, comprehensive sexuality education, gender diverse, disability affirmative and sex-positive programmes

2. PRIVATE HEALTHCARE SECTOR

- a) Provide care that is consistent with fundamental rights and human rights.
- b) Prioritize people over profits, and ensure that services are accessible, affordable and acceptable to all.
- c) Do not engage in unwanted or unindicated procedures at the behest of governments, families or any other actors.
- d) Ensure adherence to evidence-based standards of care, with an emphasis on quality.
- e) Adhere to private health care regulations and establish mechanisms of holding erring providers accountable.
- f) Sensitize healthcare professionals towards the needs of gender-diverse, non-binary, and disabled populations.
- g) Provide services for the diverse needs of populations especially those of gender-diverse, non-binary, and disabled persons.
- h) Promote research around diverse bodies, and around adapting medical technologies to advance inclusive care.

3. PRIVATE SECTOR WORKPLACES AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- a) Gender-diverse representation across tiers of leadership and within teams.
- b) Establish policies that are inclusive along with proper implementation of policies such as prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace, diversity equity inclusion and accessibility policies, maternity paternity and menstrual leave, and others as relevant.
- c) Respect diverse expressions of gender identity, display SRH information, making available SRH products (such as menstrual pads), gender-neutral toilets, and ramps, thereby challenging taboos and exclusion through the workplace.
- d) Gender sensitisation sessions with employees, faculty and students to target gender and sexual stigma and stereotypes.
- e) Implement empathetic HR policies that are conscious of the above concerns of all employees at the workplace.





4. BIG TECH COMPANIES

- a) Big tech companies operating in digital space should uphold the highest standard of consent, privacy, and zero tolerance towards violence
- b) Implement accountability measures to protect individuals' private data around sexuality and health
- c) Establish measures to reduce disinformation and misinformation pertaining to SRHR, in digital spaces

5. EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATION

- a) Invest in technology that centers pleasure, privacy and individual agency in sexual expression, as well as contraceptive methods that are not focussed on women's bodies alone.
- b) Develop quality products related to SRHR which are universally accessible and affordable.
- c) Promote research and innovation that caters to the needs to disabled and diverse bodies.

6. MEDIA

- a) Create positive inclusive representation free of bias, stigma and stereotypes



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