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## SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS AND THE GLOBAL GOALS



In 2015, the 193 member states of the United Nations (UN) came together to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which included seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For the first time, these “Global Goals” include global targets for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

As the international community switches from words to action, it is important that the new and ambitious SRHR targets receive sufficient political and financial attention to ensure progress is fast-tracked. Improved sexual and reproductive health and respect for rights not only has a significant effect on the lives of millions of young girls and women. It also crucial for lifting whole communities out of poverty and changing the destiny of future generations.

**But how are Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights reflected in the SDGs and defined by the United Nations?**

This publication is intended to answer these questions through a comprehensive overview for activists and policy experts.

**THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY AND OF OUR PLANET LIES [...] IN THE HANDS OF TODAY'S YOUNGER GENERATION WHO WILL PASS THE TORCH TO FUTURE GENERATIONS. <sup>1</sup>**

Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW), along with many other activists, stands ready to hold leaders accountable to the promise they made to girls and young women by signing the SDGs. We advocate for access of young people to sexual and reproductive health as well as for the protection, respect, and fulfilment of their sexual and reproductive rights. In short, we advocate for sexual and reproductive health and rights.

## SEXUAL HEALTH

## REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

### How SRHR is included in UN documents

#### Cairo Programme of Action:

- The enhancement of life and personal relations, and not merely counselling and care related to reproduction and sexually transmitted diseases. <sup>2</sup>

#### WHO working definition:

- State of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality;
- Not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction, or infirmity.
- Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence.
- For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected, and fulfilled. <sup>3</sup>

#### Cairo Programme of Action:

- State of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes.
- Ability to have a satisfying and safe sex life.
- Capability to reproduce.
- Freedom to decide if, when, and how often to reproduce.
- Access to safe, effective, affordable, and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility which are not against the law.
- Reproductive health care is defined as the constellation of methods, techniques and services that contribute to reproductive health and well-being by preventing and solving reproductive health problems.
- It also includes sexual health. <sup>4</sup>

### How SRHR is included in the SDGs

Sexual health is mentioned in target:  5.6

**3.7:** By 2030, ensure universal access to **sexual and reproductive health-care** services, including family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.

Aspects of sexual health are also covered in the following targets:  3.8  5.3

**3.3:** By 2030, end the epidemics of **AIDS**, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases, and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases.

**5.2:** Eliminate all forms of **violence against all women and girls** in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

Reproductive health is mentioned in target:  3.7  5.6

Aspects of reproductive health is also covered in the following targets:

**3.1:** By 2030, reduce the global **maternal mortality ratio** to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.

**3.8:** Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality **essential health-care services** and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable **essential medicines** and vaccines for all. <sup>5</sup>

Some SDG targets are relevant for several aspects of SRHR. Target numbers are mentioned in a speech bubble wherever relevant.

### What DSW advocates for

- Access to sexual and reproductive health services throughout a lifespan, including testing, treatment, care, and counselling for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV.
- Access to comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). <sup>6</sup>
- Freedom from sexual and gender based violence.
- Ante- and postnatal care coverage and skilled birth attendance.
- Access to condoms, modern contraceptives, and other reproductive health commodities.

## SEXUAL RIGHTS

## REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

### How SRHR is included in UN documents

Sexual rights have yet not been defined in a global UN document adopted by member states. The **Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development**, adopted by the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean defines sexual rights as follows:

“the right to a safe and full sex life, as well as the right to take free, informed, voluntary and responsible decisions on their sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity, without coercion, discrimination or violence, and that guarantee the right to information and the means necessary for their sexual health and reproductive health”.<sup>7</sup>

#### **Cairo Programme of Action:**

- The right for all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing, and timing of their children.
- The right to have the information and means to do so (e.g. access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice; access to appropriate health-care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant).
- The right to the highest attainable standard of sexual and reproductive health.
- The right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence.<sup>8</sup>

### How SRHR is included in the SDGs

**Sexual rights are not mentioned in the SDGs but aspects of sexual rights are covered in the following targets:**

3.7 3.8 5.3 5.6 5.2

**10.3:** Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating **discriminatory laws**, policies and practices, and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

**16.1:** Significantly reduce all forms of **violence** and related death rates everywhere.

**16.2:** End **abuse, exploitation**, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

**Reproductive rights are mentioned in target:**

**5.6:** Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and **reproductive rights** as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action, and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

**Aspects of reproductive rights are also covered in the following targets:**

3.1 3.7 3.8

**5.3:** Eliminate all **harmful practices**, such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation.

### What DSW advocates for

- Right to choose a partner, get married and divorced, whether, when and with whom to have sex, to have children, to have access to, and use of, contraceptives without parental, spousal or third party consent.
- Freedom from sexual violence, harassment, rape, forced and early marriage, and female genital mutilation (FGM).
- Ability to express any sexual orientations and gender identity (SOGI) freely.
- Access to justice for violations of sexual rights including gender based violence, denial of health care etc..
- Right to STI and HIV testing, treatment, care, and counselling.

## ACRONYMS

<b>CSE</b>	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
<b>DSW</b>	Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>ICPD</b>	International Conference on Population and Development
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SOGI</b>	Sexual Orientations and Gender Identity
<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
<b>STIs</b>	Sexually Transmitted Infections
<b>UN</b>	United Nations

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at the UN on September 25, 2015
- <sup>2</sup> Cairo Programme of Action (1994), Para 7.2, Beijing Platform of Action (1995), Para 94
- <sup>3</sup> WHO working definition 2006
- <sup>4</sup> Cairo Programme of Action (1994), Para 7.2, Beijing Platform of Action (1995), Para 94
- <sup>5</sup> Tracer interventions for promotion and prevention services include: **family planning coverage** (need satisfied), **antenatal care** (at least four visits), vaccination, non-use of tobacco, improved water source, adequate sanitation and other locally relevant coverage indicators. Tracer interventions for treatment services include: **skilled birth attendance**, **antiretroviral therapy**, tuberculosis treatment (case detection and treatment success), hypertension treatment, diabetes treatment, pneumonia treatment in children and other locally relevant indicators. Source: <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/metadata-compilation/Metadata-Goal-3.pdf>
- <sup>6</sup> Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is an age-appropriate, culturally relevant approach to teaching about sexuality and relationships by providing scientifically accurate, realistic, nonjudgmental information. Source: UNESCO (2015): Emerging evidence, lessons and practice in comprehensive sexuality education: a global review, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002431/243106e.pdf>
- <sup>7</sup> Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, (2013) Para 34
- <sup>8</sup> Cairo Programme of Action (1994), Para 7.3, Beijing Platform of Action (1995), Para 95

## RELEVANT UN DOCUMENTS

- Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015): <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>
- ICPD Programme of Action (1994): [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/programme\\_of\\_action\\_Web%20ENGLISH.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/programme_of_action_Web%20ENGLISH.pdf)
- Key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1999): [http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/event-pdf/key\\_actions\\_en.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/event-pdf/key_actions_en.pdf)
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- ICPD at 15 – Report. Looking Back, Moving Forward (2009): <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/icpd-15-report>
- Framework of Actions for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (2014): [http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/ICPD\\_beyond2014\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/ICPD_beyond2014_EN.pdf)
- Montevideo Consensus (2014): Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development
- ICPD and Human Rights: 20 years of advancing reproductive rights through UN treaty bodies and legal reform, UNFPA/ CRR (2014): [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/icpd\\_and\\_human\\_rights\\_20\\_years.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/icpd_and_human_rights_20_years.pdf)
- Beijing Platform of Action (1995): <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA E.pdf>
- Beijing+5 Political Declaration and Outcome (2000): [http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa\\_e\\_final\\_web.pdf](http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa_e_final_web.pdf)
- The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action turns 20 (2015): [http://www2.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/sg%20report\\_synthesis-en\\_web.pdf?v=1&d=20150226T215547](http://www2.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/sg%20report_synthesis-en_web.pdf?v=1&d=20150226T215547)

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