

CALL FOR ACTION TO ENSURE HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PROVISION OF COMPREHENSIVE CONTRACEPTIVE INFORMATION AND QUALITY SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

In order to attain the Agenda 2030 sustainable development goals and targets specifically the universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights including access to family planning, information and education requires focusing on young people's sexual and reproductive health needs.ⁱⁱ

This is because young people - adolescents (10-19) and youth (15-24) - make up 1.8 billion of the entire global population.ⁱⁱⁱ Ensuring human rights of young people including their sexual and reproductive health and rights is critical to achieving sustainable development.

The human rights of young people include the right to the highest attainable standard of health in relation to sexuality, including access to sexual and reproductive health care services; seek, receive and impart information in relation to sexuality; sexuality education; respect for bodily integrity; choice of partner; decide to be sexually active or not; consensual sexual relations; consensual marriage; decide whether or not, and when to have children; and pursue a satisfying, safe and pleasurable sexual life.^{iv}

Consequently due to the lack of fulfilment of the above human rights, young people face sexual and reproductive ill health including HIV, sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions and gender based violence. In addition, a significant number of young people face a high unmet need for contraception. This calls for human rights based provision of comprehensive contraceptive information and quality services to young people voluntarily, free of stigma and discrimination, coercion and/or violence.

In addition, the removal of structural, economic, social and cultural barriers is critical to ensure the promotion, protection and fulfilment of young people's sexual reproductive health and rights and the respect of their dignity.

For this reason, we call upon our governments, international organisations, United Nations agencies, civil society organisations, development partners and other duty bearers to ensure:

Laws and Policies

- Enable laws and policies that ensure that programmes implemented provide comprehensive contraceptive information and quality services for all young people. These programmes must focus on marginalised young people irrespective of their characteristics (i.e. marital status, indigenous young people, persons with disabilities, displaced young people due to crisis and conflict) and/or socio-economic status (i.e. rural, poor, young people facing geographical barriers, displaced young people those in crisis and conflict settings and survivors of sexual violence).
- Guarantee adequate financial and technical resources for youth led and youth serving organisations and initiatives.
- Ensure the elimination of mandatory parental/guardian authorisation /notification for young people's access to contraceptive information and services.
- Eliminate coercive population policies and practices such as forced sterilisation which violate the aforementioned rights of young people.

Comprehensive^v Contraceptive Information and Quality Services

- Guarantee scientifically accurate and comprehensive age-appropriate, sexuality education and information programmes within and outside of schools that include information on contraceptive use and acquisition.
- Make available for young people a range of contraceptive methods, including emergency contraception, within the essential medicine supply chain.
- Guarantee the privacy of young people in the provision of contraceptive information and quality services, including confidentiality of medical and other personal information.
- Provide comprehensive contraceptive information and quality services during antenatal and postpartum care, safe abortion and post-abortion care and counselling services to young people.
- Provide on-going competency-based training and supervision of health-care personnel on the delivery of youth-sensitive and youth-friendly contraceptive, education, information and services.
- Ensure the elimination of financial barriers to young people's access to quality modern contraception.
- Ensure quality assurance processes, including medical standards of care and client feedback mechanisms are incorporated into contraceptive programmes.

Young People's Participation

- Provide youth-friendly, and promote youth-led counselling and education on contraceptives, its side-effects based on scientifically accurate information. This education should include skills building in communications and negotiations tailored to meet the needs of young people.
- Empower young people to make informed choice for their own use of modern contraception (including a range of emergency, short-acting, long-acting and permanent methods) without discrimination.
- Integrate HIV testing, treatment and care into sexual and reproductive health services including comprehensive contraceptive information and quality services at all levels of health care provision.
- Facilitate young people to have a meaningful and sustained engagement, participation and inclusive decision making about contraceptive programme and policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Youth-led Democratisation of Data and Accountability

- Ensure application and use of research, monitoring and evaluation data that is disaggregated for strategic and policy formulation purposes and for improving on service delivery for young people.
- Ensure that effective and transparent accountability and redress mechanisms are in place at the individual and systems levels for young people.

- i The content draws heavily from the guidance present in the publication- World Health Organisation. (2014). Ensuring Human Rights in the Provision of Contraceptive Information and Services- Guidance and Recommendations. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/family_planning/human-rights-contraception/en/
- ii AIDS Accountability International. (2015). Call to Action to Integrate Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights into the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda in Africa region. Cape Town. AAI.
- iii UNICEF. (2012). Progress for Children, A report card on adolescent. New York : United Nations publication
- iv Thanenthiran, S. & Racherla, S.J. 2009. Reclaiming & Redefining Rights – ICPD+15: Status of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Asia. Malaysia: ARROW
- v Effective, affordable, accessibility, acceptable and quality contraceptive information and services

**This Call for Action was jointly developed by
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