

Civil society urges governments and donors to protect adolescent SRHR

As 2025 unfolds, global health systems are grappling with severe budget cuts and constrained programmes. Governments are forced to make difficult choices amid competing priorities, leaving health systems under mounting strain. This has led to a critical gap in essential services for adolescents, particularly for marginalised groups, putting their health and human rights at grave risk and jeopardising decades of progress.

At the same time, an emboldened anti-rights network is intensifying its attacks on adolescents' sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR). As the civil society space needed to hold governments accountable continues to shrink, the repercussions for young people are profound and far-reaching.

Despite these challenges, our resolve to protect adolescent SRHR remains unwavering. The global health community has the tools, the evidence and the partnerships to keep adolescent SRHR front and centre. We must stand firm, not retreat, and continue to act.

As such, we, the partners of the ASRHR consortia [My Health My Rights](#), [Youth for Health \(Y4H\)](#), [SHARP](#) and the [Ado Avance Ensemble](#), call on national governments to:

- **Prioritise adolescent SRHR in national policy and planning:** Integrate and maintain adolescent and youth SRHR as a core pillar of national health strategies, policies and frameworks.
- **Increase domestic investment:** Protect and expand domestic financing for adolescent SRHR and scale up successful, evidence-based programmes.
- **Ensure access to the full range of SRHR services:** Guarantee access to contraception, safe abortion, and comprehensive sexuality education for all young people, especially those in marginalised communities.
- **Promote meaningful youth participation:** Institutionalise mechanisms for adolescents to be meaningfully engaged at every stage of SRHR policy and programme development and implementation.
- **Strengthen the frontline workforce:** Equip healthcare workers with adequate resources, training and support to deliver adolescent responsive and rights-based SRHR services.
- **Strengthen coordination and inclusive leadership:** Facilitate cross-sectoral coordination with CSOs, the private sector and community leaders to

build inclusive, sustainable and accountable SRHR systems.

- **Convene inclusive dialogue and action:** Bring together young people, families, educators, religious and community leaders and decision-makers to build social and political support for adolescent SRHR and drive sustainable change.

Call on international partners and donors to:

- **Prioritise adolescent SRHR in global strategies:** include or maintain the SRHR of adolescents and youth in strategies and frameworks, as a policy priority and as part of universal health coverage
- **Sustain and expand financial support for adolescent SRHR:** Commit long-term, flexible funding – including continued and increased ODA – to protect and scale adolescent SRHR programmes. This investment is critical to achieving the SDGs and advancing gender equality, while supporting countries in mobilising domestic resources.
- **Support comprehensive SRHR approaches:** Ensure holistic, rights-based interventions for adolescents and youth, that include quality comprehensive sexuality education as well as improving access to contraception, safe abortion and essential health commodities,
- **Strengthen and sustain civil society organisations and youth-led organisations:** Provide consistent, flexible funding and capacity support to civil society and youth-led organisations working directly with marginalised adolescents and holding governments accountable.

Commit to and call on fellow civil society organisations to:

- **Centre meaningful youth leadership:** Involve young people fully and equitably in all aspects of ASRHR programming, from design to implementation to accountability.
- **Build partnerships and increase effectiveness:** Collaborate with others – including the private sector – for scale, innovation and sustainability while avoiding duplication and fragmentation. Seek synergies and efficiencies, geared at *doing more with less*.
- **Champion evidence-based programming:** Ground actions in data and research. Tackle disinformation and misinformation and partner with academic institutions to strengthen evidence use.

This call is supported by: [Health Action International](#), [Rutgers](#), [MSI Reproductive Choices](#), [Plan International](#), [Restless Development](#), [DSW](#), [YAG](#), [CSA](#), [EANNASO](#), MedRAP, [CAFCO](#), [Rwanda NGOs Forum](#) and [NANHRI](#)

Taking our message directly to donors, policymakers and wider civil society, Health Action International, MSI Reproductive Choices, Rutgers and Plan International (as coordinating partners of the above consortia) hosted a side event on the impact and importance of adolescent SRHR programmes during the 78th World Health Assembly. Watch the event recording (below) to find out more.