



Amplifying and Accelerating Action on Young People's SRHR

A

supplement on the regional review processes of ICPD+25



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2019 marks 25 years from when governments worldwide first made their historic commitments in the ICPD Programme of Action. Over the course of 2018, governments conducted regional reviews of progress on their ICPD Beyond 2014 agreements. We at Right Here Right Now (RHRN)^{i, ii} are heartened by the outcomes of these 2018 regional reviews, and by governments' renewed commitments across regions to ensuring the fulfillment of these agreements and in turn, the ICPD vision. Governments have also agreed that the outcomes of these 2018 conferences, and the reports prepared for them, will be brought to the global level at the 52nd session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) as part of the overall 25-year review of the ICPD. As such, it is encouraging that at regional level, both government and civil society actors have noted the centrality of fulfilling young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for ensuring rights-based and inclusive sustainable development.

In our shadow report for the ICPD+25 review,ⁱⁱⁱ we explored some of the progress and challenges regarding ICPD-related commitments to **comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)**;^{iv} access to **youth-friendly SRH services**^v and **safe abortion services**;^{vi} and the **rights of LGBTIQI individuals**,^{vii} particularly in terms of national law, policy, and implementation. Through the findings of this report, we stressed that overall efforts in relation to these issues need to be amplified and accelerated. In this sense, it is crucial that at the 52nd CPD, governments maintain the momentum garnered through their respective regional reviews, and ensure the full integration of the 2018 regional reviews within the global level review, so that global level outcomes reflect regional, national, and in turn, young people's personal realities. The following is a short supplement to our shadow report, noting achievements since its development, as well as important regional outcomes for governments to build on and carry forward at the 52nd session of the CPD, as well as at the [Nairobi Summit ICPD25: Accelerating the Promise](#) in November 2019.

General Assessment: Cross-cutting Trends

All 2018 regional intergovernmental conferences were characterized by broad participation from governments, including 51 Member States in Africa, 40 in Europe, 32 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 36 in Asia-Pacific, and participants from 21 countries in the Arab region; as well as UN, civil society and youth engagement. Though not all conferences included negotiated outcomes, at each regional review governments reaffirmed the importance of the respective ICPD Beyond 2014 agreements, while tying the full implementation of these agreements to the realization of the 2030 Agenda. In this respect, Member States across different regions called for ICPD review outcomes and recommendations to be integrated into national, regional, and global 2030 Agenda reviews. These noteworthy calls point to national ownership of the ICPD and related commitments, while also increasing the potential for synergy and reinforcement between the ICPD vision and 2030 Agenda, and for accelerating progress in relation to young people's SRHR.

Asia-Pacific: Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, Bangkok, Thailand, 26-28 November 2018

At the Mid-Term Review of the 6th Asian and Pacific Population Conference, governments recommitted to implementing the 2013 Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration. Member States also commendably agreed to move forward with establishing a regional monitoring framework to measure progress on the Ministerial Declaration, linked to both the ICPD



PoA and the SDGs, with several governments recommending that the framework be developed in an inclusive and participatory manner.^{viii} Other highlights include governments noting the importance of:

- Expanding investments in CSE for adolescents and young people, as well as access to youth-friendly SRH services “that are rights-based, gender sensitive, respectful and non-judgmental, and which included a range of safe, effective, affordable and acceptable contraceptives;”^{ix}
- Eliminating all forms of discrimination in providing SRH services, including for young people and LGBTQI individuals;^x
- Access to safe abortion and post-abortion care in reducing maternal mortality and morbidity;^{xi}
- and developing and implementing comprehensive youth policies.^{xii}

Civil society engagement at the regional conference was also high, including a preparatory Youth Forum and a CSO Forum of civil society members, both of which ARROW co-organized with other civil society partners. ARROW also held a Regional Dialogue with her partners and other stakeholders. Discussions and recommendations from the Youth Forum, which brought together more than 40 youth advocates representing diverse constituencies from more than 15 countries, were taken forward in a "[Youth Statement](#)" presented in the opening plenary of the intergovernmental regional review. The Regional Dialogue, moreover, brought together 30 SRHR advocates from the region as well as some members of official delegations, including the Chair, Mr. Juan Perez from the Philippines. Advocates developed their recommendations in a call-to-action which was shared with CSOs and Member States participating in the regional review. In both statements, CSOs and youth advocates emphasized various SRHR issues and related implementation challenges, including structural problems such as limited resources and capacities, restrictive laws and policies, a lack of disaggregated data, and the urgent need to eliminate violence against LGBTQI individuals.^{xiii} Member States, CSOs, UN agencies and young people themselves also gathered at a side-event co-hosted by ARROW, to share insights, emerging issues, and recommendations on synergizing the ICPD PoA with the implementation of the SDGs.

Africa: Review of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD), Accra, Ghana, 2-5 October 2018

At the 2018 meeting of Ministers in charge of Population as a Working Group of the Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control (STC-HPDC-2), Population Ministers from 51 African countries recommitted to the full implementation of the AADPD. Importantly, delegates not only recommended integrating future reviews of the AADPD with the region’s review of the SDGs, but also with the Africa Union’s [Agenda 2063](#)^{xiv}. Member States also linked the AADPD with the [Maputo Plan of Action 2016-2030](#)^{xv}, thereby recognizing the AADPD’s interconnections with other regional commitments to human rights, sustainable development and realizing the demographic dividend. In reviewing and adopting the draft continental report on the 5-Year Review of the AADPD, other highlights included Member States emphasizing:

- the urgency of addressing the SRHR of adolescents, girls and women;^{xvi}
- the need for increasing attention on LGBTQI issues;^{xvii}
- as well as the need to have greater representation of youth at these reviews and high-level meetings.^{xviii}

Leading up to the review, civil society advocates including IPPF AR convened together with UN experts in a regional CSOs dialogue in Nairobi, July 2018, sharing information in regards to AADPD implementation, while also preparing for the pre-conference to take place ahead of the intergovernmental meeting in Accra. At the Africa CSOs Pre-Conference for the Regional Review of the AADPD+5 in October, advocates further built upon their earlier work in Nairobi. Together, civil society actors including youth participants developed an outcome document which was presented and adopted during the Africa Population Experts Committee (APEC). In their statement, advocates linked AADPD with the MPoA 2016-2030; called for the prioritization and adequate financing of health services, including SRH services, in line with governments’



previously agreed commitments under the Abuja Declaration; for Member States to ratify, domesticate, implement, and lift any reservations associated with the Maputo Protocol; and for governments to develop comprehensive adolescent and youth health strategies which include SRHR and CSE.

Latin-America and the Caribbean: Review of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, Lima, Peru, 7-9 August 2018

At the Third Regional Conference on Population and Development, governments both reviewed and reaffirmed the Montevideo Consensus, committing to its expedition and associated allocation of resources, and making clear links with the 2030 Agenda and Regional Forum of Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. Importantly, governments also adopted the Ad Hoc Working Group's list of indicators to monitor regional follow-up of the Consensus, further validating these indicators and committing countries to implementation. Other highlights included Member States noting progress and challenges in relation to:

- sexual and reproductive rights as “consolidated dimensions of sexual equality;”^{xix}
- universal access to SRH services, as well as voluntary termination of pregnancy;^{xx}
- LGBTQI rights, including accounting for SOGIE in national indicators and statistics;^{xxi}
- as well as other issues relating to adolescents and young people.

As in other regions, civil society engagement was high in Lima, where CSOs and women's rights advocates including LACWHN came together in the Third Social Forum. As an outcome of the Forum, advocates delivered a Declaration at the conference, emphasizing that regional reports need to better capture the progress and challenges regarding gender equality and sexual and reproductive rights, including more comprehensive data disaggregation.^{xxii} Advocates also stressed the importance of a secular State for guaranteeing human rights, as noted in the Montevideo Consensus, and in order to ensure access to contraceptives (including emergency contraception) and CSE; while also drawing attention to the green movement across the region in support of access to safe and legal abortion.^{xxiii} The Latin American and Caribbean Youth Forum similarly issued a Declaration, emphasizing the above issues, while also calling for more spaces and strategies for encouraging full and autonomous youth participation, including in government bodies that monitor the Montevideo Consensus, as well as in official country delegations.^{xiv} As part of the conference, participants also reviewed regional trends tracked through "Mira que te Miro," a civil society developed tool to monitor the implementation of SRHR-related commitments.^{xv} The RHRN Platforms of the Caribbean, Honduras and Bolivia also hosted a side event showcasing the realities of young people within their contexts, celebrating their sexual diversity, while also recognizing the discrimination and violence experienced by young people in defence of their life choices.

Moving Forward

Important steps have been taken over the course of 2018 in relation to the ICPD+25 review. Within a wider geopolitical context of rising conservatism, fundamentalisms, and pushback regarding SRHR, it is a huge achievement that at regional level, these ambitious agreements have been reaffirmed in their entirety, and linked to the realization of the SDGs. Moving forward, it is critical that both within and beyond ICPD+25 global review processes, governments not only reaffirm their commitments, but also harness the momentum from these regional reviews, and adopt a proactive, enthusiastic, and holistic approach to progressive policy formulation, implementation, and increased resource allocation. This approach requires vigilance for any attempts to dilute the agreements outlined either in the ICPD Beyond 2014 framework, or in other human rights commitments. And as noted in our shadow report and associated recommendations,^{xvi} this approach must also be undertaken with the meaningful involvement of young people; for only in this way can we truly ensure that policies and programmes are both reflective of and responsive to young people's realities, and in turn achieve the vision of the ICPD agenda.



References

ⁱ Right Here Right Now (RHRN) is a global strategic partnership in ten countries (Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, Pakistan, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Senegal, Honduras, Bolivia), and the Caribbean sub-region. Our partnership strives for the protection, respect and fulfilment of the SRHR of young people, including girls, young women and young lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals, across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

ⁱⁱ Lara Cousins (2018), *ICPD+25 Shadow Report: Amplifying and Accelerating Action on Young People's SRHR*, Right Here Right Now.

ⁱⁱⁱ ECA (2013), [Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development in Africa Beyond 2014](#), para. 40; ESCAP (2014), [Report of the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference](#), para. 146; ECLAC (2013), [Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development](#), paras. 11, 14.

^{iv} ECA (2013), para. 34; ESCAP (2014), paras. 109, 112, 145; ECLAC (2013), paras. 12, 14, 44.

^v ECA (2013), paras. 37, 38; ESCAP (2014), paras. 118, 132; ECLAC (2013), paras. 40, 42.

^{vi} ECA (2013) paras. 4, 18, 35; ESCAP (2014), paras. 76, 84; ECLAC (2013), paras. 34, 36.

^{vii} ESCAP (2018), [Report of the Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development](#), ESCAP/APPC/2018/5, pgs. 1, 13.

^{viii} ESCAP (2018), p. 11.

^{ix} Ibid.

^x Ibid, p. 10.

^{xi} Ibid, p. 11.

^{xii} Ibid, p. 13.

^{xiii} Africa Union (2018), [Submission of Africa's Inputs to the Twenty-Five Year Review of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development](#), p. 7

^{xiv} Ibid, p. 5

^{xv} Ibid, p. 4

^{xvi} Ibid, p. 3

^{xvii} Ibid, p. 3

^{xviii} ECLAC (2018), [Report of the Third Session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), LC/CRPD.3/5, p. 12.

^{xix} ECLAC (2018), p. 12.

^{xx} Ibid.

^{xxi} Ibid, pgs. 8, 38, 40.

^{xxii} Ibid, pgs. 38-41.

^{xxiii} Ibid, pgs. 31-34.

^{xxiv} Ibid, p. 15.





We are a global advocacy partnership in pursuit of the fulfilment of young people's SRHR – free of stigma, discrimination and violence. In our partner countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America, and at international level, we strengthen the capacity of young people and civil society organisations for joint SRHR advocacy. Ultimately, we want to reinforce institutional accountability, and realise the adoption, budget allocation and implementation of SRHR-progressive and inclusive policies.

