



54<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD)

## NOT RELIGION, NOT THE STATE WOMEN AND GIRLS MUST DECIDE THEIR FATE

### Side Event Concept Note, Version 2

**On:** Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**At:** 08:30 – 09:45 EDT (New York City)

**Organizers:** ACT Alliance, THE African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Faith to Action Network and IPPFWHR.

**Virtual Event:** [Register via Eventbrite](#)

***A dialogue between faith and secular actors tackling taboos and promoting Comprehensive Sexuality Education to meet zero maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning and zero gender-based violence.***

Faith-based actors, as trusted voices within communities, have a responsibility to promote each person's inherent dignity and right, while also promoting rigorous analysis of the impact of religious and customary systems on issues, including population, food security, nutrition, and sustainable development.

In this Side Event, expert speakers will share strategies for overcoming existing taboos and resistance in addressing comprehensive sexuality education. Bringing together gender advocates from Africa and Latin America, who are striving to change social norms, tackle intersecting inequalities, and promote Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.

Each speaker will focus on how the Commission can contribute to achieving zero maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning and zero gender-based violence by 2030.

#### ***Speakers:***

**Maria del Pilar Cancelo**, Executive Director, SEDI Asociacion Civil

**Dr. Paul Z. Mmbando**, Medical Doctor, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania

**Jill Anami**, SRHR Program Officer, The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)

**Jantiku Ijasini Jamare**, Pastor and Co-Chair Youth Community of Practice, ACT Alliance

**Susana Medina Salas**, Senior Research and Evaluation Officer, IPPFWHR

**Maria Tororey**, SRHR Lead, Faith to Action Network

*Point for discussion will be:*

1. How can Member States, Intergovernmental agencies, and civil society counter arguments, which use religious language, to block progress at the UN Commission on Population and Development?
2. Where are the points for collaboration to address intersecting inequalities related to population, food security, nutrition, and sustainable development?
3. What are the interconnections and interdependence between faith, sexual and reproductive health, human rights, and sustainable development?