

Commission on Population and Development 52nd session

Review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

1-5 April 2019

Statement by the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW), a Non-Governmental Organisation in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council

STATEMENT

Universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender equality are foundational to the full implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia Pacific region.

The Asian Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) and the undersigned 77 organisations who endorse this statement welcome the adoption of the political declaration at the 52nd Commission on Population and Development to reaffirm the ICPD Programme of Action during the opening of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development (CPD) and also welcomes the theme of the 52nd session: **Review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. We recognise the strong interlinkages of both these transformative and visionary frameworks in furthering gender equality and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The Asian Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) is a regional women's organisation working in the Asia Pacific region, since 1993 to advance gender equality and women and young people's rights, particularly their sexual and reproductive rights. We work closely with national partners in 17 countries, regional and global networks around the world, and are able to reach stakeholders in 120 countries, predominantly in the Global South regions.

The Asia Pacific region is home to 4.3 billion people of the world, and 60% of world's young people reside in the region. These people dynamics call for immediate implementation of effective policies and programmes that ensure gender equality and universal access to sexual and reproductive rights without stigma, discrimination and violence

An evidence based situational analysis in the region points to some progress, however huge gaps and challenges are emerging in the achievement of ICPD PoA and Agenda 2030 goals and targets of achieving gender equality; universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for contraception, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes; and the 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 and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

Evidence also points to many people in the region falling through the cracks, facing multiple discrimination in access to SRHR. These people include, women, young women including adolescent girls; ageing persons; trans-persons; people from poor; lower wealth quintiles; from rural areas and hard to reach places; minority and indigenous communities facing ethnic and caste-based violence; LGBTIQ communities; women engaged in informal labour; refugees; indigenous people; stateless people, internally displaced; women and trans people with disabilities; women and young people from conflict-affected areas in the region.

High out-of-pocket expenditure, unregulated privatisation of health, including unaffordable health insurance result in a denial of services to the most marginalised people. Poor public health expenditure, and lower health worker to population density in the region further impede universal access to SRHR.

As we celebrate the 25th year of ICPD implementation, we call upon Member States¹, to:

- Uphold commitments to the principles of the International Conference on Population and Development; the Beijing Platform for Action and the Agenda 2030 to realise universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Enact legislation, formulate and implement policies to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services through publicly funded health systems including social health insurance. This includes access to the full range of SRH information, contraceptives services, maternal health services including emergency obstetric care, safe abortion and post-abortion care, infertility treatment, HIV, STIs and reproductive cancers. Ensure respect for women, and young people, informed decision making, autonomy, confidentiality, informed choice, consent and privacy in the provision of such SRH services.
- Eliminate all punitive measures for women and girls seeking abortion, and health care providers performing abortions. Enable change in attitudes and perceptions that result in stigmatisation within health institutions and communities.
- Ensure full integration of comprehensive SRHR information and services, delivered through strengthened health and education systems, with focus on primary health care and referrals. Such services need to be provided through public financing, with a focus on patient centeredness, efficiency, accountability, and sustainability.
- Protect and promote women's human rights, and commit to advance gender equality in all its diversity, identity and expressions and ensure substantive equality of women
- Eliminate all forms of multiple intersecting sexual and gender-based discrimination and violence including intimate partner and non-partner violence.
- Eliminate harmful traditional practices by influencing all formal and informal institutions and discriminatory patriarchal socio-cultural norms and practices
- Address data gaps and ensure disaggregated data on SRHR information and services indicators.
- Ensure gender responsive budgetary allocation and expenditure tracking for SRHR information and services in the national health and development plans. Ensure governments increase financial and human resources for health systems strengthening and gender equality.

¹ Recommendations below were developed in the recent policy dialogue on SRHR in the Asia Pacific region held in November 2018, which brought together participants from across the region and multiple stakeholders working on ICPD implementation.

Lastly, we call for a rigorous and regular monitoring framework on the follow-up and review of the ICPD Programme of Action in the Asia Pacific region and globally, precisely because the Agenda 2030 will not be achieved without concerted action on implementing the ICPD Programme of Action.

The full list of organisations who have endorsed the statement are given below. The list has been arranged in no particular order, but listed as the organisations responded to the call for endorsement in support of this statement:

1. CDA Park - Nepal
2. Visible Impact, Nepal
3. Restless Development, Nepal
4. Yuwalaya, Nepal
5. Youth Action Nepal
6. AYON, Nepal
7. Blue Diamond Society, Nepal
8. RUWON, Nepal
9. YUWA, Nepal
10. LOOM, Nepal
11. Blue vein, Pakistan
12. Aware girls, Pakistan
13. Family Planning Association of Nepal
14. Aahung, Pakistan
15. Bargad, Pakistan
16. FDI, Pakistan
17. Bandhu Social Welfare Society, Bangladesh
18. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Bangladesh
19. Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, Bangladesh
20. Oboyob, Bangladesh
21. BRAC Education Programme (Adolescent Development Programme), Bangladesh
22. Family Planning Association of Bangladesh
23. James P Grant School of Public Health BRAC University, Bangladesh
24. Naripokkho, Bangladesh
25. SERAC Bangladesh
26. Unite for Body Rights-Bangladesh Alliance- RHSTEP
27. UBR Bangladesh Alliance Secretariat
28. PEREMPUAN AMAN, Indonesia
29. CommonHealth, India
30. Reproductive Health Association of Cambodia (RHAC), Cambodia
31. Beyond Beijing Committee, Nepal
32. Philippine Safe Abortion Advocacy Network, Philippines
33. Shamima Akhter, BAPSA, Bangladesh
34. Rafi Ullah, Kapal Kore organisation, Pakistan
35. Federation of Reproductive Health Association, Malaysia (FRHAM)
36. SAHAYOG, HealthWatch Forum, Uttar Pradesh, India
37. NAMHHR, Uttar Pradesh, India
38. Madiha Latif, Shirkat Gah – Women’s Resource Centre, Pakistan
39. Likhaan Center for Women's Health, Inc, Philippines
40. Centre for creative initiatives in health and population, Vietnam

41. Women's Health Foundation, Indonesia
42. Society for Health Education, Maldives
43. Greenwatch, Bangladesh

44. Center for Sustainable Community Development (SCODE), Vietnam
45. Gender and Development for Cambodia (GADC)
46. AwazCDS, Pakistan
47. Youth Advocacy Network, Pakistan
48. Psychological Responsiveness NGO, Mongolia
49. Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum (PFF), Pakistan
50. Youth Association for Development (YAD), Pakistan
51. Youth Advocacy Network, Sri Lanka
52. Light House, Bangladesh
53. Rural women's association Alga, Kyrgyzstan
54. Tuvalu DPO, Fusialofa, Tuvalu
55. Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (CGFED) Viet Nam
56. National Indigenous Disabled Women Association Nepal (NIDWAN).
57. Krityanand UNESCO Club Jamshedpur, India
58. Paryavaran Mitra, India
59. CSDM – Centre for Sustainable development in mountainous areas and VTIK – Vietnam Indigenous Knowledge network, Vietnam.
60. Center for Participatory Research and Development-CPRD, Dhaka
61. Asia Pacific Women's Watch (APWW), Sri Lanka
62. JERA International, Australia
63. Association for Promotion Sustainable Development, Mauritius
64. CIDP NGO, Sindh, Pakistan
67. Swara, Indonesia
68. PKBI, Indonesia
69. ARI, Indonesia
70. INTI Muda Indonesia
71. Gender and Sexuality Studies, LP2SP UI, Indonesia
72. Women's Health Foundation, Indonesia
73. YIFOS, Indonesia
74. Independent Youth Forum, Papua
75. Perkumpulan Pamflet Generasi, Indonesia
76. Aliansi Satu Visi (One Vision Alliance), Indonesia
77. Rutgers WPF, Indonesia