

Brief on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights or SRHR

What is SRHR?

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights or **SRHR** is the concept of human rights applied to sexuality and reproduction. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) encompass the right of all individuals to make decisions concerning their sexual activity and reproduction free from discrimination, coercion, and violence. Specifically, access to SRHR ensures individuals are able to choose whether, when, and with whom to engage in sexual activity; to choose whether and when to have children; and to access the information and means to do so.

The right to exercise control over one's own sexuality and reproduction is fundamental for all people. Sexual and reproductive health and the associated rights (SRHR issues) extend to the equal opportunities, rights and conditions of all people to have a safe and satisfying sexual life, and to be able to decide over their own bodies without coercion, violence or discrimination.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH is the complete physical, mental and social wellbeing related to the reproductive system throughout the life cycle. **Reproductive rights** are those of couples and individuals to freely decide the timing, number and spacing of their children, and to access information and care in all matters related to reproduction and sexuality. **SEXUAL HEALTH** is a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing in relation to sexuality throughout the life cycle. **SEXUAL RIGHTS** includes the right to not be subjected to sexual violence and coercion, as well as to a safe and satisfying sex life - including the right to say 'no' to sex. *Adapted from the ICPD Plan of Action.*

SRHR as Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the agreed treaties establish that human rights apply to everyone and that no one should be excluded. They identify that SRHR entails not only the absence of reproductive or sexual illnesses, but also the full enjoyment and well-being of sexual health.

SRHR, as part of human rights, have the following principles of human rights described in the Universal Declaration and outlined by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA):

- **Universality:** They apply equally to all persons and they are the rights of every individual, there are no exceptions. This means that SRHR apply to everyone, including all children, adolescents and young people.
- **Inalienability:** This means that you can never lose your rights. You have them, from the moment you are born, because you are human.
- **Indivisibility:** No right is more important than another right, they are all connected and you cannot have one without the other. Denial of one right impedes the enjoyment of the other rights.
- **Interdependency and interrelation:** The fulfilment of one right may depend in part or in whole on the fulfilment of other rights.

Who is most affected?

Women and adolescents of both genders are most likely to suffer from inadequate sexual and reproductive health services and rights.

SRHR includes the right of all persons to:

- Seek, receive, and impart information related to sexuality;
- Receive sexuality education;
- Have respect for bodily integrity;
- Choose their partner;
- Decide to be sexually active or not;
- Have consensual sexual relations;
- Have consensual marriage;
- Decide whether or not, and when, to have children; and

- Pursue a satisfying, safe, and pleasurable sexual life.

Comprehensive sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services include:

- Contraceptive information and services, including emergency contraception and a range of modern contraceptive methods;
- Maternity care, including antenatal and postnatal care, and delivery care, particularly skilled attendance and emergency obstetric care;
- Prevention and appropriate treatment of infertility;
- Safe abortion and post-abortion care;
- Prevention, care, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, reproductive tract infections, and reproductive cancers;
- Information, education, and counseling; prevention and surveillance of violence against women (VAW), care for survivors of violence; and
- Actions to eliminate harmful traditional practices such as FGM and early and forced marriage.

What is the definition of reproductive health?

Good sexual and **reproductive health** is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being in all matters relating to the **reproductive** system. It implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life, the capability to reproduce, and the freedom to decide if, when, and how often to do so.

What is adolescent reproductive health?

Adolescents have unique **reproductive** and sexual **health** needs. Teen sex, sexually transmitted infections, birth control, sexual education, and teen pregnancy are a few of the clinical and social issues covered here for young adults and their providers.

Why reproductive health is important?

Reproductive health deals with the **reproductive** processes, functions and system at all stages of life. ... **Reproductive health** includes sexual **health**, the purpose of which is the enhancement of life and personal relations, and not merely counselling and care related to **reproduction** and sexually transmitted diseases."

What is meant by reproductive rights?

"**Reproductive rights**" are the **rights** of individuals to decide whether to reproduce and have **reproductive** health. This may include an individual's **right** to plan a family, terminate a pregnancy, use contraceptives, learn about sex education in public schools, and gain access to **reproductive** health services.

What is reproductive freedom?

Reproductive freedom is so much more than merely being pro-choice. Without reproductive freedom, women's rights to legal equality and social equity cannot be guaranteed.

"Defined by feminists in the 1970s as a basic human right, it **includes the right to abortion and birth control, but implies much more**. To be realized, reproductive freedom must include not only woman's right to choose childbirth, abortion, sterilization or birth control, but also her right to make those choices freely, without pressure from individual men, doctors, governmental or religious authorities. It is a key issue for women, since without it the other freedoms we appear to have, such as the right to education, jobs and equal pay, may prove illusory. Provisions of childcare, medical treatment, and society's attitude towards children are also involved."

–The Encyclopedia of Feminism (1986) Lisa Tuttle

What are some reproductive choices?

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What is Sexual health?

Sexual health is a state of physical, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality. It requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.