

Our Rights, Our Lives

Women's Call to Action Toward Cairo+20*

As the world reviews progress on implementation of the Program of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, women in all our diversity, are mobilizing. We aim to build political commitment, to overcome financial and legal obstacles, and to transform the weak health systems, adverse social and economic conditions, violence and discrimination that impede us from accessing the necessary health services and information to make informed decisions about our sexual and reproductive lives. All over the world, millions of women are demanding justice. Young women are speaking out, calling for meaningful participation in all areas of public life, for education and jobs, and fulfillment of human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights.

Today, there are 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10-24 who do not have access to the comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services and sexuality education that they need for a safe and healthy life. More than 215 million women who are married or living in unions do not want to be pregnant but lack access to modern contraception, and even more lack access to other vital sexual and reproductive health services and information. The prevalence of anemia due to poor nutrition, continuing lack of safe water and sanitation, and the health impacts of rising global and national inequality place the sexual and reproductive health of girls and women at grave risk. Too many women and girls continue to face gender inequality, violence, and other violations of human rights.

We will generate political will, sustained action, and accountability for:

- **Universal access to quality, comprehensive, integrated sexual and reproductive health services**, counseling, and information for women and adolescent girls, with respect for their human rights, and with an emphasis on equity and respect for diversity. Comprehensive services include: gynecological care, all forms of safe and effective contraception, safe abortion and post abortion care, maternity care, and prevention, timely diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections including HIV, breast and reproductive cancers, and infertility. Ideally, these should be integrated, one-stop services tailored to women's needs throughout the life cycle, with effective referral.
- Programs that empower women, particularly adolescent girls and young women, to know their bodies and to exercise their rights, especially through **comprehensive sexuality education**.
- Protection and promotion of **reproductive rights** as human rights, and international adoption of **sexual rights** as human rights. Full recognition and implementation, through policies and programs, of existing and emerging legal standards are urgently needed.
- **Young women's leadership** at all levels and types of decision-making on sexual and reproductive rights and health, and the meaningful participation of women's organizations in the design of health and development programs.

* This rallying call was developed by an inter-generational group of over 30 feminist activists convened by Realizing Sexual and Reproductive Justice (RESURJ), International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC) and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN). To support these demands please send your name, organization and country to info@resurj.org. Thanks!

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