



Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Sub-Saharan Africa

Regional Context

SRHR is a critical investment for human development. Main SRHR challenges in SSA:

- Violations of sexual and reproductive rights large unmet needs for sexual and reproductive health services; unaffordability of these services
- Lack of comprehensive sexuality education
- Inadequate and inappropriate digital technology usage
- Negative environment for key and marginalized populations
- Negative impact of COVID-19: SRH services disrupted

Adolescent girls and young women living in SSA are particularly vulnerable:

- 1 in 4 girls become pregnant before they turn 18
- 34% of women aged 20-24 are married before the age of 18
- 53% of the people living with HIV are in SSA are with HIV, and young girls represent most HIV infected people

Wide range of African commitments and legally binding charters protocols for advancing SRHR:

- African Charter on Human and People's Rights
- African Children's Charter
- Protocol on Gender and Development, Model Law for Ending Child Marriages (2016)
- SADC SRHR Strategy 2018-2019 and Scorecard (2020)
- EAC: Gender Equity and Development Bill, and the EAC Child Policy

The implementation of these regional instruments is weak. Enforcement mechanisms are not in place

The key drivers for advancing SRHR in SSA are:

- Successful legal/policy reform and implementation
- Addressing the social determinants of SRHR
- Comprehensive education
- Sustainable financing
- Strengthened health systems
- Knowledge expansion and creation
- Technology and innovation

Geopolitical Context and relevant SDGs

SHR is fundamental for achieving health SDGs and gender equality:



Programme of Action of ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development)

The EU Role in Global Health Council Conclusions and EP Resolution on health systems strengthening and upholding SRHR in Africa

Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa

AU call for a New Public Health Order in Africa

Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Relations 2020-2025 (GAP III)

EU ongoing SRHR investments:

- 35 regional programmes
- covering 47 countries
- ~500 mill EUR

Common areas of intervention

- Health
- Gender Equality
- Human Rights protection
- Education - Comprehensive Sexuality Education
- Capacity building of CSO

Team Europe Proposal

Strengthen political commitments and capacities to implement continental and regional SRHR:

- Joint education and health sector responses for SRHR outcomes (such as comprehensive sexuality education, linking school to health services)
- Inclusion of SRHR within the Health System Strengthening/Universal Health Coverage agendas

Strengthen regional mechanisms to address supply-side constraints and improve access to quality assured SRH-commodities

- Use of pooled procurement mechanisms
- Supporting the harmonization of regulatory environment
- Improving supply chain management systems

Strengthen advocacy and social accountability of regional commitments on SRHR

- Increasing SRHR data availability and analysis for evidence-based policy making
- Advocacy, and system and service reforms
- Promoting demand creation and movement building
- Promoting coordinated actions of regional parliamentarians, civil society (networks and alliances), women and youth movements

Added value:

- Strengthening the implementation of regional normative frameworks and increasing accountability
- Tackling drivers of negative SRHR outcomes and promoting enablers for SRHR across borders
- Increased efficiencies
- Evidence and knowledge management and learning
- Promoting sustainability through movement building

Synergies with existing and new investments in SRHR & other Regional Health TEIs:

- MAV+ TEI
- Digital Health TEI
- Public Health Institutes TEI

Geographic coverage: TEI activities may be implemented at multi-country, sub-regional, regional and cross-regional levels, based on need and potential to add value for the desired outcomes

Modalities/ Tools

Policy dialogue

Technical assistance

Advocacy and social accountability

Transformational potential

- To advance the SRHR agenda in the SSA region, with a particular focus on adolescent girls and young women

*This Team Europe Initiative is work in progress

**SDGs included based on a new JRC electronic text mining tool, which identifies SDGs (targets)

