



Sexual and Reproductive Health throughout the Life Course

ICPD Beyond 2014 Review
in the UNECE Region

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*“....Reproductive health .. implies that
people are able to have a satisfying and
safe sex life and that they have the
capability to reproduce and the
freedom to decide if, when and how
often to do so.... ” [para. 72]*

Context of the PoA implementation in Eastern UNECE

- Profound transition period
- Significant social changes.

Policy and practice

- Wide variety of policies, programmes and strategies
- Most social and welfare policies targeting vulnerable groups recently updated
- Special focus on Sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Many challenges remain.

Some Key Facts

- Low fertility
- Availability and increased use of modern contraception
- Abortion rates have declined, Inequities remain
- High rates of STIs and HIV
- Proportion of teenage mothers has decreased yet adolescent birth rates remain high in many sub-regions
- Weak rights-based policies for removing barriers that limit choices and protect vulnerable groups

ICPD across the life course



Family – roles, rights, composition, structure

The family is the basic unit of society and, as such, should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. Various forms of the family exist. [ICPD Principle 9]

- Family forms are changing
- Delaying childbearing, higher levels of infertility and demand for reproductive technologies
- Migration patterns affect family dynamics (women led households, vulnerable migrants, and return migrants).

45th Session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) 2012

“.... give full attention to meeting the reproductive health-service, information and education needs of young people, with full respect”



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- Increased access to education for girls
- Improved data collection on sexual health
- High levels of well-being among young people
- Lack of comprehensive sexuality education
- Limited access to SRH youth-friendly services.
- Restrictive legal barriers
- Social / Normative Barriers to Behaviour Change

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- Young people's access to comprehensive sexuality education
- The right to access youth-friendly SRH information and services (*incl. contraception, safe abortion, STI/HIV prevention, treatment and care*)
- Limit adolescent pregnancies and child marriages through proactive laws and policy protections

The ICPD Programme of Action established a clear connection between **reproductive health** and **human rights**.



- HIV and AIDS is the most important problem in the region
- Access to information, social stigma, and gender related barriers continues to restrict choices
- Access to SRH services varies among different populations and sub-regions
- Lack of financial mechanisms and integrated services
- Lack of enabling legal environments and participation by affected groups

- Universal access to SRH and Rights that recognizes access to quality services including maternal and newborn health and family planning as Human Rights issues
- Remove service level barriers through integration of SRH into PHC; and by investing in health system strengthening
- Challenge restrictive gender norms to equitably allow for sexual and reproductive life choices
- Create an enabling legal and regulatory environment to respect, protect and fulfil people's SRH rights

ICPD Programme of Action
gave little attention to SRHR
among the elderly



- The UNECE population is getting older
- On average the elderly are healthier
- However, inequalities exist.



- SRHR sector has neglected the needs of older persons.
- Policy and media responses have been largely negative
- Support is needed for caretakers of older persons
- Care and support for older persons must keep them connected to their families and communities especially in the case of vulnerable elderly people
- Urgent need to recognize/support the rights of older persons



1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10-24 do not have access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services and sexuality education

215 million women who are married or living in unions do not want to be pregnant but lack access to modern contraception

Too many women and girls continue to face gender inequality, violence, and other violations of human rights



There is a need to generate **political will, sustained action, and accountability** for:

- ✓ **Universal access** to quality, integrated SRH and HIV services
- ✓ Programmes that **empower women**, especially through **comprehensive sexuality education**
- ✓ Protection **reproductive rights as human rights**, and international adoption of **sexual rights as human rights**.
- ✓ **Young people's leadership**
- ✓ **Meaningful participation of civil society organizations**
- ✓ Recognition of **SRH needs throughout the Life Course**.