

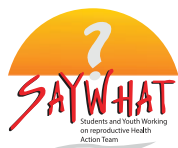


THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGIONAL STUDENTS AND YOUTH CONFERENCE ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

3rd EDITION, 11th & 12th JULY 2019



THEME:



Supported by



Executive Summary

The Southern African Regional Students and Youth Conference on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SARSYC) was established in 2015. The platform aims to bring together students, youth and like-minded organisations in the region to find common solutions to the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) challenges that young people face. The 3rd edition of the conference took place from 11th to 12th July 2019 in Lusaka, Zambia under the theme Plan, Prioritise and Prevent. Conference participants included students and youths, donor community, Civil Society Organisations (CSO's), Non-Governmental Organisations, Government representatives and members of SADC. The Guest of Honour was the Director of Public Health from the Zambian Ministry of Health (MOH), whose Key Note address pointed out that the MOH (Zambia) has a track record in improving the health of young people. This commitment led to the launch of the outreach health programme at the University of Zambia which aims to address the challenges young people face with regards to SRHR.

The conference deliberations were centred on ensuring that stakeholders embrace an amalgamated approach in dealing with socio-economic challenges, inequalities and human right issues for the minorities as well as the need for strengthened coordination among all stakeholders. Plenary discussions revealed that Southern Africa already has existing strengths and indigenous solutions which need to be leveraged on with all partners working towards contributing to the overall SRHR goals as addressed in the goals 3, 4 and 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which relate to health, education and gender respectively. In order to achieve this, the most impactful SRHR strategies need to be put in place and should be aligned to the four SRHR pillars outlined below:

1. Women's and children's health and SRHR;
2. Health and SRHR of young women and men, and Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people;
3. Strengthened health systems for greater access to SRHR;
4. Strengthened democracy and gender equality, and greater respect for human rights, focusing on prevention of child marriages and sexual and gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation.

Discussions also pointed out the importance of political will for any economy to develop with governments being urged to make funding available to address the needs of young people.

Breakaway sessions were an equally important part of the conference and topics discussed included:

- Adolescents and Young People's Health – discussions were centred on the importance of giving young people an opportunity to be heard for them to be able to have access to their rights
- Social Accountability Monitoring of Adolescents and Young People's SRH services – group members were introduced to this platform which advocates for young people to raise their voices on SRHR service delivery challenges
- Sexual Harassment – presentations and discussions focused on equipping student with skills that would enable them understand and exercise their rights
- Abstract Based Presentation – presentations were made on the importance of Biomedical Research, Life of a Student Living with Physical Disability and the Development of an efficient SRHR model for students
- Academic Freedoms in Southern Africa – the key message in the session was that students should be empowered to have strengthened policy advocacy and be able to influence policy makers accept the best policy alternatives
- From Clubs to Movements – group members were privileged to engage with representatives from Web for Life, a platform for female students to become leaders and advocates for SRHR services
- Using Art and Design to address SRHR issues – the University of Johannesburg shared how SRHR challenges can be addressed through deliberate policies and programs

The conference came up with resolutions that addressed all stakeholders holding them accountable and ensure each one plays their roles in accelerating the SRHR agenda. Students were reminded to be active in order to be recognised whilst embracing coordination and innovation. On the other hand colleges were tasked to ensure they provide Youth Friendly Services (YFS), implement programs to encourage student uptake of SRHR services and have sexual harassment policies in place. The donor community and CSOs are key stakeholders in the implementation of SRHR and they were called upon to plan and implement sustainable SRH programs whilst supporting capacity building and youth driven initiatives.

It was further resolved that governments should recognise platforms that support youth participation in decision making. In doing so, priority should be given to ensure that resource allocation towards youth programs be increased with all countries honouring commitments they have affirmed to at all levels. SADC was reminded of their mandate to monitor and reinforce policies in the region as well as hold governments accountable.

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Acronyms	
ADFHS	Adolescent Friendly Health Services
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AfriYAN	Africa Youth and Adolescents Network
ARV	Anti-Retroviral
AU	African Union
CSA&G	Centre for Sexuality, AIDS and Gender
CSE	Comprehensive Sex Education
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EUP	Early and Unintended Pregnancy
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICASA	International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
LGBTI	Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex
LGBTIQ	Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer
MHM	Menstrual Health Management
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOE	Ministry of Education
NCC	National Coordinating Committee
NHSP	National Health Strategic Plan
PLWHA	People Living With HIV/AIDS
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission
PrEP	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis
RHRN	Right Here Right Now
SA	Southern Africa
SADC PF	Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum
SARSYC	Southern African Regional Students and Youth Conference
SAYWHAT	Students and Youths Working on reproductive Health Action Team
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SH	Sexual Harassment
SNDP	Seventh National Development Plan
SR	Sexual Reproduction
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TWG	Technical Working Group
UCH	Universal Coverage for Health
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESWA	University of Eswatini
UNFPA	United Nations Populations Fund
UP	University of Pretoria
UNZA	University of Zambia
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
YETT	Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust
YWLP	Young Women's Leadership Programme
ZYP	Zambia Youth Platform

Document Identification

Prepared By: Cecilia Nyondwa Katebe (DipPharm; ACIM; MBA), Private Consultant
Email: ceciliakatebe@yahoo.co.uk / ceciliakatebesakala@gmail.com

Mobile: +260 977 469440 / +260 956 698750
City/Country: Lusaka, Zambia

1. Introduction and Background

The Southern African Regional Students and Youth Conference on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SARSYC) is a platform that was established in 2015, as a strategic forum that brings together organisations in the region to find common solutions to the shared Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) challenges that young people face. It is a biennial event with the first and second edition held in Zimbabwe in 2015 and South Africa in 2017 respectively. SARSYC harnesses the potential of young people and other stakeholders to come up with one voice in matters related to young people's sexual and reproductive health.

The 3rd edition of the conference took place from 11th to 12th July 2019. It was hosted by the University of Zambia (UNZA) and was held under the theme Plan, Prioritise and Prevent.



The conference called on governments and stakeholders to effectively plan for the realization of young people's sexual reproductive health and ensure that there is a coordinated response in addressing students and young people's sexual reproductive challenges.



The conference called for the prioritization of key populations amongst the youth constituency. These are students in institutions of higher learning with a special focus on female students, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI), young people with disabilities and Young People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).



The conference gave a special focus on the girl child and called on all stakeholders to join the efforts towards preventing Early and Unintended Pregnancies (EUP) which usually escalates to unsafe abortions and deaths. This calls for strengthening Comprehensive Sexuality Education and access to contraception services for young women and men.

2. Expected Conference Outputs – Commitments

In line with the conference values and objectives, the 3rd Edition of SARSYC represented a further commitment by young people to improve the SRHR landscape in the region to:

Recognise: That in addressing all the contemporary health challenges of young people, there is need to Plan for the realization of young people's sexual reproductive health.

Reinforce: The importance of Prioritizing young people giving special emphasis on marginalised groups who include students in institutions of higher learning with a special focus on female students, LGBTI+, persons with disabilities and those living with HIV.

Remember: Prevention is a key strategic imperative which should be mainstreamed in programing to address youth SRH challenges.

Re-affirm: The conference belief that education is one of the key pillars to address youth challenges.

Re-call: The resolutions of past conferences, particularly the 2017 edition where young people expressed commitment to adopt and encourage protective behaviours among each other; to be the change they want to see, taking ownership, responsibility, leadership and control over sexual and reproductive health matters in their countries.

2017 resolutions calling for governments, Regional Entities, Health Providers, UN Agencies, CSOs, Parents and Guardians and other Relevant Entities In Southern Africa to Promote collaborations between research organisations in knowledge and evidence generation; Promote youth participation at all levels and strengthen the implementation of interventions and mobilise funding towards promoting comprehensive sexuality education; continue supporting programs that promote young people's access to sexual and reproductive health services among other resolutions and youth led research for meaningful advocacy work.

Appreciate: The development of the SADC SRH Strategy, with young people actively participating, and adoption of the strategy by member states to provide a framework for programing and policy formulation and other supporting model laws and policies at SADC level.

Note with concern: Young people's SRH challenges keep escalating with emerging issues like unsafe abortions claiming lives of young people and that the uptake of SRH services remains low among young people.

Be mindful of the fact that: New HIV infections among young people keep rising, although the region is recording significant progress HIV treatment across all ages

Realise the need for: Strengthened accountability among governments for quality services to the youths in the face of serious economic melt- down in most of the region's economies
Coordinating the voices of students and youth in Southern Africa on matters to do with sexual and reproductive health.

Appreciating : Young people in the region, including key populations are committed to be part of the solution and to be active participants in coming up with solutions to address challenges they face and that SADC governments have developed various laws and policy documents to guide ASRH interventions but with limited implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Bear in mind: We are already in the 4th year of SDGs implementation and only less than a year before reaching the FP 2020 mark, but with still high unmet need for contraceptives among SADC countries.

2.1 Conference Stakeholders

2.1.1 Conference Convenors

The conference was convened by Students and Youths Working on reproductive Health Action Team (SAYWHAT) and hosted by the University of Zambia (UNZA). Morekolodi Kakambi (UNICEF Botswana) and Sibumalambo (Zambia Youth Platform) chaired the conference.

Key Supporters of the conference included:



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2.1.2 Participating Institutions and Organizations

Southern Africa HIV and AIDS Information Dissemination Service (SAfAIDS); and
The Southern Africa Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF)
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
University of Amsterdam
International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa (ICASA)
Right Here right Now (RHRN) Zimbabwe Consortium
University of Pretoria (UP)
University of Eswatini (UNESWA)
University of Johannesburg (UJ)
University of Maastricht
Hillside Teacher's College (Zimbabwe)
Africa Youth Adolescents Network (AfriYAN)
Population Council of Zambia
University of Botswana
University of Malawi
University of Zimbabwe
Pedagogical University
AIDS Foundation of South Africa
Her Voice Fund Namibia
Web for Life
Centre for Sexuality, AIDS and Gender (CSA&G)
Grassroots Soccer
Copper Rose
Section 27
Million Memory Project Zimbabwe
Mutare Teacher's College
Malawi College of Health Sciences
Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
Youth Network and Counselling (YONECO)
Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development
Ministry of Health Zambia
Dental Training School
Copperbelt University
Mzuzu University Malawi
Malawi Girl Guides Association (MAGGA)
United College of Education
Parliament of Zimbabwe
Parliament of Zambia
Society for AIDS in Africa
Ministry of Local Government Public Works and National Housing
Parliament of Eswatini



Dr C. Mzyamba – University of Amsterdam

The opening presentation aimed to remind young conference participants of the important role they are expected to play in addressing SRHR issues. Participants were taken through the SRHR journey and the successes that have been achieved after 1993 when being diagnosed with Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV) was equivalent to a death sentence.

During this period, the Southern Africa (SA) region recorded approximately 3.5 million deaths related to HIV and Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome (AIDS) annually and this was not due to lack of medication but because of the injustice by pharmaceutical companies who sought to make profit over the lives of people using patent rights. However, between 2001 and 2003 a group of advocates stood up against the pharmaceutical companies so that they could make ARVs affordable for the poor. This fight ensured increased access to ARVs so that infected people reached undetectable levels of HIV and in the long term this would ultimately reduce transmission. Further, Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) was introduced to protect unborn children.

Access to Anti-Retrovirals (ARVs) in the SADC region has increased significantly over the years with a regional coverage of about 50% and the region has been able to avert over 200,000 deaths annually. Despite the progress made, there is still much to be done.

A research by the University of Amsterdam documents that the negative outcomes in SRH are anchored by four major forms of oppression and injustice within the Southern Africa Region and these are outlined as follows:

- 1. Poor or unequal social economic conditions*
- 2. Lack of country/context specific interventions*
- 3. Lack of proper unity and coordination within the struggle which leads to the duplication of efforts and wastage of resources*
- 4. Denial of humanity and basic human rights to women, LGBTIQ, young people and the disabled*

The presenter made a request to young people to denounce all forms of injustice. The research also discovered that the negative outcomes of SRHR are rooted in systematic oppression. This means that aiming at behavioural change without any significant effort to address the systematic and underlying causes of high HIV-prevalence rate is counterproductive. Moralising society does not work and abstinence has failed to produce desired results thus stakeholders should direct efforts where we can have impact.

In line with this, a plethora of research has suggested an amalgamated approach that deals with socio-economic challenges and inequalities. Furthermore, human rights questions for the minorities need to be addressed. In order to do so, there is need to coordinate it as a united front with concerted effort thinking globally but acting locally. The SADC region has strengths and indigenous solutions which can be leveraged on. As the region undertakes this mandate, it should bear in mind that social change within SRH is not a linear process and happens in a complex way. All stakeholders play an important role in this fighting which each individual action should contribute to overall goal.

3.2 Opening Remarks Representative for the UNZA Vice Chancellor



The UNZA Vice Chancellor's Representative, Dr. Clementina Lwatula (Medical Officer in Charge at UNZA Clinic) reminded participants of how the journey of working together on various matters relating to health, socio-economic, academic and sport can be traced back many years ago through strengthened partnerships. SARSYC was recognised as a special and unique partnership that brings people together to deliberate on health issues in general and SRH in particular; emphasizing that strategies can only be met if young people are healthy. The representative made a commitment that UNZA will continue to support SARSYC and looked forward to seeing the conference resolutions



3.3 Message from the Convenor



Jimmy Wilford – Executive Director, SAYWHAT

The Executive Director thanked all participants for the various roles they took up in order to make the conference a success. He reminded the students and youth of the importance of the theme and the need for them to understand what it meant. He pointed out five (5) key behavioural traits that would positively impact on the implementation of activities pre, during and post-conference.

1. Humility and focus – young people should remember that they are not entitled to everything that happens and should take initiative and be proactive.
2. Responsibility – rights come with responsibility and as young people hold leaders accountable they in turn should be accountable for their actions.
3. Don't be limited by challenges.
4. Take action – participate and contribute to regional initiatives such as Family Planning 2020, Agenda 2063, and the Sustainable Development goals (SDGs)
5. Innovative – use the most impactful SRHR strategies to achieve success and live by the Motto "One SADC Region, One SRHR Voice."

3.4 Solidarity Message: Youth Unlimited



Chivuli Ukwimi - Programmes Manager - HIVOS

Hivos reminded youths of how their youthful days should be filled with optimism, courage, energy and commitment to make the world a better place for oneself and others. This optimism is sometimes diminished by socio-economic challenges, discrimination and stigma. Hivos is compelled to act and recruit others to act together to fight against poverty which is the root cause of negative SRHR outcomes. Hivos reminded participants how institutions of higher learning were considered breeding grounds for STIs and unwanted pregnancies and how it poses major risks to youth who are supposed to be future leaders. Hivos indicated how the move had become a major concern for all those working towards improving SRH services. Key to note is that protection during sex should be everyone's priority. In doing so they should look for and share information as well as demand for services at their institutions in order to make the world a better place. Youths were told to be vigilant over their bodies, sexuality and health.

Hivos indicated its belief in unlimited potential within people and how working together could bring change. The message to the young people was for them to be bold, brave and strive to improve themselves. They were reminded that by working together they can bring about change be it in issues of climate change, SRH or ending hunger and disease. It has been noted that young people across the globe leave their homes and societies where they are not free to express themselves and thus find themselves running away from a world plagued with many social challenges. All young should know that they have the right to be young and free and the future is bright as they have the power to create a better tomorrow.

3.5 Southern Africa's Utopia



Chipo Zulu – Swedish International Development Agency

SIDA thanked all representatives supporting young people and told participants that Sweden had a history of investing in young people in Sub Saharan Africa and had put in place strategic priorities for regional development cooperation which highlight the importance of addressing the needs of young girls and boys. SIDA recognises the efforts being made by the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) in raising the importance of Zambian youth as evidenced in the current Seventh National Development Plan (SNDP) 2017-2021 under the theme "Accelerating Development Efforts for Vision 2030 Without Leaving Anyone Behind." This Plan was informed by the need to harness the demographic dividends in view of Zambia's youthful population which entails government's efforts towards creating an enabling environment to ensure all citizens claim rights to education, health, development and live free from violence and discrimination.

Sweden also recognises guidelines targeted towards improving the health of young people e.g. Zambia's National Youth Policy, National Health Strategic Plan (NHSP), National Health Adolescent Health Strategy among others and commended partners in the Southern region in improving the health and rights of youths.

Sweden expects to see a Southern African region with an enabling legal and policy environment that prioritises the rights of young people as they are the future leaders that deserve access to quality health and education.

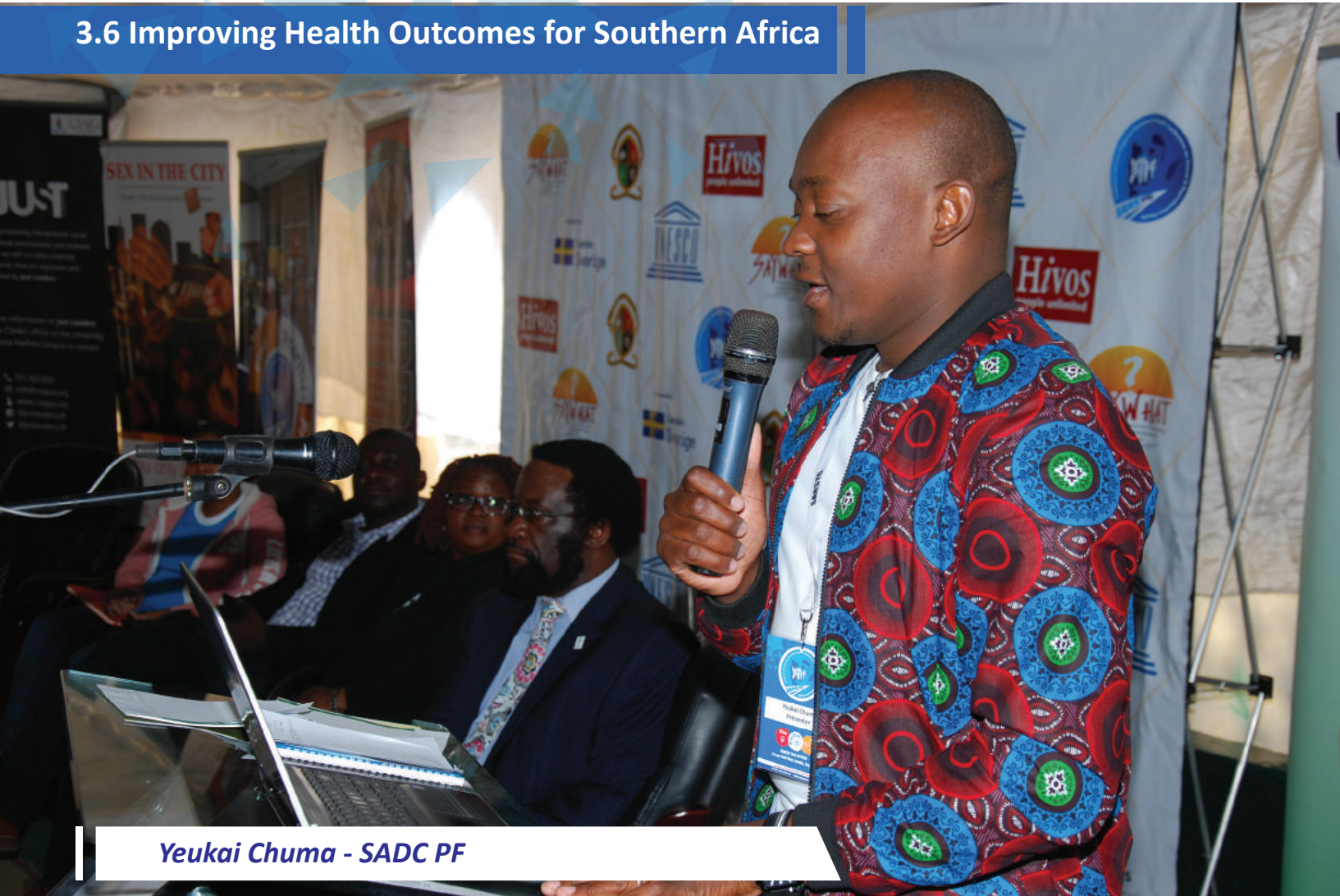
Further, Sweden envisions a SA region with sound policies and strategies, youth initiatives that are cross-sectional and address basics in education, employment, economy, housing, health, culture and leisure. Youth strategies and plans must be holistic cognisant of the fact that they do not exist isolation and their ability to thrive is dependent on social and environmental factors.

SIDA funds programmes aimed at strengthening democracy, gender equality and human rights and expect to see governments that have a youth perspective. Sweden also wishes to see the region with equal representation of men and women in decision making roles taking action that is gender sensitive and gender inclusive.

Furthermore, Sweden expects to see a region that respects and upholds the rights of young people to make decisions over their own bodies and live healthy and reproductive lives regardless of their age, gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation or physical disability.

Recognising that child marriage is a major challenge in the region, Sweden expects to see greater effort being put towards elimination of the practice and hopes to see the SA region meeting the Abuja Declaration with countries allocating at least 15% of their annual budget towards improving the health sector with special focus on services that respond to the SRH needs of young people. This will result in the reduction of unsafe abortions, unwanted pregnancies, maternal deaths and increased access to contraceptives, among other things. Sweden continues to invest in SA region through the Regional Strategy for SRHR SA with an allocation of USD355m over a period of 2015 to 2021 and is complimentary to Sweden's country level funding in Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It hopes that other partners will continue to invest in this cause. Key stakeholders and young people were encouraged to know their rights. This enables them to have their governments account for their, gender and sexual reproductive rights in order to prevent all SRH related issues. The SIDA representative was hopeful that other partners will contribute towards the support of SRHR efforts in Southern Africa.

3.6 Improving Health Outcomes for Southern Africa



Yeukai Chuma - SADC PF

Young people were strongly encouraged to invest in what makes them relevant. SADC PF thanked SARSYC for providing a platform for young people through the forum. It also recognised work by all the others partners h to improve health outcomes for young people citing the quote "United we stand, Divided we fall." Since 1996 SADC PF has been involved in a number of governance and cooperation programs including regional integration and gender in parliaments, HIV/AIDS, training and capacity building. With support from SIDA as a response to advocacy work by networks and the alarming SRHR indicators; the forum adopted a resolution on the role of Parliament to ensure that SRHR is addressed at both national and regional levels.

SADC PF said it hoped that young people will fast track the implementation of SRHR and joining their respective parliaments in demanding for accountability. SADC PF hopes that the 3rd edition of SARSYC will hold the bar higher to ensure that all people in the region enjoy their health, sexual and reproductive lives and also have sustainable access and coverage to quality SRHR services, information and education.

3.7 AIDS Free Southern Africa



Dr. Namwinda – Society for AIDS in Africa

Society for AIDS in Africa are the convenors of ICASA, which will be held in Rwanda from the 2nd to 7th December 2019. In their message, they bemoaned how the African culture had made it a taboo discussing sexual issues contributing to the vulnerability of youths due to lack of information. Youth were recognised as a powerful group that comes with great responsibility to nurture those coming behind them for a better tomorrow.

The presenter commended the organisers, leadership and participants of SARSYC for their commitment in promoting SRHR. She further added that the United Nations (UN) agenda was guided by World Programme Action for Youth and adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1995. The agenda aims to provide the policy framework for practical guidelines for national action and international support with a vision to improve the situation of young people around the world. The World Programme Action for youth describes youth participation as a fundamental right, one of guiding the principles of the universal declaration of human rights that have been echoed in human rights, labour, gender equality, poverty reduction, agriculture, SRHR among others. Youth consultations were instrumental in leading up to the post 2015 Development Agenda and the SDGs which address youth participation with specific target on youth development issues. The African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 through the Youth Charter, Youth Decade Plan of Action and the Declaration of Youth Empowerment protects young people from discrimination and freedom of movement, speech associations, religion, ownership of property and other human rights.

A review of the declarations and commitments shows that in fifteen (15) years Africa will have the largest population of youth in the world. In view of this, youths should take into consideration their sexual rights and must be informed and oriented positively on issues to do to with sex. This will result in the African continent avoiding new HIV/AIDS infections and ultimately eradicating the scourge. Youth Focus at ICASA

Ten people were selected as the Youth Committee out of 104 Africans and the conference has 3 youth components which include:

1. Youth Pre-Conference – focus meeting that takes place a day before the conference and is intended to provoke intellectual discussions amongst youths around field of HIV, TB and emerging diseases
2. Youth Special Sessions – explore issues around HIV response for young people e.g. issues on domestic funding, youth activities on HIV, youth engagement and leadership and best country approaches towards HIV responses in Africa
3. Youth pavilion activities – where general public can participate in activities related to HIV

In order to raise awareness of the HIV programme and promote youth behavioural change the Youth Caravan programme will be conducted and selected countries include Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Burundi.

The presenter concluded by saying that the ICASA programme would not be complete without youth participation. Despite the many efforts being made by stakeholders in the fight against HIV, prevalence rates keep escalating among young people and more effort is still required to address unsafe abortion and access to contraceptives.

1.1 Plenary Discussion

Session engaged all speakers with conference participants in order to ensure that all their issues were addressed.

Questions	Response
How can young people access SIDA support?	SIDA works in partnership with Hivos and in Nov 2017 an Agreement was signed to support Hivos as they reach out to youth/youth led organisations. Hivos is the point of call for young people.
How can young people make use of SADC PF structure to be able to influence policy decisions? <i>The question was raised in order to understand how leaders can be held accountable for all the commitments they affirm to.</i>	<p>SADC PF has 5 committees with a sixth one to be introduced which will specifically deal with young people's issues. The Forum operates by ensuring each country sends six Parliamentarians who are champions for countries.</p> <p>At national level, the forum implements programmes focusing on SRH, HIV and Governance. The project is designed to be driven by in country partners to ensure adolescents' rights are prioritised and will be spear-headed and monitored by partners and Parliament.</p> <p>There are model laws and strategies in place that are cascaded from the region to country level.</p> <p>SIDA confirmed their involvement in the evaluation process of the agreement between them and SADC PF and encouraged young people to participate in country hearings in order for their voices to be heard. The hearings are in the public domain and easily accessible.</p>
How does ICASA ensure meaningful involvement of the youth?	There are over 500 fully funded scholarships that come with a pre-condition for one to submit an abstract within three programmes namely Scientific, Leadership and Community. Young people should understand the system and how to access what is offered. Each abstract should contain 400 words. Youths were encouraged to visit ICASA website and submit abstracts. The deadline is 31st July.

3.9 Unpacking the Theme



Alice Siame – UNESCO

The UNESCO Representative had an important role of unpacking the Theme “Plan, Prioritise, Prevent.” UNESCO explained how important it is for the SRH needs of young people to be taken care of for them to be able to successfully achieve their academic aspirations.

In 2013 UNESCO embarked on activities that support SRH through the work they have been conducting in collaboration with SIDA, other UN organisations and civil society to affirm SR Ministerial Commitments which brings together Ministries Health/Education to ensure that they provide CSE and SRH. Twenty one (21) countries affirmed to this commitment which goes up to 2021 and are implementing and tracking progress.

The Sexual Reproductive (SR) Ministerial Commitment is a strategic tool that aims to strengthen HIV prevention efforts and foster positive sexual behaviour outcomes for young people through access to sexuality education as well as services. The objective of the commitment is to bring the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Education (MOE) together in a coordinated effort to ensure the achievement of high level political commitment so that all outcomes are in line with the provision of improved SRHR services.

The implementation of the commitment is supported by guidelines that were developed in the region which are in line with the goals to end EUP, GBV, and ensuring that SRHR for young people are met.

The role of civil society in the SR Ministerial commitment is to support implementation as well as ensure the provision of a platform for collaboration and inclusion for young people to work with/for Civil Society Organisations (CSO). The UN supports government to review legislation, remove barriers to access commodities and services and also ensures that there is the existence of transparent budget to support Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE) and SRHR programmes.

Young people were reminded to call upon government to ensure that SRHR needs are addressed collectively in national plans for the realisation of young people’s needs and rights and ensure that there is a coordinated response in addressing these issues. The UN also calls for the prioritisation of key populations among the youth population including students, female, disabled and PLWHA. Prevention should give focus to the girl child so as to prevent early and unintended pregnancies knowing the adverse effects related to this which include unsafe abortions and school drop outs. Concrete plans and budgets should be put in place to support SRHR programmes in all countries. Young people should take advantage of stakeholders and experts to help push their SRHR agenda forward.

“A firm call was made by UNESCO for SARSYC participants to ensure that all resolutions made during the conference are put into action.” Resolutions should aim towards, among other things, ensuring that SRHR issues are included in national budgets with the ultimate goal to see statistics drop in all negative SRHR impacts some of which include the high number of girls dropping out of school due to EUP, HIV infection rates and unsafe abortions.

Young people are expected to support countries achieve the SDGs 3, 4 and 5 related to health, education and gender respectively, and once this is done youths should be able to realise their full potential.

3.10 Key Note Address



Dr. P. Bobo – Director Public Health and Research, Ministry of Health Zambia

On behalf of Zambia's Minister of Health, the Director of Public Health expressed how honoured Zambia was to be given an opportunity to host SARSYC facilitated by the UNZA. Participants were told how the MOH in Zambia has a track record in improving the health of young people as evidenced in the 2017 and 2019 Adolescent Health Strategy. This commitment has seen the launch of the outreach health programme at UNZA which came about as a result of the challenges young people faced with regards to SRH. The programme embarks on bringing services close to young people working with various partners. A consensus was reached with partners that sexual reproductive rights for young people were equally important in enhancing their health. A community initiative for young people has been implemented to ensure that they are not left behind in health matters. Further, the transformational agenda anchored on the Universal Coverage for Health (UCH) being implemented by GRZ envisions that young people are not left behind in health matters.

The conference was encouraged to work tirelessly to support young people both in and out of school, employed and unemployed and provide solutions that work in Southern Africa. The theme rightly spoke to the needs for students and young people to rally behind each other and have one coordinated voice in advocacy and key messages in order to achieve the 90/90/90 target to combat HIV challenges as well as eliminate other vices such as child marriages. The Director said that SRH of young people will always be priority for GRZ and they acknowledge the progress made in the region on SRHR even though a lot still needs to be done. . It was noted that children and youth under the age of 24 constitute 18% of the global population and 19% of these are in Africa. SRHR of students and youth in Southern Africa needs to be prioritised in order to advance social and economic development.

The Director concluded by thanking SAYWHAT and UNZA for providing a platform where practises can be shared. MOH indicated that it expected to receive the resolutions of the conference and committed to support their implementation.

3.11 Debate Session

The debate session discussed issues related SRHR with the view provoking ideas on the issues can be addressed by governments and other stakeholders realising that there are always different points of views for every situation.



Debate Number 1 - Feminism is a cancer that ruins society
Zimbabwe (Government) Vs. University of Botswana (Opposition)
Zimbabwe (Government)

Opening the debate the Government speaker started by telling the house that it comprised of delegates who believe that feminism is a cancer that ruins society and the government's stance is that the belief and philosophy that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men is a growing problem that has damaged communities. The speaker went on to define the key areas of the motion to show what government is doing to realise whether feminism is a cancer or not and referred the house to the topic under discussion which does not just aim to discuss the idea of feminism but the struggle of bringing the idea into a reality in order to achieve the intended goals.

Delegates heard of how the varying approaches to feminism stall the progress of women emancipation and that regardless of the forms of feminism all of them should bring a unified front to address policy. Tokenism of power cements the point that women are not capable of playing roles given to them and this is one of the challenges identified. Further, the idealistic approach of feminism originating from the Western world without adapting it to local contexts as well as the exclusion of men in the Gender Agenda are all some of the negative approaches towards making feminism a reality.

University of Botswana (Opposition)

The speaker from the opposition was of the view that feminists have one goal which is to advance towards the most egalitarian society in which all individuals are protected regardless of their gender. They indicated their strong belief that feminism was not a cancer but cure because uplifting a woman is key and this had not been the case in a society marred with social systemic oppression against women which includes patriarchy, sexism, transphobia and xenophobia. Due to this oppression there are wide salary gaps between men and women, where the latter has been denied authority and control over their own bodies and restricted rights that have led to child marriages etc.
Zimbabwe (Government)

The second speaker representing the government emphasized that they were not against feminism but the strategies and approaches used in the implementation of feminism which had been put in place to address it - some which had led to a stall in progress of policy making to address SRH issues affecting women in society. Due to the different views between liberal and radical feminists these deliberations have been delayed.

The speaker further went on to say that societies should have affirmative action in place to assist women bridge the gap that has been created due to a patriarchal societies. As much as women are empowered they have been stripped of the tools to impact on the social and political spaces in which they operate. Also pointed out was how it is not idealistic to use western approaches to solve issues in Southern Africa culture which is ignorant to feminism thus making women vulnerable and limited in their career progression.

Feminism is not a war waged against men and men should be excluded from the Gender Agenda. Society still needs to be educated on protecting women and to realise the full potential of feminism there should be a balanced society and men need to be included in the process.

University of Botswana (Opposition)

The opposition argued that feminism is not a cancer but a cure that has helped society by providing a voice for all through democracy. There are women in Parliament and women with the right to vote now and all this has been as a result of feminism advocates. The opposition supports groups that empower women through feminism to help them build their self-esteem and identify their strength. Women depend on their partners thus remain quiet when abused. Feminism has helped do away with major practices that oppress women like cultural practise and political oppression and this has led to gender equity because men are included in feminism. Women are now in power and are able to empower other women in turn.

Zimbabwe (Government)

Supporting its stance the government said it puts more focus on the evaluation of processes that will help feminism achieve what it aims to achieve and thus everyone should ask themselves whether feminism has created equity for women, has it benefited men or has it benefited society as a whole?

Society believes that a woman needs to be given a platform for free. The biases that women cannot stand up on their own should be done away with and better solutions should not deviate from plans that feminism has created. The argument is that there has to be a structural shift for it to be relevant. Evaluation is key to realise the goal of feminism and the aim should be to identify solutions that benefit cause and do not create anarchy with the realisation that women cannot stand up on their own so women should be given real power and the whole approach should aim towards providing solutions that will uphold their status in society.

University of Botswana (Opposition)

The opposition believes in the saying that “A person is a person through other people” and that other people are men with the world being male and binary divisions should never be allowed. Patriarchy should not be replaced but instead people should be advocating for human rights for everyone. As much as there may be different approaches to feminism in the world there is only one goal to achieve. Women should either oppose or affirm feminism as binary division gives rise to oppression. Thus the semantic “cancer’ is wrongly used as people who have died of cancer did not die of feminism!

Zimbabwe (Government)

Summing up the debate, the government made a suggestion that all feminists (religious, social, radical) should be of one voice as this will enable policy makers meet their responsibilities. Feminism should include men so that through unity societies can be preserved and competition between men and women will be equal. Compatible approaches should be put in place and implementers should ensure that strategies do not deviate from goals if the ultimate goal is to achieve equality and avoid imbalances of any sort. Aim should be to provide quality women in Southern Africa.

University of Botswana (Opposition)

The opposition’s summary of the debate was with the strong point that everyone can become feminists and that there should be different approaches to push forward women’s rights. This would entail having different drivers advocating for different approaches and that government should stop dictating how women should live and feminists should never be boxed as they advocate for opportunity if Africa is to unite. Women are not here to serve men’s appetites and should remember that binary division is not the way to go. Feminists advocate for equal opportunities and this should be respected.

Participants’ Open Discussion on Debate

One of the participants was against government’s view saying that culture is not a person and that men should never be set as the main benchmark of competitiveness. Africa should be clear about whose version of feminism it embraces in order to fully understand how to approach all the issues surrounding feminism.

Debate Number 2 – Men cannot be part of the Gender Agenda



University of Johannesburg (Government) Vs. University of Zambia (Opposition) University of Johannesburg (Government)

The speaker started by explaining that men are in power and have always been superior. The government set off the debate by defining gender and sex and how the two are usually intertwined which should not be the case as sex is biological while gender is cultural. A reminder on how GBV has been a major issue in Africa that affects women and children among other negative vices such as rape and child marriages. Women are made to sleep their way to the top and men are main perpetrators of all the mentioned vices. Feminists should be given more rights to different approaches that will pave way for women to be more involved in decision and policy making. Women should be involved in policy making and be seen as equal to men.

University of Zambia (Opposition)

Responding to this the leader of the opposition expanded the definition of gender to include the attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. This said, an agenda has been set to achieve the goal at hand which is to see that men and women are given equal opportunities and thus if men are left out the Gender Agenda would leave the definition of gender incomplete as gender refers to social construction of roles played by both men and women. The speaker went on further to explain how development is a journey and pointed out the importance of the 1975 UN meeting in Beijing where it was agreed that men be included as no goal can be achieved if one sex is excluded citing the importance of the role of men and partnerships.

University of Johannesburg (Government)

Government argued out that men have always had power giving them an unfair advantage and use this against women in an unfair way. Men are the biggest oppressors of women and this disqualifies them from being part of the Gender Agenda.

University of Zambia (Opposition)

The opposition strongly felt that all perpetrators should be educated if the Gender Agenda is to work and no one can deny the fact that men have responsibilities and carry so much power thus the ultimate goal for all stakeholders is to close the gap in gender inequality. Men always make decisions that overpower females.

The deputy leader of the opposition told delegates that men never want to talk about gender issues and that there are of the two forms that exist being pro-feminist and anti-feminist. Standing on two grounds:

Optimism: everyone boys and girls men and women have the capacity to flourish and fulfil desired results which will empower and improve economies for both men and women.

Activism: how can gender neutralise gender to solve day to day problems.

Some male perpetrators are not aware that what they are doing is wrong thus need to be educated so that they stop oppress women. The gap between gender inequalities should be closed. Men have responsibilities and duties and carry so much power especially in the Southern region where the majority of leaders are male.

University of Johannesburg (Government)

The government was of the view that men are already involved in societal agendas leaving very few platforms where women will not be threatened by their oppressor – men! It is almost impossible for men to participate in pure honesty and usually protect what benefits them. Excluding men will allow women to express themselves without feeling intimidated. A typical example was given of how Mandela was more of a celebrated icon despite being a sell out more than Winnie who had to bare the pain of being beaten in her own home as she supported her partner's struggle all because he was a man.

University of Zambia (Opposition)

The opposition reminded the house that it does not make sense to leave men out as it brings about discrimination. Stakeholders cannot compromise as they seek change and vengeance can never be a solution. Violence has always been associated with men however men are equally oppressed. There is a difference between right and wrong and excluding men from the Gender Agenda is wrong.

University of Johannesburg (Government)

In conclusion the government whip reiterated that it is men who attribute bad qualities to women and have raised themselves on such high pedestals where culturally practicing polygamy and patriarchy heightens their status which makes it impossible for them to see women as their equals. This said, Gender Agenda should be exclusive for women who advocate for being treated fairly so that they are able to express themselves and be protected from oppression by radical narrow minded men who do not propose change. If men are part of the Gender Agenda women will continue to be abused and sexually assaulted as they are seen as a threat to the world. Occasionally women advocates for feminism and those who stand for equality are oppressed.

University of Zambia (Opposition)

The opposition concluded by saying that “Behind every successful woman should be a woman” and they do realise the importance of the male folk as the term equality can only be used if it's referring to two different things. Men should accept that women exist and work towards uplifting them. Further, men should be educated to make them understand that a woman has same value as they do. Aim to change the mind-set of men by involving them in the Gender Agenda so that they are aligned to the goals of the cause.

With this the first round of debate sessions was concluded with Zimbabwe and the University of Johannesburg going through to the finals.

3.12 Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) MOH Support to Adolescent Health

MOH Representative – Chief Nursing Officer Adolescent Health

Activities at national level aim towards the 2030 vision of having a healthy productive person and in order to achieve this the MOH has an Adolescents Health TWG which is a multi-sectorial group that involves young people who train health workers in the provision of quality healthy responsive services and to ensure they are no longer judgemental. Deliberately adolescent focal point persons have been appointed at sub national levels as conduits for young people to reach out to leaders of facilities. MOH has retained UNZA Response team but will work closely with them to preview information.

MOH has also educated peer educators to become family planning facilities for their peers as well as increased access to emergency contraceptives in health facilities. Outreach services were launched so that the MOH Motto “leave no one else behind” is realised. Common negative vices among young people like suicide, GBV, STIs have been noted and are equally being addressed by the TWG. Unsafe abortion is legal in Zambia but restrictive. In all these efforts, GRZ is working with other partners.

3.13 Breakaway sessions

Session 1: Adolescents and Young People's Health- RHRN Zimbabwe



Key Messages

Young people have limited voices which restricts their access to their rights. Leaders and policy makers should allow young people to be in the forefront and make decisions.

According to the Zimbabwe School Health Policy the long term outcomes that will ensure that the issues surrounding young people's health include:

- Focus on acquiring more funding for implementing policies to reduce mortality and morbidity rates associated with sex, review abortion Act; access to health service should be for every citizen
- Improve implementation of policies
- Review the current Abortion Act
- Ensure every citizen has access to health services regardless of sexual orientation or health status

Conclusion

Parliamentarians should allow youths to delegate meetings in order to have their needs addressed and more funding should be sourced to ensure implementation of policies.

Session 2: Social Accountability Monitoring of Adolescent and Young People's SRH Services-SAfAIDS

Key Messages

Social Accountability Monitoring for Adolescents and Young People's SRH is a platform for adolescents and young people to raise their voice on SRH service delivery challenges they face at the local health facility and contributes to positive outcomes of SRH. SAfAIDS launched a new mobile application called MobiSAfAIDS which is aimed at empowering adolescents and youths to engage in social accountability monitoring. This application allows citizens to report cases of lack of service; interact with the health facility administrators, health services providers, civil society organizations, and local government officials; track progress on the resolution of issues; and to be empowered to hold relevant stakeholders accountable for providing the necessary sexual and reproductive health services.

Use of MobiSAfAIDS

Download the MobiSAfAIDS App on Google play store and install it on your phone.

Session 3: Sexual Harassment

Key Messages Presentation 1 - The Centre for Sexualities, AIDS and Gender (CSA&G) Mr D. Rasebopye - Centre for Sexuality, AIDS and Gender (CSA&G)

The Centre for Sexualities, AIDS and Gender (CSA&G) was established in 1999 to help guide and shape the University of Pretoria's (UP) HIV response, its engagement with communities from which staff and students are drawn and implement both service and research programmes.

The CSA&G uses an intersectional approach to working with constituents and broader issues of human rights and social. The pursuit of sexual harassment work has helped the University of Pretoria move to achieving other stuff that from the start they may not have intended to pursue.

Aims of CSA&G

- Help people identify and define sexual harassment
- Deal with all levels of discrimination
- To ensure human rights are spoken about and not violated
- Ensure all people have access of basic need and services



CSA&G also identifies the LGBTIQ as another marginalised community who face a lot of verbal harassment as well as violation of their rights. It has been noted that even in situations where they are clearly the victims of harassment or violations, it is not spoken about because laws only decriminalise and not acknowledge or affirm. It is important that laws protecting the LGBTIQ community be extended not only to particular individuals or communities but to everyone else.

Presentation No. 2 - Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust (YETT)

YETT is a youth networking organisation committed to the full participation of young people in sustainable development through advocacy and capacity building of youth organisations in Zimbabwe.

The presentation focused on the Student Academic Freedom Regional Advocacy Programme (SAFRAP) which aims to equip students with the necessary skills to understand their rights and the requisite knowledge to present and communicate the evidence supporting their claims. This forum brings together students, researchers, academia's' and government representatives in order to exchange and share ideas and experiences to promote academic freedom and lift student activists.

The ultimate goal of SAFRAP is to improve the quality of tertiary education in the Southern African region. Please refer to Appendix 2 for the YETT Brochure

Conclusion

People experience sexual harassment but not understanding it to be so especially in a situation where it does not involve a rape case. It is only acknowledged to exist at extremity and this is what the University is trying to deal with by creating workshops and working on policies in order to address the gap. Furthermore, women must always be aware that people may always be driven by the cultural aspects that have groomed them for a very long time and not be too sure someone will not harass them. It is better to prevent such scenarios from happening to us before actual happenings.

Session 4: Abstract Based Presentations

Key Messages Presentation 1 - Biomedical Research (Dr P. Thomas – University of Maastricht) A Case for Scientific Research in Africa

A detailed presentation was made citing the importance of biomedical research in that it promotes education, skills training, and employment, helps build resilient societies by creating opportunities for communities but has faced limitations in relation to ethics, funding, partnerships and collaborations. These limitation can be mitigated by giving African researchers ownership to all researches conducted on the continent, creating opportunities for communication on all research findings and outcomes, finding new solutions to address current situations, documenting best practices, build on existing information and advocating at all in-country levels.

Please refer to Appendix 3 for the Biomedical Research

Question and Answer session

Question 1: How do you address barriers for researchers on the continent in terms of visa restrictions? Movement of researchers are restricted.

Presenter has not come across this but believes it is an important factor that needs to be addressed.

Question 2: Should there be any relation between topic of research and funding

Funding and opportunities may not always be in line with needs of communities as they may not be most pressing for local communities. Research usually fits points of view of funders and not the community requirements which should not be the case and is considered a shortcoming that requires re-aligning.

Question 3: have you come across any statements that safeguard ethical consent during the conducting of research

Broader discussion required regarding ethical consent. Community consent is very important as well as the involvement of community leaders to gain trust and better communicate with local population and stakeholders. This is just one of the many ways of improving communication.

Question 4: AU to start implementing biomedical research

Roadmap for Agenda 2063 aims to pave way for development in Africa and research is noted as an important component of the agenda.

Key Messages Presentation 2 - Life of a Student Living With Physical Disability

(Ms N. Nozhinle -Hillside Teachers' College, Zimbabwe)

Discussion was around the disabled as a marginalised community who are usually excluded from most societal benefit and deserve to receive equal treatment. The presentation aimed:

- to establish challenges faced by students living with disabilities in tertiary institutions.
- to explore the effects of challenges faced by students living with disabilities in tertiary institutions
- to examine the strategies that can be implemented to reduce the social and academic challenges namely lack of resources, lack of an inclusive syllabus, time management, social integration (other students not willing to share resources) and stigmatization

Please refer to Appendix 4- Presentation - The Life of a Student Living With Physical Disability

Key Messages Presentation 3 – University of Eswatini

(Ms N. Mabuza –University of Eswatini)

Towards the Development of an Efficient Sexual and Reproductive Health Model For UNESWA –Institution of Distance Education for Female Students

The third presentation aimed to show how the University of Eswatini has identified issues being faced by young female students and what has been put in place by the country at large and the University to address these issues. It has been noted generally that young people are a group that deserves special attention regarding the provision of SRH services and the promotion of SRH rights but the country has a weak National Health policy to be able to coordinate SRH services and this prompted UNESWA to put in place an effective SRH model that is comprehensive.

Please refer to Appendix 5 for the Presentation - Towards the Development of an Efficient Sexual and Reproductive Health Model For UNESWA –Institution of Distance Education for Female Students

Question and Answer session

Question 1: How do you find new ways to reach out and use technology to bring out your messages and are you planning to capitalize on scaling up ways of addressing SRHR issues

UNESWA relies on working with partners and the plan is to develop ethical level framework for implementation. The university advocates for the acceleration of the SRHR agenda.

3.14 Debate Final

**Culture is at the centre of Sexual Harassment Behaviour
University of Johannesburg (Government) Vs. Zimbabwe (Opposition)
University of Johannesburg (Government)**



The University of Johannesburg, representing the Government, started the debate by giving the definition of culture as the arts and manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively while sexual harassment is the behaviour characterized by the making of unwelcome and inappropriate sexual remarks or physical advances in a workplace or other professional or social situations.

The speaker explained how people are raised to believe that humanity is one of the biggest cultures in people's lives and men are at the top of decision making in most cultures which limits the say of women. Issues of consent have side-lined women giving men so much power over women.

Harassment can happen to any person in society including the LGBTIQ community. The African culture believes in heterosexuals thus this group of people is marginalised. Issues such as polygamy empowers men to have multiple partners which extends sexual harassment to include emotional abuse beyond the usual physical abuse women are made to go through.

Zimbabwe (Opposition)

The leader of the opposition strongly believes that culture is not at the centre of sexual harassment as there is no culture that allows rape regardless of the circumstances. As the motion is being discussed people should not only agree with some elements of the definition but understand that culture refers to customs and beliefs that shape people's lives. In doing so culture should focus on beliefs that are influential in one's life.

The speaker held delegates to task by asking if it is really culture that causes perpetrators to do what they do when individuals make personal decisions to watch pornography and use it as an excuse to harass others sexually. Acknowledging that we are living within world where cultures of feminism is growing and despite being enlightened on these issues there is an increase in sexual harassment cases which shows that individuality is more important. People's mind sets need to be changed. People are privileged to live in an environment where information is shared on how to treat others equally yet they continue sexually harassing others. Cultural dilution should not be an excuse to engage in sexual harassment.

University of Johannesburg (Government)

The second speaker from the government took to the floor reminding delegates that the mind set and culture are inseparable and mutually constituted therefore influencing each other. Culture is shared and transmitted and people learn most vices from generations before them bearing in mind that the smallest things done in families affect individuals and this is how culture is transmitted.

South Africa has a saying that gives father's the right over their children's bodies which has led to sexual harassment being on the increase. Societies look at the LGBTIQ community and believe they need to be fixed and this is sexual harassment.

Zimbabwe (Opposition)

The Deputy leader of the opposition made an attack on the government speaker that referred to mind-set and culture being inseparable referring to Linet's story and how she is actively involved in the Gender Agenda and is not a reflection of her background proving that her mind-set is not linked to her background. This is a matter of personal responsibility.

Corrective rape in the LGBTIQ community is not a South African culture as the country has recognised gay rights which makes this an act a mind-set issue. Culture may have an influence on sexual harassment but cannot be said to be the centre. With regard to the point on the dilution of culture due to globalisation people should bear in mind that there are so many factors that influence a child's behaviour as they develop. The influence of the media and the internet is by choice and should not be an excuse for sexual harassment. Personal beliefs are not only influenced by the culture one grows up in making individuals responsible for their choices. The speaker ended by saying that lack of personal responsibility is the hinge of sexual harassment not culture.

University of Johannesburg (Government)

Government continued the debate by emphasizing that culture is the centre of sexual harassment citing some customs of society where men are in illegal child marriages which they believe is legal in their culture. Moreover, people are victimised and this is killing the nation as men are being driven by sexual desires. Most men believe they can do whatever they wish and are not emotionally supported. It is true that in most cases the past influences future where people do things according to what they've been taught without regarding rights of other individuals.

Zimbabwe (Opposition)

The opposition analysed issues discussed by the government making reference to respect which gives others a sense of protection and should be embraced by society. With regard to corrective rape the speaker strongly believes it is wrong whichever form it is done. Sexual desires are owned by individuals. Attacks on LGBTIQ can never be a culture anywhere. Failing to take responsibility of your actions is an individual decision as the saying goes "as a man thinketh so is he." Culture should not be stigmatised and the main issue at hand is lack of personal responsibility and people should focus on changing their mind sets.

University of Johannesburg (Government)

As a wrap up the government whip lashed out at the opposition missing out the vital point on what culture is focusing on Africa. Cultures are shared and learned norms, conceived born and die. Dilution of culture and sexual harassment has become the norm. According to the Zulu culture Section 28 of SA constitution states that 18 years and below is considered children yet there are cultures still marrying off children under this age.

Addressing dilution the speaker reminded how this make people see everything as normal. As we discuss harassment, focus should not just be on the victim but on the perpetrator as well who has learned culture that makes them him feel what they are doing is right. Individualisation cannot be cited as a vice that promotes sexual harassment as it takes one person to influence others thus birth of culture. The LGBTIQ each have their own cultures and what needs to be critically analysed is what sits at the centre of their culture that would influence their behaviour in society.

Culture is through learning and there is failure within societies to rebuke something that is wrong.

Zimbabwe (Opposition)

The opposition concluded by saying that a person has the right to make an individual choice whether or not to perform sexual harassment. People have personal choices and perception. The world has seen activists rise up against sexual harassment thus putting their mind-set against what their culture tries to impart onto them. Sexual desire is a personal preference and people have the right to control themselves. People need to change your mind-set to perpetuate a culture which does not make it the centre of sexual harassment. The Christian culture does not allow sexual harassment thus it still happens because of individual's mind sets. People need to be equipped with the right information for them to be able to make informed decisions as the choice is up to them.

Delegate Comments

Delegates contributed to the debate by airing some of their views which highlighted that:

1. Sexual harassment should not have focus on women only, even men are harassed
2. Before technology there was culture and harassment can be through internet meaning culture is not the centre
3. Culture can influence one to do something positive
4. Culture should not be limited to Africa
5. Change mind-set and not just culture

The winner of the debate was Zimbabwe with the award for overall best speaker in all the debate sessions going to Zimbabwe and South African speakers as a tie.



SARSYC 2019 DEBATE WINNERS

4 Key Messages Day One

- There should be an amalgamated approach that deals with socio-economic challenges and inequalities and human right questions for the minorities needs to be addressed
- All stakeholders addressing SRHR issues should be coordinated as a united front thinking globally but acting locally
- Leverage on the existing strengths and indigenous solutions within the SADC region
- All stakeholders play an important role in the implementation of SRHR issues and all actions should contribute to the overall goal
- Use the most impactful SRHR strategies to achieve success and live by the Motto “One SADC region, One SRHR voice.”
- Protection during sex should be everyone’s priority
- The next ten years should see a SA region with an enabling legal and policy environment that puts young people’s needs and rights before anything else
- Child marriage is a major challenge in the region thus greater effort is required to eliminate the practice
- Countries should allocate at least 15% of their annual budget towards improving the health sector
- Stakeholders and young people should know their rights to be able to plan, know processes to prioritise needs and have governments account for young people’s human, gender and SRHR issues
- Young people should have sustainable access and coverage to quality SRHR services, information and education and should realise and exercise their SRH rights
- Youth consultations are instrumental in leading up to the post 2015 Development Agenda and the SDGs which address youth participation with specific target on youth development issues
- The role of civil society in the SR Ministerial Commitment is to support implementation and provide platform for collaboration and inclusion for young people to work with stakeholders

5.1 SADC SRHR Strategy – Key Point for Young People in Southern Africa



This session was coordinated by Dr. Mbizvo, Country Director for Population Council of Zambia and aimed to identify how countries can come up with the most effective ways of implementing and addressing SRHR issues.

The plenary session comprised representatives from SADC PF, UNFPA, AFRIYAN and Centre for Reproductive Health. In explaining how the strategy will make a difference in people's lives the UNFPA was tasked to translate the strategy and what it means for young people. The representative explained that young people were given a chance to participate in the development of the SADC SRHR Strategy which acknowledges the risks that young people face and that their voices are being heard on how things should be planned for them by policy makers. Young people have identified the importance of their rights which gives them access to comprehensive services and they have the responsibility to ensure rights are exercised; be equipped with the necessary skills to negotiate with sexual partners and be able to demand for protective/transactional sex whilst policy makers have the responsibility to build the capacities of young people so that they are protected.

The SRHR Strategy also addresses the SDGs where all leaders will be held accountable for milestones and achievements. The SADC PF representative gave some insights of the strategy stating that young people don't take enough time to understand political institutions and this was attested to by the few conference participants that knew about the existence of SADC PF.

A brief background was given about SADC PF which is a regional framework that functions like government and is an institution under SADC which operates by means of charters, protocols, pacts that are binding to member states and are approved by conference of Ministers and Heads of States then disseminated to countries for implementation. SADC PF supports improvement of regional integration and development in all matters that require parliamentary influence.

5.1.1 Specific Objectives of the SRHR Strategy 2019-2030

- Promotion of Human rights, gender equality, good governance and transparency
- Promotion of peace, security and stability
- Economic cooperation and development and integration on basis of equality and mutual benefit
- Facilitation of networking and promoting participation of NGO
- Familiarising people with SADC aims and objectives

5.1.2 Opportunities for young people

- Standing community – addresses the needs of gender, women and youth affairs
- Youth component will stand out on its own – no longer dormant like in the past
- Regional Women Parliamentary Caucus – to ensure SADC Strategy is implemented
- SRHR In-country Project – towards attainment of equitable universal access

5.1.3 Plenary Discussion

Questions Response

University of Pretoria

How do we ensure we do not lose the “R” representing “Rights” in “SRHR” and how can the minimum standards of key population be used as a way of anchoring the “R” for “Rights?” UNFPA

Most countries have made a lot of progress in last 5 years in acknowledging definition of key population as well as the response to the HIV epidemic. There have been challenges along the process with the different marginalised groups each wanting their own package (e.g. LGBTI). The community need to identify the risks to be addressed in the SRHR package. Adolescent girls from 10 to 15 years are among one of the marginalised and are very vulnerable. Rights need to saturate this age group and all underserved.

Centre for Reproductive Health

It is the responsibility of everyone to ensure that the definition of SRHR be promoted and that “Rights” are upheld and should not be lost as discussions on SRH are being addressed.

AfriYAN

The strategy involved civil society organisations and faced a number of challenges from some countries in relation to the inclusion of key populations. Young people were advocated for by SheDecides Movement. SheDecides works with IPPF and identified youth representatives that attended all the consultation processes.

AfriYAN requires funding to support process to hold in-country consultations to ensure young persons are involved and have the strategy domesticated. Young people need to push their way into the platforms. The strategy comes with scorecard which enables countries to report on progress made. Countries are required to say how much they allocate to the outcomes of the strategy as they report annually.

UNZA

What measures is SADC PF putting in place to ensure member states are held accountable? The SADC PF has regional credibility and youth can convene regional meetings with the support of the forum. The Key Population Guidelines Minimum Standards is an important document that youths should identify with as they implement SRHR strategies. Further, HIV/AIDS Model Role, Gender Protocol and related documents all offer youth opportunities to help push the SRHR agenda forward. SADC PF plans deliberately for SRHR and ensures issues are prioritised by member states.

University of Botswana

At what level are young people engaged in the development of the strategy? UNFPA

Young people were involved at both country and regional levels and in order to get their voices heard different countries have put in place different platforms like the Adolescent Health Technical Working Group (TWG) in Zambia. The challenge is that there is no funding to support the programme and it is heavily dependent on donor support.

YETT

Why aren't young people consulted before strategies that relate to their issues are implemented and how are representatives from countries identified. Convenor agreed with the young participants about the importance of youth engagement in advocacy.

Comments

- SAfAIDS – as budgeting is being done at national level could SADC PF ensure that member states include SRHR with an allocation of at least 5% to actualise the SADC SRHR strategy?
- Malawi – strategic objective does not have a clear indication on how it will promote youth involvement. Young people should be allowed to play the leadership role in the implementation of the strategy.
- Malawi - Another participant from Malawi raised an issue with regard to implementation but there is still a concern that youth are imposed and not given a chance to share their views. There should be a follow up on all discussions surrounding implementation.
- General participant view - The conference participants were of the view that the plenary panel should have comprised of youths who are in the best place to address issues affecting them like stigma, PrEP, engagement with adult service providers etc. There is need for the roll out of interventions to be communicated for effectiveness (e.g. SAfAIDS mobile app – Malawi was not aware).

5.1.4 Conclusion Remarks from Panellists

Convenor Response

Why should SRHR be strengthened? UNFPA

It's a development issue to allow safe transition into adulthood. For progress to be achieved there is need to address threats related with sexuality and sexual health. Youths should remain HIV free to contribute to regional development

Centre for Reproductive Health

Innovation is key and countries need to identify the people that were involved in the consultation process. Representative confirmed that youths were consulted before development of strategy. The role of the youth should be to ensure that those who have been identified to represent them should be knowledgeable and have adequate information. Participants were reminded that sometimes selections were done by funding agents however the representative acknowledged that opportunities should be given to build capacities of other youths and that selection should be transparent.

AfriYAN

Not everyone can participate however people in platforms need to be held accountable. Youth input is cardinal.

SADC PF

Analysed document which constitutes 4 principles out of 11 focusing on youths. Young people should find time to review document, analyse it then make recommendations. The document is youth friendly and being circulating but participants were asked to refer to the internet.

Post Plenary Remarks Wrap-up - SAYWHAT Executive Director

The Executive Director believed that the panel achieved the objective to expose gaps in the strategy which was well represented. He acknowledged that there are gaps in the involvement of youth. However, young people should be proactive, get involved in processes and take initiatives. Efforts should be made to contribute to the content of the conference and have time to address issues at hand.

5.2 Health Demands for Young People in Southern Africa: Our ASK to Policy Makers

Facilitator - University of Botswana and University of Zimbabwe

This session aimed at giving youth the platform to voice out their needs by identifying problems and providing solutions and/or recommendations and started with questions posed to the young people in the house. Participants should take time to analyse documents that relate to SRHR issues. Even though there is the Adolescent Friendly. Health Services (ADFS 2011-2015) nothing much has been done by government for adolescents. There should be a deliberate plan for youth friendly spaces and SRHR should be given priority.

The general feeling was that the budget allocation for SRHR implementation in the region is minimal for any significant impacts to be achieved and this should be addressed by policy makers.

Leaders are quick to ratify documents but implementation continues to remain poor with a representative from Zimbabwe adding that different privileges and choices should be given to youths instead of having strategies/interventions imposed on them. All opportunities targeting youths should be made available in the public domain but youth are urged to be proactive. A participant from the UP requested for sensitivity training for GBV victims and that public health facilities should have equipment/kits for basic things citing flawed systems as a major challenge for SRHR.

5.3 Uncomfortable Conversations

Convenors: AIDS Foundation of South Africa/Section 27 Zimbabwe

This session aimed to address the many challenges young people face when it comes to discussing certain issues that relate to sexual health. The session comprised representatives from SAYWHAT, PrEP Advocate from Zimbabwe and a student from Zambia.

It was noted that only about four of the participants understood sign language which already exposes that communication is not provided in its best form and this has made it difficult for people living with disabilities to have access to SRHR services. In Africa sex issues cannot be discussed openly and students were requested to demand access to critical SRHR services e.g. PrEP, as they are more exposed to HIV/AIDS. However it was noted that not much awareness is raised on PrEP and some young people are not sure if it is available in their local clinics, let alone how it is supposed to be administered and who should take it. Young people reported cases of hostility from old nurses and expressed the need to have younger nurses in the clinics to respond to their fellow young people's needs. In order to address some of these challenges, the metaphor below was used.

Participants' discussion on Uncomfortable Conversations

University of Malawi expressed concern over the challenges people with disabilities face as they pursue studies asking if there were any special condoms for the visually impaired.

The participant also suggested that policy makers should ensure that sign language is mandatory and that peer educators are ready to assist all disabled people. Beyond this nurses should do away with attitudes regardless of age. In order to address some of these communication gaps all nurses to accept the reality of sex and stop preaching to save souls. Health facilities should be seen as a safe haven by young people.

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) – what are the side effects? How should it be taken?

In response to a question on the safety of PrEP, participants were reminded that for all HIV preventions clinical trials are conducted prior to administering them to people and the same was done for PrEP thus making it safe for administration to people exposed to HIV.

Note: for more details, refer to PrEP Watch website <https://www.prepwatch.org/>

Plenary conclusion

Values clarification should be conducted as capacity building to improve access to comprehensive health and policy makers should ensure that as part of Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) values clarification should be included. All duty bearers should be meaningfully engaged to ensure all issues related to SRHR are addressed.

5.4 Breakaway Sessions

Session 1: Abstract Based Presentations Key Messages Presentation No.1

Promoting Healthy Development: Youth Friendly Service Provision (YFSP), Youth Advocates Zimbabwe
Presenter highlighted adolescence as a critical stage for choices and that they be accorded a chance to make informed decisions taking cognisance of their different vulnerabilities. The presenter also pointed out the common challenges faced whilst seeking SRHR services e.g. lack of confidentiality, resort to traditional herbs, lifelong consequences of STI's and the poor quality of care. In order to address the challenges there has to be strong political will and YFSP can be instituted in some facilities where young people should have access without fear. Community support is equally important, parents should be involved in the lives of young people and programmes for different countries need to be customised.
Please refer to Appendix 7 – Presentation - Promoting Healthy Development: Youth Friendly Service Provision (YFSP)

Presentation No. 2 Re-thinking HIV Prevention: Take Control of Your Health

According to the UNFPA state of world population 2019, 88 percent of the 1.2 billion adolescents worldwide live in developing countries where access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services that could support them are often inadequate and fragmented. Among the many challenges are the lack of HIV prevention options and choices, unfriendly health services and poor parent to child communication. At the same time, new HIV prevention tools have become available that could help control HIV in youth and subsequently put an end to the HIV crises in our countries.

In order for this to happen, health systems must provide youth-friendly HIV prevention services delivering PrEP, PEP, male circumcision, and eventually the vaginal ring and long-acting injectable PrEP, among others. Additionally, young people must learn about this new package of HIV combination prevention and demand that they be provided at local community clinics, including university health centres.

PrEP should be taken daily and for as long as one feels exposed. However eligibility is different based on countries. The Dapivirine Ring is a silicone matrix vaginal ring meant to prevent the transmission of the virus. The ring acts against HIV 1 and is able to adapt to the body temperature thus cannot be felt once inserted. Dapivirine is an anti-retroviral and the ring has a one month length of action with a three month length of action still under development.

Please refer to Appendix 8 – Presentation - Re-thinking HIV Prevention: Take Control of Your Health

Session 2: Academic Freedoms in Southern Africa- YETT Key Messages

The aim of this session was to equip students with the necessary skills to understand their rights and to have the requisite knowledge to represent and communicate the evidence supporting their claims. SAFRAP believes that students should be empowered to strengthen policy advocacy and increase the likelihood of influencing policy makers to accept better policy alternatives. This is going to help in order to reduce the levels of violent demonstrations from the students e.g. The University of Zambia students believe that the only way to air out their grievances is by rioting and rebelling which results in conflict between the students and government officials. The conflict results in the absence of academic freedoms.

Please refer to Appendix 9 – YETT Report – Academic Freedoms in Southern Africa

Session 3: From Clubs to Movements - Web for Life and Mugota

Key Messages Web for Life is an active and dynamic network and platform for female students in tertiary institutions who are leaders and advocates for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights with the vision to see empowered, healthy and responsible young women who advocate for their Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

Please refer to Appendix 10 – Report -Web for Life

Please refer to Appendix 11 – Presentation – Young Men Can

Session 4: Using Art and Design to address SRHR Issues-University of Johannesburg

Key Messages

- Aims to address deep historical inequalities in moving forward, healing divisions of the past through interventionist policies and programs.
- It addresses race, gender, class, age, disability, HIV/AIDS and geographical inequalities through deliberate policies and programs focusing on equality, anti-racism, social cohesion, inclusion and human rights.
- Recognizes the individual and groups as equal with others in Higher Education from their status as disabled, women, blacks, HIV/AIDS sufferers and other groups which get discriminated against.
- What to do: poverty eradication, measuring progress reports, mutual learning and exchange and social inclusion assessment.
- Promotion of safe sex.
- Make sure students have access to basic needs of life (food, water, and proper sanitation) and accommodation.

5.5 Conference Resolutions

The conference came up with resolutions that addressed all stakeholders holding them accountable and to ensure each one plays their role in accelerating the SRHR agenda.

Students were reminded to be active in order to be recognised whilst embracing coordination and innovation. On the other hand colleges were tasked to ensure they provide Youth Friendly Services (YFS), implement programs to encourage student uptake of SRHR services and have sexual harassment policies in place. The donor community and CSOs are key stakeholders in the implementation of SRHR and they were called upon to plan and implement sustainable SRH programs whilst supporting capacity building and youth driven initiatives.

It was further resolved that governments should recognise platforms that support youth participation in decision making. In doing so, priority should be given to ensure that resource allocation towards youth programs be increased with all countries honouring commitments they have affirmed to at all levels. SADC was reminded of their mandate to monitor and reinforce policies in the region as well as hold governments accountable.

All stakeholder came to a consensus that the resolution be submitted to the next International Conference on AIDS and STI's in Africa (ICASA) to be held in Rwanda in December 2019 as the official voice of students and youth in Southern Africa in matters related to SRHR.

Please refer to Appendix 12: Conference Resolution

5.6 Closing Remarks

Jimmy Wilford, Executive Director - SAYWHAT

The Director thanked all conference participants for the successful event with special mention going to University of Zambia for hosting the 3rd Edition of SARSYC. He announced that the next conference will be in 2021 and will be hosted by wither Malawi/Botswana. He took the opportunity to remind the delegates that Hosting this event requires commitment from hosting country as they facilitate most for the local logistics and further reminded delegates that All SARSYC communications are done on the website and through social media.

In terms of what the next steps are, the Director said there is need to polish the conference statement and ensure there is coordinated and systematic way of influencing country implementation. He further noted that post the conference, all countries are expected to have in-country plans.

Mr Wilford further extended gratitude to other conference partners, including HIVOS, Swedish Embassy, UNESCO and all the Universities represented for making the conference a success.

He concluded by encouraging young people to continue finding ways of participating in the ICASA conference scheduled for December 2019 as it is a forum that recognises SARSYC and added that SARSYC will be involved in the Caravan Programme being facilitated by ICASA.

At this moment, the conference was declared officially closed.

6 Day 2 Key Messages

- All sectors of society should ensure that all SRHR issues are included in the Universal Health Coverage
- Political will is key for any initiatives to be successful and this calls for governments to finance the implementation of strategies
- Funding should be made available to address needs of young people and countries should not rely on donors to fund national activities
- Youths can convene meetings with the support of the SADC PF
- Youths should have their capacities built so that they are able to generate and interpret evidence for advocacy and accountability
- There is need to develop coordinated evidence, informed advocacy strategies to elevate youth priorities with decision makers
- Sharing lessons learnt and best practices should be common practice among the young
- Coordination and following up on resolutions is key to ensure strategies are implemented
- It is the responsibility of everyone to ensure that the definition of SRHR be promoted and that “Rights” are upheld and should not be lost as discussions on SRHR are being addressed
- Interaction is key to address all problems related to SRHR

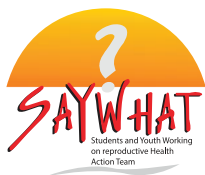





www.sarsyc.org

 @SARSYC

 @sarsyc



24 Jefferson Road, Logan Park, Hatfield, Harare, Zimbabwe

 +263 (242) 571184 / 571190 Toll Free: +242 572 864

 +263 (0) 782 702 886 +263 (0) 772 146 247-9

 saywhat@mweb.co.zw

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