



The Geo-politics of sexual and reproductive rights at the UN – addressing the protection gaps

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Human Rights Council resolutions

A wide range of resolutions relating to SRHR already exist at the HRC, including:

Progressive texts

- Preventable Maternal Mortality and Morbidity
- Violence Against Women
- Discrimination Against Women in Law and Practice
- Human Rights and HIV
- Rights of the Child
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Child, Early and Forced Marriage
- Access to Medicines

Regressive texts

- Traditional Values
- Protection of the Family

SRHR Protection Gaps

States deem '*contentious*', yet need to be addressed if SRHR is to be advanced comprehensively and holistically:

- Access to abortion services
- Aspects of adolescent sexuality
- Human rights of sex workers
- Bodily autonomy
- Etc.

The 'added' value of SRHR?

- SRHR is regarded as 'unimportant' by some states
- SRHR seen as a negotiating tool rather than a substantive issue
- SRHR used to highlight regional priorities
- Global North '*imposes values*' on Global South
- Used to gain concession on other issues
- Regional interpretations of SRHR

The 'siloing' of SRHR

Consequences of siloing SRHR - for example:

- FP and HIV funding;
- Creation of Protection Gaps;
- Sanitizing of SRHR;
- Donor 'pet' issues funded at expense of other key issues

The continuation of siloed approaches – the UPR example

“Non-contentious” issues - Recommendations

- 1,501 on Gender equality
- 732 on VAW/GBV
- 463 on Domestic violence
- 232 on Discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity
- 227 on sexual violence
- 207 on criminal laws based on same-sex sexual practices
- 168 on HIV/AIDS
- 211 on Female Genital Mutilation
- 125 on sexual abuse
- 91 on Early, Forced Marriage

“Contentious” issues - Recommendations

- 37 on abortion
- 16 on sex work
- 15 on Forced sterilisation
- 15 on sexuality education
- 7 on early pregnancy
- 3 on Age of Consent
- 3 on Adultery
- 0 on Intersex rights
- 0 Aspects of adolescent s
- 0 on sex selection

Advancing SRHR comprehensively

- Recognition of need to address SRHR holistically
- Pro-active civil society approach
- Broad-based mechanism that addresses human rights related to sexuality, gender and reproduction, or more broadly, addressing the right to bodily autonomy
- Work intersectionally without jeopardising specific issue focuses
- Address protection gaps
- De-politicisation of SRHR and training of diplomats
- Recognition of adverse impacts of politics of marginalisation