



INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS CHECKLIST TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SRHR ACTION PLANS

ACADEMIC NETWORK FOR SEXUAL AND
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS POLICY
(ANSER)

Updated version: April 2024



RATIONALE

This document was developed on request of UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECARO) to accelerate the universal access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in the region and to assist the countries of the European Region in advancing the national SRH strategies and action plans.

National action plans should be in line with the international commitments made by the countries related to reproductive health, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)¹, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action², the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action³, the Global Strategy for Women's Children's and Adolescents Health⁴, the Nairobi Summit⁵ and other global and regional commitments, including the WHO EURO Action plan for sexual and reproductive health.

Following these international commitments, the governments should develop national SRH strategies and policies in a comprehensive way, with clear goals, objectives and key actions and according to the country's legislation, priorities, and capacities.

The first checklist has been developed in 2019. This 2024 updated version of the checklist helps the countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia to take into account the minimal standards for developing a nationally adapted action plan and supports the implementation of it. It is intended to be used as a guiding and self-assessment tool for the development of the national action plans and strategies, as well as for the review and updating of the above documents. The documents of the checklist are hyperlinked in the electronic version of this checklist, to facilitate the access of the users to the respective conventions, strategies and policies.

Countries are encouraged to develop country-specific intermediary level indicators to oversee process and analyze progress towards the strategic level indicators proposed in the document. It is important that these indicators are formulated using the SMART framework⁶ and in a way that helps understand progress at national, subnational and regional/oblast levels, and be sensitive enough to see how this progress is responding to the needs of those left furthest behind.

1 <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

2 <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/01/beijing-declaration>

3 https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/programme_of_action_Web%20ENGLISH.pdf

4 <https://www.who.int/data/maternal-newborn-child-adolescent-ageing/global-strategy-data>

5 <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/content/icpd25-commitments>

6 <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/broaderprogress/pdf/SA-2014-9-Post2015.pdf>

CHECKLIST

ESSENTIAL PACKAGE OF SRH INTERVENTIONS

To ensure all people can enjoy their full potential of sexual and reproductive health and rights, it is important to take a comprehensive approach to SRHR. Although some specific topics might be more urging on the agenda than others, or some might need more effort to implement, it is very important to include the full range of sexual and reproductive health issues, as recommended in the Guttmacher- Lancet Commission on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. This includes:

Comprehensive sexuality education

Counseling and services for a range of modern contraceptives, with a defined minimum number and types of methods

Antenatal, childbirth and postnatal care, including emergency obstetric and newborn care

Safe abortion services and treatment of complications of unsafe abortion

Prevention and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections

Prevention, detection, immediate services and referrals for cases of sexual and gender based violence

Prevention, detection and management of reproductive cancers, especially cervical cancer

Information, counseling and services for subfertility and infertility

Information, counseling and services for sexual health and well-being

INTERNATIONAL SRHR & BROADER HEALTH AGREEMENTS

Countries have been signing international, regional and national declarations and conventions on a very wide range of issues throughout the years. A broad range of them can be directly or indirectly linked to SRHR. What follows is a checklist of declarations and conventions that are related to SRHR and – if relevant for the national context – need to be considered in all future SRHR related policy work, especially the national action plans.

Historical SRHR agreements

International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, 1994

The Beijing Platform for Action, 1995

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development & Sustainable Development Goals, 2015

UNFPA Nations Strategies

UNFPA Strategy for Family Planning, 2022 – 2030

UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022 – 2025

Global plan of action to strengthen the role of health systems in addressing interpersonal violence, in particular against women and girls, and against children, 2016 – 2030

Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health, 2016 – 2030

Global health sector on, respectively, HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual transmitted infections for the period, 2022 – 2030

Regional strategies

Physical activity strategy for the WHO EURO Region, 2016 - 2025

Investing in children: the European child and adolescent health strategy, 2015 - 2020

Strategy and action plan for healthy ageing in Europe, 2012 - 2020

European regional action framework for behavioural and cultural insights for equitable health, 2022 - 2027

Leveraging digital transformation for better health in Europe: Regional digital health action plan for the WHO European Region, 2023 - 2030

The WHO European framework for action to achieve the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities, 2022 - 2030

Regional action plans for ending AIDS and the epidemics of viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, 2022 - 2030

Roadmap to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem in the WHO European Region, 2022 - 2030

Delivering United Action for Better Health - a strategy for collaboration between the WHO Regional Office for Europe and Member States in the WHO European Region, 2022

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AGREEMENTS

In addition to agreements that relate directly to SRHR, numerous international agreements on human rights issues are (in)directly of importance for the development of national action plans on SRHR. The most relevant ones are listed below.

International Declarations & conventions

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or punishment

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Convention on the Elimination off All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Convention on the Political Rights of Women

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict

Declaration on the Right to Development

International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

Joint Statement on Ending Acts of Violence and Related Human Rights Violations Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity

Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

Regional EURO

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European union

Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

Council of Europe Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision Making Process, 2009

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

European Convention on Human Rights

European Convention on Nationality

European Social Charter

Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON INVOLVEMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS

Finally, the involvement of civil society and the participation of minority groups in the development and implementation of national SRHR action plans is essential. Notable agreements in that context include the following.

International

Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1999

Resolution on Protecting Human Rights Defenders, 2013

UN HRC Civic Space Resolution, 2013 and 2014

UN HRC Resolution on Equal Participation in Political and Public Affairs, 2014 and 2015

Regional EURO

Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Council of Europe Declaration on Equality between women and men

Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life

The European Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level

BUILDING BLOCKS OF HEALTH SYSTEMS

In 2007, the WHO report *Everybody's business: strengthening health systems to improve health outcomes : WHO's framework for action* defined six building blocks that make up health systems. National action plans on SRHR should address each of these building blocks in detail, i.e.:

Service delivery: packages; delivery models; infrastructure; management; safety & quality; demand for care

Health Workforce: national workforce policies and investment plans; advocacy; norms, standards and data

Health information systems: facility and population based information & surveillance systems; global standards, tools

Access to essential medicines: norms, standards, policies; reliable procurement; equitable access; quality

Financing: national health financing policies; tools and data on health expenditures; costing

Leadership/ governance: health sector policies; armonization and alignment; oversight and regulation

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As mentioned above, the third WHO health system building block consists of health information systems (HIS). Adequate HIS are essential to monitor and evaluate the sound implementation of national action plans and to inform corrective actions if needed. The following measures will need to be taken:

Review of legislative documents, policies and national action plans

Analyse civil registration data and vital statistics

Set up continuous surveillance systems

Survey general population as well as specific target groups

Obtain health facility data

ACADEMIC NETWORK FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS POLICY (ANSER)

The Academic Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Policy (ANSER) is an international thematic network initiated by Ghent university in 2016. Today, it brings together 47 academic and non-profit institutions from all over the world to build evidence for SRHR policies through:

1. Education: Improve master students' knowledge on translating SRHR evidence into policy
2. Research: Improve researchers' knowledge on translating evidence into policy and increase SRHR research outputs that are directly relevant to society
3. Service to society: Improve policy makers' and professionals' knowledge of SRHR related evidence and increase the use of it by policy makers when developing policies

ANSER is characterized by its interdisciplinary and global nature and approach. The network includes academic staff from several disciplines (healthsciences, psychology, social sciences...) and its member institutions cover six continents. Currently, ANSER is composed of the following academic institutions: Institute of Public Health (Albania) - University of Medicine of Albania (Albania) - Armenian Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (Armenia) - Burnet Institute (Australia) - Azerbaijan Association 'Support to Development of Gynaecology and Perinatology' (Azerbaijan) - Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp (Belgium) - Ghent University (Belgium) - Universite libre de Bruxelles (Belgium) - University of Antwerp (Belgium) - Hasselt University (Belgium) - VUB Brussels (Belgium) - Tsinghua University (China) - National Research Institute for Family Planning (China) - Institute of Population Research (China) - University of Cuenca (Ecuador) - Jimma University (Ethiopia) - Tbilisi State Medical University (Georgia) - Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (Germany) - Federal Centre for Health Education - BZgA (Germany) - Berlin Social Science Center - WZB (Germany) - Philipps-Universität Marburg (Germany) - Aga Khan University (Kenya) - AMREF International University (Kenya) - International Centre for Reproductive Health Kenya (Kenya) - Technical University of Kenya - University of Nairobi (Kenya) - Riga Stradins University (Latvia) - Nicolae Testemitanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy (Moldova) - International Centre for Reproductive Health Mozambique (Mozambique) - University Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique) - Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (Norway) - University NOVA de Lisboa (Portugal) - Foundation for Professional Development (South Africa) - University of the Western Cape (South Africa) - University of Cape Town (South Africa) - Ahfad University for Women (Sudan) - Karolinska Institutet (Sweden) - Mbarara University (Uganda) - Uppsala University (Sweden) - Bern University of Applied Sciences (Switzerland) - Coventry University (United Kingdom) - Johns Hopkins University (United States of America) - Aga Khan University SONAM (Pakistan) - KU Leuven IFSS (Belgium) - Queen's University of Belfast (Northern Ireland) - Universidad de la Republica (Uruguay) - Centre for Reproductive Rights (USA)

The network is coordinated by Ghent University.

Academic Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Policy
(ANSER)

Contact details Campus UZ, Corneel Heymanslaan 10, ICRH, entrance 75, 9000 Gent, Belgium
anser@ugent.be
<https://www.ugent.be/anser/en>

