

**The Manila Challenge:  
A Call to Achieve SRHR for All**

*Issued during 7<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights (7<sup>th</sup> APCRSHR)  
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WE, the participants of the 7<sup>th</sup> APCRSHR, representing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) advocates from various sectors in Asia and the Pacific region have gathered in 2014 to review the 14 years of SRHR action since our first conference in Manila in 2001.

WE recognise the persistent gross inequities in sexual and reproductive health outcomes across the region and within countries and the failure to ensure SRHR for all. These are reflected in high maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality, inequitable contraceptive services across the region and within countries, high rates of adolescent pregnancy and early/forced marriages, high levels of unsafe methods of abortion and stigmatisation of safe abortion, high rates of HIV and STIs and poor access to treatment, growing incidence of poorly treated reproductive cancers, and appallingly high rates of gender-based violence.

WE stress that respect, fulfilment and protection of SRHR expressed in the first declaration in 2001 remain unrealised, and discrimination and stigma continue to oppress marginalised women, sexual minorities, young people, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

WE highlight that SRHR is critical to achieving sustainable development and it does not exist in isolation. SRHR for all cannot be achieved when people's right to basic human needs is not fulfilled. Equally basic is the need for sexual and reproductive health and the respect for sexual and reproductive rights.

WE reiterate our commitment to achieve SRHR for all by building upon the global acceptance of human rights, eliminating gender inequality and inequity, and enabling universal access to SRHR information and services.

WE reaffirm and advance the goals of the ICPD Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals. Therefore:

WE Challenge GOVERNMENTS in the Asia Pacific to take action by:

1. Acknowledging the centrality of SRHR to sustainable development, ensuring that it becomes a national priority, providing universal access to comprehensive SRHR information, services and supplies for all, at all stages of the life cycle, across all locations, and especially in times of emergencies;
2. Implementing fully international human rights commitments, particularly those related to SRHR;
3. Raising and allocating the necessary resources to fill the gaps and satisfy unmet needs in SRHR including family planning, estimated at USD7 billion in the region in the next five years if 2010 levels of funding are maintained;
4. Providing democratic structures, including safe spaces, and enabling environments to discuss and advocate for SRHR, focusing on inter-sectoral coordination;
5. Removing discriminatory policies and laws that systematically violate the human rights of vulnerable groups;
6. Making all elected and appointed officials more responsive and accountable for SRHR principles, policies and programmes;
7. Institutionalising and providing comprehensive sexuality education and youth-friendly services regardless of marital status, as well as respecting young people who are discovering their own identities and making SRHR choices;
8. Enhancing the accountability of the private sector in promoting SRHR within gender-responsive workplaces, and assuring occupational safety programmes and policies;

9. Strengthening public response to identify and prevent sexual and gender-based violence; and
10. Involving meaningfully all marginalised women, sexual minorities, young people, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups in the development and implementation of SRHR legislation and programmes.

WE Challenge SCHOLARS AND RESEARCHERS in the Asia Pacific to provide additional evidence for policy-making and public education. This requires closer attention to the quality of censuses, surveys and other research methods, the assurance of ethical standards of data collection, the accessibility of publicly funded data sets and research results, and fostering of critical perspective in all analysis of SRHR research;

WE Challenge ACTIVISTS, AND COMMUNITY-BASED AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS to strengthen their advocacy for SRHR and monitor the implementation of commitments and programmes on SRHR, both national and international, work with governments as both critics and partners, and be models of accountability;

WE Challenge YOUNG PEOPLE, to advocate and promote SRHR among their peers, to respect sexual preference and diversity, and to foster informed and safe sexual choices;

WE Challenge MEDIA PROFESSIONALS to promote public discourse on SRHR, and to provide accurate and reliable information;

WE Challenge DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS to provide resources for SRHR in the region, support the sustainability of civil society organisations, contribute to the empowerment of SRHR advocates, ensure participation and leadership of civil society in global post-2015 discussions, and strengthen synergy and networking among SRHR advocates; and

WE Challenge the UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM to ensure that an “SRHR for All” agenda is captured in the post-2015 development framework.

With improving economies, continuing technological innovations, and dynamic young populations, we envision an Asia-Pacific region where:

- Countries have integrated SRHR in their development plans and investment programmes;
- Communities have access to SRHR information and services;
- All people exercise their reproductive and sexual health and rights; and
- Everyone lives a healthy life.

This is a world of conflict, crisis, and persistent inequality and it is common for governments to cite other priorities ahead of SRHR. Missions of rescue, rehabilitation, and programs of development must address SRHR as core elements, without which all other investments are diminished. For this reason, WE CHALLENGE all governments, civil society organisations, and religious institutions to demonstrate respect for SRHR by acknowledging SRHR needs of all people in all contexts now and into the future.