

**BODILY AUTONOMY, BODILY INTEGRITY AND
SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS**





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The activities and materials provided in this section have been adapted from Amnesty International's publication *Respect my Rights, Respect My Dignity Module Three: Sexual and Reproductive Rights are Human Rights*, 2015 (available at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/act30/0010/2015/en/>)

Assignment

Describe your understanding of the concepts of bodily autonomy and bodily integrity and how these relate to the realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights, using an example from your own country to illustrate. Please write at least 3 pages.



ACTIVITY 1: MAKING SRHR PERSONAL

AIMS

- To reflect on how sexual and reproductive rights are part of everyone's life.
- To explore how certain conditions such as age, gender, sexual identity, access to resources, can contribute or limit your knowledge and access to sexual and reproductive rights.

TIMING

3 hours

WHAT YOU NEED

- "Take a step forward" statements (see below)
- Sufficient space for participants to stand in a line and be able to take a step forward.
- Slips of paper
- One set of the sexual and reproductive rights cards for each group of four or five people (see below)
- Flipchart paper
- Markers and pens

THIS ACTIVITY HAS FOUR STEPS

Step 1: Take a step forward (45 min)

Step 2: Who decides? (45 min)

Step 3: Identifying my rights (60 min)

Step 4: Take action (30 min)



Step 1: Take a step forward (45 min)

Plenary (10 min)

- Ask participants to line up silently in a straight line facing you. There should be some distance between you and the participants so that participants can take a step forward. This exercise should be done in silence.
- Explain to participants that you will read out a series of statements. If they would answer yes to the statement, they can step forward in silence. Tell them they must remain silent, and when you say "thank you" they can step back.
- When reading the statements, repeat the introduction "Take a step forward if" for each statement. It is important once you read the statement to give the participants some time to think and step forward.
- After participants have stepped forward stay 30 seconds in silence in quiet reflection then say "thank you" and that they can return. Then read out the next statement.
- After all the statements have been read, the participants will form buzz groups to reflect on the exercise.

STATEMENTS: TAKE A STEP FORWARD IF...

- You have heard about sexual reproductive rights before this activity.
- You have ever in your life felt pressured to change something about your body or have been discriminated against because of the way you look, dress or act.
- You have ever in your life been given wrong or incorrect information on sex, sexuality, reproduction.
- You have ever in your life felt embarrassed to ask questions or talk about sex, sexuality, sexual relations or reproduction.
- You have ever in your life felt that someone has tried to make a decision regarding your body, sexuality or reproduction.
- You have ever in your life felt you have not had access to information or sexual health services or known someone that has not been able to.
- You have ever in your life felt pressure to have or not to have sexual relations.
- You have ever in your life felt pressured about when or when not to have children.
- You have ever known anyone that has been discriminated against or experienced violence as a result of the choices they have made about their bodies, sexuality and relationships.

Buzz groups (10 min)

Ask participants to find a partner to reflect with on the following questions:

- How did you feel doing this exercise?
- What affected you the most?
- What did you learn from this exercise?
- What do you think this exercise has to do with sexual and reproductive rights?

Plenary (25 min)

Bring the participants back into plenary and ask participants if there is anyone that would like to share their reflection on each question. Depending on the group, you can get three, four participants or more to answer each question.

You can wrap up noting that almost everyone is affected in one way or another by sexual and reproductive rights.

- Note that this exercise shows how most of us at one time or another have felt pressured into a decision, or someone else has made decision regarding our bodies, our sexuality and relationships.
- Explain that people should be able to make decisions about their own bodies, reproduction and sexuality including:
 - whether to obtain information regarding sex;
 - whether to engage in sexual activity and with whom;
 - which contraceptive methods to use, if any;
 - whether to use condoms or other barrier methods to prevent the transmission of STIs;
 - whether, when and with whom to have children;
 - whether to seek health services or medical attention for pregnancy, fertility, or other sexual health reasons;
 - how and with whom to build a family;
 - whether to abort an unintended pregnancy;
 - how to express your gender and sexuality.
- We should be able to make these decisions free from coercion, pressure, discrimination and violence. We will look more in depth on this in the next activity.

Step 2: Who decides? (45 min)

Group work (20 min)

- Remind participants of the previous activity.
- Divide participants into small groups. These groups can be divided by gender or be mixed.
- Ask participants to write or draw on slips of paper decisions about sexuality and reproduction that they are likely to make or have made at different points during their lives and to reflect on the following questions:

- Have you ever felt pressured to make a certain decision or has someone else made a decision for you regarding your body, sexuality, sexual relations, gender identity or reproduction?
- Are there any such decisions that some people in your community may not or cannot make? Who? Which decisions and why? (Reflect on if being a man or woman, adult or young person, having economic resources or not, or living in an urban or rural setting can contribute or limit someone's ability to make certain decisions.)
- What happens when people cannot make decisions about their reproduction and sexuality?
- What do you need to make your own decisions regarding your body, identity, sexuality, sexual relations and reproduction?

Plenary (25 min)

- Bring the groups together and ask the participants to share their list of decisions and their reflections.
- Finish with some general conclusions on how society, culture, family and even peers decide or pressure us to make certain decisions regarding our bodies and sexuality.
- Certain groups such as young people can have difficulty in accessing information and services to make those decisions. If their decisions fall outside what society dictates for them, they can suffer discrimination, marginalization and even violence.

Step 3: Identifying my rights (60 min)

Group work (30 min)

- Ask participants to return to their small groups.
- Ask them to remember and take into account the previous discussion on decisions that they or others have had to make regarding their bodies, sexuality, sexual relationships, identity and reproduction.
- Hand out one set of sexual and reproductive rights cards to each group.
- Ask participants to look over their sexual and reproductive rights cards, and to reflect on the following questions:
- Regarding the decisions that you need to make, which of these rights can support each decision? (For example, to decide when to have your first sexual relations you need the right to information, the right to services and right to choice.)
- Which groups of people can access these rights freely or have better access to these rights than others? And why?
- Which groups of people may not have full access to each right? And why? (Reflect on if being a man or woman, adult or young person, having economic resources or not, living in an urban or rural setting can contribute to or limit your ability access certain rights.)
- Is there anything you can do to have better access to and claim these rights?

Plenary (30 min)

- Bring the groups together to present their reflections.
- Draw some general conclusions from your discussion.

Step 4: Take action (30 min)

- Reflect on how we can take action on what we have learnt.
- Think of creative ways to present the importance of sexual and reproductive rights for the decision we need to make in our life to other people (posters, slogans, songs, poems etc...).
- Review what the group has identified as actions in Step 3 they could do to better access and claim their rights and decide which of these they could take forward.
- Check what is happening with ARASA's Every Body Counts Campaign to see if there are ways to support others to defend and claim their rights at <https://www.arasa.info/home/1/page/ebc>

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS CARDS

CHOICE

Everyone has the right to make decisions about her or his own body, sexuality, sexual relations, gender identity or reproduction.

INFORMATION

Everyone has the right to ask for and receive information about sex, contraception and related health services.

EDUCATION

Everyone has the right to comprehensive, accurate and non-discriminatory education on human sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, human rights and gender equality

FAMILY

Everyone has the right to choose whether to marry and what type of family to create.

BODILY AUTONOMY

Everyone has the right to make decisions and control what happens to their bodies

REPRODUCTION

Everyone has the right to decide for themselves whether and when to have children.

HEALTH CARE

Everyone has the right to access comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, free from discrimination, coercion and violence.



ACTIVITY 2: LINKING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TO HUMAN RIGHTS

AIMS

To understand how sexual and reproductive rights link to and affect other human rights.

TIMING

2 hours

WHAT YOU NEED

- Photocopies of “What if…” statements (see below) – one per participant
- Photocopies of the case studies (see below)
- Photocopies of the human rights flow chart for each participant (see below)
- Flipchart paper
- Markers and pens

THIS ACTIVITY HAS FOUR STEPS

Step 1: What if... (45 min)

Step 2: Human rights flow chart (45 min)

Step 3: Why sexual and reproductive rights are important to me (20 min)

Step 4: Take action (10 min)

Step 1: What if? (45 min)

Individual work (5 min)

- Give each participant one “What if…” statement
- Ask participants to imagine if they were in the situation presented in the statement and to reflect individually on the following questions:
- How would your life be different over the next five years?
- How does that make you feel?
- How would it affect you personally, your family, your community?
- Does this type of situation happen in your country?

Buzz groups (10 min)

- Ask participants to find another person with whom they can share their “What if” statements and to reflect on each other’s views.

Plenary (30 min)

- Ask a participant to share their “What if…” statement with the group and their reflections.
- Ask if there is a person who had a similar “What if…” statement and would like to share their reflections
- Ask if there is a person who had a different statement and would like to share their reflections.
- Share as many of the five “What if…” statements as you have time for.
- After the participants have shared their thoughts, explain that these situations are happening in the world right now.



Step 2: Human rights flow chart (45 min)

Share the sexual and reproductive rights flow chart (below) as an example of how the violation of sexual and reproductive rights – such as the right to access information and services for sexual and reproductive health – can affect a person’s access to other human rights – such as education, health, work – and can result in greater poverty, marginalization, discrimination and even violence.

Group work (25 min)

- Ask participants to form a group according to the “What if…” statement they have.
- Ask the groups to use their own story to create their own human rights flow chart linking the violation of sexual and reproductive rights to its effect on other human rights.

Plenary (20 min)

- Bring the groups back together.
- Write “Sexual and reproductive rights” in the centre of a flipchart.
- Ask the groups to share their reflections and flow charts.
- Write the different rights that the groups have identified as being related to sexual and reproductive rights.
- Draw a line connecting them to visually represent the interrelationships and links between sexual and reproductive rights and human rights.

Some key points to conclude with:

- Sexual and reproductive rights are interrelated and dependent on other human rights. The violation of sexual and reproductive rights has repercussions on the ability to access and fulfil other human rights and the lives of people.
- Having access to other human rights can make it easier to access sexual and reproductive rights.

Step 3: Why sexual and reproductive rights are important to me (20 min)

Graffiti wall (10 min)

Put a large flipchart paper in the middle of the room and ask participants to write or draw examples of why sexual and reproductive rights are important to them.

Plenary (10 min)

- Ask participants to stand in a circle around the flipchart so everyone can see what is written on the “wall”.
- Ask participants to read out loud something from the graffiti.
- Encourage participants to read out as many words or phrases as possible.

Step 4: Take action (10 min)

- Reflect on how we can take action on what we have learnt.
- Create a poster or shareable image, for example “You have just found out you are pregnant, what are your options?” And list the options you have come up with as a group.
- Suggest the participants might display the poster in common public areas where the people at risk would see them (in girls’ toilets, etc).
- Think of ways of sharing the case studies of the other countries with what happens in your community.
- Think of where you could display the graffiti wall or do another graffiti wall with others in a public space.

“WHAT IF...” STATEMENTS

WHAT IF...

You find out you are pregnant and that having the baby is going to put your life at serious risk. Ending the pregnancy is not an option because a law in your country prohibits abortion. What would you do?

WHAT IF...

You want access to birth control medication, but health clinics will only give it to you if you are with your parents or husband. What would you do?

WHAT IF...

After being raped you are forced to marry your attacker, to “protect” him from being sent to prison and to preserve your family’s honour. What would you do?

WHAT IF...

You want access to birth control medication, but health clinics will only give it to you if you are with your parents or husband. What would you do?

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS DIAGRAM

