



**Amplifying Rights Network**

Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights for All

# Position Statement A Call to Action



***Affirming that sexual and reproductive health and rights are the bedrock for growth and prosperity for all individuals, and societies, we the Liberian citizens who took part in the first Liberia SRHR Conference have collectively agreed on the call to action below:***

We call on you to:

- 1. Abolish Harmful Traditional/Cultural Practices:** Some cultural practices, child marriage, and FGM, hinder access to SRHR services. Child marriages contribute to early pregnancy, social isolation, school dropouts, and increased risks of intimate partner violence. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is recognised internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women. The National Traditional Council declared a national three-year ban on FGM in 2023. As such, we call on GoL:
  - The national three-year ban on FGM should be fully implemented and monitored.
  - The legal framework for Child marriage should be harmonised to prevent customary violations.
- 2. Improve Menstrual Health Hygiene:** To effectively manage menstruation, we call on the government of Liberia to remove all tariffs on sanitary products to improve access to affordable and appropriate menstrual hygiene materials. As such, we call on GoL:
  - Remove all tariffs on sanitary products to improve access to affordable and appropriate menstrual hygiene materials.
  - Improve access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities in all schools.
- 3. Accelerate legal and inclusive policy reform:**
  - We are calling on the Senate to concur with the Lower House and pass the Revised Public Health Law, which addresses abortion as a public health care issue for women as opposed to its status as an act with criminal sanctions in the penal code.
  - Remove criminal sanctions in law on same sex consenting conduct between adults.
- 4. Accessible and Inclusive Service Provision:** Overt and subtle practices of discrimination prevent persons seeking care, especially young people and those with disabilities and sexual minorities, from being able to present their full range of needs and experiences to service providers without fear. The Government should implement fully inclusive and responsive sexual reproductive health and rights services, catering to everyone regardless of their identities or abilities, by,
  - Ensure that healthcare professionals are fully trained in SRHR service provision to everyone, including key populations and people with disabilities, without stigma or discrimination.

- Urgently address the current stockout of contraceptives in the public facilities in Liberia due to supply chain challenges.
  - Improve access to all forms of modern contraception and provide information and counseling.
5. **Implement Gender-Responsive Budgeting:** The budget determines how public funds are raised, used, and who benefits. It is essential to develop a budget that works for everyone (women and men, girls and boys) by ensuring gender-equitable distribution of resources and by contributing to equal opportunities for all. The current National Gender Responsive Budgeting Policy developed by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning ends in 2023. We request that the government fully implement and extend the policy.
6. **Improve adolescent health interventions in and out of schools:** Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) lays the foundation for life and health choices. Yet few young people have the knowledge and skills to grow healthily and happily. As such, we call for the following:
- Adequate investments in efforts to reach CSE to all young people in and or out of school. Programs outside the homes and schools are instrumental in supporting the growth and development of our youth.
  - Provision of youth-responsive spaces in communities where young people can play, learn, and unlearn, socialise, expand, and relax to engage and stimulate everyone's diverse intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical needs.
  - Invest in training teachers, educators, and health workers to provide accurate, scientific, and non-judgmental SRH information and youth-friendly services.

### ***Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights for All***

