

# SRHR AND GOAL 16:

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

- 16.1** Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
- 16.3** Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
- 16.6** Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- 16.7** Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

*Achievement of Goal 16's mission requires recognition of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as an enabler of justice and inclusion. SRHR promotes gender equality, reduces violence against women and provides individuals with information to make informed and healthy decisions relating to their lives.*



Gender equality and the empowerment of women is a cross-cutting issue in the SDGs and is intrinsic to building effective, accountable and inclusive societies and institutions. Many studies demonstrate the causal link between SRHR and gender equality and note that violence against women is a form of gender inequality.<sup>i,iii,iv</sup>

It is well established that SRHR is not only fundamental to people's health, wellbeing and economic development, but it supports gender equality by empowering women to make decisions about work, education, relationships and whether or when to have children.

The social and economic costs and the negative impact of violence against women are high. Evidence suggests that women who are experiencing or have experienced violence make higher use of health-care services. All women should have access to the full suite of sexual and reproductive health services, as these services offer opportunities for provision of a supportive response to address women's health needs.<sup>v</sup>

The autonomy, empowerment and education of women and girls is essential not only for individuals health and wellbeing, but for their families, communities and ultimately, for sustainable development. Sexual and reproductive health is fundamental for women's full participation in society and offers Governments and policy makers a high social and economic return on investment.<sup>vi</sup>

## Actions

- Recognise that sexual and reproductive health interventions are key to overcoming systematic inequality, violence, and discrimination against women
- Ensure that national sexual and reproductive health strategies are up to date, evidence-based, and provide women with access to the full suite of health services
- Upskill doctors and sexual and reproductive health clinicians in best practice to sensitively address and respond to reproductive coercion within clinical settings
- Invest in training, information and resources for clinicians that addresses clinical presentations of female genital mutilation/cutting and appropriate responses
- Implement consistent approaches to the collection of data on family domestic and sexual violence and introduce routine data collection and reporting on reproductive coercion

## FURTHER INFORMATION

[Family Planning NSW's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals Reports](#)

[United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 16 Factsheet](#)

<sup>i</sup> Grose RG, Chen JS, Roof KA, Rachel S, Yount KM. Sexual and Reproductive Health Outcomes of Violence Against Women and Girls in Lower-Income Countries: A Review of Reviews. The Journal of Sex Research. 2021;58(1):1-20.

<sup>ii</sup> García-Moreno C, Amin A. The sustainable development goals, violence and women's and children's health. Bull World Health Organ. 2016;94(5):396-7.

<sup>iii</sup> George AS, Amin A, de Abreu Lopes CM, Ravindran TKS. Structural determinants of gender inequality: why they matter for adolescent girls' sexual and reproductive health. BMJ. 2020;368:l6985.

<sup>iv</sup> Starrs AM, Ezeh AC, Barker G, Basu A, Bertrand JT, Blum R, et al. Accelerate progress - sexual and reproductive health and rights for all: report of the Guttmacher-Lancet Commission. The Lancet. 2018;391(10140):2642-92.

<sup>v</sup> García-Moreno C, Amin A. The sustainable development goals, violence and women's and children's health. Bulletin of the World Health Organization. 2016(94):396-7

<sup>vi</sup> The Lancet. 2020: a critical year for women, gender equity, and health. The Lancet. 2020;395(10217):1.