

GLOBAL GOALS, LOCAL ACTION

Advancing homegrown solutions for girls and women through regional advocacy caucuses



**WOMEN
DELIVER**

PATH



Acknowledgements

This report was authored by Ashley Bennett, PATH with contributions from Lippi Doshi, Kristy Kade, Kristen Kelleher, and Kimberly Whipkey, PATH; Susan Papp and Savannah Russo, Women Deliver; as well as the organizations listed below.

Elige Red de Jóvenes

Hivos Southern Africa

HACEY Health Initiative

RODA-Parents in Action

Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Rutgers Pakistan

White Ribbon Alliance Uganda

Cameroon Agenda for Sustainable Development

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PATH, Women Deliver. *Global Goals, Local Action: Advancing Homegrown Solutions for Girls and Women Through Regional Advocacy Caucuses*. Seattle: PATH; 2016.

PATH is the leader in global health innovation. An international nonprofit organization, we save lives and improve health, especially among women and children. We accelerate innovation across five platforms—vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, devices, and system and service innovations—that harness our entrepreneurial insight, scientific and public health expertise, and passion for health equity. By mobilizing partners around the world, we take innovation to scale, working alongside countries primarily in Africa and Asia to tackle their greatest health needs. Together, we deliver measurable results that disrupt the cycle of poor health. Learn more at www.path.org.

Women Deliver is a leading global advocate for girls' and women's health, rights, and wellbeing. Women Deliver brings together diverse voices and interests to drive progress, particularly in maternal, sexual, and reproductive health and rights. It builds capacity, shares solutions, and forges partnerships, together creating coalitions, communication, and action that spark political commitment and investment in girls and women. [Women Deliver](http://www.women-deliver.org) believes that when the world invests in girls and women, everybody wins.

Individual caucus reports linked to throughout this document were developed solely by each caucus organizer, with out the input of PATH or Women Deliver.

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Regional Advocacy Caucuses: Advancing health and wellbeing for girls and women in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) era

At the [2016 Women Deliver 4th Global Conference](#), PATH and Women Deliver sponsored eight regional advocacy caucuses to spur collective, local action to improve the health, rights, and wellbeing of girls and women around the world. Each caucus was designed and led by a local nongovernmental organization and included a diverse mix of civil society leaders, parliamentarians, ministry officials, media representatives, and youth advocates. The focus of each gathering was to explore issues and set priorities for how to elevate the needs of girls and women in regional and national plans aimed at fulfilling the [Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents Health](#), achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), and realizing other global commitments.

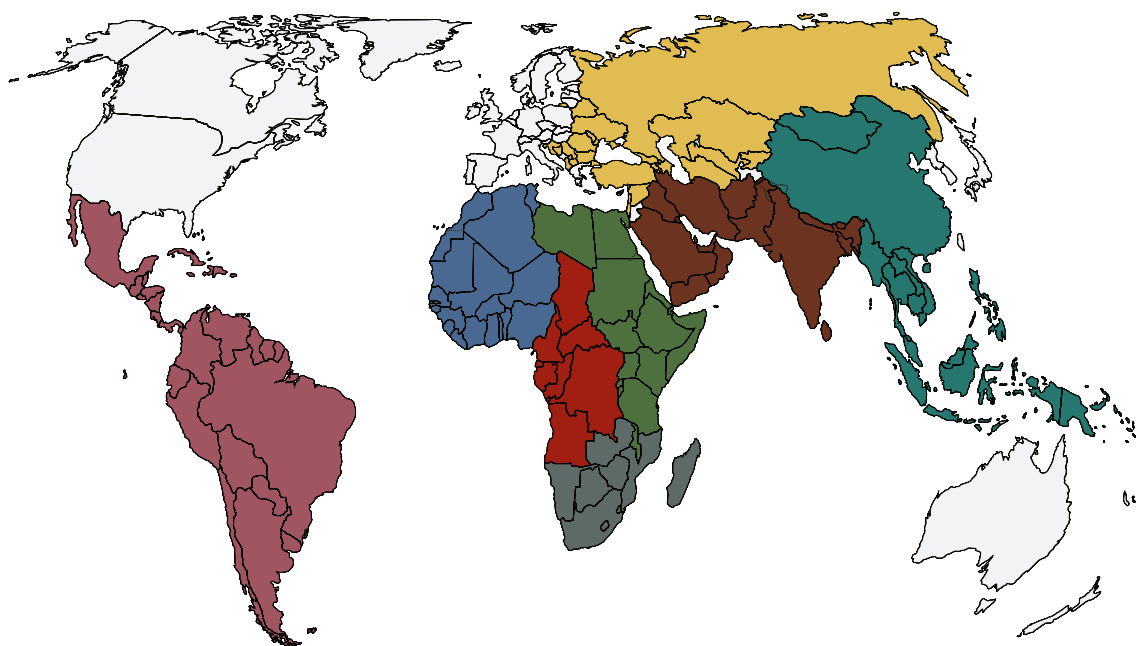
To make the SDGs a reality and to achieve global goals for women and girls, broad coalitions of stakeholders

from multiple sectors must come together in partnership with regional governing bodies and national governments to hold each other accountable for commitments made and progress toward set objectives.

The caucuses provided a forum for dialogue and collective strategic planning on a variety of regional priorities, from ending child marriage and ensuring safe childbirth rights to promoting the sexual and reproductive rights of youth and adolescents, among others. Through vibrant discussion and exchange, caucus participants identified steps to put the global goals into practice in their regional context and set localized agendas and plans of action. The caucuses represent a step forward in generating momentum for policies and actions in the spirit of the SDGs. Their notable outcomes will help catalyze a new era of health and wellbeing for girls and women.

A selection of caucus outcomes

- **Central Africa:** Issued a Call to Action for Universal Access to Sexuality Education, which several country parliamentarians promised to fulfill.
- **Latin America and the Caribbean:** Adopted a new pact on the health, sexual rights, and empowerment of girls and young women in the region containing commitments from regional political leaders.
- **Southern and Western Asia:** Agreed on a shared advocacy priority on the Regional Action Plan to End Child Marriages in South Asia and created a strategy to see it implemented at the upcoming South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) meeting.
- **Southeast Asia and Pacific:** Issued a call to action aimed at regional policymakers to ensure that the sexual rights of young people and women are respected, protected, and fulfilled.
- **Eastern Europe and Central Asia:** Generated commitments from parliamentarians in four countries to add the issue of human rights and dignity in childbirth to each of their legislative agendas.
- **Eastern Africa:** Resolved to work with national governments and regional bodies to institutionalize accountability mechanisms in programs and policies that track progress for girls and women against stated public commitments.
- **Southern Africa:** Generated plans for a new youth advocacy forum on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) to facilitate youth-led advocacy in the region.
- **Western Africa:** Finalized a written commitment to collectively develop a model national strategy for SRHR that could be adapted by countries throughout the region, and created a communications platform on social media to drive advocacy around accountability for the SDGs.



Regions represented at the caucuses*

Eastern Africa: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Libya, Mayotte, Réunion, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania

Western Africa: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Tunisia, Western Sahara

Central Africa: Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe

Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Southeast Asia and Pacific: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Indonesia, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, New Caledonia, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam

Southern and Western Asia: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kuwait, Maldives, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, State of Palestine, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

Latin America and the Caribbean: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, British Virgin Islands, Brazil, Caribbean Netherlands, Cayman Islands, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Falkland Islands (Malvinas), French Guiana, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Martinique, Mexico, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten (Dutch part), Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

* Countries were divided into regions based on geography, World Bank regional groupings, and expected attendance levels. Country names and spelling taken from <http://www.un.org/en/members>.



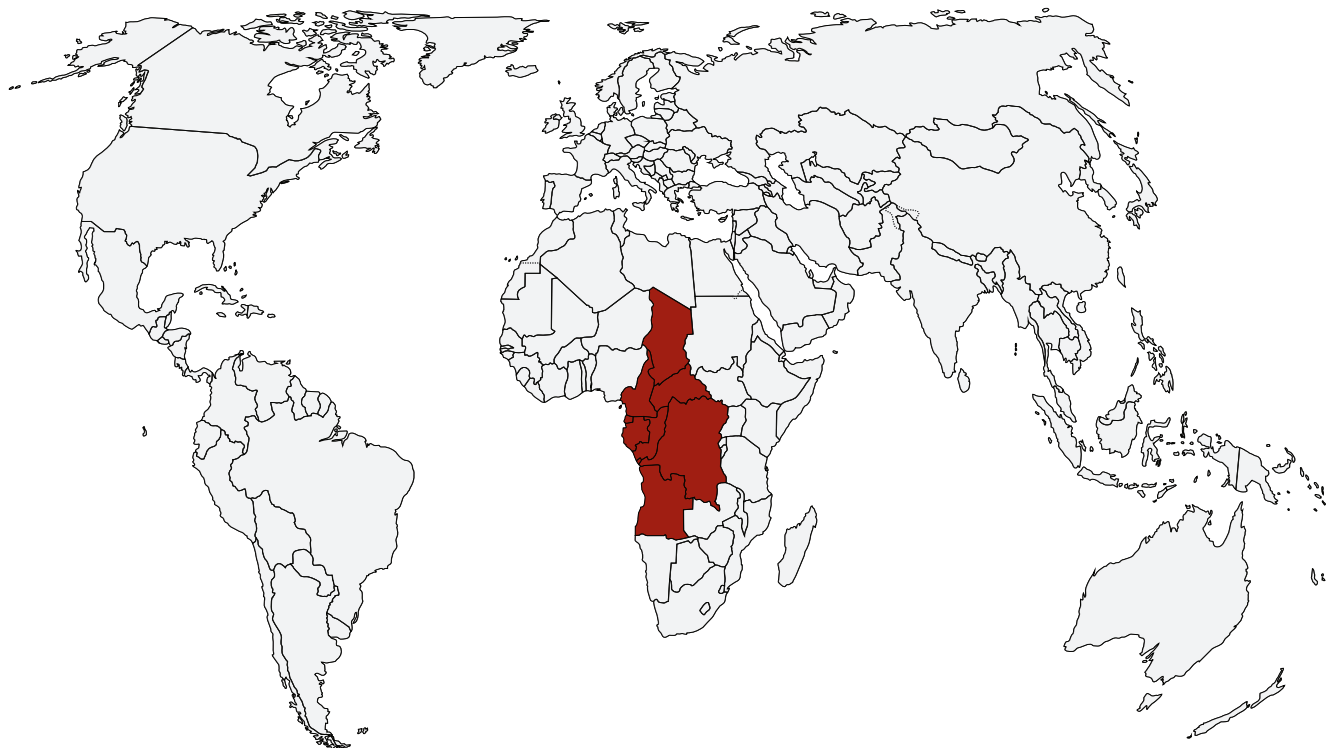
“It’s important to listen to the people, know their problems and address their needs... Governments should be accountable to citizens.”

*Hon. Sarah Opendi,
State Minister for Primary Health Care, Uganda*



Participants at the Eastern Europe and Central Asia caucus.

Central Africa: Universal access to comprehensive sexuality education



Caucus by the numbers

- 32 participants from 10 countries
- Policymakers in attendance:
 - Hon. Pierre Edumbadumba, Member of Parliament, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
 - Hon. Marie Rose Nguini Effa, Member of Parliament, Cameroon
- Key outcomes:
 - [Call to Action for Universal Access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education](#) developed and adopted.
 - Youth leaders and civil society organizations from Cameroon, Chad, Congo, and DRC committed to lead advocacy campaigns on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in their respective countries. Parliamentarians from Cameroon and DRC committed to support any youth-led / civil society advocacy initiatives for CSE.
- Caucus leaders:
 - Caucus organizers: Numfor Munteh, Pacaline Bih, Fon Eleanor, and Patience Agwenjang; Cameroon Agenda for Sustainable Development (CASD)
 - Meeting facilitators: Hon. Marie Rose Nguini Effa, Member of Parliament, Cameroon; Dr. F.R. Zawaira, Director of Family & Reproductive Health, World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa (WHO/AFRO); Lisa Diarra, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Cameroon

Caucus objective and focus

The Central Africa regional caucus focused on improving multi-stakeholder understanding of the state of adolescent girls' health and wellbeing in Central Africa and mobilizing them to lead advocacy actions geared towards the achievement of both the [Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents Health](#), and the [SDGs](#).

Meet the organizers

Cameroon Agenda for Sustainable Development (CASD)

www.casdcam.org

One of the fastest growing and highly effective youth-led organizations in Cameroon, CASD believes that sexual and reproductive health and rights is a crucial area of investment for any emerging economy and should be prioritized in development agendas. CASD's mission is to work with policymakers and grassroots communities to improve the health and socioeconomic conditions of vulnerable women, children, and adolescents in ways that are inclusive, accountable, and sustainable.

[Learn more.](#)

Strategies and solutions

Participants crafted several advocacy statements on the changes required to improve access to sexual and reproductive health services for girls and women. These statements were combined to form a [Call to Action for Universal Access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education](#). The platform calls for the fulfillment of [SDG target 3.7](#) by institutionalizing CSE programs in national education systems and increasing country budgets to create and start these new programs in early adolescence.

Accelerating action

- Representatives from each country will take the Call to Action forward with their respective national governments.
- A [Facebook group page](#) has been created to share updates and organize additional national-level action in each country.
- In Cameroon, CASD and the other caucus participants will meet with policymakers at the Ministry of Secondary Education to discuss the items in the Call to Action.
- CASD will disseminate the Call to Action to other civil society organizations within the region that were not present at the caucus to inform their work and spark broader advocacy action within the region.

To follow the online conversations from this caucus, visit: [#CAfricaWD](#)

For more information about CASD, please contact Numfor Munteh at nalenwi@casdcam.org.

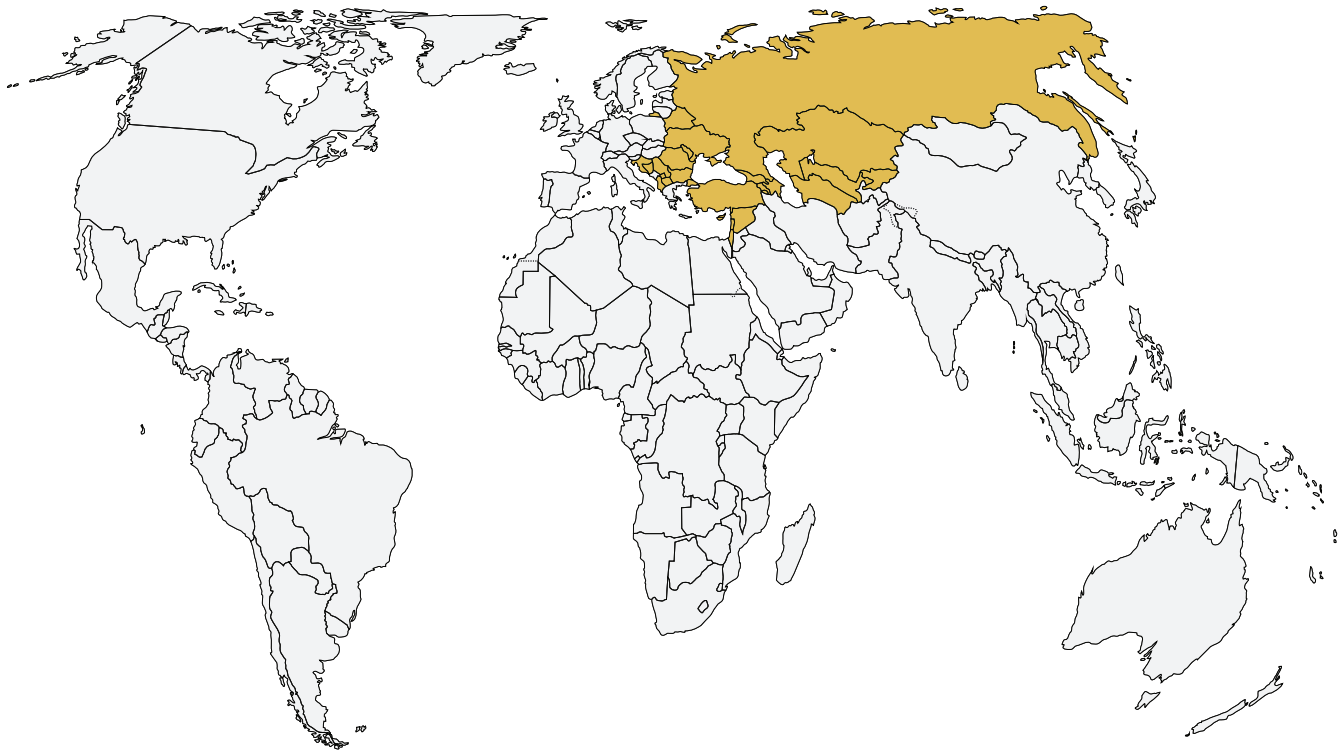


Anandita Phillipose, UNFPA, addresses the Central Africa caucus.

“Civil society organizations need to put more pressure on parliamentarians to adopt and implement programs that meet the needs of adolescents”

*Marie Rose Nguini Effa, MP,
Cameroon*

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Respectful maternity care for all



Caucus by the numbers

- 119 participants from 31 countries
- Policymakers in attendance:
 - Ms. Erika Kvapilova, UN Women Representative to Georgia
 - Hon. Giorgi Tsereteli, Member of Parliament, Georgia
 - Hon. Ms. Khayriniso Yusufi, Vice Speaker and Member of Parliament, Tajikistan
 - Hon. Petra de Sutter, Member of Parliament, Belgium
- Key outcomes:
 - Parliamentarians from Georgia, Tajikistan, and Belgium, made commitments to put the issue of maternal respect on the legislative agenda in their countries.
- Caucus leaders:
 - Caucus organizers: Daniela Drandić, RODA – Parents in Action; Elena Ateva, White Ribbon Alliance
 - Meeting facilitators: Daniela Drandić and Elena Ateva, White Ribbon Alliance; Marinella Marejic, Women Deliver Young Leader, Croatia; Yoanna Stancheva, Zebra Midwives, Bulgaria; Nicholas Rubashkin, Human Rights in Childbirth, USA; Iveta Jancigova, Advocate and Researcher

Caucus objectives and focus

The objective of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia caucus was to create a meaningful dialogue among high-level stakeholders about the need to develop policy mechanisms that expand the definition of adequate reproductive health and safe motherhood, including during pregnancy and childbirth. This is crucial for the health and future of women, children, families, and societies.

Meet the organizers

[RODA – Parents in Action](#)

From its foundation in 2001 to the present, RODA has influenced positive changes in public opinion and within institutions through creation of infrastructure and legal frameworks for changing outdated practices in maternal health. RODA is active in the Republic of Croatia through a network of projects and activities carried out by the organization's more than 250 volunteers. In its work, RODA has become an important stakeholder and a central place for pregnant women, new mothers, and parents to get health information and share experiences.

[Learn more.](#)

Strategies and solutions

Attendees committed to a [participatory statement](#) on the reproductive rights of women in the Eastern European and Central Asian region, including safeguarding the right to dignity in pregnancy and childbirth, with input from caucus participants and stakeholder networks throughout the region. The final declaration will be released in late 2016.

Accelerating action

- UN Women committed to looking further into the issues surrounding respect and dignity in reproductive rights care, especially during pregnancy and childbirth, in partnership with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Parliamentarians from Georgia, Tajikistan, and Belgium* made commitments to put the issue of respectful maternal care on the legislative agenda in their countries.
- Advocacy efforts with partner organizations are planned, starting with European Safe Motherhood Week in September 2016, which will bring together numerous nongovernmental organizations from the European region to discuss issues that continue to face high- and middle-income countries with regard to access and quality of care for pregnant women.
- Caucus organizers will be developing a regionally focused declaration on the reproductive health and rights of women during pregnancy and childbirth, to be circulated in Q3 2016.

To follow the online conversations from this caucus, visit: [#EECAWD](#)

For more information about RODA-Parents in Action and this caucus, please contact Daniela Drandić at daniela@roda.hr and Elena Ateva at eateva@whiteribbonalliance.org.

“As an obstetrician, to go through the process of your daughter being pregnant is really an excellent lesson about the biases and problems in the place that your daughter lives in.”

*Dr. Gunta Lazdane,
Programme Manager, Sexual
and Reproductive Health, World
Health Organization, Europe*

* Belgium was not part of the Eastern Europe / Central Asia region for this caucus; however, Belgian policymakers joined the caucus as partners interested in the topic of respectful maternity care

Eastern Africa: Citizen-led accountability in the SDG era



Caucus by the numbers

- 136 participants from 14 countries
- Policymakers in attendance:
 - Temesegen Ayehu, Ethiopia Federal Ministry of Health
 - Dr. Anisa Omar, Kenya Ministry of Health
 - Hon. Andrew Toboso, Member of Parliament, Kenya
 - Yolanda Ille, South Sudan Ministry of Health
 - Martin Elias and Neeme Rusibanayile, Tanzania Ministry of Health
 - Chris Baryomunsi, Ministry of Health, Uganda
 - Sarah Opendi, Minister of Primary Care, Ministry of Health Uganda
 - Hon. Sylvia Ssinabulya, Member of Parliament, Uganda
- Key outcomes:
 - The caucus proposed the creation of a Center for Excellence for securing the rights of girls and women through citizen-led accountability.
- Caucus leaders:
 - Caucus organizers: Robina Biteyi and Faridah Luyiga Mwanje, White Ribbon Alliance Uganda

Caucus objectives and focus

The Eastern African caucus focused on securing rights for girls and women through national and regional accountability to global commitments. This includes codification of SDGs critical for girls and women in national laws and policies that are firmly anchored in international standards. Additional emphasis was placed on changing social attitudes and stereotypes that undercut gender equality.

Meet the organizers

White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) Uganda

whiteribbonalliance.org/national-alliances/uganda/

WRA unites citizens to demand the right to a safe childbirth for every woman, everywhere. In Uganda, 17 mothers and 106 newborns die every day due in part to inadequate government investment in life-saving emergency obstetric and newborn care. In 2013, WRA Uganda worked with the Government of Uganda to make a commitment to the Every Woman, Every Child movement to improve emergency obstetric and newborn care services. WRA continues to inspire and convene advocates who campaign to uphold the right of all women to be safe and healthy before, during, and after childbirth. WRA helps citizens recognize their rights and hold their governments to account for commitments made to maternal and newborn health.

[Learn more.](#)

Strategies and solutions

Caucus participants discussed:

- [Developing a fact sheet](#) for members of parliament (MPs), and planning meetings with newly elected MPs to ask for their support in ensuring citizen-led accountability for the SDGs.
- Using existing community-based monitoring teams and citizen journalists to track progress and commitments on the health and rights of women and girls.
- Develop training tools for civil society organizations on the role and value of accountability and how to employ and amplify the voices of citizens for health and rights of women and girls.

Accelerating action

- White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) Uganda and partners will develop and test an advocacy toolkit to encourage and amplify citizens' voices in advocacy efforts that can be used by civil society in target countries represented at the caucus.
- Caucus participants committed to engage with the Eastern African Parliament and African Union to promote the voice of citizens to demand for quality health and rights for women and girls.
- To house and manage these efforts, WRA Uganda proposed the creation of a Center of Excellence for citizen-led accountability in Uganda, in partnership with key caucus participants.

To follow the online conversations from this caucus, visit: [the Eastern Africa caucus Storify page](#).

For more information about White Ribbon Alliance Uganda, please contact Robina Biteyi at biteyi.robina@gmail.com.



A participant at the Eastern Africa caucus shows his support for citizen-led accountability.

Latin America and the Caribbean: Adolescents and young women voice their health and rights priorities



Caucus by the numbers

- 100 participants from 38 countries
- Policymakers in attendance:
 - Cristina Lustemberg, Vice Minister of Health, Uruguay
 - Dr. Nazarea Herrera Maldonado, Ministry of Health, Mexico
 - Sergio Meneses Navarro, National Institute of Public Health, Mexico
 - Virginia Camacho, UNFPA Panama
 - Juan Jose Calvo, UNFPA Uruguay
 - Onia Terrero, UNFPA Cuba
 - Hon. Gabriela Troiano, Member of Parliament, Argentina
 - Hon. Hazel Brandy Williams, Member of Parliament; Minister of Gender, Social Development, Youth, and Sports Affairs, St. Kitts and Nevis
 - Hon. Volda Lawrence, Member of Parliament, Guyana
 - Alejandro Caceres-Monroy, Ministry of Labor, Colombia
- Key outcomes:
 - Development and adoption of a [Pact for the empowerment, sexual rights, and the sexual and reproductive health of girls](#), adolescent girls, and young women by six countries in the region for adolescent sexual and reproductive rights for girls and young women.
 - Commitments to work with national governments to support SDG 2030 indicators that track progress in reproductive rights, sexual rights, and maternal health.
- Caucus leaders:
 - Caucus organizers and facilitators: Nayeli Yoval, Mayra Zamaniego, Karen Villalmar, Suleica Pineda, Valeria Macias, Elige Red de Jóvenes; Milka Dinev, PATH

Caucus objectives and focus

The objective of the Latin America and the Caribbean regional caucus was to bring together policy decision-makers with civil society organizations to develop shared priorities and policy solutions to transform the process of the implementation of the SDGs into tangible and specific commitments. The ultimate goal of the meeting was to spur action across sectors that can improve the living conditions and the fulfillment of girls, adolescent girls, and young women in the region.

Meet the organizers

Jovenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos

www.eligered.org

Elige Red is a feminist civilian organization of young men and women, founded in 1996, whose purpose is to contribute to the defense of the human rights of youth. With its work and impact at local and regional levels in Latin America, Elige Red seeks to promote youth mobilization and political participation from a feminist perspective, and the full realization of human rights.

[Learn more.](#)

Strategies and solutions

The caucus adopted a [Pact for the empowerment, sexual rights, and the sexual and reproductive health of girls, adolescent girls, and young women](#). The Pact, created by Elige Red, was adopted by caucus participants and will be adapted so that it can be taken forward by allied international organizations to facilitate advocacy processes with national governments in at least six countries: Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

Accelerating action

- Caucus participants will coordinate outreach with the International Youth Foundation to promote inclusion of the Pact's priorities in the Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government in November 2016.
- Before and after the Summit, Elige Red and other partners will meet with State ministers who will be participating in the [XIII Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) in October 2016 in Montevideo, Uruguay—a key avenue to further formalize the Pact.
- Caucus participants committed to work with their national governments to identify indicators to track progress against issues presented in the Pact.

To follow the online conversations from this caucus, visit: [#LACWD](#)

For more information about Elige Red de Jóvenes, please contact Nayeli Yoval at nayeli@eligered.org and Mayra Zamaniego at mayra@eligered.org.



Panelists at the Latin America & Caribbean caucus listen to a question from the audience.

Southern Africa: Creating a new platform for community engagement



Caucus by the numbers

- 51 participants from 15 countries
- Policymakers in attendance:
 - Susan Shabangu, Minister of Women in the Presidency, South Africa
 - Dr. Patricia Machawira, UNESCO, South Africa
- Key outcomes:
 - Launch of a new Youth Forum on the regional SRHR website in collaboration with AIDS Foundation South Africa (AFSA).
 - A call for proposals for small-scale advocacy campaign grants linked to the key issues discussed at the caucus.
- Caucus leaders:
 - Caucus organizers and facilitators: Ellen Hagerman and Chibwe Salati, Hivos South Africa
 - Meeting facilitators: Charlotte Hord Smith, IPAS; Dr. Patricia Machawira, UNESCO, South Africa; Rada Tzanewa, AIDS Accountability International; Prof. Address Malata, Malawi University of Science and Technology; Lute Maekaeka Kazembe, Global Sojourns Giving Circle

Caucus objectives and focus

Earlier in 2016, Hivos [conducted a survey](#) which determined that gender-based violence, family planning and contraception, adolescent and youth health, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, and improving socio-cultural gender norms were the top priorities for the health and wellbeing of women and girls in the Southern Africa region. The focus of the caucus was to identify campaigns launched at the regional level and across Africa to initiate virtual discussions on these issues and to take collective action toward solutions.

Meet the organizers

Hivos Southern Africa

southern-africa.hivos.org

Hivos is an international organization that seeks new solutions to persistent global issues. With smart projects in the right places, Hivos opposes discrimination, inequality, abuse of power and the unsustainable use of our planet's resources. The problems Hivos wants to confront are complex and can change rapidly.

[Learn more.](#)

Strategies and solutions

Caucus participants identified key actions to take forward, including:

- The development of a multi-stakeholder think tank that can generate and share information on violence against women.
- Leveraging campaigns, such as the [African Union Campaign](#) to end child marriage; as well as the recent launch of an [Africa-wide campaign](#) to decriminalize abortion.
- Working with national governments to include gender equity actions in all country budgets.
- Engaging traditional and male leaders as role models for positive cultural practices and norms.

Accelerating action

To continue the momentum gained at the caucus meeting, Hivos is leading the launch of:

- A Youth Forum on the regional sexual and reproductive health and rights website in collaboration with the AIDS Foundation South Africa (AFSA).
- A regional campaign on safe abortion.
- A call for proposals for small-scale advocacy campaign grants linked to the key issues that were discussed at the caucus.

In addition, the caucus participants formed a new network to:

- Launch an advocacy campaign on what the SDGs mean from a personal perspective so that they can be owned and contextualized for the Southern African region.
- Leverage their new presence and new relationship with UNESCO at the 2016 International AIDS Conference to build on the momentum gained during the caucus.

To follow the online conversations from this caucus, visit: [#SAfricaWD](#)

For more information about Hivos Southern Africa, please contact Ellen Hagerman at e.hagerman@hivos.org.



Caucus organizer Ellen Hagerman, Hivos, speaks to a participant at the Southern Africa caucus.

Southern and Western Asia: A rights-based approach to ending child marriage



Caucus by the numbers

- 70 participants from 19 countries
- Policymakers in attendance:
 - Dr. Chandra V. Mouli, World Health Organization
 - Hon. Dina Upadhyay, MP, Nepal
 - Hon. Mahtab Akbar Rashdi, MP, Pakistan
- Key outcomes:
 - Participants proposed the formation of a regional group of civil society organizations to attend the upcoming South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit in Pakistan.
 - Agreed to encourage governments to conduct a review of national laws to harmonize child marriage laws in all countries of this region.
 - Formation of a regional advocacy group to advocate for implementation of child marriage laws.
- Caucus leaders:
 - Caucus organizers and facilitators: Qadeer Baig, Syed Imran Haider, and Saad Haroon, Rutgers Pakistan

Caucus objectives and focus

In countries throughout the Southern and Western Asia region, early marriage is all too common. Poor economic conditions, prevailing customary practices, and lack of perceived value for girls drives this violation of girls' and women's sexual and reproductive rights. The specific objectives of this caucus were:

Meet the organizers

Rutgers WPF Pakistan

www.rutgerswfp.org

Rutgers WPF is a renowned center of expertise on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Its activities are mainly carried out in the Netherlands, Africa, and Asia. Its aim is to improve SRHR throughout the world. Rutgers WPF supports partner organizations and professionals in their work to increase their expertise on SRHR and issues surrounding it. The mission of Rutgers WPF Pakistan is to work for sustainable human development by promoting the sexual and reproductive health and rights of youth, women and marginalized groups.

[Learn more.](#)

- To highlight the situation of child marriages and its determinants as well as policy strategies and best practices to improve the situation at national and regional levels.
- To develop a broader understanding of the [Regional Action Plan \(RAP\) to End Child Marriages in South Asia](#).
- To facilitate the development of commitments from representatives of civil society and governments that can contribute to the implementation of the RAP.
- To develop a joint agreement on future advocacy priorities for advocacy strategies at national and international levels.

Strategies and solutions

[Outcomes](#) from the caucus meeting included an agreement to integrate the RAP in future advocacy efforts at all levels and increase regional communication and cooperation aimed at learning from each other's experiences and developing a common advocacy agenda. Other key actions identified to take forward include:

- Increased focus on local governments and district administration systems to ensure comprehensive cross-sector participation.
- Engagement of religious scholars to echo support for ending child marriage.
- Increased funding and support for in-depth qualitative research to identify the deep-rooted causes behind child marriages, as well as contributing factors to increasing age of marriage age in certain areas.
- Supporting legal challenges to the dowry system.

Accelerating action

- Participants proposed the formation of a regional group of civil society organizations to plan for the upcoming SAARC summit in Pakistan in November 2016 in order to use the summit to accelerate national-level adoption.
- Participants will encourage their respective governments to include the issue of child marriage on the agenda of the [SAARC](#) summit and to conduct a review of national laws on child marriage in an effort to harmonize laws across all countries within the region.
- Rutgers Pakistan will take the lead to build on the caucus momentum and will facilitate the formation a regional group to advocated for the implementation of child marriage laws.

To follow the online conversations from this caucus, visit: [#SAsiaWD](#)

For more information about Rutgers Pakistan, please contact Qadeer Baig at qadeer.baig@rutgers.pk.

Southeast Asia and Pacific: Sexual and reproductive health accountability and access for women and youth



Caucus by the numbers

- 74 participants from 21 countries
- Policymakers in attendance:
 - Hon. Dr. Jetn Siratharanont, Senator from Thailand
 - Hon. Dr. Mya Thuang, Chair, Parliamentary Committee on Women and Children's Rights, Myanmar
 - Dinh Ahn Tuan, Department of Mother and Child's Health, Ministry of Health, Vietnam
 - Hon. Natasha Stott Despoja, Ambassador for Women and Girls, Australia
- Key outcomes:
 - Opportunity in Myanmar to develop legislation on universal access to comprehensive sexuality education and the rights of children, including girls.
 - A series of national-level policy briefs that will provide a snapshot of the sexual rights context and an analysis of national gaps and advocacy entry points.
- Caucus leaders:
 - Caucus organizers and facilitators: Kabir Singh and Alexandra Johns, Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
 - Meeting facilitators: Hon. Dr. Mya Thuang, MP, Myanmar; Prameswari Puspa Dewi, Aliansi Remaja Independen; Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont, MP, Thailand; Lily Liu Liqing, Marie Stopes International China; Nazneen Damji, UN Women; Natt Kraipet, Thailand, Unzip the Lips

Caucus objectives and focus

The fulfillment of sexual rights is critical to enabling the full participation of all people in society, reducing inequalities, and achieving just and sustainable development. The objective of the Southeast Asia and Pacific caucus was to gather diverse stakeholders from a variety of sectors in the region, including parliamentarians, youth, government officials, and activists, to engage in constructive dialogue and to identify national level actions and advocacy entry-points for implementation of the SDGs as they relate to the sexual rights of women and young people.

Meet the organizers

Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA)

www.asiapacificalliance.org

The APA is a network of national, regional, and global civil society organizations that advocate for the fulfillment of SRHR for all persons in the Asia Pacific region. Over the last sixteen years, APA has galvanized and coordinated national and regional advocacy to further commitments made at the International Conference on Population and Development and its reviews, along with other inter-governmental meetings and conferences related to SRHR, gender, and human rights. APA actively engaged with the national, regional, and global civil society consultation and review processes that informed the development of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

[Learn more.](#)

Strategies and solutions

Recommendations from the caucus were used as the basis for drafting a [Call to Action](#) in support of five of the seventeen SDGs. After incorporating inputs from the caucus participants to strengthen the draft, a final Call to Action was circulated for endorsement by caucus participants, including to a network of parliamentarians that work on population and development in the region.

Accelerating action

- Dr. Mya Thaung, Chair of Parliamentary Committee on Women's and Children's Rights in Myanmar, met with the Ministry of Social Welfare and civil society to draft legislation on the universal access to comprehensive sexuality education as well as the development of legislation on the rights of children, including girls.
- Caucus participants are developing a series of national-level policy briefs that will provide a snapshot of the sexual rights context in the region and an analysis of national gaps and advocacy entry points and opportunities. These briefs are intended to be used to hold governments accountable for their commitments to sexual rights to further the achievement of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.
- APA will expand its membership to include organizations from across the Asia Pacific region, in order to galvanize civil society advocacy to hold governments and other stakeholders accountable for their obligations and commitments related to SRHR and gender equality.

To follow the online conversations from this caucus, visit: [#SEAsiaWD](#)

For more information about the Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, please contact Alexandra Johns at alexandra@asiapacificalliance.org.

“Universal access to comprehensive sexuality education is a critical enabler for our young people to fully contribute to society and for our countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.”

*Dr. Jetn Siratharanont,
Senator from Thailand*

Western Africa: Making maternal, sexual, and reproductive health a human right



Caucus by the numbers

- 113 participants from 8 countries
- Policymakers in attendance:
 - H.E. Morgens Lykketoft, President of the United Nations General Assembly
 - H.E. Toyin Ojora Saraki, Founder and President, Wellbeing Foundation Africa
 - Dr. Olusegun Mimiko, Executive Governor, Ondo State, Nigeria
 - Hon. William Sabi, Member of Parliament, Ghana
- Outcomes:
 - 94 delegates signed a [Call to Action to Advance Maternal and Reproductive Health of Women and Girls in Africa](#).
 - Progress toward the creation of a regional advocacy alliance for reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health.
 - Creation of a communications platform for the region to share ideas and coordinate joint advocacy efforts.
- Caucus leaders:
 - Caucus organizers and facilitators: Paul Ojanjuni, Isaiah Owolabi, Rhoda Robinson, Abisola Olapeju, David Adewoye, HACEY Health Initiative
 - Meeting facilitators: Dr. Luther-King Fasheun, Wellbeing Foundation; Ms. Maty Dia, Save the Children; Luc De Bernis, UNFPA; Mojisola Alausa; Owambe Nigeria

Caucus objectives and focus

With high poverty levels, low literacy rates, and low human development, the Western Africa sub-region is one of the riskiest places in the world to give birth. Many women and girls in West Africa die of preventable illnesses and complications associated with maternal, sexual, and reproductive health. In the Western Africa caucus, participants aimed to identify opportunities for collaboration and discussed advocacy priorities and strategies for increased commitment to the health and wellbeing of girls and women in the region.

Meet the organizers

HACEY Health Initiative

www.hacey.org

HACEY is a development organization focused on improving the health and productivity of under-served population in Africa. HACEY has worked with the Ministry of Women Affairs and the Ministry of Health, as well as a variety of stakeholders to foster cross-sector and inter-generation collaboration to create a healthy, just, and productive society for women in West Africa. HACEY also works across West Africa to organize capacity building, and stakeholder and policy advocacy meetings to discuss and promote women's and girls' issues.

[Learn more.](#)

- Create a common platform that will consist of stakeholder representatives across all sectors to collectively drive accountability, action, and knowledge sharing for improved maternal and sexual and reproductive health of women and girls in West Africa.

Accelerating action

- HACEY has committed to host an online, regional platform for sharing best practices on its website. This platform will be used to exchange knowledge and build capacity of stakeholders across sectors for collective advocacy.
- HACEY will organize meetings with the West African Civil Society Forum, West African Civil Society Institute, Private Sector Health Alliance of Nigeria, and International Youth Alliance for Family Planning to explore the possibility of creating a regional alliance focused on advancing maternal and sexual and reproductive health of women and girls in West Africa.
- H. E. Toyin Ojora Saraki committed to use her influence with the Nigerian government to move the caucus recommendations forward.

To follow the online conversations from this caucus, visit: [#WAfricaWD](#)

For more information about HACEY Health Initiative, please contact Paul Ojajuni at ojajunisiji@hacey.org.

Strategies and solutions

A [Call to Action](#) letter was signed by most of the caucus participants. It includes a commitment to collectively:

- Develop a model national strategy for training frontline health workers to improve the quality of maternal and sexual and reproductive health of women and girls.

“Education is intrinsically linked to health for all members of the family from birth to childhood to adolescence to motherhood and hopefully old age. Health literacy is the difference between life and death for everyone on earth, most importantly to Africans.”

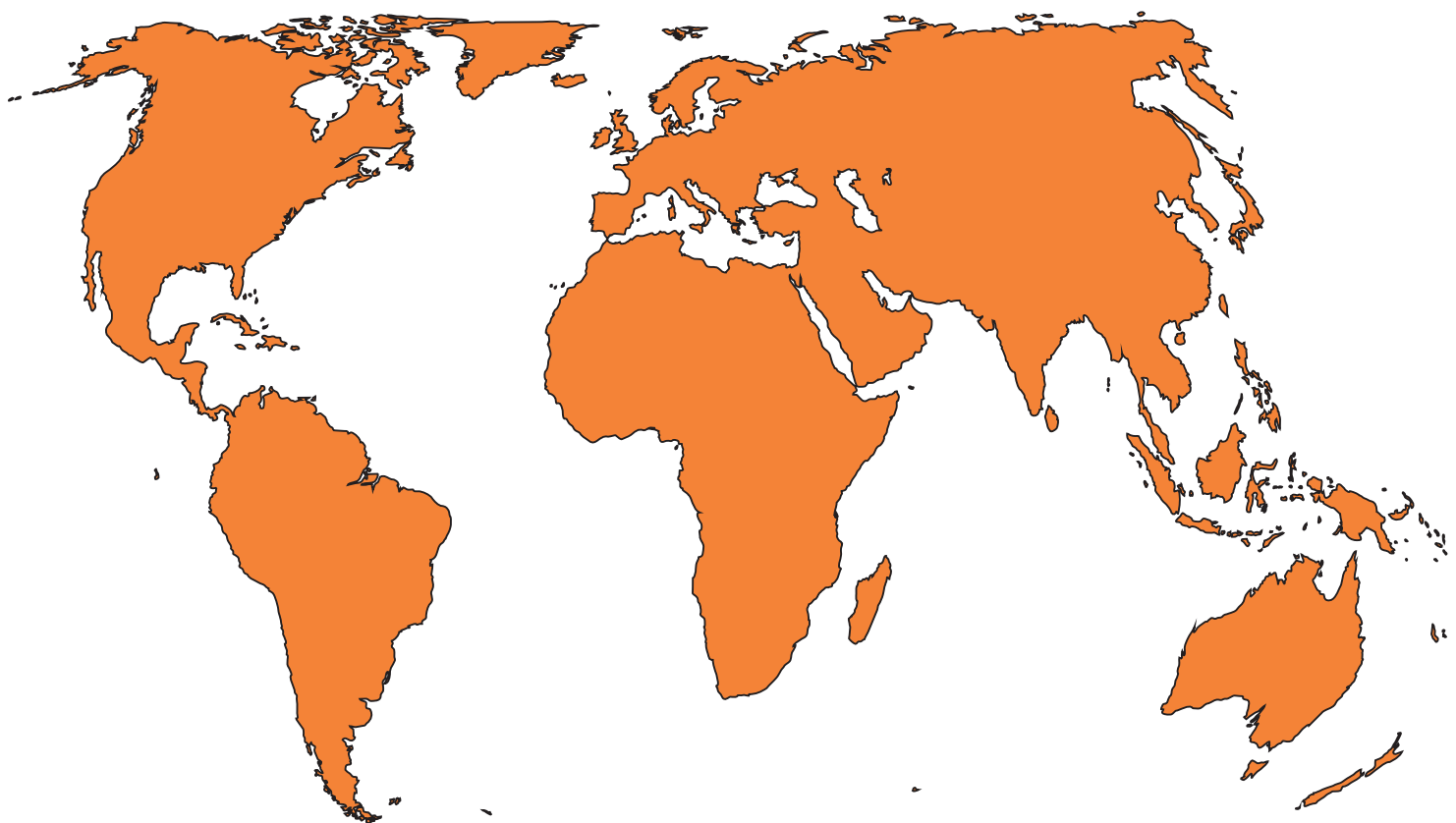
H.E. Toyin Ojora Saraki

The way forward

In 2015, global leaders committed to an ambitious vision for what the world will look like in 2030. In order to create an environment where these goals can become a reality, girls and women must be at the center of implementation and accountability efforts. From advancing good health to improving gender equality, from reducing poverty to building economic growth, the health and wellbeing of girls and women is central to the success of the SDGs. The breadth of exciting outcomes of the 2016 regional advocacy caucuses at the Women Deliver Conference is testament to the dedication of civil society, implementers, and policymakers from across sectors and platforms who came together to build shared strategies for local applications of these global commitments.

While the caucuses have provided the opportunity for robust dialogue and collective strategic planning, the next few years will be essential to see actions taken toward making the SDGs and other global commitments meaningful to the lives of girls and women.







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