

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



WOMEN'S
GLOBAL NETWORK
FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

W G N R R

ABOUT WGNRR

Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR) is a southern-based global network that builds and strengthens movements for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and justice. Our work is grounded in the realities of those who most lack economic, social and political power.

Through critical analysis and strategic actions, WGNRR connects members and allies, builds knowledge, organises campaigns and shares resources. WGNRR works to realise the full SRHR of all people, with a particular focus on the most marginalised. We believe that achieving this goal requires transformative social change. We therefore use a human rights, justice and feminist framework to advocate and campaign for the changes in social norms, legal frameworks, policies and resource allocation required to realize our vision.

We at WGNRR have four priority programme areas, which we believe are priorities for WGNRR, our network members and allies:

- I. Sexual Rights for all people
- II. Sexual and Reproductive Rights of Young People
- III. Access to Contraceptives
- IV. Access to Safe and Legal Abortion

We continue to be one of the few South-based global networks that primarily works with grassroots organisations, and we are inclusive and accountable in all that we do. Strongly committed to equality for all genders, WGNRR values diversity and intersectionality. We aim to be self-reflective, and we are independent of political, governmental or religious institutions.

WGNRR has consultative status at the United Nations (ECOSOC).

For more information regarding partnerships, WGNRR's technical expertise in developing SRHR advocacy & capacity strengthening strategies, or to donate to WGNRR, contact us via: office@wgnrr.org
www.wgnrr.org



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TO OUR FRIENDS, PARTNERS, MEMBERS AND ALLIES

2017 have been eventful and challenging year in the SRHR movement. Women's and SRHR organisations worldwide are facing threats as a result of geopolitical changes that are trying to erode human rights. Given this scenario we want to thank and support the voices of governments, institutions, partner organisations and individuals who are resisting and standing up to protect human rights.

This report gives an overview of WGNRR's achievements in 2017. Key milestones accomplished in 2017 was the establishment of WGNRR Tanzania office from Kigoma to Dar-es-salaam. We also had continuous engagements at the grassroots, national and regional levels, supporting our members and communities, and working closely with partners to push for the advancement of SRHR for all.

We want to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to a key member of the WGNRR team: ED Kathy Mulville, who after eight years at WGNRR, stepped down from her position at the end of September 2017. The entire WGNRR staff are forever grateful for her leadership, positive attitude and warm sisterhood.

WGNRR Team





WWW. SEPT

ADVOCATING FOR SEXUAL HEALTH AND RIGHTS FOR ALL



In 2017, we continued our work in pushing for SRHR in the Development Agendas. We participated at the 61st session of the Commission of the Status of Women in New York in March 13-24, 2017. Our first event (in the midst of the Stella Snow Storm!), was held in collaboration with Love Matters and focused on the synergies between offline and online activism, particularly in relation to SRHR advocacy. The event, "Advancing Action on SRHR: Harmonizing Online & Offline Campaigning Strategies," consisted of an intimate discussion between WGNRR and our partners from Astra Network, Astra Youth, Choice for Youth and Sexuality and the Youth Coalition, alongside activist, singer and songwriter MILCK. With over 2885 people tuning in, and following the event via #MeWeCSW, the event explored recent SRHR activism initiatives, including the September 28 #StepIntoOurShoes campaign, the #Icantkeepquiet movement and the #BlackMonday strike in Poland. We were also joined by Dutch Ambassador Susan

Blankhart who shared more information about the #SheDecides initiative, and how it's turning into a global movement in support of SRHR around the world.

WGNRR's Executive Director, Kathy Mulville moderated the "Pushing Boundaries: Advancing Safe Abortion Advocacy in Restrictive Settings" panel. With the sponsorship and the participation of the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations, as well as Center for Reproductive Rights, Pinsanand Resurj members, the panel touched on various issues surrounding strategies for advocating for safe abortion in highly restrictive contexts, and the role of CSOs in these settings.

WGNRR's Communications and Campaigns Coordinator, Marisol Ruiz participated at the Youth Forum and the Young Feminist Caucus prior to the start of the CSW.

The Young Feminist Caucus statement reiterated that SRHR is critical to ensure economic empowerment for women, girls, and youth. To capture the diversity and intersections of young people's movements, and acknowledge the driving force youth can have in creating change, the Young Feminist Caucus took part in #YoungFeministVisions, a project that pushes young feminists to exercise self reflection, to think both within and beyond their experiences of oppression, and envision what a just and feminist future could really look like. Young people taking part in advocacy spaces at the UN had their portraits taken by New York based photographer Jai Lennard and are looking to share insights into their own activism, the barriers they face, and their visions for the future.



"A society in which all people, especially women and girls, live with dignity, and their human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights and safe abortion rights are fulfilled."

SARAH JANE BITON
Philippines

#YoungFeministVisions
#CSW61



In WGNRR's oral statement at CSW61, we assert on the crucial role SRHR plays in ensuring women and girls' economic empowerment and basic rights across the span of their lifetimes. For CDP50, WGNRR submitted a joint statement with the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network. The statement addresses the theme of changing population age structures and sustainable development, and the necessity of ensuring young people's health and rights, including their SRHR.

In April, WGNRR Mexico Office attended the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development the first and only regional mechanism that exists to follow up and monitor the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The meeting held in Mexico City, April 26-28, 2017, made efforts to recognize the imperative participation of civil society to both implement and expand the agenda.

In early May, WGNRR as part of the Philippine Safe Abortion Advocacy Network, PINSAN, submitted a joint report to the 27th Session of the UPR Working Group of the UN HRC. The report focused on the Philippines government's commitment and obligations in the area of women's reproductive and sexual health, and requested member states to make a number of recommendations. As a result of PINSAN's engagements in the UPR Process, the governments of The Netherlands, Mexico, Belgium and Sweden raised the issue of reproductive rights in their participations. The Netherlands, Belgium, and Sweden also submitted their questions in advance on the issue of abortion in the country.

In the African Region, WGNRR's Africa Regional Coordinator, Nondo Ejano, attended the Africa Leaders' Summit on Safe, Legal Abortion, jointly convened by the Ipas Africa Alliance, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), and the Pan African Parliament. Held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the summit served as a platform for the discussion of strategies for realizing continental commitments on safe, legal, abortion under the theme "Leadership Summit: From Commitment to Action." The summit saw the participation of 70 high level leaders drawn from different sectors, including government and development partners, from various countries such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Cote D'Ivoire, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Europe and USA.

CAMPAIGNING FOR OUR RIGHTS

WGNRR offices, members, partners and allies carried out activities to commemorate major days of action such as May 28 International Day of Action for Women's Health and September Global Day of Action for Access to Safe and Legal Abortion.

May 28 has been celebrated for over thirty years by women's rights activists all over the world. In 2017, members and partners participated in diverse and creative ways to both commemorate the day, and resist recent rollbacks intended to curtail women's SRHR. Allies, members and partners held a twitter rally using the hashtag #OurHealthOurRights which received around 318,061 impressions.

We are also proud that the WGNRR led, #IResistWePersist September 28, International Safe Abortion Day, was a huge success in 2017. We collaborated with Ipas and partners from different regions and volunteer illustrators created and designed a series of #IResistWePersist comic strips showcasing the incredible work being done by partners in their local communities, WGNRR also successfully launched a three part resistance webinar series for abortion advocates in partnership with Inroads in addition to creating a number of campaign materials and resources in a number of languages which can be found here at the September 28 website. This year we received over 300 submissions of the #IresistWepersist initiative through the different social media channels! Members reported around 60 grassroots events united by the #IresistWepersist theme. We also had a historical participation in the twitter rally with more than 250 organizations from all over the world joining in their timezones and more than 1,200 individual activists participating and sharing the hashtag. September 28 message reached a total of 3.8 million users and the number keeps growing.

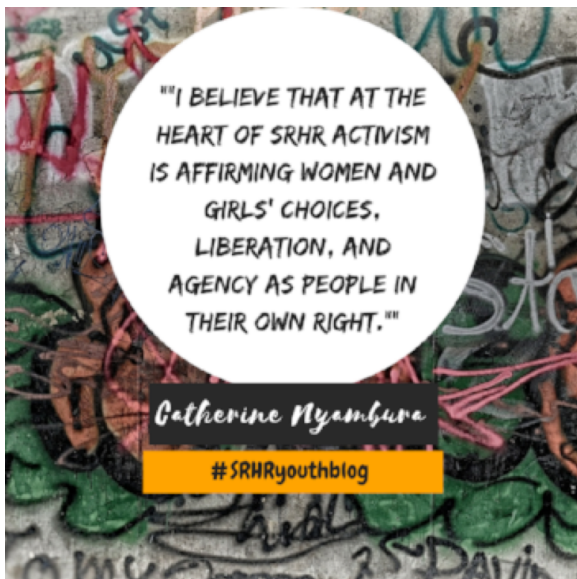


SAVE THE DATE

28.05.17
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION
FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

#MAY28
#OURHEALTHOURRIGHTS
#WOMENSHEALTHMATTERS
WWW.MAY28.ORG

As a follow-up to the September 28, 2016, Step Into Our Shoes Campaign, WGNRR joined forces with Love Matters and RNTC in holding an online training for SRHR activists on "**Global Online Training: Breaking the Silence Around Abortion: How online communities, campaigns and storytelling can challenge abortion-related stigma.**" The training discussed different communication strategies for SRHR issues, particularly in terms of advocating for access to safe and legal abortion services. More than 20 SRHR activists from all over the world including Greece, Pakistan, and India participated in the webinar where they engaged in interactive dialogues with presenters, on the importance of creating strong and engaged online communities that include not only SRHR advocates, but also a broader audience, in order to strengthen abortion-related advocacy and activism activities. This workshop also showcased some examples on how strong stories and messaging can persuade and ultimately contribute to a positive shift in attitudes surrounding SRHR issues and abortion advocacy.



During the **International Youth Day**, we joined advocates worldwide in calling on governments to ensure young people's meaningful participation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes affecting their lives. In particular, young people's voices must be heard in regards to their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). In celebration of International Youth Day, we presented the third issue of our Youth Blog Series: "Looking back, looking forward: My journey into SRHR activism." Catherine Nyambura from Kenya, who has been a leading youth activist shared her experience as an African youth SRHR activist.

On World AIDS Day 2017, and in line with the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, WGNRR called upon all national governments to uphold their commitments to end all forms of violence against women and girls living with HIV, including institutional violence in the form of violating their SRHR. WGNRR calls for global attention to the unmet full realization of the right to health for all people living with HIV. Specifically, WGNRR calls for the respect, protection and fulfillment of the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of all women and girls living with HIV, and for an end to all forms of violence against them.



On the occasion of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, WGNRR launched fundraising campaign to sustain WGNRR's campaigning efforts. We partnered with Global Giving in raising funds for our global campaign.

NETWORKING TO ADVANCE SRHR FOR ALL

As part of WGNRR's work in providing technical expertise to support the SHEWE Coalition, a coalition of HIV and SRHR organizations committed to advancing the SRHR of women living with HIV in Nigeria, WGNRR Advocacy Manager Lara Cousins visited with ICW West Africa and fellow SHEWIH members in Abuja and Lagos. Together, coalition members assessed their progress so far, identified upcoming opportunities, and developed exciting plans for shared advocacy and campaign initiatives related to countering HIV-related stigma and discrimination, and promoting WLHIV's right to access contraceptives and safe abortion services.

WGNRR Africa Participate in Regional Consultation in Nairobi ACSA members under the auspices of Ipas Africa Alliance participated in a Regional Consultation on "The Role of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in Promoting Accountability for Sexual and Reproductive Health in Africa" in Nairobi. WGNRR Africa liaised with the Tanzania Commission on Human Rights and Good governance (CHRGG) and invited them to attend the regional consultation in Nairobi. CHRGG attended the consultation. The workshop was attended by 27 participants including 18 Human Rights Commissioners from Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and South Africa.

As a member of the Asia Pacific Conference Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights (APCRSHR) International Steering Committee, WGNRR actively contributed in shaping the programme of the Conference. Marevic Parcon, WGNRR's Asia Programme Coordinator, attended the preparatory meetings in Vietnam. At the forum proper, WGNRR led sessions on abortion rights and presented in a number of sessions. APCRSHR is the biggest regional forum on SRHR in the Asia Pacific region.

WGNRR together with the Philippine Safe Abortion Advocacy Network - PINSAN, held a workshop entitled Shaping Conversations, Pushing Boundaries: Advancing Access to Safe and Legal Abortion in Restrictive Settings at the 3rd Asia Pacific Feminist Forum took place in Chiangmai, Thailand. Safe abortion advocates from a number of countries attended the workshop, including; Thailand, Korea, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, and Kyrgyzstan. In September. At the Forum, WGNRR reiterated the need to resist and persist against restrictions on access to safe abortion during the forum, which was participated by over 300 feminists from the Asia Pacific Region.

In December, in observance of Human Rights Day and the 5th anniversary of the Reproductive Health Law in the Philippines, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Manila hosted a networking reception with WGNRR and its partners where we proudly presented the project highlights of 2017 in addition to the future plans for 2018 and beyond to the diplomatic community.





WGNRR IN THE PHILIPPINES

WGNRR has strengthened the national network for abortion rights. In the span of three years, WGNRR as the coordinator of the Philippine Safe Abortion Advocacy Network has developed its capacity to advocate and campaign for safe and legal abortion. WGNRR in Manila hired two new staff to strengthen project monitoring, management, and implementation. The Project Officer sees to the timely and efficient implementation of the work, support project documentation, and represent WGNRR in events, among others. The Consultant for the Youth Programme leads in the planning and content development of the training programme for youth, as well as support project partners in their activities.

The networking activities in 2017 have widened our presence and linkages both nationally and internationally. The network was present and active in major sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) advocacy spaces such the 61st Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW61) in New York in March and at the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in Geneva in April and September.

WGNRR sponsored seven (7) members attended the CSW Session in New York where for the first time, they were able to engage in the UN conference, and had a valuable policy engagement exercise when they had an audience with the Philippine Delegation.

With our partners and members, we presented an oral intervention during the Philippine UPR Report Consideration at the 25th Meeting of the 36th Regular Session Human Rights Council to call for the Philippine Government to decriminalize and allow abortion on certain grounds.

At the regional level, we were invited to either present or chair a number of conference sessions on improving access to medical abortion, gender-based violence, stigma elimination, building partnerships and alliances, challenging restrictive policies on abortion during the Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights Conference in Vietnam, World Congress on Adolescent Health in Delhi, India and at the Asia Pacific Feminist Forum in Thailand.

At the national level, we held numerous forum and events conducted by CSOs and government agencies on women's health and rights such as the 2nd National Family Planning Conference, and Philippine Commission on Women consultations, among others.

More importantly, we are able to conduct community-based workshops and activities on abortion involving grassroots women in various parts of the Philippines.

As a result of our work to decriminalise abortion in the Philippines, Marevic Parcon, Asia Programme Coordinator at WGNRR spoke to [The Guardian](#) in a special edition exploring the landscape of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the Philippines.

The greatest impact of our work in the Philippines is that we are able to strengthen the capacity of PINSAN to show, locally and internationally, that despite the restrictive environment, when local advocates are capacitated and supported, it is possible to change the discourse and challenge the laws and policies for access to safe abortion.



WGNRR AFRICA

2017 was a busy year for WGNRR Africa. Under the leadership of Africa Regional Coordinator, Nondo Ejano, WGNRR Africa opened the doors to its office in Dar es Salaam with the goal of working in a strategic location in the region that facilitates collaboration with partners and members. Located in Ngome Holding building, Africa Saana, Dar es Salaam. The office functions as a regional hub where members and partners meet, strategize and convene as needed. We also completed the recruitment of its first team of staff and volunteers to deliver activities and working closely with our constituency.

We conducted numerous networking and strategising activities with key continental partners on how African leaders and stakeholders can translate commitments on SRHR into concrete actions. With support from Ipas Africa, we actively participated in the Africa Leadership Summit on SRHR in Addis-Ababa where more than 65 SRHR advocates, government representatives and development partners from various countries in the region.

We facilitated networking meetings in Abuja and Lagos, Nigeria where members & partners were supported in reviewing and updating their advocacy strategies and work plans, reflecting on successes, challenges & lessons learned so far.

In Tanzania, We witnessed the actual provision of technical support to local SRHR partner organisations in Tanzania where we worked hand in hand with its key local partners, namely Tanzania Women Lawyers Association (TAWLA) and other local organisations to develop advocacy tools to sensitise policy and decision makers at policy and community level on the situation and causes of maternal deaths and its effects on country economy; and to advocate for the domestication of the Maputo Protocol. We convened a national strategic meeting for 17 CSOs working on SRHR at community and policy level in Tanzania to strategise on repositioning SRHR in the national health agenda. We conducted capacity strengthening involving more than 116 representatives of CSOs partners and community women on evidence and rights based advocacy for policy influencing and holistic economic empowerment. We enhanced the capacity of 44 representatives from Tanzanian CSOs working on SRHR in Mwanza, Kigoma, and Dar-es-salaam on evidence and rights-based advocacy for policy influencing.

In Tanzania and Ghana, 72 community ambassadors and representatives of partner CSOs working in mining communities in Geita region and Western region respectively were capacitated on rights-based advocacy and holistic economic empowerment. We also facilitated the development of community level advocacy strategies and workplans for community women in Tanzania & Ghana. These strategies are being used by women community ambassadors in Geita/Tanzania and Tarkwa and Wassa Akropong/Ghana to influence policies, norms, attitudes and beliefs toward women economic empowerment.



Another year has passed with satisfying achievements involving our partners, allies and members. We are grateful for all the support that our members, donors and partners provided. We are moving ahead and making good plans for the coming period. We thank grassroots women and girls for being the reason, inspiration and motivation for the work that we do.

www.wgnrr.org