

A GLOBAL SOUTH COALITION FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS & DEVELOPMENT JUSTICE



WHY?

The divide between the Global South and Global North on the right to development (RtD) and development justice (DJ) has deep roots in colonial history and post-World War II struggles over the scope of human rights. Today, this divide is exacerbated by huge rises in inequality, the dominance of Northern countries in global economic institutions, and support for the interests of their transnational corporations despite documented harms to justice and people's rights.

Global crises, such as COVID-19, have exposed systemic development injustices and their consequences for the most oppressed people in many Global South countries. These include intense pressure from financial institutions to implement fiscal austerity, unfair trade and investment rules, and reduced funding for social expenditures on, inter alia, nutrition, clean water, housing, education, and health including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

As traditional donors slash funding, debt burdens become increasingly unsustainable and inequality skyrockets, while victim-blaming and movements against gender equality gain ground. Rooted in patriarchal beliefs and institutions, old and new, opposition to SRHR has grown to take advantage of the South-North

divide. Some opponents attack gender equality and SRHR nationally, regionally and globally, while claiming at the same time to support the South on issues such as debt.

Yet history shows that even in complex political contexts, progress towards fulfilling human rights is possible. International political forums have long been a site where SRHR have been contested. But despite at times formidable opposition, feminist and social movements, building on the lived experiences of girls, women, and oppressed people, have successfully used these spaces to identify and define key issues, build political commitment and momentum, and ensure accountability for advancing gender equality and human rights.

Key to these successes is connecting SRHR and gender equality to the broader right to development and development justice - the idea that every person and every country should have the means, and access to fair systems to shape their path to wellbeing. Advancing SRHR is not only a matter of personal freedoms or health; it is also central to development justice, to ending inequality, and to ensuring that people's human rights are upheld.

WHY NOW?

In the current conjuncture of polycrises, this has become all the more important. Our opposition is strong, well-resourced and effectively coordinated, while the space for feminist movements and allies to influence global agendas has been closing.

We are facing a crisis.

But we are convinced that a strong, revitalized, South-led feminist movement can rise to this challenge and respond strategically to it. A vibrant new generation of younger SRHR and development justice activists is growing in the Global South, giving us hope and confidence. This generation believes that SRHR and development justice are inseparable. Each depends on the other.

HOW?

A new narrative and coalition are urgently needed. **The Global South Coalition for SRHR & Development Justice is a response to the challenge.** Led by a cross-sectional group of SRHR and development justice activists from the Global South along with allies, the Global South Coalition is working to change the narrative by powerfully

linking SRHR with development justice and the right to development. Its work includes analysis, local to global advocacy, and mobilization of key actors from feminist movements, civil society, international organizations and governments advocating for justice and human rights for all.