

Open Letter: 30 Years After Beijing, We Demand Urgency in Implementing Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Santiago de Chile, December 2024

Thirty years ago, at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, the International Community committed to transforming the lives of women, girls, and youth in all their diversity through the Beijing Platform for Action.

From IPPF ACRO and its feminist Member Associations and Collaborative Partners present at the Sixty-Sixth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean – Fundheg (Argentina), Gestos (Brazil), INPPARES (Peru), Colectivo Rebeldía (Bolivia), Fundación LLAVES (Honduras), Asociación Las Crisálidas (Guatemala), Unes (Paraguay), Cemoplaf (Ecuador) – we recognize the progress made but also raise our voices against the pending, urgent, and critical challenges that remain unaddressed.

Latin America and the Caribbean have made significant strides in protecting and guaranteeing the human rights of girls, youth, and women in all their diversities. However, we are witnessing serious setbacks, increasing inequalities, and deep democratic gaps in a global context of triple crises: climate urgency, economic instability, and attacks on multilateralism.

In the face of so many crises, this is a strategic moment to demand a renewed commitment to the Belém do Pará Convention and the Beijing Platform for Action, ensuring these translate into effective policies for all communities in all their diversities, with an intersectional, intercultural, anti-racist, and anti-colonial approach. This approach must acknowledge that guaranteeing sexual and reproductive rights (SRHR) is fundamental to achieving gender justice, real access to human rights, and sustainable development.

It is concerning that the implementation of **sexual and reproductive** health programs – including access to STI prevention and care, reproductive planning, and contraceptive methods – remains unequal in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially for women, girls, adolescents, and youth from low-income backgrounds, rural areas, Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, those with disabilities, living with HIV, sex workers, and migrants, particularly in contexts of poverty, limited mobility, and forced displacement caused by political, economic, and climate emergencies.

We must acknowledge that the **climate crisis** impacts the SRHR of women, girls, and youth, particularly in the Global South, who disproportionately face its effects, including loss of livelihoods, forced displacement, and heightened vulnerability to violence. These challenges exacerbate the lack of access to essential services, water, and food. Therefore, we demand that climate policies and financing include a gender perspective, prioritize sexual and reproductive justice, and actively involve feminist organizations in their design, decision-making, and monitoring processes.

We also emphasize the central importance of **comprehensive sexuality education** for girls, adolescents, youth, and everyone to make informed decisions about their bodies, sexual, and reproductive lives.



Furthermore, we reaffirm that access to safe **abortion** is an inalienable human right, essential for the autonomy of women and pregnant individuals. While progress has been made in decriminalizing and legalizing abortion in some countries in the region, in others, people continue to face restrictions, criminalization, social barriers, and lack of access to safe health services.

Thus, we call for gender-sensitive, inclusive, intersectional, anti-racist, and environmentally responsible policies with adequate funding to fulfill the commitments of Beijing and ensure universal access to SRHR, particularly for women, girls, adolescents, youth in all their diversities, and LGBTQIA+ individuals. This includes ensuring funding for evidence-based comprehensive sexuality education, reproductive planning, contraception, and abortion, eliminating punitive legislation, and guaranteeing access to quality, public, free, and safe services.

Additionally, achieving sexual and reproductive justice requires fair **care economy** policies that reduce and equitably redistribute care responsibilities among women and men, families, and the state. We also call for increased investment through international cooperation for SRHR, gender equality programs, and violence prevention, particularly in crisis contexts. We urge governments and international bodies to channel resources toward feminist and community organizations, which are the driving force behind social transformation and the guarantee of SRHR.

This demands the implementation of **progressive and equitable fiscal policies**, including higher taxes on the super-rich and the elimination of tax incentives for private sector causing social and environmental harm. Closing tax havens, addressing tax evasion and avoidance, and reducing debt burdens for low- and middle-income countries are essential to addressing liquidity and solvency issues and freeing up resources to finance the implementation of the Beijing commitments, the 2030 Agenda, and the Climate Agenda.

Our Call to Action:

Thirty years after Beijing, we reaffirm that the fight for SRHR is urgent and inseparable from the fight for social, environmental, and gender justice. We call on States, International Organizations, and Civil Society to intensify efforts and translate commitments into concrete and immediate actions.

Only through adequate public financing and genuine political will can we respond to urgent needs and build a more equitable and just region. We urge governments and multilateral institutions to integrate SRHR with a gender perspective into comprehensive responses to the effects of climate and democratic crises, ensuring sufficient resource allocation and the sustainability of related programs.

The Beijing Platform for Action remains a compass for an equal future. Now more than ever, we must not tolerate setbacks. We demand a bold, multisectoral, well-funded, feminist, and anti-racist response to today's challenges and reiterate our commitment to building a world where all women, girls, and youth in all their diversities can live free, autonomous, and dignified lives.

IPPF ACRO Delegation
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