2020 REPORT
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION FOR WOMEN’S HEALTH

WOMEN’S HEALTH
STILL MATTERS!

#SRHRisEssential  #WomensHealthMatters  #NoLockdownonRights  #May28
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It is with great pleasure that we present WGNRR’s 2020 report on May 28 actions undertaken by members and partners worldwide for the International Day of Action for Women’s Health.

As with previous campaign reports, this year’s report aims to capture the number, range and geographical spread of actions taken during the May 28 campaign, but more importantly to provide inspiration for campaigners all over the world!

This year’s campaign finds itself against the backdrop of a public health crisis that directly impacts women’s and girls’ health, and, particularly, their sexual and reproductive health.

As Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) activists, feminists and allies the world over uncovered stories and experiences of women who had been placed in precarious, even fatal situations, because of reallocation of resources and priorities to respond to the pandemic, the call to ensure SRHR in COVID-19 response became critical.

Hence, this year’s Call for Action, “Women’s Health STILL Matters: Women’s access to essential SRHR information and services remains critical in responding to COVID-19.”

Despite the limitations brought about by our current situation, SRHR activists, feminists, and allies all over the world have responded creatively and innovatively to be able to deliver on the call for action.

Our partners mobilized, asserted and demanded through a diverse range of actions, from webinars and zoom talks to twitter rallies and chats to live video pitches and photo challenges to online contests and
Anticipating that most actions would be projected online, the May 28 campaign expanded the campaign toolkit to include profile photo frames, cover photos, social media cards and sample tweets and messages. These have also been made available through the May website (www.may28.org). Check out how our partners have adapted these materials and made them their own further down the pages of this report.

This year, we can successfully report that the number of actions among local, regional and international NGOs resulted in a total of more than fifty actions worldwide. Proof of the success of these actions are the commitments made by government leaders, numerous landings on mainstream media, and the hundreds of thousands of impressions made online, where most of these actions have taken place.

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of our partners and allies—from global, regional and local organizations to individual advocates and activists—in making this year’s May 28 campaign a success.
CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

May 28 has been commemorated by women’s health advocates and their communities since 1987, when during the International Women’s Health Meeting in Costa Rica, Latin American and Caribbean Women’s Health Network (LACWHN) proposed to celebrate May 28 annually as the International Day of Action for Women’s Health. Being the leading regional network LACWHN took the responsibility of promoting and coordinating the regional actions, while Women’s Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR) being the global network was requested to spearhead May 28 campaign globally. Both networks worked closely together with the group of core active members in coordinating the campaign efforts. Since 1987, May 28 has been maintained as an annual campaign through yearly collaborative calls for action focused on a particular topic related to women’s health. The range of topics throughout the years includes access to quality health care, the feminization of poverty, access to safe and legal abortion, women and HIV/AIDS, VAW as a Global Health Emergency, and Young People’s SRHR, among others.
This year, Women’s Global Network for Reproductive Rights, Center for Reproductive Rights, Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW), MenEngage, Strong, Harmonized and Empowered Advocacy Actions in Africa (SHE ACTS Alliance), Safe Abortion Advocacy Initiative Global South Engagement (SAIGE), Philippine Safe Abortion Advocacy Network (PINSAN), South Asia Reproductive Justice, Accountability Initiative (SARJAI), Ipas Africa Alliance, and International Campaign for Women’s Rights to Safe Abortion jointly developed the Call for Action, “Women’s Health STILL Matters: Women’s access to essential SRHR information and services remains critical in responding to COVID-19.”
BY THE NUMBERS

More than 50 actions
WORLD WIDE

20 FEATURES & MENTIONS ON MAINSTREAM MEDIA
(RADIO, TV, PRINT AND ONLINE NEWS)

20,000 TWEETS USING #MAY28 CAMPAIGN HASHTAGS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE CAMPAIGN

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF IMPRESSIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA
Actions

#SRHRisEssential  #WomensHealthMatters  
#NoLockdownonRights  #May28
Mobility restrictions due to the pandemic did not stop partners and allies from having meaningful discussions over the state of sexual and reproductive health and rights. Our partners and allies went online! We hosted public webinars and zoom discussions to commemorate the Day of Action.

May 28 campaign organizers, WGNRR Africa, and MenEngage Africa Alliance had a webinar on “Strategic Collaboration on SRHR campaigning for May 28” on May 22, while the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) and Safe Abortion Advocacy Initiative (SAIGE) had a webinar on “Safe Abortion amid a pandemic” on May 27 with guest speakers from WGNRR, Beyond Beijing Committee Nepal and PROMSEX in Latin America.
A number of online talks also featured policy-makers which would make their commitments to SRHR in COVID-19 response during the sessions and after on their respective parliamentary platforms.
On May 28, several advocates and activists also contributed their own pitches to the ongoing conversation by going live on Facebook.
On May 28, a global tweet-a-thon, “#WomensHealthStillMatters: A Twitter Rally for our Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights!” was led by young south-based feminists and our partner organizations. This hour-long activity prompted more than 200 tweets and thousands in likes and retweets, which resulted in all four campaign hashtags trending globally.
MEET OUR PANELISTS

Trust for Indigenous Cultures and Health
@TICAH_NE

Auntie Jane Potente
@Makukutrz

CEHRD
@CEHRD_Uganda

Stellie Ph
@StelliePh

Sarah Bagu
@SarahBagu

Mamul Chayo
@MamulChayo

Kikinuma Picho
@Kikinuma_Picho

Michelle Chung
@Michelle_Chung

Arati Filipinas
@AratiFilipinas

ARROW
@ARROWWoman

IPAS Africa Alliance
@IPASAfricaAlliance

Zamara Foundation
@Zamara_Mf

#Women's Health Matters

Follow @WIGNER and @wignerr_africa

3 p.m. East Africa Time (UTC+3) / 8 p.m. Philippine Standard Time (UTC+8)

www.may28.org

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WHY DO YOU THINK
#WomensHealthStillMatters?

Answer the question by filling in the blanks: "I am [name] from [city/organization] and #WomensHealthStillMatters because..."

#SRHReEssential #WomensHealthMatters

#NoLockdownonRights #May28

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HOW ARE WOMEN AND GIRLS DEALING WITH THEIR CURRENT SITUATION?

Share personal and community responses to COVID-19. Big or small, mundane or innovative, they are all welcome. Share photos or videos as well!

#SRHReEssential #WomensHealthMatters

#NoLockdownonRights #May28

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WHAT IS THE SRHR SITUATION IN YOUR COUNTRY AND HOW ARE WOMEN AND GIRLS AFFECTED?

Share personal experiences or anecdotes from friends or your community. You can also give a larger account and share links to news articles or media stories online.

#SRHReEssential #WomensHealthMatters

#NoLockdownonRights #May28

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WHAT SHOULD DUTY-BEARERS DO TO ENSURE THAT SRHR IS PART OF COVID-19 RESPONSE?

Tag the government and nongovernment bodies relevant to your demands. You may also retweet any of our May 28 messages found in the tweets below.

#SRHReEssential #WomensHealthMatters

#NoLockdownonRights #May28
#SRHRisEssential
Trending

#WomensHealthMatters
Trending

#NoLockdownnonRights
Trending

#May28
Trending

Keikantse E. Phele @ke_phele · May 28
I am Keikantse Phele from Botswana #WomensHealthMatters because women experience unique and intersectional SRHR issues and need access to quality and efficient health services. #SRHRisEssential #NoLockdownnonRights #May28

Manal @manalkhan07 · May 28
Even today, the draconian Pakistan Penal Code criminalises abortion seekers and providers if the fetus is older than a 120 days. The woman gets no say in the matters of her right to her own body and this is why #SRHRisEssential.
#WomensHealthMatters

Mickreen Adhiambo @Adhyambo_mickey · May 28
Replying to @WGNRR @sarahelago and 10 others
I am Mickreen Adhiambo a gender, women and SRHR advocate from Kenya and I believe #WomensHealthStillMatters because women’s health rights are human rights and paramount #SRHRisEssential #May28
#NoLockdownnonRights #WomensHealthMattersKE

Sarah Elago @sarahelago · May 28
I am Sarah Elago from Kabataan Partylist and #WomensHealthMatters because it serves as an indicator of promotion and protection of everyone’s right to health.
#SRHRisEssential #NoLockdownnonRights #May28

Nawmi Naz Chowdhury @n_nazchy · May 28
Replying to @ARROW_Women
I am Naz from Kuala Lumpur, ARROW and #WomensHealthMatters because we have every right to live a healthy life through access to quality services and support that are both accessible and affordable for all.
#SRHRisEssential #NoLockdownnonRights #May28
The #pandemic has seen a surge in #ViolenceAgainstWomenandGirls across the globe. Jakarta Feminist Association found that the # of reported #DomesticViolence cases against women has tripled in Indonesia since the start of the pandemic.

#SRHRisEssential #NoLockdownonRights #May28

I first covered reproductive health issues back in 2017. Those running the Tondo clinic I immersed in said many of the women have to sneak out to get contraceptive shots, because many men still think using contraceptives "emasculates" them. #WomensHealthMatters #SRHRisEssential

Mass public transport is restricted if not suspended entirely in diff areas of the Philippines. Imagine if a poor pregnant woman goes under labor and has to walk to the hospital, which might not even be able to accept her because of overwhelmed capacity from COVID-19?

In Kenya with the quarantine measures and curfew has led to inaccessibility of SRHR services for women and girls especially youth-friendly services and organisations have been forced to go online in offering services and information especially on SRHR #SRHRisEssential #May28

In Uganda, besides the curfew & its associated effects e.g poverty, restrictions to access SRH services, there has been displacement of people due to floods thus women & girls are extremely affected. (such situations when even their clothes/undies are hard to get)

Apart from the physical health impact, nobody should have to suffer the trauma of YAW or looking for safe abortion options in PH: if others know, they are stigmatized. If they keep it secret, they are isolated and at a loss for what to do. #SRHRisEssential #NoLockdownonRights
Partners and allies have also kept the conversation going for weeks by having twitter chats and rallies leading up to May 28.
Partners also shared SRHR information materials, such as posters and infographics for dissemination on the May 28 channels.
Many also sent in social media cards featuring their community actions leading up to May 28. They even used the official My 28 profile frame!
28 de mayo
Día Internacional de Acción por la Salud de las Mujeres.

Durante el COVID19, los gobiernos deben garantizar la continuidad del acceso a servicios de salud integral para las mujeres y las niñas.

#AbortionBeyondLockDown
INTERATIONAL DAY OF ACTION FOR WOMEN’S HEALTH

28 de mayo
Día Internacional de Acción por la Salud de las mujeres.

Durante el COVID19, las mujeres continuamos requiriendo servicios integrales de salud sexual y reproductiva, mismos que deben ser garantizados por el personal de los servicios de salud.
SPOTLIGHT: #YOUNGPEOPLEINQUARANTINE

With access to social media while in quarantine, young people play a critical role in mobilizing support for women and girls’ health, and speaking on the challenges they face. In solidarity with the May 28 International Day of Action for Women’s Health, the Young Advocates for SRHR (YAS) hosted the Young People in Quarantine Challenge through its Facebook page where young people were engaged in sharing information and creative work around COVID-19 and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

During the Young People in Quarantine Challenge, four online learning sessions on creative skills for SRHR campaigning, including photography, opinion-writing, short story writing, and an information session on SRHR.

YAS Talks, a series of conversations with and about young people and their sexual and reproductive health and rights was also launched, with its first talk on Young People and COVID-19 with guests from Commission on Population and Development, Executive Director Dr. Juan Antonio Perez III, and Kabataan Partylist Representative, Hon. Sarah Jane Elago. Both policy-makers committed to ensuring that SRHR would be part of their proposed policies for COVID-19 response.
Young People in Quarantine Challenge also held online contests where young people learn about SRHR, creatively advocate for their rights and win phone credits or cash for their creative work. The online contests received 663 entries in Health Quiz Bee, Essay Writing Contest, Photo Contest, Poster Making Contest, Creative Placards Contest, Opinion Writing Contest, and Short Story Contest. Out of the more than 600 entries in different contests, 135 young people received phone credits and cash prizes, with their work featured in the YAS Facebook page.

This shows that, despite the pandemic, when young people are engaged and have access to the online platforms and resources, they can become advocates of their rights.
Several organizations also took part in the May 28 campaign by releasing statements sounding the alarm on rollbacks in SRHR at both national and global levels.

Here are some of the statements released by WGNRR and their partners:

- **Women’s Health Still Matters**: Ensure availability and equitable access to essential SRH services in COVID-19 Response co-signed by 62 organizations and individuals and responded to with commitments by the Department of Health, Philippine Commission on Women and the Department of Interior and Local Government.

- **WGNRR statement on the U.S. administration’s attempt to roll back SRHR**.

- **Statement of African CSOs and other organizations working in Africa on USAID’s attempt to roll back SRHR in light of the COVID-19 pandemic**.

**STATEMENT OF AFRICAN CSOS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN AFRICA ON THE USAID’S ATTEMPT TO ROLL BACK SRHR IN LIGHT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

African CSOs join forces to register our outrage at the Acting USAID Administrator John Barsa’s letter dated May 18th 2020 to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres demanding the UN to remove reference to “sexual and reproductive health” and its derivatives from the Global Humanitarian Response Plan’s (HRP) guidance, and drop the provision of abortion as an essential component of the UN’s priorities to respond to COVID-19 pandemic.
The Asia Safe Abortion Partnership also published a series called “Dear Leader” featuring feminists from countries all over Asia addressing their country leaders to forward their #May28 demands.

Source: https://www.facebook.com/pg/AsiaSafeAbortionPartnership/photos/
The May 28 campaign was brought to millions of people through mass media. While our online campaigns were hugely successful, the circulation of mass media products helped to bring the campaign to the large masses of people that may have little or no access to the internet during this pandemic.

In Africa, Haki zetu Tanzania conducted a total of five mass media sessions during a period of eight days. This includes one TV interview, two radio sessions, and two newspaper interviews. Many of the activities by our partners and allies were also covered by the news media.

In Argentina, rallies were held last May 28 by SRHR activists and feminists to secure their rights to safe and legal abortion. Such movements were covered by local and international news media.
In the Philippines, the May 28 campaign was also covered by the country’s major newspapers, aside from online news websites. Aside from the statements released by WGNRR, Oxfam and partner which garnered significant media coverage, an entry to the May 28 photo challenge also gained considerable media attention and public support. The facebook post by Atty. Clara Rita Padilla of Engenderights announcing the organization’s draft bill to decriminalize abortion in the Philippines was met with 11,000 positive reactions and publication in national broadsheets.
The #May28 campaign was a huge success!

As such, we would like to thank our partners and allies all over the world for mobilizing, asserting, and demanding with us!

Let us sustain the message of the May 28 campaign by continuing to call on governments and the international community to ensure that #WomensHealthMatters and #SRHRisEssential beyond May 28.

Again, thank you and we hope to have you with us in future campaigns. Ideas for collaboration? Email us at office@wgnrr.org! For updates, go to www.may28.org.

Continue speaking out, mobilizing and asserting!
MAY 28
2020
REPORT

For more information on this report, you may contact Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights at office@wqnr.org.