World Health Summit 2023: Side Event

Sexual And Reproductive Health And Rights And Bodily Autonomy In A Digital World

16 October 2023, 09:30 AM CET

Lounge Brazzaville, JW Marriott Hotel Berlin

Session Description:

This session delves into the transformative impact of technology, social media, and digital health interventions on gender health disparities, with a focus on the challenges and opportunities they present. The rise of mobile and e-health models offers promising avenues for public health interventions, especially in resource-limited settings. However, barriers exist in the form of geographic, economic, and social disparities, particularly affecting gender, disability, and race.

Restrictive policy landscapes exacerbate healthcare access issues, extending into the digital realm, increasing surveillance, and hindering access to crucial services like safe abortion. The session will also touch on the need for improved data governance in the face of growing personal data reservoirs and the risks posed by AI in de-anonymising personal data, which, in turn, threatens gender equality.

This panel aims to explore solutions to these challenges, ensuring the transformative potential of digital technology reaches women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals, supporting their agency, bodily autonomy, and decision-making. Key research and policy dimensions will be discussed to promote a gender-equal and intersectional approach through digital interventions for enhanced sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

Key Guiding Questions:

1. What are the primary issues that need addressing to unlock the transformative potential of technology for all, especially focusing on young individuals, girls, and gender-diverse people? Additionally, what are the areas where technology and digital health are not being leveraged enough to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights?
2. What are promising projects or initiatives being led that emphasize the linkage between technology and sexual and reproductive health and rights?
3. How can partnerships across private, public, and international organizations be optimized to foster a digital environment conducive to advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights, considering the diverse nature of institutions and approaches represented?

Co-organisers:

United Nations University- International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH), University of Southern California Institute on Inequalities in Global Health, World Health Organization - Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research/ Human Reproduction Programme (WHO SRH/HRP)

Format:

In this focused **90-minute interactive dialogue**, experts from the private sector, academia, and the UN will unpack the dual challenges and opportunities technology offers for women, girls, and gender-diverse individuals. The session aims to highlight key research and policy strategies, promoting a gender-equal, intersectional approach through digital solutions for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health.

Moderator:

- **Sofia Gruskin**, Director, USC Institute on Inequalities in Global Health

Speakers:

- **Christine Stegling,** Deputy Executive Director, Policy, Advocacy and Knowledge Branch, UNAIDS
- **Ivor Horn,** Chief Health Equity Officer, Google
- **Julitta Onabanjo,** Director, Technical Division, UNFPA
- **Pascale Allotey,** Director, Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research, WHO, and HRP
- **Rajat Khosla,** Director, United Nations UniversityInternational Institute for Global Health