

**Evidence. Voice. Action: Catalysing Change for Gender Equality in Health**

*Gender and Health Hub Virtual Forum 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> December 2023*

**Session 2: Digital Justice and Sexual and Reproductive health and rights**

**Date:** Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Time:** 12:00 pm-1:30 pm **London**/ 3:00pm-4:30pm **Nairobi**/ 8:00 pm – 9:30pm **Malaysia**

**Language:** English plus simultaneous interpretation in French and Spanish

**Organisers:** UNU-IIGH & SRHM

**Description:**

Sustained attention to the role of digital technologies as they affect sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) is a critical concern. Increasingly, available evidence demonstrates how digital technology can have multiple positive impacts on SRHR. It can *expand access to* sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, reaching even the most marginalised, structurally excluded, and hard to reach populations, and those experiencing subversive healthcare services in restrictive policy settings, such as LGBTI populations and sex workers. It can provide information and counselling as well as access to services and products whose availability may be restricted, such as emergency contraception, medical abortion, or transition care.

While SRHR related digital technology holds promise and potential to revolutionise SRH services, the unregulated growth and use of digital innovations can also foreshadow the immense possibilities it holds. It can perpetuate racism, sexism, ableism, or discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and can deepens exclusion, marginalisation, and already existing human rights violations. Marginalised communities, including people living with HIV, sex workers, LGBTIQ people and women living in restricted legal settings for SRHR, can be disproportionately impacted by the collection, surveillance, commercialisation, and misuse of their private and intimate data, especially in criminalised settings.

There is a growing call for the need to apply a social justice and human rights framework in sexual and reproductive health and digital spaces. It requires assessing how digital technologies can advance SRHR instead of impeding it, and what measures need to be taken to safeguard human rights related to SRH, such as those related to privacy, confidentiality, non-discrimination and equality, safety, and security. It includes addressing unjust social structures such as criminalization and inequalities as they affect SRHR in the digital space, and involves adopting mechanisms that ensures legal, social, and health system accountability, applicable to both to State and non-state actors, such as industries and funders, to work within a coherent rights-based framework.

**Objective:**

The webinar aims to bring evidence and policy considerations for a strong call for the adoption of social justice and rights-based framework related to the development, adoption, and implementation of digital technologies for the advancement of SRHR.

**Target audience**

SRHR researchers, policy makers, implementers, funders, academics, human rights defenders, and civil society actors.

**Take Away Messages**

Knowledge on integrating digital justice and rights to address intersecting issues related to SRHR, health, and inequalities considering evolving technology and digital spaces.