



Center for Health, Human Rights and Development



SRHR Movement Building Conversation

(Entebbe 1st – 2nd July 2019)

The Conversation Report

Background

On 1st to 2nd July 2019, CEHURD convened a Conversation on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHRs) Movement Building in Entebbe-Uganda. The Conversation attracted a cross range of over 45 SRHR activists, policy makers, funding partners and other stakeholders - focusing on the need to strengthen a sexual and reproductive health and rights movement in Uganda. The meeting came up with key resolutions and actionable ways forward such as SRHR advocates building consensus on SRHR in Uganda.

The Objectives of the Conversation were:

1. To draw a map of SRHR initiatives in Uganda, get a clear understanding of who doing what, geographical coverage, issues covered and the constituency;
2. To analyse how resistance and backlash to SHRH institutional change efforts manifest in different contexts, on different issues, and at three different levels (macro, meso and micro) and the institutional individual levels, and the forces that are advancing or challenging them;
3. To understand how SHRH activists and social justice actors are currently addressing resistance and backlash and enable collective strategizing on responses including what kinds of collaborations and partnerships are needed to be effective to lobby and engage;
4. To discuss new ways of building new relationships between frontline activists/women human rights defenders and academics, institutional change practitioners that enable the re-crafting of strategies to respond to the real-time opportunities and threats to SRHR; and
5. To determine how we can develop and communicate new ways of working, conceptualise tools, strategies and actions to a broader audience within the country and around the region.



Conversation Methodology:

The Conversation employed a cross-range of participatory methodologies to allow for deeper reflection, learning and action planning. Key among these are: debates, plenary discussions, learning and review of strategies by use of case studies of other movements (the Jesus Movement, LGBTIQA and Sex Work Movements), group input, reading, timeline exercise on the SRHR Movement in Uganda and informal networking.

Major Outcomes of the Conversation:

The Conversation achieved the following outcomes:

- a. A clearer understanding of what a progressive SRHR movement encompasses as well as the necessary steps to take towards building a sustainable and resilient Movement.
- b. A clear understanding of the visible and invisible issues within the SRHR Movement.
- c. An increased level of commitment by SRHR advocates and stakeholders in advancing SRHR rights through the wider SRHR movement.
- d. An agreement on the areas for further exploration and actionable ways forward.



Emerging Issues from the SRHR Movement Building Conversation

The following were the emerging issues from the Conversation:

1. **Clear divide between the Visible and Invisible Issues within SRHR Movement** – Pertinent issues herein are:

a. SRHR Movement works on both Visible (non-controversial, safer issues) and Invisible Issues (highly contested and controversial issues) summarised as thus:

SRHR Category	Visible Issues	Invisible Issues
Sexual Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ STI prevention ▪ Teenage Pregnancy ▪ Gender Roles ▪ Provision of health commodities and consumables (e.g. condoms) ▪ SGBV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contraceptive access to adolescents and young people • Comprehensive abortion services • Mental health arising from sexuality • Sexuality for elderly persons
Sexual Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HIV/AIDS ▪ Puberty ▪ Adolescent SRHR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex work • Same Sex relations & LGBTIQA Rights • Sex re-assignment surgery • Consent • Abortion • Sexuality Education • Sexual pleasure, eroticism and BDSM • Disability and Sexuality • Sexual rights for elderly persons
Reproductive Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maternal and Child Health ▪ FGM ▪ Reproductive health diseases (e.g. prostate and cervical cancer) ▪ HIV/AIDS ▪ Puberty ▪ Menstrual Health Hygiene Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Menopause • Infertility (male and female) • Reproductive Health Hygiene • Safe abortion services (PAC, CAC and SAC)
Reproductive Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family Planning / Birth Control ▪ HIV/AIDS ▪ VCT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to marry and found a partner • Marital Rape • Virginity • Reproductive Rights of PWDs and Senior Citizens

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- b. While most actors are working on the less controversial “Visible Issues”; there is need to investigate why SRHR actors fear working on the “Invisible Issues”.
 - c. Its paramount to establish who supports which work under the invisible issues.
 - d. At what point do actors intersect between the invisible and visible issues? And is this intersection locally driven by the SRHR actors in Uganda or by local contexts and circumstances or its donor driven?
- 2. Indicators of Progress for Movement Building** – Pertinent issues herein are:
- a. Developing indicators of progress and measuring towards them.
- 3. Positionality within the SRHR Movement** – Pertinent issues herein are:
- a. Identifying who is doing what, what their constituencies are and where they are working.
 - b. Who maps out, who is doing what and where are they working?
 - c. How is the work that all actors do interlinked? Where is that intersection and who monitors that interaction?
 - d. How are the target constituencies connected?
 - e. Do the target constituencies connect the work of various actors within the SRHR Movement?
 - f. What can we learn from SRHR Champions? How can we get them back on board (for those that fell off the rails)?
 - g. What lessons can the wider SRHR movement learn from the Feminist Movement, LGBTIQA Movement and Sex Work Movement on what works and what doesn't work in terms of cross-movement organising?



- 4. Funding Dynamics** – Pertinent issues herein are:
- How prepared are SRHR actors to engage with funding partners on the nature of funding?
 - Where is the space and forum to engage funding partners on support towards SRHR in general and the invisible issues in particular?
 - What are the capacities of the SRHR Movement in Uganda to engage with the wider politics of funding?
 - What ways can SRHR actors attract multi-year core support given that movement building is a more protracted process that cannot be done with project financing?
 - How can the opportunities in funding be harnessed? E.g: the opportunities of new funding mechanisms as a response to the Global Gag Rule (e.g: Amplify Change, SHE Decides, etc)?
 - With the possibility of alternate funding mechanisms like the Silicon Valley Technology funds, what is the capacity of the SRHR Movement in Uganda to package its agenda through a Social Enterprise angle?
 - How sustainable is SRHR organising beyond donor funding? Is the work done in the past and present scalable and sustainable?
- 5. Documenting the Journey(s)** – Pertinent issues herein are:
- There are a number of stories of the SRHR Movement and sub-movements both told and untold. So who is documenting the stories? Who is writing the collective story of the wider SRHR Movement?
 - How best can this SRHR Conversation (The Timeline Exercise) be further developed to create an SRHR Movement Story for Uganda? And who is best suited provide leadership on this?



Areas for Further Exploration

Building onto the achievements and key milestones that have been registered over the last 25-50 years of the SRHR Movement in Uganda, participants at the Convening resolved on the following areas for further exploration:

1. **Collective Understanding of SRHR Issues** – This includes:
 - a. Defining a collective understanding of the SRHR issues in Uganda (beyond the narrow legal and moral interpretations). At the moment, SRHR are working in silos and majorly focusing on the non-controversial issues and not making an intersection between the visible and invisible issues. The possibility of intersections ought to be explored.
 - b. Engaging on invisible issues (such as: Abortion, SOGIE, Sex Work, Sexuality and Disability, Consent, Menopause, Sexuality Education, etc) and continuously questioning and asking as SRHR Movement actors why these issues are invisible.
2. **Strengthening Working Together** – There is need to explore:
 - a. Interest in Working Together as a Movement and interrogate whether partners are interested in working together beyond this Conversation, existing areas of interests and linking sub-movement where they belong to. This would require strengthening capacities to undertake cross-movement-work collectively, as well as within the various sub-movements under the wider SRHR movement.
 - b. Strategies – There is need to further explore how best to redefine new modes of working together that includes but not limited to:
 - Working with unusual partners / getting out of the comfort zones
 - Engaging on the Invisible issues within the SRHR Movement
 - Consolidating gains registered (within the visible and invisible issues within the SRHR Movement)
 - Use of unusual strategies in building the SRHR Movement
 - c. Step up engagement on bodily autonomy issues – sex work, SOGIE, abortion, consent, comprehensive sexuality education, etc.
 - d. Develop and adopt Indicators of Progressive SRHR Movement - As a way to strengthen the SRHR Movement; there is need to define:
 - Indicators for SRHR Movement Building (develop them, summarise them, validate as key actors and popularise widely)
 - Clear indicators of a progressive SRHR social movement that informs various stakeholders working towards this.
3. **Nurturing and Sustaining Linkages** – Explore:
 - a. Linking the trajectory of the SRHR Movement with historical contexts and trends as a way to get learnings that inform planning for the future.
 - b. Intergenerational Linkages – Exploring making connections across generations (the young, seasoned, emerging SRHR activists and practitioners).

4. **Sustainability of the SRHR Movement** – Exploration of how to make the SRHR Movement sustainable in terms of: the agendas, managing cross-movement dynamics and tensions, managing transitions of various actors, resourcing and mobilisation. In addition, another area for exploration is the culture of continuous reflection and re-strategising.
5. **Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms as the SRHR Movement (Individual Activists, Organisations, Collectives and Movements)** - Exploration of the possibility of developing a ‘Charter of Principles for SRHR Activists in Uganda’ onto which individual activists subscribe and use to hold themselves as well as each other accountable to.
6. **Scaling up Collaborative Opportunities across Sub-Movements within Wider SRHR Movement** – As SRHR actors, there is need to explore how to scale up collaborations across sectors and issues through: joint information sharing, intergenerational dialogues on SRHR and joint advocacy for upcoming interventions such as: Sexual Offences Bill, National Sexuality Education Framework, Marriage and Divorce Bill, Petition 16, Anti-Homosexuality Act, the School Health Policy and the EAC SRHR Bill among others.
7. **Documenting the SRHR Movement(s) in Uganda** – Exploration of this would be through:
- Situational Analysis / Stakeholder Mapping for SRHR Movement in Uganda – documenting what is happening, the power centres, invisible issues, key actors, etc
 - Documenting within the sub-movements that comprise the wider SRHR Movement
 - Further develop the *SRHR Timeline (Before 2000 to 2019)* done as part of this Convening and explore:
 - Publishing a Book on “*The Genesis of the SRHR Movement in Uganda (1950 – 2019)*”
 - Developing Digital Stories out of the Timeline



Moving Forward and Practical Next Steps

The following were the agreed practical next steps and actionable ways forward:

1. Creating a mailing list to share meeting outcomes and related information towards building a robust SRHR Movement.
2. Carrying it forward through sharing the information from the conversation with the various movements that the participants belong to as well as spaces of engagement and organisations.
3. Sharing various SRHR advocacy interventions, research findings and reports amongst stakeholders.
4. CEHURD to convene stakeholders for a round-table discussion to finalise the SRHR Movement Timeline.
5. CEHURD to share the SRHR Movement Building Conversation Outcomes (Summary Report) outcomes with the participants.





CENTER FOR HEALTH, HUMAN RIGHTS & DEVELOPMENT



Plot 4008, Justice Road,
Canaan Sites, Nakwero,
Gayaza - Kalagi Road.



Tel: +256 414 - 532283,
Toll free - 0800 313 131



info@cehurd.org



www.cehurd.org



CehurdUganda



CehurdUG



Cehurd256