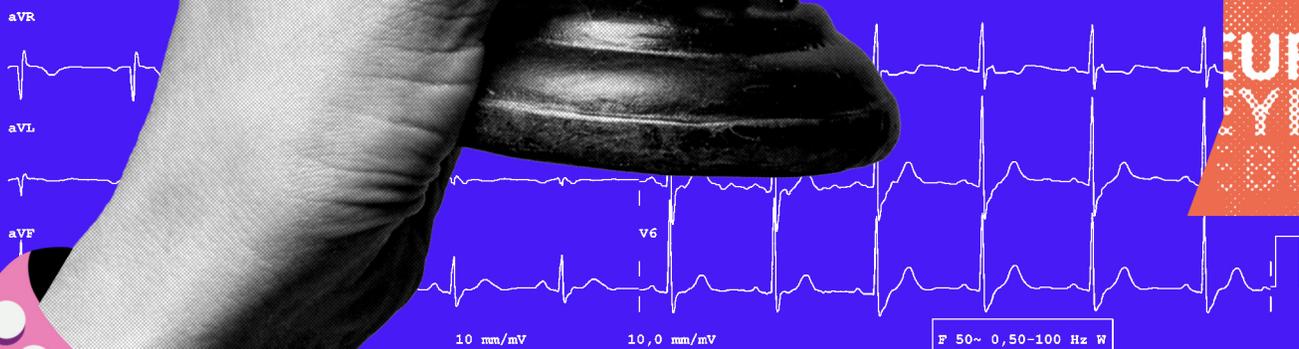
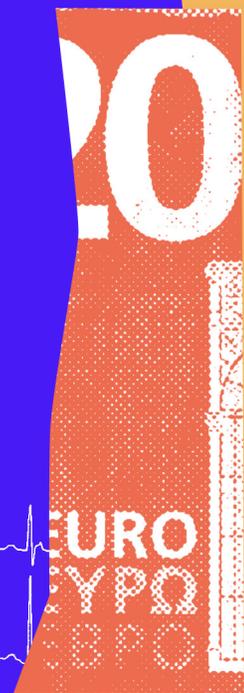




ICPD25
International Conference on
Population and Development



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FROM ICPD25 TO ICPD30: KEEPING THE CAIRO AND NAIROBI COMMITMENTS ALIVE

An Engagement Guide by Young People, for Young People

Acknowledgments

This guide has been developed *by* youth *for* youth. More specifically, in support of and on the instructions of the Secretariat to the High-Level Commission on the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 Follow-up, the guide was developed by CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality, as part of an effort of the Platform for the Future of ICPDⁱ led by young people (also known as The Platform). This guide accompanies “*Rights, Justice, Action: Making Sexual and Reproductive Justice a Reality for All*” a youth-friendly report reflecting on the findings and recommendations of the High-Level Commission on the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 Follow-up. We would like to specifically recognize Nicole Leonetti, the author of this guide, for competently leading its development, and the broader support of Ximena Argüello, Daphné Galloux, Veerle Dams, and Alex Sampaio-Cook, all CHOICE members who supported the process.

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Copy editor: **Kieran Lobo**

Overall design: **Rec Design**

Cover: **Paula Bustamante**

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i <https://icpdplatform.wixsite.com/theplatform>

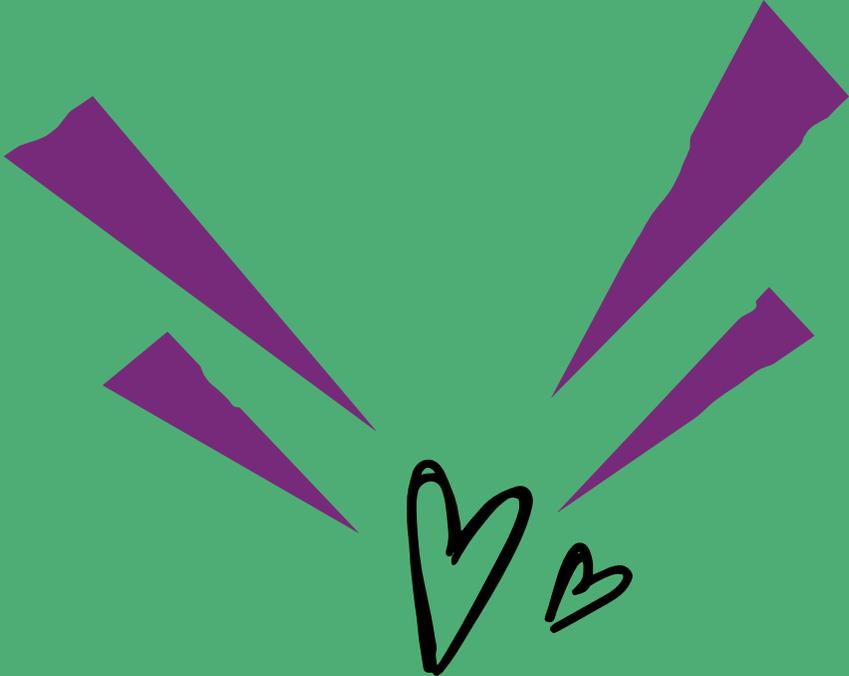
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Introduction & Overview

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Hey there!

It's been a while, and guess what? The 30th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) is approaching, which means we, young people, need to accelerate our action! With ICPD30 coming up, it's time for a new review of ICPD goals and **commitments**. It's also time to reflect on the last few years since ICPD25 to look forward and discuss how we can engage in advancing the goals of the ICPD and the commitments made at the landmark Nairobi Summit, which marked the ICPD's 25th anniversary.

We designed this guide to empower you, a young person, to engage with the broader ICPD agenda. It will provide you with the tools, knowledge, and inspiration needed to contribute to the progress made since the Nairobi Summit and to create a fair, equal, and sustainable future where sexual and reproductive rights are in place for all **youth** in all our diversity. It's time to refresh, reflect, and rev up our engines for some serious ICPD engagement!



This guide accompanies the youth-friendly reportⁱⁱ summarising the key themes and messages from the reports created by the High-Level Commission on the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 follow-up. The Commission was established with the mandate to track the implementation of the Nairobi commitments.

Before we get started, it's important to note that the UN definition of "youth" is used in this guide, meaning people between the ages of 15 and 24.

ii The youth-friendly report titled "Rights, Justice, Action: Making Sexual and Reproductive Justice a Reality for All": <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/publication/youth>

WHAT IS THE ICPD?

The International Conference on Population and Development took place in Cairo in 1994. The discussions led to 179 countries adopting a Programme of Action (PoA), which put human rights at the core of development plans. The ICPD marked a turning point as it recognized the importance of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for sustainable development. The PoA called for universal access to **comprehensive reproductive healthcare, family planning and contraceptive methods**, and the prevention of **sexually transmitted infections**. Since 1994, there have been global reviews of the implementation of the ICPD PoA at five-year intervals. These global reviews take place to keep track of global commitments and ensure accountability while sustaining momentum in working toward a fair, equal, and sustainable world. Regional and national dialogues, such as preparatory events and conferences, take place in the lead-up to the global reviews.

In addition, the Commission on Population and Development (CPD), established by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, monitors the review and assessment of the implementation of the PoA. The CPD meets annually, focusing on a different theme each year to adopt a resolution. It comprises 47 Member States elected by the Economic and Social Council for four years based on geographic distribution.

THE NAIROBI SUMMIT: 25 YEARS SINCE THE LANDMARK ICPD

The Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 took place in November 2019, marking the 25th anniversary of the ICPD. Governments, civil society organizations, business leaders, indigenous people, financial institutions, people with disabilities, youth groups and organizations, and academics, amongst others, came together to reflect on the progress made since 1994 and to discuss future actions to push forward the ICPD agenda. With 8,300 participants from 172 countries, the Nairobi Summit was a massive milestone in advancing the ICPD agenda. Over 80 youth-led and youth-serving partner organizations contributed to developing the Summit programme and global, national, and local commitments. The Summit culminated in governments and other stakeholders presenting over 1,300 commitments and widespread support from participating countries for 12 overarching global commitments, captured in the [Nairobi Statement](#)ⁱⁱⁱ, to achieve the ICPD goals. UNFPA and its partners provided scholarships for more than 2,000 young people, women from grass-roots organizations, traditional leaders, LGBTQI+ populations, people living with HIV, people living with disabilities, people of African descent, indigenous people, and community-led organizations so that they could attend the Summit. The participation of young people worldwide was vital to accelerating the momentum in advancing the ICPD PoA. Now, it's our job to ensure that we sustain this energy and the feeling of global solidarity in Nairobi as we carry forward the ICPD agenda!

iii Nairobi Statement on ICPD25: <https://www.nairobisummitcpd.org/content/icpd25-commitments>

You may ask yourself: How are we monitoring and ensuring these commitments are realized? The High-Level Commission on the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 Follow-up, launched in 2020 for a three-year term, is an independent body that reports on the progress in implementing the commitments made at the Nairobi Summit and fulfilling the promise of the ICPD PoA for everyone, everywhere. The Commission, co-chaired by two former Heads of State, includes 27 members who reflect a wide range of stakeholders, including governments, royalty, civil society, academic, youth and faith-based organizations, the private sector, and others, who provide guidance and recommendations for advancing progress toward creating a world of rights and choices for all. The Commission reports annually on gains and gaps in the progress of the 12 global commitments contained in the Nairobi Statement. Here, you can find the [report from 2021^{iv}](#), and [2022^v](#). You can also find the youth-friendly version of these reports [here^{vi}](#).

In 2024, ICPD30 will mark the 30th anniversary of the ICPD, where governments, civil society, young people, and other groups will reconvene to discuss the progress made on the ICPD agenda and the global commitments outlined at the Nairobi Summit. As the world takes action toward the ICPD30 review process, accountability for implementing the ICPD25 commitments remains key.

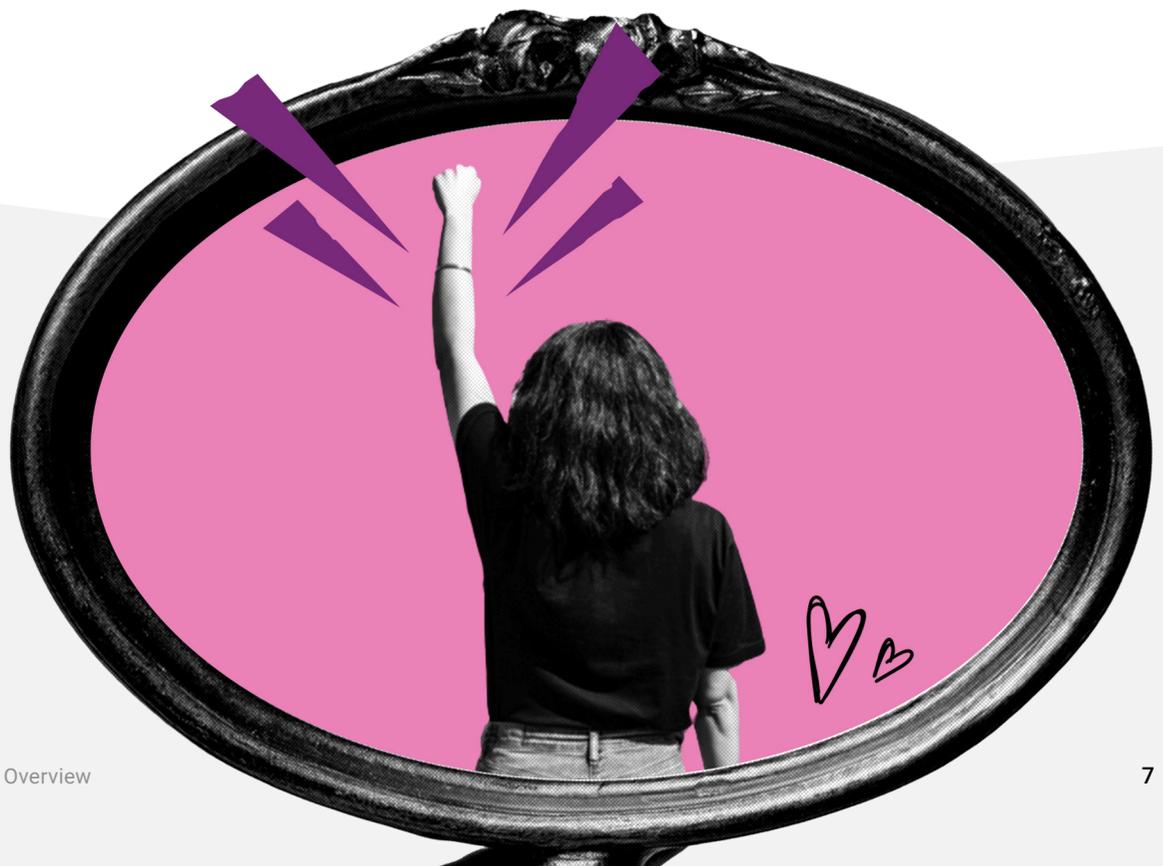
iv *No Exception, No Exclusions: Realizing sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice for all* https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/sites/default/files/NairobiHLC-ENGLISH_0.pdf

v *Sexual and reproductive justice as the vehicle to deliver the Nairobi Summit commitments*: <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/publication/sexual-and-reproductive-justice>

vi *Rights, Justice, Action: Making Sexual and Reproductive Justice a Reality for All*: <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/publication/youth>

A CALL TO YOUTH: NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US!

Calling all young changemakers! We hold the key to building a fair, equal, and sustainable world. As young people, nobody understands our stories, struggles, needs, and desires better than us. Our diversity, unique perspectives, passion, and energy combined can pave the way for positive change in advancing the ICPD agenda and Nairobi commitments, ensuring they meet our sexual reproductive health needs and rights and that we have adequate resources to make free and informed decisions about our sexual health. It's time to hold our governments accountable and inform policymakers to ensure that they hear our stories and consider our perspectives on matters relating to our sexual and reproductive health. Some of the 12 overarching commitments made at the Nairobi Summit focus explicitly on bettering young people's lives, while other commitments are also key for our wellbeing, so our voices are necessary to ensure that these commitments represent the realities of our needs. To this end, the ICPD is a vital space for us to engage in. Here, we can ensure that our voices are heard, our needs met, and that the Nairobi summit commitments become a reality! By empowering the 1.8 billion young people worldwide, we can fulfill the vision and promise of the ICPD PoA and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We have the power to make a difference and create a fair, equal, and sustainable world where young people are free to choose how to live their lives and no one is left behind!



2

Looking back: Updates since Nairobi

YOUTH-FOCUSED GLOBAL COMMITMENTS

The 12 global commitments announced at the Nairobi Summit at ICPD25 involve commitments specifically tailored to our meaningful involvement and participation as young people in the decisions that govern our lives and to ensure that all young people worldwide have access to and can enjoy their sexual and reproductive rights. Three of the 12 commitments in particular pay special attention to young people. Some highlights are provided below on the status of implementing these commitments, which can help us identify gaps, hold our governments accountable, and identify where our support and advocacy as young people are most needed.

4 NAIROBI GLOBAL COMMITMENT



Access for all adolescents and youth, especially girls, to comprehensive and age-responsive information, education, and adolescent-friendly comprehensive, quality, and timely services to be able to make free and informed decisions and choices about their sexuality and reproductive lives, to adequately protect themselves from unintended pregnancies, all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, to facilitate a safe transition into adulthood.

Global Commitment 4 refers to young people's access to education, information, and quality services related to sexual and reproductive health. While governments have made some progress, there is still much work to do! Let's break down some important statistics to assess our current standing:

- ▶ According to the UN, 76% of 115 analyzed countries have supportive laws and regulations guaranteeing full and equal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.¹ Does your country have them?

Globally, certain aspects of SRHR have **enabling laws**:

- ▶ 81% of countries have enabling laws relating to **HIV** and **HPV** services.²
- ▶ 76% of countries have enabling laws around contraceptive services.³ Does your country have these enabling laws?

However, other areas need more attention, as legal barriers present a significant challenge in putting enabling laws in place to ensure full access to SRHR:

- ▶ Only 43% of countries have enabling laws related to abortion.⁴ This means fewer than 50 of the 115 countries analyzed have supportive laws and regulations allowing abortion in certain circumstances. Even where enabling laws exist, societal attitudes, cultural norms, and personal beliefs contribute to the taboo surrounding abortion, making it a complex and sensitive issue to address.
- ▶ Only 66% of countries have laws which enable access to **comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)**.⁴

It is important to note that even when robust legal frameworks exist, their implementation is often lacking, denying young people access to sexual and reproductive health services and restricting their ability to make free and informed decisions about their sexuality and reproductive lives.

8 NAIROBI GLOBAL COMMITMENT



Investing in the education, employment opportunities, and health, including family planning and sexual and reproductive health services, of adolescents and youth, especially girls, so as to fully harness the promises of the **demographic dividend**.

Global Commitment 8 focuses on ensuring that young people are empowered and given the opportunities necessary to participate fully in society. The COVID-19 pandemic slowed the progress made on this commitment, so plenty of work still needs to be done! Let's break down some of the important statistics to track the progress made since 2019:

- ▶ Globally, nearly 23.5% of young people were not in education, employment, or training in 2022⁵, which means almost a quarter of young people were missing out on opportunities for personal development and not acquiring the necessary skills to participate fully in society, impacting their overall well-being. While this statistic represents a slight improvement since 2020, it is still higher than before the pandemic. We still have a long way to go!

Including data on **child marriage** is crucial here, as it deprives a person of their human rights and limits their full participation in society. Given the following numbers, we need to invest in the well-being of women and girls urgently:

- ▶ Globally, 19% of women aged 20-24 were married or in a union before age 18.⁶ While child marriage has declined by 10% in the last five years, the effects of the pandemic slowed this progress due to the closure of schools and pandemic-related travel restrictions, which led to greater barriers to accessing healthcare services.
- ▶ Since the beginning of the pandemic, 10 million more girls are at risk of child marriage over the next 10 years.⁷ Do you know what laws are in place regarding child marriage in your country?

11 NAIROBI GLOBAL COMMITMENT



Committing to the notion that nothing about young people’s health and well-being can be discussed and decided upon without their meaningful involvement and participation (“nothing about us, without us”).

Global Commitment 11 refers to young people’s meaningful participation and involvement in the decisions that govern their lives. This means ensuring their active involvement in all stages of policy-making, including in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of sexual and reproductive health policies and other areas of decision-making. Without young people’s meaningful participation and involvement, programs and policies are less likely to address our specific needs, concerns, and desires effectively. There is a significant lack of young people in political positions representing the interests and perspectives of youth. Statistics from the *Be Seen Be Heard Global Youth Survey* on young people’s political participation illustrate this point:

- ▶ Only 2.8% of Members of Parliament (MPs) worldwide are under 30. This figure is concerning because 50% of the global population is under 30.⁸ What about in your country? Are young people adequately represented in politics?
- ▶ Globally, 76% of under 30-year-olds think politicians do not listen to young people.⁹
- ▶ 69% of countries globally restrict young people from running for office, even when they can vote.¹⁰



Looking forward: Call to Action for You(th) to Engage

Remember, young changemakers, the power to shape our future lies in our hands! Despite progress made since the Nairobi Summit, young people across the globe still fall short of fully accessing and enjoying their sexual reproductive health and rights. As we inch nearer to ICPD30, we must remain actively engaged and take action to uphold the global commitments made at Nairobi. So, how can you(th) engage with the ICPD as we work toward making its goals a reality?

Please keep in mind that not all of these actions apply to every country or every place in a given country. Choose which measures are best suited for your context!

JOIN A YOUTH-LED ORGANIZATION (YLO)

Join forces with other young people who are just as passionate about sustainable development and sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice! Joining a YLO can support your engagement in the ICPD process by giving you a platform for advocacy, specifically by allowing you to engage in national, regional, and global dialogues held as part of the ICPD30 review process. This would ensure your meaningful participation as a young person in a vital advocacy mechanism and include your perspectives in tracking the progress of fulfilling the ICPD agenda. You can also start your own YLO or implement youth-involvement structures in your organization! While doing so may sound daunting, this [booklet](#)^{vii} will walk you through how to set up structures which meaningfully involve young people in an organization. Your own YLO could, in the future, engage in the various dialogues that form part of the ICPD review processes conducted every five years.

vii Youth-Led Structures: A guide on setting up youth involvement structures in organisations, 2021: <https://londonyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Youth-Led-Structures-Booklet.pdf>

HOLD YOUR GOVERNMENTS ACCOUNTABLE

Stay informed about government policies that impact your SRHR and the commitments made under the ICPD agenda and at the Nairobi Summit. Find out [here](https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/commitments)^{viii} what national commitments your government or other local stakeholders made in Nairobi. If your government is not doing enough, especially concerning global commitments 4, 8, and 11, you can write letters to your parliamentarians, sign petitions, organize peaceful protests, and spread the word within your networks. Accountability is the key to change!

STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Activists are increasingly under fire for standing up for our human rights. Their work is directly linked to the goals of the ICPD PoA, and by supporting and defending these brave individuals, we stand up for our – and their – human rights and engage with the ICPD’s mission to create a more just and equal world. You can support human rights defenders by amplifying their stories on social media and sharing their struggles. No one deserves to be silenced, oppressed, or threatened for fighting for what is right, so let’s raise our voices and speak up against any harassment human rights activists may experience!

LISTEN TO OTHER STORIES AND TELL YOURS

For all people and youth in all our diversity to fully access and enjoy their SRHR, we must especially listen to young women and girls, young people, people with disabilities, people with diverse sexual and gender identities, and people with diverse backgrounds. Diversity in voices must be listened to in order to gain an understanding of the needs and desires of youth around the world and how their experiences impact their SRHR. But don’t forget, it goes both ways! Telling your own story is equally as important. When we tell our own story, we can uplift marginalized voices and bring to light the narratives that often go unheard. Raising our voices becomes the most authentic and powerful form of advocacy! When we listen, learn, and deepen our understanding of others’ experiences, we become fierce advocates for a more just, equal, and sustainable world, which aligns with the ICPD’s mission.

viii <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/commitments>

BROWSE THE WEB FOR YOUTH-FRIENDLY RESOURCES

Use online resources such as podcasts, articles, and videos to deepen your knowledge about SRHR and how to advocate for them as a young person. The social media accounts of YLOs have lots of resources and insights, especially for you! For example, CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality's shares news, books, movies, and podcasts related to SRHR. CHOICE has also created a resource hub called *You(th) Do It!*^{ix}, where you can learn about SRHR and how to advocate for them. You can also access resources to educate yourself about international advocacy mechanisms, including ICPD and its different review processes. For example, you can refer to [this document](#)^x for a simplified explanation on the CPD and the ICPD. You can also refer to the report^{xi} accompanying this guide for a detailed description of the key themes and messages that emerged from the Nairobi Summit to keep track of the progress on the global commitments made as we head into ICPD30.

LOCALIZE THE AGENDA AND HIT THAT SHARE BUTTON

Use your social media networks to share posts focusing on local initiatives related to the ICPD agenda and support issues of youth empowerment and SRHR and broader issues surrounding sustainable development. Localizing the ICPD agenda means taking broader themes, such as sustainable development, climate change, and SRHR, from the global to the local level so that young people can engage in ways that directly impact their local communities. By sharing the work of local initiatives and on-ground YLOs, you can raise awareness, educate, and mobilize other youth in your community around the importance of participation in advocacy mechanisms such as ICPD and in all decision-making processes that govern our lives.

ENGAGE IN INTER-GENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

Foster dialogue with your community, peers, friends, and family about the key themes surrounding sustainable development and the ICPD agenda. Encourage respectful discussions that challenge social norms and stereotypes to raise awareness of moving towards a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable future. One of the essential aspects of the ICPD PoA is

ix *You(th) Do It!*: <https://www.youthdoit.org>

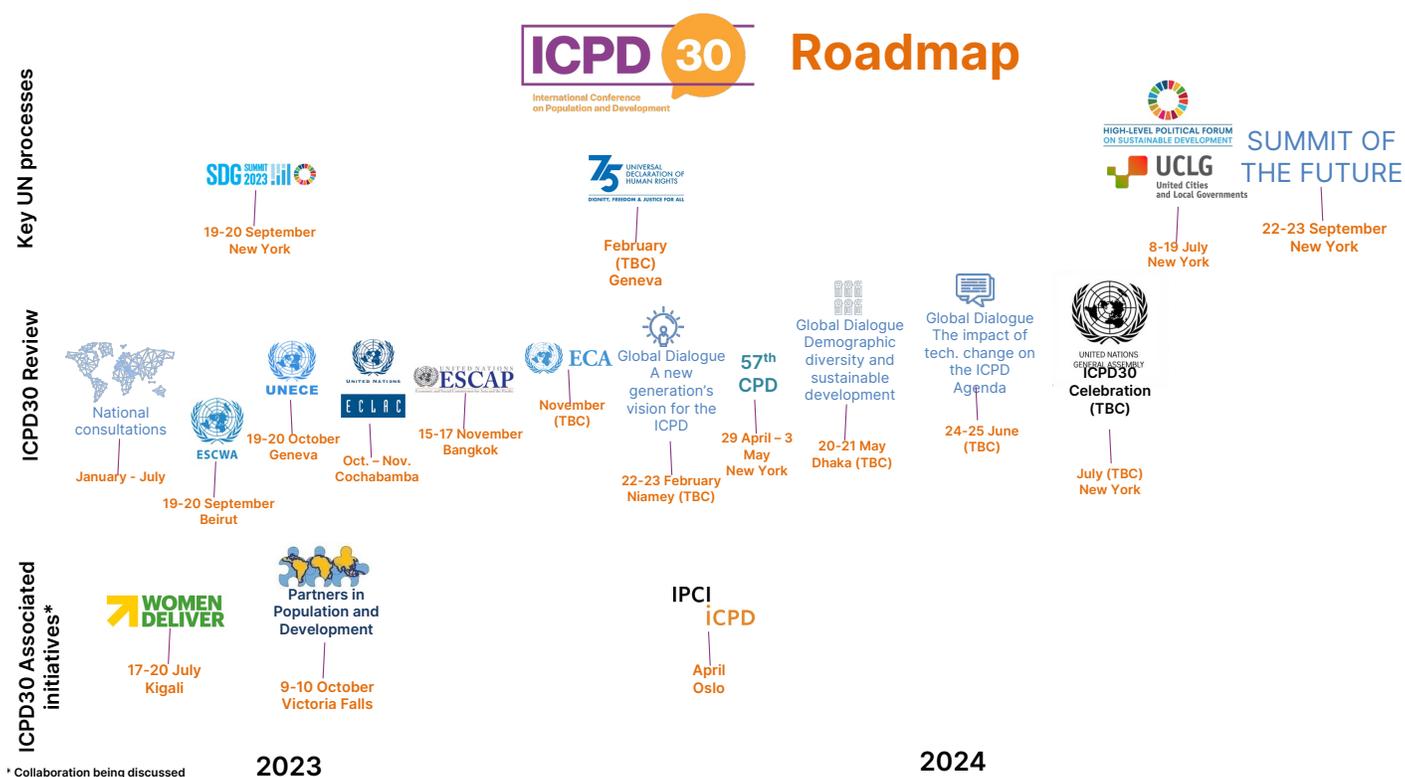
x <https://www.youthdoit.org/assets/Uploads/CHOICE-CPD-Factsheet-1.pdf>

xi *Rights, Justice, Action: Making Sexual and Reproductive Justice a Reality for All*: <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/publication/youth>

the inter-generational nature of its aims and strategies. So, let's tap into the power of engaging in inter-generational dialogue to exchange ideas and sentiments with older adults about collaborating to achieve key commitments of the ICPD agenda and the Nairobi Summit! If you need help kicking off such a discussion, refer to [this document](#)^{xii} as an example of increasing meaningful and respectful family-based communication with your parents and guardians regarding SRHR.

FOLLOW THE ICPD30 ROADMAP

Keep up with the events taking place in the lead-up to ICPD30, and look into which events you can engage in as a young person! Below, you can find a roadmap with events taking place until 2024.



xii https://healtheducationresources.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/unesco_our_talks_manual_a4.pdf

List of Acronyms

- CPD** Commission on Population and Development
- CSE** Comprehensive sexuality education
- HIV** Human immunodeficiency virus
- HPV** Human papillomavirus
- ICPD** International Conference on Population and Development, which took place in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994
- ICPD25** 25th ICPD anniversary
- ICPD30** 30th ICPD anniversary
- MP** Member of Parliament
- PoA** Programme of Action (of the ICPD)
- SRHR** Sexual and reproductive health and rights
- UN** United Nations
- UNFPA** United Nations Population Fund
- YLO** Youth-led organization

Glossary

Child marriage

Any formal marriage or informal union between a child under the age of 18 and an adult or another child.¹¹

Commitment

An agreement or pledge to do something in the future.

Comprehensive reproductive healthcare

Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being in all matters relating to the reproductive system and its functions and processes. Comprehensive reproductive healthcare, therefore, is the organized provision of medical and social care to individuals or a community to ensure that people can look after their reproductive health.¹²

Contraceptive methods

Different mediums which prevent unintended pregnancies, such as oral contraceptive pills, implants, injectables, patches, vaginal rings, Intrauterine devices, condoms, male and female sterilization, etc. Contraception also reduces the need for an unsafe abortion and reduces HIV transmissions from mothers to newborns, which can create more opportunities for women to participate more actively in society, including paid employment.¹³

Demographic dividend

The economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15-64) increases relative to that of the non-working-age (14 and younger, 65 and older).¹⁴

Enabling law

A law that authorizes government ministers or bodies to create detailed rules to accomplish general principles set out in the law.

Family planning

Allows people to attain their desired number of children, if any, and to determine the spacing of their pregnancies. Family planning is achieved through the use of contraceptive methods and the treatment of infertility.¹⁵

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)

A form of sexuality education that gives young people accurate and age-appropriate information about sexuality and their sexual and reproductive health, which is critical for their health and survival.¹⁶

Sexual and reproductive health and rights

A state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to all aspects of sexuality and reproduction, not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Therefore, a positive approach to sexuality and reproduction should recognize the part played by pleasurable sexual relationships, trust, and communication in promoting self-esteem and overall well-being. All individuals have a right to make decisions governing their bodies and access services supporting that right. Achieving sexual and reproductive health relies on realizing sexual and reproductive rights, which are based on the human rights of all individuals.¹⁷

Sexually transmitted infections

An infection transferred through direct sexual contact (oral, anal, vaginal, but also potentially through objects like sex toys).¹⁸

Youth

The UN defines "youth" as people between the ages of 15 and 24, although there is no universally agreed international definition of "youth" or "young people."¹⁹

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