



**World YWCA**

# The Right to Know: Empowering Youth Through Education and Health

## *World YWCA's Best Practices*

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# Presentation Outline

- About World YWCA & Its Bold Goal
- The Imperative on Young Women and Girls
- Shifting the YW Narrative: From Vulnerability to Leadership
- Creating and Sustaining Safe Spaces Models
- CSE and Child Early and Forced Marriage
- Conclusions



# About the World YWCA



- A global movement of 25 million women and girls in 120 countries, and 22,000 communities providing services & engaged in advocacy.
- A unique - faith, women, youth, community and global movement
- Focused on inter-generational leadership, advancing women's rights and building sustainable social justice movement. Health, education, justice and rights central to mission.
- Strong inter-generational leadership with 60% young women under 30 on World YWCA Board.
- Global Goal, as commitment and contribution to SDGs  
*"By 2035, 100 million young women and girls transform power structures to create justice, gender equality, a world without violence and war, through a sustainable YWCA Movement inclusive of all women"*



# Imperative on young women & girls



- Demographic data present and future
- Maternal Mortality trends among adolescents
- HIV and AIDS vulnerability, risk and prevalence
- Education data and transition from secondary and tertiary
- The 15 million girls forced into child, early and forced “marriage”
- Data on unemployment and other economic participation indicators by age and gender
- Emerging role of technology
- Faith, culture and values



## Shifting the Narrative:

### *YW & Adolescent Girls as Informed & Empowered Leaders*

- Transition age from childhood to adulthood, thereby increased responsibility for personal decision making on social issues.
- Biological transitions with increased responsibility require quality information for girls and Young Women to make informed choices
- The indicator of child “marriage” and teenage pregnancy speaks to reality that young people are having sex.
- Girls in marriage and young moms, demands quality SRHR information and services which include sexuality education and family planning
- Peer pressure and social media, requires a robust positive intervention, and not just reaction to mitigate negative consequences.
- Demands a coherent approach from normative level, national policies, approach to services (education, health, counselling etc), community engagement and empowerment of girls and young women, and addressing social norms.



# World YWCA Safe Spaces Model

- Physical space for adolescent girls and young women to gather, meet, dialogue and share information
- A mentor with social skills especially counselling
- Bring in expertise into the space for quality and scientific fact-checks and response to group queries
- Referral capacity to services by government and other civil society organisations
- Organising strategically for engaging with policy makers for appropriate legislation or commitments ie ESA Commitment of Ministers of Health and Education.
- Engaging with faith and cultural leaders on critical issues in language and around values in ways that advances rights.
- Impacts on: ***Information and knowledge, access to services, and changing norms and policies***
- **<http://www.worldywca.org/Resources/YWCA-Publications/YWCA-Safe-Spaces-for-Women-and-Girls-A-Global-Model-for-Change>**



# Child, Early and Forced “Marriage”



- At the heart of this “marriage”, which in essence is child sexual abuse and often rape, a gross form of violence against women and girls, is sexual control and SRHR for adolescent girls.
  - Who has the power, the control and the decision making on SRHR of the adolescent girls.
- Prevention of child “marriage” have strongly centred on issues of access to and retention of girls in school, reducing household poverty, and changing social and cultural norms. The question of sexual abuse, and violation of SRHR is yet to be addressed. What is the place of CSE in this dialogue.
- “Married” Girls and Teen Moms: With the staggering numbers of 15 million a year of “married”, this is a figure to extrapolate for child birth related fistula, maternal mortality among adolescence, unplanned pregnancies. These are girls who often do not have decision making, lack economic capabilities and are socially disempowerment.



# Conclusion & Recommendations



- Scaling Up with Unusual partnerships
- Appropriate Tools for Impact
- Resourcing community innovations
- Measure Impact in Communities
- Ensure accountability on agreed national, regional and global norms





# I end with a An Invitation



## 1. Join World YWCA's by “100 million young women and girls commitment”

- *“We can not bring change by scaling up status quo. We must be bold, daring and transformative”*

## 2. join the campaign to end, early and forced marriage. *Be part of this unstoppable movement with your best resources. It is about health, education, opportunities and well being of adolescent girls.*





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