

# HANDOUT

## Components of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

### Sexual rights

Sexual rights are human rights and include the right of all persons, free of discrimination, coercion, and violence, to:

- achieve the highest attainable standard of sexual health, including access to sexual and reproductive health services
- seek, receive, and impart information related to sexuality
- receive comprehensive, evidence-based, sexuality education<sup>20</sup>
- have their bodily integrity respected
- choose their sexual partner
- decide whether to be sexually active or not
- engage in consensual sexual relations
- choose whether, when, and whom to marry
- enter into marriage with free and full consent and with equality between spouses in and at the dissolution of marriage
- pursue a satisfying, safe, and pleasurable sexual life, free from stigma and discrimination
- make free, informed, and voluntary decisions on their sexuality, sexual orientation, and gender identity

### Reproductive rights

Reproductive rights rest on the recognition of the human rights of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing, and timing of their children, to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of reproductive health. They also include:

- the right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion, and violence
- the right to privacy, confidentiality, respect, and informed consent
- the right to mutually respectful and equitable gender relations

## Sexual health

“A state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.”

Sexual health implies that all people have access to:

- counselling and care related to sexuality, sexual identity, and sexual relationships
- services for the prevention and management of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS,20 and other diseases of the genitourinary system
- psychosexual counselling, and treatment for sexual dysfunction and disorders
- prevention and management of cancers of the reproductive system

## Reproductive health

“Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes.”

Reproductive health implies that all people are able to:

- receive accurate information about the reproductive system and the services needed to maintain reproductive health
- manage menstruation in a hygienic way, in privacy, and with dignity
- access multisectoral services to prevent and respond to intimate partner violence and other forms of gender-based violence
- access safe, effective, affordable, and acceptable methods of contraception of their choice
- access appropriate health-care services to ensure safe and healthy pregnancy and childbirth, and healthy infants
- access safe abortion services, including post-abortion care
- access services for prevention, management, and treatment of infertility