

FORUM: Sustainable Development Commission 2 (SDC2)

QUESTION OF: Measures to delay the age of first pregnancy as a means of improving maternal health

SUBMITTED BY: Sudan

CO-SUBMITTERS: Pakistan, European Union, Human Rights Watch, African Union, Netherlands, South Korea, Russian Federation, ECE, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Andorra, Costa Rica, Papua New Guinea, Maldives, Fiji, Palestine, Mali, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Mauritius, Ukraine, Vietnam, Bahrain, Seychelles

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION,

Recalling goal 3 of the UN Sustainable Goals declaration created at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2012,

Reaffirming its Sustainable Development Goals 3.1 to reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births, and 3.7 ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs,

Confirming the respective indicators 3.1.1 for maternal mortality, and 3.7.2 for adolescent birth rate (aged 15-19 years),

Approving the efforts of the World Health Organization (WHO) manifested in its guideline on preventing early pregnancy and poor reproductive outcomes among adolescents in developing countries and of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) delivered by its work against forced adolescent marriage,

Noting with deep concern that the leading cause of adolescent girls' death in 2016 were maternal conditions, where estimates by the WHO suggest a 10% reduction in child marriage could contribute to a 70% reduction in a country's maternal mortality rate,

Alarmed by the projections by the WHO indicating that the number of adolescent pregnancies will increase globally by 2030,

Deeply concerned that girls may be forced into non-consensual sex, knowing about 20% of girls around the world experience sexual abuse as children and adolescents,

1. Calls upon the UNESCO to aid LEDCs in the management of public schools in rural areas, in order to implement and secure:
 - a) a national curriculum involving a thorough sexual education that explains the physical and mental consequences of pregnancy before the age of eighteen
 - b) annual national examinations by the state to monitor the execution of said new national curriculum
 - c) a training system for sex and health teachers to:
 - i. educate students starting at the age of ten about their bodies and as they get older about puberty and sexual health
 - ii. learn to be a counselor for a student's personal questions and issues
 - iii. teach the value of females in society and recognize them beyond being potential child-bearers and caretakers
 - iv. advise teachers on how to respond to student's needs and disadvantages
 - d) programs in schools which will:
 - i. assist girls in setting up their own educational goals to increase involvement in school and ambition to succeed to help them maintain a positive sense of self-esteem and work toward healthy life goals
 - ii. offer career counseling to help them with the process of career and work planning

through individualized counseling and exercises;

2. Confirms the vital role of medical assistance for child and maternal health and therefore requests the World Health Organization (WHO) to help fund the expansion of and access to medical resources such as but not limited to:
 - a) health care to cover the costs of contraceptives
 - b) medical stations in rural areas well-prepared with medical assistance;
3. Urges the creation and enforcement of policies that protects and ensures access to feminine hygiene products by:
 - a) reminding the period tax on all products related to women's hygiene products in order to lessen the causes of period poverty
 - b) requesting that schools provide access to women's hygiene products to the girls in attendance allowing women to obtain contraceptives without the need of the permission of family or their partner;
4. Emphasizes the education of negative health impacts of adolescent pregnancies and child marriage to be provided to parental figures and other adults, and that the value of girl children to both their family and society must be expanded beyond their definition as potential child-bearers and caretakers through ways such as but not limited to:
 - a) leaders at all levels of the society speaking out and acting against patterns of gender discrimination, based on preference for sons wherever such a pattern exists
 - b) actively involving voluntary youth in the planning, implementation and evaluation of development activities that have a direct impact on their daily lives
 - c) newspapers and radio broadcasts in order to reach those in the areas which do not have any access to the internet;
5. Invites LEDCs to eliminate existing inequities and barriers to women in the workforce and women's participation in policy-making and implementation for providing young girls with life options involving a financial income in the future outside giving birth through actions such as but not limited to:
 - a) arranging gender experts who will work with women on the ground for the establishment of more favourable climates for eliminating social, cultural, political and economic discrimination against women in the workforce and achieving balance between population
 - b) directing New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)'s investments towards ensuring right working conditions and remuneration for women in all sectors and businesses by expanding the NEPAD's agri-business program to industrial level;
6. Reminds all member states to recognize that the UN defined age of adulthood is eighteen and that child marriage is a largely contributing factor to early pregnancy, therefore suggests:
 - a) that all Member States contribute to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) which focuses on the prevention of child marriage and female genital mutilation as well as the elimination of maternal fatalities so as to aid its better implementation worldwide
 - b) create internship positions for females coming out of school to promote the pursuit of a career as opposed to marriage
 - c) that all Member States sign and ratify the International Convention on the right of the child and specifically implement Article 15 which secures children's rights to free will and freedom by strengthening or implementing national laws on child marriage in efforts to prevent early pregnancies, risking the lives of the child and mother.