

Voluntary National Review 2023 | Contribution civil society groups

1. Name of your organisation
Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Working Group of Be-cause Health ¹
2. Societal group (business, trade unions, NGOs, science and research, inclusive society, others)
Multi-stakeholder group within Be-cause Health, Belgium's platform for international health
3. Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are you working on, which ones have you already committed to? → Give preference to actions related to different Ps of the 2030 Agenda, which are transformative and inspiring for other organisations at the international level. → Prefer a synthetic presentation and references to web pages or online documents for further information.
The SRHR WG is dedicated to monitor and support Belgium's international cooperation on SRHR and hence the realization of SDGs 3.1, 3.3, 3.7, 5.2., 5.3, 5.6. It does so through systematic exchange, learning and fostering of collaboration of Belgium's stakeholders in SRHR and by building capacity (e.g. through Body&Rights.be , e-learning on sexual and reproductive health and rights).
4. What are the themes/SDGs on which Belgium should focus its efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda? → Given your assessment of the situation, studies, indicators, etc., what are the most important points for Belgium?
Half of all pregnancies in the world are unintended, and 60% of these end in safe or unsafe abortions. 257 million women in the world would like to prevent or delay pregnancy, but have no access to modern contraceptives. Only 56% of all women can make their own decisions about the use of sexual and reproductive health services. ² Yearly, about 295,000 women die during pregnancy or delivery. During the Covid-19 pandemic sexual and gender-based violence increased ³ , and countries reported interrupted treatment of people living with HIV ⁴ . Climate change-induced emergencies interrupt people's access to SRH services and increase their risk to sexual and gender-based violence, including harmful traditional practices like FGM and early marriage ⁵ . These figures demonstrate the huge challenges in realizing universal access to SRHR for all by 2030. Belgium is committed to advance SRHR internationally with SRHR as a priority in its health and gender strategy and its law on development cooperation. These commitments should be reflected in funding, programs and human resources.
5. What issues require changes at the European/international level to implement the 2030 Agenda? → In the light of your assessment of the situation, studies, indicators, etc.,
SRHR, including gender-based violence faces growing legal and political opposition from transnational anti-gender movements that undermine human rights ⁶ . Belgium should be vigilant in countering this opposition, collaborating with like-minded countries in multilateral and European fora, and build alliances across continents and with civil society, to make sure these movements do not undermine agreements.
6. What are the key messages you would like to see in the Voluntary National Review?
Belgium should continue its support for a progressive SRHR agenda and uphold its political and financial support for SRHR through multilateral and bilateral cooperation with/and in LMICs, by investing in health systems strengthening, by integrating family planning and HIV prevention and treatment in universal health coverage, providing youth friendly services for adolescents and investing

¹ This contribution in no way binds the members of Be-cause health.

² https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/EN_SWP22_report_0.pdf

³ [The Shadow Pandemic: Violence against women during COVID-19 | UN Women – Headquarters](#)

⁴ [countries-reporting-on-arv-disruptions-due-to-covid-19-june-2020.png \(1300x975\) \(who.int\)](#)

⁵ [IPPF position paper: The climate crisis and sexual and reproductive health and rights | IPPF](#)

⁶ [The transnational anti-gender movement in Europe | Gunda-Werner-Institut | Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung \(gwi-boell.de\)](#)

in SRHR in emergencies. This without leaving marginalized communities behind, like women, LGBTQI+ and young people and persons with disabilities.