

Human Rights Council - 46th Session
Outcome of the Universal Periodic Review – Maldives
Action Canada for Population and Development

Thank you, President.

Action Canada makes this statement on behalf of the Sexual Rights Initiative and a collective of young people in the Maldives.

Firstly, we welcome the finalisation of the UPR process as well as the commitments made by the State to improve education and access to sexual and reproductive health services. However, these commitments are too often limited to just that - commitments on paper. In reality, young people, and especially young women continue to be excluded from access to essential sexual and reproductive health education, information, and services.

Every year, over 6000 children, students, leave school with no education or access to information about their bodies, sex and relationships. These gaps in our education system, not only affect their right to bodily autonomy and mental and physical wellbeing, but also leave them ill equipped in the face of violence and abuse. This silence on issues that matter to young people, by the State, by our system, is terrifying and too often life threatening.

We would like to reiterate the calls to strengthen policies and platforms to ensure access to sexual reproductive health information and services for youth, develop a plan and allocate budgets to set up sexual and reproductive health clinics in existing health centers and hospitals in every atoll to provide easy access to sexual and reproductive health education, information, and services. We further call on the government of the Maldives to strengthen existing healthcare systems to address any discrimination in the provision of sexual and reproductive health services and remove all barriers that restrict women's rights to bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health.