

Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR)



**YEARS OF ADVANCING
AND DEFENDING
SEXUAL AND
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
AND RIGHTS FOR ALL!**

Reproducti
Justice
MOBiliser

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WOMEN'S
GLOBAL NETWORK
FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

30

YEARS OF
ADVANCING AND DEFENDING
SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
AND RIGHTS FOR ALL!

Dear Friends and Partners,

Greetings!

I am pleased to introduce you to this publication, which was prepared to celebrate WGNRR's work in advancing and defending sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all peoples for the past 30 years! It has been an exciting journey, affirming our identity as a global network that builds and strengthens movements for SRHR and justice.



As a Southern-based global, member-driven network, we have flourished because of our endeavour to support radical and controversial issues to the benefit of our Southern membership. Through the years, we have provided and supported important spaces for building solidarity on issues that affect women, girls and other marginalised groups in a context of rising conservatism.

We thank our members for their tireless effort, dedication and commitment in working with us over the last 30 years in advancing SRHR for all. The work we undertake would not have been possible without the support of donors and partners to expand opportunities for women, youth, and marginalised communities.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Felistah Mbithe'. The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract, with overlapping loops and lines.

Felistah Mbithe

WGNRR Board Chairperson

Congratulations to WGNRR on this milestone anniversary! For the past 30 years, the Network has been a passionate advocate and leader in the global struggle for reproductive and sexual health rights and justice. This is a time to celebrate the accomplishments of WGNRR, its members and partners. And it is a time to appreciate and re-affirm the Network's commitment to promoting grassroots and community-based leadership. The Network has been dedicated to ensuring that the voices of those most directly affected by oppressive policies will ring out in policy debates, and be in the forefront of the movement. It has been an honor to work with WGNRR and so many of you in this struggle. Together we are bending the arc of history towards reproductive justice.



In solidarity and sisterhood,

Marlene Gerber Fried

Marlene Gerber Fried

Former WGNRR Board Member

Professor and Faculty Director,

Civil Liberties and Public Policy Program,
Hampshire College

Founding President and current Board Member,
National Network of Abortion Funds

WHAT IS THE WOMEN'S GLOBAL NETWORK FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS?

"We advocate and campaign for the realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all peoples, with a particular focus on the most marginalised."

The Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR) is a Southern-based global network of organisations and individuals whose work is founded on the belief that Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) is a human right that must be respected, promoted and fulfilled.

Achieving SRHR for all requires a transformative change. Thus, WGNRR adopts a feminist, rights-based and social justice approach to its work.

WGNRR facilitates strategic partnerships among members and allies, especially grassroots organisations, to support a global community for building knowledge, developing capacity, sharing resources, and strengthening advocacy and campaigning efforts on critical global SRHR and justice issues.

WGNRR fulfils a critical role in ensuring that global civil society advocacy efforts are informed by local and national SRHR priorities, as well as bringing a global SRHR perspective to national and regional advocacy and campaigning.

WGNRR is guided by the principles of non-discrimination, respect, equality, transparency, accountability and inclusivity. It is committed to equality for all genders and values diversity, is member-focused; self-reflective and independent of political, governmental and religious institutions.

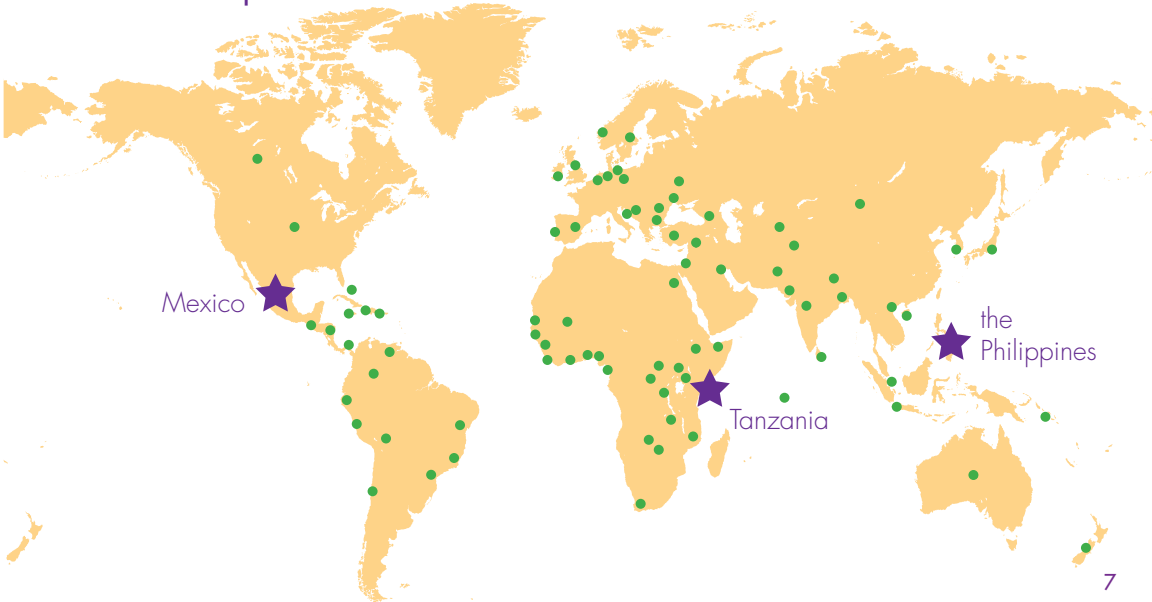
WGNRR defines SRHR to include a set of interrelated, universal, indivisible, and inalienable human rights accompanied by the necessary socio-economic conditions for them to be realised. Full access to SRHR enables all peoples to have safe and fulfilling sexual lives, to freely express their gender identity and sexual orientation, to access comprehensive information and services, and to freely decide if, when, how often and with whom to have children; free from coercion and violence. This includes the right of access to safe, legal and voluntary abortion.



1,000 members
based in 85 countries

UN Economic and Social Council
status in 2012

decentralised operations with staff based in:



HOW DO WE WORK WITH MEMBERS AND PARTNERS?

Valuing alliances and partnerships

WGNRR recognises the value of alliances and partnerships in the SRHR struggle. Collaboration with organisations and networks who share the same goals ensures resources are utilised to their maximum potential, creates a community of practice and experts, and avoids duplication of work. Most importantly, collaboration brings together SRHR advocates that strengthen advocacy and campaigns.

Currently, WGNRR develops strategic alliances and partnerships with a range of regional and global SRHR networks including:



International Community of Women
Living with HIV/AIDS



Women Human Rights Defenders
International Coalition
Defending Women Defending Rights

عوائق زیرِ اشرام مسام قوانین
Women Living Under Muslim Laws
النساء في ظل قوانين المسلمين
Femmes sous lois musulmanes



Asia Pacific
Alliance



WGNRR has established a partnership with a research institution – the International Center for Reproductive Health, University of Ghent – to facilitate knowledge management on SRHR, and to promote SHRH research as an advocacy tool.

WGNRR's approach to working with its members and strategic partners is founded on:

Empowerment: WGNRR contributes to the creation of enabling environments so that members and allies empower themselves to take actions based on their own knowledge, experiences and context

Grassroots and community-led: WGNRR's work is grounded on the realities of grassroots and communities.

Partnership: WGNRR works in partnership with members and allies for effective campaigning and joint advocacy efforts towards achieving shared goals- holding governments and policy makers accountable to their global commitments and human rights obligations. WGNRR seeks to complement, not duplicate, the work of national and regional SRHR networks.

Working with national SRHR networks

The diversity of issues relating to SRHR globally makes it hard to get regional consensus on priority issues and to gain support from local organisations on specific campaigns, as they each have their own objectives and priorities. WGNRR works with national SRHR networks, and establishes new ones where they do not exist, and strengthening relationships for regional/global actions.

Participatory and member-driven

To better reach and consolidate its membership, WGNRR maximises its use of information technology. WGNRR and its members share information and campaign updates through the monthly e-newsletters (WGNRR Speaks Up!), and social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Additionally, WGNRR has an online database for its members to enhance outreach and strengthen networking.

SRHR FROM A HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE

Human rights offer SRHR advocates a stronger framework for advocacy, a system for reporting abuses and gaining legal redress.

Reproductive rights were affirmed as human rights at the ICPD in 1994 and since then, SRHR has been referenced as basic human rights in a regional human rights treaty (Maputo Protocol) and by the international human rights bodies such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Yet despite these references, mechanisms set up to monitor States' recognition of human rights obligations have not given the same emphasis to SRHR as afforded to other human rights.

WGNRR uses the human rights framework to promote SRHR and achieve its programmatic goals. While continuing to use the range of international treaties and conventions to hold governments accountable, WGNRR sees human rights treaties and monitoring bodies as important legally binding mechanisms to report SRHR violations and to gain recognition and justice for those whose rights are denied. This includes addressing and interpreting the denial of SRHR services, such as access to contraceptives or access to safe and legal abortion, as Violence against Women and other human rights violations recognised in international human rights treaties.

WGNRR developed and disseminated advocacy tools on using HR frameworks for SRHR issues and continuously builds its capacity, as well as its members', to use HR mechanisms in achieving SRHR and enhance protection strategies for SRHR advocates.

Reproductive rights embrace certain human rights that are already recognised in national laws, international laws and international human rights documents and other consensus documents. These rights rest on the recognition of the basic rights of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. It also includes the right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence, as expressed in human rights documents.
-ICPD Programme of Action

Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs)

WGNRR promotes SRHR activists and defenders as WHRDs, and strengthens strategic relationships with the HR community for the recognition of SRHR as human rights. WGNRR is part of the Executive Committee of the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition (WHRD IC), a global resource and advocacy network for the protection and support of women human rights defenders worldwide.



30 YEARS OF WGNRR

WGNRR is founded at the 4th International Women and Health Meeting (IWHM) in Amsterdam. Participants, alarmed by growing population control rhetoric and "right to life" movements, agreed that women needed a way to connect and mobilise to defend women's reproductive rights.

WGNRR organises its first members' meeting in Manila.

WGNRR adopts a reproductive justice framework linking access to reproductive rights with socio-economic contexts. It was also during this year when for the very first time, the issue of the right of access to safe and legal abortion was openly addressed through its May 28 Call for Action.

WGNRR was closely involved in the development of the Programme of Action for the Women's World Conference in Beijing—pushing for women's health issues.

Interest and focus on reproductive rights begins to wane after Cairo. To counter this, WGNRR holds the 1996 Regional Members' Meeting in Amsterdam.



1984

1989

1994

1996

May 28th is established as the International Day of Action on Women's Health and the day for the annual Call for Action (C4A). May 28th is now internationally renowned and recognised by governments and women and health groups. The first C4A was the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Campaign, in cooperation with the Latin America and Caribbean Women's Health Network (LACWHN).



WGNRR plays a key role at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). As a member of the Women Alliance, WGNRR helped build a broad and strong voice for SRHR organisations at the conference. Ahead of the ICPD and Beijing Conferences, WGNRR co-organised the "Reinforcing Reproductive Rights Conference" (India, 1993).

WGNRR campaign to stop the research on anti-fertility vaccines in 1993 becomes the International Campaign Against Population Control and Abusive, Hazardous Contraceptive. In 1995, more than 400 groups from 39 countries joined the call and The World Health Organisation reported receiving 2000 postcards from WGNRR's International Postcard Action.

The Millennium Development Goals were seen as a step forward in terms of reproductive rights achievements.

"Women, Population and Public Health" was established to re-address these issues in the light of Structural Adjustment and gradual privatisation.

1999

Development Goals
up backwards
reproductive rights

on, Environment
with Corner House,
address population
of globalisation, the
ent Programs and the
on of healthcare.

The Network decides to relocate to the Global South in order to be more responsive to the needs of its members. Members also decide that WGNRR should work more at the regional level and that a separate Dutch and International Board should be replaced with an International Board, elected by members, as a sole permanent body. WGNRR's transition process concluded in 2009.

The Women's Access to Health Campaign (WAHC) is launched with the People's Health Movement, to rally global network membership behind the call on governments to take responsibility for women's health.

2004

WGNRR creates tools and methods to make MDG a useful framework for SRHR advocacy.

WGNRR launches the 2006-2009 Strategic Plan which introduces Regional Consultation Meetings (RCM) instead of General Assemblies. Succeeding RCMs were conducted in India (2005), Kenya (2007), Nicaragua (2007) and South Africa (2008). WGNRR facilitates members' participation in international events such as the World Social Forum (2007) and the AWID Conference (2008).



WGNRR starts to engage in the post2014/15 processes to push for a strong position and holistic definition of SRHR in a post-2015 development framework.

2009

The September 28 Global Day of Action for Access to Safe and Legal Abortion is launched

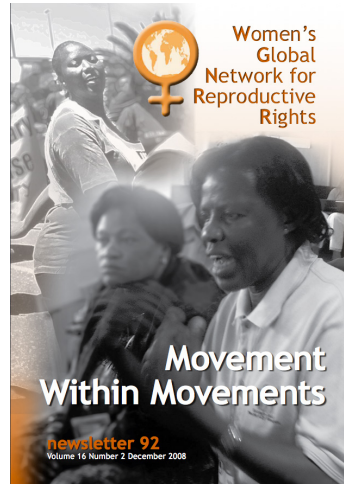
WGNRR establishes the Abortion Advocacy and Campaign Project in Nepal, Tanzania, Nigeria, Pakistan and Malaysia.

WGNRR launches a new 3-year Strategic Plan emphasising the use of human rights framework for achieving its programmatic goals.

2014

WGNRR documents and provides support with technical advice to members on cases of sexual and reproductive rights violations for a report submitted to the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa.

WGNRR is actively involved in the ICPD and other post2014/15 processes, including the Bali Youth Forum.



SRHR IN THE “WORLD WE WANT”: FRAMING THE POST 2014/15 AGENDA

The inclusion of SRHR in the post2014/15 agenda is central to achieving social justice, gender equality and equity, and sustainable development.

WGNRR engages in the post-2014/15 processes to push for a strong position and holistic definition of SRHR in a post-2014/15 development framework, ensuring that women’s SRHR is central to the discussion and is approached from a feminist and human rights perspective.

WGNRR is an active member of several platforms and networks of regional and global SRHR actors and it is through these spaces that WGNRR is able to collaborate with main international and regional civil society actors and at the same time, reach out to members to support their participation in the post-2014/15 process. WGNRR has the unique opportunity to ensure that grassroots voices resonate throughout the discussion and outcome documents. It facilitates the flow of information, identifies opportunities for civil society engagement and enables the attendance of members and allies through its ECOSOC status. In addition, WGNRR provides capacity development sessions for grassroots members to articulate SRHR demands.

The current definitions of SRHR- in the MDGs and within the ICPD- are very limited, which has major implications upon women’s sexualities and agencies, as well as that of young people and people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. SRHR should go beyond “maternal healthcare” and “reproductive health” but must cover a broader range of issues such as pleasure, access to contraceptives, women’s empowerment, equality, sexual orientations and gender identities and abortion rights.



Supporting women and young people as advocates and leaders remains a core goal of WGNRR activities. WGNRR aims to ensure that majority of women and youth are present in all its events, and also supports intergeneration skills and knowledge sharing with partner organisations and allies.

WGNRR's PROGRAMMATIC GOALS

SEXUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL

WGNRR advocates for the recognition of sexual rights as human rights and for its inclusion in the post-2014/2015 development framework. WGNRR works to achieve safe and pleasurable sex for everyone with particular focus on marginalised communities such as women living with disabilities, young people, women living with HIV, sex workers and people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities among others.

WGNRR advocates to highlight State obligations to uphold sexual rights. WGNRR monitors violations of sexual rights all over the world and with partners and allies, mobilise international support in defense of sexual rights. WGNRR raises awareness and capacitates members to better understand and respond to such violations.





SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Youth sexual and reproductive health services must include access to safe abortion; are comprehensive, affordable, needs and rights-based, accessible, acceptable, confidential and free from parental or spousal consent.

WGNRR ensures full integration of a youth perspective and youth-specific issues into all its activities. WGNRR's work specifically addresses the cultural, social, economic and political barriers that young people face in accessing their SRHR. WGNRR advocates for equal access to rights-based, youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services and comprehensive sexuality education, and the meaningful leadership and engagement of young people in driving their own futures.

WGNRR developed a youth policy in consultation with youth members and youth groups to reflect WGNRR's commitment to youth leadership and solidarity with youth movements. WGNRR also decided to include two youth members in its Board as a significant step towards cross-and inter-generational learning and solidarity. To support youth activists and to encourage an exchange of knowledge, WGNRR runs an internship programme at the Manila office.

ACCESS TO SAFE AND LEGAL ABORTION AS A HUMAN RIGHT

WGNRR strongly advocates for access to safe abortion alongside access to contraceptives. Whilst access to contraceptives may reduce the need for abortion, women will face unplanned pregnancies due to contraceptive failure, sexual violence and unplanned or unwanted sexual experiences. Access to safe abortion must be part of universal reproductive health services and recognised as human right.

Access to safe and legal abortion accompanied by accurate information and affordable, quality and friendly services, enable women and young people to have full control over their bodies and their fertility. WGNRR believes that any effort to curb maternal mortality and morbidity will be fruitless without addressing the issue of abortion. Together with members and allies, WGNRR defends existing legislation and its implementation, opposes restrictive laws and policies, challenges social stigma and discrimination, and advocates for the decriminalisation of abortion worldwide. WGNRR also develops capacity of grassroots organisations for safe abortion advocacy.

The September 28 Global Day of Action for Access to Safe and Legal Abortion



In 2011, September 28 was launched as the Global Day of Action for Access to Safe and Legal Abortion drawing on two decades of campaigning experience in Latin America and the Caribbean. The global mobilisation calls for an end to discrimination of women and girls, end stigma around abortion, and to demand governments to uphold, protect and fulfil women's right to safe and legal abortion. In 2013, mobilisations took place in 60 countries and received significant mainstream media attention.



WGNRR is a member of an advisory committee of the International Campaign

for Women's Right to Safe Abortion which in collaboration with global and regional networks and organisations also actively promotes the September 28 Global Day of Action.



ACCESS TO CONTRACEPTIVES

WGNRR advocates for the availability of a full range of contraceptives, particularly women-centric contraceptives, and advocates for voluntary, rights-based contraceptive services as a human right.

Contraceptives are important in preventing pregnancy, preventing the spread of STIs and HIV and allows for safe enjoyable sex for everyone. But while there has been recognition of the need to provide contraceptives, universal access- where women are able to choose and easily access the contraceptive methods that meet their own needs- remains a challenge.

WGNRR advocates against forced sterilisation and population control strategies. WGNRR participates in the review process for ICPD +20, facilitating inputs from grassroots member organisations. The Network also participates in events, organises workshops on access to contraceptives as a human right, and builds solidarity with women and HIV and AIDS movements.

september 28
GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION FOR ACCESS TO SAFE AND LEGAL ABORTION

sept 28
Global Day of Action
WOMEN'S RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL FOR SAFE ABORTION

backstreet black denied health
market women's power parental
condemned safe legal abortion consent
quack doctor safe legal abortion wrong dosage
incest confidence abortion service frustration
prejudice judgement consideration my decision ostracized suffering
unsanitary my decision control catheter disability hand destiny forced pregnancy
excommunicated responsibility my decision support care freedom friendly women's reproductive justice
depression support confidentiality my health care service open harmony light
persecuted imprisoned frustration planned militia my choice my life
haemorrhage motherhood false pills abortion harmony care
human rights abuse suboptimal safety abortion wanted transparency my choice
condemned pregnancy performed care open affordable choice of partner
infertility peace coverage timely open confidence
harmony depression measures
anguish guilt women's legal
friendly
fistula

**MY BODY, MY LIFE,
MY RIGHT TO DECIDE!**

WOMEN'S RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL FOR SAFE ABORTION
WGNRR

28
GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION FOR ACCESS TO SAFE AND LEGAL ABORTION



HOW IS WGNRR FUNDED?

WGNRR would not have been able to undertake the work necessary to achieve what has been noted in this publication without the support it has received over the last 30 years.

WGNRR's first donor was the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has received funding from a range of donor agencies and charities including Oxfam Novib, Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO), and the Safe Abortion Action Fund (SAAF).

WGNRR aims to diversify its funding to reflect the Network's global nature and has developed new funding strategies to continue its work despite the challenges in the funding environment for SRHR organisations. WGNRR initiates joint fundraising with members and partners for national, regional and global activities and over the last few years.

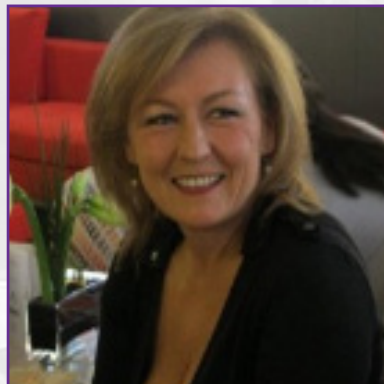


Ministry of Foreign Affairs



WGNRR - MOVING FORWARD

With over 30 years' experience, WGNRR has significantly contributed to the global efforts to achieve SRHR for all peoples.



WGNRR remains the only global SRHR network of individuals and organisations providing a unique opportunity to connect advocates around the world.

WGNRR's unique global position and ability to connect and mobilise grassroots members is recognised by advocates, policy makers and donors around the world. WGNRR is now recognised as a Southern-based, Southern-led feminist SRHR organisation and we will continue to decentralise and regionalise operations to better reach out to members and more effectively bring issues from the grassroots to regional and global policy levels. The impact of our work is dependent on a collective effort from WGNRR staff and board, the staff and volunteers of our member organisations, together with individuals who share a commitment to achieve SRHR for all peoples.

Over the last three decades, WGNRR has redefined itself and changed strategic priorities to better respond to the needs of members, align with developments in the global women's movement, and respond to the changing political and socio-economic contexts which impact SRHR. From addressing population control discourse during the 1970s-1980s and reframing the issue of reproductive rights as an issue of social justice,

WGNRR is now also focused on developing capacity and strategy in order to respond to the challenges of achieving SRHR from a both feminist and human rights perspective with particular focus on marginalised women and girls. We will continue to monitor new developments in SRHR such as assisted reproductive technologies and surrogacy and the feminisation of HIV infection rates and the need for women-centric services, and develop responses in consultation with members and our strategic partners.

The ongoing failure of governments to meet international agreed targets for SRHR within ICPD and MDGs and the limited opportunities for challenging such failures highlight the ongoing need for global SRHR networks such as WGNRR.

WGNRR will continue to defend what have been achieved at the ICPD and within the human rights treaties and monitor and respond to violations of SRHR around the world. We will remain vigilant in the face of rising religious, political and economic extremisms, which limit SRHR. We will continue to advance critical SRHR issues such as access to abortion, young peoples' access to contraceptives and youth-focused comprehensive sexuality education and demand access to safe and satisfying sex lives for everyone.

In solidarity,



Kathy Mulville
Executive Director

The WGNRR staff and Board Members would like to thank those who have been with us throughout the years: former staff and Board Members, volunteers, and interns. Much of the work undertaken by WGNRR for the past 30 years, would not have been made possible, if not for the passion, commitment and tireless efforts of these individuals.

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WOMEN'S
GLOBAL NETWORK
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Advancing and Defending Women's SRHR for 30 Years!

WGNRR