WHAT IS SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH?

Sexual and reproductive health means a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality and the reproductive system and processes.

The right to the highest attainable standard of health, including SRH, requires all women and girls to be able to control their health and fertility, free from coercion and with full and informed consent.

WHAT RIGHTS ARE GUARANTEED BY THE MAPUTO PROTOCOL?

According to the Maputo Protocol, every woman has the right to:

**DETERMINE**
whether to have children, and the number and spacing of children

**CHOOSE**
any method of contraception

**ACCESS**
family planning education and services

Her government has the responsibility to:

**PROVIDE**
adequate and accessible health education and services to all women and girls

**STRENGTHEN**
health services for pregnant women and new mothers

**AUTHORISE**
medical abortion in cases of rape, incest, and danger to the life of the mother or foetus
WHAT IS THE REALITY?

• Develop comprehensive legal frameworks on women and girls’ SRH, that enable women and girls to exercise and enjoy their reproductive rights and freedoms with full consent and without restrictions such as those related to age or marital status.

• Ensure high-quality, integrated, and gender-sensitive SRH services for all women and girls, and develop in particular youth-friendly services aimed at meeting and promoting the needs and rights of adolescent girls and young women.

• Provide information and education on sexuality and SRH that is comprehensive and age-appropriate.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

All countries who committed to the Maputo Protocol must:

• **Train** health workers on non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive service provisions and access.

• **Ensure** girls who are pregnant can continue their education.

• **Decriminalise** abortion, and develop statutory law on access to safe abortion that emphasises a human rights perspective and is in line with the Maputo Protocol.

• **Involve** men and boys as change agents to promote and realise women and girls’ reproductive rights.

In **2 OUT OF 5** African countries, women cannot access safe abortion under the conditions specified in the Maputo Protocol.

In West and Central Africa, more than **1 IN 4 GIRLS** are pregnant before the age of 18.

**1 IN 5** married African women have an unmet need for family planning.

**MORE THAN HALF** of maternal deaths worldwide occur in sub-Saharan Africa.

The #RightByHer Campaign works across Africa to reduce the gap between rights and reality. At #RightByHer, we analyse the status of inequality, raise awareness, facilitate empowerment and together advocate for change.

This factsheet is based on the State of African Women Report. Full report and more info at rightbyher.org  Oct. 2018