

Sexual and reproductive health remains a big challenge for today's young people in Sri Lanka.

Most young people lack accurate information about reproductive health and contraception, putting them at risk of unwanted pregnancies, STIs, and HIV/ AIDS. Through recognizing the human right of access to comprehensive reproductive health education (CRHE) and services, young people are empowered to protect their health, well-being and dignity. Whilst Sri Lanka has made some progress in the delivery of reproductive health services, there is room for improvement in the education sector and to meet international standards and protocols.

Why CRHE and Why in Schools and Universities?

- Reduce misinformation and increase accurate knowledge
- Clarify and strengthen positive values and attitudes
- Increase the skills needed to make informed decisions and act upon them
- Improve perceptions about peer groups and social norms
- Increase communication with parents or other trusted adults

UNFPA Initiatives in Collaboration with the Government of Sri Lanka

Since the establishment of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Sri Lanka in 1969, UNFPA has been working with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure the right of access to CRHE and services by men, women and young people in order to lead healthier lives.

UNFPA has demonstrated the importance of CRHE through its pioneering efforts both within and outside of the formal public school system.

UNFPA has also responded to adolescents' need for this knowledge through community based programmes, school-based extracurricular activities, in addition to the regular school curriculum.

UNFPA initiatives on CRHE with the Government- 2015/2016;

- SRH TOT programmes for teachers and instructors with **Ministry of Education**
- Supported to the **Ministry of Health** to do the National Youth Health Survey
- Supported to **Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training** to do need Assessment survey on SRH for young technical and vocational training sectors
- New SRH curriculum development for vocational training centers with **Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training**
- Including CRHE in Provincial Youth Policy recommendations

UNFPA other Initiatives

- ABLE App - Mobile application which provides information on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of young people
- 100 Voices campaign – Youth engagement program to educate and empower young people with knowledge on GBV
- Supported to develop Sign language SRHR glossary for deaf people with YPEERs
- Supported to develop SRHR terminology guideline with YPEERs

Next steps toward achieving full realization of this human right in Sri Lanka

A coordinated and integrated approach in responding to CRHE is critical and urgent, and it needs commitment from rights holders and duty bearers: community leaders, policy makers including development partners.

UNFPA supports the implementation of a comprehensive and integrated reproductive health services program, particularly in high fertility geographic areas and for vulnerable groups through greater involvement of government and community based organisations. Furthermore, UNFPA works towards re-positioning CRHE by convening all relevant stakeholders to improving the knowledge and access of young people to sexual reproductive health services at all levels of Government and in School, Universities and at Vocational Training Centers.