



Press Statement

South Centre with CeHDI steps up work on advancing the right to health including sexual and reproductive health and rights

Geneva, 5 February 2025



The South Centre is enhancing its capacity to support the Global South in advancing the right to health—including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) — and global health equity at a time when progress is facing unprecedented challenges and funding is declining.

The right to health is a fundamental human right that ensures everyone can attain the highest possible standard of physical and mental well-being. As part of this obligation, countries must develop and implement legislation and public policies that comprehensively advance the right to health for all, including access to healthcare and access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, addressing the root causes of health disparities, such as poverty, stigma, and discrimination.

With support from the Centre for Health Diplomacy and Inclusion (CeHDI) and the Health Development Partnership for Africa and the Caribbean (HeDPAC), which serves as CeHDI's implementation arm, the South Centre will promote the right to health by advocating for SRHR, enhancing global health equity, and improving access to medicines and other medical products. This will be achieved by amplifying the voice and influence of the Global South, particularly within the World Health Organization (WHO), the Human Rights Council (HRC), and other key international forums addressing health issues.

Building on the South Centre's strengths, this two-year project will enhance the capacity of Global South policymakers through policy dialogue and evidence-based approaches. By fostering coordination in relevant negotiations, the initiative will increase the Global South's visibility and collaboration in multilateral efforts to advance the right to health — including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) — and global health equity and solidarity that advances global prosperity.

A first activity will be an event organized at the sides of the Human Rights Council on 14 March 2025.

Media contact: Anna Bernardo, abernardo@southcentre.int

About the Project:

The human right to health is a fundamental right of every human being intended to achieve the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. As part of this obligation, countries should develop and implement legislation and public policies that guarantee access to quality health services and address the root causes of health disparities, including poverty, stigma and discrimination.

To support developing countries' efforts in this area, the South Centre, together with The Global Center for Health Diplomacy and Inclusion (CeHDI), aims to **strengthen the right to health from the perspective of the countries of the Global South**. This project is designed to amplify the voice of the Global South in shaping global health policies and priorities, including Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and global health equity.

This program is designed to increase Global South policymakers' participation in international forums to promote their health priorities in multilateral discussions and negotiations. By providing training, fostering collaboration, and increasing visibility in international fora, the program will equip these policymakers to support essential issues in discussing the right to health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and access to critical medicines.

Furthermore, the evidence-based research and policy briefs prepared by the South Centre will aim to strengthen a rights-based approach to global health equity, ensuring that the right to health is protected within diverse cultural and social contexts. The program will contribute to stronger policy frameworks and unified positions on critical health issues by ensuring that developing countries actively shape the global health agenda and increase their capacity to achieve health for all, promoting solidarity, cooperation, and a people-centred approach to health.

These efforts are also part of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly resolution "Global health and foreign policy: strengthening health system resilience through affordable health care for all" adopted by the UN General Assembly. The resolution emphasises the crucial link between global health and foreign policy, particularly in the context of achieving affordable healthcare for all. It seeks to encourage Member States to prioritise strengthening health system resilience through a comprehensive approach that includes ensuring access to affordable health services, promoting health financing mechanisms that avoid financial hardship, and supporting the development and equitable distribution of essential health products.

This resolution considers the need for international cooperation and solidarity to build more robust health systems that can withstand shocks and ensure the health and well-being of all people, which are also the objectives pursued by the South Centre.