

# MY BODY MY RIGHTS

FALL 2015 TOOLKIT

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



**Dear Human Rights Activist,**

Before you get started, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your interest in the My Body, My Rights (MBMR) campaign! Amnesty International would not be the organization it is without the commitment and hard work of its members and activists.

At the heart of the MBMR campaign is the idea that **we all have the right to make decisions about our own health, body, sexuality, and reproductive life.**

In joining the MBMR campaign, together we can:

- stop governments from using discriminatory laws that punish people for their sexuality or reproductive choices;
- stop others from controlling the decisions we make about our bodies and our lives;
- remove barriers that prevent us from getting sexual and reproductive health information and services, including contraception;
- help others claim and exercise their rights, so that we can all make free and informed choices about our sexual and reproductive lives without fear of discrimination and violence.

This fall, we're focusing on Ireland's near-total abortion ban and the barriers women and girls face in making decisions about their lives, health care, bodies, and futures in Burkina Faso. Did you know that in Ireland, a near-total ban on abortion means women and girls who are raped can't access abortion, and that women face up to 14 years in jail for seeking abortion services to which they are entitled under international human rights law? Or that in Burkina Faso, a country with one of the highest rates of maternal mortality, only 17% of women and girls use contraceptive and very few have basic information about contraception or their bodies? We can change this!

**In this toolkit you'll find:**

- (lots of) information about sexual and reproductive rights;
- actions and strategies to defend sexual and reproductive rights in Ireland and Burkina Faso;
- a human rights education activity you can do with your Amnesty group, class, or any group of participants;
- and ideas for action to promote sexual and reproductive rights in your own community.

**You can make a difference!** By defending sexual and reproductive rights, you can help overturn the abortion ban in Ireland, ensure women and girls have access to life-saving information and services in Burkina Faso, and build a culture of human rights in your own community!

**Thank you for joining us to defend your body and your rights!**

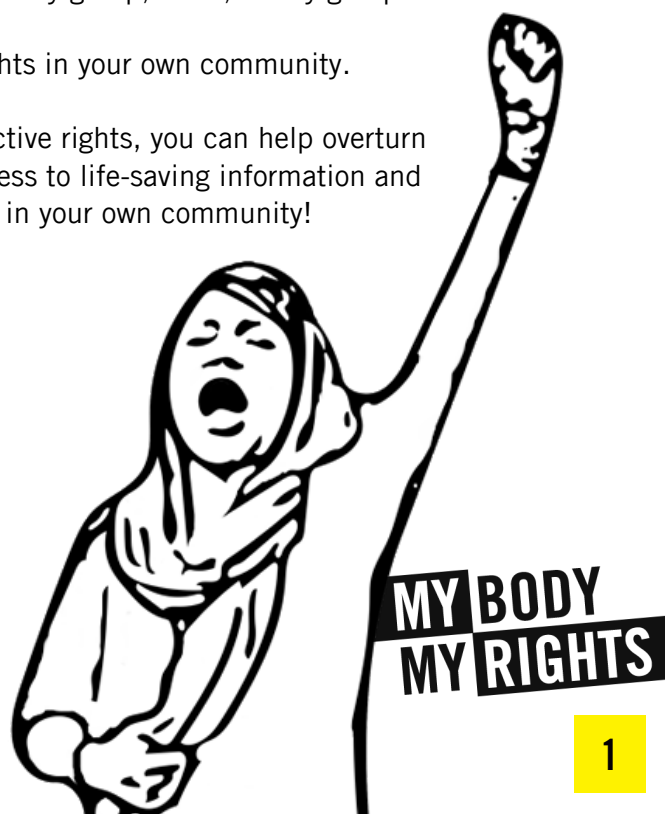
Sincerely,

**Tarah Demant**

Senior Director

Identity and Discrimination Unit

Amnesty International USA



# WHAT ARE SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS?

We all have the right to make decisions about **our own health, body, sexuality and reproductive life, without fear, coercion, violence or discrimination**. But all over the world, people's freedom to make these decisions is controlled by the state, medical professionals, even their own families. Criminal law and punitive sanctions are frequently used to control such choices. In the end, many people are prevented from making any choice at all.

## SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS (SRR) MEANS YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Make decisions about our own health, body, sexual life and identity without fear of coercion or criminalization.
- Seek and receive information about sexuality and reproduction and access related health services and contraception.
- Have access to comprehensive education on human sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, human rights and gender equality.
- Decide whether and when to have children, and how many to have.
- Access safe abortion services in cases of rape, incest, when the life or health of the mother is at risk, or when there is severe or fatal fetal impairment
- Choose our intimate partner and whether and when to marry.
- Choose whether or not to marry and what type of family to create.
- Live free from discrimination, coercion and violence, including rape and other sexual violence, female genital mutilation/cutting, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilization and forced marriage.

## SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS PROTECTED UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW AND STANDARDS

### INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS, COVENANTS, DECLARATIONS, & TREATIES

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

### REGIONAL DOCUMENTS

- American Convention on Human Rights
- Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (Convention on Belem do Para)
- European Convention on Human Rights
- Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)
- African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Banjul Charter)
- Protocol Additional to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights in the Rights of Women in Africa (African Women's Protocol)
- Arab Charter on Human Rights

# TALKING ABOUT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Sexual and reproductive rights can be immensely personal, and also controversial.

For many people, sexuality and gender are spaces of strong emotional connections and firmly held beliefs. And many also believe that sexual and reproductive rights is solely about the right to abortion. **The act of questioning our assumptions can feel dangerous and exhausting while still being exhilarating and inspiring.**

Culture and cultural norms are fundamental to the way societies build and frame people's sexual gender identities. Being aware of how you grew up and keeping different cultural norms in mind will help you have a more inclusive conversation.

## COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

When talking about these sexual and reproductive rights, activists and facilitators will need to plan ahead for how best to support and create space for participants to have emotional discussions, and how to keep balance between positive and negative messages (see Activity 3.1 on page 17 for more on creating safe spaces).

The contents within this toolkit are meant to engage with the broader national and international dialogue about restrictions. Conversations matter. Engaging in conversations spark new ideas and ignite collaboration. **By educating ourselves, we can build collective power and help implement change.** If you need more guidance on how to approach this topic you can refer to the module, which can be found online: Respect My Rights, Respect My Dignity —Module Three - Sexual and Reproductive Rights are Human Rights.

MY LIFE  
MY HEALTH  
MY EDUCATION  
MY CHOICE  
MY BODY  
MY RIGHTS



# MY BODY, MY RIGHTS TALKING POINTS

**All over the world, people are coerced, criminalized and discriminated against, simply for making choices about their bodies and their lives.**

We all have the right to make decisions about our own health, body, sexuality and reproductive life, without fear, coercion, violence or discrimination. But all over the world, people's freedom to make these decisions is controlled by the state, medical professionals, even their own families.

Criminal law and punitive sanctions are frequently used to control such choices. **In the end, many people are prevented from making any choice at all.**

The problem encompasses a broad range of issues, including freedom from discrimination, access to safe abortion services, contraception, and other sexual and reproductive health services and education.

- **40%** of women of childbearing age live in countries where abortion is banned, restricted or not accessible (Source: WHO 2003)
- **47,000** pregnant women die every year due to complications for unsafe abortions (Source: WHO 2003)
- **14 million+** adolescent girls give birth every year, mainly as a result of coerced sex and unwanted pregnancy (Source: International Center for Research on Women 2013)
- **215 million** women are not using contraception, even though they want to stop or delay having children (Source: International Center for Research on Women 2013)
- **215,000** maternal deaths per year could be avoided through contraception use (Source: UNFPA)
- **60%** of adolescents in four sub-Saharan African countries didn't know how to prevent pregnancy and more than 1/3 didn't know of a source for contraceptives (Source: 2012)

## WE ARE CALLING ON GOVERNMENTS TO:

- stop the discriminatory use of criminal law to regulate sexuality and reproduction and stop third-party control over individual decision-making;
- remove barriers to access to sexual and reproductive health services, education and information by addressing discrimination in law and practice;
- empower people to claim and exercise their rights, so that every person can make free and informed choices about their sexuality and reproduction and can exercise their sexual and reproductive rights free from discrimination, coercion and violence.

# MY BODY, MY RIGHTS: 2015/2016 PLANNING CALENDAR

## WHAT TO DO?

1. Connect the Dots: Why are Sexual Reproductive Rights a Human Right?
2. Raise Awareness by Educating Your Community!
3. Engage People in ACTION!

## SAMPLE CAMPAIGN WORK PLAN

- Week 1:** Educate and build knowledge in your group on the campaign (utilize resources outlined in this toolkit)
- Week 2:** Develop a 4-6 week outreach plan that will provide opportunities to raise awareness in your community
- Week 3:** Plan and mobilize for the Global Day of Action to Decriminalize Abortion
- Week 4:** Host a follow up “gathering” such as a happy hour/brown bag lunch to engage all the new folks who have expressed an interest in your group and more specifically in this campaign (incorporate Sexual Reproductive Rights education exercises into your meeting)
- Week 5:** Plan spaces (classes/other student groups) where you could do SRR education exercises in this toolkit
- Week 6:** Plan a mid-semester social-media push around the petitions
- Week 7:** Plan a mid-semester Art for Amnesty stress-relieving event where you highlight MBMR
- Week 8:** Plan Write-for-Rights events to highlight Burkina Faso case

## SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER: IMPORTANT DATES

- September:** My Body My Rights Fall Toolkit and webinar on September 16th
- September 28<sup>th</sup>:** Global Day of Action to Decriminalize Abortion - focus on Ireland
- October 11<sup>th</sup>:** International Day of the Girl
- October:** Presidential & Parliamentary Elections in Burkina Faso (election results announced in December 2015)
- October 23-25<sup>th</sup>:** Southern Regional Conference, Deauville Beach Resort, Miami, Florida
- October 23-25<sup>th</sup>:** Mid-West Regional Conference, Doubletree, Bloomington, Minneapolis

## NOVEMBER-DECEMBER: IMPORTANT DATES

- November 6-7<sup>th</sup>:** Northeast Regional Conference at Boston University, Boston, MA
- November 13-14<sup>th</sup>:** Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference, Sheraton Inner Harbor, Baltimore, Maryland
- November 20-22<sup>nd</sup>:** Western Regional Conference, Los Angeles, California
- November 23-Dec 10<sup>th</sup>:** 16 Days to Stop Violence Against Women
- November-December:** Amnesty International 2015 Write for Rights – including focus case on Burkina Faso
- December 10<sup>th</sup>:** International Human Rights Day

## JANUARY-FEBRUARY: IMPORTANT DATES

- January 1<sup>st</sup>:** Second anniversary of enactment of Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act (Ireland)
- January 18<sup>th</sup>:** Ireland Petition Closes (send in all your petitions!)
- February 1<sup>st</sup>:** Burkina Faso Petition Closes (send in all your petitions!)
- February:** My Body My Rights Spring Toolkit

## MARCH-APRIL: IMPORTANT DATES

- March-April:** Amnesty International Burkina Faso extended Report Launch
- March 8<sup>th</sup>:** International Women’s Day

# IDEAS FOR ACTION

1. Join the MBMR campaign to receive updated information and to have first access to future toolkits and actions—>email [kdenzler@aiusa.org](mailto:kdenzler@aiusa.org) to join now! Join the Women's Human Rights Action Network. Sign up at: <http://eepurl.com/lCr3H>, and be sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter!
2. **Host a Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) Panel discussion/a well-known speaker on SRHR (contact your Field Organizers for support).**
3. Social media! We all know what a powerful tool social media is, so spread the messages online (e.g. Tweet, Facebook posts, Instagram, etc.) and use the hashtag [#MyBodyMyRights](#). Don't forget to upload photos to social media outlets of your group participating in an action and use the same # above and show us what you're doing by emailing us pictures to [kdenzler@aiusa.org](mailto:kdenzler@aiusa.org).
4. **Get the facts and give presentations to student, community, and faith-based groups.**
5. Organize an event, demonstration, rally, or silent protest (come to the demonstrations on September 28th! See more about this under the Ireland Campaign section). Go to <http://www.amnestyusa.org/events/submit-your-event> to submit information on your event.
6. **Table at farmers' markets, fairs, festivals, on campus — reach out to more people! Get as many people as you can to sign the petitions in this toolkit and hand out information (also included in this toolkit) like the MBMR Manifesto or the Burkina Faso handouts.**
7. Canvass for signatures in a public place and aim to collect 100 signatures (or more!). This would help us reach our goal of 30,00 signatures for each country.
8. **Host a film night on campus or somewhere in your local community (e.g. community spaces such as libraries, art galleries, dorm lounges, churches, etc.) and watch "The Vessel" or "The Magdalene Sisters". End with a brief discussion on Sexual Reproduction and Health Rights (SRHR).**
9. Make a public service announcement by asking your community what they know about SRHR. Provide individuals with some quick facts (use the talking points or facts from Ireland and Burkina Faso) and then capture their reaction.
10. **Write Letters to the Editor/Publish an op-ed in your local newspaper/ Publish a blog.**
11. Arts and Activism -- Bring the use of visual art into your activism through mural making, poster designs that send powerful messages, music (e.g. JAMnesty), poetry through the use of spoken word, book readings, and theater (i.e. work with your local theater group and collaborate on a 5-10 minute screenplay that will educate, engage, and inspire!).
12. **Co-sponsor events with community partners/build relations with like-minded groups. Consider joining forces with similar groups in the area to get the message out even louder.**

If you're planning a MBMR event, particularly on the Day of Action to Decriminalize Abortion on September 28th, email Kaitlyn Denzler at [kdenzler@aiusa.org](mailto:kdenzler@aiusa.org) to get t-shirts, stickers, pins, and more!

# MY BODY MY RIGHTS

As governments and others try to impose restrictions in the most private corners of our lives – sex, relationships, birth control – we, the people, have launched this manifesto: seven principles which unite us in our quest to claim control over our bodies, health and the personal decisions that affect our futures.

## **We declare that:**

- 1 Consensual sex is never a crime – whatever our sex, sexuality, gender identity or marital status.**
- 2 Seeking an abortion – or helping someone get one – does NOT make us criminals.**
- 3 Affordable, confidential and quality health services, including access to contraception, is not a luxury – it's a human right.**
- 4 Education and information on sex and relationships must be based on scientific evidence, and should be available to everyone.**
- 5 We all have the right to live free from all forms of violence, including rape.**
- 6 We have the right to have a say in the laws, policies and programmes that affect our bodies and our lives.**
- 7 If we are denied any of the above, we have the right to report it, have it investigated and be confident that justice will be served.**

These declarations are not just expressions of belief. They are rooted in human rights that are enshrined in international standards that place obligations on our governments.

It's time for our governments to deliver on these obligations. Only then will we be truly empowered to make our own decisions about our bodies, our lives and our futures.

**Endorse the My Body My Rights Manifesto:**  
**[bit.ly/mbmr\\_manifesto](http://bit.ly/mbmr_manifesto)**

# IRELAND CAMPAIGN

JUNE 2015 - JUNE 2016

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Abortion is illegal in Ireland, except in cases where there is a “real and substantial” risk to the life – rather than the health – of the woman. This exception was established in 1992 by a Supreme Court ruling on the case of a 14-year-old who was pregnant as a result of rape, and was suicidal. **Women and girls and anyone assisting them in undergoing an abortion, including health care providers, are liable to 14 years’ imprisonment and a fine of up to €4,000 if they violate the law.**

In 2013, the government finally enacted legislation (The Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013) following a 2010 European Court of Human Rights decision in *A, B & C v Ireland*. The Act, in theory, outlines the process to establish when there is a real and **substantial risk to a woman’s life, as distinct from the health, of women and girls for the purposes of then allowing a termination**. The legislation and associated guidelines, made public in September 2014, remain unclear and fall far short of human rights standards. Despite the minor change introduced by the legislation, abortion is still illegal for women who are pregnant as a result of rape or incest, where their health is at risk or in cases of severe and fatal fetal abnormalities.

Rather than restricting access to abortion, the law in effect restricts women’s access to safe and legal abortion in Ireland. Women and girls are reluctant to seek abortion information or services in Ireland – and healthcare professionals are reluctant to provide them – under any circumstance, even when they are permitted by law, due to the threat of prosecution or imprisonment. **This effect of criminal regulation is broadly termed the “chilling effect.” As a result, thousands of women and girls are forced to travel abroad, most to the UK and the Netherlands, to have an abortion, at significant financial, sometimes physical and often mental costs.** For those who are unable to travel (for example asylum seekers, those unable to afford the trip, or too sick to travel), there is no way out and they face an impossible choice: break the law in Ireland, risk their health with a clandestine abortion or carry an unwanted pregnancy to term.

## LEARN MORE

**REPORT: She is Not a Criminal: The Impact of Ireland’s Abortion Law**

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/research/reports/she-is-not-a-criminal-the-impact-of-ireland-s-abortion-law>

**BLOG: Marriage Equality But Not Reproductive Rights: Ireland’s Inconsistency on Human Rights**

<http://blog.amnestyusa.org/europe/marriage-equality-but-not-reproductive-rights-irelands-inconsistency-on-human-rights/>

**GET THE FACTS: 6 outrageous facts about abortion in Ireland**

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2015/06/6-outrageous-facts-about-abortion-in-ireland>



# GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION TO DECRIMINALIZE ABORTION

## DAY OF ACTION FOR IRELAND: SEPTEMBER 28TH, 2015



On September 28th, 2015 activists in different cities throughout the US will join in solidarity demonstrations with other activists in Ireland. We will show our support on the Global Day of Action to Decriminalize Abortion in front of Irish embassies and consulates in cities such as **Chicago, Boston, New York City, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis**. All of these cities have large Irish-American populations and will be perfect locations to increase the pressure on Ireland and spread the message that Ireland needs to decriminalize abortion and respect the human rights of its women and girls.

**If you don't live in one of these cities, there's still plenty of action to take!** Collect signatures on this day and we'll deliver them to the embassies ourselves when you mail them in to Tarah Demant at 600 Pennsylvania Ave, SE, 5th Floor,

Washington DC, 20003. Or hold a demonstration on your campus in solidarity with other activists, educate your campus about what's going on in Ireland, and collect as many signatures as you can.

You can also participate in the 'Not a criminal' photo petition action! Create posters (see a picture above as an example) or a [#NOTACRIMINAL](https://www.facebook.com/aiusa) sign and have demonstrators, passersby, etc. take pictures with the poster or sign. Send your pictures to [kdenzler@aiusa.org](mailto:kdenzler@aiusa.org) and we'll include your photo petition when we submit the petition signatures to Ireland's Prime Minister.

**For more information on how to join these actions or for support planning your events, contact your regional field organizers.**

**[CLICK HERE TO FIND YOUR REGIONAL FIELD ORGANIZER](#)**

## OTHER ACTIONS TO TAKE NOW AND THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN

- Sign and collect as many signatures as you can for Amnesty International's petition calling on Ireland's Taoiseach (Prime Minister) to stop treating women and girls like criminals by changing Ireland's abortion laws. Find the petition on page 10.
- Help strengthen the impact by taking as many pictures as you can for the 'Not a criminal' photo petition action throughout the fall and email them to [kdenzler@aiusa.org](mailto:kdenzler@aiusa.org).
- Educate your community on Ireland's restrictive abortion law and share information on the recent poll results that show Ireland is ready for a change! See the results on page 11.

# TELL IRELAND TO CHANGE ITS ABORTION LAW

She is pregnant. Doctors say the fetus won't survive. But Irish law says she has to carry the pregnancy to term.

She was raped. Now she's pregnant. And each day that the pregnancy continues reminds her of the horror she went through. Still, Irish law says she has to carry on.

She needs an abortion, but she is not allowed one in Ireland. Instead, she is forced to leave the country - if she can travel. If she stays and tries to have an abortion in Ireland, she is threatened with a 14-year jail term. She is not a criminal. **She has a human right to an abortion.** Sign our petition today. **Tell Ireland to change its abortion law.**

**We urge Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Enda Kenny to:**

- Repeal Article 40.3.3 (the Eight Amendment) of the Irish Constitution, to enable the provision of a human rights compliant framework for abortion and information, in law and in practice
- Decriminalize abortion
- Repeal the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013 and replace it with laws that ensure safe and legal access to abortion, at a minimum, in cases of rape, incest, risk to health or severe and fatal fetal impairment
- Repeal the Regulation of Information (Services Outside the State for the Termination of Pregnancies) Act 1995 and any related censorship laws

Name	City, State	Email	Signature

Please send completed petitions to Amnesty International USA, attention Tarah Demant at 600 Pennsylvania Ave, SE, 5th Floor, Washington DC, 20003 or by fax at (202) 546-7142





# IRELAND CHANGE YOUR ABORTION LAWS

We asked people in Ireland what they think about Ireland's abortion laws. Here is what they told us.



It's a crime to have an abortion in Ireland – unless your life is at risk



**64%**

don't know it's a crime

only **9%**  
know a woman can  
go to jail for 14 years



**67%**

say the Irish government  
should decriminalise  
abortion. That's more  
than two-thirds of the  
population

**25%**

don't want  
abortion  
decriminalised

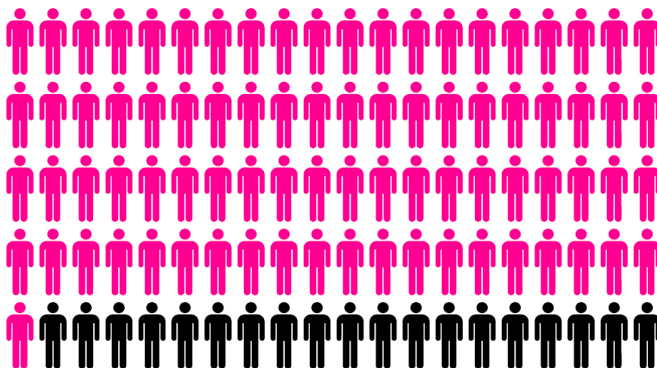


**79%**

say doctors **should not**  
**face 14 years in jail** for  
performing an abortion

**13%**

say doctors **should face**  
**14 years in jail** for  
performing an abortion



**81%**

favour access to abortion at least  
when a woman's health or life is  
at risk, and in cases of rape,  
incest and fatal foetal impairment

# BURKINA FASO CAMPAIGN

JULY 2015 - FEBRUARY 2016

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Imagine not knowing that sex could make you pregnant. Imagine finding out how to prevent a pregnancy only after you'd had your third or fourth child. Now imagine being refused contraception – the pill or condoms – just because you don't have your partner's or in-law's permission.

**Burkina Faso has one of the lowest rates of contraceptive use among women in the world:** 17% at last count in 2014. It also has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. By the time they are 19 years old, most girls are married, and nearly half of them are already mothers. Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Burkina Faso's Constitution, **women and girls are entitled to the same human rights as men and boys. But in practice, they are discriminated against and denied their rights.** They are too often unable to make decisions about who they can love, who they have intimate relations with, who they marry, and about whether to have children and how many.

**Access to contraception is central to preventing unintended pregnancies,** reducing the number of abortions, and enabling women to time their births. But women and girls in Burkina Faso are denied access to contraception because of cost, lack of information, travel distances, and men and boys' attitudes. By denying them access to contraception information and products, Burkina Faso prevents women and girls from fully enjoying their human rights.

## LEARN MORE

**BLOG:** "I Didn't Know You Could Get Pregnant After Sex." Breaking Barriers to Women's Rights in Burkina Faso

<http://blog.amnestyusa.org/africa/i-didnt-know-you-could-get-pregnant-from-having-sex-breaking-barriers-to-womens-rights-in-burkina-faso/>

**ONLINE PETITION:** Let's break the barriers to contraception for women and girls in Burkina Faso

<https://www.amnestyusa.org/BurkinaFaso>

**"I DIDN'T KNOW I COULD GET PREGNANT AFTER SEX"**

- MARIAMA, AGE 24 BURKINA FASO

# BURKINA FASO: FACTS & FIGURES

- In Burkina Faso, **1 woman in 22** is at risk of dying from pregnancy related causes compared to 1 woman in 47,000 in Ireland.
- In Burkina the proportion of teen pregnancies is **115 per 1000** girls compared to 6 per 1000 in France. (Check <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.ADO.TFRT> for the comparison with your country.)
- **Only 19%** of women and girls aged 15-49 use contraceptives in Burkina Faso, compared to 75% in France, 60% in South Africa.
- Burkina sits on the scale (among the **bottom 20** countries with Chad and South Sudan having the lowest contraceptive usage at 6%).
- In Burkina Faso, the average woman will give birth to about **6 children**.
- **341** deaths per 100,000 live births.
- **30%** of maternal deaths could be prevented if women's access to family planning was reinforced.
- **17%** modern contraceptive prevalence rate in 2015.
- **23.8%** of girls aged between 15 to 19 years old were pregnant or had already a baby.



## TAKE ACTION NOW

Sign and collect as many signatures as you can for Amnesty International's petition calling on the government of Burkina Faso to break the barriers for women and girls. Find the petition on page 14. Educate your community about the barriers women and girls face in Burkina Faso. Hand out the postcards on page 15 to spread the word and encourage people to take action.

# BREAK THE BARRIERS FOR WOMEN & GIRLS IN BURKINA FASO

Imagine not knowing that sex could make you pregnant. Imagine finding out how to prevent a pregnancy only after you'd had your third or fourth child. Now imagine being refused contraception – the pill or condoms – just because you don't have your partner's or in-law's permission. This is the reality for many women and girls in Burkina Faso today.

Even if they have permission, they may not have enough money to pay for it: emergency contraception can cost as much as one-fifth of your monthly income if you're earning minimum wage. In the end, women and girls are denied the right to make crucial choices that belong to them – an abuse of their sexual and reproductive rights.

Tell the President of Burkina Faso to break the barriers to contraception. Urge him to make the choice to give women and girls a choice. Sign our petition today.

**We urge Président du Faso to break the barriers to contraception for women and girls by:**

- Making contraception free for all women and girls in Burkina Faso
- Improving the accessibility of sexual health information and services for women and girls
- Guaranteeing their right to decide if and when to have children and if so, how many.

Name	City, State	Email	Signature

Please send completed petitions to Amnesty International USA, attention Tarah Demant at 600 Pennsylvania Ave, SE, 5th Floor, Washington DC, 20003 or by fax at (202) 546-7142





Break the barriers for **women and girls** in Burkina Faso  
 Break the barriers to **contraception** in Burkina Faso  
 Break the barriers to **education** in Burkina Faso  
 Break the barriers to **health** in Burkina Faso  
 Break the barriers to **free choice** in Burkina Faso

TAKE ACTION: [www.amnestyusa.org/BurkinaFaso](http://www.amnestyusa.org/BurkinaFaso)

**#MyBodyMyRights**



Break the barriers for **women and girls** in Burkina Faso  
 Break the barriers to **contraception** in Burkina Faso  
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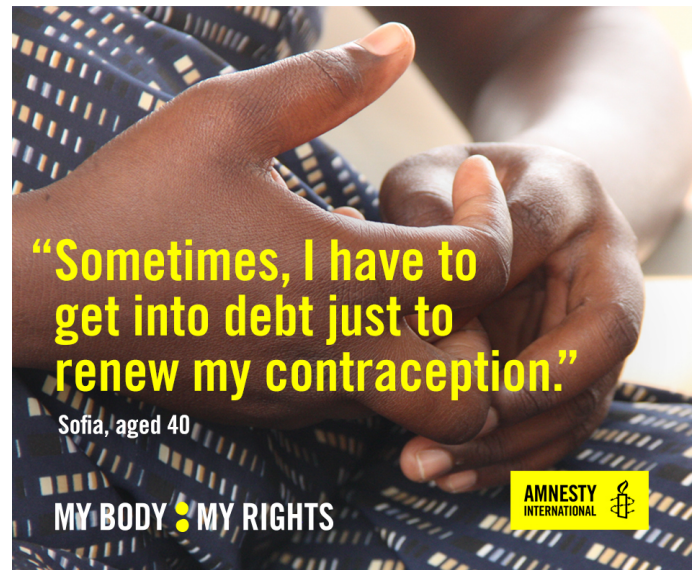
**#MyBodyMyRights**



Break the barriers for **women and girls** in Burkina Faso  
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**#MyBodyMyRights**



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**#MyBodyMyRights**



# SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS EDUCATION

Here are some tips and suggestions for creating a comfortable and safe space for discussions around gender and sexuality. We have also included a human rights education activity around sexual and reproductive rights that is intended to start the conversation, challenge assumptions, share knowledge and experience, and educate and engage the greater community as well as your own group. The conversation should focus on the local, national, and international components of sexual and reproductive rights and violations.

## CREATING A SAFE SPACE

### SHARING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

In activities that invite participants to share personal stories on gender and discrimination, be aware that participants may not feel comfortable doing so and should not be forced. Allow adequate time for reflection in activities where participants may have shared personal stories or if disclosure takes place.

### DO YOUR RESEARCH.

Know what issues are common in your community, and what resources are available to participants for further support when you are planning your activities. Are young people in your community at particular risk of infection with HIV or other STIs? Know where there are youth friendly testing facilities. Is domestic abuse and family violence common? Find what counseling and legal resources are available for survivors and keep that information available.

### ADMIT WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW.

You are not required to have an answer to every question. Practice saying “I’m not sure, but I’ll look into it and get back to you.” Know whom you can turn to for help if needed. Make sure you follow-up.

### CREATE A GROUP CODE OF CONDUCT OR GROUP NORMS.

Start the session by defining a common agreement on the expectations of the group regarding language, atmosphere, and objectives. “Language” includes what words and terms the group considers appropriate and which are inappropriate, any rules about forbidden terms or language, and how to address each other respectfully. At no point should hurtful language about race, religion, gender, sexuality or other status be allowed in these activities, and this expectation must be part of the code of conduct.

### BE INCLUSIVE.

Discuss how to address each other respectfully and use inclusive language around gender identity and sexual orientation. This should include using people’s chosen names and pronouns and not making assumptions about other people’s experiences or identities. As a facilitator, you should also consider how to build neutrality into activities through using terms like “partner” instead of “girlfriend” or “boyfriend” and choosing gender-neutral names for role-plays.

## TIPS

- After the group sets an agreement on confidentiality and privacy, ask participants if they can **commit** to it.
- Ensure that **no one is “forced”** to share during any of the activities or discussions. Participation is voluntary.
- Ask participants to reflect on how they can **practice openness** and refrain from judgement in their everyday lives, not just in the session.
- **Empower participants** to remind each other of the common agreement when they see each other breaking it, both in the space and outside. Discuss ways to do this respectfully and without confrontation or blame.
- Encourage participants to **ask each other’s permission** to discuss shared experiences with others, and to volunteer permission when the experience shared does not need to be kept confidential.
- Have the group **reflect** on their own personal risks, dangers and security.
- Discuss what the group needs to feel safe, what the fears are in discussions and the **code of conduct/safe space**.

# MY BODY MY RIGHTS

## ACTIVITY 3.1

### MAKING SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS PERSONAL

#### AIMS

- To reflect on how sexual and reproductive rights are part of everyone's life.
- To explore how certain conditions such as age, gender, sexual identity, access to resources, can contribute or limit your knowledge and access to sexual and reproductive rights.

#### TIMING

3 hours

#### WHAT YOU NEED

- "Take a step forward" statements (page 99)
- Sufficient space for participants to stand in a line and be able to take a step forward. (If space is unavailable, you can adapt the activity. See Facilitation Tips.)
- Slips of paper
- One set of the sexual and reproductive rights cards for each group of four or five people (page 102)
- Flipchart paper
- Markers and pens

#### THIS ACTIVITY HAS FOUR STEPS

- Step 1:** Take a step forward (45 min)  
**Step 2:** Who decides? (45 min)  
**Step 3:** Identifying my rights (60 min)  
**Step 4:** Take action (30 min)

#### FACILITATION TIPS

- ✓ You can adjust the time for this activity according to your group size and needs.
- ✓ You can divide the activity after Step 2 into two separate activities, but make sure there is a chance to reflect at the end of each activity.
- ✓ The "Take a step forward" exercise requires young people to feel safe so it is important to do a dynamic or short activity before starting, to facilitate trust and to remind people of the common agreement, specifically highlighting the agreement on confidentiality.
- ✓ If because of lack of space you need to adapt the activity, you can use "Stand up" rather than "Take a step forward". However, it is important to note that standing up in front of everyone can be more difficult than to take a step forward for some people.



# MY BODY MY RIGHTS



# MY BODY MY RIGHTS

## Step 1: Take a step forward (45 min)

### Plenary (10 min)

- Ask participants to line up silently in a straight line facing you. There should be some distance between you and the participants so that participants can take a step forward. This exercise should be done in silence.
- Explain to participants that you will read out a series of statements. If they would answer yes to the statement, they can step forward in silence. Tell them they must remain silent, and when you say “thank you” they can step back.
- When reading the statements, repeat the introduction “Take a step forward if” for each statement.
- It is important once you read the statement to give the participants some time to think and step forward. This activity should not be rushed even if it can feel uncomfortable in silence. After participants have stepped forward stay 30 seconds in silence in quiet reflection then say “thank you” and that they can return. Then read out the next statement.
- After all the statements have been read, the participants will form buzz groups to reflect on the exercise.

### STATEMENTS: TAKE A STEP FORWARD IF...

- You have heard about sexual reproductive rights before this activity.
- You have ever in your life felt pressured to change something about your body or have been discriminated against because of the way you look, dress or act.
- You have ever in your life been given wrong or incorrect information on sex, sexuality, reproduction.
- You have ever in your life felt embarrassed to ask questions or talk about sex, sexuality, relations or reproduction.
- You have ever in your life felt that someone has tried to make a decision regarding your body, sexuality or reproduction.
- You have ever in your life felt you have not had access to information or sexual health services or known someone that has not been able to.
- You have ever in your life felt pressure to have or not to have sexual relations,
- You have ever in your life felt pressured about when or when not to have children.
- You have ever known anyone that has been discriminated against or experienced violence as a result of the choices they have made about their bodies, sexuality and relationships.

# MY BODY MY RIGHTS

## Buzz groups (10 min)

- Ask participants to find a partner to reflect with on the following questions:

1. How did you feel doing this exercise?
2. What affected you the most?
3. What did you learn from this exercise?
4. What do you think this exercise has to do with sexual and reproductive rights?

## Plenary (25 min)

- In plenary, ask participants if there is anyone that would like to share their reflection on each question. Depending on the group, you can get three, four participants or more to answer each question.

- You can wrap up noting that almost everyone is affected in one way or another by sexual and reproductive rights. They affect both men and women. They are essential for young people all over the world not just for people in other countries.

- ▣ Note that this exercise shows how most of us at one time or another have felt pressured into a decision, or someone else has made decision regarding our bodies, our sexuality and relationships.

- ▣ Explain that people should be able to make decisions about their own bodies, reproduction and sexuality including:

1. whether to obtain information regarding sex;
2. whether to engage in sexual activity and with whom;
3. which contraceptive methods to use, if any;
4. whether to use condoms or other barrier methods to prevent the transmission of STIs;

5. whether, when and with whom to have children;

6. whether to seek health services or medical attention for pregnancy, fertility, or other sexual health reasons;

7. how and with whom to build a family;

8. whether to abort an unwanted pregnancy;

9. how to express your gender and sexuality.

- ▣ We should be able to make these decisions free from cohesion, pressure, discrimination and violence. We will look more in depth on this in the next activity.

## Step 2: Who decides? (45 min)

### Group work (20 min)

- Remind participants of the previous activity.

- Divide participants into small groups. These groups can be divided by gender or be mixed.

- Ask participants to write or draw on slips of paper decisions about sexuality and reproduction that they are likely to make or have made at different points during their lives and to reflect on the following questions:

1. Have you ever felt pressured to make a certain decision or has someone else made a decision for you regarding your body, sexuality, sexual relations, gender identity or reproduction?
2. Are there any such decisions that some people in your community may not or cannot make? Who? Which decisions and why? (Reflect on if being a man or woman, adult or young person, having economic resources or not, or living in an urban or rural setting can contribute or limit someone's ability to make certain decisions.)

# MY BODY MY RIGHTS

3. What happens when young people cannot make decisions about their reproduction and sexuality?
4. What do you need to make your own decisions regarding your body, identity, sexuality, sexual relations and reproduction?

## Plenary (25 min)

- Bring the groups together and ask the participants to share their list of decisions and their reflections.
- Finish with some general conclusions on how society, culture, family and even peers decide or pressure us to make certain decisions regarding our bodies and sexuality.
- Certain groups such as young people can have difficulty in accessing information and services to make those decisions. If their decisions fall outside what society dictates for them, they can suffer discrimination, marginalization and even violence.

## Step 3: Identifying my rights (60 min)

### Group work (30 min)

- Ask participants to return to their small groups.
- Ask them to remember and take into account the previous discussion on decisions that they or others have had to make regarding their bodies, sexuality, sexual relationships, identity and reproduction.
- Hand out one set of sexual and reproductive rights cards to each group.
- Ask participants to look over their sexual and reproductive rights cards, and to reflect on the following questions:
  1. Regarding the decisions that you need to make, which of these rights can support each decision? (For

example to decide when to have your first sexual relations you need the right to information, the right to services and right to choice.)

2. Which groups of people can access these rights freely or have better access to these rights than others? And why?
3. Which groups of people may not have full access to each right? And why? (Reflect on if being a man or woman, adult or young person, having economic resources or not, living in an urban or rural setting can contribute to or limit your ability access certain rights.)
4. Is there anything you can do to have better access to and claim these rights?

## Plenary (30 min)

- Bring the groups together to present their reflections.
- Draw some general conclusions from your discussion.

## Step 4: Take action (30 min)

- Reflect on how we can take action on what we have learnt.
- Think of creative ways to present the importance of sexual and reproductive rights for the decision we need to make in our life to other young people (posters, slogans, songs, poems etc...).
- Review what the group has identified as actions in Step 3 they could do to better access and claim their rights and decide which of these they could take forward.
- Check what is happening with Amnesty International's My Body My Right Campaign to see if there are ways to support others to defend and claim their rights at <https://campaigns.amnesty.org/campaigns/my-body-my-rights>

# MY BODY MY RIGHTS

## CHOICE

Everyone has the right to make decisions about her or his own body, sexuality, sexual relations, gender identity or reproduction.

## INFORMATION

Everyone has the right to ask for and receive information about sex, contraception and related health services.

## EDUCATION

Everyone has the right to comprehensive, accurate and non-discriminatory education on human sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, human rights and gender equality.

## REPRODUCTION

Everyone has the right to decide for themselves whether and when to have children.

## FAMILY

Everyone has the right to choose whether to marry and what type of family to create.

## HEALTH CARE

Everyone has the right to access comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, free from discrimination, coercion and violence.

## BODILY AUTONOMY

Everyone has the right to make decisions and control what happens to their bodies. Threats to bodily autonomy include any actions carried out without consent, such as rape and other gender-based violence, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilization, or female genital mutilation/cutting.





# MY BODY MY RIGHTS

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