



THE SHEDECIDES VISION

FOR A #NEWNORMAL

In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was a defining moment in the fight for gender equality. In 2020, 25 feminist activists from around the world, all born in 1995, gathered to form the 25x25 Generation of Equality, to commemorate this historic declaration and those who advocated for it, but also to identify what is still to unpack and to achieve.



We, the SheDecides 25x25, share our vision on the current issues concerning sexual and reproductive rights around the world, while shedding light on a path forward. **We defend bodily autonomy as the heart of every feminist movement across borders.** We define it as having control over our own body, living the right to draw boundaries around it in all spheres of life, and exercising the agency of choosing what we do with it, who touches it, and how it looks.



“To rectify, we must remember”

Worldwide, societies are, to different extents, still patriarchal and dominated by cisgender men. This is reflected in national legal systems that govern key aspects of society such as inheritance, marriage, fertility, divorce and land rights. Colonial inheritance and increasingly powerful conservative agendas perpetuate stigma that prevents women and young people from exercising their bodily autonomy. Worse, women are underrepresented in politics and positions of power worldwide, which is crucial to achieve lasting change and creating inclusive policies.



These systemic factors have resulted in continuing harmful practices – often performed under the guise of tradition or religion – like female genital mutilation, child marriage, as well as deepening socio-economic inequalities. This has led to restricted access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, as well as legal and safe abortion care, with serious repercussions for bodily autonomy and lived experiences of women and young people.

In addition, gender-based violence remains widespread across the globe, with policies and legal systems failing to protect survivors and to successfully prosecute the perpetrators. It is difficult to report sexual violence and convict crimes because of the fear of victim-blaming, lack of trust towards survivors, poor training of legal enforcement and the continued lack of recognition of forms of psychological and verbal violence.



“To ascend, we must collaborate”



To address these issues, we propose working on all levels for the respect of universal human rights, the promotion of secular nation-states and decolonisation, as well as the construction of inclusive narratives that lead to social de-stigmatization of bodily autonomy. We need responsive justice systems and greater commitment by governments to prioritize and implement international conventions on gender equality. We aspire for legislation and public policies to align in respecting, promoting and guaranteeing sexual and reproductive rights, including comprehensive sexuality education and contraceptive services.

At this point, governments must realise that they cannot achieve a sustainable future where everyone can live in dignity without implementing holistic public policies based on a comprehensive analysis of the structural inequalities produced by and reinforcing systemic marginalisation pertaining to gender, race, sexuality, disability, status, profession, religion, caste and class.

In order to foster dynamic and inclusive progression, donors and governments should invest in women’s political participation and intersectional youth agendas, and ensure that their interests are adequately represented in the formulation of public policy and programs. Also, research and campaigns in local languages need to be developed to better design and disseminate co-produced education for equality. In this, it is important to include men and boys, and promote the construction of positive, non-hegemonic masculinities.

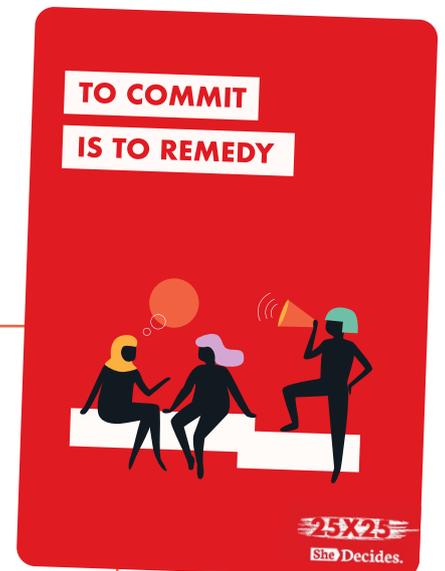
Civil society possesses a key role towards an equitable world where She Decides, by working together with the government to ensure it achieves and maintains its responsibilities towards the people it vows to serve. Civil society can also build disruptive spaces in the countryside, neighborhoods, cities and communities where political decisions are taken collectively, according to people’s own needs and desires.

“To commit is to remedy”

We, the 25x25 Generation of Equality, commit to:

Stand up, speak out:

- We commit to create safe spaces for people to raise their voices and seize every chance to stand against female genital mutilation, child marriage, teenage pregnancy and maternal death.
- We commit to talk about sexual and reproductive rights through different mediums and around the world, to facilitate discussions around bodily autonomy in our communities, and to teach people about their rights and how to fight for them.
- We commit to advocate for programs on comprehensive sexuality education in schools, access to contraceptive methods and push for the social and legal decriminalization of abortion in our countries.



Change the rules:

- By spreading the word and inviting women, non-binary and gender-diverse leaders to join the movement, we commit to promoting equitable distribution of powers and making decision-making positions more accessible.
- We commit to advocate for the decriminalisation of bodies and gender-based approaches in formulating public policies in favour of women, girls and queer people.
- We commit to challenge traditional hierarchical power structures put in place by governments and donor agencies by directly partnering with grassroot level organisations in our communities.

Unlock resources:

- We commit to develop young feminist networks to redefine political strategies and landscapes aiming to advance sexual and reproductive rights and bodily autonomy.
- We commit to build on our mutual connections, to expand, promote and call for international and regional cooperation for gender equality.

“To move forward, we aspire”



We are moving forward, and we are not walking alone!

We call for international and regional cooperation with grassroots organisations and other activists for gender equality. **We need to foster young feminist networks and build stronger connections between different generations within the international feminist movement.**

We call for those advocating for gender equality to use their positions to meaningfully involve us at all levels, by opening doors so that we can take a seat at the table to defend our rights. Moreover, we call for them to speak up for us and build inclusive narratives that lead to social de-stigmatization of bodily autonomy.

Finally, we call for political and financial support to make laws, policies and services just, so that women and young people can finally decide about their bodies.



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The global curators jointly authored the global vision statement based on contributions from all of the other 25x25s in their respective regions.