

**HOW
SHE DECIDES
DRIVES
CHANGE**

She  **Decides.**

WHO WE ARE

SheDecides is a global political movement driving change for bodily autonomy, fuelled by actions in communities with young people at its heart. SheDecides was launched at the start of 2017 and has since grown to include movements and activists championing the fight for bodily autonomy in countries around the world. Together, we are guided by the vision in the SheDecides Manifesto: a new normal where girls and women decide about their bodies, their lives, their futures. Without question.

SheDecides Stands Up and Speaks Out to create a New Normal

Girls and women do not own the narratives that surround their bodies, or connect with the technical language that is often used to describe their bodies or their lived experience. They are not in positions of power, and are often excluded from spaces that decide about their bodies and lives. Their autonomy is continuously under threat by those who think they should not decide, and the social norms that restrict bodily autonomy.

SheDecides is a global movement of people willing to Stand Up and Speak Out for her right to decide. SheDecides exists to create a world that is better, stronger and safer. To build this New Normal, the movement works to directly influence how we think about, talk about and act on bodily autonomy.

We recognise that change is a continuous process; that it is both individual and collective; that it happens in many different processes and takes on many different shapes.

SheDecides helps to drive this change by connecting people and movements with each other, to those in positional power, and to the resources required for women and girls and to subvert and disrupt harmful norms.

WHAT BODILY AUTONOMY MEANS TO US

We decide what we do with our bodies, and what does or does not happen to our bodies. When we have bodily autonomy, we have the power and freedom to make decisions about our wellbeing; our relationships and our futures; and we are supported to fulfil those decisions free from fear and judgement.

The *SheDecides Manifesto* sets out this vision and acts as a galvanizing force for the movement. It has young people at its heart, but it brings together all those who believe that respecting her rights improves her health, life and future – and those of her family, community and society: young leaders; long-time activists; emerging leaders; artists; service providers; policy makers; politicians; and academics.

HOW SHEDECIDES BRINGS ABOUT CHANGE

1 THE STORY OF SELF

SheDecides works to create, or support, **brave and inclusive spaces** where women and girls are encouraged to join in, **in whichever form** and at whatever moment, and **whomever they are**.

Joining in can take many different shapes, but what is important is that **moment of awakening** which spurs action. That is when a person connects their personal experience to the wider political context, and starts to share experiences about their bodies, relationships and health in their **stories of self**. In these spaces, people can **learn, share, and be inspired** to participate in action to advance bodily autonomy.

SheDecides believes that by sharing personal stories free from fear and shame, women and girls can recognise how political choices and powerful narratives **shape their own experiences**, and **demand to be included** in discussions and decisions that affect their lives.

SheDecides activists will strengthen their personal power to tell their own stories and create their own spaces to shape their health, lives and futures.

2 THE STORY OF US

SheDecides **creates connections** between people—individual people and collective movements—and institutions, to take action on bodily autonomy issues.

Through these connections, activists **come together** to find a way to **stand up and speak out** about their **story of us**, promote their narratives, and take collective disruptive action.

SheDecides believes that by joining together, activists can build **collective power** to plan action, and work their way around in political contexts, to **reclaim their stories** and their bodies.

In doing so, the movement can inspire and engage new people to join together to demand the right to bodily autonomy.

3 THE STORY OF CHANGE

SheDecides **links activists with allies** also working on bodily autonomy issues to expand the space where they can Stand Up and Speak Out together.

SheDecides believes that in these spaces activists can own their **stories of change**, in the face of opposition and threats. By speaking out in a **new, powerful language**, they not only change the conversation, they shape it. They shatter stereotypes to **stand up in moments of solidarity**, in places they are typically excluded from, **to tell a new story that challenges traditional ways of thinking** about, and power over, gender topics.

This new language **changes the game**. It recognises their **transformative power** as leaders of the conversation. It recognises the **legitimacy of their experiences**. It brings them together as a force, fueled by evidence-based outrage and focused on **hope**, which demands their right to make decisions about their bodies, their lives and their futures.

Context

- Girls & women are not in positions of power
- Movements are disconnected, under-resourced and under threat
- Conservative forces coordinate efforts to restrict bodily autonomy
- Social norms restrict bodily autonomy
- Girls & women do not connect with technical discourses about their rights

SheDecides can:

- Access positional power
- Connect movements to each other and resources
- Mobilise different actors
- Subvert norms
- Engage girls and women



Medium-term Outcomes

SheDecides activists **understand** how political choices and powerful narratives affect their experience and **demand to be included** in discussions and decisions that affect their lives.

Growing numbers of SheDecides activists **come together, promote** their narratives, and **take collective disruptive action** for bodily autonomy.

Increased **constituency** of diverse people, groups, movements and institutions who are supportive of bodily autonomy and can respond to threats.

Increased **relevant discussions and decision making spaces** where women, girls and young people are included and leading.

Issues are in the public and political agenda **framed** in a supportive way.

Long-term Outcomes

SheDecides activists **develop** themselves, **build** their own narratives and claim their space in shaping their diverse realities.

SheDecides activists **join** with others to **build** collective power, **plan actions** together to **reclaim** their stories and their bodies, and **inspire** and **engage** new people.

SheDecides **disrupts** spaces of power and **subverts** gender norms.

GOAL

Girls & women set the terms of the debate, and the framing of discussions, about their bodies and health

Unlock Resources

Finding support for bodily autonomy

Strong & inclusive movement for autonomy built

VISION

Bodily Autonomy

Change the rules

Power rebalanced

Socio-cultural norms changed

Laws and policies changed

- Values**
- We stand in **solidarity** with people who believe in bodily autonomy everywhere
 - We work together as **equals**
 - We practice **intersectionality**, bringing our full selves to our work everyday
 - We are honest about our mistakes and together we **learn and grow** from them

What **SheDecides** stands for

SheDecides' work is guided by our founding values. These values were developed in a process that involved people from across the movement: grassroots activists to government Champions, SheDecides Support Unit members to young leaders. This process was modelled on the way that feminists are seen to organise; with processes that recognise people's full selves, and that value their contribution as equals.

These values support our approach which is explicitly political, understanding of different contexts, and powered by people everywhere taking action for bodily autonomy. They allow us to be more responsive to movements across the world and to work with them as equals, with common purpose and a shared sense of ownership.

- We **stand in solidarity with people** who believe in bodily autonomy, everywhere.
- We **work together as equals**.
- We **recognise the many different disadvantages** and experiences that affect the identities of people and communities. We **appreciate the deeper understanding** that it brings about the complex issues people face when taking action for bodily autonomy. And we **work to support people and communities** as they take action, whoever and wherever they are.
- We are **honest about our mistakes** and together we learn and grow from them.

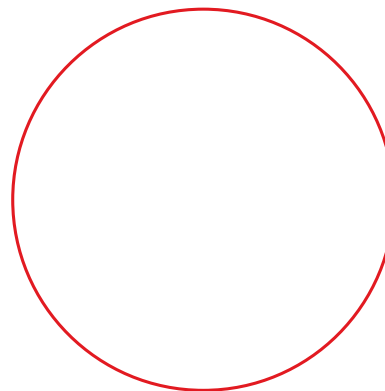
How we work

SheDecides is built in a way that is flexible, creative and encourages freedom.

It is different from international non-governmental organisations and UN agencies, but it complements the technical policy work and global diplomacy that these organisations promote by building supportive power, coordinating action to challenge established norms and pressure power establishments, and growing influential movements for bodily autonomy.

It includes:

- **Anyone** who signs the SheDecides manifesto and is committed to standing up and speaking out
- **Activists, organizers and young leaders** from around the world, who are leading action for bodily autonomy in their communities and countries
- **Influential individuals** who are from diverse backgrounds—some representing governments or organisations—who act alone and together to propel us toward a reality where every girl and every woman has power over her body. Without question.



The **SheDecides Support Unit (SDSU)**
is a hub for the SheDecides movement.

We support anyone who believes in the SheDecides vision – people who want to start organizing and leaders who are already doing so to unite in collective youth led action to advance bodily autonomy worldwide.

We offer ongoing tailored and flexible support to develop individual and collective narratives, build on leadership journeys and strategize and support the development of organizing structures to take collective action.

To learn more about organising,
contact us on info@shedecides.com

www.shedecides.com

