Support for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Sub-Saharan Africa: A New Index Based on World Values Survey Data

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Guttmacher-Lancet definition of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

*Sexual and reproductive health is a state of physical, emotional, mental, and social **well-being in relation to all aspects of sexuality and reproduction**, not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction, or infirmity.*

*A positive approach to sexuality and reproduction should recognize the part played by pleasurable sexual relationships, trust, and communication in the promotion of self-esteem and **overall well-being**.*

*All individuals have a **right to make decisions** governing their bodies and to access services that support that right.*

*Achievement of sexual and reproductive **health** relies on the realization of sexual and reproductive **rights**.*

Agenda 2030 and SRHR

✓ Eliminate violence against women and girls
✓ Eliminate all harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation/cutting
✓ Reduce maternal deaths
✓ Ensure universal access to SRHR

Towards ZERO
Unmet need for family planning

Towards ZERO
Preventable maternal deaths

Towards ZERO
Gender-based violence and harmful practices

Knowledge gaps

- Social norms are a barrier/enabler of SRHR, but there is no global baseline for SRHR social norms

- Existing data cover limited aspects of SRHR and/or limited subpopulations

- Need for comprehensive measures to tap into intersecting dimensions of SRHR
  - ➢ Across whole populations
  - ➢ In Sub-Saharan Africa
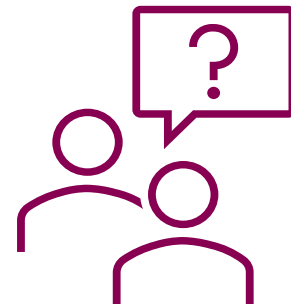
Social norms are …

- … the unwritten social expectations or rules that influence behavior by prescribing what is expected, allowed, or sanctioned in specific circumstances
- … both harmful and supportive
- … open to change

➤ *Not systematically, comprehensively measured for SRHR quantitively across settings and time, incl. areas with most needs*
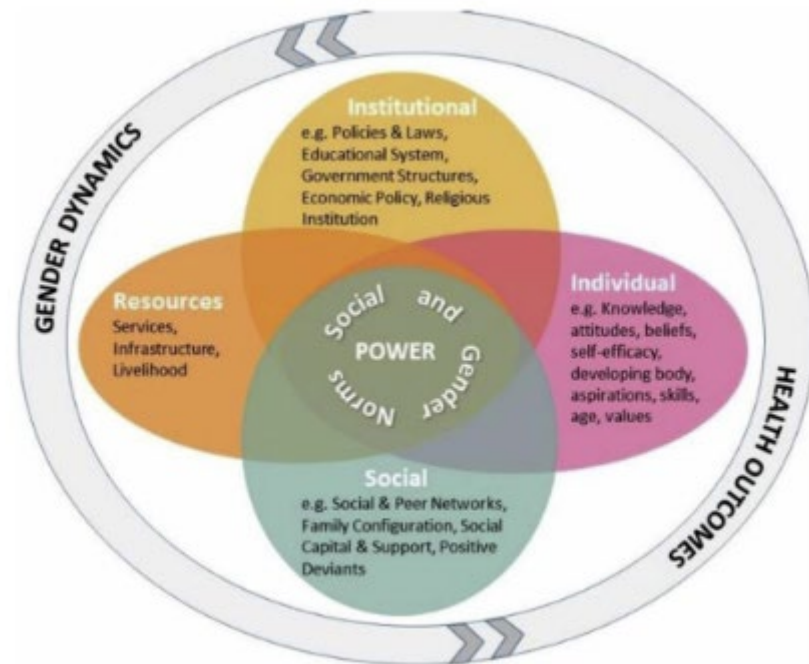

Figure 1. Conceptual framework highlighting centrality of social and gender norms, and power, for ASRH.

*To identify an **Index of Support for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)** that can be compared across countries and over time, based on data from the World Values Survey*

Contributing to closing a relevant data gap
using an instrument at scale

Informing interventions, policies
and programs

Contributing to achieving
the Sustainable Development Goals

*"Without gender data, there is no credible
path to achieving the SDGs. Today, we
lack data to monitor 80% of the indicators
for SDG 5 on gender equality"*
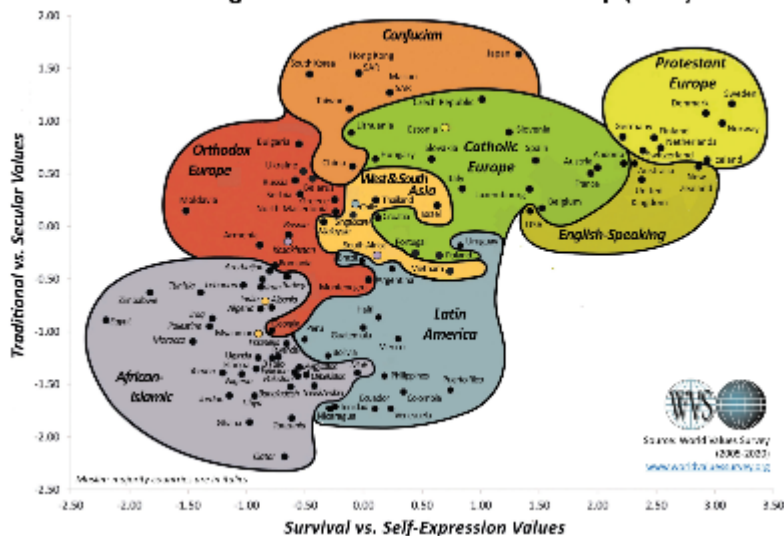
Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN WOMEN

World Values Survey

- ⑩ Population-representative samples on social norms and values
- ⑩ 500.000 face-to-face interviews, in >90 countries, since 1981
- ⑩ Open access to all time series data, online analysis tool
- ⑩ Actionable input for research, advocacy & policy

www.worldvaluessurvey.org

The Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map (2020)

World Values Survey Coverage

Karolinska Institutet

**Grey countries
=
No WVS data**

Study Setting and Data Collection in wave 7 of WVS

2020
- Ethiopia   n = 1,230

2020
- Zimbabwe   n = 1,215

2021
- Kenya   n = 1,266

n = 3,711

Men and women
Aged >18 years
Nationally representative sampling

1. Local teams of trained interviewers
2. Translated to all languages spoken by >15% of the population
3. Oral informed consent
4. Rigorous data safety mechanisms
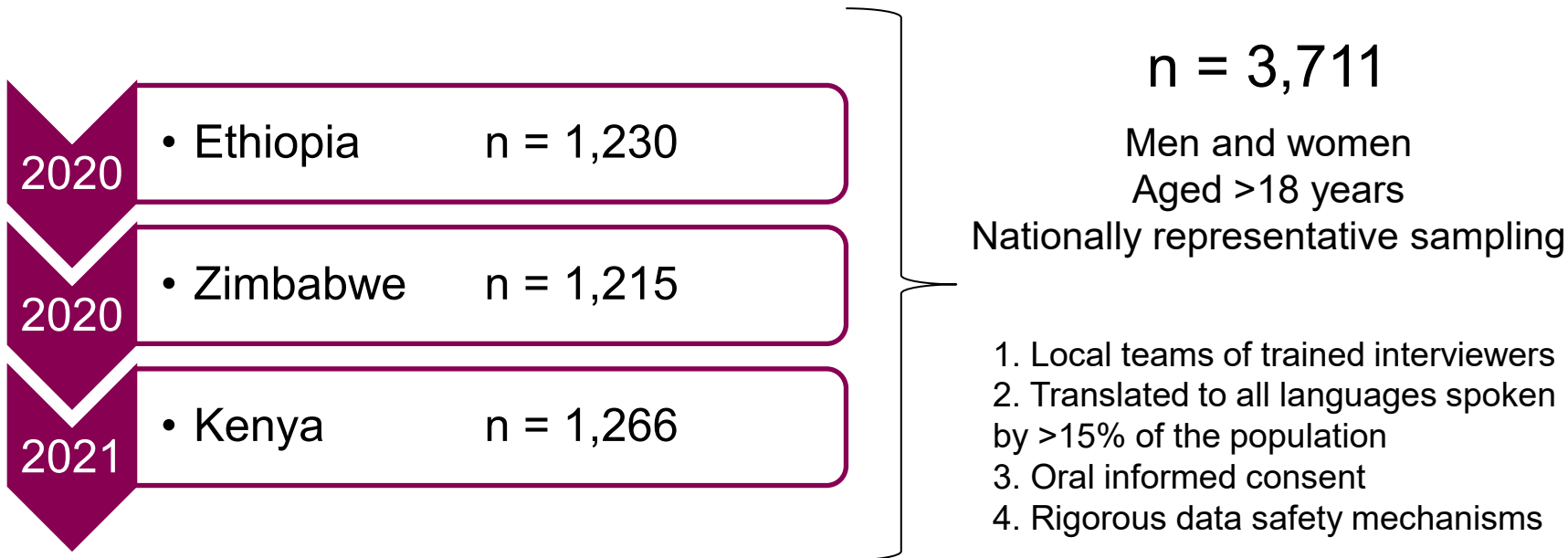
Measures

WVS Core Questionnaire

- 290 Likert items
  - → Democracy/corruption
  - → Security
  - → Migration
  - → Women's role in society
  - → Life satisfaction/happiness
  - → Religious values
  - → Social capital & confidence in institutions

"Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?"

SRHR & Gender Module

- 50+ Likert items
- Previously validated
  - → Gender roles
  - → LGBTQ rights
  - → Early marriage and childbearing
  - → Comprehensive sexuality education
  - → Contraception and abortion
  - → Infertility
  - → Perceived level of free choice and control over reproduction

"Contraceptives should be available for everyone, whether or not one is married"

LACK OF ITEMS FOCUSING ON SRHR

Statistical analysis (step 1)

- Exploratory factor analysis
- Polychoric correlations, principal component analysis (PCA), scree plots, and parallel analysis (PA) for initial assessment
- Iterated principal factors (IPF) with oblique rotation to determine the appropriate number of factors
- Criteria:
  - Parsimony
  - Factors with at least three items loading >0.40 and item uniqueness of <0.70
  - Conceptually meaningful
 - Cronbach's α of ≥0.7

Statistical analysis (step 2)

- Multivariate linear regression models to assess scoring on the Index
- Sociodemographic covariates
  - Age groups
  - Sex/gender
  - Place of residence
  - Highest educational level
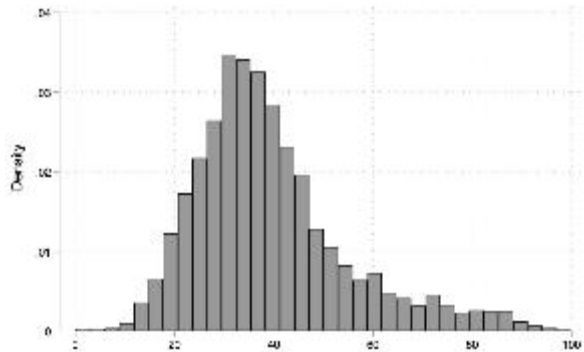 - Relationship status

SRHR Support Index

- A 23-item five-factor solution (Cronbach's alpha=0.80)

    1. Sexual and reproductive rights
    2. Neighborhood sexual safety
    3. Gender-equitable relationships
    4. Masculinity norms
    5. SRHR interventions
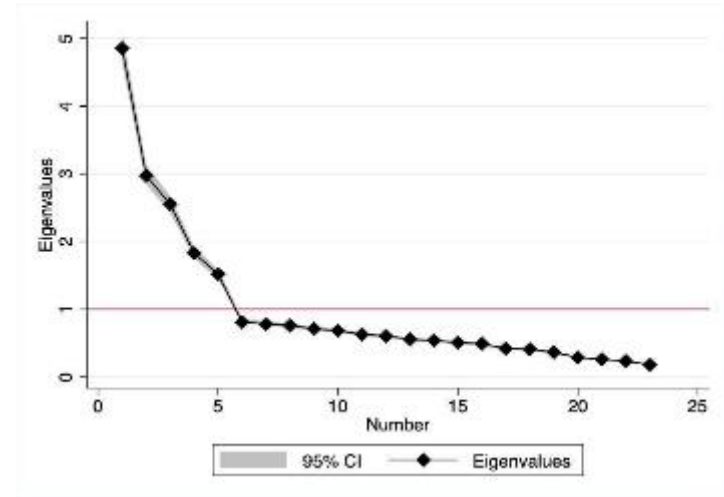
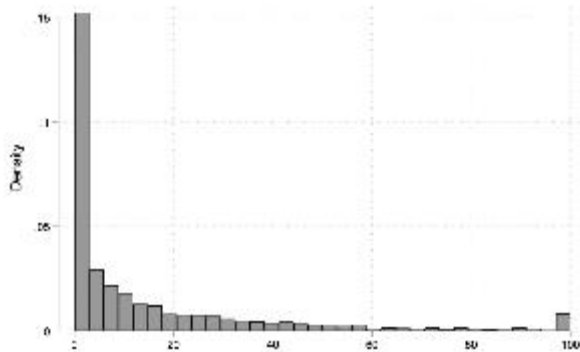> Combined into a comprehensive "SRHR Support Index", standardized on a 1–100 scale with higher values indicating more support for SRHR
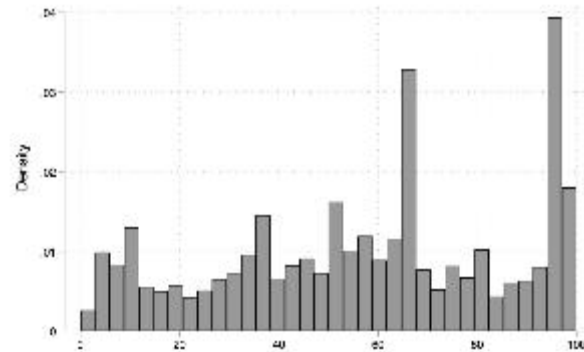
SRHR Support Index –
Distribution of Support per Sub-index

SRHR Support Index

Sub-index 1: Sexual & Reproductive Rights

Sub-index 2: Neighborhood Sexual Safety
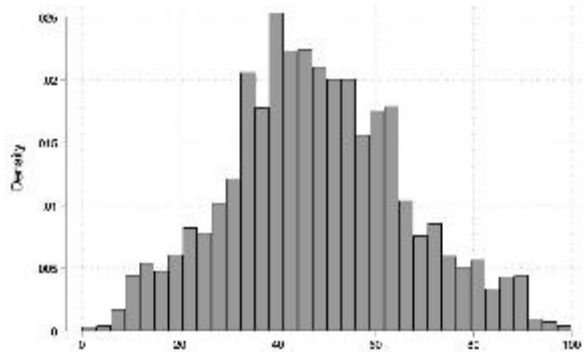
Sub-index 3: Gender-Equitable Relationships
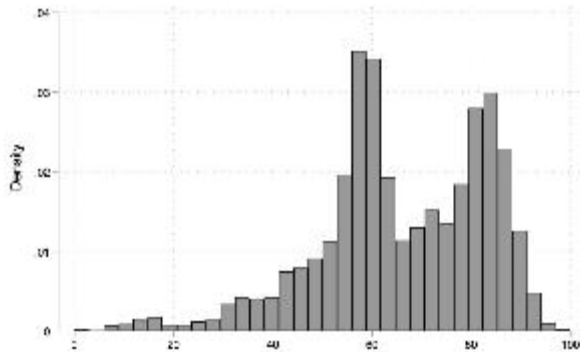
Sub-index 4: Masculinity Norms
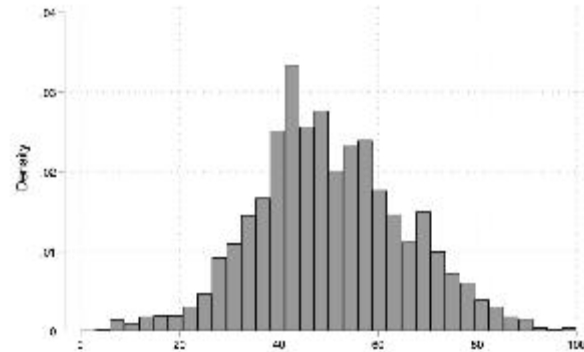
Sub-index 5: SRHR Interventions

Variations across countries and subgroups

- Kenya (45.48, SD=16.78)
- Ethiopia (40.2, SD=13.63)
- Zimbabwe (32.65, SD=13.77)

➢ Highly educated, urban & single individuals were more supportive of SRHR (except in Ethiopia)

➢ Support did not differ significantly by sex

➢ Among men, younger age and urban residence were linked to more support for SRHR

Strengths of the SRHR Support Index

- A comprehensive measure of support for SRHR
- Based on nationally representative data
- Robust across countries and population subgroups
- Can be used to track progress over time

The SRHR Support Index …

➢ … can be used as a **baseline** if integrated into global surveys for trends analysis and facilitates future research on SRHR norms and values

➢ … offers a tool to **further advance our understanding of attitudes and norms as barriers or facilitators to SRHR globally**, thereby guiding the tailoring of interventions and policy

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Thank you!

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Table 2 Exploratory factor analysis

Guttmacher-Lancet SRHR dimension	Variable	Loading
	FACTOR 1: Sexual and Reproductive Rights	
Non-discrimination related to sexuality, sexual orientation, and gender identity	Justifiable: Homosexuality	0.86
Reproductive empowerment	Justifiable: Abortion	0.84
Consensual, non-violent relationships	Justifiable: Prostitution	0.88
	Justifiable: For a man to beat his wife	0.72
	Justifiable: Divorce	0.66
Satisfying sexual life	Justifiable: Sex before marriage	0.76
	Justifiable: Having casual sex	0.83
	FACTOR 2: Neighborhood Sexual Safety	
Consensual, non-violent relationships	How often in neighborhood: Sexual assault/rape	0.71
	How often in neighborhood: Women and girls trading sex for money	0.83
	How often in neighborhood: Men and boys hurting women and girls	0.92
	How often in neighborhood: Men and boys making unwanted sexual comments or gestures toward girls or women	0.87

Table 2 Exploratory factor analysis (continued)

Guttmacher–Lancet SRHR dimension	Variable	Loading
	FACTOR 3: Gender-Equitable Relationships	
Gender-equitable relationships	A man should always have the final say about decisions in his relationship or marriage	0.56
	There is no doubt that gainful employment is good but that what most women really want is a home and children	0.73
	On the whole, family life suffers when women work full time	0.58
	It is a man's job to earn money and a woman's job to take care of home and family	0.67
Consensual, non-violent relationships	If a man has a girlfriend or wife, he should know where she is all the time	0.60
	FACTOR 4: Masculinity Norms	
Gender-equitable relationships	A man who talks a lot about his worries, fears, and problems doesn't reserve respect	0.54
	A real man should have as many sexual partners as he can	0.79
	A man should use violence, to get respect, if necessary	0.82
	FACTOR 5: SRHR Interventions	
Reproductive empowerment	Women should have access to safe abortion services to terminate an unwanted pregnancy	0.53
	Contraceptives should be available for everyone, whether or not one is married	0.58
	A couple who cannot conceive should have access to infertility services	0.60
SRH information	Sexual education helps people make informed decisions	0.62

Table 1 Sociodemographic characteristics of the study sample (n=3,113)

Variable	n	%
Age		
18–24	862	27.69
25–29	614	19.72
30–39	776	24.93
40–49	426	13.68
50+	435	13.97
Sex		
Man	1,595	51.24
Woman	1,518	48.76
Place of residence		
Urban	1,205	38.71
Rural	1,908	61.29
Relationship status		
Married or cohabiting	1,843	59.20
Divorced, separated, or widowed	313	10.05
Single	957	30.74
Education		
Primary or lower	1,512	48.57
Secondary	1,092	35.08
Tertiary	509	16.35
Country		
Ethiopia	945	30.36
Kenya	1,011	32.48
Zimbabwe	1,157	37.17
TOTAL	**3,113**	**100.00**

Table 3 Summary statistics of the SRHR Support Index and its five subindices

Population	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	IQR
SRHR Support Index (Cronbach's α=0.80)				
Total population	39.19	15.27	36.22	28.93;46.04
Ethiopia	40.41	13.63	37.93	32.94;43.74
Kenya	45.48	16.78	43.54	33.20;55.98
Zimbabwe	32.65	13.77	30.06	23.72;37.38
Men	39.24	15.72	36.27	28.97;46.02
Women	39.12	15.76	36.18	28.82;45.92
Subindex 1: Sexual and Reproductive Rights (Cronbach's α=0.92)				
Total population	15.75	23.56	4.67	0.89;20.76
Ethiopia	9.95	22.69	1.01	0.71;7.34
Kenya	26.38	22.82	21.22	7.38;41.05
Zimbabwe	11.13	21.69	1.27	0.86;9.51
Men	16.38	23.36	5.47	0.90;22.71
Women	15.06	23.73	3.87	0.87;18.38
Subindex 2: Neighborhood Sexual Safety (Cronbach's α=0.86)				
Total population	57.30	28.76	59.45	35.88;81.48
Ethiopia	76.10	23.83	85.29	62.39;96.58
Kenya	52.59	27.13	56.16	31.54;70.86
Zimbabwe	46.09	26.19	46.38	27.01;65.28
Men	57.76	28.16	59.42	36.43;81.71
Women	56.82	29.38	59.47	34.86;81.20

Table 3 Summary statistics (continued)

Population	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	IQR
Subindex 3: Gender–Equitable Relationship (Cronbach's α=0.71)				
Total population	48.01	18.20	47.03	35.71;60.22
Ethiopia	49.36	19.11	48.29	36.46;61.45
Kenya	55.33	16.81	55.91	43.90;66.07
Zimbabwe	40.47	15.54	39.82	32.01;49.54
Men	47.56	18.34	46.47	35.35;59.62
Women	48.48	18.05	47.43	36.17;60.80
Subindex 4: Masculinity Norms (Cronbach's α=0.65)				
Total population	65.97	16.93	64.81	56.34;81.01
Ethiopia	68.68	16.47	70.39	58.19;82.96
Kenya	63.10	18.45	63.04	53.17;79.06
Zimbabwe	66.28	15.46	63.49	56.65;80.26
Men	64.56	17.22	62.98	55.41;80.02
Women	67.47	16.48	67.85	57.41;81.89
Subindex 5: SRHR Interventions (Cronbach's α=0.57)				
Total population	50.26	15.28	48.79	40.41;60.00
Ethiopia	51.03	14.86	51.76	41.48;60.74
Kenya	53.25	18.10	53.12	39.91;66.82
Zimbabwe	47.01	11.95	45.88	40.06;54.36
Men	50.97	15.38	49.81	40.98;60.47
Women	49.53	15.15	48.05	39.62;59.34

Table A4 Correlation matrix of scores derived from the final five-factor model

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Factor 1	1				
Factor 2	-0.03	1			
Factor 3	0.11	0.11	1		
Factor 4	-0.13	0.05	0.30	1	
Factor 5	0.15	-0.03	0.18	0.20	1

Original WVS sample n=3,711
Ethiopia=1,230
Kenya=1,266
Zimbabwe=1,215

Excluding 45 respondents with less than 25% response rate on SRHR module items n=3,666
Ethiopia=1,223
Kenya=1,228
Zimbabwe=1,215

Sample included in final five-factor solution and SRHR Norms Index n=3,135
Ethiopia=949
Kenya=1,023
Zimbabwe=1,163

Sample included in the regression models n=3,113
Ethiopia=945
Kenya=1,011
Zimbabwe=1,157