

My name is Rose Wakikona from the Republic of Uganda, and I am speaking on behalf of the Women Probono Initiative, a partner of Fòs Feminista, an International Alliance for sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice.

Fòs Feminista welcomes this year's theme, which provides an opportunity to highlight achievements, gaps, and opportunities to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights for women, girls, and gender-diverse people.

In Africa, the Addis Ababa Declaration for Population and Development has provided strategic direction for integrating population concerns into national development plans. Positive developments on the continent include 25 countries banning female genital mutilation. Further progress includes decreases in child mortality and HIV/AIDS infection rates and increases in school enrollment rates and access to skilled birth attendants.

While these are important advances, a recently published regional report by the Fòs Feminista identifies gaps reported by partners in accountability and transparency of implementation, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, inequalities and abuses to the rights of women, girls, and gender diverse people, and insufficient data for policy reform. The current reality of poly-crises, consisting of pandemic, conflict and climate change, are widening these gaps, especially for structurally marginalized populations.

While we noted that progress has been made on banning female genital mutilation, we are concerned about the rollback of the law in Gambia which can overturn the gains made in the region. Thus, we are also concerned about the lack of political will to implement key continental commitments like the Maputo Protocol and the Abuja Declaration.

Persistent gaps in policy formulation, monitoring, and accountability, along with disjointed coordination among national agencies, resistance to civil society, dependence on foreign aid, and economic austerity measures hinder governments' ability to improve access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

We therefore call on Member States to take the following key actions:

- Ensure and facilitate inter-sectoral action and collaboration between government entities to ensure effective coordination and translate global commitments into national and local implementation.
- Scale and sustain investments in transparent national monitoring, evaluation and data collection systems to identify populations and issues that need further attention and thus ensure the implementation of the Program of Action.
- Protect, respect and fulfill the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women, girls and gender-diverse people, as well as protecting the gains made to fulfill these rights, as central to the International Conference on Population and Development, and curtail the operations of anti-rights and anti-gender movements.