

Statement of the Generation Equality Forum (GEF) Action Coalition on Bodily Autonomy and SRHR on the Overturn of *Roe v. Wade*

August 2, 2022.- The Generation Equality Forum (GEF) Action Coalition on Bodily Autonomy and SRHR is gravely concerned about the pushback against women and girls' reproductive rights and justice, in particular the United States (US) Supreme Court's decision *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* overturning *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, which guaranteed and reaffirmed, respectively, the constitutional right to abortion in the United States.

We are deeply concerned by indications that this decision could lead to more than half of the states in the United States to quickly move to ban abortion, leaving at least 36 million women of reproductive age without access to safe and legal abortion. The direct consequences of this decision will negatively affect millions of lives in the United States, particularly women.

We know from decades of experience that decisions like these not only erode or eliminate access to critical reproductive health care services but also contribute to abortion stigma and discrimination against health providers and people seeking care. This can also have far-reaching effects on reproductive health and bodily autonomy and can lead to increased rates of maternal morbidities and mortalities, adolescent pregnancy, and disruption in life projects of young people, with a significant impact on their economic autonomy, security, safety and access to opportunities. Moreover, the revocation of a right recognized and exercised for nearly 50 years signals a precedent that could reinforce stigma and influence policy decisions around abortion rights globally and stands in stark contrast to recent changes made in other countries, such as Argentina, Benin, Kenya, Colombia, Mexico, and Thailand, to liberalize abortion laws.

We emphasize that abortion bans do not reduce the number of abortions people have, but only result in the isolation and criminalization of providers and people seeking care. No one should fear arrest or punishment for providing or accessing essential health care. The precedent set through this decision is in direct contradiction to the ICPD Programme of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action emphasis on reducing unsafe abortions, as well as Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 5 on health and gender equality, respectively, and the recently updated World Health Organization's Abortion Care Guidelines.

Despite this development and others that criminalize and restrict abortion, we believe that the global feminist movement for reproductive rights and bodily autonomy is stronger than ever. The GEF Action Coalition on Bodily Autonomy and SRHR is a testament to that, having collectively renewed our strong commitment to women's rights to dignity, bodily autonomy, and control over their bodies and pledging to work around four key actions including increasing the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and the quality of abortion services. We are encouraged by the continued efforts of government officials, parliamentarians, civil society organizations, and other actors all over the world working towards removing barriers to access comprehensive abortion care.

At a time of ongoing, compounding crises, reproductive rights for all are not negotiable and should not be rolled back anywhere. We are committed to meeting this moment and driving forward our Global Acceleration Plan, a visionary agenda for gender equality, so that women, girls, and all people in their diversity can fully exercise their right to bodily autonomy and SRHR.

Issued on behalf of the Action Coalition on Bodily Autonomy and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. Opinions expressed are that of the Action Coalition, a multi-stakeholder coalition of governments, civil society, private sector, youth, philanthropic, and multilateral agencies participating in Generation Equality.