



RENEW

RENEW/C&S/IPPF-DFAT/2023/

8th September 2023

Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Branch
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade RG Casey Building
John McEwen Crescent Barton
ACT 0221
Australia

Dear DFAT Gender Branch,

As Executive Director of RENEW (Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women), I am pleased to make a submission to inform consultation on the DFAT International Gender Equality Strategy.

RENEW is a strong advocate for Gender Equality and Sexual and Reproductive rights in Bhutan. We are a key government partner and trusted provider of Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services across the country.

We appreciate DFAT's ongoing support of RENEW's work on SGBV and SRH and also in the region and welcome this opportunity to make a submission.

As a Member Association of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, we support the key recommendations made by IPPF in their submission to DFAT:

1. Australia should affirm its position as a strong leader and champion of sexual and reproductive health and rights as integral to the achievement of gender equality.

- Advance sexual and reproductive health and rights within the International Gender Equality strategy, recognising it as fundamental to the achievement of Universal Health Coverage.
- Boldly support the adoption of policy and legislative frameworks to advance, promote, and protect sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.
- Ensure DFAT Development Partnership Plans include gender equality objectives and outcomes, including sexual and reproductive health and rights.

2. Australia should adopt a gender-transformative, decolonising approach across all programming

- Prioritise genuine partnerships with local civil society, feminist organisations and sexual and reproductive health providers to inform gender responsive programming.
- Strengthen the integration of sexual and reproductive health and rights within climate adaptation, disaster resilience building and emergency response programming.
- Ensure programming to address sexual and gender-based violence takes a rights-based approach and includes access to sexual and reproductive health services.

3. Australia should increase investment in targeted tools and interventions to advance sexual and reproductive rights health and rights and drive gender equality.



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- Support a shift in gender norms and improve the sexual and reproductive health outcomes for young people through the acceleration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).
 - Increase investment in digital health interventions to support gender inclusive access to sexual and reproductive health information and services.

Feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss further.

Kind regards,

(Tshering Dolkar)
Executive Director