

www.fiapac.org

Fertility control into the hands of women

8-10 September 2022, Riga, Latvia



Promoting safe abortion

Teresa Bombas

MD, Coimbra University Medical Center, Portugal

Chair from Safe Abortion Committe



Background



FIGO is proud to represent national societies of obstetricians and gynecologists in more than 130 countries and territories.



FIGO's diverse membership, along with our global reach and connections with other world organizations, strengthens our position *as the global voice for women's health.*



FIGO Divisions and Committe



Division of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Wellbeing

This division works to empower women to make conscious, healthy and respectful choices about their sexuality, relationships and reproductive lives, including when, if and how they wish to become pregnant.

Division Director

Dr Ivonne Diaz Yamal, Colombia

GLOBAL TRENDS: ABORTION RIGHTS

Only four countries have removed legal grounds for abortion since 1994, while 58 countries have liberalized their abortion laws to expand the grounds for legal abortion.

4



58

Regressions

Progressions

Removal of legal grounds for abortion since 1994:

- United States
- El Salvador
- Nicaragua
- Poland

Liberalizations in abortion law since 1994:



Abortion Committee?



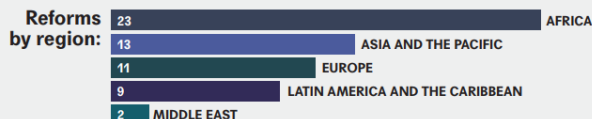
According to WHO:

- Globally, *25 million unsafe abortions occur each year*, causing approximately **39,000 deaths**.
- Nearly every death and injury resulting from unsafe abortion is preventable.*

CENTER for REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

25 of the 58 countries have reformed their laws to broadly permit abortion

SOURCE: WORLD ABORTION LAWS MAP GRAPHIC: MSJONESNYC



global voice for women's health



Why a Safe Abortion Committee?



The committee will contribute to this global work on safe abortion by:

- Supporting member societies in their *advocacy work to promote access to legal and safe abortion*;
- Supporting member societies to deliver *training programs on abortion and post abortion health care* to ensure that every woman and girl receives appropriate abortion care – including through telemedicine;
- Promoting *the importance of incorporating sexual and reproductive health and rights education* (including safe abortion as essential health care) *into the core medical school curricula, post-graduate training and Continuous Medical Education*;



FIGO[®]
International Federation of
Gynecology and Obstetrics

the global voice for women's health



FIGO promote the use of :



World Health
Organization

human
reproduction
programme
hrp.
research for impact

Abortion
care guideline

The [WHO's new guidelines](#) – which provide recommendations spanning clinical practice, health service delivery, and legal and policy interventions to support quality abortion care – provide a landmark tool to enable our member societies, OBGYNs and nations to move collectively towards meeting the needs of women and girls and eliminating unsafe abortion.



FIGO[®]
International Federation of
Gynecology and Obstetrics

the global voice for women's health



FIGO Joined



#BreakTheBias: Fulfilling adolescents’ right to access abortion and contraception

Ahead of this year’s International Women’s Day, with the theme #BreakTheBias,



On 5 April 2022, FIGO joined the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), IPAS Partners for Reproductive Justice (IPAS), and MSI Reproductive Choices (MSI) in the launch of a joint initiative “[Defending the Frontline Defenders of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights](#)”.



Joint Statement

June 2022

As the US Supreme Court overturns Roe v Wade, global health care organisations call on all governments to defend access to safe and quality abortion care

As organisations dedicated to providing and supporting health care, we know that restrictive laws do not reduce the need for abortion care. Rather, such laws increase inequities in access, stigmatisation and criminalisation; and put women, girls and pregnant people at risk.



FIGO

Advocating for Safe Abortion Project



Advocating for Safe Abortion Project

FIGO's Advocating for Safe Abortion Project works on international, regional and national levels to improve access to safe, quality abortion services.

The Project team works closely with the [FIGO Committee on Safe Abortion](#) on communications and advocacy campaigns, statements, training and implementation of WHO best-practice guidelines.



FIGO[®] the global voice for women's health
International Federation of
Gynecology and Obstetrics



FIGO Statement: Calls for the Total Decriminalisation of Safe Abortion



Global evidence

- Restricting abortion with laws does not lead to fewer abortions
- But a shift from unsafe abortion to safe abortion, often accompanied by comprehensive services that allow women to receive contraceptive counselling that further prevents unwanted pregnancies.
- Current abortion laws around the world impose restrictions that are not clinically evidence-based and inevitably cause preventable delays and harm



International Federation of
Gynecology and Obstetrics

Position

- The provision of safe abortion is time-sensitive, essential health care.
- Safe abortion care should be available on request, universally affordable, and accessible – as early as possible and as late as necessary.
- **Decriminalization removes stigma, widening access to safe care**

the global voice for women's health

Recommendations

- **Total decriminalization of abortion**
- Abortion should be removed from criminal law and regulated by laws consistent with every other medical procedure.
- the removal of all unnecessary clinical, bureaucratic, medical and legal restrictions worldwide.
- ensure that health professionals are licensed and trained according to World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines or national standards.



FIGO Statement: Conscientious objection: a barrier to care



Global evidence

- invoking conscientious objection has become a widespread global phenomenon and one that constitutes a barrier to these services .
- by claiming that their right to exercise conscientious objection trumps women's and girls' sexual and reproductive rights

Position

- FIGO regards reproductive autonomy, including access to safe abortion services, as a basic and non-negotiable human right of every woman and girl globally.
- **Essential services cannot be denied. All providers have a professional responsibility to ensure that every patient receives the clinical care they have authorized in the informed consent process.**

Recommendations

- **Providers they must provide appropriate referrals to ensure women and girls in need can access these services in a timely manner.**
- Whenever the exercise of conscientious objection results in delays, increased burdens for women and girls, or no access at all, it should no longer be accepted as conscientious objection but defined as an unjustified denial of health services





FIGO Statement: Improving Access to Abortion Beyond 12 Weeks of Pregnancy



Global evidence

- Worldwide, only 10–15% of abortions are performed beyond 12 weeks of pregnancy.
- However, they represent two-thirds of serious abortion-related complications.

Position

- Induced abortion and post-abortion care beyond 12 weeks of pregnancy are safe and effective procedures when performed using professionally acceptable methods

Recommendations

- Service providers and facility managers should follow the WHO recommendations for safe provision of abortion and post-abortion care, which include the use of mifepristone followed by repeated doses of misoprostol; misoprostol alone; or dilation and evacuation.
- Abortion care beyond 12 weeks of pregnancy should include immediate access to and provision of contraceptive counselling



FIGO Statement: Addressing Barriers to Safe Abortion



Global evidence

- 45% of abortions are not Safe
- 13% Maternal death
- Laws,
- Policies of implementation
- Quality of Services
- Waiting periods
- Gestational age limit
-

Position

- Reproductive autonomy, including access to safe abortion services, to be a basic and non-negotiable human right.
- Abortion is a time sensitive, essential medical service – one that should be provided in accordance with women and girls’ preferences, and with safety, privacy and dignity at the forefront.
- It is an integral part of SRHR, gender equality, reproductive justice and universal access to healthcare.

Recommendations

- We demand that all governments remove the barriers that impede access to safe and effective care, management and timely provision of non-judgmental services – both during COVID-19 and afterwards



the global voice for women's health



FIGO joint Statement:

Contraception and Abortion in sexual and reproductive health education for all medical students (to be publish)



WATOG
World Association of Trainees in Obstetrics and Gynaecology



IFMSA
International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations



FIGO
International Federation of
Gynecology and Obstetrics

Joint statement of support for the inclusion of contraception and abortion in sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing education for all medical students

Inclusion of contraception and abortion in SRHR elements of curricula would provide students with a strong and relevant foundation for their professional lives and prepare them to be competent and caring practitioners. It may also promote the normalisation of, and positive attitudes towards, SRHR as basic medical care – in particular, abortion and contraception. This would contribute to efforts to remove stigma and support the assurance of future provision of essential sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and care across the lifespan.



Thank you and
welcome



FIGO Global Webinar

Abortion and post-abortion contraception: challenges and opportunities

Moderators: Dr Aparna Sridhar and Dr Teresa Bombas

Speakers: Dr Dominique Truan, Dr Ian Askew,
Dr Laura Gil, Dr Dhammika Perera and Dr Samukeliso Dube

Language: English with live interpretation in French and Spanish

#FIGOWebinar

Thursday 15 September 2022, 15:00 UTC+1

Register for free: www.figo.org/upcoming-webinars



FIGO REGIONAL CONGRESS 2022

CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA

3-5 NOV

FIGO XXIV
WORLD CONGRESS OF
GYNECOLOGY AND OBSTETRICS
PARIS 2023

9-13 OCTOBER 2023
SAVE THE DATE