



Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for International Development Cooperation

Dear SRHR partners,

Thank you for the letter ‘A Nordic development agenda for gender equality and SRHR post-COVID-19’, which we have read with great interest and equally great appreciation. Apologies for the belated response.

As a feminist government pursuing a feminist foreign policy, Sweden works consistently to ensure that SRHR are protected and promoted for everyone, including those who live in the most vulnerable situations and are left behind. This is a core part of our work and of agenda-setting, and also of discussions on how we confront the exacerbated situation caused by COVID-19 and build back a better and greener world after the COVID-19 crisis.

Our political commitment to SRHR is also mirrored in our financial support. Sweden, together with the Nordic countries, is consistently among the biggest financial contributors to SRHR, multilaterally as well as bilaterally. Prioritising robust funding of SRHR has become even more crucial as we see that COVID-19 causes a devastating increase in child and maternal deaths.

We continuously work to involve and engage more countries and actors and are grateful for our cooperation with you in this. As we all know, the goals cannot be achieved without the broad and concerted efforts of many interested parties, and we will therefore continue to push the agenda in close cooperation with international organisations and governments, civil society, the private sector, academia, philanthropists and others. Nordic cooperation stands out as particularly robust, as does cooperation with organisations such as yourselves.

Cooperation within the EU is central, as is – equally important when it comes to gender equality and SRHR post-COVID-19 – cross-regional collaboration that also includes the ‘global south’.

The Nordic countries have various networks set up to further bolster collaboration and strengthen our collective voice. A firm Nordic voice on SRHR-related matters – such as a human rights-based approach to development, realising SRHR and gender equality, and strengthening of the global health system – is more important than ever. In these unprecedented times, Nordic collaboration has been further strengthened, with more frequent meetings and activities on more levels than before. For example, Sweden has initiated a network and working group on gender equality and women’s and girls’ rights at ambassador level.

Among other things, the Nordic countries are now focusing on formulating a narrative for Building Back Better and Greener. This narrative has been taken forward by ambassadors and working groups focusing on different issues, including health and gender equality – with SRHR as part of both. Your letter provides very welcome input to this work.

Sweden remains committed in its support to an enabling environment for the existence and meaningful participation of civil society organisations. The work of these organisations is of utmost importance to drive societal change and pressure governments to advance SRHR. We would therefore like to conclude by conveying our sincere gratitude for the fruitful cooperation that we enjoy with your respective organisations. Together, we are stronger and our impact greater, and your contributions to ‘SRHR Team Sweden’ are invaluable, as shown for example at the ICPD +25 commemoration in Nairobi in November.



Ann Linde



Peter Eriksson