



Colloquium on the sexual and reproductive health and rights of vulnerable groups specifically refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers in Africa

Introduction

The year 2024 marks the 10th anniversary of the University of Pretoria's Centre for Human Rights (CHR) Master's Programme in Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Africa (SRRA). To celebrate this occasion, the CHR will host an International Colloquium on the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Vulnerable Groups specifically Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrant Workers in Africa (Colloquium). The event will not only reflect on the progress made in the 10 years of the SRRA Programme but will also, in the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognise that progress is only achieved when vulnerable groups like refugee and migrant workers are not left behind in the enjoyment and realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

Background

The United Nations Sustainable Development Group has set out its vision in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. One of its core principles is to "Leave No One Behind". This transformative promise represents the unequivocal commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, as well as reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine their potential. The "Leave No One Behind" principle compels us to focus on discrimination and inequalities (often multiple and intersecting) that undermine the agency of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers as holders of rights. Many of the barriers refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers face in accessing services, resources, and equal opportunities are not simply

accidents of fate or a lack of availability of resources, but rather the result of discriminatory laws, policies, and social practices that further marginalise them.

The “Leave No One Behind” principle applies equally to SRHR in Africa. Goal 3 of the SDGs emphasises the need to realise universal health care services for all, especially vulnerable and marginalised groups, including refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers. Many refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers in Africa are hindered not only by the general barriers to accessing SRHR but also by additional challenges faced by their vulnerable status. Strong evidence exists to show the disparities in SRHR status among different population groups and subgroups in African countries, particularly among refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers. These groups face discrimination based on additional factors such as ethnicity, status, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity, which results in them being affected by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that produce and reproduce deep inequalities across generations. Various international and regional human rights instruments guarantee the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers. This includes the right to health and SRHR. In addition, many African countries are party to the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa of 1969.

These instruments contain important provisions protecting the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers, including the right to health.

The Colloquium seeks to convene different stakeholders, experts, researchers, and advocates to explore the impact and accessibility of SRHR for vulnerable groups specifically refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers, to ensure that “No One is Left Behind” in the advocacy of SRHR in Africa.

Objectives

The objectives of the Colloquium are as follows:

- To explore the existing legal frameworks relevant to SRHR in Africa, and whether they comprehensively address vulnerable groups such as refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.
- Strategies to be considered in addressing barriers and gaps in protecting the SRHR rights of vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers in Africa.
- To examine the possible limitations and challenges that vulnerable groups of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers face related to SRHR in Africa.
- To facilitate knowledge exchange on best legal practices, policies, and frameworks that can support the implementation of SRHR initiatives aimed at vulnerable groups of refugees, asylum seekers

and migrant workers in Africa.

- To understand the multiple forms of discrimination faced by vulnerable groups such as refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers in the enjoyment of their SRHR.

About the Colloquium

The Colloquium will be held on the 26th and 27th of September 2024 at the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, South Africa. The Colloquium will run for a full day on the 26th of September and a half day on the 27th of September 2024. The Colloquium will end with a celebratory dinner and book launch on the 27th of September 2024. The Colloquium, which seeks to bring scholars, experts, practitioners, and researchers from the African region and beyond, will serve as a forum for scholarly interactions and exchange of ideas. It is anticipated that the papers at the colloquium will be reworked by authors and submitted for consideration for publication in a special issue of the African Human Rights Law Journal. **This will be edited by Satang Nabaneh (Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, satang.nabaneh@up.ac.za) and Ebenezer Durojaye (Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, ebenezer.durojaye@up.ac.za).**

Possible Issues to be covered

The following are mere suggestions rather than an exhaustive list of issues that authors may consider using as focal areas or thematic areas:

- Adequacy of regional and international human rights standards in ensuring the realisation of SRHR of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.
- Analysis of norms and standards at international and regional levels on the SRHR of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.
- Availability of legal, policy, frameworks, and other programs at domestic levels for the realisation of SRHR of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.
- Lessons that can be learned from different regions regarding the protection of SRHR of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.
- Comparative analysis of jurisprudence and norms between two regions on the SRHR of marginalised groups of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.
- Intersectionality in the realisation of access to SRHR of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.
- The access, availability, and quality of the SRHR of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.

- The barriers faced by refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers in realising their SRHR.
- The relevance of strategic litigation in advancing the SRHR of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.
- The role of national institutions and courts in addressing the violations of the SRHR of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.
- The role of regional human rights bodies in advancing the SRHR of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers.

Important Dates

- Kindly send us an abstract of about 400 words by 15 June 2024. Kindly send it to Danielle Visser at Danielle.visser@up.ac.za. The feedback for successful abstracts will be communicated in June 2024.
- The first draft of the paper should be sent to us by 31 August 2024.
- A colloquium will be convened from 26-27 September 2024 to share comments with authors.
- The revised papers should reach us by 15 November 2024.

Guidelines for Authors

On the technical editing side, we prescribe the following requirements:

- Manuscripts should average between 5 000 and 7 000 words (including footnotes) in length. Footnotes must be numbered consecutively. Footnote numbers should be in superscript without any surrounding bracket.
- Each paper should have an introduction and a conclusion.
- Authors should supply a summary of their contributions of not more than 300 words, setting out the main findings and contribution to scholarship.
- Authors are kindly requested to adhere to the house style of Pretoria University Law Press (PULP). We have attached the relevant guidelines which are also available at https://www.ahrlj.up.ac.za/images/ahrlj/PULP_Styleguidelines_2022.pdf.
- To avoid a perennial back and forth between authors and editors,

which has the effect of delaying the editorial and publication process, we implore authors to diligently adhere to the house style when preparing the chapters.

- Authors must provide their ORCID identifier together with their manuscript. ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from every other researcher and, through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, supports automated linkages between you and your professional activities ensuring that your work is recognized. If you do not have such an ID, please register at the website <https://orcid.org/register>, and thereafter provide us with your ID.

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