





Riailtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



## Adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights: advancing the agenda for a sustainable future

**High-level Ministerial event in the margins of the Summit of the Future**  
*under the auspices of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly*

23 September 2024, 8:00 – 10:00 EST  
Grand Central Ballroom, Westin Grand Central, 212 East 42nd Street, New York

Name and Title	Photo	Bio
<b>Moderators</b>		
<p><b>Dr Shakira Choonara, Generation Equality Thematic Lead on SRHR, UN Women &amp; Lancet Commissioner on Adolescent health and wellbeing</b></p>		<p>Dr Shakira Choonara, is a multi-award-winning public health practitioner, her notable accolades include being named the 2017 Woman of the Year in Health in South Africa and being a 100 Most Influential Young African. Dr Choonara is currently appointed to UN Women HQ as the Thematic Lead for Generation Equality. Through her role at UN Women she supports 300+ partners globally to advance gender equality, and sexual and reproductive health and rights and is also a Steering Group Member and Commission for Adolescent Health and Well-being.</p>
<p><b>Levi Singh, SADC Regional Youth Parliamentarian &amp; Regional Youth and Policy Officer with SRHR Africa Trust</b></p>		<p>As former secretary general of the African youth and adolescent network on population and development (AfriYAN), Levi Singh now serves as a mentor to the current executive committee of the network. Over the last decade, he has worked extensively on systems for the meaningful engagement, participation, and leadership of young people in health policy making spaces using data to influence policy dialogue through civic diplomacy. His professional work and advocacy experience include the Africa agenda 2063, UN Sustainable development goals, African health strategy, ICPD Plan of Action and Universal health coverage with a focus on adolescent &amp; youth health and well-being. He serves as a founding member of the United Nations global partnership forum on comprehensive sexuality education and as a SADC regional youth parliamentarian to the 3rd SADC youth parliamentary forum.</p>

## Welcome and opening

**Ambassador Carla Serazzi, Director of Multilateral Division, Ministry of Affairs, Government of Chile**



Ambassador Carla Serazzi, a seasoned Chilean diplomat, became Director for Multilateral Affairs in January 2023. She has held various domestic and international roles, notably as Chile's Ambassador to Ireland (2020-2022) and as Deputy Permanent Representative at Chile's Mission to the United Nations in Geneva (2017-2019), focusing on human rights, health, labor, and environmental issues. Serazzi also served at the Organization of American States and the UN Security Council, covering global hotspots like Afghanistan and Haiti. She has degrees in journalism, communication, and public administration, with academic achievements from Chilean institutions and Harvard University. Her extensive diplomatic career spans numerous international summits, conferences, and negotiations.

**Maryam, Adolescent advocate, Canada**










Maryam is an accomplished student leader with a proven track record of high standing in academics, sports, and music. She is a proud Youth Member of the New York Academy of Sciences, where she focuses on solving STEM-related challenges worldwide. Recently, she was selected to be part of the Youth Advisory Council at Plan International Canada. She is excited to be part of a group of young leaders who will advocate for the rights of children, equality for girls, SRHR, and other issues facing young people worldwide. As a member of the Youth Advisory Council's Summit of the Future Working Group, she helped draft the CanYouth Pact, which urges the Government of Canada to advocate for inclusive, future-focused recommendations at the Summit of the Future, emphasizing meaningful youth engagement and safeguarding the futures of current and future generations.





**Rt. Hon. Helen Clark, PMNCH Board Chair and Former Prime Minister of New Zealand**

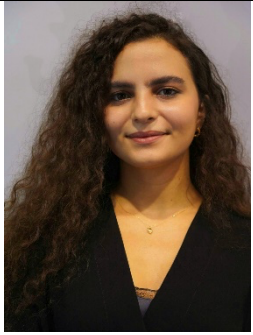









Helen Clark was Prime Minister of New Zealand from 1999–2008 and a Member of Parliament for 27 years. She advocated strongly for economic and social justice, sustainability and climate action, and for multilateralism. Helen served two terms as Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and as Chair of the United Nations Development Group from 2009-2017. Earlier, Helen taught in the Political Studies Department of the University of Auckland, from which she had graduated with BA and MA (Hons) degrees. Helen advocates for sustainable development, climate action, gender equality and women's leadership, peace and justice, and action on pressing global health issues. In July 2020, she was appointed by the Director-General of the World Health Organisation as Co-Chair of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response. She chairs the boards of the Extractive Industries Transparency Organisation, the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, and other public good organisations and initiatives.

<p><b>Diene Keita, Assistant SecretaryGeneral, UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme)</b></p>		<p>Ms. Diene Keita, who recently served as Minister for Cooperation and African Integration with the Republic of Guinea, brings to the position nearly 30 years of experience within the United Nations System. She started her United Nations career in 1990 with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in New York as Programme Officer, and from this point held various successful programmatic leadership positions at country level, serving as UNDP Deputy Representative and Acting Representative for several years.</p>
<p><b>Technical panel</b></p>		
<p><b>Prof. Dr. Robert Blum, Professor, Johns Hopkins University</b></p>		<p>Robert Blum is Professor at Johns Hopkins University. He has published two books and over 350 journal articles, book chapters and special reports. He is Past-President of SAHM, the Guttmacher Institute Board and the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Adolescent Health. He has received numerous awards for adolescent research and advocacy and is a member of the National Academy of Medicine. Until recently he was PI on a 9-country study of gender norms and consequences among young adolescents.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Melis Pehlivanürk-Kızılkın, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and an adolescent medicine specialist at Hacettepe University Faculty of Medicine</b></p>		<p>Melis Pehlivanürk-Kızılkın is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and an adolescent medicine specialist at Hacettepe University Faculty of Medicine. She serves as a lecturer, researcher, and supervisor in the Adolescent Health Doctoral Program at the Hacettepe University Institute of Child Health. Additionally, she is the Assistant Program Coordinator for third-year medical students and a member of the Pediatrics Residency Education Board at Hacettepe University. Melis is the co-chair of the International Association for Adolescent Health (IAAH)-Emerging Professionals Network and has been actively involved with IAAH since 2018. She is also a dedicated member of the Turkish Society of Adolescent Health. Her research interests include eating disorders, bone health, and internet gaming disorder. Passionate about reducing health inequities, she has worked in various underserved regions of Türkiye. Melis is committed to advancing adolescent health education both nationally and globally.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Helen Habib</b></p>		<p>Helen Habibata Habib is a researcher and teacher with training in the biomedical and sociomedical sciences. Her work employs quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the socio-structural determinants of health along the life course. Her specific interest in adolescent populations seeks to understand the intersections of the multi-level factors that shape adolescent health and wellbeing such as climate, culture, education, health system structures, laws &amp; policies, and migration among others. Dr Habib is currently a Postdoctoral Research Scientist at the African Population and Health Research Center where she predominantly works in multi-country projects on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as the changing dynamics of family systems in East Africa. She also mentors younger and aspiring STEM researchers in Ghana and Kenya.</p>

<p><b>Dr. Prerna Banati, Scientist, WHO</b></p>		<p>Dr Prerna Banati is a Scientist and Research lead for Adolescent and Young Adult Health at the World Health Organization in Geneva. She has over 20 years of international development experience as a researcher and advisor with the United Nations and other international organizations. Her work involves evidence generation, translation and guideline development to support scaling of inclusive, quality adolescent and youth policies and programmes. She brings extensive experience at the intersections of adolescence, gender and social inclusion, and has worked widely in cooperation with governments, civil society and young people themselves.</p>
<p><b>Artist performance</b></p>		
<p><b>Seedel, Young Poet</b></p>		<p>Seedel, a 19 year old Poet from New York, is transforming mental health advocacy through the power of her words. Her poetry, rich with emotional depth and social commentary, resonates profoundly with Generation Z, addressing critical issues such as mental health, identity, and social justice. From a young age, Seedel demonstrated an innate talent for storytelling. Fueled by her passion for poetry, she embarked on a journey to use her voice to effect positive change and foster meaningful conversations. In 2024, Seedel has become the founder of Seedel Poetry Club, creating a vibrant digital community dedicated to creative expression and mental health advocacy. Through engaging performances and interactive poetry activities, Seedel fosters an environment of inclusivity and empowerment, inspiring others to share their stories and embrace their mental health journeys.</p>
<p><b>High level political dialogue</b></p>		
<p><b>Member States</b></p>		
<p><b>Ntoi Rapapa, Minister of Education and Training of Lesotho</b></p>		<p>Honourable Ntoi Rapapa, the Minister of Education and Training in Lesotho holds a PhD in Physics from the University of Manchester in the UK, obtained in 1999. In 1995 he obtained Advanced Post Graduate Diploma in Physics from the International Centre of Theoretical Physics in Italy. Before enrolling with the international universities, Professor Rapapa attained a Degree in Bachelor of Science - Mathematics and Science from the National University of Lesotho. Honourable Rapapa worked as a Chief Executive Officer for the Lesotho Electricity Authority from 2010 - 2016. Prior to that he worked as an Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer and Lecturer (in this order) from 1995 - 2010. He also worked as a Teaching Assistant and Tutorial Assistant at the University of Manchester from 1977 - 1999. Honourable Rapapa was appointed as a Minister of Education and Training in 2022. He has championed education in his capacity as chair of Higher Education Quality Assurance Committee of the Council on Higher Education in Lesotho. He brings wealth of experience to the world of learning in science, technology and innovation and the integration thereof.</p>

<p><b>Petar Mladenov, Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Bulgaria</b></p>		<p>Petar Mladenov is currently the Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Bulgaria. Prior to this role, he worked as a Programme Analyst at UNFPA, where he covered the portfolio of youth-led advocacy, digital technologies, and CSE. Petar Mladenov also worked at the Youth Policy Unit of the European Commission, supporting the European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education, and Youth. With over 10 years of experience in youth policy and engagement, public administration, and CSE, he has been actively involved as a youth advocate in various global youth-led networks, including Y-PEER.</p>
<p><b>Arlene Beth Tickner, Ambassador at-Large for Gender Issues and Feminist Global Policy of Colombia;</b></p>		<p>Arlene B. Tickner is a vocal and committed feminist with over 30 years of teaching, research, mentoring and consulting experience in the field of International Relations. Before her appointment as Colombia's first at-large ambassador for Gender Issues and Feminist Global Policy, she was the country's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York.</p>
<p><b>Sarah Hunt, Counsellor, Development Cooperation and Africa Division, Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland;</b></p>		<p>Sarah Hunt is Policy Director in the Development Cooperation and Africa Division of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs. Prior to this role, she was an Advisor representing Ireland at the Executive Board of the World Bank in Washington D.C. Before this Sarah managed the process for the development of Ireland's international development policy, A Better World, and was policy lead on social protection and on governance. Sarah has also worked as a Lecturer in Political Economy of Development at the University of Manchester and Trinity College Dublin.</p>
<p><b>Adolescent and Youth leaders</b></p>		
<p><b>Juanita (Bolivia)</b></p>		<p>Juanita since she was 10 years old is part of the process of working in networks of children, adolescents and young people. It was part of the school of "Champions and Champions for Change and Gender Equality", this school is an experiential workspace which tries to promote gender equality and change in social norms through the participation of girls, adolescents and peer mobilization. Juanita actively participates in her municipality, currently she is leader of the ENFÓCATE project which seeks to promote the rights of girls and adolescents to live a life free of sexual violence, it promotes horizontal and experiential spaces that provide security for girls and adolescents in 10 municipalities in the country.</p>

<p><b>Imane Lakbachi (Morocco)</b></p>		<p>Imane Lakbachi is a youth and gender equality advocate with a background in tech, she is the Founder of Concealed Narratives, a Fellow at the Apolitical Foundation, a Youth Champion at the DTH-LAB, a YRC Member at the AU, a Women Deliver Alumna and Diana Award Winner.</p>
<p><b>Jeremiah (Zambia)</b></p>		<p>Jeremiah works as a Volunteer and Youth Advisor for Plan International Zambia's Health, Child Protection and Participation thematic areas which aim at keeping children safe from all forms of violence and promoting sexual reproductive health especially in rural communities of Zambia. He has also previously held the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) in Luapula Province an Initiative of Plan International which allows young people to influence the Organizations work on the inequalities that young people face especially girls, which include HIV/AIDS, Child marriage, teenage pregnancy, Violence, Exclusion and Poverty. Jeremiah sits on the Youth Advisory Panel YAP National Committee for Zambia which advances advocacy efforts mentioned at National Level. He sits on the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) for the She SOARS (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Economic empowerment supporting out of school Adolescent girls' rights and skills project) Project. One of his key roles as a YAB Member is to design specific guidelines of Meaningful Youth Engagement (MYE) for the project and to ensure that the principles of MYE are observed across all areas of the project.</p>
<p><b>Aisha Lareb (Pakistan)</b></p>		<p>Aisha Lareb is a committed public health advocate and doctor specializing in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), with a focus on climate change and youth empowerment. Founder of Conversation For Change (CFC), Aisha leads efforts to promote SRHR in underserved areas of Sindh, Pakistan. Her initiatives have empowered thousands, especially during the 2022 floods, by providing vital education on menstrual hygiene, family planning, and reproductive rights, breaking stigmas, and enhancing healthcare access in marginalized communities. As the Youth Focal Point for FP2030 in Pakistan, she influences family planning and population control policies, particularly addressing the challenges faced by women and girls during environmental crises.</p>
<p><b>Paul Mavesere Ndhlovu (Zimbabwe)</b></p>		<p>Paul Mavesere Ndhlovu is an advocate for public health, HIV, SRHR and Mental health, working as a Knowledge, Evidence, and Innovations Associate at Zvandiri in Zimbabwe. Paul uses national and community radio stations and social media, to address community and health challenges faced by young people living with HIV. Paul together with his team at Zvandiri they have created and broadcast 95 episodes of the peer-led Zvandiri radio show bringing together young people, service providers, policymakers, religious and community leaders to share information and advocate for adolescent health, rights and wellbeing reaching over 250,000 people through radio, support groups and Facebook livestreams.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Closing panel</b></p>		

<p><b>Ximena Arguello,</b> Executive Director, CHOICE for Youth &amp; Sexuality</p>		<p>Ximena is a feminist queer Ecuadorian activist. She was born in Riobamba, a small city in the centre of the Andean region of Ecuador, and has been living in the Netherlands for almost 5 years. Ximena has 5 years of practical and 3 years of academic experience in international development, SRHR and Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation, working both at a national (in Ecuador) and international (in the Netherlands) level. Ximena currently takes on the role of Executive Director at CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality, a youth-led organisation dedicated to ensuring that all young people have the power to make decisions about their sexual, reproductive and love lives.</p>
<p><b>Dr. Guilherme Gonçalves Duarte,</b> Executive Director, UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health</p>		<p>Dr. Duarte is UNITE’s Executive Director, a medical doctor with a specialization in Public Health. He has gained significant experience in Diplomacy, Policymaking, and Global Health, having served as a Diplomat in Geneva overseeing health affairs for the Portuguese Government, including during its EU Council Presidency. He has previously worked in the Cabinet of Government, consulted for WHO in LMICs, completed the ECDC Fellowship Programme in Field Epidemiology, and managed various health emergencies at local, national, and international levels. Additionally, Guilherme collaborates with various faculties and public health schools. He is passionate about global health, health systems governance, and emerging challenges like population and environmental changes and their impacts, economic sustainability, and Universal Health Coverage.</p>
<p><b>Dr Jarbas Barbosa,</b> World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director for the Americas</p>		<p>Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, a national of Brazil, was elected Director of the Pan American Health Organization by Member States during the 30th Pan American Sanitary Conference on 28 September 2022. Dr. Barbosa begins his five-year term on 1 February 2023, succeeding Dr. Carissa F. Etienne of Dominica, who led PAHO from 2012 to January of 2023. From July 2017 until his appointment as Director, he served as PAHO Assistant Director, leading five technical departments and PAHO’s Revolving Fund – a special program to increase equitable access to vaccines in the region. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Barbosa led the Organization’s efforts to support Member States in reducing the impact of the emergency on priority public health programs. He also led the PAHO Task Force for COVID-19 Vaccination in the Americas and launched a platform to expand production of mRNA vaccines in Latin America and the Caribbean to reduce the region’s dependency on imports during future health emergencies.</p>
<p><b>Linda Weisert, Global Director - Equity, Gender &amp; Youth, Children’s Investment Fund Foundation</b></p>		<p>Linda leads CIFF’s global Equity, Gender &amp; Youth Portfolio. In this role, she oversees the foundation’s global gender advocacy strategy and its approach to embedding equity, including gender equity and meaningful adolescent and youth engagement, across its programmes and partnerships. She also works closely with CIFF’s People &amp; Culture team on embedding Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion in its workforce strategy. Linda has worked on global health, international trade and development issues for 17 years, including within multilateral institutions and as a public affairs professional advising EU institutions, civil society organisations and Fortune 500 companies. She has a Master’s Degree in International Relations from the London School of Economics and a Bachelor Degree in European and French Politics from King’s College London and Sciences Po Paris.</p>