

**ASSOCIATION  
HERA-XXI ANNUAL  
BULLETIN – 2019**



# ADVOCACY

One of the main priorities of the Association HERA-XXI is to improve social, economic, legislative and political environment regarding the SRHR through advocacy on both national and international level. Throughout year 2019, the Association HERA-XXI worked both with the representatives of Georgian Government and used international tools to improve current environment regarding SRHR.

## ADVOCACY ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Advocacy on the national level can be viewed in two perspectives: central and local levels.

- Meetings with local municipalities to help them in integrating SRHR issues in strategies and action plans



## ADVOCACY ON NATIONAL LEVEL

Meetings with the representatives of Gender Equality Councils and Women's Corners of the local municipalities (Kvemo Kartli, Khobi and Kutaisi)



- The Association HERA-XXI runs a coalition FOR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS, uniting 15 regional and national non-governmental organizations. The coalition works on legislative amendments to strengthen SRHR-related legislative environment in the country, prepares reports, including parallel report for Beijing 25, highlighting still existing obstacles faced by women, including nonexistence of age-specific and gender sensitive sexual education, lack of competent information about sexual and reproductive health and rights, obstacles to access to modern methods of contraception, family planning and reproductive health services and barriers of health services, such as financial and geographical difficulties, stigma, legal barriers, the quality of the services and etc.
- In 2019, the Association partnered with the Coalition for Children and Youth<sup>1</sup>. Through the partnership, discriminative norms regarding comprehensive sexual education were taken out from the Draft Code of the Rights of the Child<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ccy.ge/en/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/georgia/press-releases/draft-code-rights-child-presented-public-georgia>

## ADVOCACY ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

- Association HERA-XXI uses the international monitoring instruments such as **CEDAW** (The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women), **ICCPR** (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.) **UPR** (Universal Periodic Review) and provides the active advocacy to promote the fulfillment of international obligations;
- Throughout 2019, Association HERA-XXI participates in all important events regarding SRHR, such as **Beijing+25 Sub-Regional Expert Consultation, Regional Workshop on Strengthening Strategies to Advance Progressive Reform of SRHR**, organized by UNFPA, EPF<sup>3</sup> and CRR<sup>4</sup>, Astra Network meeting, Nairobi Summit etc.;



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<sup>3</sup> European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights (EPF)

<sup>4</sup> the Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR)



# CAMPAIGNS

THE Association HERA-XXI carries out several significant campaigns every year, both social media and live ones. The campaigns aim to promote SRHR issues in Georgia, support gender equality, promote youth engagement and raise awareness regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights. Throughout 2019, HERA-XXI carried out:

## 6 Large-Scale Campaigns (Social Media and Live)



**COVERED BOTH  
TBILISI AND REGIONS**

**REACHED ROUGHLY  
15,000 PERSONS  
(online)**



Campaigns: The International Day for Protection of Children, International Youth Day, International Day of the Girl Child, Human Rights Day, Reproductive Health Week, 16-day campaign against gender-based violence, Women's health campaign.

## Highlights from Some of The Campaigns:

### The International Day for Protection of Children – June 1



**Main message:** *Education is My Right*

**Goals:** Advocating for access to extensive education, including comprehensive sexual education; Supporting youth initiatives; Raising awareness about the importance of comprehensive education, including sexual education; Promoting volunteer work and providing information about opportunities offered by Hera.

**Location:** Tbilisi and Khobi

### International Youth Day – August 12

**Main message:** *Healthy Generation for Healthy Future*

**Goals:** Supporting youth initiatives; Deepening cooperation between youth and government representatives; supporting youth Initiatives; Raising awareness about healthy lifestyle; Promoting youth engagement in civil activities; Creating friendly, open and stigma-free environment;

**Location:** Tbilisi and Akhatsikhe



## International Day of the Girl Child – October 11



International Day of the Girl Child – October 11

With the partnership with Khobi and Akhatsikhe municipalities, Youth groups of Association HERA-XXI organized campaign dedicated to the International Day of the Girl Child.

**Goal:** The goal of the campaign was to educate young girls about sexual and reproductive rights. Providing correct, age-specific information through the campaigns plays an essential role in establishment of healthy environment, where girls can realize their potential, protect their rights and take informed decisions.

**Location:** Tbilisi, Khobi and Akhatsikhe

## International Human Rights Day – December 10

**Main Message:** Education is my Right!

Through the year of 2019, HERA-XXI was actively disseminating the message “Education is My Right”. Comprehensive sexual education is and should be an essential part of general education. To raise awareness about this, the Association ran an online campaign disseminating messages like: **Comprehensive sexual education for everyone; I have the right to make informed decision; Education is my Right.**



# STUDIES AND RESEARCH – TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

## BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SAFE ABORTION SERVICES FOR WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE

Analytical Report

2019



In 2019 Association HERA-XXI has developed research about barriers to accessing safe abortion service in Georgia. The research provides life story-based evidence about barriers that are related to the access of safe abortion service in Georgia. The findings are actively used in advocacy process both on national and international level. The study has identified that women face a wide range of barriers when accessing safe abortion service, such as socio-economic barrier, psychological and moral problems, geographical and legal obstacles and stigma existing in Georgian society.

The broad audience including representatives of the State,

international and non-governmental organization attended the presentation of the study and received unique, firsthand information – live stories told by women who have accessed safe abortion service. The study, among other goals, aimed to highlight that despite the legal status of abortion service, it is still associated with wide range of problems, barriers and obstacles.



# PARTNERSHIPS

In order to ensure improving SRHR environment in Georgia, Association HERA-XXI partners with various governmental and non-governmental agencies and institutions for better advocacy, communication and coordinated actions.



## **Partnership with Youth Agency of Georgia**

– In 2019, the government of Georgia established Youth Agency which is responsible for creating strategy and action plan to promote youth civil engagement, support their development and strengthen their potential. Association HERA-XXI was actively involved in establishing youth strategy and action plan through participating in working meeting of the Agency. Later this year, representatives of HERA-XXI attended 10th Youth Forum organized by the agency, which aimed to

deepen already existed cooperation.

## **Partnership with the Administration of Government Representative in Kvemo Kartli**

- Association HERA-XXI partners with the Administration of Government Representative in Kvemo Kartli to ensure that issues of SRHR are integrated in strategies and action plans of local municipalities (Marneuli, Bolnisi, Tsalka, Rustavi, Tetrtskaro, Dmanisi, Bolnisi) in the region. Through the partnership, representatives of the association met with Gender equality councils and Women's Cabinets/Rooms to study their needs and help them to integrate principles of gender equality and SRHR issues in local work. Later this year, in the framework of partnership, the association held seminar, which served as a reflection for the above-mentioned meetings.



**Partnership with The Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics** – In 2019, Association HERA-XXI entered in partnership with Charter of Journalistic Ethics in order to ensure monitoring of media environment in Georgia regarding SRHR. The partnership has been fruitful as the organization already won a case against unprofessional and biased tv spot about abortion. Through the partnership, Association HERA-XXI will serve as a watch-dog organization for media to identify and report on journalists/media outlets with violate gender sensitive reporting standards and strengthen negative stereotypes about SRHR issues.



**Partnership with Social Service Agency of Georgia** – The Association HERA-XXI has a longstanding partnership with the agency, through which organization ensures that social workers have relevant skills and knowledge to work with beneficiaries about SRHR issues, including specific information about reproductive health services. Through the partnership, HERA-XXI has organized training sessions for social worker from different regions of Georgia (Tbilisi, Imereti and Kvemo Kartli) in order to raise their awareness about sexual and reproductive health and rights which will further help them in their future professional work.

**Partnership with Regional TV Channels – Voice of Abkhazia and 9<sup>th</sup> channel** – the Association HERA-XXI's Alternative Opinion TV spots are the only complex and lasting source of information about SRHR issues. Taking into the consideration that Georgian TV channels, including Public Broadcaster rarely features topics of SRHR in their airtime, which creates informational vacuum in society, Alternative Opinion is almost the only source of valid, unbiased information about SRHR. In order to disseminate these spots, the Association partners with two regional channels with viewers reaching almost half million. This partnership also helps association to bring the voice to regions populated with ethnic minorities.



**Partnership with Georgian National University (SEU)** – the Association HERA-XXI has a long-lasting partnership with the university. Georgian media very often faces challenges when covering sensitive issues, such as SRHR topics, which spreads incorrect information and strengthens already existing stigma. For past several years, Association has been training young journalists through this partnership.



**Partnership with Peace Corps** – The Association HERA-XXI partnered up with the Peace Corps to run summer camp for young girls in summer 2019. Association HERA-XXI works to create an environment for youth where they can realize their full potential, receive knowledge and information and develop in a healthy way.

This camp, gathering more than 30 girls from different parts of Georgia, served as an activity dedicated to creation of such environment.

**Partnership with Regional Clinics** – The Association HERA-XXI has an enduring cooperation and partnership with several regional clinics, including Bolnisi Central Hospital, Kutaisi IDP Medical Center “Bichvinta”, Kutaisi 3<sup>rd</sup> Maternity Hospital, Senaki Maternity Hospital and Gynecological clinic in Poti. Beneficiaries of the above-mentioned clinics are marginalized groups (IDPs, ethnic minorities, economically and socially disadvantaged persons, sexual minorities and etc.). Through the partnership, safe abortion and family planning services are now accessible in these clinics) In addition, staff is annually trained in order to keep high quality of the services.

**Partnership with the National Center for Teacher Professional Development** – The Association Hera-XXI partners with the Center since 2017. The Center was actively involved in development of [www.forteachers.ge](http://www.forteachers.ge) – an online platform for teachers. Experts from the National Center for Teacher Professional Development contributed to creation of materials for the website. Right now, through the partnership the center assists in disseminating information about the platform among teachers.

# YOUTH

Association HERA-XXI contributes to the formation of young activist leaders and their involvement in various activities and campaigns planned by the organization. The Association supports youth initiatives, promotes their healthy development and works to establish stigma-free, friendly and healthy environment, where young people can receive age-specific and correct information and high-quality, friendly and accessible reproductive health services. **HERA-XXI plans and implements all its activities with and for youth in order to fulfill their fundamental human rights – sexual and reproductive rights.**

**HERA-XXI has:**



Through 2019, 4 youth groups of HERA-XXI have organized and implemented more than 15 information sessions, regarding:

- Free online services offered by Association HERA-XXI;
- The importance of volunteer work and opportunities offered by HERA-XXI;
- The problem of early marriage;
- Sexually transmitted diseases and their prevention;
- Modern methods of contraception and family planning services;
- The Importance of comprehensive sexual education;
- Gender equality and protection of women's rights



## HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019 Youth Group of HERA-XXI in partnership with Rustavi American Corner, Established a youth club “Healthy Lifestyle”. Club hosts series of informational sessions and seminars about the importance of healthy lifestyle. All sessions are held by specially trained peer educators. Such clubs represent a good example of how young people can motivate

their peers to live healthy. In addition, members of the club receive valid and correct information regarding reproductive health and rights, which helps them to debunk myths and stigmas regarding there sensitive issues. Such activities largely contribute to the development of educated and healthy generation.

## EDUCATION

For Years, HERA-XXI has been using peer to peer method of education. In 2019, the Association has trained roughly 50 youngsters through all-in-one curriculum about sexual and reproductive rights, using online learning platform [www.ehera.ge](http://www.ehera.ge). Specially trained young people plan and implement information sessions for their peers, transferring acquired knowledge, skills and information and raising awareness about SRHR issues.

ASSOCIATION HERA-XXI USES INNOVATIVE METHODS TO TRAIN AND EDUCATE YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT SRHR, INCLUDING FAMILY PLANNING, MODERN CONTRACEPTION METHODS, SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES, EARLY MARRIAGE AND ETC. THROUGH 2019, THE ORGANIZATION CARRIED OUT UP TO

## ANNUAL GATHERING OF HERA-XXI’S YOUTH LEADERS, GROUPS MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

The Association HERA-XXI organizes annual gatherings for young people in order to help them to establish connections, exchange best practices and experience and plan future activities together.

In 2019, the gathering took place in Tbilisi, where members of youth groups from regions, peer educators, young leaders and volunteers came together to talk about their needs, meet each other and plan activities for the upcoming year of 2020.



# SERVICES AND RESOURCES

The association HERA-XXI offers a wide range of free, online and confidential services, including online consultation with doctor-reproductologist, online consultation with lawyer, online learning platform and two innovative platforms for teachers and parents.

In 2019, Association HERA-XXI created and launched an innovative web-site – [www.forteachers.ge](http://www.forteachers.ge). The page helps teachers to acquire skills and knowledge about how to speak with students about sexual and reproductive health and rights. The web-site features ready-to-use materials, lesson-plans and tools which are age-specific, unbiased and created by field professionals.

The platform has mobile versions for both IOS and ANDROID users, downloaded more than 4000 times.

## SERVICES

Similar platform like [www.forteachers.ge](http://www.forteachers.ge) is also created for parents. Both web and mobile versions are available and feature content on how to create friendly environment for children where they can talk about reproductive and sexual health with parents. The platform helps parents to answer questions about ongoing changes in teenager's body; menstrual cycle; pregnancy and maternity; bullying etc.

### ONLINE CONSULTATION WITH DOCTOR-REPRODUCTOLOGIST

Association "HERA-XXI" offers free, anonymous online counseling of a doctor-reproductologist. You can receive online-counseling of sexual and reproductive health issues. In 2019, the service was used by more than 2000 persons.

### EHERA.GE - ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM

Non-stop continuous education for doctors is very important. The Association has developed an online platform offering courses for family and school doctors. All courses are free and meet international standards.