

# FOURTH ANNUAL MEMBERS SUMMIT



## ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF SELF-CARE: MOVING FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE

JUNE 2024

### MEETING OVERVIEW

The Self-Care Trailblazer Group (SCTG) is a global coalition dedicated to expanding the safe and effective practice of self-care so that individuals can better manage their own health, health outcomes are improved, and health systems are better equipped to achieve universal health coverage. To date, the coalition has over 900 members around the world.

On June 25, 2024, the SCTG hosted its fourth Annual Members Summit, bringing together 100 diverse and passionate members united by a shared vision of advancing self-care globally. The theme of this year's Summit, "Envisioning the Future of Self-Care: Moving from Policy to Practice," focused on translating self-care policies into actionable practices across various organizations and countries. The Summit was expertly moderated by Solome Nakaweesi-Kimbugwe, Chairperson of the SCTG's Coalition Steering Committee (CSC).

The Summit featured **three key objectives**:

- 1. LEARN** about the state of self-care across Africa, Latin America, and South Asia and how the SCTG is contributing to moving policy to practice.
- 2. COLLABORATE** through sharing best practices and engaging in an interactive mapping activity that aims to understand member activities and priorities.
- 3. INSPIRE** active participation in SCTG's plans for 2024 and beyond.

### LEARN

About the state of self-care across Africa, Latin America, and South Asia and how the SCTG contributes to moving policy to practice

Sandy Garçon, Senior Communications Manager at Population Services International (PSI), shared the SCTG's vision and significant milestones to date. Highlights included progress in SCTG focus countries - Ethiopia, Kenya, Senegal, Nigeria, and Uganda, where efforts to adopt the World Health Organization (WHO) normative guidelines and develop national self-care guidelines have been successful. These achievements, however, mark just the beginning of a broader journey from policy to practice within the self-care movement. Judy Stenmark, Director General of the Global Self-Care Federation, emphasized the need for a WHO Resolution for Self-Care to legitimize self-care and elevate its global importance. She called on members to actively support this movement. Recognizing that the real impact of the self-care movement happens on the ground, a panel discussion followed by a Q&A session featured four diverse voices sharing policy, provider, grassroots, and user perspectives from Latin America, Asia, and Africa on translating self-care policy into practice.

#### POLICY: SELF-CARE

**DR. KAYODE AFOLABI,**

Independent Consultant and former Reproductive Health Director, Federal Ministry of Health, Nigeria



"Self-care is integrated into the national plan on sexual, reproductive and newborn health in 25 states of the target 36 states. The basis of success in Nigeria includes strong advocacy, mobilizing support through awareness raising and coordination by the Federal Ministry of Health. Overall, **a collaborative approach** involving policy makers, healthcare professionals and the community is essential for the successful dissemination and implementation of self-care policies.

#### PROVIDER: SRHR SELF-CARE

**DR. NAJIBULLAH SAMIM,**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Afghan Family Guidance Association



"We have adopted a four-stage approach to implementing self-care programs in local communities. One of these stages include facilitating **advocacy awareness raising sessions with local authorities** in the provinces and getting them involved in programming by making them aware of the objectives and outcomes of the programs, especially around family planning."

## GRASSROOTS:SELF-MANAGED ABORTION

**SUSANA CHÁVEZ,**

Executive Secretary, Latin American Consortium Against Unsafe Abortion



“In terms of human rights, **self-managed abortion has provided grounds and reasons to discuss the discrimination faced by poor women**, who, due to lack of information, are at greater risk and more vulnerable. Additionally, it has empowered different communities by increasing access to information and creating systems of solidarity that are important to evolve women, young women and a new generation of feminists.”

## USER: SELF-INJECTION

**KABUGHO RHONA**

DMPA-SC User & Advocate, Reach a Hand Uganda



“Self-injection has helped me to go back to school even if I am a mother and a student at the same time. It has given me the independence and convenience to manage my reproductive health despite my time schedule. In terms of the future, we should **include users in raising awareness about the benefits and accessibility of self-care products** like self-injection by sharing positive experiences and encouraging open conversations. This can help to reduce stigma and the myths and misconceptions people have. We should also **integrate self-care education into the school curriculum** and community programmes to educate potential users and parents.”

## COLLABORATE: • • • • •

Through sharing best practices and conducting an interactive mapping activity to understand member activities and priorities.

Members watched a membership video highlighting the accomplishments and challenges in implementing self-care policies in Uganda, Nigeria, and Kenya.

Additionally, members participated in an interactive mapping activity designed to deepen their understanding of self-care initiatives across various organizations and countries. This activity aimed to foster a more connected and impactful self-care community by identifying opportunities for collaboration among members' self-care projects. The SCTG will explore the possibility of using the results from the activity to create an accessible and valuable resource for ongoing learning and connection.

## INSPIRE: • • • • •

### Active participation in SCTG plans for 2024

SCTG Director Sarah Onyango shared the SCTG's priorities for 2024, which include supporting ministries of health in focus countries to institutionalize self-care into national health systems, strengthening global advocacy efforts, and advancing the evidence base for effective self-care policy and implementation. Closing remarks were given by Judy Stenmark, who highlighted the importance of unity in elevating self-care globally, emphasizing achieving legitimacy through mechanisms like the WHO Resolution for Self-Care, collaboration across sectors beyond sexual and reproductive health, and strategic advocacy with policy makers and local communities. Members had the final say and were asked to share one thing they will commit to doing differently after the Summit. **Key insights included:**



SUCCESS STORIES FROM UGANDA



Membership video June 2024

“Create a National Self-Care Network in Cameroon and advocate more for a comprehensive policy on self-care.”

“Read about the WHO Self-Care Guidelines and incorporate them in my working area.”

“Support the MOH to get a policy and start practice especially in community health; and establish the network in Liberia.”

“Seek to be actively involved in two working groups.”

## HOW TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT?

There are several exciting ways to join the movement and engage in the SCTG:

- Join the **SCTG and its Coalition Steering Committee** or one of its working groups.
- Watch the recording of the Annual Members Summit [here](#).
- Join a **National Self-Care Network (NSN)** in one of our five focus countries or get in touch with us on how to develop a NSN in your country.
- Learn about the **United for Self-Care Global Coalition's** movement toward adopting a WHO Resolution for Self-Care.
- **Connect us with a MOH representative** to secure a letter of support for the WHO Resolution for Self-Care.

Have any questions? Get in touch with us!  
[Secretariat@selfcaretrailblazers.org](mailto:Secretariat@selfcaretrailblazers.org)

<https://www.psi.org/project/self-care>

[www.selfcaretrailblazers.org](http://www.selfcaretrailblazers.org)