

## Title

*Youth on the Frontlines of Multiple Crises: Advancing Bodily Autonomy and Leadership through Activism*

## Background

In Latin America and the Caribbean, young people are navigating the overlapping effects of multiple crises: climate emergencies, large-scale migration, and geopolitical instability. These dynamics have intensified existing inequalities, disproportionately affecting women and girls, whose access to health services and sexual and reproductive rights is often the first to be compromised. Interrupted health systems, limited access to contraception, and increased exposure to gender-based violence in contexts of displacement and natural disasters threaten their bodily autonomy and future opportunities.

Despite these challenges, youth are not passive victims. Young activists across the region have emerged as powerful agents of change, organizing to demand accountability from governments, leading campaigns to advance Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), and linking the fight for gender justice with climate and health agendas. Their leadership demonstrates that investing in youth autonomy and rights is not only a matter of equity, but also a necessary strategy for building resilient and sustainable societies.

## Abstract

Young people in Latin America and the Caribbean stand at the frontline of multiple, intersecting crises. Climate change, migration, and persistent gender inequalities converge to undermine their health and rights, particularly those of women and girls. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has proven to be more than a tool for promoting sexual and reproductive health; it equips youth with the critical thinking, agency, and leadership skills needed to challenge discriminatory norms, advocate for policy change, and build resilience in times of uncertainty. This presentation will explore how youth-led movements are reshaping the nexus of health, gender, and environment, advancing bodily autonomy as a cornerstone of social transformation.

## This panel will...

- Highlight the disproportionate impact of climate, migration, and political crises on young people, **particularly women and girls**, in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Share examples of **youth-led advocacy and activism** that have influenced public policies and advanced bodily autonomy in the region.
- Examine **how CSE strengthens youth leadership and resilience**, preparing them to address interconnected challenges across health, gender, and environment.
- **Provide recommendations** on how governments, civil society, and international organizations can meaningfully invest in and partner with youth leadership for sustainable and equitable futures.