



FROM UGANDA TO THE WORLD: RHU'S VOICE AT ICFP 2025



Showcasing Innovation, Impact, and Global Collaboration

November 3-6, 2025

ICFP 2025: THE PLOT TWIST YOU DIDN'T SEE COMING

Bogotá, Colombia. Agora Convention Centre

The first week of November, Bogota was the city to be. You have guessed right! ICFP 2025 was the plot twist of the year. While thousands of SRHR champions, researchers, youth leaders, and global powerhouses were inside exchanging ideas hotter than Colombian coffee, Bogotá was giving drama on all fronts.

Inside, the air was electric panels buzzing, innovations dropping, partnerships forming, and youth voices shaking the room like a live volcano. But outside? Wuuuuy! A whole different episode was unfolding.

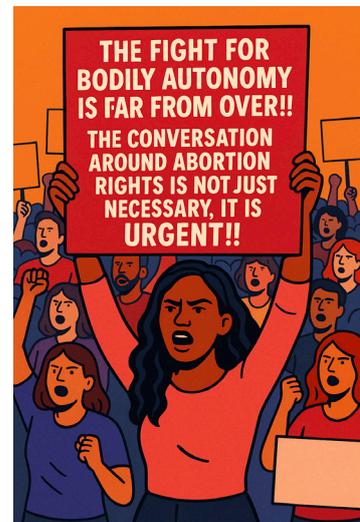
From Day 2 to Day 4 of the conference, anti-abortion activists assembled

outside the Agora Convention Centre, holding peaceful demonstrations, placards high, chants firm, and energy unrelenting.

It was the perfect reminder that the fight for bodily autonomy is far from over... and that the conversation around abortion rights is not just necessary, it is urgent.

So yes, if you didn't make it to ICFP 2025, you missed the learning... the innovations... the global networking... the passion... the heated debates... and the plotline that even Netflix couldn't script better.

Welcome to the recap. Buckle up.



WHEN THE WORLD GATHERED FOR SRHR



The International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) 2025 brought together over 3,500 delegates from 120+ countries in Bogotá, uniting advocates, youth leaders and global partners to advance SRHR. Held from 3–6 November, and preceded by the Pre-Youth Conference, the event championed youth voice, innovation and evidence under the theme “Equity Through Action.”

For RHU, ICFP was a powerful platform to learn, share and showcase Uganda’s SRHR innovation and impact. Through youth-led sessions, exhibitions and dialogues on contraception, gender equality and family planning, RHU reaffirmed its commitment to delivering high-quality, rights-based services and keeping young people at the centre of SRHR programming.

“ICFP 2025 is a reminder that advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights requires innovation, collaboration and courage. At RHU, we continue to champion evidence-based advocacy, amplify community voices and expand access to quality SRHR services especially for women, girls and young people. The global platform allows us to learn, share and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that every individual can make informed and empowered choices about their reproductive health,” says Jackson Chekweko, Executive Director, Reproductive Health Uganda

LIGHTS. CONVERSATIONS. IMPACT. RHU TAKES BOGOTÁ!

This section captures those moments, the ideas we shared, the stories we told, and the partnerships we built that continue to inspire action beyond Bogotá.

RHU'S YOUNG PEOPLE LEADING GLOBAL SRHR CONVERSATIONS

At ICFP 2025, young people were not just participants. They were leaders, innovators and storytellers.



01

RHU's Own Trailblazer: Melvin Oscar Takes Uganda's Voice Global

RHU celebrates Melvin Oscar, a young leader nurtured through the RHU Fort Portal Branch, who was selected among the 44 global Youth Trailblazers at the ICFP 2025 in Bogotá, Colombia.

As part of the Advocacy and Accountability Subcommittee, Melvin helped develop the ICFP Youth Position Paper and co-facilitated the Smart Advocacy Breakout Session. He also moderated and spoke in high-level sessions on engaging men and women in reproductive health, inclusive SRHR, and financing advocacy for family planning. His poster on using AI to expand SRHR access for young people in Uganda showcased innovation drawn from real community experience.

Melvin's recognition as a Youth Trailblazer reflects RHU's commitment to nurturing young people and platforms for them to champion the SRHR agenda.

Youth Innovation in Action

During the Youth Summit at the ICFP 2025, Huzaifa K. Ssali, a youth advocate at RHU, shared how RHU used Human-Centred Design to improve young people's access to contraceptives and SRHR services.

He highlighted how young people are engaged in identifying barriers, co-creating solutions, and designing interventions that make contraception more accessible, acceptable, and youth friendly.

Huzaifa's presentation showcased RHU's commitment to innovation and meaningful inclusive youth participation in advancing reproductive health for all.



02

RHU AT ICFP LIVE STAGE

ICFP LIVE is the conference's global platform that streams powerful sessions and stories to audiences worldwide, amplifying youth and community voices on sexual and reproductive health and rights. RHU featured in two segments, using media and creative art to spark dialogue, inspire change, and accelerate access to SRHR — tools we also use in our everyday programming to engage communities and drive lasting impact.



01

From Whisper to Roar

On the ICFP LIVE Stage, Olivia Komugisha, Communications Officer at RHU, performed a poem titled "From Whisper to Roar" — a journey of resilience, voice, and transformation. Her performance illuminated the untold stories of women and young people navigating silence and stigma within Uganda's reproductive health landscape, proving that art can move hearts, shift narratives, and inspire collective action for inclusive SRHR.

Watch the session here [👉](https://www.youtube.com/live/k4LHGFiG-pw?si=6owwKLJloKuBFtKNw)
<https://www.youtube.com/live/k4LHGFiG-pw?si=6owwKLJloKuBFtKNw>

Rumour, Camera, Action!

On the ICFP LIVE Stage, Aidah Babirye, Communications Officer at RHU, presented a dynamic session titled "Rumour, Camera, Action! How Kalangala's Young People Turned Contraceptive Myths into Media Gold." The session highlighted how young people used creative storytelling and media advocacy to challenge misinformation and spark open conversations around sexual and reproductive health.

Watch the session here [👉](https://www.youtube.com/live/qgcmY0tvTWA?si=8pei-bihEgLcwhNQ)
<https://www.youtube.com/live/qgcmY0tvTWA?si=8pei-bihEgLcwhNQ>



02

EVIDENCE IN ACTION: RHU RESEARCH THAT DRIVES CHANGE

At ICFP 2025, RHU presented research abstracts through oral and poster sessions, sharing evidence-based insights and practical solutions from its SRHR programming across Uganda. These presentations translated research into real-world impact, showcasing RHU's innovations in service delivery, advocacy, and youth engagement, and contributing to global learning on what works in advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights.



01

Sexual reproductive health for Climate Change Adoption.

RHU showcased a poster abstract showing the adaptation strategies to mitigate the impact of floods on women's access to SRHR services in Uganda. The presentation, delivered by Dancan Muhereza Project Officer, RHU Fort Portal Branch highlighted how recurrent floods in Kasese disrupt access to essential SRHR services—especially for women and adolescent girls.

Drawing from field experiences under the PROMISE II Programme, implemented in Kasese, Kagadi, and Rubirizi districts, Dancan shared how RHU advances SRHR as one of climate change adaptation interventions to ensure continuity of care in climate-affected communities. The poster emphasised community resilience strategies.

Safe Haven: Youth-Led Innovation for Contraceptive Access

Daisy Kandole, Project Officer at RHU, presented a flash and poster session titled “Safe Haven: Harnessing the Power of Co-Creation to Improve Access to Contraception by Youth.” Using the Human-Centred Design approach under the Power to You(th) Programme, Safe Haven was co-created with adolescent girls and young women in Kalangala district in central Uganda to address barriers to contraceptive access and improve youth-friendly SRHR services.

The innovation empowered adolescent girls and young women to make informed and autonomous reproductive health choices.

02



03

From Awareness to Access: Enhancing SRHR Uptake Among Youth in Namayingo

Aishah Nakyazze, Branch In-Charge at RHU Iganga, presented an oral and poster session on “Enhancing SRHR Uptake Among Young People Through Youth Events: The Stand-Up Project in Namayingo.” In Namayingo District, where teenage pregnancy stands at 22%, RHU used community youth events to promote positive behaviour change and access to SRHR services. When awareness did not translate into uptake, the project integrated on-site SRHR service delivery, ensuring that young people especially adolescent girls and young women could access accurate information and quality services in one setting.

Exploring How Gender Norms and Violence Shape Access to Family Planning in Uganda

At ICFP 2025, Robinah Nalwoga, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at RHU, co-presented with Ruth Lucy Apadet, Youth Researcher at UYAHF a flash and poster session titled “Unpacking the Links: Social Norms, SGBV and Family Planning Among Youth and Women in Uganda.”

The presentation highlighted findings from the Power to You(th) operational research (Nov 2024–Feb 2025) conducted in Busia and Mbale districts in eastern Uganda, which used youth co-researchers to explore how social norms connecting gender roles, violence and reproductive choices limit women's autonomy and access to family planning and post-GBV care.

04





Fireside Chats for Change: Using Culture to Boost Contraceptive Access in Kalangala

Dianah Nanyange, Programme and Knowledge Management Manager at RHU together with Zaituni Nabateregga, Gender Specialist at Sonke Gender Justice, co-presented a session titled “Leveraging Culturally Valued Practices to Enhance Contraceptive Access and Uptake: A Case Study of ‘Ekyooto’ (Fireside Chats) in Kalangala District, Uganda.”

Through the Power to You(th) Programme, RHU transformed the traditional Ekyooto (fireside chats) into safe community spaces for open dialogue on SRHR. By blending culture with modern health communication, these sessions fostered discussion, challenged myths, and increased contraceptive awareness and trust among adolescent girls, young women, and community members in Kalangala District.

TO READ MORE ABOUT RHU'S ABSTRACTS PRESENTED AT ICFP 2025, PLEASE SCAN THIS QR CODE



BUILDING CONNECTIONS, CELEBRATING COLLABORATION

Partnerships were at the centre of RHU's presence at ICFP 2025, reflecting the organisation's collaborative spirit and commitment to advancing SRHR through shared learning and joint action.



RHU at the ICFP 2025 Exhibition

The Bergstrom Foundation booth was a dedicated exhibition space creating a shared platform for its partner organisations to showcase their work, strengthen collaboration, and spotlight collective impact.

At the booth, RHU joined fellow Bergstrom Foundation implementing partners to share innovations, achievements and connect with global stakeholders. The booth became a space for storytelling, learning, and exchange.

RHU used this opportunity to highlight its work under the Breaking Barriers to Access Family Planning project showcasing how the initiative, funded by the foundation, is expanding access to modern contraception and rights-based SRHR information for women, young people, and marginalised communities across Uganda

Right Here Right Now Global Close Out Celebration

The week also featured the Right Here Right Now (RHRN) Partnership Dinner, marking the official global close-out of the RHRN programme. The evening was both reflective and celebratory, a tribute to years of collaboration, youth leadership, and advocacy that shaped stronger, more inclusive SRHR movements in Uganda and around the world.

02



WAY FORWARD

Key Takeaways and Lessons

The ICFP 2025 reinforced that family planning is both a lifesaving intervention and a driver of economic empowerment. New evidence presented by WHO, The Lancet, Guttmacher, FP2030, and Rutgers revealed that global SRHR progress stands at a crossroads where innovation and inequality collide.

As highlighted by global leaders, including Diene Keita (UNFPA), Marta Royo (Profamilia), and Dr. Philip Anglewicz (William H. Gates Sr. Institute), this moment demands renewed political commitment, local innovation, and community-centred action.

The Data is Compelling:

- 928 million women in low- and middle-income countries want to avoid pregnancy.
- 214 million women still lack access to modern contraception.
- An investment of \$104 billion annually could meet all SRHR needs globally — just \$15.56 per capita per year — with a return of \$2.48 saved for every \$1 invested in contraceptive services.

The lesson is clear: evidence must translate into action. The fight for reproductive rights and access to contraception cannot be won through research alone, but through practical implementation that centres women and young people.

Future Commitments

As RHU moves forward, the organisation reaffirms its commitment to:

- Advocate for equitable access to contraception and SRHR services for women, young people, and marginalised groups.
- Advance gender-transformative and climate-responsive programming in partnership with cultural and community leaders.
- Continue positioning Uganda as a leader in evidence-driven SRHR innovation and youth-led advocacy.



SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO OUR DONORS AND PARTNERS

We extend our appreciation to our donors and partners for their support in advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights across Uganda and for their continued partnership and commitment. Your support not only strengthens our programmes and innovations but also made our participation in the ICFP 2025 valuable to the global SRHR community.



PHOTO ESSAY

