

ANNUAL REPORT

20
23



RFSU President's leader:

The defence of SRHR must start at grassroots level

2023 was marked by a global decline in the freedom for people to decide over their bodies and their sexuality. The wars in Gaza and Ukraine forced the world to acknowledge the need for sexual and reproductive rights and healthcare in crises. How can childbirth ever be safe when bombs are falling outside the door?

IN ADDITION TO HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHES and wars that severely limit people's access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), there were political shifts around the world causing concern. In the USA, access to abortion was restricted for millions when the country's Supreme Court overturned the protection of abortion rights in the summer of 2022. In the autumn, sudden changes to abortion legislation were implemented in Georgia, directly reducing access to abortion for all involuntarily pregnant women. In Argentina, abortion and LGBTQI issues are once again targets under the new government, and in Uganda, the death penalty was introduced for homosexuality.

At home, a transphobic debate questioned the human rights of transgender people, summer camps for transgender children were cancelled due to threats and drag queens reading stories in libraries received death threats.

THIS CONTEXT HIGHLIGHTS the importance of RFSU's work. Our task is to ensure strong and lasting support for SRHR, both in Sweden and globally. That's why we began working in 2023 to become an even stronger and more stable member organisation, to build the defence for SRHR from the grassroots level. In response

to global restrictions on abortion rights, we are building broad alliances for abortion. In the autumn, we organised our first abortion conference with international speakers and significant participation from both civil society and the public sector. As the Swedish government slowly but surely undermines civil society's conditions to operate, we are joining forces with a broad range of civil society actors and organising ourselves.

BUT IT WAS NOT ALL BAD NEWS IN 2023. In Mexico, the Supreme Court ruled that all healthcare institutions in the country have a duty to provide abortion care to those in need, and in Estonia, equal marriage legislation was finally passed. In Sweden, the government launched an investigation to enable medical abortions at home, something RFSU has long advocated for.

WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED. That sexuality information, contraception and abortion are fundamental building blocks for democratic development. Having the right and freedom to make decisions about oneself and one's body is a prerequisite for participating in economic, political, and social power. Access to SRHR empowers people to raise their voices and participate in and contribute to societal development. Therefore, RFSU will continue to work so that everyone, regardless of power and resources, has the freedom to decide over their bodies and sexuality.

LINA FRIDÉN
President, RFSU



ABOUT THE REPORT

The annual report looks at the highlights in 2023 for RFSU's activities locally, nationally, and internationally, as well as RFSU AB. It describes some of the activities carried out, some of our achievements and the most important effects of our work.

The report focuses on five areas, which are also part of RFSU's strategic goals. These are:

- Abortion
- Sexual education and teaching
- LGBTQI rights
- Equal health and care
- SRHR defence and civil society space

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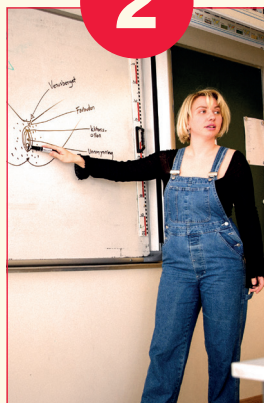
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90 YEARS OF RFSU

The Swedish Association for Sexuality Education, RFSU, is a non-profit organisation for sexuality education and sexual policy that has existed since 1933. Through knowledge, mobilisation and policy advocacy, RFSU contributes to a world in which everyone is free to enjoy, and make decisions about their own bodies and sexuality.

Elise Ottesen-Jensen, better known as "Ottar", founded RFSU based on her vision: "I dream of a day when all children born are welcome, all men and women are equal and sexuality is an expression of sincerity, affection and pleasure." All the components that make up RFSU today have been present for a long time or since the beginning.

The RFSU family consists of:

- 17 local organisations from Malmö in the south to Luleå in the north. Before founding RFSU, Ottar travelled around Sweden to recruit members and start local branches. Ottar realised that RFSU's potential for change would be so much greater if it managed to bring together many people.
- The RFSU clinic, where anyone can come to get tested for STIs or get advice on contraception and sexual health. The clinic also offers psychotherapy and family counselling based on sexological expertise, telephone counselling and digital consultations. Ottar helped women try out diaphragms and answer questions from worried letter writers, and this is the basis for the RFSU clinic.



- RFSU AB offers products in health, sex, intimacy, body and well-being. RFSU AB was founded to ensure access to modern and affordable contraceptives. The profits are reinvested into RFSU's sexual policy and sexuality education programmes both in Sweden and internationally.
- IPPF, International Planned Parenthood Federation, of which RFSU is a member. Cooperation and learning across national borders were an important part of RFSU's work from the start.
- About 50 partner organisations in eight countries. Ottar realised early on that striving for our vision did not stop at Sweden's borders.
- The magazine Ottar, which is Sweden's largest sexual politics themed magazine with a circulation of 8,000 copies.
- Ottarfonden, an independent foundation that supports education, awareness-raising, cultural and scientific initiatives in the field of sexology.
- RFSU's head office, which runs activities in the field of sexual policy and sexuality education, contributes knowledge and changes norms, and conducts fundraising activities.



"Don't forget flowers and bees in the summer."



TIMELINE OF RFSU'S 90 YEARS

SWEDEN IN 1933. The poverty rate is high, contraception is illegal, and there is minimal access to sexuality information. The poverty rate is high, contraception is illegal, and there is minimal access to sexuality information. Many women face frequent pregnancies and resort to unsafe abortions. Homosexuality is illegal, and marital rape is permitted. In response, the RFSU organisation was established to provide affordable contraceptives. A local RFSU organisation was first formed in Stockholm, followed by a national association. Shortly after RFSU's formation, a sales organisation is created. It is called Sexualhygien u.p.a., the forerunner of RFSU AB. The aim is to provide the best possible contraceptives at the best possible prices.

1976

Condom production is started in Hennan by Centri Gummifabrik, owned by Sture Randström. Sture builds the first foiling machines himself, and before 1976, RFSU condoms are packed in his basement in Jakobsberg. The business in Hennan is owned by Centri Gummifabrik until 1991, when RFSU takes over the staff, equipment and buildings.

1981

The first issue of the magazine "Ottar" is published, followed by four themed issues a year.



1984

All RFSU stores are sold.



2013

RFSU Halland is formed after a successful Stroller March in Halmstad.



2017

RFSU co-founds Innova Health Supplies in Latin America together with five other SRHR organisations. Innova sells sexual health products in Venezuela, Chile, Guatemala, Honduras and about ten other countries in Latin America.



2019

RFSU clinic starts family counselling, on behalf of the City of Stockholm.



1933

RFSU starts the first RFSU clinic for family planning counselling.



1960

The first contraceptive pill is launched and can be prescribed to married women. Further clinics are set up for counselling and are now located in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö and Katrineholm. Together they receive 14,401 visits. Social counselling by a counsellor is available for those who want it after receiving a positive pregnancy diagnosis.



1952

Ottar and RFSU are involved in forming the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), which in 2023 operates in 172 countries.



1985

RFSU buys Etac, a company which develops ergonomic aids and aids for patient transfers and lifting.

2011

RFSU sells Etac to Nordstjärnan for more than SEK 800 million, creating RFSU's capital. The value is the result of successful work over many decades. The idea is that the capital will be retained long into the future and contribute to RFSU's activities. Thanks to interest, dividends and amortisation, RFSU receives around SEK 30 million for its activities - while the capital is kept intact.

1933-34

The local associations in Gävle, Bollnäs, Eskilstuna, Malmö/Lund and Arvika are formed.

1937

Until this year, it is strictly forbidden to import condoms into Sweden. It is not even allowed to mention that contraceptives exist. When the import ban is lifted, RFSU AB opens its first shop. By the end of the 1960s, RFSU has 36 health shops across the country.



1942

There are now 48 doctors being paid hourly, and 1 nurse named Märta working at the RFSU clinic. They receive 7,942 visits. Further counselling clinics are opened in Eskilstuna, Gävle and Norrköping.

1946

The Abortion Act is amended and RFSU opens an abortion counselling agency. RFSU also starts its own condom testing programme.



1942

Counselling by post is available - 1,936 letters are answered.



1993

RFSU opens its own condom factory in Hennan, Hälsingland. It is Europe's most modern and advanced condom factory.

2009

RFSU becomes a strategic partner organisation of Sida.

2021

RFSU clinic launches national digital clinic.



WHAT GUIDES RFSU?

Policy document Sextant's objectives

Sextant's objectives help RFSU to set goals for its activities. To achieve them, RFSU has focus goals that show which issues RFSU should prioritise. They guide the organisation until 2025. Common to the goals is the realisation that RFSU needs to do more for everyone, regardless of power and resources.



Norms

It should be easier for people to feel desire and pleasure, without being restricted by racism or discrimination.



SRHR and Agenda 2030

The link between SRHR and sustainable development should be evident in our efforts to achieve the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



Democratic space and cooperation in civil society

Civil society organisations should cooperate more closely. This would strengthen both democracy and people's commitment to SRHR.



Family policy

More people should be able to live together and start a family without being hindered by discrimination based on gender, gender identity or sexuality.



Healthcare

Everyone should have access to high-quality health and medical care, especially people affected by racism.



Children and young people

All children and young people should receive high-quality sex education that provides them with knowledge about sexuality, their bodies and relationships.



Abortion

Everyone should have access to legal and safe abortion. Having an abortion is no longer shameful or taboo.



Contraception

Everyone has access to contraception.



Gender-based violence

violence and oppression must no longer restrict the health and rights of women, children and LGBTQI people.

The entire document is available at rfsu.se/en/key_strategies



Sextant's strategies

The three strategies of Sextant describe how RFSU will act to contribute to change at an overall level.

Knowledge RFSU works with others to develop knowledge and awareness of the body and sexuality. RFSU provides sexuality education to young people, but also educates a broad public through the media and social media. RFSU also generates awareness amongst the rest of society, for example spreading perspectives to institutions, actors and professionals. RFSU develops new knowledge through the RFSU clinic, takes part in and disseminates research and conducts its own surveys and studies.

Mobilisation It is essential for RFSU that people engage with RFSU's issues. The more individuals get involved, the easier it becomes to advocate for SRHR. A diverse group of engaged members brings different perspectives to RFSU's work. Furthermore, RFSU needs to collaborate with other actors in civil society to engage people and to become stronger together.

Policy Advocacy RFSU advocates for sexual and reproductive SRHR in several ways, including shaping laws, policies, funding, and systems, as well as holding decision-makers accountable. This involves providing technical support, raising awareness among decision-makers at various levels, and collaborating with others to influence policy. RFSU ensures commitments are made and monitors their implementation.

Kompassen (the compass)

At its Congress in June 2023, RFSU adopted a new conceptual programme, Kompassen. Together with the Sextant and RFSU's statutes, Kompassen acts as a guideline when RFSU takes a stand on complex social issues. rfsu.se/en/key_strategies



RFSU IN SWEDEN



1 Haparanda

RFSU visited inmates in remand centres and prisons in 12 locations across the country. Haparanda prison is one of them.

2 Umeå

RFSU Umeå started an SRHR network involving more than 40 actors in Västerbotten. Representatives from civil society, the region, the municipality, universities and schools have met on four occasions to increase knowledge and share experiences.

3 Östersund

RFSU Jämtland marked World Aids Day on 1 December together with RFSL with a lecture by Tobias Karlsson, known from Let's Dance.

4 Uppsala

RFSU Uppsala has provided sexuality education to young people and young adults living in rural areas and in smaller municipalities in Uppsala County. In 2023, our counsellors held 36 sexuality education sessions for pupils and conducted several training sessions for professionals in schools in smaller municipalities in Uppsala. In this way, RFSU Uppsala has helped to strengthen SRHR among 370 pupils in rural areas of Uppsala County.



5 Stockholm

RFSU turns 90! This was celebrated with a full day at the Stockholm City Museum under the slogan "Freedom to choose, be and enjoy". Around 60 visitors took part in lectures, panel discussions, mingling and an exhibition of artefacts from RFSU's activities over the years.

6 Katrineholm

RFSU Västmanland and RFSU Sörmland merged to form the new local association RFSU Mälardalen.

7 Linköping

What's really going on in Linköping's garden association? Well, RFSU Östergötland organised a dildo kubb game, and everyone was welcome to join! About fifteen passers-by took the bait and played enthusiastically for over an hour. Many more walked by and had a good laugh. It's not every day you see dildos flying over the lawns in the centre of town.

8 Finspång

All members were offered a t-shirt with RFSU's pride message, to use in any pride parade. RFSU was present at at least 18 pride celebrations in 2023, of which Finspång was one.



9 Växjö

RFSU Växjö invited its members to see the dance performance YEBO YES! set in South Africa in the 1950s. The performance was followed by coffee and a discussion about racism and the right to one's body.

10 Gothenburg

RFSU Gothenburg participated in a demonstration against the government's proposal for the so-called "informer law". RFSU Gothenburg was one of approximately 70 organisations behind the demonstration. The aim was to show that no one who visits RFSU's clinic, membership activity or any other activity is labelled as undocumented.

11 Halmstad

RFSU Halland's successful performance about Elise Ottesen-Jensen, Tapper & Vred, went on tour. Seven performances in five cities were organised during the year. The songs are also now available on Spotify.

12 Malmö

RFSU Malmö continued organising popular café evenings aimed at people with autism and/or intellectual disabilities. A total of 15 meetings were organised during the year. The events included sexy bingo, drag workshops, speed dating, talks on jealousy and individual counselling with a sexual advisor.

12 Malmö

In a Malmö art studio, participants in RFSU Malmö's new member group Klimax are making kimchi together. At the same time, RFSU member Bonnie Dahlström is giving a talk on the link between SRHR and the climate crisis.

"The climate crisis means a greater risk of dying in childbirth and less access to contraception and abortion. Bonnie Dahlström also talks about the importance of social organising. Kimchin's fermentation

process becomes the symbol of how an activist movement can be built - several ingredients working together can start a powerful change. "The most important thing you can do right now when it comes to the climate is to engage with others. We no longer have time to dedicate to individual lifestyle changes. We need to use what we already know and find a way to channel it into the environmental movement. Together we can make a difference!"

RFSU IN THE WORLD

1 Ghana

Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana supports young people in north-eastern Ghana. In 2023, they reached 2,729 people with information on young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). They also want to change harmful traditional and gender norms that affect young people's health and wellbeing.

2 Nigeria 3 Zambia 4 Kenya

During the year, RFSU and IPPF have partnered with organisations in Nigeria, Zambia, and Kenya to develop and test messages on SRHR aimed at reaching a broader audience. These messages were tailored to reflect the values important to specific target groups, including schoolchildren, guardians, teachers and local leaders. In this way, schoolchildren and young people have received information about the equal value of everyone and the ability to control their own bodies.

3 Zambia

RFSU accompanied seven Swedish members of parliament on a visit to Zambia to learn more about SRHR in the country and the impact of Swedish aid. In our international work, RFSU works to increase knowledge of, and commitment to, SRHR among Swedish decision-makers at all levels. RFSU's goal is for Sweden to continue to prioritise SRHR in Swedish foreign and development policy, both through funding and by being a strong and courageous voice for SRHR in various global forums.

4 Kenya

KAZ Entertainment has organised The Spread Festival once a year since 2018. It provides an opportunity for young people and adults to openly discuss issues of sexuality and gender, which are becoming increasingly difficult in Kenyan society. In 2023, the festival was visited by more than 500 people from countries including Ghana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, South Africa, Zimbabwe and the USA.

5 Cambodia

Behind a locked metal door in central Phnom Penh is the office of Klahaan, an organisation that RFSU has been working with since 2019. A steep staircase leads up from the courtyard to the workplace where, on this day, three people are seated at their computers. Rachana Bunn, the organisation's founder, is one of them. "We love RFSU!" she exclaims. "We feel that your support comes from genuine concern. You ask questions that make us think, and you're always curious about our plans instead of telling us what to do."

Cambodia is at the forefront of laws and policies. Women have the right to education, divorce and abortion. But the reality is often far from gender equality "We women live in fear. We are not threatened by armed conflict, as so often in Cambodia's history, but many of us live in constant fear of violence and harassment: at home, at school, at work and in public spaces. One in five women aged 16-64 have experienced sexual violence, the majority from their own partner or a family member."

This is one of the many issues Klahaan wants to change, and they have a clever approach to their education and advocacy work: they survey society's views on different issues, using in-depth interviews and online surveys, and then disseminate the results through their social media channels. So far, this has included highlighting how so-called virginity norms are upheld in society and their effects, as well as women's high proportion of unpaid labour in the home.



1

FOCUS AREA: ABORTION



Every day, women and girls around the world become pregnant against their will. In some places, abortion is an integral part of healthcare. In others, it is life-threatening.

What is the problem in society?

Unequal access to safe abortion worldwide

A quarter of the world's population lives in countries where abortion is banned. But banning abortions does not stop people from having them. Instead, it leads to more people having unsafe abortions. Millions of women are hospitalised every year for injuries caused by unsafe abortions, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

But unsafe abortions also occur in countries with more liberal abortion laws. 13% of all abortions in these countries take place the health system and are considered unsafe, according to the WHO. The reasons can be that it costs too much money to have an abortion or that it is impossible to travel, but also that there is a fear of being stigmatised or mistreated by health professionals.

97% of all unsafe abortions take place in low- and middle-income countries. In particular, young girls and women with lower education in rural areas and those belonging to different minorities have the worst access to safe abortions.

What progress does RFSU want to see?

Aid must support safe abortions

Swedish aid must prevent poverty and contribute to sustainable development. Therefore, it must also provide support for safe abortions. Humanitarian aid must also take into account the particular problems of access to safe abortion in areas affected by armed conflict and disasters.

Increasing access through more self-managed medical abortions

During the coronavirus pandemic, more countries around the world made it possible to carry out the entire abortion at home. In Sweden, 96 per cent of all abortions are performed using the medical method, i.e. using pills to induce abortion. Here, the law says that the first pill must be taken in hospital. RFSU wants to change that.

There are many arguments in favour of self-managed abortions. It may be that the home is a safe environment, that you have had an abortion before and feel safe with the process, or that you live far away from healthcare and want to avoid travelling.

How does RFSU work?

Global work for abortion rights and increased access to abortion

RFSU participates in several important negotiations within the UN focusing on abortion rights. Examples include the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) in New York, and the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva. RFSU also builds alliances with organisations and governments on other continents to increase access to safe abortion.

RFSU organises Learning 4 Change, providing meeting spaces where different partner organisations can exchange experiences. In September, RFSU's network focusing on abortion met in Tbilisi, Georgia.



FOCUS AREA: ABORTION

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS

What has RFSU contributed to in 2023?

During the year, RFSU launched a national network on abortion. Stakeholders from civil society, authorities and academia were invited and the aim was to increase knowledge about abortion both in Sweden and worldwide. A first conference was held in October with over 80 participants and panellists such as Pascal Allotey from WHO and Justyna Wyrzyńska, abortion rights activist from Poland.

Abortion legal in Mexico

On 7 September 2023, the Mexican Supreme Court decriminalised abortion. All health centres in 32 states will offer the option of abortion. Previously, half a million unsafe abortions were performed each year, resulting in 2,000 deaths. RFSU's partner organisation Catholics for the Right to Decide Mexico has been part of the local green wave movement that has long fought for decriminalisation.

With this decision, abortion will be available to more people. RFSU's partners expect that abortion care will be available in public hospitals and other health facilities in the future.

Two government enquiries into abortion rights in Sweden

The proposal to make self-managed medical abortions possible means that the hospital and doctor requirement in the Abortion Act will be abolished. The enquiry into self-managed abortions is due to be completed in February 2025 and RFSU is part of the expert group set up by the special investigator.

Highlighting that safe abortion is an important part of SRHR in EU aid

Together with the International Planned Parenthood Federation EN, the IPPF European

Office and the umbrella organisation Concord, RFSU helped put SRHR on the map during the Swedish Presidency of the EU, in the first half of 2023.

Liberia could have Africa's most liberal abortion law

RFSU's partner organisations in Liberia have been working hard to make a new bill a reality. Coordinated by RFSU, ten different civil society organisations are sharing information, coordinating efforts and working strategically to lobby for the adoption of the law. In May, Liberia's first SRHR conference was organised with over 700 participants. The country's Vice President and the UN Special Rapporteur on Health attended, along with civil society activists. If passed, the law will be one of the most liberal in Africa - decriminalising abortion, banning FGM and making contraception more accessible.

Progress and setbacks in Georgia in 2023

In Georgia, abortion is legal but complicated, with three visits to a doctor, a mandatory ultrasound and a five-day reflection period.



RFSU's partner organisation celebrated a victory in spring 2023 when it succeeded in introducing a new abortion procedure, whereby doctor's appointments could be held online and the abortion carried out at home. Back in November, the practice faced setbacks when the government changed the law without warning. Is continuing its advocacy work so that access to abortion can increase again.

Increased mobilisation in Africa and Asia

RFSU's partner organisations in Asia are testing new approaches to dealing with anti-abortion and anti-rights movements and organising across regions and continents. RFSU's partner Arrow, based in Malaysia's capital Kuala Lumpur, is working more systematically with organisations in Africa and Asia. The organisations are sharing lessons learned on strategies and gathering data to influence jointly at regional and global level. This can ultimately make the work for abortion rights more effective and stronger.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

What's stopping people from getting the abortions they need?

Naomi Tulay Solanke, Community Healthcare Initiative, Liberia: "Lack of access. Abortion pills are expensive and hard to get. That makes women take desperate measures, such as swallowing crushed glass or inserting cassava needles into their vagina."

Lika, Georgia: "Expense. You have to pay for abortion care yourself. It costs around 70 US dollars, which is a lot of money for many people. The abortion law also stipulates three doctors' consultations with five days consideration time between them."

Marevic Parcon, Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights, Philippines: "The law. We have one of the toughest abortion laws in the world. Getting an abortion is forbidden and there are no exceptions. That leads to three people per day dying due to unsafe abortions."

Alka Barua, Common Health, India: "It's difficult. Abortion is legal in India, but the law lays down such tough requirements for the clinics that perform them that very few manage to live up to them."

Mohammad Altaf Hossain, BAPSA, Bangladesh: "Ignorance. There are actually not so many obstructions. Abortion is legal but we have to call it 'menstruation regulation' rather than abortion. And few women know where to turn."

Paula Sánchez Mejorada Ibarra, CDD México, Mexico: "Stigma. We have made considerable progress legally, but the social stigma is still a major barrier and the attitude of the Catholic church is still forbidding."

María Alicia Gutierrez, Grupo Fusa, Argentina: "Unevenness. Different parts of the country have achieved different levels. The current government is amenable, but we have presidential elections next month and there is a risk of all our work being lost if the right-wing wins." (September 2023!)

Monica Carmen Baya Camargo, Comunidad de Derechos Humanos, Bolivia: "The law. Abortion is only permitted after rape or incest or to save the mother's life. Our main objective is decriminalisation!"



2

FOCUS AREA: SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Everyone needs to know about their bodies and sex - how else can they make decisions about their own bodies? Good sexuality education contributes to a more open dialogue about sex, bodies and relationships. But it's not just important for people's sexual health - it's also important for democratic space.

What is the problem in society?

Sexuality education gives young people the knowledge and tools to take control of their own bodies. The freedom to control one's own body is a prerequisite for participation in the development of society and access to economic, political and social power.

However, the right to sexuality education in schools is being challenged around the world. The term 'comprehensive sexuality education' can rarely be used. Instead, terms such as 'reproductive health education' or 'life skills' are used. As resistance grows and censorship spreads, digital channels become important ways to reach out.

In Sweden, sexuality education has been an integral part of the curriculum since 1955 - but here too there are obstacles. Not all teachers have received the training they need to provide comprehensive and up-to-date sexuality education. Many schools lack sufficient support and resources to develop sexuality education systematically.

What progress does RFSU want to see?

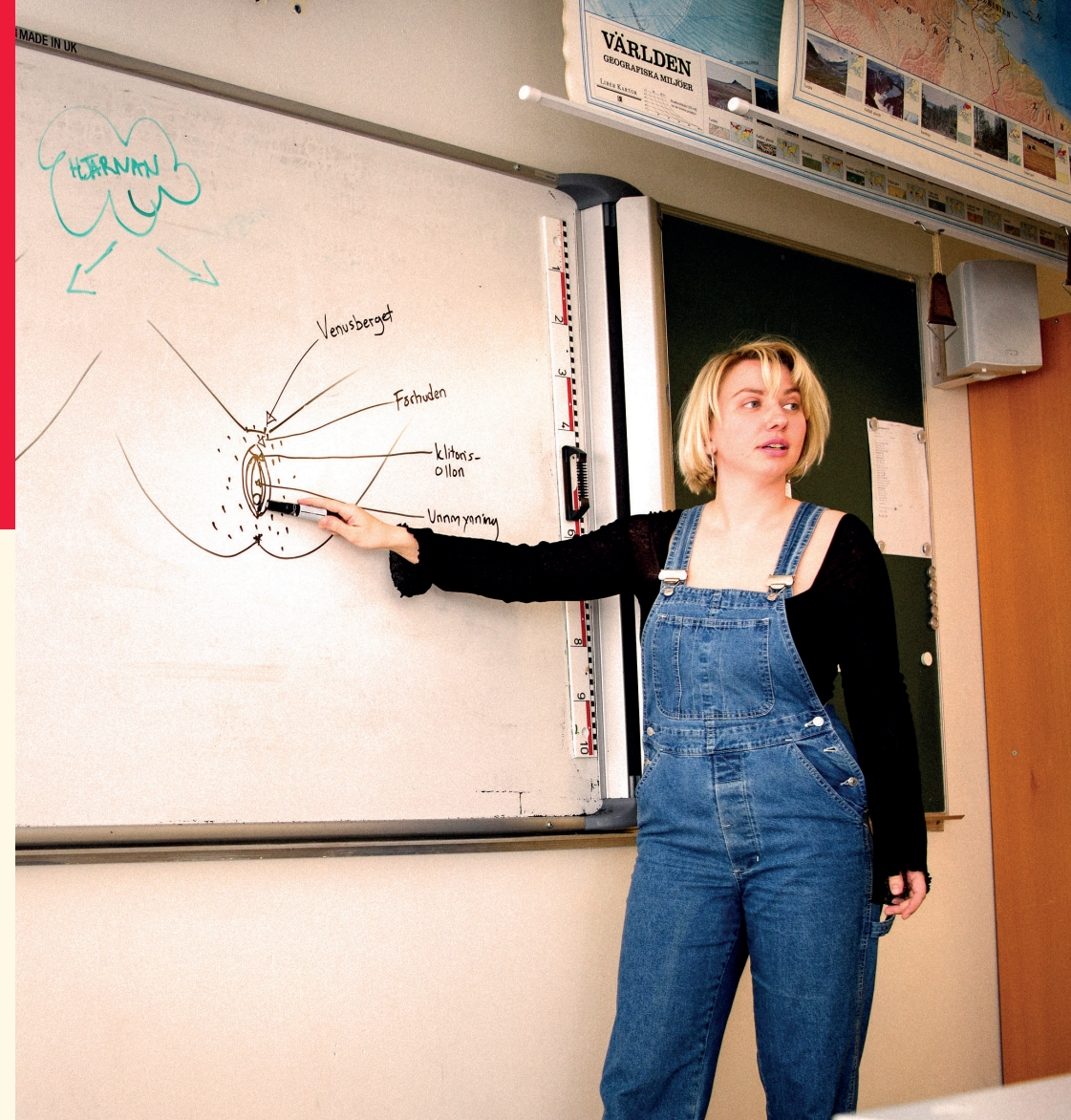
Sexuality education increases gender equality, prevents sexual abuse, reduces the risk of STIs and unwanted pregnancies, and reduces

homophobia and transphobia. For education to succeed, it needs to highlight relationships and sexuality as positive and important aspects of life, not just highlight problems to be prevented or risks to be avoided. Education should include LGBTQI issues, highlight honour norms and have anti-racist ambitions - so that all students feel addressed and seen.

How does RFSU work?

RFSU partner organisations work to ensure that all children and young people receive quality and comprehensive sexuality education in countries such as Bolivia, Kenya, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Georgia and Ghana.

At home, RFSU continues to support school sexuality education with methods, materials and training. Through partnerships with universities and trade unions, RFSU wants to strengthen teacher training. As a complement to school sexuality education, RFSU offers sexuality education sessions to primary and secondary schools, after-school centres and day care centres throughout the country. RFSU's specially trained educators lead discussions that spread knowledge, question norms and empower students regardless of their prior knowledge.



FOCUS AREA: SEXUALITY EDUCATION

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS

What has RFSU contributed to in 2023?

Vill du? (Would you like to?) strengthens young people's ability to communicate about sex and prevents abuse

A scientific study has shown that RFSU's promotion and violence prevention film and lesson package on the theme, Vill du? works.

Vill du? is a method package consisting of ready-made lesson plans with nine short films, teacher guides and discussion questions. The aim of the material is to support secondary school teachers in holding open discussions about sex, communication and boundaries - on young people's terms.

The methods have been evaluated over two years together with the county administrative boards in Skåne and Stockholm and sociologist Veronika Fridlund. The results are favourable: the young people in the study confirm that they have gained a broader view of what sex is. Many feel they've gained the knowledge needed to communicate about sex. A larger number also assesses they know when and how to intervene if they witness sexual assault.

Success for Georgian sexuality education on TikTok

When it is difficult to reach young people with sexuality education via schools, RFSU's partner organisation in Georgia is focusing on doing it via social media instead. In a unique collaboration between RFSU, the media organisation RNW Media in the Netherlands and the Georgian organisation, young people in Georgia have been able to create sexuality education content that has been fact-checked by Tanadgoma's project manager.

The TikTok channel has had 1.1 million views of its 71 videos in 2023. This means that many people have learnt important information about pleasure, sex and consent.

More teachers trained during Sex Ed Week and advanced training

More than 2,000 teachers and other school staff have received advanced training from informants from RFSU's local organisations in Malmö, Gothenburg, Stockholm, Umeå and Uppsala on how to teach about sexuality, consent and relationships. Most appreciated were the parts on inclusive language use, the in-depth look at young people's thoughts on sexuality education and the reviews of RFSU's methods. During RFSU's annual Sex Week campaign, a further 850 adults from the world of school gained new knowledge - which is now benefiting students throughout the country.

77 per cent learned something new from chatting with RFSU

Anyone can ask questions about sex, relationships and the body completely anonymously and get answers from a midwife, sexologist or psychotherapist using the RFSU chat. The most common questions are about contraception, STIs and pregnancy, but all questions and concerns are welcome.

In 2023, 2,378 people chatted with RFSU, an increase of 16.5 per cent compared to the previous year. The evaluation of this year's chats showed that almost 96 per cent received a response they found good or very good. 77 per cent say they learnt something new.

Sexuality education in 16 different languages

RFSU's material on sex, body and health in 16 different languages is aimed at people whose mother tongue is not Swedish and at healthcare professionals who meet them. Around Sweden, RFSU has organised discussion meetings where people with experience of migration can talk about sexuality in their own language. A compilation of 453 survey responses from



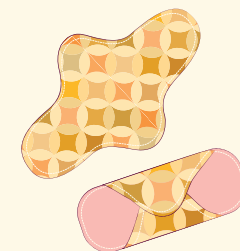
2017-2020 shows that the counselling sessions have been relevant and rewarding and that the participants are satisfied - 96% of respondents gave the counselling sessions a score of 4 or 5 out of 5.

Some of the feedback received:

- "Everything was good and exciting. The more we talk about our bodies, the more comfortable I become and I feel better."
- "I can't believe it took me 65 years to learn about the anatomy of my body, I'm so grateful."
- "I would love to teach my children that sex can be pleasurable and not painful."

Home-made sanitary towels lead to sexuality education talks in Sri Lanka

In 2023, RFSU started new partnerships with organisations in Sri Lanka. One is the organisation Muslim Women Research Action Forum, which has started making its sanitary towels. These will then become an entry point for talking about sexuality and relationships in schools and mosques, with the ultimate aim of preventing child marriage. Muslims are a vulnerable group in Sri Lanka, where the economic crisis has led politicians to pit different groups against each other.



FOCUS AREA: SEXUALITY EDUCATION

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS

Dare to Care reached more people 42,000 condoms distributed led to over 40,000 conversations about sex, consent and relationships when RFSU's Dare to Care festival project toured Sweden in 2023. Dare to Care started in 2016 as a collaboration between RFSU, the county administrative boards and Svensk Live to reduce the number of sexual offences at festivals and other events where many people meet. 2023, around 100 volunteers were trained by RFSU to lead talks on mutual consent and sexual communication at the eight festivals, from Brännbollsyran in Umeå to Malmö Festival in the south. In addition, 235 people chose to become members of RFSU and spread the word further.



BREAKING ISOLATION IN DETENTION CENTRES AND PRISONS

Project manager Jonas Lemon reports



RFSU has been conducting visits to remand prisons and prisons around Sweden since 2016, with the support of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's government grant to civil society organisations.

2023 was characterised by serious gang crime and a political debate calling for tougher measures against criminals. However, every criminal is also a human being.

"A 16-year-old wondering about their identity, missing their parents, their partner, their home-cooked food, and their friends, and wondering how their little sibling is doing. But they have to cope with all these feelings alone, locked up in a small room," says Jonas Lemon, project manager for RFSU's co-operation with the Prison and Probation Service.

Clients under the age of 18 are legally entitled to four hours of human interaction per day. Unfortunately, figures from the Prison and Probation Service show that far from everyone is granted this right, and many are isolated from the outside world for much longer periods. During the year, RFSU conducted 207

interviews with clients in the prison service, at twelve remand centres and prisons around Sweden.

"By imparting knowledge about consent, the body and relationships and promoting discussions about sexuality and relationships, we are working to strengthen the sexual health of a target group where the needs and knowledge gaps are particularly great. It is about learning important facts and at the same time, like all the other young people we meet, having the opportunity to reflect on themselves and understand their rights. It's empowering for yourself and those around you and promotes good relationships," says Jonas Lemon.

RFSU Malmö counteracts honour-related oppression against people with intellectual disabilities

People with intellectual disabilities are often overlooked when talking about honour-related oppression and violence - even though this group is particularly vulnerable. A project funded by Allmänna arvsfonden (the Swedish inheritance foundation) will now empower the target group with knowledge and tools. For three years, RFSU Malmö has been working on honour and on rights for people with intellectual disabilities and autism. The project produced four films with associated exercises in 2023. Counsellors have been trained to hold the important conversations in 2024 and 2025.



3

FOCUS AREA: LGBTQI PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

Loving who you want and being who you are should be a given for everyone, everywhere. However, LGBTQI people around the world still face hatred, threats and discrimination.

What is the problem in society?

When democratic space shrinks, the rights of LGBTQI people often suffer. In many countries, LGBTQI rights become a weapon in political power struggles - often becoming symbolic issues in a 'culture war'. Unfortunately, these kinds of hateful and offensive public statements by politicians are rarely just empty words. Often, hate campaigns lead to harassment and attacks against activists as well as LGBTQI people in general.

However, there are countries in the world where LGBTQI rights have been strengthened or are in the process of being strengthened. In some areas, LGBTQI organising is tolerated or promoted while other freedoms and rights are restricted, perhaps because the country wants to appear tolerant to the outside world. In other cases, the strengthening of LGBTQI rights takes place within the framework of a more unilaterally positive development for democratic space and human rights.

What progress does RFSU want to see?

In order to support LGBTQI people around the world, changes are needed at a structural level and in the way people are treated in their daily lives. Family policy must provide opportunities for everyone to live in the family they want with the right legal safety net.

How does RFSU work?

- RFSU's partner organisations take a long-term and strategic approach to strengthening the rights of LGBTQI people and recognising same-sex partnerships and families. RFSU supports 21 organisations in seven countries.
- In Sweden, RFSU works to influence policy to change discriminatory legislation relating to gender, sexuality and gender identity. During the year, RFSU has pushed for a new Gender Identity Act and a gender-neutral Parental Code.
- The magazine Ottar writes about LGBTQI rights and spreads knowledge.



On gender and gender identity in the Compass:

RFSU believes that everyone has the right to identify themselves, including their own gender. There are many genders, which are expressed and perceived in various ways. The right to be oneself applies regardless of gender, gender identity, gender expression or prevailing norms.



FOCUS AREA: LGBTQI PEOPLE'S RIGHTS ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS

What has RFSU contributed to in 2023?

A new Gender Recognition Act that makes life easier for transgender people

Sweden has the world's first and oldest gender recognition law. It regulates the change of legal gender and access to gender-affirming genital surgery. RFSU has long been working for a change in legislation based on self-determination and separating medicine from law. The issue has been investigated on several occasions.

In September 2023, the Moderate Party and the Liberal Party announced that they intend to submit a proposal for a new Gender Identity Act through the Parliament's Social Affairs Committee instead of via the government, as the Christian Democrats and the supporting party, the Sweden Democrats, have said no. The bill will simplify the process of changing legal gender - although a statement from a psychologist or doctor will still be required. In April 2024, the bill was voted through in Parliament.

Hope for decriminalisation of same-sex relationships in Sri Lanka and Cambodia

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is the regular UN body where countries meet to make recommendations on ways forward for human rights. Here, civil society has great opportunities to influence decision-makers on important perspectives.

In Sri Lanka, the UPR process led to hopeful messages from the government regarding the rights of LGBTQI people. RFSU's partner organisation Équité Sri Lanka has worked intensively to ensure that same-sex relationships are no longer prohibited. Shortly after the negotiations at the UN in Geneva, the country's foreign minister announced that the government intended to support a bill to decriminalise same-sex relationships. At the time of writing, Équité is still waiting to hear the outcome.

In Cambodia, RFSU's partner organisation RoCK has also been working for many years to legalise same-sex marriage, including by proposing a new working group where the government and civil society can agree on how to overcome legal obstacles.

Violations against LGBTQI people in Bolivia documented in key reports

Pregnant trans men are denied access to healthcare during pregnancy and childbirth and face difficulties in registering their parenthood with the civil registry office. RFSU's partner organisation IGUAL has documented the violations in a report. Since 2020, the organisation has helped several trans parents with legal support. The CDC has also conducted a comprehensive study of LGBTQI people's experiences of social stigma and its consequences. The reports have become important tools in advocacy work to counteract discrimination against LGBTQI people in Bolivia.



RFSU reports Transkriget (the trans war) to Swedish Broadcasting Review Board

In autumn 2023, RFSU reported SVT's documentary "Transkriget" to the Swedish Broadcasting Review Board - something that received a lot of attention in both traditional media and comment fields. According to RFSU, the documentary gave a one-sided picture of transgender care and omitted important information about how the care is provided.

"Many people waiting for care feel very unwell. We know that gender-affirming care and psychosocial support save lives. SVT does not mention this fact at all," said Lina Fridén, President of RFSU, in connection with the report.

"This is about people's lives and health. Transgender people's need for care and a new law on gender identity are important issues that must not be handled in this biased way," said Ingela Holmertz, Secretary General of RFSU.



On family and reproduction in Kompassen

"People's life dreams about relationships or families look different. Society's norms and legislation should give everyone the freedom to shape their own relationships and form families. RFSU wants everyone to be able to create the relationships and families they want."





On sexual and reproductive justice in the Compass

The realisation of sexual and reproductive rights for everyone requires sexual and reproductive justice. Restrictive norms, lack of resources, hierarchies and discrimination are all barriers between formal rights and the people who benefit from them. Sexual and reproductive justice means working actively and consciously to overcome these obstacles.

4

FOCUS AREA: EQUAL HEALTH AND CARE

Everyone sitting in the waiting room has one thing in common, whether it's choosing contraception, taking a pregnancy test or treating an infection. Patients want to feel safe and cared for. Unfortunately, too many people leave a healthcare visit with a knot in their stomach. Inequality in healthcare is a fact.

What is the problem in society? Inequality leads to insecurity

Swedish healthcare treats people differently. Cultural and social beliefs linked to skin colour, cultural background, religion and language lead to unequal access to care. Migrants are known to have less access to healthcare, including reproductive and sexual healthcare. A common reason is that their needs are questioned. Women who were born abroad and whose skin colour is not white suffer more complications during pregnancy, childbirth and aftercare. People exposed to racism in healthcare age faster and become more susceptible to diseases.

But more groups also risk not being treated equally. Trans care is underfunded and is being questioned from many quarters. People with disabilities and chronic diseases face many challenges when it comes to sexual health.

What progress does RFSU want to see?

More awareness is needed – especially in relation to SRHR

There is currently plenty of research on how racism affects people in working life, at school and in the housing market. However, there is not as much awareness when it comes to healthcare and health, not least sexual and reproductive health. More research and investigative data are needed on unequal health and care based on racism. RFSU also wants to see increased funding for research on how racism affects sexual and reproductive health.

How does RFSU work?

- RFSU provides further training for healthcare professionals in anti-racism and equal treatment, in collaboration with actors such as the Swedish Healthcare Association.
- RFSU follows and influences the work on regional action plans to achieve more equal healthcare.
- The RFSU clinic develops its activities to identify and reach new groups with SRHR care.
- RFSU disseminates films and other materials with sexuality education in different languages in healthcare. There are now 17 films on sex, body and health in 16 different languages.



FOCUS AREA: EQUAL HEALTH AND CARE

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS



100 per cent recommend the RFSU clinic

What do patients think of the RFSU clinic? During November and December, 334 patients responded to a survey aimed at evaluating and developing the organisation from a patient perspective.



	Yes (%)	No (%)
Were you able to ask the questions you wanted?	99	1
Did you get the help you needed?	98	2
Did you have enough time during your visit?	96	4
Did you understand any information you received?	99	1
Did you feel involved?	99	1
Did you feel safe?	99	1

Some quotes from the survey:

"VERY NICE STAFF."

"FELT LISTENED TO."

"GREAT!"

"I HAD MORE QUESTIONS, NEEDED MORE TIME."

"IT IS NICE AND SAFE TO COME HERE."

"GREAT EXPERIENCE OVERALL!"

What has RFSU contributed to in 2023?

More people with disabilities and chronic illnesses are aware of their rights

RFSU and Funktionsrätt Sverige have produced an online training programme aimed at people with disabilities and chronic illnesses. The aim is to empower people with knowledge of their sexual rights and to support them in encounters with, for example, healthcare, assistance and rehabilitation. The course is based on the UN Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and puts these in an everyday context with the help of various cases that the recipient can familiarise themselves with. Approximately 200 people have attended the course, mainly people from the target group but also healthcare professionals.

RFSU Stockholm gathers knowledge about the experiences of Afro-Swedish women in maternity and obstetric care

Thanks to a grant from the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF), RFSU Stockholm can contribute to new knowledge about racism and treatment in healthcare. The project involves investigating Afro-Swedish women's experiences of maternity and obstetric care in Stockholm County. The project began in 2023 with interviews and surveys to collect experiences from Afro-Swedish women who have given birth in Region Stockholm over the past ten years. Next year, the study will be summarised in a report.

100%

100 per cent answered yes to the question: "Would you recommend someone you know to go to the RFSU-clinic?"

198 healthcare professionals learnt about anti-racism in the healthcare encounter

There is a great need for awareness about anti-racism in healthcare. Around the country, participants spent half a day learning about how racism is expressed in maternity care. They were able to reflect and find common solutions to what midwives can do to treat patients in an equal and anti-racist way.

The course was well received by the target group - on the scale of whether it will support conversations about sexual health in the professional role, the average response was 8.6 out of 10.

Participants on the course have shared their own thoughts and feelings about racism and what their own behaviour can mean. For many, it was the first time they had been trained on racism during working hours. The course will be offered by the RFSU clinic from 2024 for a fee.

From the evaluation:

- "The day gave me food for thought and tips to help people avoid racism created by me without my knowledge, e.g. the wrong colour of the plaster."
- "Good opportunity to reflect on racism and how you have acted in a racist way. Greater awareness."
- "Thought-provoking training! Especially to reflect on white privilege!"
- "Now we have something to take with us to every workplace meeting, in every meeting with a person. Thank you!"



FOCUS AREA: EQUAL HEALTH AND CARE

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS

RFSU Gothenburg's informants strengthen youth clinics and train cultural birth assistants

RFSU Gothenburg has long worked against structural racism in its sexuality education work. In 2023, the local association systematised its work to increase equality in its work against HIV and STIs. An important target group has been youth clinics, where RFSU and Region Gothenburg have launched a pilot project on how anti-racist perspectives can be expressed in everyday life. RFSU Gothenburg has also carried out further training on SRHR and sexuality education for doulas in the Early Parental Support Association, which supports new mothers.

Increased focus on rights and racism in the Public Health Agency of Sweden's new national SRHR action plan

In June 2023, Sweden finally received a national action plan for SRHR. RFSU has been involved in its development by participating in the Public Health Agency of Sweden's various dialogue meetings together with other key stakeholders. Among other things, RFSU has highlighted the need for a clearer focus on rights but has also emphasised the importance of specifically mentioning people exposed to racism as an important target group in the plan.

Successful work against stigma in discrimination against LGBTQI people in Kenya

Two of RFSU's partner organisations (whose names are not mentioned for security reasons) have worked during the year to increase knowledge of LGBTQI people's sexual and reproductive health and rights for representatives from health authorities and staff at health clinics in the country. The organisations are also working to strengthen the self-esteem of LGBTQI people. Both organisations report that training and local advocacy have resulted in a reduction in stigma and discrimination at the clinics. They have also seen more LGBTQI people, including LGBTQI refugees, daring to seek care.



5

FOCUS AREA: SRHR RESISTANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Democratic space and human rights are increasingly being questioned in Sweden and around the world. Activists and civil society organisations fighting for the rights of women and LGBTQI people are hit hard as democratic space shrinks.

What is the problem in society? Both individual threats and long-term weakening of civil society

Threats to democratic space and human rights come in many guises in the public sphere and in digital environments. The aim of these threats is to intimidate and silence both individuals and organisations. Organisations working on feminism, LGBTQI rights and sexual rights are particularly affected, according to a report by MUCF, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society.

Threats and harassment against LGBTQI activists as well as feminist movements were reported by RFSU partners in several countries. In Ghana, LGBTQI people and organisations have been subjected to violent attacks, kidnappings, illegal arrests and extortion. In many places, we see the situation worsening in the context of negative statements and anti-LGBTQI bills by leading politicians and other influential people.

Shrinking democratic space

Civil society is also threatened by a longer-term weakening, often referred to as 'shrinking space'. This can mean that grants to organisations are severely cut or that it becomes more difficult for organisations to take their place in the public eye. Sometimes there are smear campaigns from both established parties and debaters and marginal, often violent actors.

In parts of Europe, for example in Georgia, RFSU's sister organisations must now register as "foreign agents" in order to receive grants from abroad. In Sweden, too, there are signs that it is becoming more difficult for civil society to carry out its activities.

In the international arena, shrinking democratic space has been particularly evident in the area of sexuality education. Many states are resisting commitments to sexuality education in global policies. In addition, restrictions are taking place in many of the countries where RFSU works with its partner organisations. Increased online surveillance and harassment and the spread of misinformation are reported by SRHR activists around the world.



FOCUS AREA: SRHR RESISTANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS

What progress does RFSU want to see?

If the goal is a world where everyone can decide over their body and sexuality, we must also fight the forces that want to undermine democratic space and weaken human rights. Democratic space is in decline all over the world - a frightening development that no one should turn a blind eye to.

How does RFSU work?

- RFSU supports partner organisations in various political and social contexts.
- RFSU produces reports, holds talks and seminars and participates in various activities that strengthen civil society and highlight the resistance that exists.
- RFSU conducts systematic security work with security routines, for example before major and minor events and external monitoring focusing on threats to and disinformation about sexual and reproductive rights and their advocates. Where appropriate, RFSU shares information with other parts of civil society or with the police.
- RFSU engages in dialogue with politicians from right to left to ensure that civil society's conditions are not undermined.
- RFSU works for more collaboration within civil society. By exchanging knowledge and working together, organisations can support each other and make it easier and safer to be involved in voluntary work.

How the far right tried to spread false information about RFSU's work in April 2023

An established method among far right activists is to mobilise their followers by spreading false information on social media. The aim is to damage organisations that work with democratic space and human rights by polarising, creating fear and identifying enemies.

In April 2023, RFSU was the target of a social media hoax, based on misinformation about how RFSU works in preschools. The campaign began on a far-right website with racial ideological links and was then spread on many far-right platforms: on the

SD-linked YouTube channel Riks, the Nazi Nordic Resistance Movement's website, the "paedophile hunter" website Dumpen and the far-right news website Samnytt.

Among other things, extracts from older material aimed at pre-school staff were distributed together with crude and hateful accusations. Threats poured in on social media and RFSU's communicators and experts had to work hard to give a different picture than the incorrect one. As the RFSU's own story spread thanks to committed commentators, members and allies, the drive eventually subsided.

Read more about the far right's attack on RFSU in the magazine Ottar, ottar.se/drevet-mot-rfsu.



FOCUS AREA: SRHR RESISTANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACTS

What has RFSU contributed to in 2023?

Increased security and heightened preparedness in collaboration with Expo

In 2023, RFSU and the Expo Foundation have deepened their collaboration on Swedish right-wing extremism and SRHR resistance. Through this collaboration, all employees and elected representatives will receive introductory training on trends within the so-called far right and how this affects RFSU's priority issues. A selection also receives in-depth training.

Expo also supports RFSU's systematic monitoring of the world around us through alarm reports and regular counselling. In this way, RFSU gains important insight into SRHR resistance within the far right, while Expo gains in-depth knowledge of the role SRHR plays in organised right-wing extremism. The result is more robust security work and safer RFSU representatives.

Safer human rights defenders in Central America

Civil society in Central America is being hit hard as governments in some countries become increasingly authoritarian. Activists face threats and violence. Women, transgender people and activists working on climate, environmental and land issues are particularly affected. In 2023, RFSU supported a feminist organisation that helps organisations and individuals defending human rights. The help can be to relocate a person from one country to another, provide shelter in their own country, access medical care and therapy, or just have a safe place to rest.



RFSU Award for Drag Queen Story Hour

Using fairy tales as a starting point and libraries as an arena, Drag Queen Story Hour Sweden has given more children and young people greater freedom to dream and shape their lives on their own terms in an inspiring way. That is why the duo received this year's RFSU Award of SEK 40,000, given annually since 1991.

At the same time, Drag Queen Story Hour, like other groups where drag queens read fairy tales to children in public settings, has been subjected to threats and hatred through targeted campaigns. This is a typical example of resistance to SRHR and the right of LGBTQI people to be seen and heard on the same terms as others.

"We are so grateful and honoured to be awarded the RFSU Prize 2023, which is a great acknowledgement that what we do is important and significant. We would like to share the award with all the staff at libraries, preschools, schools and all the visitors to our storytimes, as well as all the wonderful people who give us so much love. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts," said the winners at the award ceremony at RFSU's congress in Halmstad.

RFSU AB

RFSU's business concept is unique in the world and a good example of how corporate social responsibility (CSR) can work in reality. All profits from RFSU AB go to the operations of RFSU.

Facts about RFSU AB

RFSU AB sells condoms, home tests, intimate health and menopause products and lip balm under the Carmex brand. The products are sold online and in physical stores in the grocery trade, pharmacies, health and beauty shops, kiosks and petrol stations.

The company has an annual turnover of around SEK 270 million and employs around 50 people in Sweden, Norway and Finland, with subsidiaries in Oslo and Helsinki. The majority of sales are outside Sweden.



RFSU AB has a certified quality management system according to ISO 13485, is certified according to MDR (Medical Device Regulation) for condoms, and IVDD (In vitro diagnostic medical devices directive) for self-tests, which means that the products are CE-marked medical devices.

RFSU AB has its own production of condoms in Hälsingland. It also has warehouses and an accredited laboratory, where the company ensures that all condoms meet the requirements for CE marking in accordance with the MDR.

2023 – a record year for RFSU's brand

"For your f*cking freedom" visible throughout the Nordic region

How can one communicate that fairly simple and obvious products can facilitate 90 years of work towards a freer and more beautiful world? The For your f*cking freedom advert was shown on screens large and small, from mobile phones on Instagram and TikTok to big screens at festivals and cinemas.

The annual brand survey conducted by RFSU AB in collaboration with Ipsos shows that the film has produced results. RFSU is more clearly associated with social responsibility in several countries and especially in the 16-35 age group.

The Condom Survey

The condom achieved a milestone in 2023. The Nordic Condom Survey showed that condom use increased by almost 12 per cent in the Nordic region in 2023, compared to 2019. The gap between the willingness to use condoms and actual use, the so-called condom gap, also decreased by 6% among adolescents and young adults. Positive attitudes towards condom use also increased compared to previous surveys, a trend reversal that was already visible in 2018, indicating a strong attitudinal and behavioural shift towards condoms among young people. All this also resulted in a 6.6 per cent increase in sales in 2023 compared to the annual average sales in 2018-2022.

The new period - products and awareness for menopausal women

In October, RFSU AB launched the Nordic region's first comprehensive product range for women in any of the phases of menopause. The range consists of dietary supplements for the most common menopausal symptoms and caring intimate products. The product range was very well received by pharmacies and most



product shelves were filled during October. In connection with the launch, RFSU AB also developed a digital training programme for pharmacists on menopausal symptoms and a digital self-assessment test for menopause, which more than 17,000 people completed between October and December on RFSU AB's website, rfsu.com.

The launch began on International Menopause Day, 18 October, with the release of the Menopause Check-up report and national media coverage led by RFSU clinic staff. This was followed by a broad advertising campaign, with RFSU appearing in outdoor adverts across the country, a strong digital campaign and collaborations with influencers such as Malin Berghagen, Rachel Mohlin and Zeina Mourtada.

Sustainability in focus

In 2023, RFSU AB has worked with sustainability in a number of focus areas based on the UN's global sustainability goals, Agenda 2030. The goal is for RFSU AB to be at the forefront of sustainability in all its dimensions, in accordance with Agenda 2030. This is a tough commitment that places high demands and is included in all decisions.

A concrete and clear example is the installation of 103 solar panels at the factory in Hälsingland, expected to produce 37,000 kilowatt hours per year. This corresponds to a reduction of 29,915 kg of carbon dioxide or 2,067 trees. RFSU AB also stopped using air transport throughout 2023, instead relying on sea transport, renewable fuel and co-freight of goods.

A strong 2023 provides robust growth throughout the Nordic region

RFSU AB can look back on a strong year with growth in sales and earnings. The company easily met the requirements of the owner directive, with a 13 per cent increase in turnover compared to 2022 and a profit before financial items of 12.5 per cent. In addition to RFSU AB providing people with high-quality products in intimate and sexual health, a full 72 per cent of the profit before financial items goes to RFSU's operations.



RFSU IN FIGURES

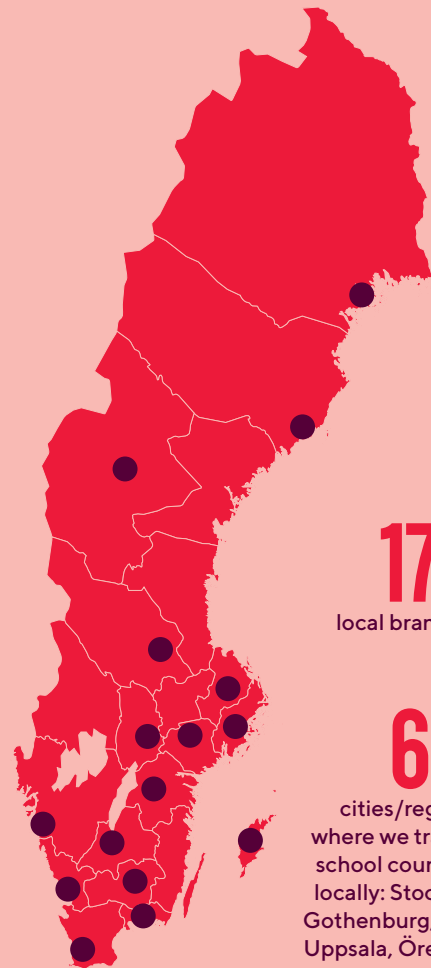


Around
50
partner organisations,
of which 5 are regional
networks/organisations,
in Latin America, Africa
and Asia

Partners in

8

countries



17
local branches

6
cities/regions
where we train new
school counsellors
locally: Stockholm,
Gothenburg, Malmö,
Uppsala, Örebro and
Umeå

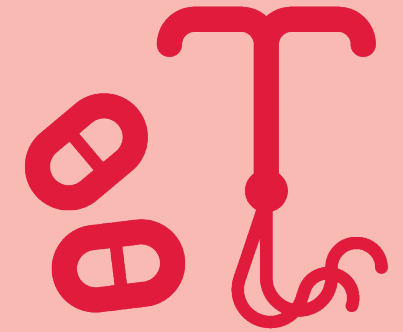
6,432
members, of which
18 are organisational
members
(organisations that are
members of RFSU)



**Membership
record again this
year! 921 more
than the year
before.**

The RFSU clinic

RFSU's own clinic promotes equal care for all and shows that it is possible to provide care based on a holistic approach to sexual health. In 2023, the number of unique visits to the clinic increased to **21,150** in the various branches: sexual medicine, counselling, family counselling and psychotherapy. Visitors came from **152** different municipalities.



Breakdown of visits	2020	2021	2022	2023
Midwife	14,964	11,695	13,450	13,725
Nurse	1,730	1,349	1,051	922
Psychotherapist	2,580	2,549	2,251	2,230
Family counsellor	913	794	700	607
Doctor	1,584	1,640	1,597	1,971
Infection tracing	1,288	1,014	1,301	1,695
Total	20,696	18,027	20,234	21,150

Number of samples taken (of which positive results)	2021	2022	2023
Chlamydia	17,972 (553)	21,243 (513)	22,990 (612)
Gonorrhoea	18,276 (163)	21,613 (223)	22,992 (390)
HIV	5,699 (5)	2,126 (5)	6,467 (1)

RFSU provided sexuality education sessions for **19,600** young people at various venues in 2023.

RFSU Stockholm conducted **12** discussion groups with a total of **116** asylum seekers in 2023.

RFSU counsellors met with more than **600** people held in detention centres and prisons in 2023.

The online Method Bank for teachers had around **230,000** page views in 2023.



RFSU IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Major changes in social media platforms led RFSU to focus on Instagram rather than Facebook and Twitter/X. Instead, the focus became presence on TikTok and LinkedIn.

Instagram was RFSU's largest channel during the year with 19,300 followers, an increase of 1,910 compared to last year.

These posts received the greatest organic reach:

- 1 This is not a kiss
Reach: **54,800**
- 2 Congratulations Finland, new abortion law
Reach: **48,600**
- 3 The word 'snippa' turns 20
Reach: **22,000**
- 4 RFSU reports the trans war to the review board
Reach: **21,500**
- 5 We won't tell anyone you've been here - about the whistleblower law
Reach: **15,700**
- 6 There was no sex chaos - about new laws in the Nordic countries
Reach: **15,100**



Sex on Tiktok

Thanks to support from the Public Health Agency of Sweden, RFSU was able to devote more energy to providing digital sexuality education relevant to young people. The emphasis was on tactile material. During the year, 23 posts were made (11 in 2022) on Tiktok. The total reach was 168,000. The most widespread were:

- Visit to a senior citizens' meeting in Malmö
Reach: **30,300**
- Treatment in abortion care
Reach: **24,500**
- Answers about emergency contraception
Reach: **14,900**
- Stand up for abortion rights
Reach: **8,300**



PRIZES AND AWARDS



Swedish Design Prize

RFSU AB's sex toys win silver in the Swedish Design Prize in the packaging design category.

LiveApan

RFSU wins the LiveApan award "Campaign of the Year" for the Dare to Care project at the live music organisation's major annual event in Skellefteå. Dare to Care is a project that aims to counteract sexual harassment and promote interaction and reciprocity through dialogue at festivals and other live events.

The citation reads: "With the Dare to Care initiative, RFSU has supported organisers in their efforts to increase safety at festivals and clubs. With its knowledge and creativity, as well as its enthusiasm and will, RFSU has helped live music to make the world a better and more sustainable place. To best describe the spirit of the content, we quote RFSU: "Sex without consent is not sex, it is something else".

Sifo-Kantar's reputation survey

RFSU comes in fourth place among organisations with the highest reputation in Sweden according to Kantar Public's annual reputation survey. Almost 10,000 people between the ages of 18 and 79 took part in the survey.



Historic results in donor survey

RFSU achieves historic results in the independent evaluation consultant Keystone's survey. Over the years, Keystone has evaluated the cooperation between 165 international donor organisations and over 50,000 recipient organisations. RFSU performs well above the global average in almost all areas and has broken records in 19 of the 37 questions covered by the survey. This is the first time an organisation has achieved such high scores according to Keystone.

In particular, the RFSU scores exceptionally high in the area of relationships and communication.

Here are some examples:

- RFSU understands our work environment and cultural context
- RFSU staff are respectful, helpful and competent
- RFSU staff ask us for advice and guidance

Silver at Roygalan

RFSU AB wins silver at Roygalan with the brand video "For your f**king freedom". The purpose of the award is to recognise creativity and innovation in Swedish advertising film production.

Diploma in Guldägget

"Lusten ser inga hinder" (lust knows no boundaries), a campaign from RFSU and Funktionsrätt Sverige, receives a diploma in Guldägget 2023. The campaign shows that a disability or chronic illness does not prevent a wonderful sex life.



FUNDING: WHO MAKES A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER WITH RFSU?

MEMBERS



RFSU's 6,000 members strengthen the organisation's voice in the work for the right of everyone to decide over their body and sexuality in Sweden and the world.

RFSU AB



RFSU AB's mission is to contribute to a world where everyone is free to decide over and enjoy their body and sexuality. This is achieved through RFSU AB's sales and marketing of products in the categories of sexuality, body, relationships and desire, and through the distribution of profits to the owner RFSU.

GROWTH IN RFSU'S CAPITAL



The capital created when RFSU sold the company Etac in 2011 helps us to maintain stable support operations, such as administration, IT, HR security work and more. The capital also enables RFSU to have a long-term approach to our activities, for example through our own contribution to Sida projects and for some of the care provided by the RFSU clinic.

INDIVIDUAL GIVING



RFSU's donors support the fight for everyone's right to their body and their sexuality through one-off or regular donations.

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATIONS AND ORGANISATIONS

The AIDS Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Concord Countdown and UNFPA. The support enables RFSU to conduct independent advocacy work for SRHR in Swedish foreign and aid policy with focus on the Swedish parliament, as well as advocacy work on global issues in Sweden, the EU and globally.

FESTIVALS



Homerun Festivals, Live Nation, Västerås Cityfestival and Malmöfestivalen, RFSU and organisers of festivals and clubs work together to promote reciprocity in all sexual encounters. This is a good way to prevent sexual abuse.

THE GENERAL INHERITANCE FUND

Through project funding, the General Inheritance Fund enables RFSU to run activities for children, young people, people over 65 and people with disabilities.

SWEDISH EMBASSIES



The aim of Swedish international aid is to create the conditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and oppression. Some of the aid funds are managed via Swedish embassies, which in turn support activities run by RFSU and partners in co-operation.

STOCKHOLM CITY



The family counselling service is aimed at couples, parents and families who need help with various cohabitation issues and live in Stockholm. RFSU's family counselling service welcomes anyone over the age of 18 who lives as a couple or in other family forms.

KAMMARKOLLEGIET

Thanks to support from Kammarkollegiet, RFSU can organise safe and secure meeting places and invest in security-enhancing measures.

SIDA

Sida aims to strengthen civil society organisations in developing countries by providing financial support to enhance their ability, capacity, and capability to improve living conditions for people facing poverty and oppression, in an effective and results-oriented manner. RFSU works with 44 partner organisations in eight countries.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS

With its support for RFSU, the Government, through the Ministry of Social Affairs, wants to help increase opportunities for women and men with a migrant background to receive support in achieving the best possible sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. This in turn can lead to a reduction in inequality and inequity in sexual and reproductive health and rights.

STOCKHOLM REGION

The RFSU clinic has a remit within "Vårdval sexual hälsa" (choice of care for sexual health). The RFSU clinic offers testing and examination of sexually transmitted infections and provides advice on contraception. The region also supports RFSU in its efforts to strengthen women's health initiatives.

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY

The Public Health Agency of Sweden promotes good, equal and gender-equal sexual and reproductive health throughout the population.

It supports RFSU and other stakeholders in order to limit the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections, and to limit the consequences of these infections for both individuals and society.

THE PRISON AND PROBATION SERVICE



The Prison and Probation Service and RFSU work together to develop knowledge to improve people's health, prevent abuse and help people make better decisions. RFSU talks about sex and relationships in prisons and remand centres around Sweden.

STOCKHOLM COUNTY COUNCIL

Vill du?

"Vill du" (Would you like to?) is a method package for secondary school teachers to support their work in holding open discussions about sex, communication and boundaries - on young people's terms. Over a period of two years and together with seven different schools, RFSU, with the support of the Skåne County Administrative Board and the Stockholm County Administrative Board, has evaluated Vill du?



The Secretary General's report:

Grateful and proud – we're gearing up to defend democratic space and free civil society



As I look back on 2023, I feel a great sense of gratitude and pride. Grateful to be part of an organisation that every day, in so many places in Sweden and around the world, fights for everyone to be free to decide over their body and sexuality. We succeed despite the resistance that we and our partners often face from authoritarian regimes and the forces that want to limit people's rights and freedoms. I am humbled and respectful of all the brave people who stand up every day for the right to be themselves.

OVER THE PAST YEAR, it has become increasingly clear how the fight for access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for everyone is so closely linked to democratic space and a free civil society. If you are not free to make decisions about your body and sexuality, you have fewer, if any, opportunities to participate in the development of society, nor to live a life free from discrimination, oppression and violence. Without access to contraception, the number of unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions increases dramatically. This increases inequalities and affects girls' and women's health, education and labour opportunities. As democratic space in the world goes in the wrong direction, it becomes even more important that we put RFSU's issues in a broader context.

The past year has seen less favourable conditions and less space for civil society in Sweden. This has included reduced funding for popular education, withdrawn support for peace and ethnic organisations and proposals that mean that the entire role of Swedish civil society in aid may be reduced or cease completely.

We will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with activists around the world in the fight for SRHR and LGBTQI rights, for access to sexuality education for young people and for safe and legal abortion. It is more important than ever that Sweden has a robust aid programme that strengthens SRHR given the setbacks that are now taking place around the world. And we need to ensure that the Swedish government does not abandon the groups that are most vulnerable and need the support the most.

OUR WORK IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS will therefore be about defending the rights we have long taken for granted. We are equipping ourselves to be a strong voice in the debate and to navigate an increasingly challenging world. We will continue to monitor the world around us and increase our knowledge of the forces that are based on value-conservative, xenophobic currents and that make a difference to people. We will do everything we can to counter these developments and always be an objective voice – based on our values and the conviction that everyone is equal.

INGELA HOLMERTZ
Secretary general

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