



FINAL EVALUATION IMPACT OF THE IT'S MY BODY! PROGRAMME 2016-2020

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**

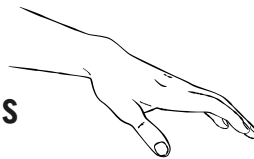


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Our vision is of a world where those in power keep their promises, respect international law and are held to account.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and individual donations.

We believe that acting in solidarity and compassion with people everywhere can change our societies for the better.



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Cover photo: *Transnational meeting of activists, organized in Buenos Aires, Argentina, by CIJA, 2019.*

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FOREWORD

After more than 5 years a programme of tremendous importance to Amnesty International is coming to an end. Taking stock of what we have achieved between the initial conception phase in 2013 and the ending of activities in 2021, with the COVID-19 extension, the only viable conclusion is that the experience has been enormously enriching for our human rights movement in the Americas. As this report will show, the programme has made an obvious impact on leadership, active support and participation in advancing human rights in the Americas by young persons, and in particular in their making decisions to do with their sexual and reproductive rights. The findings confirm how important it is to offer comprehensive programmes employing different tactics in human rights education, campaigning and activism, in support of **new generations of human rights defenders.**

The **It's My Body!** programme has been essential to the development of Amnesty International's work with young people, as it is run by and for young people; it has been prominent and impactful in involving young persons in various ways. Thanks to this project the number of young activists in the sections has increased enormously. In addition to this, a number of youth groups have begun to self-organise with some independence from Amnesty International, to have the freedom to disseminate messages and use forms of communication not necessarily in line with Amnesty's policies, or to focus on issues outside the direct scope of the programme. We wholeheartedly welcome and encourage this, as our main objective in our human rights education strategy is for groups to "take initiative and develop their own human rights activities and campaigns" and "bring about substantial change in their own lives and the lives of others, and to take action based on increased knowledge, skills and values of human rights".

In this respect it **fills us with hope, joy and gratitude** to hear young people identify themselves as human rights activists after being involved in the programme, and say that they will continue to promote human rights within or outside the context of Amnesty International, because they believe in the cause, in a world free of discrimination, in equality and a culture and society based on human rights. For its part, as an organization, Amnesty International has learned and developed enormously alongside these young activists and we offer them the greatest thanks and admiration, as they have made this programme a success.

We are also deeply grateful to the donor, Operation Day's Work Norway, and to all the young people involved in Norway who have understood the utmost importance of working on sexual and reproductive rights in **Argentina, Chile and Peru** and have believed in the programme, thus supporting the changes and impacts made by young people in the three countries.

Finally, this report is the result of an arduous process of final impact evaluation. It is not often possible to bring the evaluation process in-house, but having allowed us and encouraged us to do so, Operation Day's Work Norway has enabled us to achieve a more thorough integration of learning and reflection that is of great value to our organization. Young peoples' experience is undoubtedly **the most important input** to this report. Their experiences, perceptions, growth, activism and future plans set the tone for what the programme has meant to Amnesty International and for what is yet to come.



PART 1

INTRODUCTION

It's My Body! has been an innovative and far-reaching youth leadership and empowerment programme. It invested heavily in a combination of human rights education (HRE) tactics, campaigning, activism and advocacy, and was unlike anything Amnesty International had ever done in the region, with a generous provision of resources at a time when Amnesty International's resources were very limited. Implementation of the programme was also a learning process for everyone involved.

After 5 years, looking back and taking stock of the results, what stands out most from the evaluation process is specifically the important advances and impacts in the context of human rights and sexual and reproductive rights, and the imprint the programme left on young people's lives¹. In the parts that follow, this is evidenced by significant data, testimonies and examples.

Finally, It's My Body! has shown that there is more that can be learned from young people than can be taught to them, and project coordinators at all levels have repeatedly expressed their admiration and gratitude for the **leadership, creativity and courage** shown by young people in the programme.

APPROACH AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The process of evaluating the impact of the 5-year It's My Body! programme has been the result of an internal exercise carried out between October 2020 and January 2021. Different parties from Argentina, Chile and Peru contributed to its preparation: young activists, national, regional and global coordination and management, staff, partner organizations and the donor Operation Day's Work Norway. Amnesty International Americas led the process with the support of consultants. In carrying out the evaluation and preparing the report the evaluation team sought to collect the various opinions and experiences of the stakeholders involved, reflecting both common viewpoints and differences. This report is a reflection of lived experiences and perceptions of a diverse reality, and relevant data shared by those taking part in online surveys, focus groups and individual interviews.

The report considers the following axes of impact and learning:

- **Youth leadership and involvement.**
- **Peer education.**
- **Changes in young people and their environment.**

The graphic below outlines the structure of the programme, the process of impact evaluation and lessons learned that this report seeks to demonstrate.²

"ALTHOUGH THE PROJECT IS CLOSING IT'S STILL THERE AND THERE'S NO GOING BACK."

Youth activist, Peru

"IT'S MY BODY! IS SOMETHING THAT STIRS THE SOUL. YOU ARE NOT THE SAME AFTER TURNING THAT CORNER".

Youth activist, Argentina

"FOR ME IS IT LOVELY TO SEE THAT WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT TURNED INTO REALITY. THAT THIS IS STILL EXISTING. TO LOOK AT YOUTH THAT HAVE BEEN EMPOWERED BY THIS PROJECT. IT EMPOWERED ME. ALSO MY PEERS. AND MY NEIGHBOURS."

Youth activist member of CIJA

¹ The main target group for the programme has been 13-19 year olds. Those involved have in some cases been younger or older than this age group. In this report we use the term "young person" when referring to children, adolescents and young people who have taken part in the programme.

² The quantitative data presented in this report has been derived from the questionnaire, while qualitative information has been obtained from interviews and focus groups.

IT'S MY BODY!

2016–2020

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL PERU
+ MANTHOC

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL CHILE
+ PARTNERS

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL
ARGENTINA
+ ACTIVANDO
DERECHOS +
ANDHES

GLOBAL
HUMAN RIGHTS
EDUCATION

AMERICAS
REGIONAL
OFFICE

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL
NORWAY

13 TO 19 YEAR OLD YOUTH LEADERS
IN THE PROGRAMME

IT'S MY BODY! SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

PROGRAMME AREAS

Human rights education – peer education and multiplication of workshops with youth, teachers and parents in schools and families



Activism and campaigns – at local, national and regional level, led by youth raising their voices to claim their rights



Advocacy – towards local authorities and national governments – in the education and health sectors and with politicians

Impact evaluation (October 2020-January 2021)

- ✓ Revision of existing material and reports
- ✓ 59 answers from youth to the questionnaire
- ✓ 10 focal groups: 5 with Amnesty International staff and 5 with national groups of activists and CIJA
- ✓ 22 individual interviews with national coordinators, directors, partner organisations, ODW Norway, Global HRE and Regional HRE
- ✓ Stories of change from 20 youth

THE IT'S MY BODY! PROGRAMME


It's My Body! began as a way to provide continuity for the work of Amnesty International's worldwide My Body My Rights campaign, which promoted the use of human rights education tools to more actively engage young people in the Americas, and based on the interest of entities in Latin America to delve deeper into issues relating to sexual and reproductive rights. At the same time there arose an opportunity to present a proposal to the youth organization Operation Day's Work Norway. This issue was highly relevant to this organization and the idea of supporting a programme with the features of It's My Body! in three Latin American countries (Argentina, Chile and Peru) proved to be of great interest to it.

At their national assembly around 600 Norwegian young persons endorsed the choice of It's My Body! from two other programmes shortlisted in a first round that year, and pledged to raise the necessary funds for it. Amnesty International Norway was the organization that submitted the application to Operation Day's Work. Once the fundraising had been completed Amnesty International Norway handed over responsibility for running the programme to the global human rights education team, which was partly located within the Norwegian section.

On the one hand, the topic was a very important aspect in Operation Day's Work's choice of the programme. Empowering young people and their commitment to sexual and reproductive rights are two issues very close to the hearts of young Norwegians, and the donor organization was very interested in addressing sexual identity issues in the Americas. On the other hand, it was very important for young people in Latin America to know that the funds came from a young people's organization such as Operation Day's Work. From the outset the young persons involved in It's My Body! felt a connection with the donor organization and its philosophy. It was very important to work with people who understand that a youth programme should be led by young people and that they should be allowed to make the most important decisions about their involvement.

It's My Body! is a programme that has prominently implemented several tactics that Amnesty International uses in its human rights advocacy: working with rights holders, local organizations and communities; education, activism, advocacy and campaigning. In turn, the programme came at a very opportune time, as Amnesty International was preparing its global youth strategy³ when the It's My Body! programme began to take shape, so the strategy and practice of youth participation and leadership in Argentina, Chile and Peru has been good experience for the Amnesty International movement.



 Youth training workshop in Lima, Peru 2016.

© Amnesty International

³ <https://bit.ly/3INKadn>



The use of a participatory approach made it possible to involve young people and broadened the scope of the programme. It was the young people consulted during the stage of planning the programme who expressed a sincere interest in favouring the use of peer education or the train-the-trainer approach to carry out the programme. With education as the starting point for further action and the integration of activists into the programme, the groundwork was laid on the principle that actions have greater impact and are more successful if the learning is action-oriented.

Having resources to work on It's My Body! for 5 years gave Amnesty International a rare opportunity to be able to plan such a long-term programme, which was a great advantage. At the same time, a 5-year term means that the context changes over time, as do the young people involved in the project. Having had several generations of young leaders involved in the programme, it has sometimes been a challenge to introduce new people to the programme. Faced with desired or necessary changes, Operation Day's Work has shown itself to be a generous and flexible donor.

👁️ *Participants in the regional workshop in Peru, 2015.*

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THE GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

The central aim and specific results that guided the 5 years of work were:

AIM: Young people in Argentina, Chile and Peru should have access to their sexual and reproductive rights and be able to make informed decisions about their bodies and sexuality.

1. **Educating and inspiring young people:** Changing young people's lives. Increasing access to information on sexuality, sexual and reproductive rights and health services for young people.
 - Young people should understand and regard sexual and reproductive rights as being human rights.
 - Young people will know who to turn to if their sexual and reproductive rights are violated, especially in cases of sexual violence and rape.
2. **Youth activism:** Raising our voices: changes in activism and mobilization. Empowering young people to build public support and claim their sexual and reproductive rights in society.
 - Strong youth networks at national and regional levels for young people to claim, promote and defend their sexual and reproductive rights.
 - Young people taking action to promote and protect their own sexual and reproductive rights, as well as the rights of other young people.
3. **Young advocates:** Bringing our voices to our people in power. Generating policy change on sexual and reproductive rights and their enforcement. Empowering young people to engage in influencing government policies on sexual and reproductive rights education and health services.
 - Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) comprehensively and fully implemented in formal and informal educational settings.
 - Steps have been taken to ensure that government authorities effectively monitor and oversee proper and full compliance with existing laws and policies on sexual and reproductive health education and sexual and reproductive health services.



Images from the programme in Argentina, Chile and Peru.

© Amnesty International

PART 2: AREAS OF IMPACT LEADERSHIP, AGENCY AND PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

A key aspect of the work done on It's My Body! was empowering young people to know and demand their sexual and reproductive rights, and to take action in their communities. Young people's leadership, agency and meaningful participation was an important part of the focus of the work throughout the programme, to encourage young people to have an opportunity for decision making based on their needs, ideas and proposals, in addition to collectively organizing and taking action towards common goals.

The concepts of leadership and involvement developed throughout the project in continuous exchange and dialogue between the young people and project coordination. These models took account of specific national contexts and organizational opportunities, resulting in different forms of expression or articulation in each country. In Peru, for example, there was a strong focus on protagonismo⁴, while in Chile young people were self-organized from the outset. In Argentina there was strong youth agency of campaigning and advocacy. Ownership of the project, joint or youth-led decision-making and the questioning of adult centrism have been key in each of the countries. While there is no consensus on this, or at least not explicitly, the programme has challenged traditional forms of organization and has given more ownership to young people's actions and decisions. In this report we use the term youth leadership to refer to youth participation, agency and leadership in the programme.

91% of young people believe that It's My Body! enabled them to **make informed decisions** about their sexual and reproductive rights and to **take action in a variety of ways**: organizing information fairs, workshops or marches, demanding that education authorities incorporate and/or implement comprehensive sexuality education in the school curriculum, activism and cyber-activism, among others.

MAIN ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOUNG PEOPLE TOOK PART

- 73%** Training activities (multiplications, workshops and peer education)
- 58%** Street activism
- 46%** Cyberactivism
- 39%** Workshops or training aimed at adults
- 39%** Involvement in awareness campaigns
- 24%** Advocacy actions
- 22%** Representatives of the International Committee of Young Activists (CIJA)

"KNOWING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE CAN CHANGE THINGS. WE HAVE A VOICE. EVEN THOUGH IN MANY PLACES IT IS STILL UNDERVALUED. SO THERE IS STILL MUCH TO BE DONE. THERE IS A NEED TO WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE INTERGENERATIONALLY AND BETWEEN SECTIONS. FROM THINKING THROUGH PROJECTS, REGULATIONS OR WORK THAT HAS TO BE DONE, TO CARRYING IT ALL OUT (NOT JUST SO THAT THEY CAN SAY THAT "WE WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE"). YOUNG PEOPLE'S POINT OF VIEW NEEDS TO BE IN EVERYTHING".

Youth activist, Chile

⁴ In Peru the concept of *protagonismo* differs from that of leadership because of its definition and origin. While the concept of leadership comes from the liberal cultures of the Global North and is centred on the capabilities of the individual, *protagonismo*, as a category from the de-colonial Global South¹, refers to the tradition and legacy of the original South American cultures that are collectivist. Moreover, *protagonismo* is a category that refers to a new social pact on childhood, going beyond the capabilities of individuals and proposing a new social order in which children are recognized as individuals having their own rights in relation to their families, communities and society. A definition of leadership that is very close to the concept of *protagonismo* has been used in the context of It's My Body!.

Those taking part in the programme have a **strong sense of collective satisfaction and pride** in their achievements and in having had opportunities for self-knowledge, reflection on sexual identity and analysis of their individual behaviour. Being engaged in national and transnational actions, influencing other young people and establishing links with activists in other regions and countries are elements of their experience that they value positively. The transnational work of It's My Body! provided an opportunity for forging links, appreciating other cultures and developing mutual support between young people from three contextually different countries, based on common objectives, scope for exchange and joint actions on issues of interest to them.

MOST IMPORTANT LEARNING FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE

Incorporating knowledge (the guarantee, enjoyment and ownership of, and insistence upon, young people's human rights).

The work and systematisation of experiences deriving from the participative methodologies used by Amnesty International.

Close involvement with other young people with whom they share ideals and joining forces to achieve various goals.

Gathering experience and making use of prior knowledge to express their ideas in public, facilitating workshops for others (young people and adults).

A sense of belonging to a worldwide movement in which young people take part, discuss, debate and are able to reach agreement.

Recognising, valuing and appreciating diversity and differences.

According to the young people surveyed, their expectations of the programme were largely met.



"REALISING THAT THE PROBLEMS WE DEAL WITH IN OUR YOUTH GROUP ARE NOT RESTRICTED TO OUR COUNTRY, BUT ARE SHARED STRUGGLES THAT GO WELL BEYOND THE REGION".

Youth activist, Argentina

"I FEEL MUCH MORE CONFIDENT BECAUSE OF THE UNION THAT WE HAVE SET UP BETWEEN THE THREE COUNTRIES. THIS HAS BEEN IMPORTANT. IT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THIS YEAR IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PANDEMIC, AND IT DIDN'T NEED MUCH EFFORT (WITH VIDEO CALLS OR WHATSAPP MESSAGES). WE ARE LIVING THROUGH SUPER-IMPORTANT CHANGES IN THE THREE COUNTRIES. IT'S MAJOR. HAVING SUPPORT NOT JUST WITHIN OUR OWN COUNTRY MAKES US A BIT SAFER. FOR OUR GROUPS OR NETWORKS. BUT FOR OTHER NETWORKS TOO. PEOPLE WHO ARE SUPPORTING US, WHO SEE OUR WORK AND AT THE SAME TIME ARE GETTING INFORMATION THAT IS TRUTHFUL."

Youth activist member of CIJA

© Transnational kick-off workshop, Peru 2016.
© Amnesty International

FULFILLED EXPECTATIONS HIGHLIGHTED BY YOUNG PERSONS (A SELECTION)

Argentina

Meeting people with the same concerns and queries as me and learning from their experience.

Informing other young people about sexual and reproductive rights.

Learning about human rights and in particular sexual and reproductive rights and feminism.

Learning about the reality of human rights in my country and the region.

Becoming informed and getting the tools to change the situation and defend human rights.

Turning my ideals into specific actions.

Peru

Becoming informed and knowledgeable about sexual and reproductive rights.

Overcoming the misconceptions I had in my mind.

Being able to know and value myself.

Becoming informed and then sharing it with the family.

Experience of working in pairs and working with teachers.

Acquiring an identity as a sexual and reproductive rights activist.

Political and social advocacy on sexual and reproductive rights.

Chile

Feeling part of something and feeling accepted within a group where there is social and professional support.

Being able to meet more people who have similar goals to mine and making friends.

Engaging in activism for sexual and reproductive rights.

Learning about the technical aspects of human rights, other forms of activism, feminism and participatory methodologies.

Educating myself about sexual and reproductive rights, teaching others, and being able to take action.

Empowering myself and motivating myself about everything that seemed unjust to me.

"THE MOST SIGNIFICANT LEARNING IS THAT MANY TEENAGERS LIKE ME WERE ABLE TO REPLICATE THESE WORKSHOPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE, TEACHERS, SCHOOLMATES. BRING ALL THIS LEARNING TO AUTHORITIES, WHICH SURPRISED MANY OF THEM, THAT TEENAGERS LIKE US WERE GIVING THEM TALKS AND SHARING THE LEARNINGS WE GAINED THROUGH THE WHOLE PROCESS OF THE IT'S MY BODY! PROJECT. I HAVE JOINED IN MARCHES, AND THIS TAUGHT ME TO ALWAYS FIGHT FOR THE FULFILMENT OF MY RIGHTS."

Youth activist, Peru

"IN ALL THREE COUNTRIES IT'S MY BODY! MADE IT POSSIBLE TO REACH AREAS WHERE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PREVIOUSLY HAD NO PRESENCE AND ESTABLISH LINKS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AS PROTAGONISTS AND RIGHTS HOLDERS, WHO BECAME ROLE MODELS, LEADERS AND EDUCATORS ON TOPICS RELATING TO THEIR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES."

Staff member, Amnesty International Regional Office for the Americas

Publications and links:

📱 We asked about the expectations of participants at the start of the programme in 2016. They wrote blogs that can be found in "Defending sexual and reproductive rights in South America" (<https://bit.ly/3shUtrz>) and "A young activist speaks out" (<https://bit.ly/3jlshtM>).

ARGENTINA promoted strong advocacy work. The section's support for the national campaign for the decriminalization of abortion and strong investment in the section's digital communication strategy opened up space for innovation and creativity among young people. Workshops held were accompanied by adult workshop facilitators who in some cases took the place intended for young people to train their peers. Young people set up several campaigns to raise awareness among their peers about the importance of taking action to demand that the Comprehensive Sex Education Law be implemented. The youth network of the project was the same as the youth network of the section. The youth networks in partner organizations (ANDHES and Activando Derechos) engaged in actions at local level while joining some activities with the section's network. Working with different youth audiences from various regions in Argentina represented, on the one hand, technical and empowerment challenges because of the conservative nature of local partners' regions and the diversity and vulnerability of living conditions of participants. On the other hand, it meant significant learning about strategies that favour youth leadership and participation in different conditions.

"YOUNG PEOPLE STARTED OFF BEING RECEIVERS OF INFORMATION. BUT NOW THEY HAVE REACHED A LEVEL OF ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT WHERE THEY ACTIVELY PLAN THEIR CAMPAIGNS AND RUN THEIR WORKSHOPS."

Staff member, Amnesty International Argentina

"I FEEL THAT I AM UNDERSTOOD AND I NO LONGER FEEL ALONE. I KNOW THAT THERE IS A COMMUNITY THAT ALSO SHARES MY DREAMS. THAT IS PASSIONATE ABOUT PEOPLES' HUMAN RIGHTS BEING FULFILLED. I FEEL STRONGER HAVING THE TOOLS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION TO SUPPORT MY FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS."

Youth activist, Argentina



Argentina publications and links:

- 📖 An interview with Florencia Manolakis and Bruno Rodriguez, project activists in Argentina, on the transformative power of human rights education and youth leadership (<https://bit.ly/37sPOtb>).
- 📖 The voice of young people. Young people are organizing themselves, sharing their life experience, becoming empowered and making demands (<https://bit.ly/3r1ByeD>).
- 📖 Abortion in Argentina was a key campaign for the project. Young people have been the protagonists of 'the Green Wave' (Marea Verde) and some of their testimonies are recounted in this piece (<https://bit.ly/3BaCreP>).
- 📖 Teaching materials for sustainability of the CSE project (<https://bit.ly/3rfSxip>).



👁 2019 march, Argentina.
© Amnesty International

BOLETÍN ¡ES MI CUERPO! - CHILE

NOVEDADES DE LA RAMS

RED ABORTANDO MITOS DE LA SEXUALIDAD

EDUCACIÓN SEXUAL INTEGRAL - ACTIVISMO JOVEN - DERECHOS SEXUALES Y REPRODUCTIVOS

JULIO A SEPTIEMBRE 2019

LO QUE HICIMOS

Encuentro Transnacional ¡Es Mi Cuerpo! - Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Jóvenes de Argentina, Chile y Perú, que participan en el Proyecto ¡Es Mi Cuerpo!, se reunieron en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires los días 22, 23 y 24 de agosto para trabajar sobre adultocentrismo y liderazgo juvenil, sostenibilidad del proyecto y planificar acciones de movilización conjunta en fechas claves. Destacamos a Constanza (ESLEX), Esperanza (Aumasex), Ángeles (Atacama Queer), Rena (Escuela Es Mi Cuerpo), y a Isis, representante de Chile en Comité Internacional de Jóvenes Activistas (CIJA) por su participación!

LO QUE HICIMOS

Taller Planificación Estratégica y Lanzamiento Campaña Educación Sexual Sí #PeroQueSealIntegral.

Alrededor de 20 jóvenes de la Red Abortando Mitos de la Sexualidad, desde Atacama a Magallanes, se reunieron en Santiago los días 1, 2 y 3 de septiembre con el objetivo de adquirir herramientas y

ACTIVISTA DESTACADA

¡Hola! Soy Isis Brenat, activista de Concepción de la Red Abortando Mitos de la Sexualidad y representante de Chile en CIJA (Comité Internacional de Jóvenes Activistas), una red transnacional conformada por representantes de 3 países: Chile, Perú y Argentina. La necesidad de abarcar problemáticas que van más allá de los límites nacionales pero que nos afectan por igual, como lo son los DDHH y más específicamente los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos llevó a la creación de este comité existente desde el 2017, momento desde el cual se ha trabajado conjuntamente con el objetivo de promover los DSR en las comunidades, a través del planteamiento de las realidades territoriales de cada país, buscando soluciones y planes de

In **CHILE** the approach used promoted and enabled the creation of a comprehensive space for youth leadership in the project through establishing the “Red Abortando Mitos sobre la Sexualidad” (RAMS) [Network for Aborting Myths about Sexuality]. Growth and leadership among the network’s young members and close support from Amnesty International enabled the network to become independent of the organization by the end of the project. Also during the implementation of the project, RAMS acted with a certain amount of independence from Amnesty International so as to be free to disseminate messages and use forms of communication that were not necessarily in line with Amnesty’s policies. RAMS has run campaigns, workshops and festivals, written columns, taken part in interviews, studies and seminars, among other educational, motivational and advocacy activities on sexual and reproductive rights (SRR) and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in Chile.

RAMS and It’s My Body! promoted a change in Amnesty International Chile’s statutes to allow young people to take part in and be represented in the section’s decision making processes. The vision of the It’s My Body! programme and actions taken in its context have made the Chilean section one of those having the greatest involvement by young persons in activism, governance and development of the section’s action plan.

“I WAS IN THE ORGANIZATION FOR A YEAR AND A HALF AND ONLY THEN REALIZED THAT LEGALLY I COULDN’T BE A PART OF AMNESTY AND COULDN’T VOTE. WE BEGAN TO PUT PRESSURE ON AMNESTY AND THE BYLAWS WERE CHANGED. I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE ON THE MANAGEMENT BOARD OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CHILE.”

Youth activist, Chile

Chile Publications and links:

Members of the RAMS network have created several spaces, activities and playful materials. Under the gender inclusive concept “*Es Mi Cuerpo!*” they produced a number of manuals that they use within and outside the project, among them the Non-Sexist Education Workbook (<https://bit.ly/3xIfew>).

In an effort to create a memory and make widely known what they had created and used in the process, during the final months of the project RAMS young people published the *¡Es Mi Cuerpo!* Manual: Tools for Sexual Rights and Reproductive Rights Advocacy in Chile (<https://bit.ly/3wNehTX>).

RAMS continues to be active outside the framework of the It’s My Body! programme through various activities, events and campaigns, as can be seen on their Instagram and Facebook pages. <https://www.instagram.com/abortandomitos.red/> <https://www.facebook.com/redabortandolosmitos/>



© “Not One Less” march in Peru, 2016.
© Amnesty International

PERU is a country where anti-rights and anti-gender movements, such as the *Con Mis Hijos No Te Metas* [Don't Mess With My Children] movement, have a strong presence and where there is notorious social resistance to addressing these issues in formal education. Taking up ownership of the project, its central themes and youth leadership processes not only served to achieve the project's aims, but also to generate internal reflections on sexual and reproductive rights and changes in the youth-led partner organization MANTHOC. At the beginning, a closer accompaniment between Amnesty International and MANTHOC was necessary to understand the functioning of both organizations and to recognize how, from such a specific and unique structure that young people knew from their participation in the MANTHOC collective, they could be incorporated into Amnesty's membership and structure. Since then, the young people in the project have had a high level of protagonism in their advocacy actions and managed to have an impact on their communities and regions.

They have contributed to the analysis of various laws and policies and have built their strategy and actions around relevant issues, they have opened up discussion in the community and have developed awareness-raising actions, taken part in events and conferences, discussion panels on non-sexist education, appeared in performances, and run their own workshops in which other young people, teachers and families, as well as others, have taken part.

"BEFORE, I COULDN'T GIVE AN OPINION WHEN ADULTS SPOKE. I DIDN'T REALIZE WHEN MY RIGHTS WERE BEING TRAMPLED ON [...] I REALIZED [THAT] I HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPRESS MY OPINION. TO DEFEND MYSELF".

Youth activist, Peru

Peru Publications and links:

☞ Young people in Peru have engaged in advocacy at national level with the Ministry of Education (<https://bit.ly/3wJoKQn>), as well as internationally with the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva (<https://bit.ly/3B7KCsb>).

☞ They have led training workshops on sexual and reproductive rights, such as a workshop attended by 120 teachers from Fe y Alegría's rural schools in Iquitos (<https://bit.ly/3B5fbPc>).

☞ In order to combat gender inequality in families, which worsened during quarantining for the COVID-19 epidemic in 2020, the young persons in the project published 4 videos on the subject under the hashtag #YoPongoElHombroEnCasa [I lend a hand at home] (<https://bit.ly/3z3o9L8>).

At transnational level, the creation of the International Committee of Young Activists (CIJA) in 2017 was an important moment. CIJA was created within the scope of the organization of a regional meeting entirely planned for by young people so they could take ownership of opportunities for exchange and better coordinate transnational actions within the programme. For the members of CIJA, the significance of the committee went beyond this and contributed to youth leadership in a broader sense.

Some of the results of the CIJA space that members mentioned: the creation of networks with activists from other countries with the aim of generating greater advocacy and strengthening their own actions; the creation of bonds of friendship and support for their social struggles; the interest they had in meeting people who shared the same concerns and interests as they did; and learning from the experience of other young people in other countries in their struggle to defend sexual and reproductive rights. By having CIJA, young people felt they had a valuable platform and infrastructure to, in their words, effect communication more directly, create more autonomy and empowerment once decisions had been made, and have a counterweight to the power of the sections.

As the group matured, they sought the best way to organise and coordinate, through trial and error. They felt that the regional meeting that the young people organized in 2019 achieved greater participation by young people, with more voices and more points of view from all the countries: “it was something we wanted very much”. They also broadened interest in CIJA’s work and expanded the membership. It is seen as an example of the value of leadership by young people and the positive outcomes it produces.

In all three countries, young people reported that they found a safe haven in It’s My Body! where they felt they could talk freely and confidently about their concerns, issues and experiences relating to their sexual and reproductive rights. However, in their participation they faced situations that in some cases led them to stop being actively involved in the programme, such as demands from school, family or work.



“IT WAS CLEAR TO US THAT WE NEEDED TO HAVE REPRESENTATION FROM THE 3 COUNTRIES. A PLATFORM TO COORDINATE THE ACTIONS THAT WE WANTED. TO BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN THE COUNTRIES AND TO UNDERSTAND OUR LONG AND SHORT-TERM NEEDS. THAT’S WHERE CIJA CAME IN.”

A member of CIJA

“CIJA. IT’S DIFFICULT TO MARK OUT ONE EXPECTATION: IT WAS MORE THAN A WORKING GROUP. IT FELT LIKE THE TIP OF SOMETHING MUCH BIGGER AND THAT MADE ME THINK A LOT ABOUT OTHERS AND THOSE WHO WOULD COME AFTER.”

A member of CIJA

“BEFORE, WE DIDN’T KNOW WHAT WORK WAS BEING DONE IN THE OTHER COUNTRIES. WE WERE A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT GROUPS. SOME OF US WERE YOUTH FROM AMNESTY. OTHERS BELONGED TO THE CHILEAN YOUTH NETWORK AND OTHERS TO MANTHOC. WITH CIJA CAME THE POSSIBILITY OF BEING ABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS GOING ON IN EACH COUNTRY. TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND HOW GROUPS OPERATE IN EACH COUNTRY AND TO BE ABLE TO CARRY OUT OUR STRUGGLES TOGETHER.”

A member of CIJA

Creation of the International Committee of Young Activists (CIJA), 2017.

© Amnesty International

Main barriers to young people continuing in It's My Body!

Time available to young people.

Exceeding the age limit.

Need to enter employment or academia.

Members' **exhaustion** or mental fatigue.

The **COVID-19** pandemic.

Leaving space for other young people or ceasing collaboration with the project partner organization.

The online survey data showed that only 2 of the 59 young people surveyed stopped taking part because the activities were not what they expected or thought they would be. In more extreme and circumstantial cases where young persons were prevented from continuing in the project, there was strong resistance from the family or school community. For example, Amnesty International Chile accompanied and negotiated in cases where schools faced students with a choice: to either continue with their activism or with their education.

The length of time they were actively involved in activities has varied between one and five years. For example, according to the 59 responses to the survey received, 2 young people took part during the entire period from 2015 to 2020, and 4 during the period from 2016 to 2020. The rest ranged from one to three years' involvement with It's My Body!



© Members of the Aborting Myths about Sexuality (RAMS) Network, Chile 2018.

© Amnesty International



RELEVANT RESULTS

- It's My Body! provided a space for young people to learn about their sexual and reproductive rights, in many cases to undertake **their first experience of activism**, to learn, to meet people with the same concerns, to strengthen the work of their own organizations or groups, and to develop the confidence to share their experiences and knowledge with other young people.
- The programme fostered **a new generation of human rights defenders**. Through their involvement, many young people self-identify as sexual and reproductive rights activists and human rights activists in general, claiming that their activism is a way of life and that this has boosted their creativity and participation in other areas.
- Because protagonism and leadership are a strong component, many young people became **role models and champions for sexual and reproductive rights in their communities and environments**.
- Young people feel that **they were able to take ownership of the programme** and be part of decision-making processes.
- A desire to learn and know about comprehensive sexuality education, about young people's rights and to be part of Amnesty International were the main reasons why young people took part. They were looking to break with **gender stereotypes and social prejudices** in their environment.
- One of the aspects positively valued by the young members was the building of **horizontal relationships between young people and adults**. These relationships allowed them to address issues that are usually very difficult to deal with, not only because of their intimate and personal nature, but also because of the nature of conservative societies where there is a strong religious influence.
- **The most challenging moments** in the programme for young people were those when they felt they could do nothing or when they were forced to pause their involvement. Young people also found the times when they engaged with local authorities or represented the programme in other contexts challenging.
- In addition to the enthusiasm and satisfaction that young people have expressed for It's My Body!, they mention that they experienced **emotional exhaustion** in connection with the demands of the programme, such as coordinating activities at national or transnational level in a timely manner, the questioning of their ideas and experiences outside the scope of the programme, and the presence of anti-rights groups in their everyday contexts.

GOOD PRACTICE AND LESSONS LEARNED

- It is important that programmes targeting young people promote **their involvement at all stages** (planning, implementation and evaluation), as well as in participatory decision-making. A thorough understanding of their expectations is a key element to encourage them to participate and achieve good results.
- It is essential to actively involve young people in programmes that **promote leadership and advocacy among them, and to help strengthen their activism** within Amnesty International, their sense of belonging to national networks and their motivation to take an active part in section activities and decision-making.
- Young people are more than willing and fully competent to lead their projects and make good decisions. They bring high levels of creativity and dedication that make projects flourish. However, in having a programme with a strong emphasis on advocacy and decision making by young members, it is necessary **to foster their leadership on practical levels and accompany them in building capacities** that enable them to take on this role, while the organization must have the flexibility and openness to let go of certain expectations of its own to give way to leadership in its various forms and expressions.
- An important aspect of the planning and implementation of programmes is to **take into consideration the demands, pressure and expectations** that the activities may generate in young participants, as well as to take into account their situations, problems, age, available time and expected level of involvement.
- While digital work has its challenges and disadvantages - especially in the context of the pandemic, where COVID-19 quarantining caused fatigue and anxiety - it is noticeable that much education and empowerment work can also be done through virtual platforms, with the use of various online tools for meetings and workshops, as well for putting participatory approaches into practice, thus also facilitating **links between activists and outsiders from very different geographical areas**.
- It's My Body! contributed to internal reflection on how to promote the involvement of young persons in Amnesty International's practices and structures. While being an ongoing work for the inclusion of young people in the movement, and especially in governance at national and regional level, It's My Body! has made a great contribution to major advances in recent years, such as achieving the representation of young persons on the board of Amnesty International Chile. Among other things, **learnings and good experiences were used in other large projects** such as the 3-year long regional programmes Diversxs I and Diversxs II which advance young LGBTIQ+ persons' rights in 5 countries, in Amnesty International's first global youth strategy in 2017, and the regional ESIgualdad campaign on the inclusion of comprehensive sexuality education in the education sector in Latin America in 2021.

Video on leadership by young persons in the programme, produced as part of the part-time learning process (<https://bit.ly/3fR1VF0>).



👁 Workshop on the training of young people in Lima, Peru 2016.

© Amnesty International

PEER EDUCATION

Peer education was the most important tool in the programme. This fostered not only involvement, but also empowerment, agency and leadership among young people. Peer learning stimulates and contributes to empathy, dialogue, assertiveness, self-esteem, connection, exchange of attitudes and experiences, and motivation.

By using the training of young trainers as a model and accompanying the replications facilitated by young people in their communities it was possible to bring the experiences and discussions of It's My Body! and Amnesty International's presence to various areas far from the capital cities of the three countries where the programme was implemented and to carefully consider the contexts in each region.

From the point of view of the national programme coordinators, the tools that were developed within the framework of this methodology made it possible to allocate resources to the activities proposed by the young people and to democratise how knowledge is produced, building information from experience. Although the process of adopting the approach was hard work and a challenge in some cases, once the young people felt capable of giving their own workshops, this had a multiplier effect that enabled them to propose the design of campaigns and specific actions to increase the scope and impact of the programme. In this sense, the programme not only provided the empowerment and tools needed for young people to provide peer education, but also gave them the space they needed to be able to do this work.

"YOUNG PEOPLE LISTEN MORE
TO OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE
AND SO THEY LEARN BETTER
FROM THEM."

Youth activist, Argentina

"PEER EDUCATION HELPED
US SO THAT WE WERE
ABLE TO ACHIEVE OUR
OBJECTIVES BY THE END
OF THE PROJECT".

A member of CIJA



© Participants in the regional workshop in Peru, 2016.

© Amnesty International

For young people, peer education meant giving value to personal experience over formal knowledge, learning to listen, knowing and understanding other realities, building from diversity, questioning prejudices, becoming role models for their peers, creating safe spaces for the exchange of ideas, thinking about the responsibility and trust involved in the discussion of sexual and reproductive rights. As part of this approach, experiential education without hierarchies has been favoured, allowing a safe and trusting environment to be built up, supported by the ability of young people to share different experiences with a common language in which knowledge circulates freely.

61% of the young people who responded to the online survey took part in workshops (attendance, simulation, design and delivery). Other peer education-related activities involving them included: designing and creating infographics; activism; taking part in information fairs and online actions; creating music, performances, cyber-activism, activism and festivals, among others.

"WE WERE BECOMING
THE TEACHERS THAT WE
DIDN'T HAVE."

Youth activist, Chile



Meeting of transnational activists, organized by CIJA in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2019.

© Amnesty International

Young people shared a positive rating of their perceived ability to educate their peers about sexual and reproductive rights after participating in It's My Body! The overall rating exceeded 8 out on a maximum scale of 10.

47% of young people responded that they plan to continue to participate in activities with their peers on sexual and reproductive rights in a variety of ways:

- ⚡ With a friend and fellow activist we will be doing workshops and informative talks at the school we graduated from.
- ⚡ I will be able to continue sharing information and pass on what I know about sexual and reproductive rights.
- ⚡ One of the most beautiful things that this project has given me is the generation of networks outside Chile and a phenomenal friend. We have formed a group [in which], although we don't only talk about sexual and reproductive rights, our training in these issues allow us to generate spaces to speak from the empowerment of our rights. And as much as I can, I will continue [to] support the Aborting Myths About Sexuality Network that was created here in Chile.
- ⚡ I will continue with the It's My Body! project because I want to learn more about my sexual and reproductive rights and encourage more young people to learn about their sexual and reproductive rights.

"IT IS WONDERFUL THAT THERE IS A SPACE WHERE WE CAN EDUCATE OURSELVES THROUGH OUR PEERS. EDUCATION FOR US HAS ALWAYS BEEN TAUGHT AS A HIERARCHY. WHEN YOU LEARN THAT SOMEONE THE SAME AGE AS YOU CAN TEACH YOU AND YOU CAN DO THE SAME. IT GIVES YOU FEEDBACK AND MAKES YOU REALIZE THAT YOUR OPINION HAS VALUE AND YOUR VOICE IS IMPORTANT. IT TEACHES YOU THAT YOU CAN ACT AND NOT JUST NOD IN AGREEMENT."

Youth activist, Chile

© Members of the youth group organized by Amnesty International Argentina and ANDHES in Tucumán (Argentina).
© ANDHES





On the other hand, 20% said that they would not continue to work on the topic, and 17% will carry out similar activities on other topics.

👁️ Young people from MANTHOC running a workshop in a school in Cajamarca, Peru.

© MANTHOC

Peer education has also become a form of resistance by young people to adult centrism and the traditional precepts of formal education, becoming a way of questioning the methods and content provided in this field and claiming the right to access comprehensive sexuality education as part of the education system.

➡️ Positive impacts that young people highlight about peer education:

- ➡️ **83%** extended their knowledge of sexual and reproductive rights.
- ➡️ **73%** received essential tools and skills to promote active participation by other young people.
- ➡️ **69%** learned other ways to defend and demand sexual and reproductive rights.
- ➡️ **64%** increased their ability to help bring about change in communities.

"THE CHALLENGE WAS NOT TO RUN WORKSHOPS, BUT TO RUN WORKSHOPS WITH PEOPLE WHO WE DON'T KNOW. HERE IT WAS WITH PEOPLE WHO MIGHT NOT HAVE ANY INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT. ONE STEP AT A TIME WE WERE BECOMING A POINT FOR SUPPORT; IF ANYONE HAD ANY QUERIES THEY SAW ME AS A ROLE MODEL."

Youth activist, Peru

RELEVANT RESULTS

- Having obtained and co-created comprehensive, participatory and active training, the programme offered young people a thorough ownership that made them role models and champions in their communities and instilled an interest and desire to continue fighting for human rights issues and sexual and reproductive rights in particular. In this respect, the programme has built **new leaders and human rights defenders in Latin America**.
- Peer education allowed essential growth for leadership by young people in the programme and their work in replicating workshops and **advocacy with other audiences**: teachers, parents and local authorities.
- For young people, peer education is a way of working that enables them to **build knowledge, links and joint learning**. From the different evaluation spaces, this type of education was an approach and an outcome of the programme that young people enjoyed and appreciated.
- The methodology has a strong link with other strands of the programme such as leadership and agency of the programme. Likewise, the learning process, through human rights education, was an essential and solid preparation for the next stages of **taking action and building capacity for campaigning**, activism and advocacy.
- The peer education work over the 5 years enabled the young people to have a strong foundation to **face other difficulties** such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the social and political changes in their countries.
- One of the most important aspects of peer education for young people was the opportunity and room granted for **creativity**. It is an approach that promotes horizontal learning founded on affection and the practice of sharing with other people, which helps to promote youth mobilization and joint action.

© Activists from RAMS working together with teachers from various schools in training on SRR in Chile, 2018.
© RAMS/Amnesty International



GOOD PRACTICE AND LESSONS LEARNED

- When preparing a programme proposal, it is important to keep an open mind about the **different ways of implementing human rights education**; there are many creative pedagogical activities that promote participation and meaningful learning in addition to workshops.
- It is important to pay attention to the **changes that need to be made for different audiences** (personalized learning pathways, contexts, backgrounds, etc.) to allow for greater engagement and the construction of socially relevant learning. Not only towards different audiences (youth versus teachers or parents) but also within them, recognising the wide diversity and intersectionality.
- For full and active participation by young people in future Amnesty International programmes, even those with a primary focus on activism or advocacy, **the importance of human rights education processes and elements** must not be underestimated. The ownership that peer education enables is essential to self-motivation.
- The training of trainers and accompanying youth in the replication of workshops is intensive work. It is advisable to **think of a structure that allows for more support to stimulate peer-to-peer training** and to face possible obstacles such as resources, self-confidence, the adaptation of tools and accompaniment. Continuing to build capacity and self-confidence in young people is an ongoing key aspect of youth programmes.
- In connection with the above, in future projects various strategies may be considered for establishing **a differentiated kind of support from adults to young people** for the most resource-intensive elements of the project coordination in terms of human resources. For example, when promoting empowerment and agency in young people so that they can deliver their own workshops or get involved in local advocacy, the presence of adults as coaches, mentors or monitors giving more constant support might be considered, so that the main practical accompaniment does not fall on one person alone.



"THE VOICES OF SOME GIRLS WHO ARE PARTICULARLY SHY. HAVING MORE OF A LISTENING ROLE. THEY ARE PROGRESSIVELY LEARNING TO TAKE THE FLOOR AND TO FEEL SAFE EVEN AMONG THEMSELVES."

Youth activist, Argentina

© Transnational meeting of activists, organized by CIJA in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2019.

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CHANGES IN YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

Young people's involvement in It's My Body! has enabled them to experience personal changes associated with increased skills, confidence, security and self-awareness, and changes in the environments in which they interact on a daily basis. Linked to the concept of leadership, the results show that young people have begun to see each other as role models and champions, not only in their communities, but also in their family circles.

On a personal level, 83% of young people stated that their involvement in It's My Body! made a difference to them. After the programme they feel motivated and empowered to stand up for their sexual and reproductive rights, and have the ability to support other young people so that they can also get to know and demand these rights.

It's My Body! has increased young people's personal skills, which has enabled them to make use of what they have learned for taking individual and collective action.

The experience of the programme has made young people question the acceptance of behaviours such as male chauvinism and sexual harassment in their environments. It has also made them reflect on their own behaviours and prejudices, and the gender stereotypes they have lived with, and they recognise adult centrism as a form of discrimination.

The young people in It's My Body! have shared their stories and what they have learned from taking part in the programme. This process culminated in three short films with their stories of change, which were designed, recorded and created by the young people themselves:

Stories of change from Peru, Chile and Argentina

✎ In **Peru**, they told the story of girls and adolescents who cannot find answers to their questions about sexuality and reproduction. They show how not finding these answers leads to unwanted pregnancies, and raise the problem of being in a culture that is not yet prepared to answer basic questions they have about their bodies when faced with the reality of young women who are discovering themselves and who want to live their emotional and sexual relationships to the full (<https://bit.ly/2VXI0xS>).

✎ In **Chile**, the short film has focused on a more personal and intimate journey of self-discovery. The video talks about the raw discomfort that young people go through as they grow up. Who hasn't felt out of place at some point in their lives? How to give young people the right answers? But the discomfort forces them to make a choice. The choice they propose is to transform fear into power, and to demand what they need in order to be aware and committed citizens with information, freedom and the power to make decisions (<https://bit.ly/3jS4mbC>).

✎ The short film by the activist group from **Argentina** focuses on the personal journey that the project has inspired in them. Young people have questions that often go unanswered, and they become aware of the stark contrast of their reality. Although passive acceptance is a possibility, the video ends with the demonstration that there is another way, through personal involvement and the role of being an activist (<https://bit.ly/3AHcqT9>).



"CONSIDERING THAT I JOINED THE PROJECT AT THE AGE OF 13. I WOULD SAY THAT MUCH OF MY PERSONALITY HAS BEEN MADE STRONGER THANKS TO THE PROJECT."

Youth activist, Chile

"WHEN I LEARNED ABOUT THE PROPOSAL, I FELT A LIGHT AND HOPE. WE LIVED IN A LOT OF VIOLENT SITUATIONS."

Youth activist, Peru

"I HAD THE TOOLS TO PASS ON CONCERNS TO OTHERS AND CHALLENGE MORE PEOPLE TO DEMAND MY RIGHTS."

Youth activist, Argentina

"IT HELPED ME TO GROW AS A PERSON. TO KNOW MORE. TO GENERATE NEW THOUGHTS. GETTING TO KNOW ABOUT THE ACTUAL SITUATION IN WHICH WE LIVE. AND WITH REGARD TO THOSE AROUND ME IT HELPED ME TO BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE MORE DIRECTLY."

Youth activist, Argentina

Young people who took part in the programme overcame their barriers and worries to initiate conversations with adults about sex, sexuality and gender. It also made it possible for young people to be acknowledged by others, who ask for their support, which shows that through taking part in the programme they have become role models and champions in their peer groups and communities. This is not only indicative of changes in the environment, but is also a testament to the leadership qualities of young people. Amnesty International's institutional support and the support of local partner organizations has enabled young people to talk about these issues and promote discussion of them in different contexts and communities.

Increased knowledge and skills has enabled young people to apply what they have learned about activism, advocacy, human rights and young people's participation to mobilise for sexual and reproductive rights and other issues, to generate other opportunities for young people in their local contexts and to promote change on issues of concern to them.

In **Argentina** in 2018, a young person from the project was invited to the Senate debate in the National Congress on the legalization of abortion, where she presented the position of young people on abortion and comprehensive sexuality education. Again, in 2019, young people from the project contributed to the establishment of the Youth Council of the city of Buenos Aires, a part of the Ombudsman's Office in the city of Buenos Aires. Two of these young people were invited to join the Council.

"ESPECIALLY IN MY ENVIRONMENT, I WAS ABLE TO BRING THEM A HEAP OF INFORMATION THAT THEY WOULD NOT OTHERWISE HAVE HAD AND I BECAME A ROLE MODEL FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS ISSUES IN MANY OF MY CIRCLES. MORE THAN THAT, ESPECIALLY IN MY FAMILY, I DEMONSTRATED THAT MY OPINIONS WERE NOT JUST PERSONAL BUT WERE IN LINE WITH WHAT WAS DEFENDED BY SUCH AN IMPORTANT AND PRESTIGIOUS ORGANIZATION AS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. IT HELPED MY OPINIONS AND ARGUMENTS TO BE TAKEN MORE SERIOUSLY AND I WAS ABLE TO GET BETTER RESULTS FROM MY PROPOSALS AND CONTRIBUTIONS".

Youth activist, Argentina

"IN ARGENTINA THERE HAVE BEEN CHANGES IN SOCIETY'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOUNG PEOPLE NOW THEY ARE CONSIDERED TO BE IMPORTANT ACTORS IN POLITICS".

Staff member, Amnesty International Argentina

Joaco Herrero, a young activist from La Plata, decided to take action and coordinated the first sexual and reproductive rights workshop at his school. "At the time [in 2015] the issue didn't get much attention from my school, and that's what prompted me to do it". Together with his friends, they decided to create a student group, UTOPIA, to represent students who felt ignored by the school administration. In 2017 they ran in the Student Centre elections and won. Thanks to their new position of influence and constant discussion between the administration and students they succeeded in getting a curriculum reform to finally include sexuality education as a continued subject.⁵



Bruno Rodriguez, a member of the youth group and former CIJA representative, formed his own youth organization on climate change, "Jóvenes por el Clima" [Young people for Climate] in 2019. The organization quickly became known, and Bruno became a recognized activist on the issue in Argentina. He was even able to attend the Youth Summit on climate change organized by the United Nations with Greta Thunberg. This motivated the youth group to get involved in the issue and to support Bruno and his organization.



⁵ Available in: Argentina: The ignored law of Sexual Education (<https://bit.ly/37ywjPH>)

In **Peru**, young people have taken ownership of sexual and reproductive rights issues that are still taboo for most of society, such as the prevention of unwanted teenage pregnancy and the prevention of gender-based violence. They have aired their demands in public and run training and advocacy programmes in the education sector, worked directly with schools, trained hundreds of teachers on sexual and reproductive rights issues, on gender focus and on what strategies to use to include the issue in their plans of work. They have also managed to coordinate with teachers and tutors so that knowledge is passed on within the context of the topics they have to work on at school.

Young people in Peru have run educational workshops with parents on sexual and reproductive rights. The knowledge gained from the workshops for parent and the workshops with young people is having an impact on young people's family life, and they are achieving greater consensus on how to address sexual and reproductive rights.

"THIS HELPS TO INTEGRATE THE WORK OF THE PROJECT WITH SCHOOL PLANNING WITHOUT PRODUCING EXTRA WORK FOR TEACHERS. STUDENTS HAVE GONE FROM ONE SCHOOL TO ANOTHER TO CARRY OUT WORKSHOPS. THIS HELPS TO CONSOLIDATE THE CAPABILITIES OF THE PEER EDUCATORS WHEN THEY ARE CONFRONTED WITH AN UNKNOWN PUBLIC".

Staff member, Amnesty International Peru

Lu Céspedes Atahuaman was involved in the project from the outset, while also serving as a national delegate for MANTHOC. The project opened up the opportunity to talk about sexual and reproductive rights and gender identity issues. This opportunity empowered their ability to represent and support other young people, which peaked with Lu attending the Discussion Day held by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva in September 2018. Also, as Lu says, the project "influenced to open a way to break down many male chauvinistic views and actions that existed in my family".



Tatiana Sacramento was involved in the project from the outset in 2016, while serving as a regional delegate of MANTHOC. Although she did not become a national representative for the movement, the It's My Body! project gave her the opportunity to develop her skills as a national representative on sexual and reproductive rights issues. It should also be pointed out that her involvement in the project had an impact on her family, and opened up the possibility of talking about SRR and CSE, as well as to reconcile family tensions and bring them closer together and more loving.



Francheska Inga took part in It's My Body! from its beginnings in 2016 and, without being a delegate for her base or region, began to get involved and lead training workshops on sexual and reproductive rights in Iquitos. Around 2018 and 2019, for personal reasons, she had less to do with the project and moved out of the city. In 2020 Francheska became pregnant and had a baby girl, at which point she returned to Iquitos and the project in its final stage. Francheska is a witness to the impact of the project on her life, through her conviction to raise her daughter from a rights-based perspective. As she says, "I am going to raise my daughter, just like in the workshops we had, so that she will know her rights and have them respected".



In **Chile**, human rights and sexual and reproductive rights are at the heart of the country's ongoing constitutional process, and young people have taken up the cause in a context of social change. During the project, they signed collaboration agreements with different schools, universities and municipal authorities to provide school programmes on sexual and reproductive rights and comprehensive sexuality education curricula, for example in the Teachers' College and the Municipal Education Department of the Municipality of Coronel (local government), which committed itself to being the first commune in the country to implement comprehensive sexuality education in all its schools and high schools.

In some cases, Amnesty International's institutional support led young people to file complaints or channel claims to the authorities regarding violations of their sexual and reproductive rights.

In Chile, the RAMS network took action in response to the discrimination suffered by a RAMS activist in the O'Higgins region because his gender expression did not conform to the school's definition of "male" based on gender stereotypes, and his rights to education, gender identity and freedom from violence and discrimination were violated. The network ran a social media campaign, which the school asked to be taken down, but the request was denied. The national coordination of the It's My Body! Chile programme referred the case to the local Rights Protection Office of the National Department for Minors, for the violation of rights detailed above, and to the Municipal Education Administration Department, which took action, and a month later the activist was able to return to exercise his right to education, to gender identity and to live free from violence and discrimination. The school authorities were unaware of their obligations in this regard, but eventually apologized and pledged not to engage in discriminatory acts again.



Zachir Enrique José, a young non-binary gender activist, came to the project when they were a minor. Zachir was very active from the outset, getting heavily involved in designing and running workshops, festivals, books and fanzines to educate their peers and adults about sexual and reproductive rights. Through their enthusiasm and constant commitment, at the age of 18 they managed to take part in Amnesty International's "Youth, Power, Action" summit, held in Kenya in 2018, together with other young people from various countries who are also human rights advocates. "As a human rights activist, I will continue to raise my voice. I am resilient. Yes, I have had difficulties, especially because many people treat sexuality as a joke, but there are people with empathy, so we will continue to empower each other. I have a voice and I'm not afraid to use it".



In all three countries, young people point out that through the project they have increased their ability to organise themselves, in addition to increasing their responsibility and commitment to share what they have learned. They have started (or are about to start) projects relating to sexual and reproductive rights, human rights and/or youth participation, thanks to the knowledge and tools developed. Some young people have already built their own networks or youth groups beyond the project; human rights advocacy is important in their lives.

Positive impacts that young people highlight

80% More motivation and capacity to advocate for my sexual and reproductive rights.

80% I can help other young people to know and demand their sexual and reproductive rights.

49% I have noticed that other young people seek me out to share queries about their sexual and reproductive rights.



"JUST LIKE THAT YOUNG 16- OR 17-YEAR OLD WOMAN I SAW WHO STOOD UP IN FRONT OF ADULTS. NOW I CAN STAND IN FRONT OF MY 'OLD MAN' AND TELL HIM THAT [...] ALL THE EFFORT WAS WORTH IT. WE ARE ALREADY TALKING ABOUT COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL."

Youth activist, Chile

"YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT ADOPTED THE SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AGENDA AS AN INHERENT RIGHTS ISSUE THAT HAS HAD A REAL IMPACT ON THEIR LIVES AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT."

Staff member, Amnesty International Peru

"YOUNG PEOPLE BEGAN TO SEE EACH OTHER AS ROLE MODELS. WANTING TO BE LIKE THE OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE TEACHING THEM."

Staff member, Amnesty International Chile

"WE LEARNED A GREAT DEAL FROM THEM AS WELL. AND ONCE THEY HAD THE TOOLS THEY BEGAN TO PUT THEIR OWN PIECES TOGETHER. WHICH WERE VERY USEFUL FOR FACILITATING DISCUSSIONS."

Staff Member, Amnesty International Argentina

📷 *Activists launching the CSE campaign, Chile 2019.*

© Amnesty International

SIGNIFICANT RESULTS

- In addition to making connections with other young people in their communities, the project enabled the youth leaders to reach out to their families, neighbours, other adults such as parents, care givers, teaching assistants and teachers. This increased their capacity and confidence to develop **intergenerational conversations and exchanges** with a variety of groups and to bring about changes in their interpersonal relationships in terms of values, attitudes and respect for diversity.
- The link that young people were able to make between **sexual and reproductive rights and their personal experience** allowed them to identify situations of violence and discrimination that they did not previously see, increase their empowerment and motivate and support other young people in taking positive action.
- For the national coordinators of the programme, **young people have become more confident and have gone through a noticeable change**. Some young people have come to terms with their sexual identity thanks to the programme. By belonging to a network of like-minded young people with similar ideas, values and identities, several young people reported feeling more comfortable coming to terms with and expressing their sexual identity.
- Young people have become **aware of the importance of defending their sexual and reproductive rights** individually and collectively. The ability to talk about issues relating to sexuality has made them understand the importance of expressing their opinions from their own point of view and overcoming the adult centrism present in their contexts.
- In some cases, Amnesty International's institutional support led young **people to file complaints or channel claims to the authorities** regarding violations of their sexual and reproductive rights.
- What young people do today, beyond the programme and their involvement with Amnesty, is grounded in human rights. They have learned to **put forward their ideas with respect and affection for diversity**.




👁 Activists in Peru mobilising against trafficking in women and girls.
© Amnesty International



GOOD PRACTICE AND LESSONS LEARNED

- One aspect highlighted by young people who took part in the programme is awareness of the **importance of self-care and the creation of safe spaces** to share experiences with other people. It is recommended that future programmes continue to work on this to continue to generate learning and good practice.
- At an organizational level, it is important that future youth programmes continue to develop tools and structural supports that enable them to address personal issues, wellbeing, conflict management, intercultural sensitivity and self-care. It is important to devote sufficient attention and resources to planning and implementation **to continue to build capacity within the organizations.**
- What young people learn and consider in the context of this type of programme encourages them to take action in their communities and schools and seek to make changes. A fundamental aspect is that they should have support and follow-up, as dealing with institutional and adult-centred dynamics can be a significant challenge for young people. The different dimensions of decision-making and active involvement and participation in different public contexts cannot be underestimated. Different support is required when running workshops with other young people inside or outside school environments. Not only in preparing for different group dynamics but also **when working together with schools and authorities that needs more support and involvement from national teams.** For example, curriculum issues and the inclusion of CSE is a very strong power issue, and, on their own, young people do not have much influence because there is a strong and organized pressure group in various countries.
- In a project that takes place in several countries, with strong elements of exchange and mutual learning, **there has to be enough space for appreciating different struggles.** Differences in context can be revolutionary and have wide-ranging consequences for the interpretation and direction of national factors. For example, while Chile and Peru are struggling to maintain a gender focus in the curriculum, CSE is already law in Argentina. Exchange and analysis of these different experiences is enriching and generates new ideas and inspiration for those taking part.

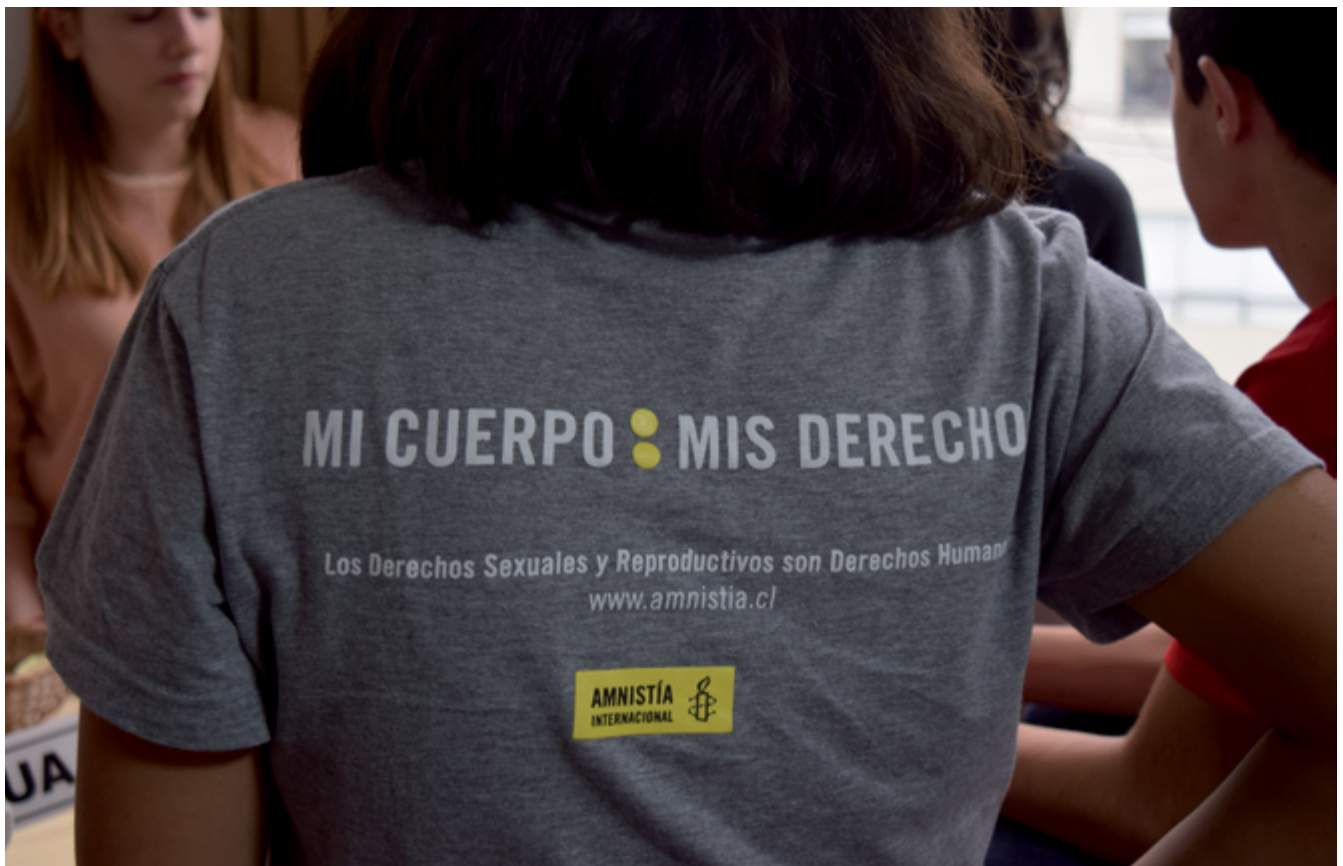
 Peer education workshop
 in a school, Argentina.
 © Amnesty International

SUSTAINABILITY

The process of evaluating the impact of 5 years of It's My Body! has shown how much of an impact the programme has had on young people as individuals and on their lives. It has been very strong and has had a multiplier effect on young people, allowing them to reflect on the knowledge and skills acquired and to reach out to other young people through peer education, campaigning and activism. Young people have also become role models and champions for sexual and reproductive rights and human rights, both in their home environments and in their communities. The contribution of the It's My Body! programme to the leadership and agency of a **new generation of human rights defenders is the main legacy of the programme.**

The political advocacy of young people is another legacy of the programme. Achieving the legalization of abortion in Argentina and the challenge of implementing the law, as well as monitoring the constituent process in Chile and the struggle to incorporate comprehensive sexuality education into the educational curriculum in Peru are strategic lines of Amnesty International's work that will count on the active contribution and involvement of young people beyond the It's My Body! programme. The programme has also produced sustainable results at local level in the educational institutions it has worked with. In these institutions, the impact of the policy changes achieved will be noticeable in years to come.

👁 *Activist from Chile.*
© Amnesty International





In the educational area, the programme has left its mark not only on the young people who have been the protagonists in implementing it, but also on the **adults that the young people have been able to educate and impact.** These changes will be sustainable through both trained teachers, who will provide better sexuality education, and parents, who now have a new knowledge and a new vision of sexual and reproductive rights. To sustain these results and to reach new target groups in the future the programme leaves a legacy of a rich archive of materials and manuals that are available to new generations of young educators.

👁️ *Not One Less march in Lima, Peru.*
© Amnesty International

Youth networks have been formed at national and transnational level over the 5 years. The end of funding for the It's My Body! programme will offer challenges to the continuity of actions, especially at the regional level. At national level, the programme has succeeded in creating an independent network supported by Amnesty International Chile, the integration of a network of young people in various key areas of Amnesty International Argentina's work, and a close ongoing collaboration between Amnesty International Peru and the MANTHOC movement as human rights defenders in Peru. The **collective work of young people goes beyond the programme.**

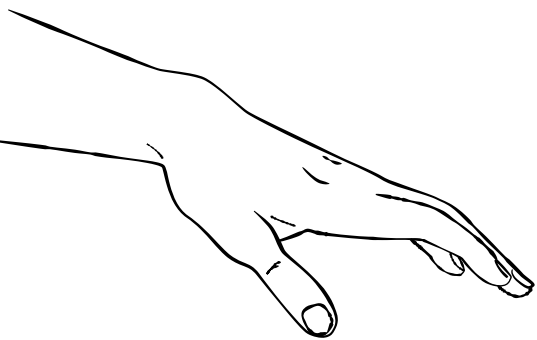
A major challenge, but one that is not impossible to solve, is of course the new worldwide context brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, whose impact on life, physical and mental health and the economy in Latin America has been particularly serious, including in terms of the violation of sexual and reproductive rights and increasing inequalities. Likewise, in the case of Chile, the country is in the midst of a process of very acute and tense social conflict that poses several challenges that have to be taken into account for the sustainability of the project.

For Amnesty International there are important aspects regarding sustainability through other programmes and processes that have subsequently been conceived and where the lessons and good ways of organising the work deriving from It's My Body! have been replicated and taken as an example, such as in the Diversxs I and Diversxs II projects, Amnesty International's 2017 global youth strategy and the regional ESIgualdad campaign. In the final evaluation of international strategy for work with young people in 2017-2020, It's My Body! has been consistently named as an exemplary programme for the Amnesty International movement.

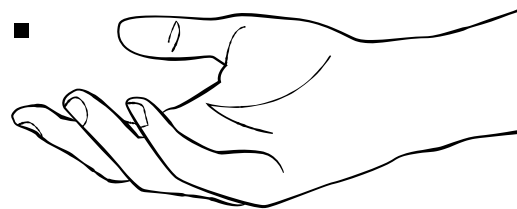
The various impact statements in this report showcase different aspects of the programme's sustainability. Together with changes at an institutional level in Amnesty International, and an accumulation of positive experience and learning that has since been sustained in other areas, programmes and campaigns, it can be concluded that the 5 years of the It's My Body! programme have resulted in experiences rich in impact and important advances in active support for human rights by young people.

👁️ CELS Festival, Argentina 2019.
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FINAL EVALUATION IMPACT OF THE **IT'S MY BODY!** PROGRAMME 2016-2020

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