



The MDGs and Sexual and Reproductive Health E-Bulletin

June 7, 2005

Dear Colleagues,

As the Millennium+5 Summit, to be held in September 2005 draws nearer, Family Care International is preparing and distributing periodic E-Bulletins to ensure that organizations working on sexual and reproductive health and rights around the world are kept up to date.

Making Progress

As summer nears here in New York, things are also starting to heat up at the UN. And the season got off to a great start with two major successes last week!

- **Universal access to reproductive health was identified as a priority in the first draft of the political declaration for the Millennium+5 Summit!** The 26-page draft outcome document, prepared by General Assembly President H.E. Mr. Jean Ping of Gabon and his ten facilitators, was released on Friday, June 3 and contains two calls for governments to expand access to reproductive health.

Under the heading of HIV/AIDS and other health issues, the document commits governments to:

“Achieving universal access to reproductive health by 2015 as set out at the ICPD, integrating this goal in strategies to attain the international development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration aiming at improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty” (¶ 19 bullet 4).

Similarly, under the heading of gender equality and empowerment of women, “ensuring access to reproductive health” is identified as one of five core actions (¶ 20).

The document also makes other strong recommendations on gender equality and women’s empowerment and on women’s human rights. For example, paragraph nine reaffirms “that gender equality and the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for women are essential to advance development, security and human rights.”

Given the current difficult political climate in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights and the fact that so many other pressing issues are also being discussed in this declaration, this is a remarkable achievement. With this language in the draft outcome document, we are in an excellent position to defend and strengthen it as the document is negotiated and finalized by governments in the coming months. Informal consultations on the draft will start on June 21, giving governments two weeks to

consider the document and prepare comments and recommendations. A second draft is expected to be released in mid-July. We can be sure that there will be opposition to language on reproductive health, so continued national- and international-level activity is imperative.

To see the full text of the draft declaration, click here:

<http://www.ngocongo.org/ngomeet/millplusfive/GADraftOutcome0605.doc>

- At the High-level Meeting on HIV/AIDS, held on June 2 at UN Headquarters in New York, **many governments mentioned the vital role that sexual and reproductive health information and services plays in the fight against HIV**. They also made the link between achieving the MDGs and expanding access to sexual and reproductive health services and information. . Recognizing that young people—and particularly young women—are being infected with HIV at disproportionate rates, many governments also stressed the importance of empowering young people with the education, information and services they need to protect themselves from HIV. The chair's summary, which will be fed into Millennium+5 Summit, is expected to be released at some point this week.

June will be a critical month as we work to ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights continue to be prioritized by governments throughout the Millennium+5 Process: informal consultations will start on the political declaration; the ministerial declaration for the high-level Economic and Social Council segment will be finalized; and the civil society hearings and high-level meeting on Financing for Development will also take place later this month. *Let's keep up our advocacy at the national and international levels to maintain and build upon these achievements!*

Update: Civil Society Hearings

The list of speakers and active participants for the informal interactive hearings of the General Assembly with NGOs, civil society organizations and the public sector, which will take place June 23-24, was released on Friday, June 3. We are thrilled that so many sexual and reproductive health and rights advocates were selected to participate. Congratulations to Zonibel Woods (International Women's Health Coalition/Association for Women's Rights in Development), Charlotte Bunch (Center for Women's Global Leadership), Geeta Rao Gupta (International Center for Research on Women), Sunila Abeysekera (INFORM, Sri Lanka), Mirna Cunningham (MADRE), and Peggy Antrobus (DAWN), who were selected as speakers for the hearings.

For those who wish to observe the hearings, the deadline for registration as an "observer attendee" is June 10, 2005, by 5:00p.m. New York Time. The registration form and related information is available online on the UN Non-governmental Liaison Service website at <http://www.un-ngls.org/GA-hearings.htm>. The completed registration form (see attached) should be emailed to observeGAhearings@un.org or faxed to +1-212-963-9248. Due to limited space, it is necessary for all people to register to attend, even those whose organizations are in consultative status with ECOSOC or DPI.

National-Level Advocacy

Over the coming months, national-level advocacy will play a critical role in ensuring that sexual and reproductive health remains in the Millennium+5 Summit political declaration. We need to lay the groundwork at the national level to ensure that governments make sexual and reproductive health and rights one of their priorities and take strong and clear positions on these issues in negotiations moving forward.

Some aims of national-level advocacy may include to:

- **raise awareness and mobilize NGO colleagues** at the national level to advocate around these issues;
- influence **government delegations** to the meeting to take a progressive stance on sexual and reproductive health and rights issues;
- ensure the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health issues in **country reports** on implementation of the Millennium Declaration and progress toward achieving the MDGs;
- ensure that language in support of universal access to sexual and reproductive health by 2015 and its role in achieving the MDGs are included in **country statements** delivered at the Summit; and finally,
- ensure the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health in MDG-ized **poverty reduction strategy papers and long-term development plans**, both before and after the high-level meeting.

Islamabad Appeal

On March 31, 2005, The Pakistan Medical Association Centre and the Commonwealth Medical Trust, with support from the World Population Foundation, organized a workshop on poverty, reproductive health and the MDGs. The participants of the workshop adopted the Islamabad Appeal, which makes ten key recommendations for achieving the MDGs. Specifically, the Islamabad Appeal calls for "the full inclusion of sexual and reproductive health in the future implementation of the MDGs through the introduction of a target and appropriate indicators."

The Pakistan Medical Association Centre and other organizations based in Pakistan are now using the Appeal in national-level advocacy strategies. For more information, click here: [http://www.commat.org/Reproductive Health and the MDGs/IslamabadAppeal.htm](http://www.commat.org/Reproductive%20Health%20and%20the%20MDGs/IslamabadAppeal.htm).

Briefing Cards: Millennium Development Goals and Sexual and Reproductive Health

FCI's briefing cards on the Millennium Development Goals and sexual and reproductive health are now available! Download the PDF version online at: <http://www.familycareintl.org/pubs/PDF/SRH13E.pdf>

To order hard copies of the briefing cards, email fcipubs@fcimail.org to specify how many you can use and where they should be sent. The briefing cards are currently available in English and will be available in Spanish and French by mid-June.

Upcoming Advocacy Opportunities

High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development, June 27-28, 2005 UN Headquarters, New York

The meeting will examine countries' progress in implementation of the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, which was held in March 2002. The recommendations emerging from the dialogue will be considered throughout the preparatory process for the Millennium+5 Summit.

For more information, visit: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd>.

High-Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council, June 29 - July 1, 2005 UN Headquarters, New York

The theme of the 2005 high-level segment of ECOSOC is *"Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities."* The outcome of the high-level segment will be a political declaration. Both the high-level segment and the coordination segment of ECOSOC will contribute to preparations for the Millennium+5 Summit. Advocacy is needed to ensure that the political declaration emphasizes the importance of implementing the ICPD Programme of Action and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and that universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services is recognized as being necessary to achieve the MDGs, particularly for the goals on gender equality and maternal health.

Calendar of Events

June

8-11	Preparatory NGO Conference on the High-Level Plenary Meeting (Copenhagen, Denmark)
12-16	Second South Summit, G77 (Doha, Qatar)
16-18	European Heads of Government Meeting (Luxembourg)
21-22	Asian Health Ministers Meeting on MDGs (Tokyo, Japan)
23-24	Civil Society Hearings toward the High-Level Plenary (New York, USA)
27-28	High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development (New York, USA)
29-1	High-level ECOSOC Segment: Theme "Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration" (New York, USA)

July

2-27	Substantive ECOSOC Segment (New York, USA)
6-8	G-8 Summit (Scotland)

September

7-9	Meeting of Speakers of Parliament (New York, USA)
7-9	DPI-NGO Meeting (New York, USA)
14-16	General Assembly High-Level Plenary to Review Implementation of MDGs (New York, USA)

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