



The MDGs and Sexual and Reproductive Health E-Bulletin

June 29, 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

Last week's **informal interactive hearings with NGOs, civil society and the private sector** in preparation for the 2005 World Summit were a resounding success! There was strong NGO representation from most regions, governments listened with interest to the many recommendations from NGOs, and the need to guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights featured prominently in many interventions.

Speakers and participants in the Freedom from Want session emphasized that ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, information, and education and protecting sexual and reproductive rights are crucial for achieving the MDGs. They also called upon governments to retain and strengthen the language on reproductive health in the draft outcome document and for the establishment of a target on universal access to reproductive health by 2015 under MDG 5.

They specifically addressed the need to ensure the sexual and reproductive health and rights of youth and adolescents, noting that maternal mortality and morbidity, HIV and other STIs, disproportionately affect young people. There were also calls to protect the sexual and reproductive rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, sexual minorities, and older women.

In relation to achieving the goal on maternal health, there were calls to ensure that all women have access to skilled care during childbirth, as well as to emergency obstetric care. Participants also emphasized the need to make explicit commitments to ensure universal access to basic health care services.

The impact of HIV/AIDS, particularly on women and girls was emphasized as a concern and there were calls to increase resources and commitment to fighting HIV, including by ensuring access to prevention, as well as access to treatment, care and support, including to anti-retroviral drugs for those who need them.

In the Freedom to Live with Dignity session, speakers and participants stressed the indivisibility and inalienability of human rights and called upon governments to uphold all of them. There were strong calls to recognize, protect and promote the sexual and reproductive rights of all people, but particularly of women and it was noted that gender equality and women's empowerment could not be achieved without this. It was also noted that universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services was a necessary component of strategies to achieve the MDGs.

In the closing session, four of the six rapporteurs also discussed the need to guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights as being a core message from hearing participants. The President of the General Assembly, in consultation with his NGO/Civil Society/Private sector task force, will now finalize a summary report of the hearings that will be fed into the preparatory process for the September Summit.

Update: High-Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council

The high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council starts today, with the theme *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 ministerial declaration, which will be adopted on Friday, has been under negotiation for the past two weeks and is still far from being agreed. The declaration aims to reflect the outcomes of the functional commissions held earlier this year, as well as set development priorities ahead of the 2005 World Summit. At present, the declaration does contain the following paragraph on access to sexual and reproductive health:

We emphasize the importance of integrating the goal of universal access to reproductive health by 2015 set at the International Conference on Population and Development into strategies to attain internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in particular those related to improving maternal health, reducing infant and child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS, eradicating poverty and achieving universal access to primary education;

While the Group of 77 and China (G-77), European Union (EU), Switzerland and Canada have indicated they wish to retain the paragraph as is, the US is pushing for its deletion. It is important to note, that this paragraph is language that the US agreed to at this year's Commission on Population and Development. The EU and Canada are also advocating for the addition of language on access to sexual and reproductive health information and services as a strategic priority for achieving gender equality

Advocacy will be crucial over the coming days to ensure that the language on reproductive health is retained and that the importance of implementing the ICPD Programme of Action and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in their entireties is emphasized.

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 online in English, French and Spanish! We are committed to making sure that these get into the hands of NGOs, parliamentarians and advocates worldwide who are working to ensure that sexual and reproductive health is recognized as necessary for achieving the MDGs.

Order free hard copies of the briefing cards online at: http://www.familycareintl.org/pubs/publications_SRH.php or send an email specifying how many you would like and where they should be sent to fcipubs@fcimail.org.

Download the PDF versions at: http://www.familycareintl.org/pubs/publications_SRH.php.

The Summit has a name!

The September High-level Plenary meeting of the General Assembly has a name! It is now the 2005 World Summit. The President of the General Assembly has also created a website that provides background documentation and updates on preparations for the Summit, which can be found at www.un.org/ga/59/hl60_plenarymeeting.html.

Calendar of Events

June

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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