



The MDGs and Sexual and Reproductive Health E-Bulletin

July 28, 2005

Dear Colleagues,

As the 2005 World 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

The **second draft of the 2005 World Summit Outcome document**, released on Friday July 22nd, **retains the paragraph on universal access to reproductive health by 2015**, as well as the reference to access to reproductive health in the gender equality and empowerment section of the draft. While the language on reproductive health has not been strengthened, the fact that it has made it into the second draft shows that there is considerable support among governments for keeping it in the Summit outcome document.

The new draft also contains much stronger language on gender equality, women's empowerment and the protection of women's human rights throughout; as well as stronger language on access to education, strengthening health systems, and addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

NGO advocacy—including the powerful show of support for sexual and reproductive health and rights at the June civil society hearings and the many national, regional and international advocacy efforts taking place across the globe—has had a strong impact on the outcome so far. Let's keep it up through the next seven weeks to ensure that the final outcome document is just as strong, if not stronger on these issues!

For the full outcome document, click here:
http://www.un.org/ga/president/59/draft_outcome.htm.

Excerpts from the July 22nd Draft Outcome Document

On reproductive health:

Paragraph 34, Bullet 6

Achieve 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.

On gender equality, women's empowerment and women's human rights:

Paragraph 10

We reaffirm 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.

Paragraph 35

We reaffirm that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration; and resolve to promote gender equality and to eliminate pervasive gender discrimination by:

- Eliminating gender inequalities in primary and secondary education by 2006 and at all educational levels by 2015
- Guaranteeing the right of women to property and inheritance laws and ensuring secure tenure of property to women
- Ensuring access to reproductive health
- Promoting women's equal access to labour markets, sustainable employment as well as adequate labour protections
- Ensuring the protection of women in armed conflicts in accordance with the obligations of States under international humanitarian law
- Promoting equal participation of men and women in government decision making bodies; and
- Supporting direct actions to protect women and the girl child from violence, including by ending impunity, in particular in situations of wars and civil strife.

Paragraph 104

We recognize the need for special attention to human rights of women and children and undertake to advance them in every possible way, including by bringing gender and child protection perspectives in the human rights agenda.

Paragraph 108, Bullet 4

Recognizing the need for universal adherence to and implementation of the rule of law at both the national and international levels, we:

- Call upon states to continue their efforts to eradicate policies and practices that discriminate against women and to adopt laws and promote practices that protect the rights of women and promote gender equality.

On access to health care and health systems:

Paragraph 20, Bullet 4

Put into place policies to ensure adequate investment in health and education, provision on public goods and social safety nets to protect vulnerable members of society.

Paragraph 25

We agree to support the establishment and implementation of country led "quick win" initiatives consistent with long-term national development strategies so as to realize major immediate progress towards the development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals through such measures as free distribution of malaria bed nets and effective anti-malaria medicines, the expansion of home-grown school meals programs using locally produced foods and the elimination of user fees for primary education and health services.

Paragraph 34, Bullet 3

Strengthen by 2010 the health system in developing countries, with sufficient health workers, resources, infrastructures, management systems, and supplies to achieve the health related

MDGs and launch by 2006 a global initiative to strengthen the national health systems in developing countries, building on existing mechanisms.

Paragraph 43, Bullet 2

Support African commitment to ensure that by 2015 all children have access to a complete, free and compulsory education of good quality, as well as to basic health care.

On HIV/AIDS:

Paragraph 34, Bullet 1

Ensure that the resources needed for prevention, treatment, care and support, the elimination of stigma and discrimination, as well as enhanced access to affordable medicines, reduced vulnerability of affected persons in particular orphan children, and an expanded and comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS, and for full funding of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, as well as UN system agencies and programmes engaged in the fight against HIV/AIDS, are provided universally by 2010.

Paragraph 34, Bullet 2

Fully implement the commitments made at the General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS.

Paragraph 34, Bullet 5

Actively work to implement the Three Ones principles in all countries including ensuring that multiple institutions and international partners all work with national AIDS coordinating authorities to align their support to national strategies, policies, systems, cycles and annual priorities action plans.

Paragraph 43, Bullet 9

Provide, as a priority, assistance for HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment in African countries on a grant basis, and to encourage pharmaceutical companies to make anti-retroviral drugs affordable and accessible in Africa and ensure increased support for bilateral and multilateral assistance to combat malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases in Africa.

Update: Outcome of the High-Level Segment of ECOSOC

On July 15th, the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) released his summary report of the ECOSOC High-Level Segment on achieving internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs, which took place June 29-July 1, 2005. As reported previously, the summary report takes the place of a political declaration, which member states were unable to reach agreement on after a month of negotiations.

The report notes that “[u]niversal access to reproductive health, including family planning, is essential for making progress on MDG 5 (Maternal Health) and require[s] sustainable and predictable financing.” It also emphasizes the links between sexual and reproductive health and women’s empowerment and gender equality and notes that participants in the high-level segment stressed “the importance of full access to reproductive health by 2015 for achieving the MDGs.”

The report makes an important contribution to the 2005 World Summit process by indicating widespread support among governments for universal access to reproductive health.

For the full outcome document, click here:

<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2005/hl2005/05PresSummaryHL.pdf>

Update: Civil Society Hearings - Report of the General Assembly President

The report of the General Assembly President on the civil society hearings, released on July 21, accurately reflects the sentiments expressed by NGOs on the importance of sexual and reproductive health and rights. The report's introduction notes that "gender equality, empowering women and protecting the human rights of women, including ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health and rights" was a major message emerging from the hearings.

In the Freedom from Want section, the report states that sexual and reproductive health and rights is a cross-cutting issue, contributing to the realization of the MDGs. It notes that "guaranteeing sexual and reproductive health and rights by ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health information, education and services" was a prerequisite for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

In addition, the report states:

Participants proposed that the Outcome Document call for universal access to health care services. Participants strongly emphasized the need to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, information and education by 2015 and include this target in the MDGs. Progress in this area is essential for achieving all of the MDGs. With respect to the MDG on maternal health, all women should have access to skilled care during childbirth, as well as to emergency obstetric care.

The human rights section of the report also affirms the importance of protecting women's sexual and reproductive rights.

Congratulations to everyone who participated in the hearings for ensuring that our message was loud and clear!

For the full report, click here: <http://www.un-ngls.org/GA-hearing-advance-unedited-summary-21july.doc>.

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 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 outcome document should reaffirm the international Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) goal of universal access to sexual and reproductive health services by 2015, given that access to sexual and reproductive health services and information is crucial for achieving all the MDGs, particularly those concerned with child and maternal health, HIV/AIDS, gender equality and poverty eradication.

Ambassador Henrique Valle
Acting Permanent Representative of the Brazil to the United Nations
Informal Meeting of the Plenary on 2005 World Summit Outcome Document
June 22, 2005

Calendar of Events

July

28-29 Informal consultations on the July 22nd Draft of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document

August

3-5 The Challenges of Asia and the Pacific countries in achieving the MDGs in 2015 and Beyond (Jakarta, Indonesia)
5 Anticipated release of the Third Draft of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document

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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