



Global Partners in Action: NGO Forum on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Development

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Resources and Supplies

In the past 15 years, most countries have established population policies, family planning programmes and offices or ministries on gender and women's issues. Funding for population programmes has exceeded 1994 projections of need because of attention to HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.

However, funding for the other necessary aspects of comprehensive reproductive health care has been stagnant. Political will is often lacking. Meanwhile, demand is rising: the global supply of contraceptives, including condoms, for example, is inadequate and not distributed according to the need.

The Situation

The promises of the Cairo Consensus have been overtaken by global events. The urgent fight against HIV/AIDS has absorbed attention and funding that could be better coordinated with comprehensive reproductive health care. When vital supplies such as contraceptives are unavailable from lack of financial or political support, or delayed in the distribution chain, or expire before they can be used, women's human rights are denied.

- > While most countries now maintain family planning programs, many are under-funded and do not offer enough high-quality care to meet demand or deliver it where needed. Many omit counseling on preventing unintended pregnancy, HIV or other sexually transmitted infections.
- > The HIV/AIDS pandemic has greatly raised the need for comprehensive reproductive health care education and services – to educate young people on risk factors, to prevent the spread of the virus and to treat those infected.
- > Demand for reproductive health care and services in 2015 will be 40 percent higher than in 2004 because of growing awareness among the world's largest generation of young people, now at 1.5 billion.¹
- > Some 201 million women in developing countries would like to delay or prevent a pregnancy but are not using contraception. If this need were met, 52 million unintended pregnancies could be averted.²
- > Unmet need for contraception in sub-Saharan Africa declined by less than 10 percent between 1990 and 1995 and between 2000 and 2005. By contrast, unmet need declined by a third or more in Latin America and the Caribbean, North Africa and West Asia and South and Southeast Asia.³
- > Donor countries supplied 32 billion condoms to the developing world in 2007, up from 12 billion in 1998.⁴
- > Support for population and reproductive health programs has significantly declined as a percentage of overall global health aid, from about 30 percent in 1994 to 12 percent in 2008.⁵
- > The cost for additional contraceptives to address the unmet need in developing countries (excluding delivery, personnel and other costs) would be around US\$450 million per year by 2015. To address unmet need for contraceptives in a comprehensive way that includes supplies, personnel, and support in humanitarian aid situations, developing countries will need an additional S\$4.1 billion yearly by 2015.⁶
- > Of married women who are not using contraceptives, more than three in five in North Africa and West Asia, nearly half in Latin America and more than one-third in South and Southeast Asia and in Sub-Saharan Africa said it was because they did not believe they were at risk of getting pregnant.⁷

The ICPD Commitment

The 179 countries participating in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) agreed to invest US \$17.5 billion per year by 2000 in reproductive health care and education, especially for women, rising to \$21.7 billion annually by 2015. Donor nations pledged to provide one-third of that total and developing nations promised to provide the rest. In 2005, these pledges were exceeded because of rising spending against HIV/AIDS infections, yet the amount provided for family planning, blood supplies, surgical equipment and other necessary reproductive health care commodities remains inadequate.

The ICPD Programme of Action also urged the international community to establish an efficient coordination system and global, regional and sub-regional facilities for procurement of contraceptives and other commodities essential to reproductive health programmes in developing countries. The aim was to strengthen partnerships among governments, international organizations and the private sector and to promote the private sector's role in service delivery and in the production and distribution of high-quality reproductive health and family planning commodities and contraceptives.

Areas for Action

- > Without the right products and trained personnel to deliver them, the best health programmes can't succeed. Strong political resolve and investment of at least US\$750 billion by both donors and governments are required to meet the developing world's need for high-quality, affordable services and commodities, including contraceptives, surgical supplies and medicines, by 2015.⁸
- > Reliable country-based data on reproductive health commodity supply and demand are often lacking, as is the capacity to collect, analyze and report the information. National capacity to procure reliable supplies and services is required as part of an overall strengthening of health care systems.
- > Monitoring and coordinating mechanisms at the country level are generally weak. Developing countries should establish better data collection, effective planning, communication and monitoring systems to ensure delivery of the right product to the right recipients at the right time in the right place.
- > It is important to ensure that women have as many contraceptive options as possible, to help them match their method with their needs—for example, for a temporary or permanent method of contraception, or for a hormonal or barrier method—and with their tolerance for side effects.⁹
- > Training, deployment and adequate pay for health personnel is an urgent need in sub-Saharan Africa, where about 70 per cent of women have no contact with health personnel after childbirth – even though this could provide them with contraceptives they need to postpone future pregnancies.¹⁰
- > HIV/AIDS prevention programmes should be fully integrated with family planning and other reproductive health service programmes in order to make both more effective.
- > Such programmes should involve men as well, as multi-function centres do a better job of attracting and keeping clients and are more cost-effective than single-purpose facilities.
- > Sexuality education for young people should be age-appropriate and universal so as to enable them to make informed choices about their sexual behavior, risk factors, marriage and pregnancy.¹¹

¹ International Planned Parenthood Federation, *Contraception at a Crossroads*, IPPF, London, July 2009. , p. 4

² IPPF, *Contraceptives...* p. 2

³ Guttmacher Institute, "Facts About the Unmet Need For Contraception in Developing Countries" Fact Sheet, Guttmacher Institute, New York, May 2007, http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/2007/07/09/FB_unmetNeed.pdf (accessed Aug. 7, 2009)

⁴ UNFPA, "Donor Support for Contraceptives and Condoms for STI/HIV Prevention," UNFPA, New York, 2007, p. 27, http://www.unfpa.org/upload/lib_pub_file/796_filename_updated_donor_support_report.pdf (accessed Aug. 17, 2009)

⁵ The World Bank, "World's Progress on Maternal Health and Family Planning is Insufficient," The World Bank, Washington, D.C., July 9, 2009, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22241448~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607,00.html> (accessed Aug. 17, 2009)

⁶ Commission on Population and Development (CPD), "The flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development," Report of the 42nd session, 2009 Report of the Secretary-General, E/CN.9/2009/5, New York, 21 January 2009, pp. 14-19; and UNFPA internal communication.

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/215/67/PDF/N0921567.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed Aug. 19, 2009)

⁷ Guttmacher Institute, "Facts..." (accessed Aug. 7, 2009)

⁸ UNFPA, "From Procuring Supplies to Supplying Know-How," UNFPA, New York, May 2009,

<http://www.unfpa.org/public/suhttp://www.unfpa.org/public/supplies/pid/2617plies/pid/2617> (accessed Aug. 17, 2009)

⁹ Guttmacher Institute, "Facts..." (accessed Aug. 7, 2009)

¹⁰ UNFPA, "Contraceptives Save Lives" Fact Sheet, UNFPA, New York, 2008, <http://www.who.int/pmnch/events/2008/contraceptive.pdf> (accessed Aug. 5, 2009)

¹¹ UNFPA, "Contraceptives..." (accessed Aug. 5, 2009)