

UPDATE - 2006 HIV/AIDS UNGASS REVIEW No. 2

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2006 marks the five-year anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (DoC), which set time-bound goals and targets aimed at stopping and reversing the spread of HIV and AIDS. With many governments falling short on achieving targets set for 2003 and 2005, this anniversary will be an important occasion to review and recommit to implementation of the DoC, evaluate challenges and obstacles, and reassess what needs to be done in order to effectively combat the pandemic. For SRHR and women's rights NGOs, this year offers an opportunity to draw the attention of governments to the growing impact of HIV and AIDS on women and young people, as well as the linkages between SRH and HIV/AIDS information and services. This e-Bulletin, produced by Family Care International (FCI) and the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), will share information about important events and initiatives related to HIV and AIDS in 2006 and identify key opportunities for advocacy. If you have information to share or additional questions about the process, please contact Shannon Kowalski (FCI) at skowalski@fcimail.org or Zonny Woods (IWHC) at zonnyw@yahoo.co.uk.

Commission on the Status of Women Adopts Resolution on Women, the Girl Child and HIV/AIDS

On Friday, March 10, the United Nations Committee on the Status of Women adopted an important resolution on Women, the Girl Child and HIV/AIDS. The resolution places women and girls at the center of the response to HIV/AIDS and stresses "that women have the right to control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence." In addition, the resolution urges governments to:

- Achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015;
- Create an enabling environment for women's empowerment and promote and protect women's human rights;
- Strengthen policy and program linkages between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health;
- Increase women's and girls' capacity to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, particularly through access to health care and services, including sexual and reproductive health services, as well as prevention education that promotes gender equality;
- Integrate HIV/AIDS prevention into all health services, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning, and maternity services;
- Ensure that the supply of male and female condoms is adequate and secure;
- Strengthen measures to eliminate violence against women and ensure that violence against women is addressed as an integral part of the national HIV/AIDS response;
- Ensure that women and girls have sustained and equitable access to treatment for HIV/AIDS and opportunistic infections, with full protection of their human rights, including their reproductive rights;
- Ensure access to information and education, including sexual education, to give young women and men the life skills they need to prevent HIV infection;
- Promote funding for research on women-controlled methods to prevent HIV infection; and
- Increase funding to reduce women's disproportionate burden of care for people living with HIV and AIDS.

The resolution also calls upon governments, UN agencies, the Global Fund and other stakeholders to integrate a gender-perspective in their work and allocate resources to programs that address the specific needs of women and girls. The Commission on the Status of Women asked that the Secretary-General consider the feminization and gender dimensions of the epidemic in his report for the HIV/AIDS UNGASS review and high-level meeting, and requested that the meeting itself pay attention to the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls and include gender perspectives in its deliberations.

This resolution will be an important contribution to the 2006 HIV/AIDS UNGASS review and high-level meeting and can be used to advocate for a stronger commitment to addressing the needs of women and

girls and increasing linkages between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health in the meeting's outcome document.

The full resolution will be available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/50sess.htm> once the report of the Commission on the Status of Women has been finalized.

Update: 2006 Comprehensive Review and High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS
New York, 31 May – 2 June 2006

NGO Participation

On March 27, 2006, the General Assembly passed a resolution inviting approximately 800 NGOs that do not have consultative status with ECOSOC to participate in the UNGASS Review. The list of civil society participants is available at http://www.unaids.org/unaidresources/images/UNGASS/20060328_CS0accreditationList_en.pdf.

NGOs that have consultative status with ECOSOC must confirm their interest in participating in the review meeting by **30 March 2006**, by sending an email or fax listing their representatives to the NGO Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (email: desangosection@un.org, fax: +1 (212) 963-9248). We strongly encourage sexual and reproductive health and women's rights organizations to register to participate in this important event.

Civil Society Task Force

The President of the General Assembly has convened a civil society task force to advise him on preparations for the HIV/AIDS UNGASS Review.

The members of the task force have been asked to:

- Advise on civil society participation in the roundtables;
- Work with broader civil society groupings to help identify key civil society speakers for all formal sessions, including the Plenary session;
- Communicate key issues to broader civil society to inform them of pertinent developments;
- Prepare and brief for the civil society participants and speakers;
- Provide input on the panels and aspects of the High Level event on June 1;
- Provide input on recommendations to the chairs of the roundtables;
- Provide input into the development of key messages for the Review Meeting to be used by UNAIDS at key media and communications opportunities;
- Advise on logistical issues and needs for civil society attending the Review; and
- Participate in a Post Review Debriefing.

The participants in the civil society task force are:

Representatives of People Living with HIV/AIDS

Beri Hull International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW), USA/International
Lucy Chesire Stop TB Partnership Community Representative, TB/HIV Working Group
Community Representative, ICW, Kenya

The Review and High-Level Meeting at a glance:

- The UN Secretary General will submit a report six weeks before the review on progress achieved and challenges remaining in realizing the commitments in the Declaration of Commitment;
- A short political declaration will be adopted at the end of the meeting reaffirming and recommitting to the full implementation of the Declaration of Commitment;
- A person living with HIV/AIDS will be invited to speak at the opening plenary session;
- Civil society representatives will have the opportunity to dialogue with governments during an informal, interactive hearing;
- Five to ten civil society representatives will be invited to participate with governments in each of the concurrent roundtable sessions. Each roundtable will have a total of 40 to 45 participants;
- Civil society representatives will be invited to speak on concurrent panel sessions; and
- Summaries from the roundtables, panels and the civil society hearings will be presented to a plenary meeting scheduled for June 1, 2006.

Representatives of the Coalition for Civil Society Participation in the HIV/AIDS UNGASS

Marcel Van Soest World AIDS Campaign, The Netherlands/International
Zonny Woods International Women's Health Coalition, USA/International

NGO Delegates from the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board

Mary Balikungeri Rwanda Women's Network, Rwanda
Rachel Ong Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS, China/Asia Pacific

NGO Member of the UNAIDS Universal Access Global Steering Committee

Raminta Stuikyte Central and Eastern European Harm Reduction Network, Eastern Europe

Representative of the Labor Sector

Alan Leather Public Services International

Representative of the Private Sector

Georgia Arnold MTV Networks International, UK/International

Representative of a Women's Organization

Mabel Bianco Foundation for Studies and Research on Women, Argentina

Representative of a Youth Organization

Prateek Suman Youth Coalition, India/International

Representative from a Faith-based Organization

Linda Hartke Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, Switzerland/International

For information on the work of the taskforce please visit:
<http://www.unaids.org/en/GetStarted/CivilSociety.asp>

Update: Scaling Up Towards Universal Access

Since the last update of January 30, 2006, the Global Steering Committee has had two additional meetings (February 21-22 and March 14-15) and regional consultations have been held for Latin America, Asia Pacific, the Commonwealth of Independent States (former Soviet Union Countries), Africa, the Caribbean, South and Central Europe, and the Middle East. The final report will be posted in the coming days at: <http://www.unaids.org/en/Coordination/Initiatives/default.asp>.

Regional Consultations

UNAIDS has posted summaries of the recommendations from some of the earlier regional consultations on their website. In these summaries, some recommendations on gender and sexual and reproductive health emerged:

- From *Latin America*, participants in the consultation recommended that more resources be invested in prevention efforts and asked national governments to include education on sexuality and gender education in National AIDS plans. In addition, they asked governments to strengthen public policies and enforce legislation to combat gender bias.
- From the *Caribbean*, consultation participants recommended that sexual education, with a strong gender perspective, be included in national plans to ensure that women and girls have access to information and education for HIV prevention.
- From *Asia and the Pacific*, participants recommended that governments promote gender-sensitive policies and programs to address gender discrimination.
- At the regional consultation for Africa, participants adopted the "Brazzaville Commitment on Scaling Up Towards Universal Access to HIV," which recognizes that the response to the pandemic needs to be underpinned by a number of key principles, including gender-centered approaches, respect for human rights, and the need for a comprehensive package of services for HIV prevention treatment and care that is linked with reproductive health. In addition, participants committed to "promote legal and programmatic measures to address the high vulnerability of women and girls."

The summaries Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States do not have specific recommendations on women or sexual and reproductive health and rights issues, despite the fact that both heterosexual transmission and infections among women are increasing in both of these regions.

For more information about the Global Steering Committee, including detailed e-bulletins about their work, the priorities of UNAIDS co-sponsors in this area, and the regional consultations, visit <http://www.unaids.org/en/Coordination/Initiatives/default.asp>.

Calendar of Events

4-6 May
African Union Heads of State Summit on HIV/AIDS (Abuja+5), Abuja, Nigeria

22-27 May
World Health Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland
<http://www.who.int/>

31 May – 2 June
Comprehensive Review and High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS, New York, USA
<http://www.unaids.org/>

4-6 July
Partnership Forum, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Durban, South Africa
<http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/about/forum/2006/>

13-18 August
XVI International AIDS Conference, Toronto, Canada
<http://www.AIDS2006.org>

Resources on Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS

With Women Worldwide: A Compact to End HIV/AIDS

Outlines priority actions for making global HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care strategies work for women. Developed by a group of women advocates for use in 2006 negotiations on HIV/AIDS and beyond. Also available in French, Portuguese, and Spanish

For more information and a copy of the Compact go to www.withwomenworldwide.org.

Openness about sexuality important for people and societies

Outcome document of an international conference, *What About Sex?*, held in the Netherlands, March 6-7, 2006. Calls upon governments, civil society and others to address sexuality positively, ensure access to comprehensive sexuality education and sexual health services, and promote and protect sexual rights.

For a copy of the outcome document, visit: www.wpf.org or www.youthincentives.org.



Family Care International
588 Broadway, Suite 503
New York, NY 10012
www.familycareintl.org



International Women's Health Coalition
333 Seventh Avenue, 6th floor
New York, NY 10001
www.iwhc.org