



Reproductive Health for All

An advocacy and awareness raising campaign to promote universal access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) as a key target to reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

The Millennium Development Goals

In September 2000, the world's leaders of 189 UN member states adopted the Millennium Declaration, committing their nations to stronger global efforts to reduce poverty, improve health and promote peace, human rights and a sustainable environment. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that emerged from the Declaration are eight specific, measurable, time-bound targets, which bind countries to do more in their fight against poverty, widespread hunger, gender inequality, environmental deterioration, the lack of education and healthcare, as well as deaths of children and mothers. All UN nations engaged to work together to achieve the MDGs by 2015 adapting the goals to country specific development level. Three out of eight MDGs refer to SRH, which highlights the crucial importance of this sector.



Sexual and Reproductive Health Key to Poverty Reduction

Universal access to SRH was first formulated as an important development goal at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994. The goal agreed upon at the ICPD was integrated as a new target under MDG 5 (improving maternal health) in 2006. It was recognised that the health-related MDGs in particular (MDG 4 on reducing child mortality, MDG 5, and MDG 6 on combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) will only be reached when SRH is integrated as a cross-cutting issue. Universal access to SRH will lead to an improved health situation and more sustainable population dynamics in least developed countries, where poor health and rapid population dynamics are both major obstacles to poverty reduction.

Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health often not Available

It is worldwide recognised that SRH for all is an achievable goal if cost-effective interventions are properly scaled up, political commitment is revitalised and financial resources are mobilised. Yet, SRH of women and men in the South remains neglected. Unsafe sex is the second most important risk factor for disability and death in the world's poorest communities. Every year, more than 200 million women have an unmet need for contraception, 76 million women have unintended pregnancies (over half - 45 million - of which end in abortion: safe and unsafe, legal and illegal), more than half a million women die from complications associated with pregnancy and childbirth, and 340 million people acquire new sexually transmitted infections.



However, international funding for family planning services decreased by more than 50 per cent from 1995: While international donors spent US\$ 723 million in 1995, they only spent US\$ 338 million in 2007. Furthermore, the influence of conservative political, religious, and cultural forces around the world threatens to undermine whatever progress was made since 1994.



What We Try to Achieve

The aim of the campaign 'Reproductive Health for All' is to sensitise leading opinion formers, political decision makers, civil society actors, multipliers and the general public in Austria, Germany, Poland, Spain and The Netherlands that investing in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in developing countries is not only a prerequisite in reaching the MDGs, but a cross cutting issue for development as a whole, and is also one of the most sustainable and cost-effective ways of spending Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Universal access to SRH is an important issue for European development aid policies, and strong leadership of the European Union is indispensable. The EU has proven its vital role in negotiations during the Cairo +10 process

and at the World Summit in 2005 and ensured global commitment and progress concerning people's SRHR. Continued European leadership is essential in the present global setting. The political commitments on these issues in the member states play a crucial role. Continuous advocacy at national and European level, specifically on SRHR, is therefore necessary.

The support for development strategies and policies for poverty reduction is of crucial importance in all 25 European member states. European countries show differences in history of development co-operation policies. In some European countries the issue of development co-operation is quite new; other European countries show a long history of development aid. It is therefore of great importance to build up the capacity of civil society and forge political commitment especially in the new member states to do advocacy on important development issues such as SRHR in order to enhance efforts of the EU in the fight against poverty.

Photography: Arjen van de Merwe, Fleur Koning and Andrea Kuenzig/DSW.



German Foundation for
World Population (DSW)

Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung

Goettinger Chaussee 115
D-30459 Hannover, Germany
Tel: +49 5 11 / 9 43 73 0
Fax: +49 5 11 / 9 43 73- 73
E-mail: info@dsw-hannover.de
Internet: www.weltbevoelkerung.de



Austrian Foundation for World Population and
International Co-operation
swi
Österreichische Stiftung für Weltbevölkerung
und internationale Zusammenarbeit



Federación de
Planificación Familiar
Estatal (FPFE)



Federation for Women
and Family Planning



The Reproductive Health for All campaign is funded by the European Union. The views expressed in this leaflet do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union.