

## **The New York Call to Commitment: Linking HIV/AIDS and Sexual and Reproductive Health**

*The AIDS epidemic is a global catastrophe, responsible for over 20 million deaths worldwide, tens of millions of children left orphaned, and 40 million people living with HIV. Similarly, five hundred million people a year suffer from reproductive health morbidity or lack of access to modern contraceptives, and there are over half a million pregnancy related deaths each year. In the face of these unprecedented crises, UNFPA and UNAIDS, in collaboration with Family Care International, convened a high-level global consultation at the Rockefeller Foundation in New York on 7 June 2004. Participants, including ministers, parliamentarians, ambassadors, leaders of United Nations and other multilateral agencies, donor organization officials, community and nongovernmental organization leaders, young people, and people living with HIV made the following call to commitment:*

1. Reaffirming the development goals as contained in the Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session in September 2000, and in the road map towards the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the goals set by the other United Nations international conferences of the 1990's;
2. Recognizing that these development goals will not be achieved without ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health services and programmes and without an effective global response to HIV/AIDS;
3. Emphasizing that the overwhelming majority of HIV infections are sexually transmitted or associated with pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding; that both sexual and reproductive health initiatives and HIV/AIDS initiatives must be mutually reinforcing; that both HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive ill-health are driven by many common root causes, including gender inequality, poverty and social marginalization of the most vulnerable populations; and that stronger linkages between sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS will result in more relevant and cost-effective programmes with greater impact;
4. Expressing profound concern that far too many policies, programmes and initiatives addressing either sexual and reproductive health or HIV/AIDS have failed to take account of these linkages; and that as a result, the global community has thus been less effective than it could have been in responding to these shared challenges and opportunities;
5. Agreeing that the strengthening of the policy and programme linkages between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health is essential for either effort to be successful, and for both efforts to contribute, as they must, to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

*We have agreed upon the following actions and call on others to do likewise:*

6. Reaffirm the linkages between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health, and their inter-relationships with broader issues of public health, development and human rights, as agreed by the international community in a series of commitments including:
  - The 'Programme of Action' adopted in 1994 at the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), and the Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD adopted in 1999;
  - The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of September 1995, and the Political Declaration and Further Action and Initiatives to Implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of June 2000;
  - The United Nations Millennium Declaration of September 2000 and the Millennium Development Goals; and
  - The 'Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS' agreed by acclamation at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in June 2001;

7. Promote the greater and more effective involvement of potential beneficiaries, especially people living with HIV and young people, in the design, governance and delivery of sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS initiatives;
8. Transform existing sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS policies, programmes and services to ensure:
  - That sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and integrated initiatives are all built on a fundamental commitment to respect, protect and promote human rights;
  - That the creativity and capacity of communities and of nongovernmental organizations are fully engaged towards the achievement of these goals;
  - Recognition of, and response to, the sexual and reproductive health needs and human rights of people living with HIV;
  - Special efforts to reach priority populations most under-served by current efforts, including poor women, young people and marginalized populations;
  - That family planning and voluntary counselling and testing are included in prevention of mother-to-child transmission programmes, as endorsed in the “Glion Call to Action”;
  - Provision of an essential package of sexual and reproductive health information and services to all people reached by HIV/AIDS programmes;
  - Provision of an essential package of HIV/AIDS information and services to all people reached by sexual and reproductive health programmes; and
  - Adequate, accessible, affordable and acceptable supplies of essential HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health related commodities, including male and female condoms and STI diagnostics and drugs;
9. Reinvigorate our efforts to ensure that young people around the world have access to age-specific, gender sensitive and culturally appropriate sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS education and services;
10. Mobilize the necessary resources to support dramatically increasing linkages between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health programmes and services;
11. Ensure that the linkages between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health are addressed within existing national development plans and budgets including health sector reforms, poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), sector wide approaches and UN system instruments such as the Common Country Assessment and Development Assistance Framework;
12. Promote a coordinated and coherent response to HIV/AIDS that builds upon the principles of one national HIV/AIDS framework, one broad-based multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS coordinating body, and one agreed country-level monitoring and evaluation system; promote attention to sexual and reproductive health priorities within this effort; and promote strategies which ensure that HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health programmes contribute to the overall strengthening and sustainability of health systems;
13. Above all, encourage all interested and concerned parties to reach out to their colleagues, to advocates, and to leaders around the world, emphasizing the global emergency created by HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive ill-health; the urgent need for much stronger links between sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS policies, programmes and services; and the centrality of these intersecting efforts towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.