

High-Level Task Force for ICPD

RIGHTS, DIGNITY & HEALTH FOR ALL

Strategy & Programme of Work

September 2012

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

In 1994, the international community adopted the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), a landmark agreement through which, for the first time, governments committed to fulfilling reproductive rights and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health by 2015.

The critical importance and centrality of sexual and reproductive health to poverty reduction and development was reaffirmed when these issues were integrated as part of the Millennium Development Goals—a leading global framework for guiding policy priorities and investments.

In 2015, the international community will be forging a new global development agenda for years to come, that will impact people's lives around the world and shape priorities for action and funding. In the lead up to 2015, the ICPD will celebrate its 20th-year mark in 2014. An open-ended continuation of the ICPD was approved by the General Assembly (2010), with a forward-looking review of implementation at country levels, as well as at inter-governmental regional and global levels as centerpieces of this process. The assessment of progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and determining the future development global agenda will culminate at a General Assembly Summit in 2015, also informed by the 20-year commemoration that same year of the Beijing Platform for Action on women's rights and gender equality.

Throughout these inter-related global processes, sexual and reproductive health and rights must be reaffirmed and positioned as a global priority. Sexual and reproductive rights and health issues are not only central to individuals' lives and communities' overall quality of life; but to human rights, equality and equity, and sustainable development more broadly.

Despite considerable progress in many countries since the 1994 Programme of Action was adopted, implementation has fallen short of expressed governmental commitments and needed investments. Issues of sexuality and reproduction, and of women's rights and gender equality underpinning them, remain controversial, with gains at risk of being jeopardized or rolled back in various contexts.

To this end, the High-Level Task Force for ICPD was established in 2012, as an independent body of eminent and distinguished leaders from government and civil society acting in their individual capacities. Their mission: to inspire and galvanize advocates and policy-makers by presenting a bold and progressive vision of strategic priorities for action. The ultimate aim of the Task Force is to secure strengthened political will and tangible commitments that squarely position sexual and reproductive health and rights as a priority of the post-2015 international development agenda.

About the High-Level Task Force

The High-Level Task Force for ICPD is comprised of 25 individuals recognized nationally and internationally for their achievements and contributions to human rights and development, gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and adolescent and youth rights. The Task Force is led by two honorable co-chairs who are former heads of state. Members have a record of service as ministers and parliamentarians, leaders of civil society organizations, principals of academia, philanthropy and the corporate world, activists and thinkers. The term of the Task Force is from September 2012 through December 2015, when the UN-convened processes for determining the post-2015 development agenda will have concluded. Throughout its term, the Task Force will serve as a forceful and authoritative advocate, with a view to ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights are secured as a priority of the international community's leading development framework.

AIMS OF THE TASK FORCE

The principal aims of the Task Force are to:

- ***Further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.*** Based on the reviews to date since its adoption in 1994, the assessment of implementation of the Programme of Action reveals that commitments made at Cairo, Beijing and the Millennium Summit have yet to be fully realized. Shortfalls in investments in sexual and reproductive health care, combined with concerted efforts to undermine progress and limit supportive policies and funding, has often resulted in fragmented or partial efforts. The Task Force will strive to secure more robust implementation for the full realization of the Cairo Programme of Action in its entirety, holistically and in an integrated manner as originally envisioned, through advocacy on critical gaps and unresolved issues that need to be overcome and remedied.
- ***Advance sexual and reproductive health and rights commitments in 2014 and beyond.*** Given that the 20-year milestone will serve as an opportunity to set a forward-looking agenda, the Task Force will also advocate for commitments on emerging and neglected issues since the Programme of Action was adopted in 1994. Based on analysis of the contents of pivotal agreements—principally, but not exclusively, of the ICPD Programme of Action, the Key Actions for its further implementation (1999) and related agreements adopted since—in relation to key concerns of growing importance and impact in today's world, the Task Force will identify priority issues that have been inadequately addressed to date in inter-governmental deliberations.
- ***Integrate and secure sexual and reproductive health and rights as a central aspect of the post-2015 global development agenda.*** The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), centred on eradicating poverty, marked an important turning point with the addition of a target on universal access to reproductive health in 2007. Sexual and reproductive health and rights have increasingly gained recognition in policy and funding mechanisms as essential to achieving human rights, women's empowerment and gender equality, social justice, economic prosperity and sustainable development. This recognition of the inter-linkages and centrality of the ICPD Programme of Action to achieving all other development goals needs to be maintained and reinforced as governments prepare for the review of the MDGs: It is more vital than ever that the post-2015 global development agenda secure priority attention to sexual and reproductive health and rights, if past investments are to be capitalized on and continued progress made.

With these policy objectives, the Task Force aspires to contribute to the longer-term **development goals** of improving quality of life and sexual and reproductive health worldwide, especially of women, young people and communities living in poverty or otherwise underserved; and to enabling the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights by individuals and couples, especially women and adolescent girls, without any form of discrimination, coercion or violence.

Guiding Values & Principles of the Task Force

In line with the ICPD Programme of Action, the High-Level Task Force will be guided by basic principles and positions rooted in a commitment to human rights, social justice and equity, women's empowerment and gender equality, and young people's rights and meaningful participation in decision-making.

The Task Force affirms that women's empowerment and gender equality, young people's rights and empowerment, and sexual and reproductive health and rights, are priority ends in themselves and also essential for achieving sustainable development, including by seizing opportunities for addressing global challenges related to population dynamics and trends. A fundamental demand of the Task Force, related to human rights principles, is universal access to quality, comprehensive and integrated sexual and reproductive health information, education and services. In tandem, the Task Force will advocate for increased financial resources from national public budgets and the international development community, with robust accountability mechanisms in place for tracking and sustaining progress.

STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

The main, inter-related strategies that the Task Force will deploy centre on:

- ***Policy-oriented Advocacy*** around a common platform of compelling and concrete strategic commitments for governments to consider adopting, especially at global and regional inter-governmental levels in the processes leading up to 2015, drawing on available research and evidence-base;
- ***Alliance & Coalition-Building***, to contribute to consensus-building and coherence with like-minded advocates for optimal impact of the Task Force's policy positions, especially with influential actors, strategically-positioned government decision-makers and leading international, regional and national networks of civil society advocates with experience in policy development and UN processes;
- ***Communications and Outreach***, utilizing multi-media venues to widely disseminate the Task Force advocacy positions and key messages, and establish a presence and identity of the Task Force in relevant international circles, for maximum reach to all stakeholders and civil society organizations involved in the ICPD, MDGs and related post-2015 processes.

In the area of **policy-oriented advocacy**, the Task Force will:

- *Adopt a common policy-advocacy platform, with proposals for reaffirming and advancing governmental commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights*, especially on strategic priorities, emerging and neglected issues since the ICPD Programme of Action was adopted in 1994. Policy briefs will be developed on the Task Force positions for the Post-2015 development agenda process, as well as a lead policy paper for the ICPD Beyond 2014 process (expected by March 2013). These policy briefs will be based on identified priorities for action, informed by research and analysis, including of critical gaps in ICPD implementation and global trends; inter-governmental agreements

and declarations since 1994; and leading UN System and civil society advocacy platforms and proposals. The Task Force positions will be informed by consultations with select government decision-makers, civil society and other key stakeholders, in order to ensure relevance and resonance with a broad-based and diverse range of constituencies. These informal and/or structured consultations with key stakeholders are expected to be a focus of the Task Force's work from October-December 2012, but also expected to be ongoing as these international review processes unfold. Once adopted, these policy briefs will serve Task Force Members as the guiding framework and parameters for their advocacy efforts.

The policy platform and advocacy positions will be revisited and updated as needed over the course of the Task Force's term, to ensure congruence with policy and other developments, as well as to seize key opportunities; and will be made available in English, French and Spanish. Regionally-tailored policy briefs may be developed to complement and reinforce the ICPD global position paper. Opportunities will be explored for submitting and disseminating the Task Force's positions and recommendations at key stages of the UN review processes and to the stakeholders involved.

- *Undertake advocacy, both publicly and through bilateral 'quiet diplomacy', in order to build momentum and political will for the Task Force's proposals for priority action.* This will include consultations and advocacy by Task Force Members in their own countries and regions, as well as with their respective spheres of influence at all levels (e.g. the Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Post-2015, senior-most policy-makers and ministries, parliamentarians, women's, youth, men's, environmental, children's, human rights groups, advocacy organizations for people living with HIV and AIDS, the mass media, etc.). Task Force Members represent varying and complementary comparative advantages with government and civil society decision-makers, with particular groups and constituencies that will be leveraged for building cross-regional consensus and mobilization around shared priorities.

To operationalize the advocacy strategy, Task Force Members are expected to engage with high-level government officials and civil society organizations in an effort to consolidate progressive positions for the ICPD and MDGs review processes; and influence and/or participate in the regional ICPD negotiations in 2013, and in-country or regional meetings related to the MDGs review. (For example, the United Nations will be facilitating consultations on the Post-2015 development agenda in at least 50 countries in 2012-2013.)

At global level, the Task Force will explore opportunities for representation at key inter-governmental meetings on the ICPD and MDGs (e.g. the 2014 Commission on Population and Development and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on ICPD, or high-level events on the MDGs); as well as engage in high-profile public speaking opportunities. Among them are leading global or regional conferences (non-official), such as *Women Deliver*, youth consultations and fora, among others to be considered. In addition, Task Force Members will seek to form part of their countries' official delegations, as an especially strategic entry point for fulfilling Task Force objectives. It is expected that Task Force Members will undertake travel to countries in their region and select regional and global meetings for these purposes. Wherever possible, Task Force advocacy plans and activities will be integrated into Members' existing commitments, travel and speaking engagements.

While it is expected that most of the Task Force's time would be invested in countries or in regional inter-governmental processes, select strategic participation for advocacy in capitals of the 'North' and in global forums will be an important part of the programme of work. Myriad forums will be convened by many stakeholders, and to be effective, choices will need to be made on priority events to participate in based on guiding criteria, such as whether the activity will broaden the constituent

base, the extent to which it will help move forward the Task Force's aims, and opportunities for mobilizing and engaging key and new constituencies.

- *Track outcomes and/or selectively engage in other key inter-governmental processes on the roadmap to 2015*, that have a direct relationship and bearing on the ICPD and MDGs reviews, and most directly on sexual and reproductive health and rights, notably: the post-Rio Conference process and inter-governmental working group designing sustainable development goals; the 20th year anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action; the annual sessions of the Commission on Population and Development and of the Commission on the Status of Women; and relevant General Assembly resolutions where sexual and reproductive health and related issues are commonly part of the negotiation discussions (e.g. violence against women and girls, among others). Strategies will be developed either through direct engagement and participation of select Task Force Members, and/or via networking with delegates, advocates and participants attending these fora, to promote the relevant policy proposals of the Task Force's positions and priorities.
- *Undertake policy analysis and mapping on positions surrounding sexual and reproductive health and rights*. The Task Force priorities for engaging at national, sub-regional, regional and global levels will be informed by a geo-political mapping of country policy positions, opportunities and challenges within and across regions; as well as understanding of the dynamics of UN inter-governmental negotiations at both UN and capital levels. Other inter-governmental mechanisms at global, regional or sub-regional levels may also be explored as favourable venues. This analysis will also assist the Task Force in determining priority countries and events of focus and engagement.

Alliance and Coalition-Building with strategic partners and key constituencies at all levels will be central to the Task Force's work and potential for impact and success. This area will include:

- *Identifying and engaging leading international and regional civil society advocacy networks* that can inform the Task Force's policy positions and its outreach strategy and follow-up. Particular attention would be paid to involving representatives who are well-versed in sexual and reproductive health and rights issues, UN deliberations and negotiations and/or representing key and strategic constituencies, including 'veteran' women's rights groups savvy in UN processes and expert on these issues, as well as other constituencies engaging in similar inter-governmental negotiations (i.e. on adolescents, HIV and AIDS); organizations traditionally representing the public health and family planning movement; youth advocates, including those newer to these processes but who are committed and represent the future leaders on the ICPD agenda; to emerging men's networks committed to gender equality, among other movements, that share the same values and concerns. A lead criteria relevant for the Task Force's advocacy impact relates to engaging with international networks and organizations that have global reach, with effective national affiliates, offices and partnerships that can help link country-regional-to global level advocacy work, and vice versa (global developments to national levels).

One of the comparative advantages of the Task Force is the relative stature of its membership; as such, the Task Force will be cognizant of its potential role in amplifying the voices and advocacy priorities expressed by civil society organizations, where these are reinforced in the Task Force's final decisions for its advocacy platform. Task Force Members are also expected to advocate for meaningful civil society participation, including in policy-making and decision-making fora across the UN review processes and their follow up; as well as for inclusion of civil society leaders in their

- *Coordination and outreach with key influential bodies* will form an integral part of the advocacy strategy. Importantly, the Task Force (especially via the Co-Chairs) will work to establish dialogue with the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (co-chaired by the Heads of State and Government of Liberia, Indonesia and the United Kingdom), which will be delivering its findings to the Secretary-General in the first half of 2013; as well as track developments of the inter-governmental Working Group charged with proposing sustainable development goals. The Task Force will also explore venues for coordination and building synergies with other groups of eminent personalities, such as the Global Reproductive Health Leadership Council (of which some Task Force members are also part); key international spokespersons on human rights (such as the Special Rapporteurs); or identifying especially strategic entry points and leading initiatives for advancing the Task Force positions (e.g. the *Every Women, Every Child* initiative spearheaded by the Secretary-General). Briefings and exchanges with ICPD-supportive government and parliamentary representatives, including from UN Missions, will also serve to inform delegates about key issues and priorities, and Task Force proposals.
- *Outreach to parliamentary networks at national, regional and global levels*, including exploring the prospect in select countries as Task Force Members may consider feasible, of holding briefings for parliamentarians.
- Overall, the Task Force's strategic alliances with both governments and civil society leaders is intended to ensure optimal impact through harmonized mobilization and mutually-reinforcing advocacy positions wherever possible.

Communications & Outreach will underpin the effective reach and positioning of the Task Force and its policy platform, including through:

- *Development of an overall communications strategy and plan*, with expert input that considers and assesses multi-media opportunities, regional variations and differentiated audiences;
- *Production of presentational materials* about the Task Force, including a brochure with its mission and Members' biographies, organization of the Task Force's launch (October 1, 2012), and development and maintenance of an internet website;
- *Utilizing special events to reach key constituencies*, such as the launch of the Task Force ICPD positions with primarily a UN policy-making audience, or organizing select high-level side events at major inter-governmental meetings (e.g. during the UN General Assembly high-level segments, the Commission on Population and Development, Commission on Status of Women, during the regional ICPD negotiations, etc.);
- *Use of internet-based venues of outreach*, as well as exploring use of social media, in order to ensure maximum dissemination of the Task Force's key messages across all relevant list-serves; as well as engage young people as stakeholders and advocates, and mobilize public opinion;
- *Engage the mass media* as opportunities arise, such as for the launch of the Task Force's key policy recommendations, via Op-Eds, interviews and articles of the Co-Chairs and other Members, or strategically-timed press conferences or media coverage of Task Force positions (e.g. around UN negotiations, Member keynote public speaking engagements, other);
- In addition to public speaking engagements, *explore additional influential and high-profile venues for outreach on the Task Force's positions*, as well as the option of Co-Chairs and other Task Force Members moderating or co-convening (with national partners and NGOs), for example, consultation and exchange meetings or public events with mass media coverage that can also serve to mobilize public opinion.

The specifics of the communications and outreach plan will be shaped and informed by expert communications and media advice (via retainment of an expert firm), as well as the mapping of Task

Force Members' existing commitments and other opportunities they identify and are willing to undertake with support from the Secretariat.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The overall expected impact (at outcome level) of the operationalization of the Task Force strategies and activities is to have contributed to strengthened political will and tangible commitments at global, regional and national levels that reaffirm and advance sexual and reproductive health and rights and secure their positioning in the post-2015 global development agenda.

In pursuit of this aim, the main results achieved (outputs) will have included:

- The establishment of an effective High-Level Task-Force, with a programme of work and calendar of activities.
- The production of a compelling advocacy platform with bold and concrete evidence-based proposals for strengthening and furthering governmental commitments, especially on strategic priorities, emerging and neglected issues of the ICPD agenda since the Programme of Action was adopted in 1994, and in relation to the Post-2015 development agenda process. Additional policy briefs may be developed over the course of the initiative.
- Engagement and outreach with key stakeholders, from government decision-makers to diverse civil society networks, from various regions and countries, for optimal advocacy impact through harmonized mobilization and mutually-reinforcing positions wherever possible.
- Positioning of sexual and reproductive health and rights issues through targeted advocacy, communications and media, in order to influence the outcomes of key inter-governmental processes and deliberations leading up to and including the global ICPD review (2014) and the adoption of the Post-2015 development agenda (2015).

WORKING MODALITIES, MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Task Force's strategic directions and operations will be defined and evolve under the leadership of the two Co-Chairs, and with the support of a small Secretariat hosted by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF/WHO), that will also serve as administrative and fiduciary agent.

The Task force will meet two times a year, expected to consist of one meeting convened in-person and the other using modern information technologies. The Task Force meetings and interim communications throughout the year will serve to facilitate the ongoing development and implementation of its strategy and programme of work, calendar of activities and advocacy plans, and arrive at agreements on substantive priorities and advocacy proposals for the Task Force's policy positions. The Task Force Co-Chairs may determine the need for additional group meetings and discussions subject to needs as the Task Force's programme of work evolves.

The Secretariat will provide overall coordination, advocacy, communications, partner outreach, research and substantive support for the Task Force, including production of the policy paper/s and materials, management, fundraising, donor relations and reporting, liaising with government representatives and UN Missions and relevant entities, travel and meeting logistics, and recruitment of professional services and consultants.

The Task Force is supported through pooled funding of bilateral and private sector donor contributions who are committed to the fulfillment of the ICPD Programme of Action and to advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Task Force Secretariat will be responsible for tracking Task Force activities and outputs, analysing their contributions to higher-level results, and preparing annual reports. The Task Force will produce one annual consolidated narrative and financial report, the same version of which will be shared with all donors.

Once the Task Force defines and adopts its programme of work (expected as of Fall 2012), a more specific results-based framework and indicators will be identified to track progress and challenges.