

# High-Level Task Force for ICPD

RIGHTS, DIGNITY & HEALTH FOR ALL

## Terms of Reference

September 2012

At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), 179 governments committed to a Programme of Action to advance sexual and reproductive health, reproductive rights, women's empowerment and gender equality. As the 20-year mark approaches, and the international community embarks on a forward-looking review of the implementation of the ICPD and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is critical that commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights be reaffirmed and furthered in the post-2015 global development agenda. To this end, a High-Level Task Force for ICPD was established in 2012, comprised of distinguished and eminent leaders serving in their individual capacities.

### Mission & Aims

The mission of the Task Force is to strengthen political will and commitments that advance sexual and reproductive health and rights and secure their positioning in the post-2015 global development agenda. To achieve this, the Task Force will articulate a bold strategic vision and advocacy platform that can inspire and mobilize government leaders, civil society and other stakeholders. In particular, the High-Level Task Force aims to:

- **Preserve the integrity of and promote stronger implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.** Drawing on the UN General Assembly mandate for open-ended continuation of the ICPD Programme of Action and a review of implementation in 2014 that maintains the original ICPD agreements intact (GA Resolution 65/234 of 22 December 2010), the High-Level Task Force will help build support worldwide for an affirmative review process, in collaboration with policy-makers and civil society.
- **Advance sexual and reproductive health and rights commitments beyond 2014.** The High-Level Task Force will seize opportunities available throughout the UN review processes to address critical gaps, neglected and emerging issues that remain unresolved since the adoption of the original commitments of the ICPD Programme of Action in 1994. This will involve advocacy at global, regional and national levels, including at key inter-governmental negotiations and venues involving policy-makers and civil society.
- **Integrate sexual and reproductive health and rights as central elements of the post-2015 development agenda.** The High-Level Task Force will advocate authoritatively for the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health and rights as essential components of the post-2015 development agenda, building on the widely recognized linkages of the ICPD Programme of Action to social and economic justice and sustainable development.

The High-Level Task Force will advocate for meaningful civil society participation, including in policy-making and decision-making fora, across these UN review processes and their follow up.

### Values & Principles

In line with the ICPD Programme of Action, the High-Level Task Force will be guided by the following basic principles and positions:

- **Human rights** are the core framework.
- **Women's empowerment and gender equality**, and the elimination of violence against women and girls, are priority ends in themselves, and essential for achieving development. Population dynamics presents challenges best met by empowering women and young people, especially girls and young women.
- **Universal access to contraception** is a core demand.
- **Integrated sexual and reproductive health services** is a priority for strengthening health systems.
- **Meaningful participation of adolescents and youth** is a central political and programmatic commitment.
- **Significantly enhanced international and national financial resources** are key means to accelerate progress.
- **Robust accountability mechanisms** are necessary for achieving equality, equity, human rights and results.

### **Mandate, Composition, Roles & Responsibilities**

1. The Task Force will be comprised of 25 Members, including two Co-Chairs. The term of the Task Force and its Members is from September 2012 through December 2015. In the course of its operationalization, additional Task Force membership may be considered, by decision of the Co-Chairs and in accordance with the criteria established.
2. The High-Level Task Force is a fully independent group of eminent persons, acting in their individual capacities, autonomous from the United Nations or any other parties.
3. The criteria governing the selection of Task Force Members are as follows:
  - a. Recognized leadership and commitment to the ICPD, especially sexual and reproductive health and rights, the human rights of women, gender equality and adolescent and youth rights.
  - b. Proven ability to mobilize political will at the highest levels of decision-making.
  - c. Strong connections with global and regional decision-makers.
  - d. Recognized ability to engage and/or mobilize various constituencies, from the sexual and reproductive health and rights, women's rights, social justice, youth and progressive faith-based movements, and from the donor community.
  - e. Sound understanding of the ICPD Programme of Action (1994) and the Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action (1999), as well as of the challenges, opportunities and context pertaining to their implementation and for addressing key emerging and unresolved issues.
  - f. Good understanding of and/or experience with inter-governmental negotiations at the global, regional and national levels.
  - g. Ability and commitment to devote necessary time to this initiative.

The importance of maintaining gender and regional balance in the overall composition of the Task Force will also be taken into account.

4. In the fulfillment of their advocacy roles and outreach on behalf of the High-Level Task Force, Members will be guided by:

- A commitment to take a positive, affirmative stance in support of sexual and reproductive health and rights issues throughout the ICPD and MDGs review processes;
  - A Position Paper, adopted by the Task Force, including on unresolved and emerging sexual and reproductive health and rights issues since the 1994 adoption of the ICPD Programme of Action, and affirming the relationship between sexual and reproductive health and rights and achievement of broader poverty eradication, gender equality and sustainable development goals.
  - A willingness to play key roles in selected national, regional and international meetings and conferences, and to engage in advocacy with government decision-makers, including to undertake related travel and public speaking engagements, especially at national and regional levels in the countries and regions in which they are based.
  - A commitment to partner with local, national, regional and international civil society organizations and networks, including women's and youth groups.
5. The main roles and responsibilities of the Co-Chairs of the High-Level Task Force are to provide overall strategic leadership for the implementation of the Task Force's vision; galvanize political will in support of the Task Force positions, including through outreach to decision-makers in key countries; serve as chief media and public spokespersons for the Task Force positions and represent the Task Force in select high-level, inter-governmental and civil society meetings; preside over meetings of the Task Force; and facilitate dialogue and consultation within and outside the Task Force to reach agreements and common ground on policy and advocacy positions.

In carrying out these roles and responsibilities, the Co-Chairs will be understood to hold overall decision-making authority, taking into account the views and opinions expressed by Task Force Members. To ensure effectiveness, Co-Chairs will determine working arrangements among themselves to facilitate timely, fluid workflow and decision-making. The term of the Co-Chairs is April 2012 through December 2015.

6. The Co-Chairs and Members of the High-Level Task Force will receive no remuneration for their contributions to and participation in the Task Force. Their travel and meeting-related expenses in fulfillment of Task Force objectives and programme of work will be covered, in line with the travel entitlement and other administrative policies and practices.

### **Working Arrangements**

7. The Task Force will meet two times per year. One meeting will be face-to-face and the other virtual. Interim virtual or teleconference consultations may be held if and as needed, as determined by the Co-Chairs and as may be advised by the Secretariat. The quorum for convening Task Force meetings will be based on participation of the majority of Members.
8. The Task Force shall take decisions on its working arrangements and establish a programme of work. The key expected outputs of the Task Force are the policy position paper focused on priority and unresolved sexual and reproductive health and rights issues; as well as Task Force member outreach and engagement of government, civil society and other stakeholders in the process. In determining priorities, the Task Force will be guided by lead criteria, including whether the activity will broaden the constituent base and support of the Task Force's aims; and whether the actor(s) implied share (or have strong potential of sharing), the values, thematic focus and positions of the High-Level Task Force.
9. The Task Force will be supported by a small Secretariat, hosted by the International Planned Parenthood Federation/Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF/WHR), and led by a Director. The

Secretariat will coordinate and facilitate the work of the High-Level Task Force, charged with day-to-day management and execution of the Task Force's programme of work, as mandated by Task Force agreements and under the overall direction of the Co-Chairs. IPPF/WHO will serve as administrative and fiduciary agent of the Task Force Secretariat.

10. The Secretariat will be responsible for carrying out tasks in support of the Task Force's objectives and programme of work, including: drafting and producing the position paper and advocacy materials; generating relevant background information and documentation for Task Force Members, including analyses of global and regional policy developments, updates on the ICPD and MDGs review processes and development and maintenance of a calendar of key meetings for Task Force participation; preparing, ensuring implementation of and monitoring the programme of work; developing communications, outreach and media strategies and products, including talking points, articles and other supports for Co-Chairs and Members of the Task Force; facilitating Members' travel schedules and participation in global and regional ICPD and MDG-related meetings and negotiations; organizing Task Force meetings and events; participating in strategy meetings and consultations with other key stakeholders to advance Task Force objectives; ensuring effective and timely communication and information flow between and among Co-Chairs and Members, as well as between the High-Level Task Force and key external actors; recruiting staff, commissioning consultants, professional services and background research as needed; managing and mobilizing financial resources, and reporting to and liaising with donors.
11. In carrying out their representational advocacy, communications and public speaking roles on behalf of the Task Force, Members must reflect the agreements and policy positions adopted by the Task Force. In addition, in an effort to ensure coherence and harmonization of Task Force communications and messaging, Task Force Members are encouraged to share written press articles and other opinion pieces for public consumption in advance with the Co-Chairs and Secretariat. This clause does not in any way preclude Members from expressing views and addressing issues that are beyond the parameters, scope and focus areas of agreed Task Force policy positions and contents of the Task Force position paper, when acting in their own or institutional capacities.
12. Decisions regarding the Task Force's strategy and policy positions will be taken by consensus, unless otherwise determined by the Co-Chairs on an exceptional and case-by-case basis. In such cases, prior consultation with Task Force Members will nonetheless be undertaken whenever feasible. The absence of a response by a given deadline will be interpreted as consent and tacit agreement by individual Task Force Members.
13. The Members and Secretariat of the Task Force will exercise their utmost discretion and maintain confidentiality in managing information, correspondence and content related to the Task Force deliberations and programme of work.