

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES**

IAW website: <http://www.womenalliance.org>

**Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales**

Talking Point, October 2010



Equal Rights

In this Talking Point the emphasis lies on the Millennium Development Goals. We share with you two issues: the UN goes local and the statement of the Youth Coalition on Sexual and Reproductive Rights.

Editor's comment: As you can see one important goal is missing from the quotation of David Morrison, UNCDF Executive Secretary, in his opening remarks below -. Goal 5, Empowerment of Women.

Maybe he forgot to include it. Or maybe the journalist forgot to mention it. Regardless, men generally don't like the expression 'empowerment' in connection with women. They often think of a battle about power between men and women.

Well, investing in women is a great thing. Investing in empowering women also means investing in children, health and education. So, please give your attention to the statement of the Youth Coalition on Sexual and Reproductive Rights.

Millennium Development Goals

Eight internationally-agreed targets which aim to reduce poverty, hunger, maternal and child deaths, disease, inadequate shelter, gender inequality and environmental degradation.

EXPERTS AT UN-BACKED MEETING STRESS LOCAL APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

New York, Oct 5 2010 6:05PM

Development models that harness the potential of specific areas can help solve the problem of regional disparities in social advancement in the world's poorest countries, according to experts attending a United Nations-convened forum on local development.

Participants at the three-day First Global Forum on Local Development, which opened yesterday in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, stressed the importance of taking a regional or even district or commune-level approach to local development in developing countries.

The application of the local development approach requires that all key actors, including governments, the private sector, financial institutions, civil society and development partners, work together to succeed, according to speakers at the gathering organized by UN Capital Development Fund, the UN Development Programme and the Ugandan Government, and supported by a wide range of partners.

The opening day was attended by 600 people representing 81 countries, including heads of State, and government ministers, as well as representatives of the donor community,

international organizations, local governments, local government associations, academia, civil society and the private sector.

The event, the first of its kind, seeks to explore areas in which local government might have untapped potential to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals

David Morrison, UNCDF Executive Secretary, in his opening remarks spoke about the influence that local circumstances can have on the progress of achieving MDGs, which encompass eight internationally-agreed targets which aim to reduce poverty, hunger, maternal and child deaths, disease, inadequate shelter, gender inequality and environmental degradation.

“A strong consensus is emerging that a new policy approach is needed, one that builds on local knowledge to tailor public policy to specific circumstances,” Mr. Morrison said. “This should allow for more effective provision of public goods that respond more appropriately to the needs of local communities,” he said, adding that such an approach would help guide decision-makers to “harness local potential and exploit opportunities for economic diversification and development.”

More details on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=36350&Cr=mdgs&Cr1=>

Mailed to us by IAW President Rosy Weiss

YOUTH COALITION FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Statement at Rountable 5: Addressing the needs of the most vulnerable

Imane Khachani, Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights
MDG Summit, September 22, 2010, United Nations, New York

Thank you for the opportunity to join this roundtable today.

I am privileged to speak on behalf of the Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights, an entirely youth-led international network of activists committed to promoting the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescents and young people.

As the world leaders gather today to

- assess the progress made,
- reaffirm their commitments to the Millennium Development Goals’ agenda,
- address the obstacles to achieve these goals,
- and commit to invest all the necessary resources to live up to their promises;

the faces and voices of thousands of young women and adolescent girls who die every day from preventable pregnancy and childbirth related causes are here to remind us how the world has failed them.

Girls and young women are vulnerable because they are marginalized,

Because their human rights are violated and

Because their needs are ignored, particularly their sexual and reproductive health needs.

They are barely visible in the MDGs, and 10 years later still seldom mentioned in this Summit outcome document.

They are poorly targeted by your national policies and programmes, often included in one-size-fits-all strategies that do not speak to their realities and, most of time, they are absent in your budget allocations.

And so they continue to die - by hundreds of thousands - and to suffer lifelong disabilities from totally preventable causes - by millions...

We are ALL responsible for this tragedy and by not denouncing it and effectively addressing it, we all become a party to this tragedy.

It is time to take action, concrete action for the life of women and girls.

- It is time to eradicate the crime of adolescent girl marriage, because the only place where an adolescent girl should be is at school. It is time to reform your laws on age at marriage, to create mechanisms to enforce these laws and effectively implement them.
- By preventing adolescent girls' marriage, you will avoid pregnancies that adolescents' bodies are not ready to bear, and you will spare them death or complications responsible for atrocious life-long disabilities.
- You will give them a chance to continue their schooling, build their future and consistently contribute to the development of your country.

- It is time to ensure adolescent girls and young women are equipped with all the necessary information to have healthy sexual and reproductive lives and to outreach to all adolescents and young women, in and out-of-school, in the cities, the rural and the remote areas.

- It is time to eliminate all the structural barriers - laws, facilities' coverage and user fees - that prevent adolescents girls and young women from accessing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including life-saving contraceptives, with no restrictions.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that laws, infrastructures and services are in line with your people's realities and that adolescent girls and young women's needs are fulfilled, regardless of age, economic or marital status.

- It is time to speak about unsafe abortion, time to recognise that this is not a politically incorrect subject to censor, but a reality that kills in silence and that nearly 70,000 needless women's deaths each year - half of which occurring among young women - can be avoided by ensuring access to safe abortion services, as provided in the World Health Organization's publication Packages of Interventions for Family Planning, Safe Abortion Care, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (WHO, 2010).

It is time to make commitments and to translate these commitments into concrete actions in your national policies, strategies, programs and budgets.

It is time for adolescent girls and young women's health and wellbeing to be the priority of all priorities - policies, programmes and budgets' wise - in the lead up to 2015.

Mailed to us by IAW member Helen Sackstein and many others

Note

We are sending this Newsletter as an attachment, saved in Word 97. Please be so kind to advise Pat Richardson if you know of any IAW members or affiliate/associate organisations with an e-mail address, so we can mail them this Newsletter too.

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