



WOMEN DELIVER

INVEST IN WOMEN – IT PAYS

Parliamentary Statement – Women Deliver¹

*** Turning Dialogue into Action ***

Preamble:

We, the Parliamentarians from all the regions of the world, participating in Women Deliver 2010 in Washington, D.C., USA, commit to work as legislative leaders to mobilize support and legislative action to ensure the health, dignity and rights of women and girls through universal access to reproductive and sexual health, in the shortest possible time.

We are convinced that implementing the commitments made by our Governments to date in the major United Nations conferences and summits as well as the IPCIs and the Addis Ababa call to Action² will end the preventable high maternal deaths and disability that constitute the greatest moral, human rights and development challenge of our time.

We Parliamentarians are determined to play our roles in:

1. Creating laws and policies with and for women and girls: legislative and policy responsibilities

Health solutions for women and girls must be complemented by a conducive political and legislative environment to ensure long-term results and effectiveness. We must advance, implement and protect the human rights of women and girls.

Women represent half of humankind.

We therefore commit to:

1. Actively work towards enforcing national laws and de facto implement policies to accelerate women's and girls' economic, social and political rights, and to reduce gender inequality and gender-based violence.
2. Build alliances and coalitions amongst supportive Members of Parliament, other Parliamentary Groups on Population and Development, women's groups, civil society organizations and ministry officials to ensure that governments review and remove laws and practices that still restrict access to sexual and reproductive health services.
3. Generate an institutional memory by mapping legislation/documents/programmes our governments have adhered to on women's and girl's health and rights and have committed to implement.
4. Demand that the key issues of women's and girl's sexual and reproductive health and rights are made regular agenda items during relevant bilateral, multilateral and international meetings and summits including but not limited to access to family planning, emergency obstetric care, and access to safe abortion when and where legal.

¹ Where not indicated differently, numbers and figures used rely on the Women Deliver Message Kit.

² The Addis Ababa Call to Action is available at :

http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2009/call_to_action.pdf



II. Giving women and girls their fair share of funding: budget and oversight responsibilities

Overall health funding from all sources worldwide is up sharply since 2002, but 53 percent goes to fight HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases. In the developing world, only US\$2.25 per capita goes for all other health services, including family planning and maternal and child health.

We therefore:

1. Call for additional US\$ 12 billion a year to be invested in women and girls and commit to work in partnership with governments, civil society, the private sector and other key stakeholders to meet the US\$ 24 billion that is needed to provide access to family planning and maternal and newborn care to all women in developing countries.
2. Actively work towards the establishment of a global funding mechanism for family planning, mothers and children with other international donors. Such a global funding mechanism would reduce maternal mortality by 70%, avert 44% of newborn deaths, reduce unsafe abortions by over 70% and further contribute to curb the AIDS and malaria pandemics which now place women and girls at greatest risk.
3. Demand transparency from our governments on how financial resources are earmarked for women on women and girls and how this is spent. To this end, our parliamentary groups will regularly invite government officials to inform Parliament on funding allocations and financial decisions which impact women and girls, including health systems workforce strengthening.
4. Call on our governments to earmark ongoing appropriate financial support for local, national, and international civil society initiatives and organisations which provide innovative and tested approaches to lift women and girls out of poverty through empowerment, improved health and social status.

III. Advocating for a Women's and Girl's Agenda everywhere: Advancing MDG 5 locally, nationally, regionally, and globally

The world is watching, but it also needs to act! The G8/G20 Parliamentarians' Conference and G8/G20 Summit of leaders of industrialized nations occurs just weeks after Women Deliver. In September, world leaders gather for the UN High Level Meeting to review the progress on the MDGs. Now is the time to amplify our voices to broaden the dialogue on maternal and reproductive health in the global arena and to demonstrate concrete action to achieve MDG 5 and with it all other MDGs.

We therefore commit to:

1. Urge our Ministers to establish realistic and verifiable annual action plans for reaching individual MDG targets with a special emphasis on MDG 5 (a and b). These will be presented during the UN High Level Meeting on the MDGs in September 2010 to ensure that the health, dignity and rights of women and girls are secured.
2. Call on donors and recipient countries alike, despite the reduced resources that are available as a consequence of the economic crisis, to target the most currently furthest from being achieved MDGs with a focus on maternal and child health through concrete sectoral measures and to foster ownership of the MDGs in developing countries by working through partnerships and aligning aid behind robust health targets and indicators.
3. Call on governments to act upon the endorsed Consensus on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health.



4. Demand parliamentary participation and inclusion in political priority setting on women's and girl's health at local, national regional and global levels by establishing a clear monitoring mechanism for each MDG with a clear timeline and format.

IV. Speaking out on Women and Girls: Awareness Raising and Knowledge Building

Clear evidence and global consensus exists on the fact that most maternal deaths are preventable and that the health solutions to prevent maternal deaths are readily available and cost-effective. These health solutions include: Ensuring access to modern contraception to every woman who needs and wants it, ensuring skilled care before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth, including emergency obstetric care, for mothers and newborns, and ensuring access to safe abortion when and where legal.

We therefore commit to:

1. Take a leading role in communicating the societal, economic, political, and cultural benefits of investing in women and girls to parliamentary colleagues, governments and other key decision-makers, private investors, donors and other multipliers.
2. Provide accurate information about women's sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as the need and benefits for simultaneous investments in family planning and maternal and newborn care.
3. Include young people, specifically adolescent girls, as partners in shaping reproductive health and rights policies and laws that address young people's needs.
4. Prioritise our actions towards groups most in need of support. Those at the margins, namely vulnerable girls living outside family and educational structures with little or no social assets.

Pledge

We Parliamentarians pledge to carry out these actions and to systematically and actively monitor the progress we make in doing so. As a first step, we commit to communicate the results achieved in working with our respective authorities and in close cooperation with civil society and other key stakeholders to support national action plans to be presented during the UN High Level Review meeting on the MDGs. We will report regularly on this progress through our parliamentary groups and our regional networks.