

# Call to Action

## Access for All: Supplying a New Decade for Reproductive Health

Addis Ababa, 22–23 June 2011

As a result of investments made over the last decade, millions of women, men, and young people are now able to choose, access, and use affordable, high-quality reproductive health (RH) supplies<sup>1</sup> to safeguard their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Yet there remain some 215 million women who wish to protect themselves from unintended pregnancy but do not use modern contraception. And every year, more than a third of a million women and girls die in pregnancy and childbirth, including from unsafe abortion. Millions more suffer the consequences of lifelong ill health. Countless others suffer death and disability from sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS.

RH commodity security<sup>2</sup> crosscuts all facets of RH—from service delivery to awareness creation, and from family planning to HIV prevention and maternal health. For that reason, commodity security provides both a common language and a mutual starting point for members of the RH community to work together to reduce the unmet need for family planning and to improve the lives of women, men, and young people around the world.

Ten years after “Meeting the Reproductive Health Challenge,” the landmark gathering held in Istanbul, Turkey, there is a unique window of opportunity to build on successes to date and accelerate the unprecedented momentum to transform the lives of women, men, and young people by placing RH supplies at the core of the global development agenda.

The next five years will be especially critical as the global community intensifies efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals, especially 5a and 5b; the Programme of Action of the United Nation’s International Conference on Population and Development; and the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition’s (the Coalition) HANDtoHAND Campaign, which intends to reduce unmet need by 100 million new users by 2015. Reaching this goal will mean that between now and 2015 the world will see 96 million fewer unintended pregnancies, 54 million fewer abortions, 110,000 fewer mothers dying in pregnancy and childbirth, and 1.4 million fewer infant deaths.

Over the longer term, the dynamic of unmet need for family planning will persist as increases in supplies are met by increases in demand. For that reason, the initiatives put into place to yield results by 2015 must necessarily be sustained throughout the remainder of the decade and beyond.

### To attain universal access to reproductive health supplies, we commit to ensuring:

- ① **The recognition of reproductive health and family planning**, by the global community and countries, as **priority development issues**, essential components of international development efforts, and fundamental human rights.
- ② **Country ownership** of RH commodity security by strengthening the systems and human resource base, establishing appropriate policies and frameworks, and improving coordination among and within sectors.
- ③ An **additional, adequate, and sustainable resource base** to allow **equitable** access to a full range of safe, effective, and affordable RH supplies and services irrespective of economic status, age, gender, geography, or political context.

<sup>1</sup> Reproductive health supplies encompass any material or consumable needed to provide reproductive and sexual health services—including but not limited to contraceptives, drugs, medical equipment, instruments, and expendable supplies for family planning, for prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS, and for ensuring safe delivery and postpartum care.

<sup>2</sup> RH commodity security is achieved when all individuals can choose, obtain, and use affordable, high-quality reproductive health supplies of their choice whenever they need them.

## To achieve the three priority outcomes, we urge actions to:

- ① **Recognize reproductive health and family planning, by the global community and countries, as priority development issues, essential components of international development efforts, and fundamental human rights.**
  - a. Raise the profile of RH supplies through linkages and integration between RH and other global development issues—such as economic growth and poverty reduction, environment and natural resources, food security, and education.
  - b. Leverage and maximize synergies with existing platforms, commitments, and programmes, including the Coalition and the United Nations Population Fund’s Global Programme on RH Commodity Security.
  - c. Ensure that policy and programmatic frameworks are in place that recognize RH supplies as integral to the broad RH spectrum including family planning, maternal health, and HIV and AIDS.
  - d. Establish a solid evidence-base to ensure information for decision-making, resource mobilization, policy formulation, monitoring, and informed advocacy.
  - e. Intensify work in underserved regions and countries and with at-risk populations, including youth and people living in emergency settings.
  
- ② **Ensure country ownership of RH commodity security by strengthening the systems and human resource base, establishing appropriate policies and frameworks, and improving coordination among and within sectors.**
  - a. Catalyze sustained political and financial commitments by national and donor governments for RH commodity security.
  - b. Increase collaboration and coordination among all sectors (public, private, nongovernmental, and donors) and across all levels (international, regional, national, and local).
  - c. Fortify the catalytic and unique role of civil society to strengthen country ownership by holding governments accountable and by representing those at the grassroots level.
  - d. Reinforce country-led supply chain management for RH commodities and other supplies and, where possible and appropriate, support the harmonization of tools, approaches, and quality standards.
  - e. Strengthen human capacity to ensure RH supplies by developing sustainable excellence in the workforce for supply chain management, by building health-worker capacities, and by addressing shortages.
  - f. Maximize the potential of whole-sector approaches to increase country ownership by harnessing the capacities of all sectors to increase demand and to ensure greater equity and efficiency.
  
- ③ **Secure additional resources in order to ensure an adequate and sustainable resource base to allow equitable access to a full range of safe, effective, and affordable RH information, services, and supplies irrespective of economic status, age, gender, geography, or political context.**
  - a. Exploit new and existing opportunities for innovative financing to maximize the use, effectiveness, and efficiency of resources.
  - b. Engage existing and new partners to provide timely and additional resources to increase access to RH supplies and meet increasing demand.
  - c. Design advocacy strategies focused on the sustainability of resources and policies needed to achieve equitable access.
  - d. Stimulate investment in developing new and improved RH technologies, their introduction, mainstreaming, and inclusion on global, regional, and national essential drugs lists.
  - e. Support calls to prioritize and invest in comprehensive programmes that target youth in general and young girls in particular as a strategy to increase demand for and uptake of RH supplies.

We, the participants of the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition’s **Access for All: Supplying a New Decade for Reproductive Health** meeting held in Addis Ababa on 22 and 23 June 2011, call for coordinated action to save lives and improve the health of millions of people through **universal access** to essential reproductive health supplies in low- and middle-income countries.

