

27 July, 2015

Dear Ambassador Kamau and Ambassador Donoghue,

As a very broad representation of three major groups and 100 civil society organizations working in the past years on the Post-2015 development agenda we would like to use this opportunity to express our grave concern about the following paragraph and suggest the following amendments (highlighted):

44. We recognize the role of the family, **in its various forms**, as a contributor to sustainable development; **the protection of the human rights of all individuals within families, households and communities is essential for the implementation** ~~one measure of success of~~ the new Agenda, **and** ~~will be its ability to~~ strengthen and protect all families.

We wish to strongly call upon you to **delete** the paragraph. If deletion is not possible, the paragraph needs to be **amended**. Please find our arguments and suggestions below:

1. The paragraph was added at the eleventh hour, while ‘the family’ is not part of the Millennium Declaration, World We Want or the Open Working Group outcome document. It is a new concept that has not enjoyed the support of Members States and has not been present in earlier drafts.
2. Further, during the Open Working Group, the member states already came to a final balanced agreement on the 169 targets, including those that related to the Means of Implementation. The wording of paragraph 44 introduces the concept that a “measure of success of the new Agenda will be its ability to strengthen and protect all families”. As framed, this paragraph creates a measure of success of the new Agenda, and thereby a Means of Implementation. This would mean adding a new ‘target’ on Mol to which member states can be held accountable to, which moves beyond the Open Working Group outcome. It is therefore unacceptable.
3. Last week, a great number of groups, governments and civil society organizations asked for the deletion of this paragraph or include reference to the ‘various forms’. All over the world, various forms of the family exist, which is a well-founded principle. Mentioning ‘the family’ in the first part of the sentence excludes, discriminates against and stigmatizes many forms of families including single-parent, child-headed, compound, extended and recomposed families.

We draw support for this argumentation from a great number of agreed documents, including in particular: **UN Secretary- General Report A/59/176; GA Resolution 65/277; HRC Resolution 7/29; ICPD POA (1994) para 5.1; Beijing PFA (1995) para 29; CEDAW/C/GC/21, 23, 24, 28, 29. (see Annex)**

It is our sincere hope that you can take this into consideration during the negotiations.

Sincerely Yours,

Endorsements

Major Group for Children and Youth

Women’s Major Group

Workers and Trade Unions Major Group

Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights

Action Health Incorporated

Action Health Incorporated
Advocates for Youth
Africa CSOs Coalition on Population and Development
Africa CSOs Coalition on Population and Development
African Federation for Sexual Health and Rights
African Federation for Sexual Health and Rights
African Woman and Child Feature Service, Kenya
African Women's Millennium Initiative on Poverty and Human Rights
AfriYAN
AIDOS - ITALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT
Alianza Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Jóvenes
Amnesty International
ARTICLE 19
Asia Pacific Alliance on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA)
ASTRA Network
ASTRA Youth
ATSR - Tunisia
Austrian Family Planning Association
AWAZCDS-Pakistan
AWID
AWO International
Balance Promoción para el Desarrollo y Juventud A.C.
Caribbean Leadership Network on Population and Development
Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research
Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education (CYECE) – Malawi
Chanan Development Association (CDA) Pakistan
CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation.
Civil Society Working Group on HIV/AIDS in the Post-2015 Development Agenda
Coalition of Asia-Pacific Regional Networks on HIV/AIDS (7 Sisters)
Colectiva Mujer y Salud
Commonwealth Medical Trust (Commat)
Curious Minds
Dance4life
Danish Family Planning Organization (DFPA)
DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era)
DSW – Germany
Education as a Vaccine, Nigeria
Elige Red de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos, A. C.
Espolea A.C.
EuroNGOs -The European NGOs for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Population and Development
Family Care International
Federación de Planificación Familiar Estatal
Federation for Women and Family Planning - Poland

Gender-Center, Moldova
Global Youth Action Network
Grupo de Trabajo Feminista Latinoamericano y Caribeño
Housing Works
ICASO (International Council of AIDS Service Organizations)
Indian Ocean and Young African Feminists Dialogue
Institute for Global Health, University of Southern California
International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW)
International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission
International Planned Parenthood Federation
IPAS
Kepa Finland
LGBTIQ Constituency of AP-RCEM
Movimiento Amplio de Mujeres de Puerto Rico (MAMPR)
Mujer y Salud en Uruguay (MYSU)
Muslims for Progressive Values (MPV)
National Ethical Service
Network for Adolescent and Youth of Africa
New Zealand family Planning
Oxfam International
Plan International
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Population Action International (PAI)
Reacción Climática - Bolivia
Red de Mujeres Afrolatinoamericanas, Afrocaribeñas y de la Diáspora.
Red de Salud de las Mujeres de América Latina y el Caribe
Red Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales-RedLAC
Research and Support Center for Development Initiatives
Resurj, realizing Sexual and Reproductive Justice
RFSL, the Swedish Federation for LGBTQ Rights
Rural-Urban Women And Children Development Agency (RUWACDA) – Ghana
Rutgers WPF, Pakistan
Rutgers, the Netherlands
Sensoa – Belgium
Sex og Politikk
Simavi – Netherlands
Soroptimist International
STOPAIDS
SustainUS
TakingITGlobal
Taller Salud
The Duke of Africa Foundation
The Institute for Conscious Global Change (ICGC)
Transdiaspora Network
UK Gender and Development Network

VSO International
Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) - NEW WAYS
World YWCA
World Assembly of Youth
YONECO
Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights
Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER)
Y-PEER Pakistan
Zonta International

Annex:

- *Around the world, in different cultural, social and political systems, various forms of the family exist. **GA Resolution 65/277, HRC Resolution 7/29.***
- *“While various forms of the family exist in different social, cultural, legal and political systems, the family is the basic unit of society and as such is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support [...] **ICPD POA (1994) para 5.1***
- *“Women play a critical role in the family. The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist. The rights, capabilities and responsibilities of family members must be respected.” **Beijing PFA (1995) para 29***
- *“Families are fundamental units of society and can take many forms. Family is a legal, social and, in some countries, a religious construct. Families assume diverse functions, including in education, culture and economy. The form and concept of the family can vary from State to State, and even between regions within a State. Whatever form families take, and whatever the legal system, religion, custom or tradition within the country, the treatment of women in the family both at law and in practice must accord with the principles of equality and justice for all people. States are obliged to address the sex- and gender-based discriminatory aspects of all the various forms of family and family relationships. The United Nations’ system puts forward a concept of ‘family’ that takes into account various forms including unmarried couples and their children, single parents and their children, same-sex relationship, de facto unions, and registered partnerships etc. (Based on: General Recommendations by Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: CEDAW/C/GC/21, 23, 24, 28, 29)” **CEDAW/C/GC/21, 23, 24, 28, 29***