



Inter-Agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crises

July 11, 2012

An Open Letter to Organizers of the London Summit on Family Planning

The Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) on Reproductive Health in Crises congratulates the United Kingdom (UK) Government and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Gates) – in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), national governments, donors, civil society and faith-based organizations, the private sector, the research community, and others—on the London Family Planning Summit and welcomes the critical opportunity it represents for crisis-affected women everywhere.

As a collaborative network, led by a steering committee of 18 humanitarian and development agencies including UN, government and NGOs leading reproductive health work in crises, the IAWG commends these champions of family planning. We recognize the challenges of addressing this issue in unstable settings, yet also understand how critical it is to include crisis-affected populations within our commitments. Today we ask the UK Department for International Development (DfID) and Gates to further their leadership and advance efforts to bring family planning services to the more than 43 million people that have been displaced by conflict and natural disasters. This summit provides an immense opportunity for progress to be made in the developing world, through commitments made over the course of this week. Such steps can significantly advance global efforts to reduce maternal mortality and achieve swift progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals and improve the lives of women, men, adolescents, and children worldwide. We urge long-term commitments which will:

- Close the funding gap for reproductive health between stable development settings and conflict-affected settings;¹
- Pledge long-term funding specifically to family planning programs and support a range of service delivery mechanisms appropriate for use in crisis-settings, including community based distribution, mobile clinics and integrated services;
- Include crisis-affected populations in the Family Planning Summit objective of reaching 120 million women with Family Planning by 2020;
- Include crisis-affected women and girls in reproductive health advocacy messages
- Reach women, men, and adolescents affected by crises through quality family planning programs, offering an appropriate method mix;
- Provide each woman and adolescent girl with an opportunity to decide if, when and how many children she wants to have, without coercion or discrimination.

We look forward to working with the UK Government and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as they move forward to achieve the ambitious commitments set out in the Summit.

Sincerely,

The IAWG Steering Committee

¹ Stable settings receive more than 50% more funding for RH per capita than do conflict affected settings. Patel et al, 2009. Tracking Official Development Assistance for Reproductive Health in Conflict-Affected Countries- Plosmedicine doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1000090.