

CARIBBEAN CSOs REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING ON ICPD+20
Ocho Rios, Jamaica
12-13 April 2012

The Ocho Rios Declaration

The organizations and networks from the English, Dutch, Spanish, Creole and French speaking Caribbean present in this meeting, comprising representatives of Civil Society Organizations, including women, men, youth, persons living with HIV , LGBT, sex workers, MSM, indigenous and tribal peoples, disabled, Faith-based Organizations and other networks throughout the Caribbean region on the issue of ICPD Beyond 2014 recognize the gains that have been accomplished in partnership with Governments and key national and international stakeholders:

- increase in women's participation in education resulting in some improvements in their lives and that of their families;
- enactment of some legislation and policies in areas such as sexual and reproductive health and gender based violence;
- minimal reduction in maternal mortality and HIV;
- overall decline in fertility and increase in life expectancy.

However we remain concerned that 20 years after the Cairo Consensus the Caribbean remains vulnerable due to the following factors:

- Mainly small island developing countries, majority with populations below 1 million and often perceived as middle income countries while there is still a high level of social and economic disparities
- Weak economic base due to lack of diversification and high indebtedness, with very little fiscal space to invest in development and therefore liable to shocks.
- Geographically prone to natural disasters
- Dearth of human resources/brain drain

Achievements have been unequal and insufficient; in some cases, significant setbacks have occurred, and today, there are a number of very real threats, which call for the need to strengthen democracy at all levels.

We continue to experience a lack of political will and commitment on the part of Governments to the ICPD Programme of Action. As a region, we are lagging behind in meeting some of the goals for 2014 and beyond, a situation that has worsened due to the withdrawal of major funding streams from this region.

These commitments remain relevant and critical to the livelihoods of the Caribbean people. The failure to fulfill these promises would mean the violation of fundamental human rights such as political, economic, social, cultural, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and the right to education, to work, to a life free from violence and the right to development for millions of men, women and young people, of all ages, ethnicities, identities, sexual orientation throughout the Caribbean Region. Erosion of these human rights could result in prohibitive costs and condemn the Caribbean people to situations of exclusion, violence and discrimination.

Civil Society Organizations and regional networks have contributed tremendously and have actively participated in strengthening government's accountability towards meeting their commitments.

The strengthened engagement and the inclusion of voices of indigenous and tribal peoples, disabled people, youth led, faith based, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Trans) and Men's organizations in this process has enriched the dialogue and has redefined the challenges of meeting the Cairo agenda.

In this context, we call on all of our governments of the Caribbean to recognize, implement and reinforce the commitments to which they agreed and accepted in 1994 and 1999 and reaffirmed in 2004 and 2009, particularly the promise to promote and achieve sustainable development through:

- Ensuring full participation of women in all aspects of development
- Developing capacity to collect, analyse and translate data into strategic information to feed policy formulation
- Disaggregating, disseminating of data to inform programme development and implementation at all levels.
- Recognition and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Development and implementation of comprehensive sexuality education for youth in and out of school
- Strengthening of safe motherhood initiatives including access to safe abortions
- Elimination of gender based violence
- Legal recognition and protection of rights of indigenous and tribal peoples and all minority groups such as youth at risk, LGBT, elderly, disabled, mentally ill, most at risk populations (sex workers, men who have sex with men and drug users)

- Strengthening and enforcement of an inter-disciplinary approach to gender mainstreaming into all national policies.
- Development of policies and programmes for the prevention of teen pregnancy and re-entry of teen mothers into formal education.
- Development of support systems for underemployed parents including teens.
- Removal of sanctions/revision of legislation, policies and practices that would prevent the provision of SRH services to under 18 individuals.
- Ensuring universal access to youth friendly SRH services.
- Promoting the responsibility between men and women, in care-taking through a system of protection and social welfare, with basis in equal parity, recognizing women's unremunerated domestic work (Quito Consensus, 2007)
- Strengthening and expansion of social protection policies and systems based on principles of shared responsibilities.

We call on UNFPA and Development partners to:

- Ensure the capacity enhancement of CSOs to effectively engage with governments and participate in the ICPD Beyond 2014 processes at national, regional and global levels.
- Provide technical assistance for the establishment and maintenance of a regional CSO Coalition to provide oversight and monitoring and evaluation of ICPD +20 and Beyond
- Build the capacity of the members of the regional CSO coalition to advocate for Governments to honour their commitments
- Assist in mobilizing resources to facilitate the above
- Assist in strengthening the cooperation between national civil society organizations to leverage resources and maximize impact.
- Strengthening the coordination and harmonization of inter-agency and intergovernmental responses at the national and regional levels.

Civil Society Organizations commit to:

- Maintaining and strengthening partnerships with Governments to facilitate ongoing dialogue and joint decision making with respect to monitoring and implementation of the ICPD POA and its reviews.

- Creating conditions that will guarantee transparency and accountability for all budgetary allocations related to ICPD
- Continuing to maintain and further the advancements made under the ICPD global arrangements
- Strengthen advocacy for the implementation of policy and legislation

As a matter of priority we recommend the following:

- Ratify, implement and enforce all human rights instruments that are linked to the ICPD POA.
- Ensure the economic, political and social empowerment of women and their full participation in decision making at all levels.
- Provide a comprehensive package of sexual and reproductive health services that includes family planning; access to the widest possible range of contraceptives, including emergency contraception; comprehensive sexuality education; a continuum of pre-natal and post-natal care, delivery assistance by skilled health workers and emergency obstetric care; prevention. Diagnosis and treatment of STIs, including HIV and access to safe abortion and post abortion care.
- Support the development and strengthening of social protection mechanisms, legislation and policy aimed at reducing the vulnerability and risks related to social and economic inequalities.
- Preserve the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, migrant populations, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
- Take full measures to eliminate all forms of exploitation, abuse, harassment and violence against youth, adolescents and children.
- Take all measures to eliminate all forms of gender based violence including sexual abuse and violence.
- Take full measure to identify, investigate, prosecute and eliminate all forms of human trafficking in the Caribbean region.
- Take full measures to develop protocols and train frontline health workers and other relevant service providers in the prevention, detection and management of gender based violence.
- Collect, disaggregate, analyse, disseminate and translate data into strategic information to feed policy formulation at all levels.

- Legal and constitutional reform to ensure the fullest enjoyment of human rights and quality of life in keeping with international standards.
- Increase efforts to meet financial commitments to implement the ICPD POA.