

WHO's contribution to achievement of the development goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration

The Fifty-fifth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the note by the Director-General;¹

Recalling the commitments made in the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2000² and the United Nations Secretary-General's road map towards its implementation;³

Recalling in particular the goals set out in the Millennium Declaration to have reduced, by the year 2015, maternal mortality by three-quarters, and under-five mortality by two-thirds, of their 1990 levels;

Recognizing that increased access to good-quality primary health care information and services, including reproductive health, is critical for attainment of the development goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;⁴

Recalling and recognizing the Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development, commitments made at the Copenhagen Social Summit, the World Summit for Children, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, and their recommendations and respective follow-ups and reports;

Mindful of WHO's functions, as set out in its Constitution, which include to promote maternal and child health and welfare;

Recalling that the Constitution of the World Health Organization states that enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without

¹ Document A55/6.

² United Nations General Assembly Resolution 55/2.

³ General Assembly document A/56/326.

⁴ It is understood that "primary health care services" do not include abortion except when consistent with national and, where applicable, local law, and with full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds.

distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition, recognizing the equal rights of men and women, and noting that progress towards realization of those rights should involve access to good-quality reproductive-health care, including family planning services that are effective, affordable and acceptable;

Recognizing also the importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a framework for addressing child and adolescent health and development;

Recognizing that maternal, child and adolescent health and development have a major impact on socioeconomic development, and that achievement of the global targets for the coming decades will require renewed political commitment and action;

Concerned that, because of poverty and lack of access to basic health and social services, close to 11 million children under five years of age, nearly four million of them within the first month of life, die every year of preventable diseases and malnutrition, and that complications related to pregnancy and childbirth kill more than half a million women and adolescent girls every year, and injure and disable many more;

Concerned also by global inequities which lead to women dying during pregnancy and childbirth from conditions that are readily preventable and treatable, such as severe bleeding, infections, obstructed labour, hypertensive disorders, as well as from unsafe abortions;

Convinced that concerted action to make pregnancies and childbirth safer will have a beneficial impact on the survival of women and neonates, and will contribute to the health and development of children and adolescents and to the well-being of families;

Welcoming the report of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health,¹ which provides a useful approach to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and other internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

Recognizing, as concluded by the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health, that improvements in maternal and neonatal health and survival are vital contributions to poverty reduction;

Further recognizing that the development goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration cannot be achieved without a renewed commitment of the international community, and aware of Health Assembly leadership in this context;

Reaffirming resolution WHA48.10 on reproductive health: WHO's role in the global strategy,

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to strengthen and scale up efforts to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Declaration and other internationally agreed goals and targets;

(2) to strengthen and expand efforts to meet, in particular, international development goals and targets related to reduction of maternal and child mortality and malnutrition and to improve

¹ *Macroeconomics and health: investing in health for economic development*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2001.

access to primary health care services, including reproductive health, with special attention to the needs of the poor and underserved populations;¹

(3) to continue to advocate as public health priorities safe pregnancy and childbirth, breastfeeding, neonate, child and adolescent health and development, and elimination of violence against women;

(4) to include in efforts to develop health systems, plans of action for making pregnancy safer, based on cost-effective interventions for good-quality maternal and neonatal care;

(5) to ensure that primary health care facilities strive for full coverage of their neonate, child and adolescent populations with interventions known to be effective, including those that help families and communities care for their children and young people;

(6) to support the negotiations towards an effective framework convention on tobacco control;

(7) to encourage the pharmaceutical industry and other relevant partners and organizations to make essential drugs more widely available and affordable by all who need them in developing countries;

2. ENCOURAGES developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of allocating 0.7% of GNP as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15% to 0.2% of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries, as reconfirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, and encourages developing countries to build on progress made in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help achieve development goals and targets;

3. CALLS upon the international donor community to increase its assistance to developing countries in the health sector, taking into account the recommendations of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health;

4. FURTHER CALLS upon countries and other partners in development to increase their investments in the health sector, where appropriate, in line with the recommendations of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health;

5. REQUESTS the Director-General to lead an international drive to generate resources and investments for research to improve health in developing countries, particularly in relation to neglected diseases, taking into account the recommendations of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health;

6. URGES the Director-General to facilitate a process to consider, together with Member States, the recommendations of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health and their follow-up, through intergovernmental, bilateral, national and other mechanisms, recognizing that these recommendations are based on a partnership approach between developed and developing countries, and that actions cannot be undertaken at national level without coordinated and simultaneous action at international level;

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7. FURTHER REQUESTS the Director General:

(1) to report to the Executive Board at its 111th session and to the Fifty-sixth World Health Assembly on WHO's strategy for child and adolescent health and development, together with WHO's planned follow-up to the United Nations General Assembly special session on children;

(2) to develop a strategy for accelerating progress towards attainment of international development goals and targets related to reproductive health, and to submit a progress report to the Executive Board at its 111th session and to the Fifty-sixth World Health Assembly;

(3) to promote reporting on progress towards internationally agreed goals and targets in the area of reproductive health as part of WHO's contribution to the Secretary-General's report to the United Nations General Assembly on progress towards attainment of the development goals of the Millennium Declaration.

Ninth plenary meeting, 18 May 2002
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