

The UN Devt Agenda Beyond 2015 / ICPD Beyond 2014 – the Global Context

Gita Sen

Professor, Centre for Public Policy , Indian Institute of
Management Bangalore

UNFPA Civil Society Stakeholder Group Consultations, Istanbul, 9-10
December 2011

What has changed?

- Environment for SRHR - financial governability – *funding and focus*
- Environment for SRHR – climate and linked food / energy crisis – *renewed discourse about population growth*
- Changing epidemiological profiles: coexistence of infectious disease with NCDs in many low and middle income ctries – *policy attention*

What has changed?

- ‘Maturing’ of HIV epidemic – *consolidation of incidence rates among women in many severely affected countries*
- Changing demographic profile – *largest cohort of young people (ages 10-24) ever – 1.8 billion adolescents and youth – need for comprehensive school- and community-based sexuality education for information, support including referral to health services*

What remains the same?

- Girls' and women's needs for sexual and reproductive health services – ***as defined in ICPD POA 7.6 – unmet need not only for family planning but for comprehensive and integrated SRH services – contraception, safe abortion, maternity care, prevention and treatment of STIs including HIV/AIDS***

What remains the same?

- Unfinished rights agenda for women and girls – *abortion* legal in most countries under some circumstances but still circumscribed, under attack by religious conservatives, and often self-censored by key orgns; resurfacing of population numbers-focused agenda – *family planning without human rights or with human rights tagged on as a minor afterthought*

Politics – plus ca change...

- Young people mobilising for their rights and for democracy – enormous change in the lives of young people across the globe
- More inclusive themes in rights based mobilisation globally and nationally
 - UN Human Rights Council – maternal mortality resolution (June 2009)

Politics – plus ca change...

- Report to the UN GA (October 2011) by the UN Spl Rapporteur on Health, Anand Grover calling for removal of criminal and other legal restrictions on abortion; conduct during pregnancy; contraception and family planning; and the provision of sexual and reproductive education and information on grounds of non-discrimination, violation of the right to health, infringement of human dignity particularly in respect of decision-making and bodily integrity, and that the application of such laws as a means to achieving certain public health outcomes is often ineffective and disproportionate.

Politics – plus ca change...

- ‘Reading down’ of Article 377 of the Indian Penal Code (the so-called ‘sodomy law’ which visited criminal sanctions in the colonies which were never recognised in Britain itself) by the Delhi High Court (July 2009)
- Decriminalisation of abortion in Nepal (2002)
- etc

Politics – plus reste la meme...?

- Well funded and mobilised religious conservatives who fight gender equality and human rights in some countries of Latin America and Asia, and a number of countries of Africa – their opposition is not only to safe abortion **but also to family planning**
- Implications – we cannot afford to be....



Ways forward

- 3 pronged agenda as clearly articulated at ICPD :
 - Supporting governments and others to deliver the core group of comprehensive and integrated SRH services with attention to equity to all women and girls
 - Ensuring the provision of comprehensive sexuality education and SRH services to young people, with particular focus on young girls
 - Promoting and protecting human rights so that all people can live free of the fear of coercion, discrimination and violence
- Agenda underpinned by gender equality – attention to this is not a distraction or a side-track but the unavoidable means and mechanism

UNFPA's focus

- Exactly the vision and mission articulated by UNFPA ED, Dr Osotimehin in multiple public statements and to the press
- UNFPA's revised strategic plan for 2012-13 and its development results framework (DRF) approved by the board) conveys this new vision and mission: **to achieve integrated SRH services for all and to secure adolescents' health and development, with an underlying commitment to gender equality and human rights**

Alignment with global initiatives

- The 3 pronged agenda would be clearly aligned with:
 - The UN SG's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health (November 2010)
 - US' Global Health Initiative (May 2009)

Thank you