



Gender Equality & Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

– a way to move forward on Millennium Development Goal 5

Swedish side event CSW 54

- What are the key factors that can lead to a realisation of MDG5 on maternal health – the reduction of maternal mortality and universal access to reproductive health care and health care services?
- What actions should various stakeholders (Governments, NGOs, UN bodies and other actors) take in order to enhance the process towards the full realisation of MDG5?

Opening speech

Swedish Minister for Gender Equality and Integration, *Ms Nyamko Sabuni*

Panel discussion

- *Ms Thoraya Ahmed Obaid*, Executive Director, UNFPA, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations
- *Ms Grace Kodindo*, Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Population and Family Health, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University
- *Mr Jon O'Brien*, President, Catholics for Choice
- *Mr Edford Mutuma*, Director of Programmes and Partnership, Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia
- *Ms Susanne Wadstein*, Head of Division, The Gender Equality Team, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Moderator *Ms Åsa Regné*r, Secretary General, The Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSU)

Date & Venue: 1–3 pm, 3 March 2010, Room C in the new part of the UN building.

Background

The failure to prevent maternal mortality continues to be one of the most serious human rights violations of our time, more than 500,000 women still die annually in pregnancy and childbirth. The vast majority of these deaths are preventable.

The reasons for the lack of results on maternal health are complex and thus difficult to address with isolated actions. In order to reduce maternal mortality actions are necessary in a broad range of areas. Political will and relevant prioritizations of budget allocations for health systems need to be addressed. Other measures that need to be taken include engaging in advocacy for gender equality and human rights and pursuing women's and girls' empowerment in general, reclaiming their sexual and reproductive rights in particular including a life free from violence.

The total Swedish support to development cooperation in the health sector in general, including HIV/AIDS and research amounted to 533 million USD 2008. In 2009 Sweden decided to dedicate 13.4 million USD as a special effort to tackle maternal mortality which involve education and capacity building and strategic communication to different stakeholders concerning women's and girls rights to adequate maternal health care and sexual and reproductive rights; including abortion.

More information

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