



Gender Equality and Adolescent Girls' Health: A Post-2015 Framework for Action

Tuesday, 4th February 2014, 8:15-9:30 am, Delegates Dining Room, UN Headquarters, NY



From left, Ms. Chongo Mwila, Ms. Lakshmi Puri, H.E. Prof. Nila Moeloek, Ms. Anne- Birgitte Albrechtsen, Ms. Jill Filipovic, Ms. Jeni Klugman and H.E. Ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota participate in a panel discussion.

“Gender Equality and Adolescent Girls’ Health: A Post-2015 Framework for Action”, hosted by the Government of Indonesia, and co-organized by Girls not Brides, IFMSA, NCD Alliance, PMNCH, UN Foundation, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, World Vision International, World YWCA, and WHO, and in support of *Every Woman, Every Child*, took place on February 4 at UN Headquarters. The event brought together nearly 100 participants from UN Missions, UN agencies, civil society, academia and youth to discuss why healthy adolescent girls are key to sustainable development and should be placed at the center of the Post-2015 framework. The event was held on the sidelines of the eighth session of the Open Working Group and was intended to contribute to those deliberations.

In advance of the meeting, co-organizers [prepared a document](#) recommending that the Post 2015 framework:

Field Code Changed





REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

- increase adolescent girls' access to health information and services, in particularly related to sexual and reproductive health rights, and good nutrition
- increase adolescent girls' access to quality education
- guarantees the safety of adolescent girls
- increase adolescent girls' meaningful representation and voice and access to resources and economic opportunities; including disaggregated data by age and sex to improve programs, influence policy and track progress; and
- implements innovative solutions to the challenges faced by adolescent girls and to involve various stakeholder groups critical to changing social, political and institutional norms such as men and boys.

In her welcoming remarks, **H.E. Professor Nila Moeloek**, Indonesian President's Special Envoy on MDGs, set the scene for the event. She argued that the new investment case for healthy girls must be based on a revised definition of the role of women and adolescents in development; one that positions women and girls as agents of change. She notes that "when adolescents have access to qualified sexual and reproductive health services and women are properly empowered, our development goals will be easier to achieve. Gender equality and women's health is not an insular entity detached from its surroundings, but cuts across various issues in human development, such as poverty reduction, education, health, and the environment."

Click [here](#) to view **H.E. Professor Nila Moeloek**, power point presentation.

Field Code Changed

Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen, Deputy Executive Director at UNFPA, said in her remarks that "Young people are shaping social and economic development, challenging social norms and building our collective future". Despite their contribution, adolescent girls face numerous challenges. This year, 14.2 million girls in development countries will be married before 18 and every 4 seconds a girl under 18 will become pregnant. Ms. Albrechtsen went on to note "Every young girl who succumbs to these challenges is a young girl who does not fulfil her potential".

H.E. Ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota, Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to the UN, spoke of Brazil's successes in improving social outcomes for women and girls. He argued it is the responsibility of the government to provide social protection, ensure universal access to services and implement policies that incentivize the poorest to access services, such as the conditional cash transfer program, Bolsa Familia.





Ms. Jeni Klugman, Director of Gender and Development at the World Bank pointed to the need for improved access to and use of gender and age disaggregated data to inform policies and track progress. Ms. Klugman also focused on the emerging research findings that show how greater social and economic opportunities for girls can have broader positive impacts.

Click [here](#) to view **Ms. Jeni Klugman** power point presentation.

Field Code Changed

Speakers also discussed the critical need for the Post-2015 framework to be linked to robust global, regional and national level accountability mechanisms. **Ms. Chongo Mwila** of the YWCA in Zambia spoke of the critical role of civil society organizations and communities in holding various stakeholders accountable for implementing their commitments. "Governments have made commitments and signed declarations in favor of improving adolescent health, but there is work to do in ensuring the implementation of these commitments. We at YWCA work closely with SADC, the African Union and governments to promote accountability for the implementation of these declarations using tools such as citizen's scorecards."

A speaker from the floor pointed to the need for innovation in facilitating girls' access to secondary education. Other speakers echoed the need to promote meaningful representation of women and girls in decision making spheres.

In her closing remarks, **Ms. Lakshmi Puri**, Assistant Secretary General, UN Women, reiterated the importance of adopting a cross sectorial approach for improving the health and wellbeing of adolescent girls. She called for the Post 2015 framework to ensure that girls have access to education, are empowered economically, free of violence, and are brought to the table as equal participants in institutional and political settings.

Click [here](#) to view the meeting's concept note and agenda.

Field Code Changed

