

UNGA80: Key advocacy messages to improve the health of women, children, and adolescents in times of crisis



As the United Nations marks its landmark 80th year, global leaders will convene in New York City to build consensus and confront increasingly complex global challenges. With fewer than five years remaining to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the convergence of global geoeconomic shifts, regressive human rights policies, and rising humanitarian crises and conflicts is jeopardizing the future of global health and placing millions of lives at risk.

PMNCH – the world’s largest alliance of more than 1,500 partners dedicated to improving the health of women, children, and adolescents (WCAH) – is calling for political leaders and all stakeholders to urgently prioritize the health and rights of women, children, and adolescents, and scale up policies, investments, and services to address their critical needs.

The 80th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) opens on September 9, 2025, with the General Debate taking place between 23rd-27th and on the 29th of September. In addition, the following key sessions related to WCAH will take place:

- 22nd September - [High-level Meeting on the 30th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women](#)
- 24th September - [Climate Summit](#)
- 25th September - [High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases and the Promotion of Mental Health and Well-being](#)
- 25th September - [High-level Meeting to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth](#)

Below is a list of resources to support PMNCH partners with evidence-based messages and key resources to advocate for WCAH at UNGA80.

Threats to multilateralism and global health

- Climate change, conflict, economic instability, and global health emergencies are disrupting services, overwhelming systems, and deepening existing inequalities, which women, children, and adolescents disproportionately feel.
- Compounding this issue are the shrinking Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding flows. The impact is felt most acutely in the most vulnerable communities, where ODA plays a crucial role in bridging gaps in health care, education, and social protection. ODA for health in 2027 is projected to fall below 2020 levels ([OECD](#)).



2. Addressing the financial crisis and stimulating domestic financing

- Domestic public spending on health has steadily declined in low-income countries over the past decade, creating the necessity for individual households to pay more out of pocket for essential health services. In low- and middle-income countries, a troubling imbalance has emerged – external aid per capita for health (\$12.8 in 2022) exceeds domestic spending (\$8.8 in 2022).
- A country-led shift toward greater domestic resource mobilisation is essential to reducing reliance on external aid, driven by innovative approaches and strengthened South-South collaboration.
- Shifts towards domestic financing is driven by greater political commitment, public demand for more transparent and equitable financing, and a recognition that health is a key driver of economic development.

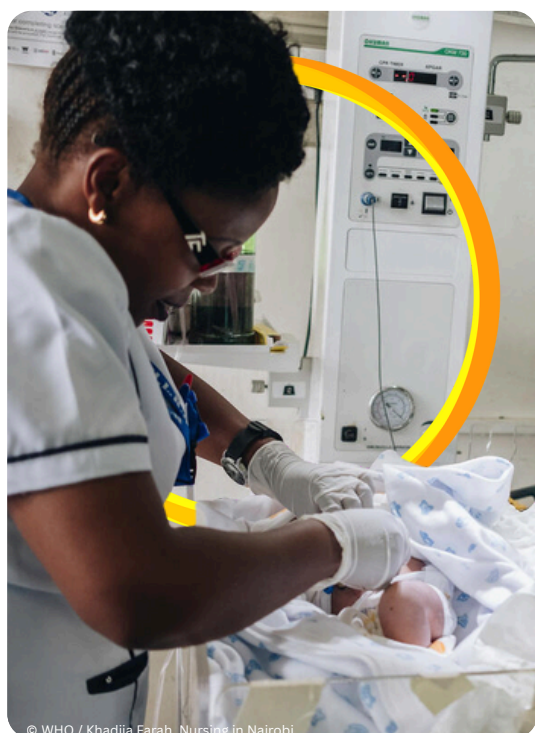


3. Conflict and humanitarian settings

- Children born in countries classified as fragile and conflict-affected are more than three times more likely to die before the age of 5.
- Addressing women's, children's and adolescents' health in conflict settings demands significant and coordinated investments, given the profound disruption to essential services that drive increased mortality rates.
- Effective humanitarian health policy requires the prioritisation, delivery and financing of essential SRMNCAH services through frameworks like the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP), while simultaneously investing in, protecting, and empowering the local human resources for health (HRH) as the backbone of these lifesaving interventions.

4. Roll back of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

- Setbacks in laws, policy, and funding undermine access to essential services and threaten SRHR. The rise of conservative ideologies, religious fundamentalism, and misinformation reinforces harmful gender and social norms harmful to women, children and adolescents.
- A significant factor in maternal mortality is a lack of access to contraception. Restricting funding and services can lead to a denial of contraceptive care for millions of women. This in turn results in an estimated 17.1 million unintended pregnancies and **34,000 preventable maternal deaths annually**.
- Funding cuts to SRHR from **international donors** and limited domestic funding have been shown to disproportionately harm women, dismantle essential health services, and **increase preventable maternal and child deaths**. To build resilient and equitable health systems, governments must prioritize and ringfence SRHR funding in their budgets.
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships are key to combatting mis/disinformation on SRHR and mobilising sustained investments for equitable access to essential sexual and reproductive health services.



5. Urgent need for accelerated action to improve WCAH

- According to the latest estimates, almost 7 million deaths occur annually across **mothers** (260 000 in 2023), **children under 5 years of age** (4.8 million in 2023), including newborns (2.3 million in 2023), and **stillbirths** (1.9 million in 2023). Without concentrated, multisectoral action the future of millions of vulnerable lives remains uncertain.
- If current rates persist, by 2030 the **global maternal mortality ratio (MMR) will be two and a half times higher than SDG target**. In addition, **60 countries** would miss SDG under-five mortality rate target and **65 would miss the neonatal mortality rate target**.

6. Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

- Non-communicable diseases are deeply interlinked with women's, children's, and adolescents' health across the life course and have impacts on maternal outcomes and women's health, child development, and adolescent well-being, with the power to influence and perpetuate intergenerational cycles of ill health.
- This cycle of malnutrition is now being amplified by climate change, as events like drought and heatwaves drive undernutrition in early life, priming individuals for a lifetime risk of obesity and non-communicable diseases. ([Source](#)).
- By leveraging existing platforms and integrating NCD prevention and care into SRMNCAH services, such as antenatal care visits, there are opportunities for cost-effective screenings for conditions like gestational diabetes and hypertension, ensuring an integrated approach across the life course.



© WHO / Enric Catala Contreras. Noncommunicable disease management in Cambodia

Engaging at UNGA80

PMNCH co-hosted events at UNGA80



Partnership Power: Disrupting the Status Quo and Accelerating Change for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health
22 September 2025, 08:00 - 10:00 ET



Uniting efforts on non-communicable diseases and maternal health: From Integration to Impact
22 September 2025, 16:30-18:00 ET



Recommitting to Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health and Rights: A Call to Action for Peace, Security, and Sustainable Development
24 September 2025, 13:30-18:00 ET

See other partner events you may be interested in attending.

[Full list of UNGA80 Side Events](#)

Learn more about PMNCH and our 2026-2030 strategy by scanning the code below.

