



Information Note to GCWA members:

Make sure your voice is heard! Preparing for the UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD)

This information note seeks to provide our membership with key information about the upcoming CPD. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact us at womenandaids@unaid.org

What is the CPD?

The UN Commission on Population and Development is a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism, made up by 47 Member States, that plays the primary role in the follow-up to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development¹. It monitors, reviews and assesses the implementation of the "Cairo" Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels. The Commission adopts a multi-year programme of work limited to a two-year planning horizon, with a special theme for each year, which is based on the Programme of Action.

When and where will the CPD take place this year?

The 45^T session of the CPD will take place in New York from 23 -27 April 2012.

What will the theme of CPD be?

This year's special theme for the Commission is "Adolescents and youth".

Why is it important to engage in the CPD?

The CPD is a key platform to review progress made in implementing the Cairo Programme of Action, identify gaps and obstacles, and set future directions. In doing so, it is crucial to ensure that the needs and rights of women and girls, as they relate to HIV and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), are recognized and upheld.

While significant progress has been made in the AIDS response, these gains are fragile, and we must come together to ensure that they are sustained and furthered. This is particularly true following the alarming outcomes of the recent 56th UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which took place from 27 February to 9 March 2012. The CSW, the principal global policy-making body dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women, was unable to reach consensus on its *agreed conclusions* on rural women being discussed at this session, as well as on the resolution on Women, the

¹ At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the world agreed that population is not about numbers, but about people, adopting a rights-based approach which addresses issues such as the empowerment of women, reproductive health and rights, eradicating poverty and stabilizing population growth. The Programme of Action agreed to at the International Conference on Population and Development, along with benchmarks which emerged from the ICPD+5 review, inform the eight Millennium Development Goals.

Girl Child and HIV². Areas of discord in this regard included issues related to eliminating gender based violence, recognizing women's human rights, securing sexual and reproductive health and rights, family planning, contraception, sexuality education, access to health services, gender perspectives, gender stereotypes, and eliminating early marriages, and the language on cultural/religion, while there were also concerns raised by some Member States about reaffirming the commitments made in the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS. Despite strong statements being made by some Member States about the importance of reaching consensus and adopting agreed conclusions, ultimately this was not possible – constituting a first non-conclusion in the history of the CSW.

These outcomes clearly represent the urgent need for GCWA members and partners to come together and jointly call for the needs and rights of women and girls in all their diversity to be recognized and upheld. There is a need to intensify advocacy for negotiations and the resolutions and recommendations which emerge from these to be evidence-informed and rights-based, upholding the principles of gender equality and equity.

How can I engage?

Before the CPD

- Negotiations on the outcome resolution by Member States will begin before the CPD. While negotiations are conducted amongst Member States, as a civil society member you can contact your government and advocate for key issues to be included. In doing so, be sure to have evidence available to support your 'asks', as well as previously agreed-upon UN language.
- Work with women's health and rights, HIV and young people's rights advocates from other countries and regions to ensure that these key issues are reflected in the CPD resolution. If you're not already connected, don't worry! Just email us at womenandaids@unaids.org with CPD in the title and we will get back to you.
- Contact your government to negotiate the inclusion of a representative of the women's movement in the official national delegation. Who to reach out to for this varies in each country, as it may be the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Health, or others. If you are not sure, it is best to seek advice from a local AIDS organization. You may also want to link up with the local AIDS organization or women's right group to agree on who to propose to represent the women's movement. If you have already been invited to be part of the official delegation, please let us know by emailing womenandaids@unaids.org

During the CPD

- Please note that registration to participate in CPD is only open until 6th April. For more information on how to register, visit <http://esango.un.org/irene/index.html?page=viewRegistration&nr=17242&type=8§ion=8>
- If you have registered and received an invitation letter, we hope to see you in New York! The GCWA, in partnership with UNAIDS, UN Women and UNFPA, will be co hosting a side event on HIV and young people. The session will take place on 25 April from 6 to 8 pm.

While the GCWA strives to share information with its membership, we are not involved in the official organization of the CPD. For information from the organizers, visit <http://esango.un.org/>

² In the place of the resolution on Women, the Girl Child and HIV, which was originally being negotiated, a Procedural Resolution was presented on the last day of the CSW.