

Oral statement for the 48th session of the Commission on Population and Development

Joint statement by the New Zealand Family Planning Association, a non-governmental organisation in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, and the Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA).

The New Zealand Family Planning Association works to improve access to accurate information and quality sexual and reproductive health services in New Zealand and the Pacific.

The Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA) brings together non-governmental organisations, donors and other stakeholders working on the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health and rights in development agendas.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights lie at the heart of sustainable development. We cannot talk about sustainable development without talking about the 225 million women who have an unmet need for family planningⁱ and the 47,000 women who die from complications of unsafe abortion each yearⁱⁱ.

Recalling principle 8 of the Programme of Action, we must ensure that universal access to sexual and reproductive health is finally realised. We must enable women and men everywhere to have access to the knowledge, skills, support and services to choose freely the number, spacing and timing of their children. Furthermore, we must acknowledge that we cannot achieve the realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights without providing access to safe, affordable and legal abortion. In addition, we must enable people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity to have choices over their sexual and reproductive health free from stigma and discrimination.

Investing in sexual and reproductive health services and education saves lives and brings significant health and social benefits to individuals, families and communities. It is also one of the most cost-effective investments we can make towards sustainable development. Within the Pacific region, our recent cost-benefit analysis of investing in family planning in Kiribati concluded that for every \$1 invested in reducing unmet need for family planning, \$23 would be saved in health and education costsⁱⁱⁱ.

Nonetheless, sexual and reproductive health remains one of the most under-resourced development issues of our time. For example, in our Pacific region, the OECD estimates that just 0.03% of all donor aid was for family planning over the past decade^{iv}.

This year is a critical year. The sustainable development goals will shape our global development agenda for the next 15 years and we must seize this opportunity to ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights receive the prioritisation they deserve.

Finally, we commend the current inclusion of a stand-alone goal on gender equality and the two sexual and reproductive health targets under goals three and five^v. We urge member

states to ensure these proposed targets are achieved by prioritising sexual and reproductive health and rights in national implementation plans and budgets, and recognising that sexual and reproductive health and rights provide the foundation for sustainable development.

Endorsed by:

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Family Planning NSW

Family Planning Tasmania

Family Planning Queensland

Family Planning Victoria

IPPF-ESEAOR

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ⁱ Singh S, Darroch JE and Ashford LS, 2014, *Adding It Up: The Costs and Benefits of Investing in Sexual and Reproductive Health 2014*, New York: Guttmacher Institute.

ⁱⁱ World Health Organization (WHO), 2011, *Unsafe Abortion: Global and Regional Estimates of the Incidence of Unsafe Abortion and Associated Mortality in 2008*, sixth ed., Geneva: WHO.

ⁱⁱⁱ Family Planning New Zealand, 2014, *Investment in family planning in Kiribati: A cost-benefit analysis*, Family Planning New Zealand, Wellington, New Zealand.

^{iv} Family Planning International, 2012, *Family Planning is Back on the International Development Agenda: Why should New Zealand play a greater role in the Pacific?*, Policy Quarterly, 8(4), 44-50.

^v United Nations Division for Sustainable Development, 2015, *Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals*, Retrieved 7 April 2015 from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal>