World Health Organization

Reproductive Rights

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A Brief Introduction to the Topic of Reproductive Health:

Physicians and healthcare providers in the international community have increasingly recognized reproductive health and associated rights are in desperate need of more concerted international action. According to the World Health Organization’s working definition of reproductive health, all people should have the right to enjoy a responsible, satisfying and safe sex life and they should retain the right to decide when and how often to reproduce. All men and women should have the right to be informed of and have access to safe, effective, affordable, and effective methods of birth control and access to appropriate health care services of sexual and reproductive medicine. New programs focused on educating women and men on how to safely and effectively experience pregnancy and childbirth should be created and implemented by 2015. The goal is ultimately to close the gaps between reproductive health and inequalities based on socioeconomic, education level, age, ethnicity, and religion. According to the WHO, “Reproductive and sexual ill-health accounts for 20% of the global burden of ill-health for women and 14% for men”. Steps that should be taken in order to achieve a more healthy global reproductive and contraceptive landscape must deal in an innovative way with sexual health, health during childbirth, access to abortion and
contraception methods, and reduction of maternal mortality. With a shift in focus on these facets, universal reproductive health would see substantial improvement and benefits for all members of society.

**Key Facets Explained:**

**Sexual Health:**

Sexual health is considered one of the foundations of modern healthcare in developed and developing societies alike. Sexual health is defined as the absence of disease or malfunction related to the field of sexual activity and reproduction. It is a crucial necessity for all countries because it determines the stability of the current and the future trajectory of a state’s citizens.

**Health during Childbirth:**

Women of all states should have the ability to retain doctors and other healthcare professionals who can assist them in prenatal, delivery, and neonatal care at an affordable cost, while giving them the highest grade of care from the time they conceive to the time they deliver and all the times in between.

**Access to Abortion and Contraception Methods:**
Women in all states across the global scale have the right to access certain elements in making healthy contraception choices, according to the WHO, not limited to the right to legal accession of information about family planning and abortion services. Prescriptions for contraception supplements and regular appointments with health professionals as a woman ages and enters various stages of reproductive vitality should be made accessible to them at a low cost.

**Reduction of Maternal Mortality:**

The rights of a woman to the best and most viable care for her situated economy should be strongly regarded when making policy changes to women’s reproductive rights. There is a substantial need for informational programs and resources to be offered to women on how to maintain the highest quality of health while carrying a child and delivering it after gestation. Maternal mortality rates have increased in lower income societies in all parts of the developing world, which reiterates the need for global standards in reproductive healthcare practices.

**Conclusion:**

The WHO strongly advises the General Assembly and the Secretary General to consider implementing an action plan designed to make reproductive and overall sexual health more attainable for
people who are disadvantaged and do not have access to the same quality of care afforded to people in more developed countries. The benefits of achieving these goals are widely known and have been proven in all areas of study. We strongly urge the General Assembly to assist us in making these goals a reality for all states in the international arena.
Sources/Additional Resources:


This document has been prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. It is an exhaustive list of key facts of reproductive health and is where the UN gets its definition of reproductive health.

2.) [http://www.unfpa.org/rights/rights.htm](http://www.unfpa.org/rights/rights.htm)

Website contains information on what the UNFPA is doing to combat opposition for a worldwide mandate on reproductive health.


National Women’s Law Center lists current pending legal battles being fought in domestic courts throughout the world.

International Planned Parenthood Federation is an advocacy group that brings awareness to new developments in the field of reproductive health and sheds light on how the international community continues to work with other advocacy groups to keep attention on the need for more attention to reproductive issues.
Policy Options

1.) Contraceptive Equity
2.) Emergency Contraception Access
3.) Freedom of Choice Laws
4.) Guaranteed Access to Prescriptions
5.) Low Income Women’s Access to Family Planning Services
6.) Protection from Clinic Violence Laws
7.) National Protection of Choice Rights
8.) Repeal of Abortion Bans
9.) Repeal of Restrictions on Private Insurance and Universal Healthcare Coverage of Abortion and Family Planning Services
10.) Penalties for Refusal to Provide Medical Services