27 July, 2015

Dear Ambassador Kamau and Ambassador Donoghue,

As a very broad representation of three major groups and 103 civil society organizations working in the past years on the Post-2015 development agenda we would like to use this opportunity to express our grave concern about the following paragraph and suggest the following amendments (highlighted):

1. We recognize the role of the family***, in its various forms,*** as a contributor to sustainable development; ***the protection of the human rights of all individuals within families, households and communities is essential for the implementation*** ~~one measure of success~~ of the new Agenda***, and***  will ~~be its ability to~~ strengthen and protect all families.

We wish to strongly call upon you to **delete** the paragraph. If deletion is not possible, the paragraph needs to be **amended**. Please find our arguments and suggestions below:

1. The paragraph was added at the eleventh hour, while ‘the family’ is not part of the Millennium Declaration, World We Want or the Open Working Group outcome document. It is a new concept that has not enjoyed the support of Members States and has not been present in earlier drafts.
2. Further, during the Open Working Group, the member states already came to a final balanced agreement on the 169 targets, including those that related to the Means of Implementation. The wording of paragraph 44 introduces the concept that a “measure of success of the new Agenda will be its ability to strengthen and protect all families”. As framed, this paragraph creates a measure of success of the new Agenda, and thereby a Means of Implementation. This would mean adding a new ‘target’ on MoI to which member states can be held accountable to, which moves beyond the Open Working Group outcome. It is therefore unacceptable.
3. Last week, a great number of groups, governments and civil society organizations asked for the deletion of this paragraph or include reference to the ‘various forms’. All over the world, various forms of the family exist, which is a well-founded principle. Mentioning ‘the family’ in the first part of the sentence excludes, discriminates against and stigmatizes many forms of families including single-parent, child-headed, compound, extended and recomposed families.

We draw support for this argumentation from a great number of agreed documents, including in particular: **UN Secretary- General Report A/59/176; GA Resolution 65/277; HRC Resolution 7/29; ICPD POA (1994) para 5.1; Beijing PFA (1995) para 29; CEDAW/C/GC/21, 23, 24, 28, 29. (see Annex)**

It is our sincere hope that you can take this into consideration during the negotiations.

Sincerely Yours,

### Endorsements

**Major Group for Children and Youth**

**Women’s Major Group**

**Workers and Trade Unions Major Group**

Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights

Action Health Incorporated

Action Health Incorporated

Advocates for Youth

Africa CSOs Coalition on Population and Development

African Federation for Sexual Health and Rights

African Woman and Child Feature Service, Kenya

African Women's Millennium Initiative on Poverty and Human Rights

AfriYAN

AIDOS - ITALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

Alianza Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Jóvenes

Amnesty International

ARTICLE 19

Asia Pacific Alliance on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA)

ASTRA Network

ASTRA Youth

ATSR - Tunisia

Austrian Family Planning Association

AWAZCDS-Pakistan

AWID

AWO International

Balance Promoción para el Desarrollo y Juventud A.C.

Caribbean Leadership Network on Population and Development

Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research

Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education (CYECE) – Malawi

Chanan Development Association (CDA) Pakistan

CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation.

Civil Society Working Group on HIV/AIDS in the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Coalition of Asia-Pacific Regional Networks on HIV/AIDS (7 Sisters)

Colectiva Mujer y Salud

Commonwealth Medical Trust (Commat)

Curious Minds

Dance4life

Danish Family Planning Organization (DFPA)

DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era)

Diverse Voices and Action for Equality, Fiji

DSW – Germany

Education as a Vaccine, Nigeria

Elige Red de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos, A. C.

Espolea A.C.

EuroNGOs -The European NGOs for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Population and Development

Family Care International

Federación de Planificación Familiar Estatal

Federation for Women and Family Planning - Poland

Gender-Center, Moldova

Global Youth Action Network

Grupo de Trabajo Feminista Latinoamericano y Caribeño

Housing Works

ICASO (International Council of AIDS Service Organizations)

Indian Ocean and Young African Feminists Dialogue

Institute for Global Health, University of Southern California

International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW)

International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission

International Planned Parenthood Federation

IPAS

Kepa Finland

LGBTIQ Constituency of AP-RCEM

Movimiento Amplio de Mujeres de Puerto Rico (MAMPR)

Mujer y Salud en Uruguay (MYSU)

Muslims for Progressive Values (MPV)

National Ethical Service

Network for Adolescent and Youth of Africa

New Zealand family Planning

Oxfam International

Pacific Feminist SRHR Coalition

P&D Factor (Portugal)

Plan International

Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Population Action International (PAI)

Reacción Climática - Bolivia

Red de Mujeres Afrolatinoamericanas, Afrocaribeñas y de la Diáspora.

Red de Salud de las Mujeres de América Latina y el Caribe

Red Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales-RedLAC

Research and Support Center for Development Initiatives

Resurj, realizing Sexual and Reproductive Justice

RFSL, the Swedish Federation for LGBTQ Rights

RFSU, Sweden

Rural-Urban Women And Children Development Agency (RUWACDA) – Ghana

Rutgers WPF, Pakistan

Rutgers, the Netherlands

Rutgers, Uganda

Sensoa – Belgium

Sex og Politikk

Simavi – Netherlands

Soroptimist International

STOPAIDS

SustainUS

TakingITGlobal

Taller Salud

The Duke of Africa Foundation

The Institute for Conscious Global Change (ICGC)

Transdiaspora Network

UK Gender and Development Network

VSO International

Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) - NEW WAYS

Word YWCA

World Assembly of Youth

YONECO

Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER)

Y-PEER Pakistan

Zonta International

**Annex:**

* *Around the world, in different cultural, social and political systems, various forms of the family exist*. **GA Resolution 65/277, HRC Resolution 7/29.**
* *“While various forms of the family exist in different social, cultural, legal and political systems, the family is the basic unit of society and as such is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support .[…]***ICPD POA (1994) para 5.1**
* “*Women play a critical role in the family.  The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened.  It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support.  In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist.  The rights, capabilities and responsibilities of family members must be respected.”***Beijing PFA (1995) para 29**
* “Families are fundamental units of society and can take many forms. Family is a legal, social and, in some countries, a religious construct. Families assume diverse functions, including in education, culture and economy. The form and concept of the family can vary from State to State, and even between regions within a State. Whatever form families take, and whatever the legal system, religion, custom or tradition within the country, the treatment of women in the family both at law and in practice must accord with the principles of equality and justice for all people. States are obliged to address the sex- and gender-based discriminatory aspects of all the various forms of family and family relationships. The United Nations’ system puts forward a concept of ‘family’ that takes into account various forms including unmarried couples and their children, single parents and their children, same-sex relationship, de facto unions, and registered partnerships etc. (Based on: General Recommendations by Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: CEDAW/C/GC/21, 23, 24, 28, 29)” **CEDAW/C/GC/21, 23, 24, 28, 29**