

INVITATION

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SEXUAL HEALTH AND RIGHTS BY 2015 – Dream or Reality?

Challenges still facing the implementation of the UN Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD)

Seminar arranged by the Finnish All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development and Väestöliitto

Time: Thursday 7 May 2009, 10 am - 14 pm (10-11 film *Dead Mums Don't Cry*)
Place: Parliament House, cabinet of the Finance Committee

Fifteen years ago the UN International Conference on Population and Development among others agreed upon the universal access to reproductive health for all by 2015. This was a groundbreaking Conference as it brought women's rights and individual choice on the forefront of development. The ambitious Programme of Action set the date of achieving its goals by 2015, which coincides with the target year of the Millennium Development Goals.

Although a lot has been achieved, there are still major challenges facing the implementation of the Programme of Action - maternal mortality being one of the biggest ones. 500 000 women still die of pregnancy related causes every year. Majority of these deaths occur in the developing countries. There has been little improvement in the last 20 years. Furthermore, the worldwide economic crisis is making the situation worse for reaching development goals. Although the crisis originated in the developed countries, the impacts are starting to be felt in developing countries. Women in the poor countries tend to be the ones who carry to worst burden of poor economic situation pushing them even further down to poverty.

The seminar will scrutinize the barriers to the universal access to sexual health and rights. In the beginning there will be a screening of a one hour (10 to 11) film "Dead Mums Don't Cry" on fight against maternal mortality filmed in Chad and Honduras. We have the honor of having **Dr. Grace Kodindo**, Senior Health and Advocacy Adviser from Chad, who is the main character in the film, joining the seminar to speak about maternal mortality and solutions to it. Other distinguished speakers will highlight other aspects of the challenges on implementation of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

You are warmly welcome to participate in this seminar to discuss about these crucial development issues.

Please, register to the seminar to Ms. Sini Karusto, sini.karusto@vaestoliitto.fi, tel.09-22805127 by May 4, 2009.

The seminar is in English without interpretation. The Programme is attached.

With best regards,

Minna Sirnö, MP
Chair of the Finnish All-Party Parliamentary Group
on Population and Development