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WORLD ORGANIZATIONS TEAM WITH UN SECRETARY GENERAL IN NEW EFFORT TO SAVE LIVES OF MILLIONS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Integrating HIV/AIDS with Women's and Children's Health Programmes Critical to Success

'One cannot succeed without the other,' says Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Vienna, 19 July 2010 – Today several of the world's largest institutions that are critical to serving the needs of women and children are pledging their commitment to work jointly with the United Nations Secretary General and others in a new global effort to save the lives of more than 10 million women and children. Organizations serving women, children and people living with HIV such as UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health are coming together with leaders in the NGO community including Family Care International, World Vision International, International Council of AIDS Service Organizations, Care, Save the Children, the International Planned Parenthood Federation and countless others to unite in the effort to improve maternal and child health and save the lives of millions of women and children.

The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched a new effort this year, the Joint Action Plan for Women's and Children's Health, that builds on existing initiatives to drive integration and synergies, and identifies new commitments to women's and children's health from all sectors of society. 2010 has been called a tipping point, a historic year where the world came together to improve the health of women and children. However, HIV and AIDS remains a top killer of women and children around the world.

Integrating HIV/AIDS with Women's and Children's Health Programmes Critical to Success

"Addressing HIV/AIDS and improving women's and children's health are inextricably linked," said United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. "One cannot succeed without the other."

Half of adults living with HIV are women, and young women between 15 and 24 years of age are at particular risk of sexual and reproductive ill-health due to HIV infection. Globally, the two leading causes of death in women of reproductive age are HIV and complications of pregnancy and childbirth, and a recent analysis indicates that HIV may have increased maternal deaths, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, by almost 20%. More than 2 million children were living with HIV; almost half a million children were infected and more than 250,000 died of AIDS in 2008.

"The AIDS response is already contributing to maternal, new born and child health through strengthening health systems and community responses," said Paul De Lay, UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director, Programmes. "When





AIDS is out of isolation, we can wider health outcomes."



achieve



"Listening to women we know that they want to go to one place to have their health needs met – for family planning, maternal healthcare and services for HIV/AIDS. Linking sexual and reproductive health and HIV makes sense. It saves lives, delivers more health for the money – and it works for women," said Purnima Mane, Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund.

AIDS prevention and treatment efforts have paved the way to reach women and children for other critical health needs, and maternal and child health services provide a crucial entry point for HIV prevention, treatment and care.

"The Joint Action Plan for Women’s and Children’s Health represents a fresh opportunity to look at how we can deliver integrated health care services for women and children across the full continuum of care," said Ann Starrs, President of Family Care International. "Advocates who work on maternal and child health and on HIV/AIDS must work together to increase resources for health, rather than competing for the bigger slice of the pie."

The Joint Action Plan for Women’s and Children’s Health

The Joint Action Plan is a historic opportunity led by the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to improve the health of women and children, calling on international, national, business and civil society leaders to intensify efforts. The Joint Action Plan focuses on women and children because they are the engines that drive our families and our communities, our economies and our nations. The Plan builds on existing efforts and aims to spur progress through an integrated package of health interventions to ensure women’s and children’s health.

The Joint Action Plan is a historic opportunity to join a growing global movement that will make history. New financial, service delivery and policy commitments will be announced during the 2010 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Summit in September.

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