

United Nations Population Fund

Recent Developments

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has remained active worldwide through the end of 2012 and into the beginning of 2013.¹ Much of the UNFPA's recent focus has been on providing services in regions experiencing refugee crises and on promoting reproductive and women's health.² With its first meeting of the year scheduled to start on January 28, 2013, the UNFPA begins the new year on steady footing.³

Throughout 2012, the UNFPA published several reports relating to women's reproductive health, family planning, and population growth, which are now available through its web site. Perhaps most notably, the UNFPA released its annual *State of the World Population* report in November 2012.⁴ The report focuses on global access to reproductive health services and makes recommendations for improvements.⁵ Further, the document explains and summarizes the UNFPA's current and past projects, utilizing case studies to illustrate their effectiveness.⁶

In January, the UNFPA has been particularly active in the Congo, where flooding has led to economic decline and subsequently, a need for humanitarian aid.⁷ As it often happens in times of crisis, women's issues have been an area of special concern for the UNFPA.⁸ By distributing supplies to women refugees, the UNFPA has assisted in alleviating some of the dangers faced by women and girls during their displacement.⁹

The UNFPA has also focused its efforts on Eastern Europe, addressing child marriages and the issue of "unwanted girls."¹⁰ Along with the World Health Organization (WHO), the UNFPA has turned its attention to Roma populations in Eastern Europe with the aim of reducing the rates at which young girls are married and dealing with the consequences of these early marriages, which include greater risks of HIV infection and complications during pregnancy.¹¹ In addition, the UNFPA has reported on the consequences of a preference for male children present in several European countries, including Albania, Macedonia, Serbia, and Kosovo.¹² This preference has resulted in a gender imbalance in the populations of these countries, and this is likely to present new challenges for the UNFPA.¹³

In addition to its commitment to humanitarian support and efforts to ensure the health of the world's populations, the UNFPA also continues to support efforts to document those populations.¹⁴ In Myanmar, the UNFPA will lend its services to an extensive census, which will provide data from which conclusions may be drawn about the needs of the country.¹⁵ While the project is certain to be a challenge, its completion will be a valuable contribution to an

¹ United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA News.

² United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA News.

³ United Nations Population Fund, Executive Board, First Regular Session 2013.

⁴ United Nations Population Fund, *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*, November 2012.

⁵ United Nations Population Fund, *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*, November 2012.

⁶ United Nations Population Fund, *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*, November 2012.

⁷ United Nations Population Fund, Congo (Brazzaville): UNFPA Provides Humanitarian Assistance to Women Victims of Floods, January 2013.

⁸ United Nations Population Fund, Congo (Brazzaville): UNFPA Provides Humanitarian Assistance to Women Victims of Floods, January 2013.

⁹ United Nations Population Fund, Congo (Brazzaville): UNFPA Provides Humanitarian Assistance to Women Victims of Floods, January 2013.

¹⁰ United Nations Population Fund, Eastern Europe & Central Asia: WHO and UN Determined to Prevent Early Marriages Among Roma and Asians, January 2013.

¹¹ United Nations Population Fund, Eastern Europe & Central Asia: WHO and UN Determined to Prevent Early Marriages Among Roma and Asians, January 2013.

¹² The Muslim News, More female fetuses aborted in Europe, January 2013.

¹³ The Muslim News, More female fetuses aborted in Europe, January 2013.

¹⁴ United Nations Population Fund Myanmar, UNFPA and Ministry of Immigration and Population Launch 2014 Population and Housing Census Project, December 2012.

¹⁵ United Nations Population Fund Myanmar, UNFPA and Ministry of Immigration and Population Launch 2014 Population and Housing Census Project, December 2012.

understanding of the state of the populations of Myanmar, a country in which the UNFPA provides necessary assistance.¹⁶

Even before its first session, the UNFPA is occupied with projects across the globe, many of which focus on women's health and reproductive issues.¹⁷ The UNFPA continues to provide assistance where it is needed and requested, as it has recently in the Congo and Myanmar.¹⁸ In order to gauge the UNFPA's evolving direction, it will be crucial to watch for new developments leading up to January 28, 2013 and beyond.¹⁹

The UNFPA at the National Model United Nations Conference

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) was established to deal with issues of population, family planning and reproductive health, and to function within the United Nations system as a leader in striving toward related goals. The UNFPA's Executive Board consists of representatives from 36 Member States, comprised of five regional groups: African States, Asian States, Latin America and Caribbean States, Eastern European States, and Western European and other States.

Format: The United Nations Population Fund is a resolution writing committee.

Voting: Each Member State present may vote once on procedural and substantive matters. Matters are decided by a majority vote.

¹⁶ United Nations Population Fund Myanmar, UNFPA and Ministry of Immigration and Population Launch 2014 Population and Housing Census Project, December 2012.

¹⁷ United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA News.

¹⁸ United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA News.

¹⁹ United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA News.

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations Population Fund Eastern Europe & Central Asia. *Home*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://eeca.unfpa.org/public/>

The home page for the UNFPA's Eastern Europe & Central Asia web site shows, at a glance, the UNFPA's efforts in that region. This page links relevant publications, news articles, and events, all of which may be of interest to those seeking information on the UNFPA's regional goals. Of particular interest are featured stories regarding contraceptives, child marriage, and the follow-up to the International Day of the Older Person.

United Nations Population Fund. *Executive Board, First Regular Session 2013*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/exbrd/pid/12129>

This page is the main resource available to the public for information regarding the UNFPA's first meeting in 2013. From here, it is possible to access several files regarding the meeting, including the agenda. This resource and others linked from this page may be helpful in identifying the issues to which the UNFPA will devote its attention.

United Nations Population Fund (December 10, 2012). *Reproductive Rights are Key to Meaningful Participation*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/news/pid/12773>

This statement from the UNFPA's Executive Director, given on Human Rights Day, emphasizes the UNFPA's commitment to reproductive health. This statement reaffirms the UNFPA's position on reproductive health as a human rights issue and demonstrates an ongoing commitment to work in this area.

United Nations Population Fund Myanmar (December 14, 2012). *UNFPA and Ministry of Immigration and Population Launch 2014 Population and Housing Census Project*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: http://countryoffice.unfpa.org/myanmar/2012/12/16/5952/unfpa_and_ministry_of_immigration_and_population_launch_2014_population_and_housing_census_project/

The census project in progress in Myanmar promises to be a major undertaking for the UNFPA throughout the next year. This source includes information from the UNFPA's Myanmar office on the preparations for the project, the extent of the UNFPA's support, and the hopes the UNFPA and the government of Myanmar have for the utility of the data to be collected.

United Nations Population Fund. *UNFPA News*. Retrieved January 13, 2013 from: <https://www.unfpa.org/public/global/news>

This page, maintained by the UNFPA, is a valuable source for tracking the UNFPA's progress and actions as they happen. The page presents headlines and short introductions to news stories relating to the UNFPA. This source is useful as a quick reference for recent developments, and it is an excellent place to start research on the UNFPA, providing links to full articles web pages.

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United Nations Population Fund (January 7, 2013). *Eastern Europe & Central Asia: WHO and UN Determined to Prevent Early Marriages Among Roma and Asians*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://inthenews.unfpa.org/?p=14461>

United Nations Population Fund. *Executive Board, First Regular Session 2013*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/exbrd/pid/12129>

United Nations Population Fund (December 10, 2012). *Reproductive Rights are Key to Meaningful Participation*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/news/pid/12773>

United Nations Population Fund (January 3, 2013). *Serbia: Unwanted Girls in the Balkans*. Retrieved January 14, 2012 from: <http://inthenews.unfpa.org/?p=14450>

United Nations Population Fund (November 14, 2012). *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*. Retrieved January 13, 2013 from: http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2012/EN_SWOP2012_Report_1.pdf

United Nations Population Fund Myanmar (December 14, 2012). *UNFPA and Ministry of Immigration and Population Launch 2014 Population and Housing Census Project*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: http://countryoffice.unfpa.org/myanmar/2012/12/16/5952/unfpa_and_ministry_of_immigration_and_population_launch_2014_population_and_housing_census_project/

United Nations Population Fund. *UNFPA News*. Retrieved January 13, 2013 from: <https://www.unfpa.org/public/global/news>

I. Addressing the Custom of Child Marriage and its Impact on Girls

Recent Developments

In October 2012, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) released a comprehensive report, entitled “Marrying Too Young,” highlighting the dramatic increase in the rate of girls under the age of 18 who are married off by their parents.²⁰ The report also stressed that little progress has been made during the past decade to end child marriage.²¹ During a news conference that same month to launch the UNFPA report, South African activist Archbishop Desmond Tutu urged an end to child marriage.²² The report was received with overwhelming support from NGOs (such as USAid) and Member States, as its presentation was also marked by the inaugural International Day of the Girl Child.²³ According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are plenty of opportunities to address the effects of child marriage and its consequences on the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents throughout Eastern Europe.²⁴ Evidence suggests that child marriage is also increasing in Europe at large, due to a renewed weight given to cultural identity:

“[The] WHO, the United Nations Population Fund and other international development partners are committed to reducing child marriage and its effects. WHO addressed the issue of child marriage at the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly in 2012. Thirty countries and seven observers made comments on the paper prepared by the WHO secretariat, which served as a forum for participants to address intervention strategies; to describe the current situation of early marriage in their country; and to acknowledge that child marriage is a clear violation of human rights and a threat to the safety and health of adolescents.”²⁵

The WHO’s policies, such as *Health 2020* and the *Guidelines for the protection of adolescents’ health* outline the need for greater implementation and an enhanced research and surveillance.²⁶ The WHO has taken a prominent role in addressing this topic, through global action, involving technical experts and representatives from several United Nations agencies, governments and nongovernmental organizations from all six regions of the WHO.²⁷ The objective was to draw increased attention to research on adolescent sexual and reproductive health resulting from child marriage.²⁸

According to a report published in January 2013 by the Express Tribune, 24% of girls married under the age of 18 worldwide last year were from rural Pakistan, whereas 18% were from the country’s urban areas.²⁹ In December 2012, documents from the International Centre for Research on Women provided recommendations for preventing child marriage in Southern Asian countries.³⁰ These policy and advocacy briefs aimed at helping policymakers develop a regional plan to end child marriage.³¹ The briefs helped provide a regional perspective on the issue of child marriage, highlighting the common challenges in the effort to prevent the practice, as well as offering evidence-based policy alternatives.³² Produced in partnership with the UNFPA and other organizations, the briefs

²⁰ Voice of America News, *UN Urges End to Child Marriages*, October 11, 2012.

²¹ Voice of America News, *UN Urges End to Child Marriages*, October 11, 2012.

²² Voice of America News, *UN Urges End to Child Marriages*, October 11, 2012.

²³ United Nations, Press Conference by United Nations Population Fund on Launch of Report on Ending Childhood Marriage, October 11, 2012.

²⁴ World Health Organization (Regional Office for Europe), *Child marriage – a threat to health*, December 20, 2012.

²⁵ World Health Organization (Regional Office for Europe), *Child marriage – a threat to health*, December 20, 2012.

²⁶ World Health Organization (Regional Office for Europe), *Child marriage – a threat to health*, December 20, 2012.

²⁷ World Health Organization (Regional Office for Europe), *Child marriage – a threat to health*, December 20, 2012.

²⁸ World Health Organization (Regional Office for Europe), *Child marriage – a threat to health*, December 20, 2012.

²⁹ The Express Tribune, *Child marriage in Pakistan*, January 2, 2013.

³⁰ International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), ICRW policy and advocacy briefs help inform regional plan to end child marriage, December 19, 2012.

³¹ International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), ICRW policy and advocacy briefs help inform regional plan to end child marriage, December 19, 2012.

³² International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), ICRW policy and advocacy briefs help inform regional plan to end child marriage, December 19, 2012.

provided an important guideline for developing strategies for lowering early marriage rates in a manner tailored to the individual context and needs of each country.³³

An UNFPA-supported programme called Choose Your Future teaches young girls who are not in formal education about important issues such as health and encourages them to develop basic life skills.³⁴ Teachers from Choose Your Future try to persuade the parents of young girls to allow them to attend school full time, and many are successful at doing so, especially since state education for girls in Nepal is free up to grade 10.³⁵ Campaigns to raise awareness to stop child marriage around the local community in Nepal have been adopted in a variety of forms including radio adverts and street performances by youth clubs.³⁶ Currently, there is increased pressure to enlarge prevention efforts, including advocacy work with the male population.³⁷ The National Planning Commission and government ministries are cooperating with UN agencies and civil society organizations in order to develop a plan of action on teenage development that addresses child marriage.³⁸

³³ International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), ICRW policy and advocacy briefs help inform regional plan to end child marriage, December 19, 2012.

³⁴ UNFPA, Empowering Girls in Nepal to Say 'No' to Child Marriage, October 9, 2012.

³⁵ UNFPA, Empowering Girls in Nepal to Say 'No' to Child Marriage, October 9, 2012.

³⁶ UNFPA, Empowering Girls in Nepal to Say 'No' to Child Marriage, October 9, 2012.

³⁷ UNFPA, Empowering Girls in Nepal to Say 'No' to Child Marriage, October 9, 2012.

³⁸ UNFPA, Empowering Girls in Nepal to Say 'No' to Child Marriage, October 9, 2012.

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Voice of America News (October 20, 2012). *UN Urges End to Child Marriages*. Retrieved January 10, 2013 from: http://www.voanews.com/content/un_urgues_end_to_child_marriages/1524977.html

The following article discusses the recent UN warning regarding child marriage. It also provides specific case studies on young girls who had to face marrying at a young age and the consequences as a result of that. The article also makes reference to the recent UNFPA report "Marrying Too Young: Ending Child Marriage" and summarizes its conclusions, such as urging governments on national and local levels to raise the marriage age to 18 and enforce it and affirming education is key to ending the practice.

World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (December 20, 2012). *Child marriage – a threat to health*. Retrieved January 10, 2013 from:

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/Life-stages/child-and-adolescent-health/news/news/2012/12/child-marriage-a-threat-to-health>

The following news release from the WHO discusses the health threats to child marriage and the impact and consequences of the latter in developing societies. It further develops on the recent WHO-UNFPA partnership and the recent discussion of child marriage at the 65th World Health Assembly in 2012. The news article also contains links to important reports and policy documents from relevant UN agencies and other international organizations.

The Express Tribune (January 2, 2013) *Child marriage in Pakistan*. Retrieved January 10, 2013 from: <http://tribune.com.pk/story/488062/child-marriage-in-pakistan/>

The following article discusses the issue of child marriage in rural and deprived areas of Pakistan and the recent initiatives to prevent it. The article mentions a seminar held on the issue, that reported that girls who married young have more chances of remaining poor than those who marry later. It also spoke of the importance of defending child rights and abiding by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

International Center for Research on Women ICRW (December 19, 2012). *ICRW policy and advocacy briefs help inform regional plan to end child marriage*. Retrieved January 10, 2013 from:

<http://www.icrw.org/taxonomy/term/5>

The following news article published by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) discusses the policy briefs and other relevant information on the regional plan to end child marriage. The ICRW policy and advocacy briefs provided a regional perspective on the issue of child marriage, highlighted common challenges to preventing the practice and offered evidence-based policy options. The link for the full briefs are provided at the end of the article.

United Nations Population Fund (October 9, 2012). *Empowering Girls in Nepal to Say 'No' to Child Marriage*. Retrieved January 10, 2013 from: <http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/news/pid/12167>

The following is the feature story on the UNFPA's official website, detailing the case studies of different girls who have experienced child marriage and its devastating effects. The story also discusses actions and initiatives that are being undertaken to empower girls and thwart marriage plans. It then highlights poverty as the underlying cause of child marriage.

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Lee-Rife, S., Malhotra, A., Warner, A. and Glinski, A. M. (2012), What Works to Prevent Child Marriage: A Review of the Evidence. *Studies in Family Planning*, 43: 287–303.

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UNICEF (December 21, 2012) *Child Marriage: Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse*. Retrieved January 10, 2013 from: http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_58008.html

United Nations (October 11, 2012). *Press Conference by United Nations Population Fund on Launch of Report on Ending Childhood Marriage*. Retrieved February 3, 2013 from: http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2012/121011_UNFPA.doc.htm

II. Correlations between Youth Poverty and the Prevalence of HIV/AIDS

Recent Developments

In November 2012, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria signed the Phase II agreement of the Health System Strengthening grant together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).³⁹ At the time of writing, it is estimated that over 100,000 people in South Sudan are diagnosed with HIV, but only about 3,000 people have access to anti-retroviral drugs.⁴⁰ The Global Fund is the only funding source in South Sudan that addresses HIV/AIDS and is the major source of funding for health services to combat malaria and tuberculosis.⁴¹

On World AIDS Day, which fell on December 1, 2012, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) issued a report, which showed an unprecedented decline in HIV/AIDS infections across 25 countries.⁴² The area in which most progress has been observed is in the reduction of new HIV infections in children.⁴³ Half of the worldwide reductions in new HIV infections over the past two years have been among newborn babies.⁴⁴ “It is thus evident that achieving zero new HIV infections in children is possible,” according to Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS.⁴⁵ “I am excited that far fewer babies are being born with HIV. We are moving from despair to hope.”⁴⁶ The report also showed that antiretroviral therapy has emerged as a dominant force in saving lives.⁴⁷ Over the last 24 months, the number of people accessing treatment has increased by 63% worldwide.⁴⁸ This becomes a positive development when taking into account it will have a positive and direct impact on the youth population in a few years time as according to UNAIDS, the youth group aged 15-24 are the most affected by HIV, being accountable for 40% of all new adult HIV infections.⁴⁹

On December 20, 2012 hundreds of youth leaders attended the Third Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.⁵⁰ The aim of the meeting was to focus on how the youth could contribute to a post-2015 development agenda and achieve UNAIDS’ zero goal (zero new infections, discrimination and AIDS related deaths).⁵¹ The Summit was organized within the framework of the CrowdOutAIDS campaign.⁵² The campaign is a ground-breaking youth-led policy project developed by UNAIDS.⁵³ By leveraging crowdsourcing technology, together with new media tools, the project allowed young people to build on recommendations to work more effectively with each other in the fight against AIDS.⁵⁴ The project document represented the first ever crowd-sourced strategy in the history of the United Nations.⁵⁵

In a 2012 report by the UN Economic Commission for Africa, a particularly interesting trend that was pointed out was the decline in HIV incidence among young women.⁵⁶ From 2001 to 2010, incidents of HIV among adult women

³⁹ UNDP, Strengthening life-saving health services in South Sudan, November 30, 2012.

⁴⁰ UNDP, Strengthening life-saving health services in South Sudan, November 30, 2012.

⁴¹ UNDP, Strengthening life-saving health services in South Sudan, November 30, 2012.

⁴² United Nations, World Aids Day: Getting to Zero, December 1, 2012.

⁴³ UN Aids, UNAIDS reports a more than 50% drop in new HIV infections across 25 countries as countries approach the 1000 day deadline to achieve global AIDS targets, November 20, 2012.

⁴⁴ UN Aids, UNAIDS reports a more than 50% drop in new HIV infections across 25 countries as countries approach the 1000 day deadline to achieve global AIDS targets, November 20, 2012.

⁴⁵ UN Aids, UNAIDS reports a more than 50% drop in new HIV infections across 25 countries as countries approach the 1000 day deadline to achieve global AIDS targets, November 20, 2012.

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⁴⁷ United Nations, World Aids Day: Getting to Zero, December 1, 2012.

⁴⁸ United Nations, World Aids Day: Getting to Zero, December 1, 2012.

⁴⁹ *United Nations News Centre*, World AIDS Day: UN officials urge greater efforts to combat epidemic, *November 30, 2012*.

⁵⁰ UNAIDS, The Third Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit opens in Burkina Faso, December 20, 2012.

⁵¹ UNAIDS, The Third Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit opens in Burkina Faso, December 20, 2012.

⁵² UNAIDS, The Third Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit opens in Burkina Faso, December 20, 2012.

⁵³ UNAIDS, The Third Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit opens in Burkina Faso, December 20, 2012.

⁵⁴ UNAIDS, The Third Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit opens in Burkina Faso, December 20, 2012.

⁵⁵ UNAIDS, Crowd Out Aids: Strategy recommendations for collaboration with a new generation of leaders for the Aids response, 2012.

⁵⁶ AUC, UNECA, AfDB and UNDP, Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals, 2012.

in sub-Saharan Africa have declined from 0.72% to 0.49%.⁵⁷ During the same period, cases of HIV in adults declined considerably in several of the priority countries (including Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Namibia, and Zimbabwe), where they fell by at least 50%.⁵⁸

On January 7, 2013, Plus News reported that Uganda continues to fail in achieving its goal of safeguarding that 80% of people living with HIV/AIDS are receiving antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) treatment by 2015.⁵⁹ However, only 8% of those receiving treatment were children.⁶⁰ A recent government survey revealed that only 49% of infants in need of treatment are receiving it.⁶¹ The Ugandan government recently developed a draft working paper with the purpose of creating a US\$1 billion HIV fund in order to research sustainable and alternate sources of aid for its HIV/AIDS programs.⁶²

⁵⁷ AUC, UNECA, AfDB and UNDP, Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals, 2012.

⁵⁸ AUC, UNECA, AfDB and UNDP, Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals, 2012.

⁵⁹ Plus News, HIV/AIDS Uganda still behind on ARV target, January 7, 2013.

⁶⁰ Plus News, HIV/AIDS Uganda still behind on ARV target, January 7, 2013.

⁶¹ Plus News, HIV/AIDS Uganda still behind on ARV target, January 7, 2013.

⁶² Plus News, HIV/AIDS Uganda still behind on ARV target, January 7, 2013.

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This 2012 report confirms that steady economic growth and improvements in poverty reduction on the continent continue to have a positive impact on MDG progress. It stresses that Africa appears to be starting to win the battle against HIV/AIDS. The report further suggests that this is evidenced by a fall in the prevalence rate (particularly among women), by a steep decline in the regional rate of new infections (the incidence rate), a reduction in the number of AIDS-related deaths, and a drop in mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS.

United Nations Development Programme (November 30, 2012) *Strengthening life-saving health services in South Sudan*. Retrieved on January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2012/11/30/strengthening-life-saving-health-services-in-south-sudan/>

This news article highlights the main developments in services in South Sudan and the role of the Global Fund in signing the Phase II agreement of the Health System Strengthening grant. The article stresses that the impact of the Global Fund programs goes beyond the refurbishment of facilities and also finances the development of a skilled health workforce, improved access to safe and effective drugs, and strengthening of the existing health information system.

UNAIDS (2012). *Crowd Out Aids: Strategy recommendations for collaboration with a new generation of leaders for the Aids response*. Retrieved on February 4, 2013 from:

http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2012/JC2338_CrowdOutAIDS_en.pdf

The following document provides a set of recommendations for strategic actions that the UNAIDS Secretariat should undertake to collaborate effectively with a new generation of young leaders to ensure that the ambitious goals set by world leaders for the AIDS response are reached by 2015. The recommendations were compiled by an independent, youth-led Drafting Committee, in dialogue with the UNAIDS Secretariat, on behalf of more than 5000 young people who took part in CrowdOutAIDS.

UN Aids (November 20, 2012) UNAIDS reports a more than 50% drop in new HIV infections across 25 countries as countries approach the 1000 day deadline to achieve global AIDS targets. Retrieved on January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/pressreleaseandstatementarchive/2012/november/20121120presults>

This news article describes the December 2012 UNAIDS report showing a 50% drop in new HIV/AIDS infections. The article also says report shows HIV continuing to have a disproportionate impact on sex workers, men who have sex with men and people who inject drugs. HIV prevention and treatment programmes are largely failing to reach these key populations. The website also contains a series of relevant publications such as the result of the 2012 World Aids Day report and the 2012 UNAIDS report on the Global Aids Epidemic.

Plus News (January 7, 2013). *HIV/AIDS: Uganda still behind on ARV target*. Retrieved on January 14, 2013 from:

<http://www.plusnews.org/Report/97184/HIV-AIDS-Uganda-still-behind-on-ARV-target>

PlusNews is the global online HIV and AIDS news service of the United Nations Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), the humanitarian news and analysis service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Its news articles outlines the current situation in Uganda with regards to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The article also contains links to relevant reports and other Plus News articles on HIV/AIDS in Africa, particularly related to Uganda.

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III. Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health in Sub-Saharan Africa

Recent Developments

In November 2012, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) published its annual *State of the World Population* report, highlighting the issue of reproductive choice and human rights concerns relating to reproductive health.⁶³ The report identifies shortcomings in several areas, including the currently minimal involvement of boys and men in family planning in many countries, the quality of training that health care personnel receive with regard to reproductive health, unmet demand for contraceptives, and the practice of unsafe abortions.⁶⁴ Many of these challenges, which are aggravated by poverty, diminished access to services, and, in some cases, a lack of political stability, are endemic to sub-Saharan Africa as a region.⁶⁵ Statistics cited within the report suggest that the region will remain of particular concern in years to come.⁶⁶

The UNFPA's end-of-year report also proposes some new possibilities for change that may be examined in 2013.⁶⁷ One innovative approach noted in the report is the UNFPA's effort to engage faith-based organizations in the administration of supplies and education, as in Somalia.⁶⁸ The report also recommends that governments reexamine their approaches to reproductive health to address the changing needs of young populations and to better include groups of people who have generally been excluded from accessing care or education.⁶⁹

A relatively young organization, the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) has taken significant steps to establish a presence in sub-Saharan Africa and to expand its services to reach those who need those services most.⁷⁰ As of January 2013, CARMMA has established a presence in 37 African countries, and it is preparing to start work in four more.⁷¹ The organization continues to publish "score cards" on each of the countries in which it operates, providing the most recent statistics available in categories used to measure progress in maternal and newborn health.⁷² As a partner of the CARMMA, the UNFPA's mission is enhanced by the campaign's work and successes in promoting maternal health.⁷³

The target completion date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is 2015, and this deadline is quickly approaching.⁷⁴ For this reason, 2013 will bring meetings regarding progress towards achieving the MDGs. A High-Level Panel, organized by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, will discuss the execution of the MDGs - including Goal 5: improving maternal and reproductive health - and what will happen once the 2015 deadline passes.⁷⁵ While the panel will not give its report until September, the High-Level Panel represents an effort to maintain focus on the MDGs even as their completion date nears and a commitment to the goals beyond 2015.⁷⁶ While the focus on completing the MDGs bodes well for Goal 5, organizations interested in keeping the world's

⁶³ United Nations Population Fund, *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*, November 2012.

⁶⁴ United Nations Population Fund, *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*, November 2012.

⁶⁵ United Nations Population Fund, *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*, November 2012.

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⁶⁷ United Nations Population Fund, *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*, November 2012.

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⁶⁹ United Nations Population Fund, *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*, November 2012.

⁷⁰ Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Mortality in Africa, *History*.

⁷¹ Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Mortality in Africa, *All-Country Scorecard*.

⁷² Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Mortality in Africa, *All-Country Scorecard*.

⁷³ Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Mortality in Africa, *Partners*.

⁷⁴ World Health Organization, *Health in the post-2015 UN development agenda*.

⁷⁵ World Health Organization, *Health in the post-2015 UN development agenda*.

⁷⁶ World Health Organization, *Health in the post-2015 UN development agenda*.

attention on reproductive health in the next several years will need to work to ensure that the subject remains a part of the dialogue.⁷⁷

The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (PMNCH), facilitated, in part, by the World Health Organization (WHO), is one of the organizations working to keep reproductive health in focus beyond 2015.⁷⁸ On November 17, 2012, the PMNCH recognized the second World Prematurity Day, drawing attention to one of many challenges facing women who do not have access to adequate reproductive health services.⁷⁹ Further, the Partnership has released a draft of its remarks and suggestions for the High-Level Panel and accepted comments from interested parties.⁸⁰ With this document, the PMNCH will attempt to address questions that are likely to remain after 2015 “from a women’s and children’s health perspective.”⁸¹ If successful, these recommendations will influence the course of action set forth for completing the MDGs by 2015 and in turn influence the UNFPA’s work toward the completion of MDG 5.⁸²

In December 2012, WHO issued a press release announcing the publication of the Global Burden of Disease 2010 (GBD), a study that provides statistics regarding the distribution of disease worldwide, including those related to maternal and newborn health.⁸³ The GBD demonstrates that maternal illness now contributes to fewer deaths than it did at the study’s start.⁸⁴ However, the study also shows that many of the health burdens that have become less problematic in other parts of the world persist in sub-Saharan Africa despite efforts to reduce them.⁸⁵ In February, WHO will host a meeting at which participants will discuss the findings of the GBD and discuss emerging opportunities for improvement.⁸⁶

The area of reproductive health in general continues to see swift and important advancements.⁸⁷ For sub-Saharan Africa, however, there remain many opportunities for improvement that may be explored by the UNFPA and other, similar agencies and organizations.⁸⁸

⁷⁷ The Guardian. Stakes are high for UN panel replacing millennium development goals, September 2012.

⁷⁸ The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, PMNCH Secretariat.

⁷⁹ The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, World Prematurity Day 2012, November 2012.

⁸⁰ The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda Consultation.

⁸¹ The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda Consultation.

⁸² The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda Consultation.

⁸³ The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, Global Burden of Disease 2010 Study Released, December 2012.

⁸⁴ The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, Global Burden of Disease 2010 Study Released, December 2012.

⁸⁵ The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, Global Burden of Disease 2010 Study Released, December 2012.

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⁸⁷ United Nations Population Fund, State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development, November 2012.

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Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Mortality in Africa. *History*. Retrieved January 8, 2013 from: <http://www.carmma.org/page/history>

The Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn, and Child Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) is an excellent resource for information regarding the effort to improve reproductive health in Africa. On CARMMA's web site, visitors can read about the history, work, and future of the campaign. As CARMMA is focused specifically on Africa, the information its web site provides is helpful for understanding the most recent developments in the effort to improve reproductive health in that region.

The Guardian (December 13, 2012). *Global burden of disease: the key data*. Retrieved January 14, 2013 from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2012/dec/13/global-burden-disease-data>

This article summarizes some of the highlights of the Global Burden of Disease 2010 report. Many of the data featured in the article relate to diseases affecting women and newborns, and the article includes tables that may add to a broad understanding of health problems currently in the spotlight. The article also emphasizes the relatively slow rate of progress in sub-Saharan Africa on many of the key health issues.

The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (November 16, 2012). *World Prematurity Day 2012*. Retrieved January 13, 2012 from: http://www.who.int/pmnch/media/news/2012/20121117_world_prematurity_day/en/index1.html

This press release regarding World Prematurity Day explains some of the action the PMNCH has planned with regard to this specific reproductive health concern. The press release emphasizes the importance of awareness of reproductive health issues and draws attention to an event designed to raise awareness. Though World Prematurity Day is an annual event only two years old, it may prove to be effective in generating discussion on reproductive health.

United Nations Population Fund (November 14, 2012). *State of the World Population 2012: By Choice, Not By Chance: Family Planning, Human Rights, and Development*. Retrieved January 1, 2013 from: http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2012/EN_SWOP2012_Report_1.pdf

The UNFPA's 2012 report outlines a "rights-based" vision of family planning and addresses the challenges that the international community will need to surmount in order to achieve that vision. The report summarizes recent progress effected by the UNFPA and its partners and includes a list of documents relevant to this issue. The report also contains some data specific to sub-Saharan African countries, including a case study from Malawi regarding that country's work with reproductive health services for youth.

World Health Organization, *Health in the post-2015 UN development agenda*. Retrieved January 13, 2013 from: http://www.who.int/topics/millennium_development_goals/post2015/en/index.html

This page provides a summary regarding the position of health, including reproductive health, in the post-MDG global dialogue. It also provides links to some of the papers and reports generated by WHO with regard to persisting and emerging health issues. These documents may provide some insight into what is currently being discussed as the deadline for the MDGs, including the fifth, approaches.

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World Health Organization, *Health in the post-2015 UN development agenda*. Retrieved January 13, 2013 from: http://www.who.int/topics/millennium_development_goals/post2015/en/index.html