



LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND: PARLIAMENTS AT THE FOREFRONT OF PROTECTING WOMEN'S, CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENTS' HEALTH IN MIGRATION CRISES, INCLUDING IN HUMANITARIAN AND FRAGILE SETTINGS

Side event to the 135th IPU Assembly
Monday, 24 October 2016

12.00 – 2.00 p.m.
CICG Geneva, Room 18, Level -1

A light lunch will be served

Languages: English and French

Every woman, every child and every adolescent has a right to be healthy. This holds true everywhere, especially in migration crises, including those that stem from humanitarian contexts and fragile settings. In recent years there has been a worldwide increase in migration, rising from 173 million in 2000 to 244 million in 2015.¹ Women comprise slightly less than half of all international migrants. The total number of female international migrants increased by over 32 million between 2000 and 2015.

Many women move to find work, a better life, access to services and new opportunities. Increasingly, they move independently from families. Many move to escape gender-based discrimination and to find personal autonomy. Some are pressured to move. Others flee conflict or are forcibly displaced, trafficked or kidnapped. Women also migrate due to environmental factors.

While humanitarian disasters gravely and adversely affect all people, women and children are disproportionately affected. Of the 84 million people who sought humanitarian assistance in 2014, over 75 per cent were women and children, many of whom were impoverished.² Women and adolescent girls on the move may be particularly vulnerable. They can be excluded, marginalized, exploited and sometimes subjected to sexual or gender-based violence. Health challenges for women, children and adolescents are particularly acute among those in refugee or temporary camps and among internally displaced communities.

That said, women and girls are also key contributors to the shaping of 21st century health and care. They continue to demonstrate extraordinary agency and resilience. Women and adolescents are critical agents of change and key partners for effective development action. Being clearly accountable to them is a key component of the implementation of the *Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health* and the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

Within this context, parliamentarians have a crucial role to play in ensuring a meaningful, balanced and informed response to the health challenges of migrant populations. Firstly, they are responsible for adopting laws to give effect to international obligations and to ensure the provision of key health services, including for essential sexual and reproductive health matters. Parliamentarians can promote fair, cross-sectoral and human-rights-centred policies. Those policies can help strengthen the health of migrant women, children and adolescents, and enable them to thrive and reach their full potential, despite their circumstances.

This side event will discuss what parliaments can do to operationalize the *Global Strategy* in their countries during migration crises, including crises that stem from humanitarian contexts and fragile settings. It will pay particular attention to how the right to health can be ensured through effective emergency responses and continuity of care via essential health services for women, children and adolescents. It will also discuss how parliaments can support a cross-sectoral approach to improve health outcomes of women, children and adolescents. This can be achieved by enacting and implementing laws on water, sanitation, infrastructure, education and gender. The event will also highlight the broader challenges that women face in migration contexts.

¹http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2015_Highlights.pdf

² OCHA. Overview of global humanitarian response 2014. Mar 2013. https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/Overview_of_Global_Humanitarian_Response_2014.pdf. See also Unicef. Humanitarian action for children 2014. Feb 2014. www.unicef.org/gambia/Humanitarian_Action_for_Children_2014_Overview.pdf.



AGENDA

Welcome:

Mr. Célestin Sebuhoze, Member of Parliament, Rwanda – member of the IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS and Maternal Newborn and Child Health

Moderator:

Mr. Habibe Millat, Member of Parliament, Bangladesh – member of the IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS and Maternal Newborn and Child Health

Panel:

Ms. Flavia Bustreo, Candidate for Director-General WHO, Assistant-Director General Family, Women's and Children's Health (on special leave), World Health Organization

Ms. Jiko Fatafehi Luveni, Speaker of Parliament, Republic of Fiji

Representative of the Parliament of Uganda

Ms. Pia Locatelli, Member of Parliament, Italy - member of the IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS and Maternal Newborn and Child Health

Ms. Anita Bay Bundegaard, International Advocacy Director and UN Representative – Save the Children, on behalf of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health

Moderated discussion:

How parliaments can leverage their core functions to ensure effective emergency response and continuity of care for women, children and adolescents in humanitarian and fragile settings, including migration crises.

Wrap-up:

Mr. Ian Askew, Director, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, World Health Organization