

## UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH: RECOMMENDATIONS

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350 million women worldwide still lack access to reproductive health supplies and every single minute a woman dies of pregnancy related causes, usually due to lack of supplies. There is a massive gap between the demand for reproductive health and its supply, due to part to the largest ever generation of young people, the increased risk of sexual HIV transmission and decreased donor support for sexual and reproductive health and rights programming.

Interact Worldwide is the UK partner of Countdown 2015 Europe a new NGO campaign concerned with achieving universal access to reproductive health. We call for action in 10 critical areas to address both the supply and demand for reproductive health supplies. These are centred on the overall aim of achieving universal access to reproductive health services and supplies by 2015<sup>1</sup>. Reproductive health supplies covers more than condoms and contraceptives. UNFPA states that supplies refer to “all the essential equipment, commodities and medicines required for sexual and reproductive health, maternal and neonatal health and for effective responses to HIV and AIDS”.

### FULL FUNDING

Best available estimates indicate that the funding needed to achieve universal access to reproductive health and comprehensive HIV and AIDS services is US\$29.8b in 2010 rising to US\$35.8b in 2015. Countdown 2015 Europe calls on donor governments to take urgent action to provide one third of these resources and meet targets of US\$9.9b in 2010 and US\$11.9b by 2015<sup>1</sup>.

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### INCREASE ODA

To achieve universal access to reproductive health, including the call of parliamentarians from G8, European and African countries for 10% of ODA to go to sexual and reproductive health, Countdown 2015 Europe calls on donor governments to provide 0.7% of their Gross National Income as ODA.

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### ENSURE COMMODITY SECURITY

To date, there has been little focus on ensuring that reproductive health supplies are prioritised and mainstreamed in national health plans and expenditure frameworks.

UNFPA, the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition and others are focused on enhancing reproductive health commodity security. Countdown 2015 Europe calls on the UK to ensure their bilateral and multilateral channels similarly prioritise expenditure on reproductive health supplies.

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### ADDITIONALITY

Countdown 2015 Europe welcomes the increased levels of funding for sexual and reproductive health and reproductive health supplies which have been made available within the response to HIV and AIDS. We urge donors to ensure that funds for HIV and AIDS are not being provided at the expense of addressing universal access to reproductive health.

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### SRH-HIV INTEGRATION

Countdown 2015 Europe calls on European donors to increase effective use of resources through appropriately integrated and linked responses to sexual and reproductive health and HIV and AIDS. Such responses need to be aligned within national frameworks. Investments in sexual and reproductive health need to mainstream HIV and AIDS, and investments in HIV and AIDS should be appraised for appropriate inclusion of SRH.

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<sup>1</sup> For more detailed financial estimates on the UK's fair share see the Countdown 2015 Europe factsheet on 'Financing Universal Access to Reproductive Health'

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## HEALTH SYSTEMS AND HEALTH WORKFORCE

Universal access to reproductive health requires strong health systems. Countdown 2015 Europe calls on the UK to ensure that aid instruments, including the International Health Partnership, are used to provide long-term, sustainable investment in health systems strengthening, particularly for significant investment in human resources for reproductive health.

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## EDUCATION SECTOR RESPONSE TO SRH

Most of the focus on barriers to access of reproductive health supplies currently centres on lack of commodities but an equal or perhaps larger barrier to access is in terms of demand. Countdown 2015 Europe calls on the UK to fund comprehensive evidence-based sexuality education to help educate the public on sexual and reproductive health and create demand for the provision of reproductive health supplies.

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## NATIONAL PRIORITIES

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action outline the need for increased national ownership of development efforts and alignment of donor efforts around national plans. Countdown 2015 Europe calls on the UK to<sup>2</sup>; consider the effects on sexual and reproductive health when assessing the effectiveness of aid, including general and sectoral budget support; work with governments to ensure that national plans include robust sexual and reproductive health indicators; ensure reproductive health supply budget lines are implemented; and annual reviews indicate expenditure against these goals.

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<sup>2</sup> For more information on Countdown 2015 Europe and aid effectiveness see the related factsheet on 'Aid Effectiveness and Reproductive Health'

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Countdown 2015 Europe is extremely concerned that the European Commission's traceable support for sexual and reproductive health is declining, contrary to commitments made in the European Consensus on Development. Urgent measures are needed to ensure that funds for reproductive health are prioritised in geographical and thematic programmes.

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## GLOBAL FUND

Resources provided for the response to HIV and AIDS by the Global Fund have been significant and increasingly recipients seek to leverage benefits to SRH and wider health services. Countdown 2015 Europe calls on the Global Fund to be explicit in its support for SRH-HIV and AIDS integration, in the development of the Gender Strategy and in a fact sheet to accompany the Round 9 Call for Proposals to outline the funding opportunities for sexual and reproductive health programming and reproductive health supplies.

The full report 'Strategic Options for Greater European Investment in Reproductive Health Supplies' which provides the basis for this briefing is available online.

**For more information about Countdown 2015 Europe in the UK visit the website or email Amy Whalley - [whalleya@interactworldwide.org](mailto:whalleya@interactworldwide.org)**