



CHANGE Matters

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Dear [[First_Name]],

We just wrapped up one of the most rewarding aspects of our work at CHANGE, our [Reproductive Justice Ambassadors Tour](#). The three-city tour to Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. brought together U.S. advocates, policymakers and three international reproductive health experts (our "Ambassadors") to discuss reproductive justice and U.S. foreign policy. I was moved by new connections between local activists and our Ambassadors, as they recognized how important integrated reproductive health services are to women and girls. I was also witness to the inspiration local advocates drew from the Ambassadors, who in spite of adversities continue to find ways to provide comprehensive reproductive health care services in their countries. As one Boston advocate noted, there is a lot to learn from international colleagues about promoting comprehensive reproductive health and rights here in the U.S.

While CHANGE is at the forefront of advocating for comprehensive approaches to reproductive health, the U.S. is also thinking about international health more holistically, especially with President Obama's [Global Health Initiative](#) (see our update below). As we learned from our Ambassadors, family planning, HIV and maternal health cannot be separated, just as sexual and reproductive health is one among many health issues confronting women, men and young people globally. We are excited to be working in partnership with more than twenty organizations to start a dialogue on U.S. foreign assistance and global health, one that breaks down the false divisions among health sectors and bolsters the importance of a comprehensive approach to global health that includes sexual and reproductive health and rights.

As you reflect on the year and causes that matter to you, we hope that you will consider making a year-end donation to CHANGE. Your support helps us to raise awareness about the importance of sexual and reproductive health and rights in U.S. foreign policy and assistance, to build bridges between domestic and international advocates, and to provide advocacy training and tools to the next generation of leaders. [Click here to make a donation today.](#)

Thank you for all you do to advance reproductive justice globally.

In solidarity,



Serra Sippel, President
Center for Health and Gender Equity

"The United States strongly supports the goals and ideals of the International Conference on Population and Development, and under President Obama's leadership has renewed our commitment to work with the international community to implement the ICPD Program of Action ."

--Wellington Webb, Senior Advisor, US Mission to the United Nations
October 12, 2009, UN General Assembly

International Experts Call for Global Reproductive Justice



In launching our new report, [*Investing in Reproductive Justice for All: Toward a U.S. Foreign Policy on Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights*](#), CHANGE hosted the Reproductive Justice Ambassadors Tour--a five-day speakers tour in mid-October featuring reproductive rights advocates Grace Sedio from Botswana, Dr. Fisseha Mekonnen from Ethiopia, and Sergia Galván from the Dominican Republic. Together they traveled to Boston, Massachusetts; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Washington, D.C., educating audiences of students, activists, and policy-makers about the need for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights. At each event

they shared personal stories about the challenges they experience--funding restrictions, poor health infrastructure, harmful gender norms--as well as optimism over changes that have come with the new U.S. administration. In addition to speaking to large town hall meetings, the advocates met with smaller groups of local activists in Boston and Philadelphia to strategize around how to bridge local and global reproductive health issues while building international solidarity for advocacy.

The Ambassadors spent the final two days of the tour in Washington, D.C. They first spoke at a congressional briefing on Capitol Hill to an audience of more than 100 people. In a personal meeting in the West Wing with Tina Tchen, the White House Director of Public Liaison and the Executive Director of the White House Counsel of Women and Girls, and Gayle Smith of the National Security Council, they discussed their hopes for the new administration. Finally, the three met with staff of USAID and of the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) and used the opportunity to emphasize two points: that the positive discussions they had in the U.S. must be translated to the local level and that the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) must adopt a comprehensive approach, integrating family planning and reproductive health into HIV/AIDS policies and programs.

Advocates Develop a Bold Vision for U.S. Foreign Assistance in Global Health

In May of this year, President Obama announced a new global initiative focused on addressing critical health concerns including family planning, maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases. Since then, the administration has proposed to release a series of policy papers early next year to add substance to the initiative and present the basis for implementing a more integrated approach to global health. Global health advocates and experts, including CHANGE, have joined together in the request of robust funding and key policy recommendations in order to help inform the next phase of U.S. foreign assistance in global health through the President's Global Health Initiative (GHI).

On Thursday, October 29, global health advocates and experts are sponsoring an event on Capitol Hill in order to release their funding requests and policy recommendations. The event will be held in cooperation with the Congressional Global Health Caucus and Representatives Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) and Diane Watson (D-CA). To view the global health community's recommendations for the GHI, click [here](#).

House Committee on Foreign Affairs Continues to Engage in Reform Efforts

Senior professional staff of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs recently met with development, humanitarian, and global health groups in order to give clarity to the first of a series of discussion papers outlining plans for a re-write of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Congressional staff devoted time to giving background regarding the development of the papers and where the reform process is headed in the near future. Some of the key aspects addressed in Discussion Paper #1 include the institution of an evidence-based system for tracking the flow and distribution of U.S. foreign assistance; increasing budgetary responsibility and discretion of USAID mission directors; and the reorganization of certain State, Foreign Operations accounts into two distinct categories - Country Support and Sectoral Support. Click [here](#) to view a copy of HCFA's Discussion Paper #1 and [here](#) for the proposed new funding structure.

CHANGE will continue to provide updates throughout the foreign assistance reform process. A draft bill of the re-written Foreign Assistance Act is expected early next year.

Meeting Promotes Dialogue among Faith-Based, Reproductive Health Organizations

While the term "faith-based organization" is often not associated with the provision of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, CHANGE works alongside many progressive religious groups whose faith compels them to see the struggle for reproductive health as a struggle for social justice. CHANGE recently took part in Sexual and Reproductive Health, Rights, and Religion: Partnerships for the Future, sponsored by the [Religious Institute](#) and the [Population Council](#). The diverse participants represented UN agencies, human rights organizations, faith-based groups, and reproductive health advocates. The group discussed ways to promote collaborative relationships to ensure as many people as possible can access sexual and reproductive health services.

What's New

- **Press Release:** "[Second-Generation Female Condom is Now Available in the United States](#)," Female Health Company, October 1, 2009.
- **Recommended Reading:** "[Abortion Worldwide: A Decade of Uneven Progress](#)," Guttmacher Institute, October 2009.

Support CHANGE

Please consider making a donation today - there are many ways to contribute! Federal employees can now contribute to CHANGE via the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) for 2009. Our CFC number is 62113.

You can also make a contribution online - [click here to donate](#). Any way you choose to contribute, your support strengthens our efforts to ensure U.S. international policies and programs promote the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls worldwide.

The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE) is a U.S.-based non-governmental organization whose mission is to ensure that U.S. international policies and programs promote sexual and reproductive health and rights for women and girls worldwide.

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