



## An Analysis of the Draft SDGs: A Family Perspective

### Part I – How the Current Draft SDGs Undermine the Family

We have identified 10 serious problems with the draft SDG recommendations. Most importantly, there is no meaningful mention of the family, and “reproductive rights,” a term used to promote abortion, is currently in the text despite strong opposition from a number of delegations. There is also vague language on “gender equality,” which can be used (and is already being used) to advance LGBT rights. Below is a summary of these and other serious problems with the draft SDGs:

1. **Goal 3.7 calls for “universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services,”** which is often interpreted to include government-funded abortion on demand.
2. **Goal 4 calls for “inclusive” “human rights” and “gender equality” education.** **LGBT rights education often comes under the banner of “human rights” education,** so this will likely be used to promote LGBT and abortion rights education.
3. **The preamble to the goals reaffirms controversial Agenda 21 and references the “rights” of “Mother Earth.”** What are these rights and who defines them?
4. **There is no meaningful reference to the role of the family or States’ obligations to protect the family.** The only mention of the family is in goal 5.4, but it is in the context of promoting shared responsibilities in the household.
5. **Goal 5.6 also would ensure “universal access to sexual and reproductive health.”** Having sexual and reproductive health in both goals 3 and 5 creates an overemphasis on one issue over all others.
6. **One of the most serious problems with Goal 5 is tying “reproductive health” and “reproductive rights” to the “outcome documents” of the “review conferences” of “the Programme of Action of the ICPD and the Beijing Platform for Action.”** This is a deliberate attempt to get UN Member States to unknowingly endorse the radical abortion and LGBT rights contained in many of these outcome documents.
7. **SDG Goal 5-c also calls upon governments to adopt policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of “gender equality” without defining the term.** The draft SDG preamble also calls for the data that are to be used to measure compliance with the UN goals to be disaggregated by “gender” instead of “sex.” Facebook lists over 50 genders, so using the term “gender” in the SDGs can open up a Pandora’s Box of problems unless it is defined in the context of male and female.

Also Goal 6 of the draft SDGs “promote[s] gender equality and empowerment of women.” Many governments are unaware that the term “gender equality” is being used by UNDP to promote lesbian rights. For example UNDP’s website states that they are working to identify “policy gaps” in fulfilling MDG3 (the goal on gender equality) and that they intend to do this by “sensitizing government representatives and other policymakers on gender inclusive legal reforms, **including on the rights and health needs of lesbians.**”

8. **Proposed Goal 10 seeks to “Reduce inequality within and among countries” and calls for the “social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or *other status*.”** This is problematic because “other status” has been interpreted by the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) monitoring committee to include “sexual orientation” and “gender identity.”
9. **Goal 10.3 seeks to “reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices,”** but who knows what kind of “discrimination” or “outcome” is meant or what kind of practices will be eliminated? What about religious practices that promote morality? Vague discrimination provisions are often used to promote controversial rights, so this wording should not be accepted.
10. **Goal 16.10 calls for the protection of “fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements,”** yet UN agencies and some UN member States claim international agreements protect LGBT and abortion rights. So who will measure compliance and what standards will they use? Also many groups are now claiming that LGBT rights are fundamental freedoms protected by international agreements, so how will this be interpreted? Are there any protections for religious and cultural values in the draft SDGs? What about protections for national sovereignty?

**Summary:** Any vague, undefined terms should be opposed in the draft SDGs, or they should be narrowly defined to ensure that they are not used to promote controversial agendas. Reproductive health is mentioned in two goals and should only be mentioned in one, and the reference to reproductive rights, a term often used to promote abortion should be removed. Since no meaningful reference to the family has been included in the draft SDGs, Member States should insist that the protection of the family, as called for by five binding UN treaties and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be included as a key sustainable development goal.

## **Part II – The Serious Problems with Referencing the Outcome Documents of the Beijing and ICPD Review Conferences**

One of the most serious problems with the most recent draft of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals released by the UN’s Open Working Group is the promotion of undefined “reproductive rights” in Target 5.6. This is because the definition of “reproductive rights” is tied to the “outcome documents of their review conferences” of Beijing and ICPD.

Despite the fact that the Rio + 20 outcome document specifically excluded “reproductive rights” as too controversial, “reproductive rights” is now part of the draft targets under goal 5 on gender equality and women’s empowerment. Member States accepted this largely because “reproductive rights” was modified to be “in accordance” with ICPD, Beijing, and “the outcome documents of their review conferences.” However, many States are not aware that instead of limiting the definition of “reproductive rights,” if “reproductive rights” are tied to the “outcome documents of their review conferences,” the definition of “reproductive rights” will be greatly expanded in controversial ways.

This is because the outcome documents of the review conference of ICPD have been manipulated intentionally by UNFPA to advance gay, lesbian and abortion rights, and although the outcome documents for the review conferences of Beijing have not been released yet, they will likely be just as controversial and used for the same purposes.

It would seem that UNFPA had a plan to get the UN General Assembly to call for reviews of both ICPD and Beijing. They then sponsored review conferences with outcome documents that advance all of the controversial sexual rights that they could not get nations to accept in transparent negotiations of Member State experts in New York.

Most nations assume that the phrase “outcome documents of their review conferences” refers only to the Beijing and ICPD + 5, 10, and 15 review documents that were negotiated by UN Member States. But since the specific review conferences are not clearly identified, it can therefore also include the highly controversial UNFPA-led conference reviews of ICPD that aggressively promote the LGBT and abortion rights agenda.

For example, what is to preclude the term “outcome documents of their review conferences” from referring to the UNFPA-sponsored ICPD review called “ICPD Beyond 2014” found at [icpdbeyond2014.org](http://icpdbeyond2014.org)? In fact, the website states, “Welcome to ICPD Beyond 2014 - the official website for the United Nations review of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action.” It continues: “This in-depth, data-rich action framework, sometimes referred to as the ICPD beyond 2014 Global Report, is the culmination of *a major global review of progress in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action*, and analyzing the gaps and challenges that remain. It gathers data from 176 countries...”<sup>1</sup>

The full title of this report, “Framework of Actions for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014,” says it is a “Report of the Secretary-General” and that it was “mandated by the UN General Assembly” and that this “Framework of Actions *also builds on the outcome documents from three major thematic ICPD reviews – on youth, human rights and women’s health.*” (Emphasis added.)

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<sup>1</sup> See more at <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/framework-actions-follow-programme-action-international-conference-population-and>

Of great concern is the fact that the “ICPD Beyond 2014” report is a radical document containing more than 500 highly controversial references including: 391 references to “sexual,” 25 references to “sexual orientation,” 6 references to prostitution, 4 references to “transgender,” 18 references to “comprehensive sexuality education,” 44 references to sexual and reproductive rights, and 173 references to “abortion.”<sup>2</sup>

“ICPD Beyond 2014” claims in paragraph 44 that “Despite such developments, the human rights principles related to equality and non-discrimination have unfortunately remained unrealized for many groups, principal among them girls and women, and persons of diverse sexual orientation or gender identity. In some countries, laws banning certain consensual adult sexual behaviour and relationships, including relations outside of marriage, remain in force.”

Paragraph 259 claims that, “The operational review showed that persons with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities in parts of the world suffer from the risk of harassment and physical violence. The outcomes of the regional reviews reinforced the importance of the principles of freedom and equality in dignity and rights as well as non-discrimination. Structural violence in the form of homonegativity marginalizes and dehumanizes persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity, hindering their capacity to fully contribute to society, and denying them the civil rights that are typically afforded to other persons.”

Finally, it claims that “The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/234, in which the Assembly ... called for an operational review of the implementation of the Programme of Action.”

The “ICPD Beyond 2014” website then lists “the outcome documents from three major thematic ICPD reviews” which are:

1. ICPD Review: Bali Global Youth Forum
2. The ICPD Beyond 2014 International Conference on Human Rights Conference Report
3. The ICPD Beyond 2014 Expert Group Meeting on Women’s Health: Rights, Empowerment and Social Determinants

Showing just a few examples from one of these ICPD “review outcome documents” listed on the UN website, the Bali Global Youth Forum review, will reveal a radical sexual rights agenda that demands in the name of the world’s youth that governments legalize prostitution, abortion, and same-sex marriage, among other things.

It would not be unexpected for there to be an attempt to get the LGBT agenda now incorporated under reproductive health using the logic that LGBT people will not come forward and get the services they need to realize their reproductive health rights if they are discriminated against, so

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/framework-actions-follow-programme-action-international-conference-population-and#sthash.yASCzIOe.dpuf>

part of ensuring a right to “reproductive health” or “reproductive rights” is advancing LGBT rights and decriminalizing same-sex relations.

**Summary:** References to the outcome documents of the review conferences of ICPD and Beijing should be removed from the draft SDG targets, as such phrases are ambiguous and unclear and will likely be used to advance controversial abortion and sexual rights as specified in UNFPA’s controversial “ICPD Beyond 2014” report and the highly controversial outcome documents from the regional ICPD reviews. If member states wish to tie “reproductive rights” to the Beijing and ICPD + 5, +10, and +15 reviews, we suggest that the exact documents be specified rather than using the ambiguous and highly problematic reference to the “outcome documents of their review conferences,” which opens the door to highly controversial sexual rights. Better yet, since the term “reproductive rights” is now being used to advance abortion and controversial rights for gay and lesbian couples to obtain children, removing the reference altogether would be the best option.

### **Part III – Fifteen Strong Reasons to Keep “Reproductive Rights” Out of the SDGS**

UN Member States should remove reproductive rights from the draft SDG Target 5.6<sup>3</sup> which ensures “universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences” for the reasons below. For reasons also explained below, references to “reproductive health services” and “reproductive health” should also be rejected as part of the SDGs.

1. **“Reproductive rights” was specifically rejected by States during negotiations of the Rio + 20 outcome document “The Future We Want”** because this term has evolved in meaning since ICPD and has become one of the most controversial terms in UN negotiations.
2. **Since 1994 when ICPD was negotiated in Cairo, the meanings of the terms “reproductive health” and “reproductive rights” have been deliberately expanded by abortion and LGBT rights activists** with the active support of treaty body monitoring committees<sup>4</sup> and UN agencies to now include controversial sexual and abortion rights that were never intended by State parties.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Based on the latest version available, Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals. Available at <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1579SDGs%20Proposal.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> The CEDAW Committee has pressured 66 nations to legalize, remove penalties for, or increase access to abortion including countries in the following regions: Africa (17), Latin America (20), the Caribbean (4), Asia (13), Europe (4), the Middle East (4), and the Pacific (4).

<sup>5</sup> See “The Relentless Push to Create an ‘International Right’ to Abortion” at [http://www.familywatchinternational.org/fwi/documents/fwiPolicyBriefonAbortionandHumanRights\\_FinalforPublication.pdf](http://www.familywatchinternational.org/fwi/documents/fwiPolicyBriefonAbortionandHumanRights_FinalforPublication.pdf). This policy brief exposes the orchestrated plan by UN Agencies and pro-abortion NGOs to expand the definition of reproductive health and rights.

3. **“Reproductive Rights” is not referred to in *any* binding UN treaties or conventions** because so many countries have restrictions on abortion that it is impossible for States to agree on a working definition.
4. **Modifying “reproductive rights” with “in accordance with” ICPD and Beijing will not prevent NGOs and UN agencies from using the term “reproductive rights” to pressure countries to legalize and fund an unlimited right to abortion and other controversial sexual rights.** They are already using this term to do so now. Target 5.6 will give them even more leverage, which is why they are lobbying so heavily for it.
5. **Including the term “rights” in connection with “reproduction” in an SDG target elevates it to a priority among the targets** as States are duty bearers obligated to fulfill the internationally recognized “rights” of individuals. Other SDG goals and targets will suffer as a result as nations will be obligated to prioritize reproductive “rights.”
6. **The SDG process requires that every target have measurable indicators. What will the indicators be, and who will decide what they are?** Consider the World Health Organization’s indicators for reproductive rights as specified in their manual, “Safe abortion: Technical and policy guidance for health systems, Second edition.”<sup>6</sup> These indicators include measuring the number of abortion facilities in a country and the percentage of health providers trained to provide abortion.
7. **UN Member States, abortion rights NGOs,<sup>7</sup> and UN agencies lobbying for this target intend to use it to pressure states, not just to legalize and fund abortions on demand, but also to decriminalize HIV transmission and laws regulating sexual relations among LGBT populations.** (See UNFPA’s report “ICPD and Human Rights: 20 years of advancing reproductive rights,” which lists “sexual orientation” (11 Times), “transgender” (6 times), “gender identity” (5 times) and has multiple references to decriminalizing same-sex behavior and implementing public campaigns to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. All this under the banner of advancing reproductive health rights.)
8. **Reproductive “health” or “rights,” if it is to be included at all in the SDGs, belongs in the health section, not in the gender equality section.** By placing it in the gender equality section, it takes on the connotation of alleged rights relating to abortion or alleged rights relating to nondiscrimination in reproduction for sexual minorities, rather than the connotation of healthy reproduction. This is exactly why sexual rights activists have placed it there rather than in the health section where it would logically belong to promote healthy reproduction.

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<sup>6</sup> “Safe abortion: Technical and policy guidance for health systems, Second edition.” Available at [http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/unsafe\\_abortion/9789241548434/en/](http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/unsafe_abortion/9789241548434/en/)

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., Center for Reproductive Rights, “Reproductive Rights: A Tool for Monitoring State Obligations.” Available at [http://reproductiverights.org/sites/crr.civicactions.net/files/documents/crr\\_Monitoring\\_Tool\\_State\\_Obligations.pdf](http://reproductiverights.org/sites/crr.civicactions.net/files/documents/crr_Monitoring_Tool_State_Obligations.pdf). “[R]eproductive rights issues [include] freedom from discrimination, contraceptive information and services, safe pregnancy and childbirth, abortion and post-abortion care, comprehensive sexuality education, freedom from violence against women, and HIV/AIDS.”

9. **The term “reproductive rights” is commonly interpreted by UN-accredited abortion rights organizations including International Planned Parenthood Federation and UN agencies (UNFPA and the World Health Organization) to advance abortion rights.**<sup>8</sup>
10. **As per their report “ICPD and Human Rights: 20 years of advancing reproductive rights,” UNFPA lists “restrictive abortion laws” and “illegal abortion” as a barrier to “reproductive rights.” This sends a clear signal that UNFPA will use a reproductive rights SDG target to pressure countries to change any “restrictive” abortion laws. UNFPA’s report also identifies laws criminalizing same-sex behavior or HIV transmission as barriers to the fulfillment of reproductive rights.**<sup>9</sup>
11. **Including “reproductive rights” in the SDG goals or targets will open up a Pandora’s Box of controversial legal issues and policy battles related to human reproduction.** For example, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine claims that “reproductive rights” include rights to assisted reproduction for gay, lesbian and unmarried persons.<sup>10</sup> What about surrogate pregnancies and other controversial reproductive arrangements or alleged reproductive “rights” that violate the rights of the child to know and be cared for by their parents as specified in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?
12. **Elevating reproductive rights by including it in an SDG target further pits the alleged “right” of women to abort their child against the right to life of the child,** who, according to the CRC, is entitled to special protections “before as well as after birth.”
13. **Those pushing for abortion as a right under reproductive rights fail to disclose the well-documented mental and physical health risks and complications associated with abortion** that have negatively impacted millions of women worldwide.<sup>11</sup>
14. **The UN Charter, Article 2.7 states, “Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.”** Issues relating to abortion are clearly relegated to the states in ICPD; therefore, “reproductive rights” or provisions relating to “reproductive health,” which can be used to advance abortion, should not be included in the SDG targets.

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<sup>8</sup> See IPPF, “Charter on Sexual and Reproductive Rights.” Available at <http://www.ippf.org/resource/IPPF-Charter-Sexual-and-Reproductive-Rights>, and Center for Reproductive Rights, “Reproductive Rights: A Tool for Monitoring State Obligations.” Available at [http://reproductiverights.org/sites/crr.civicactions.net/files/documents/crr\\_Monitoring\\_Tool\\_State\\_Obligations.pdf](http://reproductiverights.org/sites/crr.civicactions.net/files/documents/crr_Monitoring_Tool_State_Obligations.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Available at <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/icpd-and-human-rights>

<sup>10</sup> See American Society for Reproductive Medicine, “Gay, Lesbian, and Unmarried Persons Reproductive Rights.” Available at <http://www.asrm.org/topics/detail.aspx?id=504>

<sup>11</sup> See more on complications from abortion here: [http://www.familywatchinternational.org/fwi/policy\\_brief\\_abortion.pdf](http://www.familywatchinternational.org/fwi/policy_brief_abortion.pdf)

- 15. Removing “reproductive rights” or “reproductive health” targets that can be used to pressure countries to legalize and fund abortion shows respect for the numerous countries that have restrictive abortion laws to protect their unborn children.**

*This brief was produced by Family Watch International and distributed by the UN Family Rights Caucus. The mission of the UN Family Rights Caucus (UNFRC) is to promote the family as the fundamental unit of society as called for in Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. UNFRC has member organizations and individual members in over 160 countries.*