



# Women



## ***Cairo Definition of Reproductive Health***

The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo and the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing expanded the right to family planning to include the right to better sexual and reproductive health. Building on the World Health Organization's definition of health, the Cairo Programme defines reproductive health as:

“Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system, and to its functions and processes. Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. Implicitly in this last condition are the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulations of fertility which are not against the law and the right of access to appropriate health-care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant. In line with the above definition of reproductive health, reproductive health care is defined as the constellation of methods, techniques and services that contribute to reproductive health and well-being by preventing and solving reproductive health problems. It also includes sexual health, the purpose of which is the enhancement of life and personal relations, and not merely counselling and care related to reproduction and sexually transmitted diseases.”

- An estimated 1,600 women die every day from complications caused by pregnancy and child birth, 99% in developing countries.
- Each year, approximately 2 million girls are at risk of female genital mutilation.
- About 70,000 women die every year from unsafe abortions, and many more suffer infections and other consequences.
- Women are more likely than men to contract HIV through sexual encounters and about 42 per cent of all persons infected with HIV are women.
- Fifty-one percent of all pregnant women suffer from iron-deficiency anemia.
- In many countries of South Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, one-third to one-half of women are mothers before the age of 20.
- Cancer of the cervix, the most common form of cancer in developing countries, is often linked to the sexually transmitted human papilloma virus.
- Domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse are a significant cause of disability among women.

See more at United Nations Website

<http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/women/womrepro.htm>