Inter-Agency Working Group for Reproductive Health in Crises

There are approximately 42 million people displaced by conflict and persecution (UNHCR, 2011 Global Trends; Internal Displacement Monitoring Center). Fifteen million were also internally displaced due to sudden onset natural disaster (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 2011). The majority of countries with the highest maternal mortality ratios and newborn mortality rates are crisis-affected. Addressing the human rights and sexual and reproductive health needs of women, men and adolescents affected by conflict and natural disaster is an issue of critical importance globally and is essential to achieving MDG 4, 5, and 6.

MISSION: To improve the sexual and reproductive health of women, men, boys and girls affected by conflict and natural disasters.

WHO WE ARE: IAWG is a broad-based highly collaborative coalition of 18 Steering Committee member agencies – representing the UN, governments, NGOs, universities, and donors. Formed in 1995, and currently a network of over 1,500 individual members from 450 agencies, the IAWG remains committed to advancing the sexual and reproductive health of people affected by conflict and natural disaster.

WHAT WE DO: Among populations affected by conflict and natural disaster, the IAWG:
- Documents gaps, accomplishments, and lessons learned;
- Evaluates the state of sexual and reproductive health in the field;
- Establishes technical standards for the delivery of reproductive health services;
- Builds and disseminates evidence to policy makers, managers, and practitioners; and
- Advocates for the inclusion of crisis-affected persons in global development and humanitarian agendas.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS:
- Field Manual: Published in 2010, the revised Interagency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings continues to serve as the authoritative guidance on sexual and reproductive health programming in crises.
- Minimum Initial Service Package: Updated in 2011 to reflect advances in evidence-based knowledge, the MISP is included in the 2011 revised SPHERE standards and guidelines.
- Strengthening the Evidence Base: Convened a technical workshop in 2011 on setting research priorities for sexual and reproductive health in crisis settings.
- Regional Networks: In 2011, launched the Eastern European regional network during the annual meeting in Istanbul; previously established regional networks include: Asia-Pacific, sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Annual Meetings: Held its 13th annual meeting in November 2011 in Istanbul; exchanged information, identified challenges, and collectively worked towards the institutionalization of quality sexual and reproductive health care in crises.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:
- Fourteenth annual meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 2013.
- 2012-2014 global reproductive health evaluation.

Membership in IAWG is open to representatives of the UN, nongovernmental, research, and donor agencies. Additional Information, including our reports and tools, are available on our website: http://www.iawg.net