

BACKGROUND BRIEF: IPPF position paper on the climate crisis and sexual and reproductive health and rights

Purpose: This document provides background on the development of the draft IPPF position paper on the climate crisis and sexual and reproductive health and rights and highlights a few points of discussion that the leads of the process would like to bring to the approvers' attention.

1) Development of the position paper

The development of the position paper was led by Raffaella Dattler, Advocacy Team, IPPF Central Office, and Ida Klockmann, Danish Family Planning Association (DFPA). An advisory group composed of representatives from different IPPF Secretariat offices and divisions as well as from IPPF Member Associations from across regions was set up to feed in and provide guidance on the directions and contents of the position paper throughout different stages of the development process. Please see Annex I for a timeline of the process and Annex II for a list of advisory group members. IPPF Policy 4.17 on the topic of the climate crisis and sexual and reproductive health and rights was updated in parallel to the development of the position paper and in alignment with its contents.

2) Rationale for the position paper

The climate crisis has major adverse effects on the achievement of sustainable development and the enjoyment of human rights and is one of the key challenges of this time. Public awareness and concern on the climate crisis has grown significantly in recent years, including as a result of climate activism spearheaded particularly by young people. Within this broader context, linkages between the climate crisis and sexual and reproductive health and rights have become a topic of growing interest and focus among donor and national governments, civil society, and other stakeholders.

Linkages between sexual and reproductive health and rights and the climate crisis are explored and discussed across different pillars of climate change response, ranging from mitigation to adaptation and resilience, as well as with regard to environmental sustainability more widely, with different stakeholders taking a variety of views on how and where best to bring sexual and reproductive health and rights into the debate. Much attention has focused particularly on the role of contraception, including, controversially, in relation to climate change mitigation and the lessening of environmental impacts at more local levels through a reduction in fertility levels,¹ with other aspects of sexual and reproductive health and rights receiving comparatively less focus. Views range from support for family planning as a solution to climate change,² to a focus on inclusion of sexual and reproductive health and rights, including family planning, in

¹ See Margaret Pyke Trust et al (undated) Thriving Together: Environmental Conservation and Family Planning: <https://thrivingtogether.global/s/Thriving-Together-Statement.pdf>. For a strong critique, see Hendrixson, A and Ojeda, D (2020) Population: Neo-Malthusian promotion of family planning as the solution to hunger, conflict, and poverty has contributed to destructive population control approaches, that are targeted most often at poor, racialized women. Uneven Earth. Available at: <http://unevenearth.org/2020/07/population/?fbclid=IwAR07X5hT5wp358n5qWLCBf8nUiheLRAbQwviQCbyV3mmzSXsAdZ3Q59zXxs>.

² See Project Drawdown (2020) THE Drawdown Review 2020 – Climate Solutions for a New Decade. Available at: <https://drawdown.org/drawdown-review>; see also Project Drawdown website, Solutions, Health and Education:

climate change adaptation and resilience policies,³ to a rejection of population-focused narratives and framing of messaging through a gender and reproductive justice lens.⁴

A range of stakeholders in the sexual and reproductive health and rights space are currently exploring or reassessing their positioning and engagement on the climate crisis. This includes UNFPA, which has recently adopted a value proposition for the organization on climate change, and MSI, which is developing a mandatory internal guidance document on the issue.

Given the above developments and the range of views on where and how to position sexual and reproductive health and rights in relation to the climate crisis, it is critical for IPPF, as a global healthcare provider and leading advocate of sexual and reproductive health and rights, to update and clarify its own position and priorities for engagement on the issue. IPPF's existing Policy 4.17, adopted in 2011, is out of date and leaves much room for interpretation. Its uncritical embrace of narratives linking family planning to a management of climate change and reduction of carbon emissions seems problematic from a current standpoint and is misaligned with more recent organizational positioning on the issue.

3) Important areas of discussion

Extent of current and future IPPF engagement on the climate crisis

The development of this position paper has been met with real enthusiasm by IPPF colleagues, demonstrated by the large number of representatives from all corners of the Federation that were glad to join the advisory group on the development of the paper and actively contributed to the process. Interest has been high from strategic partnerships and development colleagues, who see opportunities for fundraising; from advocates in donor countries, who have to grapple with often concerning rhetoric on the issue from stakeholders in their countries; as well as from colleagues in regions where the effects of the climate crisis are particularly severely felt.

Advisory group members asked a range of questions about the extent to which what is described in the draft position paper would mean a scaling up of IPPF engagement on the issue as opposed to just a continuation of existing work. It was asked, for example, whether vulnerability to impacts of the climate crisis, such as extreme weather events, would or could be a consideration in IPPF's new model for resource allocation, such as in the assessment of country need. Advisory group members would have liked to see more concrete commitments in several places in section III. b. (IPPF priorities for advocacy and engagement) where language currently is vague.

<https://www.drawdown.org/solutions/health-and-education>; see further William J Ripple, Christopher Wolf, Thomas M Newsome, Phoebe Barnard, William R Moomaw, World Scientists' Warning of a Climate Emergency, *BioScience*, Volume 70, Issue 1, January 2020, Pages 8–12. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/biz088>.

³ See, for example, UNFPA et al (2019) Future Africa Call to Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Gender and Climate Change Resilience. Available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QaY-vVeg90ZEtkwO5-We7VxHzMFotG6D/view>.

⁴ See, for example, Hendrixson, A et al (2019). A renewed call for feminist resistance to population control. *DifferenTakes*. Available at: <https://sites.hampshire.edu/popdev/files/2019/11/DT-94.pdf>; or Climate Justice Alliance et al (2019) A Feminist Agenda for a Green New Deal. Available at: <http://feministgreennewdeal.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Feminist-GND-Kickstart-note-Final-Draft-9.20.2019.pdf>.

It was discussed that the scope for a significant organizational prioritization of the issue may be limited within the remaining timeframe of IPPF's current strategic framework, particularly given the various stages of reform and reprioritization the organization has recently undergone. However, with the development of IPPF's new strategic framework for the post-2022 period expected to start shortly, it was hoped that the climate crisis would be an important consideration in that process.

IPPF's own carbon footprint and environmental impacts

In conversations with members of the advisory group, the reputational risk involved in IPPF releasing an external position paper on the climate crisis without having adequate internal policies in place addressing IPPF's own carbon footprint and environmental impacts was repeatedly highlighted.

The draft position paper and draft revised Policy 4.17 include sections on IPPF's own environmental impacts, based on information provided by the IPPF Programme Manager, Restricted Funds Delivery & Compliance. They point to efforts underway to put in place an Environmental Management System for the IPPF Secretariat; to set clear objectives for reducing its environmental impacts and publish information on its environmental performance at least annually; as well as to support IPPF Member Associations in the development and implementation of environmental risk mitigation strategies for their operations.

While these are promising propositions, they are fairly vague at this point and it is clear that they look to future rather than existing policies and practices of IPPF. This falls short of the work of other organizations in this field, such as UNFPA, which in a recent value proposition⁵ of the organization on climate change was able to highlight that "UNFPA's operations and programming have as low an environmental and climate change footprint as possible" and point to existing Social and Environmental Standards of the organization as well as its Environmental Efficiency Initiative⁶. As part of the latter, UNFPA is able to highlight its status as a climate neutral organization and reference an annual monitoring of its operational carbon footprint and concrete emissions reductions it has achieved in this regard.

Members of the advisory group felt that to ensure its believability as an actor and advocate in the climate space, IPPF should be able to make concrete and ambitious commitments and adopt and implement sound policies for a reduction of its organizational carbon footprint and environmental impacts. However, members were also cognizant that the development and operationalization of such policies could take a potentially long time, and felt that the release of the position paper should not be delayed until that point. It was suggested that going ahead with the release of the position paper while pointing to concrete commitments and efforts underway to improve IPPF's environmental performance and proceeding with these without delay may be the best option. Sections in the position paper and Policy 4.17 discussing IPPF's own environmental impacts could be updated in line with any new IPPF commitments and policies on the issue as and when they are adopted.

⁵ See UNFPA (undated) UNFPA and the Climate Crisis: Strengthening Resilience and Protecting Progress within the Decade of Action.

⁶ See UNFPA website, Corporate Environmental Responsibility in UNFPA: <https://www.unfpa.org/corporate-environmental-responsibility-unfpa>.

Annex I: Timeline

Milestone	Date (all 2020)
First draft of ToR for position paper finalised	Mid-May
First internal consultation on ToR at IPPF and DFPA and clarification of IPPF sign-off process for position paper	Week of 18 May, and continued
Call for expressions of interest to join advisory group on development of position paper, accompanied by ToR, asking for expression of interest by end of June	Week of 15 June
Setting up of advisory group on position paper	End of June
Introductory webinars for advisory group on topic of climate change and sexual and reproductive health and rights	8 and 9 July
Skeleton position paper – indicating structure and broad areas of focus proposed – shared with advisory group, for written input by 7 August	17 July
Consultative calls with advisory group on skeleton position paper	5-11 August
Draft position paper shared with advisory group	7 September
Input by advisory group on draft position paper	21 September
Submission of revised position paper and draft revised Policy 4.17 to IPPF Directors' Leadership Team (DLT)	2 October
Translation of draft revised Policy 4.17 ahead of submission to Board of Trustees	October
Submission of draft revised Policy 4.17 and translations to IPPF Board of Trustees/Policy, Investment and Strategy Committee	October
IPPF Board of Trustees meeting	17-18 November
Further revisions as needed and finalisation, design of position paper	November/December

Annex II: Advisory group members

The below is a list of current and former* advisory group members.

IPPF entity	Contact person	Position
Institutional Delivery, IPPF Central Office	Catherine Fuller	Programme Manager, Restricted Funds Delivery & Compliance
Institutional Delivery, IPPF Central Office	Karthik Srinivasan	Chief Medical Advisor
Technical Team, IPPF Central Office	*Darcy Weaver (no longer with IPPF)	Senior Technical Advisor, Youth Services
Technical Team, IPPF Central Office	Sarah Haynes	Technical Adviser (Youth Programming)
Technical Team, IPPF Central Office	YuHsin Huang	Senior Technical Advisor, Comprehensive Service Delivery
Strategic Partnerships and Development Team, IPPF Central Office	Morag Santini	Bid Management Coordinator
Strategic Partnerships and Development Team, IPPF Central Office	Elizabeth Marks	Resource Mobilization Officer
Strategic Partnerships and Development Team, IPPF Central Office	*Emma Bakhle (no longer with IPPF)	Resource Mobilization Manager High Value Partnerships
Communications Team, IPPF Central Office	Marek Pruszewicz	Director of Communications
Advocacy Team, IPPF Central Office	Ana Maria Bejar	Director of Advocacy
IPPF Humanitarian Hub	Robyn Drysdale	Deputy Director (Pacific)

IPPF Australia and New Zealand Office	Lisa Camilleri	Chief
IPPF Australia and New Zealand Office	Nabreesa Murphy	Resource Mobilisation Coordinator
IPPF Geneva Office	Catarina Carvalho	Head
IPPF EN	Joke Lannoye	Project Coordinator Countdown 2030 Europe
IPPF EN	Rachel Litster	Project Manager Values-Based Messaging for Family Planning & SRHR
IPPF EN	Lilit Poghosyan	Lead European Advocacy and Mobilization
IPPF ESEAOR	Natassha Kaur	Senior Officer, Advocacy and External Relations
IPPF ESEAOR (SROP)	Tura Lewai	Programme Officer, National Change
Family Health Options Kenya (FHOK)	Esther Muketo	Director of Resource Mobilisation
Family Health Options Kenya (FHOK)	Benard Washika	Programme Manager
Family Health Options Kenya (FHOK)	Jane Nyanjom	Project Coordinator
Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU)	Richard Mugenyi	Advocacy and Communications Manager
Kiribati Family Health Association (KFHA)	Norma Yeeting	Executive Director
Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association (IPPA)	Yudi Supriadi	Head of Program and Advocacy

Family Planning Organization of the Philippines (FPOP)	Nandy Senoc	Executive Director
PPFA (US)	Caitlin Horrigan	Director, Global Advocacy
Caribbean Family Planning Association (CFPA)	Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth	CEO
RFSU (Sweden)	Sara Österlund	Advocacy Officer
Sex og Politikk (Norway)	Kristine Bjartnes	Advisor
Rutgers (Netherlands)	Evi van den Dungen	Advisor