



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés



UNHCR

Case postale 2500
CH-1211 Genève 2

22 November 2010

Dear Representative of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crisis

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) would like to thank you for your recognition of our commitment to serving the reproductive health needs of refugees and other persons of concern in your letter dated August 02, 2010. I would like to ensure you that UNHCR will continue to promote and support integrated sexual and reproductive health programmes.

While UNHCR focused on emergency obstetric care, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS during the past few years, family planning activities were not given sufficient attention to improve access and quality to the different methods currently available.

Building on stronger programmes, such as in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Thailand, UNHCR will support the expansion of family planning activities in 2011 to improve service providers' skills and a broader choice of contraceptive methods.

More specifically, the Public Health and HIV section is closely working with field operations and partners to promote dual protection and family planning options for HIV positive clients. UNHCR is promoting the development of communication strategies, use of community-based approach to awareness-raising on family planning for displaced populations, and use of up to date technologies. The agency is engaging key refugee and other displaced persons in sensitization interventions to demystify the use of family planning and promote healthy family life.

UNHCR is building on positive field experiences involving men as partners in reproductive health. In Bangladesh, regular awareness sessions and door-to-door visits led to acceptance and use of family planning methods in refugee populations that translated into voluntary visits to the family planning clinics and demand for contraception increased in 2010.

UNHCR will continue its collaboration with the Ministries of Health, UNFPA and other international organizations (IPAS, IPPF, Marie Stopes International) on service providers' capacity building in reproductive health, and particularly in family planning.

Please be ensured that UNHCR is committed to improve the provision and access to family planning services by refugees and other displaced populations; this will be our focus in 2011. The ultimate goal of UNHCR's reproductive health interventions is to improve the lives and well-being of refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR, and to ensure a steady progress towards the Millennium Development Goals 5 and 6.

Sincerely,

Mr. Jean François Durieux
Director of Division of Programme
Support and Management

The Representative
Inter-Agency Working Group
on Reproductive Health in Crisis