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Publications

Amnesty International Reports & Statements:

28 April: Mexico: *Invisible Victims: Migrants on the Move in Mexico*, documents the alarming levels of abuse, including rape, kidnapping, and murder, faced by the tens of thousands of Central American irregular migrants that every year attempt to reach the US by crossing Mexico.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/widespread-abuse-migrants-mexico-human-rights-crisis-2010-04-27>

27 April: Iraq: A new report, *Iraq: Civilians Under Fire*, documents how hundreds of civilians are being killed or injured each month. Many are specifically targeted by armed groups because of their religious, ethnic or sexual identity or because they speak out against human rights abuses.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/iraq-must-protect-civilians-risk-deadly-violence-2010-04-27>

23 April: UAE: Indian migrant workers, sentenced to death on 29 March, are alleged to have been tortured by police over nine days while in custody in a bid to make them 'confess' to the crime. The men were beaten with clubs, subjected to electric shocks, deprived of sleep and forced to stand on one leg for 'prolonged periods', say Lawyers For Human Rights International (LFHRI), an Indian NGO campaigning on behalf of the men. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/uae-must-investigate-allegations-torture-indian-men-death-row-2010-04-23>

22 April: Nigeria: AI has condemned a reported move by Nigerian state governors to execute death row inmates to ease overcrowding and urged the authorities to instead address the underlying problems in the criminal justice system. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/nigerian-governor-%E2%80%98threatens-execute-inmates%E2%80%99-ease-prison-congestion-2010-04-22>

22 April: China: According to Chinese media reports, officials in Puning City, Guangdong Province aim to sterilize 9,559 people, some against their will, by 26 April. The authorities started the campaign to sterilize people who already have at least one child on 7 April. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/thousands-risk-forced-sterilization-china-2010-04-22>

Death Penalty

Gaza: Hamas said it will continue executions of those convicted of spying for Israel despite the outrage of human rights groups. *AFP* (19 April)

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jdp4SKrKXwKt5Hlvdf61rBi3AnMQ>

Nigeria: Nigeria's state governors have backed the execution of more than 300 prisoners on death row to clear space in the overcrowded jails. *AFP* (22 April)

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gdNYCQesSvxYJ6mo4D13Y8mJDe9Q>

USA: Utah is the only state in the US to offer death row inmates the choice of a firing squad rather than lethal injection. It is an option that at least four prisoners have indicated that they will take. A judge has signed the death warrant, setting in motion a process that will lead to Ronnie Lee Gardner's execution in a specially built chair, with a hood to shield him from the sight of the gun barrels and a metal pan to catch his blood. *The Times* (28 April)

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us_and_america/article7106634.ece#cid=OTC-RSS&attr=797093

Food Security, Malnutrition, and Poverty

Haiti: When food aid is provided the entire supply chain can be affected, from farmers to wholesalers to merchants selling rice in local markets, many of whom say business is down because people are receiving free rice from donors. Donors have agreed to scale back, but experts say donors can help the needy and a nation's farmers at the same time if they buy food for humanitarian aid locally rather than importing it. *VOA* (29 April) <http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/americas/Food-Aid-Hurts-Haitis-Farmers--92405389.html>

Mali: The government and some NGOs say they are short of funding to adequately scale up an emergency response to the needs of 629,000 people who face food insecurity in parts of western, northern and northeastern Mali. *AlertNet* (20 April)

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/Odd74df1f08c309ac1f630cdae214702.htm>

Niger: The WFP doubled its aid Monday to Niger as thousands join a desperate exodus from parched farmland in western Africa's Sahel region, where 10 million people are facing hunger. The agency is also seeking almost half of the 182 million dollars it needs to scale up its operations in Niger. *AFP* (27 April)

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/a/-/world/7113272/hunger-forces-mass-exodus-in-parched-niger/>

Timor-Leste: Almost a third of Timor-Leste's maize harvest is lost each year due to poor storage facilities, analysts say, fuelling food insecurity. "This is a multi-faceted problem, but better storage containers could certainly mitigate the problem, provided people understand their benefits," Paul Joicey, country director for Oxfam, said. *IRIN* (26 April) <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88925>

Yemen: Yemen and the WFP called for help from the local and international organizations to offer humanitarian assistance to respond to needs of the IDPs in the Saada and Harf Sufyan. *Saba News* (28 April) <http://www.sabanews.net/en/news212907.htm>

Health Services

Afghanistan: About half a million Afghans, the majority of them in southern Afghanistan where Taliban militants are active, have no access to basic health services due to continued instability and conflicts, Peter Graaff the Country Representative of WHO said in Kabul. *CriEnglish* (26 April) <http://english.cri.cn/6966/2010/04/26/1881s565636.htm>

Sierra Leone: Sierra Leone has launched a free healthcare plan for pregnant women, breast-feeding mothers and children under five years old. But there is concern that Sierra Leone lacks the resources and infrastructure to support the new programme. *BBC* (27 April) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/8645968.stm>

Sri Lanka: Healthcare services in Sri Lanka's conflict-affected east should not be forgotten as humanitarian agencies focus their efforts on rebuilding the country's north, WHO says. "With the international community focused on the rehabilitation of the Vanni area in the north, support needed for the rehabilitation work in the east will remain difficult," Edwin Salvador, WHO's technical officer for emergency humanitarian action, said. *IRIN* (20 April) <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88862>

Uganda: The deputy Speaker of Parliament, Rebecca Kadaga, has blamed the shortage of medical doctors in Uganda on legislators who have not pushed for policies that would increase the number – currently a mere 2000 doctors. *New Vision* (28 April) <http://allafrica.com/stories/201004290538.html>

HIV and AIDS

China: China has revoked a ban on people with HIV or AIDS entering the country, softening a decades-old policy that drew sharp criticism this year when an Australian writer was blocked after declaring himself HIV-positive. *Reuters* (27 April) <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE63R09X20100428>

Kenya: The government is conducting a survey that will inform its first HIV campaigns targeted at men who have sex with men (MSM), who have so far been left out of HIV prevention efforts. Dr Mary Mwangombe, a researcher at the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), in the coastal town of Kilifi, said HIV programming for men who have sex with men and their partners – both male and female – was difficult because of the illegal nature of male-male sex and the public's intolerance of it. *PlusNews* (20 April) <http://www.plusnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88867>

USA: Fewer than one-quarter of boys ages 15 to 19 were counselled about sexually transmitted diseases or HIV by a health care provider in the previous year, according to a national survey of 1,121 young men done in 2002, representing no significant change since 1995, when a similar proportion received such counselling, the study found. (For study, see publications section). *New York Times* (16 April) <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/20/health/research/20behav.html?hpw=&&scp=3&sq=few%20boys%20counseled%20on%20sexual%20health&st=cse>

Malaria, TB and Other Diseases

Africa: UNICEF and the WHO have announced that sixteen countries in central and western Africa are grappling with measles outbreaks at time when funding for vaccination programs has fallen short of needs. *SOS Children's Villages* (22 April) <http://www.soschildrensvillages.ca/News/News/child-charity-news/Pages/Measles-Africa-Child-Health-154.aspx>

Haiti: With the rainy season beginning and much of the population in closely confined spaces in tent cities, health workers are on the lookout for infectious and water-borne diseases. *VOA News* (19 April) <http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/americas/Health-Workers-in-Haiti-Fear-Spike-in-Infectious-Disease-91524669.html>

Kenya: In Kenya, 92 children under the age of five contract malaria every day. Since 2000 when African leaders resolved to halve malaria deaths by this year, many plans have been developed. One was part of WHO's guidelines released last month, advising that accurate tests should be conducted before dispensing malaria drugs. But in impoverished communities in Kenya diagnostic testing is often unavailable. Today, many Kenyans choose to self-medicate and hope for the best. *Daily Nation* (24 April) <http://allafrica.com/stories/201004240011.html>

Maternal and Infant Health

Canada: Canada's proposed G8 child and maternal health plan may have caused controversy in Parliament over its failure to support funding for abortion, but it is also drawing favourable reviews from international health and academic experts. In fact, researchers and health leaders in the field of child and maternal health in developing nations say that the rough outline for a Canadian strategy unveiled at the G8 meeting of development ministers in Halifax, Nova Scotia, amounts to a highly promising boost for evidence-based international health programs. *CMAJ News* (29 April) <http://www.cmaj.ca/earlyreleases/29apr10-canadian-child-and-maternal-health-plan-lauded.dtl>

Global: Letters to the editor regarding the article "Maternal Deaths in Sharp Decline Across the Globe" (front page, April 14). *New York Times* (18 April) <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/19/opinion/l19maternal.html?ref=opinion>

Nicaragua: NGOs in Nicaragua are questioning data on the maternal mortality rate released by the government, which is claiming a historic decline in the indicator, and they warn that the reduction target that the country has committed itself to by 2015 is still out of reach. *IPS* (21 April) <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=51141>

Pakistan: While women want to limit family size, almost 84 percent of them do not use any FP method, according to the Pakistan Demographic Health Survey. These women have an "unmet need" for FP, because they lack access to contraception. Many rural areas do not provide reproductive health care. As such, one out of every three pregnancies is unplanned. *IPS* (30 April) <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=51270>

Mental Health

South Africa: A large proportion of pregnant women who access antenatal care in South African clinics and hospitals are depressed which could pose a risk to their unborn babies. However, the Perinatal Mental Health Project in Cape Town, which offers counselling to mothers throughout their pregnancy, is playing a role by tackling depression in the initial stages of the pregnancy. *Health-e* (21 April) <http://allafrica.com/stories/201004210723.html>

Prisons

Canada: A new federal study reports that almost one in 20 federal prisoners is HIV positive, a rate that AIDS support groups say rivals many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The Correctional Service of Canada analysis, based on a survey of 3,370 prisoners in federal penitentiaries, says that 4.6 per cent of inmates said they had the virus and 31 per cent said they had hepatitis C. *The Vancouver Sun* (22 April) <http://www.vancouversun.com/health/rampant+federal+prisons+Report/2938242/story.html>

South Africa: MPs demand to know what action the correctional services department will take to stamp out sexual violence in men's prisons after receiving a "shocking" report that details sodomy and forced "marriages". *Times Live* (14 April) <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article403437.ece/Prison-rapes-shock-MPs>

Zambia: Conditions in Zambia's prisons are so overcrowded and medical care so inadequate that they are breeding grounds for disease and pose a serious threat to public health, says a new report by Human Rights Watch, produced in association with the AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa and the Prisons Care and Counselling Association. *BMJ* (27 April) http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/extract/340/apr27_4/c2225

Report at: 'Unjust and Unhealthy: HIV, TB, and Abuse in Zambian Prisons' (2010), *Human Rights Watch*, <http://www.hrw.org/node/89834>

Violence Against Women

Canada: Over the past year, 62 names have been added to the list of missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada. The homicide rate for aboriginal women is almost seven times greater than non-aboriginal women. *The Vancouver Sun* (21 April) <http://www.vancouversun.com/news/List+missing+murdered+aboriginal+women+Canada+grows/2933684/story.html>

DRC: Congolese laws against sexual violence are not being implemented and a withdrawal of UN peacekeepers from the country would make the struggle against endemic rape "a lot more difficult", the UN said. With celebrations of the 50th anniversary of independence this year and elections next, Congo is keen for the peacekeeping mission, known as MONUC, to start withdrawing within months and wants the last blue helmet out in 2011. *IOL* (20 April) http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=68&art_id=nw20100419222336477C423490

Uganda: The fate of thousands of women and girls held as sex slaves and child soldiers by Uganda's Lords Resistance Army rebels hangs in the balance. Since the insurgency began in 1986, the LRA has abducted thousands of women and girls. Some find opportunities to escape their captors, but according to a 2008 UNICEF Humanitarian Situation Report, approximately 3,000 women and children are still held by the rebels. The delay in signing a peace agreement between the government of Uganda and the LRA has raised fresh concerns about their fate. *IPS* (20 April) <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=51122>

USA: The American Academy of Pediatrics has adopted a new statement on female genital mutilation. Rather than opposing FGM in itself, the statement commits the AAP to opposing “genital cutting that poses risks of physical or psychological harm”. (Amnesty International calls for an end to *all* forms of FGM.) Committee on Bioethics. Policy Statement Ritual Genital Cutting of Female Minors. OI: 10.1542/peds.2010-0187, Pediatrics published online Apr 26, 2010; Available at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/peds.2010-0187v1>.

Water and Sanitation

Ethiopia: Almost a quarter of Addis Ababa residents have no access to toilets, says a new report by the Addis Ababa city authorities. “We estimate that some three million people live in Addis Ababa. Out of this nearly 25 percent of the population have no access to toilets and defecate in rivers crossing the city” the report says. *IRIN* (20 April) <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88861>

Tanzania: Tanzania has unveiled the Household and Community Latrine Improvement Campaign. The initiative, being implemented in 132 districts countrywide, focuses on increasing sanitation within homes and communities with the aim of improving latrine facilities that are used by all members of the family. *This Day* (20 April) <http://www.thisday.co.tz/?l=10817>

Courses and Conferences

Inequalities in Health and Health Care

7-11 June, 2010 University of Geneva

The Foundation Swiss School of Public Health Plus

The course is intended for PhD students and other researchers interested in the quantitative analysis of inequality and inequity in health and health care. It consists of five days of lectures and computing laboratory sessions on a number of topics related to the measurement and explanation of inequalities in health and health care.

http://www.sspplus.ch/spip.php?page=ssph_show_cours_details&lang=en&id_course=40

First Global Symposium on Health Systems Research: Young Researchers Essay Competition

16 – 19 November 2010, Montreux, Switzerland.

The competition aims to identify and encourage young researchers at the early stage of their career and inspire many to action through provocative, idealistic and passionate ideas. Essay submission deadline: 17 May 2010. For more information, visit: <http://www.hsr-symposium.org/index.php/young-researchers-call>

20th World Congress for Sexual Health

12 – 16 June 2011, Glasgow, United Kingdom.

The biennial World Association for Sexual Health Congress unites international clinicians, researchers, educators, activists and policy makers specializing in the multitude of fields related to sexual health. For more information, visit: <http://www2.kenes.com/was2011/pages/home.aspx>

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) Conference: Nurses Driving Access, Quality and Health

2-8 May 2011 Malta

This ICN International Conference will present strong evidence demonstrating how nurses, as key members of the health services team, promote and contribute to quality and accessible health care. The Conference will provide opportunities to disseminate nursing knowledge and leadership across specialities, cultures and countries. The three ICN pillars – Professional practice, Regulation and Socio-economic Welfare – will frame the scientific programme and the dynamic exchange of experiences and expertise. More information at: www.icn2011.ch

The WHO Scientific Resource Group on Equity Analysis and Research together with the **Global Forum for Health Research and People's Health Movement** just opened a call for research proposals from civil society organizations (CSOs) on the theme:

“Advancing health equity through research and practice – identifying what works to reduce health inequities”. Deadline for entries 23 May 2010. The call is available at: <http://bit.ly/bvtCN3>

Publications

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Hossain S.M.I et al (2009), 'ECP Handbook: Introducing and Mainstreaming the Provision of Emergency Contraceptive Pills in Developing Countries', *Population Council*. To access the English or French versions, visit: http://www.popcouncil.org/publications/books/2009_ECPHandbook.asp

Marcell A. et al (4 February 2010), 'Prevalence of Sexually Transmitted Infection/Human Immunodeficiency Virus Counseling Services Received by Teen Males, 1995–2002', *Journal of Adolescent Health* <http://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X%2809%2900648-X/abstract>

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http://www.csvr.org.za/images/docs/inmatessexualhealth_a41.pdf

'The EU Role in Global Health' (2010), *European Commission*. Available online at: <http://bit.ly/9p1etf>

Treatment of Tuberculosis: guidelines for national programmes 4th edition (2010), *World Health Organization*. http://www.who.int/tb/publications/tb_treatmentguidelines/en/index.html

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