



# Advocacy Update

Sent September 22, 2010

Janet Stovin, WRJ's Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Delegate to the UN, attended the 63rd UN Department of Public Information (DPI)/Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Conference on global health, which was held in Melbourne, Australia on 30 August – 1 September. WRJ's interest in the UN dates from its creation in 1945 and we became accredited to the UN's DPI as an NGO in 1986. NGO delegates have several responsibilities: disseminating UN information and resources to our members, informing the DPI about WRJ UN-related activities, and when invited, participating in UN-related conferences. Janet's report on the 63rd conference follows.

"The topic of the 63rd UN DPI/NGO Conference was 'Advance Global Health: Achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).'" The MDGs are benchmarks set in 2000 to be reached by 2015 and were signed by almost all UN member states. The goals are: End Abject Poverty, Universal Education, Gender Equality, Child Health, Maternal Health, Prevent HIV/AIDS, Sustainable Environment, and Global Partnership. WRJ adopted the resolution, Ending Global Poverty, in support of the MDGs in 2006.

The conference addressed the MDGs on health, including challenges, the role of NGOs in achieving global health, strategies for NGO advocacy, and best practices. Sixteen-hundred people from throughout the world attended plenaries, roundtables, exhibits and workshops. For the first time at an NGO conference, WRJ co-sponsored a workshop: Sharing Best Practices to Advance Global Health, organized by Hadassah. Co-sponsoring this workshop gave WRJ name recognition and opened up very good networking opportunities."

## **The Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health**

The UN ten-year review of progress and shortcomings in reaching the MDG benchmarks has been taking place this week. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has just announced a forty billion dollar drive to improve the health of women and children around the world – an effort that could potentially save sixteen million women's and children's lives by 2015. The funding for the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health will come from governments, foundations, philanthropists and individuals and will seek to improve health care and prevent deaths among pregnant women and children under the age of five in countries with the lowest income.

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