



REALIZING RIGHTS THE ETHICAL GLOBALIZATION INITIATIVE

Realizing Rights: Action Update Spring 2008



As World Health Day falls every year in April, it seems a good moment to reflect on our efforts at Realizing Rights to promote greater respect for the human right to health.

In March we were honored to play a key role in the first ever [Global Forum on Human Resources for Health](#) which was held in Kampala, Uganda. Over 1500 participants from around the world came together to call for immediate and sustained action to resolve the critical global shortage of health workers. Without a strong and effective human infrastructure, health systems will never be able to tackle crippling diseases or achieve national and global health goals. The plan of action adopted by the Forum, if implemented, could help turn the crisis around over the next decade.

Our work to strengthen health leadership in developing countries has also moved forward thanks to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and its [support for our new Ministerial Leadership Initiative for Global Health](#), (MLI) a joint project in cooperation with the Health Financing Task Force and the Council of Women World Leaders. We have issued a call for submissions to participate in the technical assistance program that will support selected ministers of health and their senior staff to improve the equity and effectiveness of public and aid financing for health.

In April, in cooperation with the World Health Organization and the Global Health Workforce Alliance, we launched an [online global dialogue on Health Worker Migration](#) with over 700 participants taking part from more than 100 countries. This worldwide virtual discussion provided important insights into efforts being made to address the loss of skilled health workers from developing countries and will contribute to the development of a framework for a Global Code of Practice for Health Worker Migration within the WHO.

Human rights and a focus on the right to health provide a powerful standard by which to ensure that individuals, marginalized populations and communities are at the center of efforts to strengthen health systems.

I hope you will take some time to read about these and other activities in this newsletter and learn more by visiting RealizingRights.org.

- Mary Robinson
President, Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative

Realizing the Right to Health



[First Global Forum on Human Resources for Health](#)

The Global Health Workforce Alliance convened the first ever Global Forum on Human Resources for Health in Kampala, Uganda from March 2-7, 2008. Over 1000 participants, including government leaders, eminent health, development, civil society, academic and health professional leaders from around the world, sought to further galvanize a global movement in response to the increasingly pertinent human resources for health (HRH) crisis.

Promoting Equitable Trade and Decent Work



[Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor](#)

Hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor aims to make legal protection and economic opportunity not the privilege of the few but the right of all. The fifth Commission meeting took place in New York on February 6-8 2008.

Shaping more human migration policies



[Global Community of Practice on Health Worker Migration](#)

The Health Worker Migration Global Dialogue commenced on March 31st, with over 500 participants from more than 70 countries. The global dialog aims to discuss current realities and dynamics contributing to health worker migration globally; examine innovative strategies that are being tested to address migration issues; and identify key principals and elements of a global code of practice for health worker migration.

Enhancing the effectiveness of Women's Leadership



[Realizing Rights in Liberia](#)

In January, Realizing Rights staff traveled to Monrovia, Liberia to launch a program of work in conjunction with the government of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the first democratically-elected woman president in Africa, on women's leadership and decent work.

Influencing the direction of Corporate Responsibility



[Human Rights in Business Practices](#)

Realizing Rights has been highlighting worker rights in various ways in recent weeks. Mary Robinson delivered a keynote the Global Compact US Network's first working symposium. While at Harvard, Mary Robinson also spoke at a public forum on Worker Protection in a Global Economy. The latest edition of the UN Global Compact Quarterly includes an article by Mary Robinson.

Realizing Rights: In the News



[Mary Robinson interview on BBC's Hardtalk](#)

In an interview on BBC's political news program, HARDtalk, Mary Robinson discussed the qualities that women can bring to leadership roles and the importance of strengthening women's leadership worldwide.