



AFPPD WINS UNITED NATIONS POPULATION AWARD

BANGKOK - The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) based in Bangkok, along with Bill and Melinda Gates has won this year's United Nations Population Award. The announcement of the Award was made by the United Nation in New York. This annual award was established by the United Nation General Assembly in November 1981 and was first presented in 1983. The Award is given to individuals and institutions for outstanding work in addressing population and development issues and for their contribution to improving the health of individuals, including women and children.

The Award Committee, chaired by the Honorable Mr. Hamidon Ali, Ambassador to the United Nations for Malaysia and consisting of representatives from ten United Nations Member States, chose the laureates from 28 international nominations. The award, scheduled to be presented on June 3 at a ceremony at the United Nations, will be received by the Chairman of AFPPD, the Honorable Mr. Yasuo Fukuda, Member of the Parliament and former Prime Minister of Japan. Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Senator of Thailand and AFPPD Secretary General together with Executive Director of AFPPD, Mr. Shiv Khare will also attend the award ceremony.



Reform Drug Policies and Laws to Public Health Need

Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya



Senator Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Thailand
Secretary General of AFPPD

Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Senator of Thailand and Secretary General of AFPPD, opened the consultation. He stated that there is an urgent need to introduce and expand harm reduction as an integral component of broader response to the AIDS epidemic and illicit drug use. He added, "We must mobilize parliamentarians and all our resources, networks and political will to expand support as well as funding for harm reduction where it is practiced, and to reform our drug policy and laws into a rights-based approach where harm reduction is being hampered by misconceptions and irrational responses to public health needs".



Mr. Luke Samson, co-Chair of Consultation

Mr. Luke Samson of Response Beyond Borders and co-Chair of the Consultation welcomed participants to the three-day event. Also co-chairing the inaugural session was Geoff Manthey, Regional Programme Adviser of UNAIDS RST. In his address, Mr. Manthey urged member states, civil society, parliamentarians and UN bodies to take action towards the universal access of services for Injecting Drug Users (IDUs).

"...the services and programmes are often male oriented."

Ms. Khartini Slamah

In emphasizing the need for the inclusive drug user programme, Ms. Khartini Slamah representing Asia-Pacific Network of Sex Workers, stated that most of the services and programmes for IDUs in the region are often male oriented while the attention towards female sex workers is limited. She further noted, "We are still far in delivering comprehensive integrated programmes of

Bangkok - Nearly 20 parliamentarians from twelve countries participated in the Parliamentarians' session on Harm Reduction organized in conjunction with the second Asian consultation on the prevention of HIV infection related to drug use. During the two day session the parliamentarians discussed policies and practices on the prevention of HIV infection among drug users and called for urgent action on harm reduction. Over 200 participants attended the above mentioned consultation which was organized by Response Beyond Border (RBB) in collaboration with AFPPD, UNAIDS, UNODC, WHO, USAIDS, the World Bank, and other development agencies on January 21-23, 2010 in Bangkok.

services".

Mr. Mauro Guarinieri of Asian Division of the Global Fund on AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis in his remarks stated, "In spite of the fact that HIV epidemic in the region is started and still driven by injecting drug use, less than 10% of our annual budget on HIV for this region is spent on harm reduction programmes".

"HIV infection should be addressed as a socio-economic issue, also"

Ms. Gea Westerhof

Ms. Gea Westerhof, International Project Manager of Mainline Foundation pointed that response to HIV infection among drug users should be addressed not only as a health issue but also as a socio-economic issue and that response must also consider cultural factors that drive epidemic.

Ms. Mariam Claeson, Programme Coordinator of HIV/AIDS in the Human Development Network of the World Bank stated that the gathering indicated a role of the community in improving the process of harm reduction programmes. The need to forge dialogue between NGOs, communities, activists, policy makers, implementers, and donors has made this consultation important", said Ms. Claeson. Mr. Oscar Fernandes, Member of Parliament, India in his address called for more collaboration among NGOs to come forward in fighting HIV/AIDS.

Parliamentarians' Sessions on Harm Reduction

Community to be Engaged; Human Rights to be informed

Mr. John Hyde

One of the key highlights of the consultation was the parliamentarians' sessions on harm reduction. The first day of the session was devoted to the discussion entitled, "Regional Overview on Drugs, HIV and Human Rights Issues", chaired by Mr. John Hyde, a Member of State Parliament from Perth, Australia in his remarks he called for the "Community to be Engaged; Human Rights to be informed".



Mr. John Hyde, MLC, Australia

"...involvement of IDUs in programme designing and services needed"

Mr. Mauro Guarinieri

Mr. Mauro Guarinieri, Civil Society Officer of the Global Fund Asia gave an overview of the situation of HIV epidemic and intravenous drug abuse in Asia. "HIV epidemic in the region still concentrates among injecting drug users in which only few countries have integrated comprehensive programmes of services for those specific communities", said Mr. Guarinieri. He further pointed out that one of the problems to scale is the limited involvement of IDUs in programme designing and services needed to be delivered to local communities to create ownership in order to ensure sustainability of the programme.



Mr. Mauro Guarinieri, Civil Society Officer of
Global Fund Asia

Asia has well advanced policies

Dr. Suresh Kumar

Dr. Suresh Kumar, Psychiatrist and Consultant of UNODC, UNAIDS in his presentation on HIV prevention and intravenous drug user care, stated that Asia has well advanced policies in addressing harm reduction. However, the gap is still large in the areas such as amphetamine use. In addition, Dr. Kumar pointed out that there is a significant resource gap in terms

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of human resources which is going to be a challenge to overcome for in the next five years.



*Dr. Suresh Kumar
Psychiatrist and Consultant of UNODC, UNAIDS*

"It is a human rights issue"

Dr. Mohd Yusmadi Yusoff

Dr. Mohd Yusmadi Yusoff, Malaysian MP's shared his national experience that drug issues are addressed as a social problem. In his discussion on strategizing and lobbying for harm reduction, MP Dr. Yusoff asked the need of technical support to inform parliamentarians on human rights education. "The issue should be addressed from human rights paradigm before any strategies be formed".



*Dr. Mohd Yusmadi Yusoff,
MP, Malaysia*

HIV related to Poverty

Ms. Mariam Cleason

Ms. Mariam Cleason, Coordinator of HIV/AIDS in Human Development Network of the World Bank discussed challenges of policy and practices under different economic development approaches. She explained that HIV prevalence in Asia is related to poverty and thus the uneducated are most affected. Elaborating World Bank strategies, she said that the Bank is investing in local communities to tackle stigma in the socio-cultural context. However, the success would have not been achieved without parliamentarians who take up the cause to make programme receptive to the community. "Parliamentarians are agent of change", said Ms. Cleason.

Dr. Juana Tomas Rossello, Treatnet Coordinator for South East Asia, UNODC in her presentation on treatment reforms advocated that the community-based approach of treatment is the most cost-effective.

"...lack of community involvement is still a concern..."

Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhary

In the plenary session on the feedback of the Parliamentarians' session on harm reduction, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhary,



From left to right: Mr. Mauro Guarinieri, Mr. Geoff Manthey, Ms. Gea Westerhof, Ms. Khartini Slamah, Ms Miriam Cleason

Member of Parliament from Pakistan presented the outcome of discussions during the first day of the consultation. Dr. Chaudhary captured the problem of resource gap in response to HIV epidemic. He said that resources are provided from outside Asia but lack of community involvement is still a concern. Recapitulating discussions on different approaches to response to HIV, Dr. Chaudhary highlighted the challenges for parliamentarians by stating, "Our challenge as parliamentarians is that how we can apply different approaches of tackling HIV epidemic to maximize the impacts".

Drug Policy Reform

Ms. Ann Fordham

"Pharmaceutical Injecting and Drug Policy Reform" was the central theme of discussion on the second day of the parliamentarians' session. The session was chaired by Mr. Mauro Guarinieri, Civil Society Officer of Global Fund Asia. In this session, Ms. Ann Fordham of International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC) presented the overview of international drug control system that the previous ten years of drug control was confused on containment in terms of consumption, production and distribution. Prioritizations of law enforcement over public health lead to unintended negative consequences such as lack of access to drugs. Ms. Fordham said that the system of international drug control has direct influences on how policies are formulated at a national level. Linking international drug control system with harm reduction policies, Ms. Fordham pointed out that the effective implementation of harm reduction intervention is only possible in the legal environment in which drug use is not criminalized".

Accurate Data Needed

Dr. Zulmair Yanri

On the third day, a dialogue between parliamentarians and drug users was arranged. Responding to a question of the role of parliamentarians in helping drug users, Mr. John Hyde stated that key is to convince communities on health issues and financial facts. The involvement of the media is vital.

Dr. Zulmair Yanri, Member of Paliament, Indonesia, stated that the key role for parliamentarians to play is that of budgeting. She pointed that in order to convince parliament to increase budget for harm reduction, there is a need to gather accurate data to support the evidence.

Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya in his closing speech pledged to mobilize parliamentarians in the Asia-Pacific region in a strong partnership to win public support, to do away with social stigma, and spare no effort to create an enabling environment where harm reducing measures can be introduced, implemented effectively and bring real public health benefits to our people. "The spread of HIV among injecting drug users is preventable, and denying the real benefits of harm reduction will only perpetuate the problem. We can no longer afford the silence on this matter", said Dr. Kullavanijaya.

The three-day consultation saw useful discussions and policy recommendations to improve policies conducive to the health and rights of injecting drug users. The consultation concluded with a proposal of parliamentarians to form a Standing Committee of Parliamentarians on harm reduction to pursue parliamentary advocacy.



*Ms. Miriam Cleason
Programme Coordinator of HIV/AIDS of World Bank*



*Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhary
MP, Pakistan*

Confusion on Statistics Prevails

Bangkok – The Senate Committee on Public Health in Thailand held a meeting of the population sub-committee under the chairmanship of Senator Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Secretary General of AFPPD. This committee on population has been arranging discussions and hearings on Maternal Health and MDG-5.

Bangkok - Dr. Anan Ariyachaipanich, Chairman, Senate Standing Committee on Public Health opened the subcommittee discussion by reiterating the importance of a quality population. He said that the subcommittee was formed to solve problems about population and development related issues in Thailand. The main topic which the subcommittee discussed was the progress of MDG-5 in Thailand.

Dr. Somsak Pattarakulwanich, Deputy Director General at Department of Health gave statistics regarding Thailand's maternal health. The goal of the rate of maternal death in 2008 was to be 18 deaths per 100,000 live births. In fact, the number was less than that of 17.3 deaths per 100,000 live births. However, when international organizations such as WHO published statistics, the number was 100 deaths per 100,000 live births, which shows a difference in data.

Regarding other aspects of maternal health, Dr. Somsak explained that data and statistics originate from mostly public facilities and data does not include those from other facilities such as private clinics; such data includes infant mortality, teenage pregnancies and abortion.

Teenage Pregnancies

Dr. Somsak also said that during recent year, the Department of Health has organized a number of programs dealing with teenage pregnancy and teenage sexual behavior. These include the Program of Teenage Friends, public teenage health facilities, the youth program To Be Number One and reproductive health delivered at a bachelor's degree level.

As for policies concerning development of mother and child, Dr. Somsak stated that the Department of Health has plans to collaborate with the Ministry of Public Health and other organizations and ministries.

Factors for MDG-5

Dr. Wassana Im-em of UNFPA discussed the discrepancies regarding the data of Thailand's RH and Family Planning. Dr. Wassana also stated that MDG-5 is measured not only by maternal death, but also by around four factors which are: 1) rate of birth control 2) teenage pregnancies 3) rate of skilled birth attendants, and 4) failed birth control



Front row left to right : Ms. Yuwani Nimsombun, Senator Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Secretary General of AFPPD, Dr. Anan Ariyachaipanich

rates. The number of failed birth control can be seen by the reports of high demand of emergency contraceptives. Also, in order



Dr. Wassana Im-em, UNFPA

to monitor the progress of MDG-5, Thailand needs to monitor adolescent birth rates as well as unmet needs of family planning.

Dr. Wassana stated that as of 2010, many countries have planned to gather statistical information in order to successfully carry out MDG-5. Thailand in fact plans to begin on July 1, 2010, however, there are still many problems to face.

Statistics

Dr. Worawan Chandoevmit of the National Institute for Child and Family Development stated that another major issue that stands between Thailand and reaching MDG-5 by 2015 are the discrepancies between statistics of Thai studies and those from the international studies.

Registration Inaccuracies

Ms. Urai Homtwee from the Population and Community Development Association (PDA) informed that according to research conducted by the PDA, when family members of adolescents who commit suicide from reasons regarding teenage pregnancy during high school years, it is rare that the family members register the death being related to pregnancy. Therefore, this is

another reason why the present numbers of maternal death and adolescent pregnancy is inaccurate.

Dr. Suvajee Good, Deputy Director of the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand spoke of research conducted in the three southern provinces of Thailand. The research has shown that one of the major problems regarding maternal health is the lack of information that is available to women in the south.

Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, thanked Dr. Pinit for bringing the subcommittee together to discuss the important issues. He stated that the key to approaching issues of reproductive health and maternal health was to mobilize parliamentarians to work with leadership at local levels, such as Tambon leaders.

Ms. Kanda Sutthanunt of UNICEF referred to children's rights, and noted that teenagers are unable to return to school after giving birth. UNICEF has been discussing with the Ministry of Education in order to solve this issue and allow young mothers to return to school and complete their education.

The subcommittee on population saw useful discussions and policy recommendations to improve Thailand's movement to reach MDG-5. The meeting closed with an agreement to a continuation to discuss the MDG-5 at a later date. ■



Mr. Montri Pekan, Executive Director, The Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand

OECD Seminar on Sustaining Global Recovery : PARIS



Senator Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Secretary General of AFPPD speaking with Mr. Yahya Dogan, MP of Turkey

Senator Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Secretary General of AFPPD participated on OECD Parliamentary Seminar on "Sustaining Global Recovery" on February 18 in Paris. Chaired by Mr. Anthony Gooch, Director of Public Affairs and Communications Directorate of OECD, the seminar focused on the impacts that world is facing in the aftermath of the financial crisis.

Mr. Stefano Scarpetta, Head of the Division for Employment and Analysis Policy in OECD discussed how the financial and economic crisis have turned into a social crisis due to unemployment.

Mr. Rolf Alter, Director of Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate of OECD, and Mr. Grant Kirkpatrick, Acting Head of Corporate Affairs of OECD spoke of how transparency and integrity are central to the health of the world economies and their stabilities, and emphasized the need for regulatory reform. ■

UNESCO Releases Sex Education Guide

Sexuality education can play a key role in improving knowledge and reducing sexual risk behaviours among young people. Equipped with better knowledge, information and skills, young people can be empowered to make informed decisions about sexual choices.

In response to this challenge, the voluntary and non-mandatory International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education developed by UNESCO in partnership with UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO seeks to assist education, health and other relevant authorities to develop and implement school-based sexuality education materials and programmes. The International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education is based on a rigorous review of evidence on sexuality education programmes and is aimed at education and health sector decision-makers and professionals.

The International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education was co-authored by leading experts in the field of Sexuality Education and subjected to extensive review and comment by a global panel of experts and practitioners from civil society organizations, ministries of education, and international agencies. (UNESCO 2010) ■

In Brief:

Demise of Two Pro-women Bills in Pakistan

The National Assembly of Pakistan passed, with rare unanimity, a bill to protect women and children from domestic violence but it could not become a law as it was not approved by the Upper House in 90 days as government did not pass the bill after an objection by a member and the bill was allowed to lapse.

There was the protection against harassment of women at work place Act 2009 and Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2009. ■

Family Planning - Maternal Health

Progress Made and Lessons Learned

Bangkok - Executive Director of AFPPD, Shiv Khare, attended a USAIDS organized a conference from March 6-11 entitled Reconvening Bangkok 2007 to 2010 – Progress Made and Lessons Learned. The meeting was a follow-up of a technical meeting in Bangkok in 2007.

The meeting reviewed the programs, as well as lessons learned in the movements of the scaling-up of family planning – maternal and child health, and the best practices in Asia and the Middle East region.

The conference also discussed achieving MDG-5, and state of the art approaches available in the area of family planning, as well as pragmatic solutions and their integrations with reproductive health and stronger health systems.

Keynote speakers included Dr. Olivier C. Carduner, Mission Director for the Regional Development Mission for Asia of USAID from Bangkok, Dr. Siriwat Tiparadol the Deputy Permanent Secretary of Thailand's Ministry of Health and Dr. Jeff Spieler from the Office of Population and Reproductive Health from USAID, USA.

Issues included medically oriented themes that discussed prenatal, neonatal and maternal care. This includes discussions regarding prevention of common prenatal conditions such as anemia and eclampsia, both of which are easily preventable with proper education and care.

Dr. Abdul Mannan of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University presented a lecture concerning the frequent cases of neonatal asphyxia and how to prevent it.

Technologically oriented themes were discussed including modern methods of contraception methods and roles in Asia and the Middle East. Dr. Jeff Spieler gave a presentation entitled New Contraceptive Technology. Dr. Kiran Ambwani of DCH gave a lecture of Reinvigorating Postpartum Intrauterine Contraceptive Devices (PPIUCD) in India. Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD also attended this event. ■

UNFPA and NGOs to Complement Each Other

Ms. Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director of UNFPA call to make Cairo Dream a Reality

The Global Consultation between UNFPA and NGOs took place in New York on February 15-16, 2010. The consultation was opened by the Executive Director of UNFPA, Ms. Thoraya Ahmed Obaid. In her statement, Ms. Obaid talked about how the ICPD at 15 reviews in 2009 set the stage to move forward, and highlighted areas in which UNFPA and NGOs need to pull their strengths together to complement each other to make the dream that emerged from Cairo a reality for all.



Ms. Thoraya Obaid, UNFPA Executive Director



Left to Right: Ms. Purnima Mane, Ms. Safiye Cagar, Ms. Sivananthi Thanenthiran, Mr. Werner Haug

Ms. Sivananthi Thanenthiran

Ms. Sivananthi Thanenthiran of the Asia Pacific Resource and Research Center for Women (ARROW), representing the Global Partners in Action: NGO Forum Steering Group, presented the outcomes of the NGO forum held in 2009 in Berlin. She also presented the five points of the Berlin Call to Action and some issues which emerged during the forum.

Ms. Safiye Cagar

Ms. Safiye Cagar, Director of the Information and External Relations Division of UNFPA noted that this consultation between NGOs and UNFPA, the fourth of its kind, included partners beyond the sexual and reproductive health community, is a step towards hearing broader perspectives. She complemented the panel by focusing on the outcomes from the parliamentary and ministerial meetings held in Addis Ababa in 2009; namely the International Parliamentary Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD (IPCI) and the High-Level meeting on MDG-5, co-hosted by the Dutch government. Some of the actions urged of civil society in the Addis Call to Action are to galvanize political resolve, counter opposition and, hold governments accountable for their commitments.

The IPCI conference saw the largest number of civil society representatives from 115 countries, including a youth coalition. Its outcome, the Parliamentarian's Statement of Commitment focuses on what parliamentarians pledge to do, including hearings and partnerships with civil society. Ms. Safiye urged participants to use both the Addis Call to Action and the Parliamentarians Statement of Commitment as advocacy tools.

Parliamentarians have a specific role to play in the implementation of the ICPD and UNFPA's outreach to them is a critical part of our work by enacting and improving relevant laws and policies, parliamentarians create an enabling environment for the achievement of the ICPD goals. Safiye Cagar

Mr. Shiv Khare and Mr. Neil Datta

After the presentations, Shiv Khare from the Asia Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) and Neil Datta of the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF) made statements from the floor in which they highlighted their advocacy, particularly activities to work with

ICDP+15 Outcomes - Panel Discussion

In the panel of ICDP+15 outcomes, Mr. Werner Haug, UNFPA Director of the Technical Division, presented some of the key conclusions of the ICPD at 15 processes. He highlighted that there seems to be clarity of what the gaps, challenges and priorities are, but not on how to address them.

Some of the key conclusions of ICPD at 15 which he mentioned were that there was a reaffirmation of ICPD principles but also a call for implementation; that the ICPD Programme of Action (PoA) was decentralized with focused areas in the different regions; and that there has been progress on the institutionalization of the PoA, with the creation of laws and policies, but gaps remain in adherence. He ended his presentation with three recommendations on where NGO's and UNFPA may wish to partner.

"Three areas where we might want to partner or at least strategize together in the coming months:

We should use the ICPD at 15 findings, recommendations, priorities, language during global and regional processes. We can speak with one voice;

We should also use the outcomes (recommendations, calls to action, etc) in our interventions, as advocacy and policy dialogue tools, at all levels - global, regional, country, and local;

We should also work together to address the specific challenges, gaps and priorities identified during the ICPD at 15."

Werner Haug

NGOs and parliamentarians together. Ms. Gill Greer, Director-General of IPPF, who served as Chair of the Berlin NGO Forum, also spoke from the floor suggesting that follow-up activities could be organized according to the tracks of the Forum (human rights, HIV, maternal health, etc.) as spelled out in the Strategic Options for NGOs.

“The Need for Dialogue to be Both Ways”

Ms. Gill Greer

This session was chaired by Ms. Purmina Mane, Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA. A dialogue followed the panel including issues of NGO involvement in UN and inter-governmental processes, which could be addressed by NGOs participating in national delegations; on the importance of investing in the leadership of young people, on community engagement and simple language, on off-setting fundamentalist groups by working with ministers/governments and Faith Based Organizations that support ICPD, on the importance of advocacy and networking/working together and on looking for resources in places like the private sector. These comments were addressed again in the afternoon work group and presented the following day as concrete recommendations.

Working together to advocate for the ICPD Programme of Action

This panel was chaired by Ms. Gill Greer, Director General of IPPF. The presenters included Ms. Dame Billie Miller (Barbados), Recipient of the United Nations Population Award, and Ms. Susan Cohen (USA), Guttmacher Institute.



From Left to Right: Ms. Gill Greer of IPPF, Ms. Dame Billie Miller from Barbados, Ms. Susan Cohen from the Guttmacher Institute

Rebranding messages needed

Ms. Dame Billie Miller

Ms. Dame Billie Miller, recipient of the UN Population Award from Barbados, spoke of progress achieved in the debate on population dynamics, which is now linked to migration, poverty eradication, climate change, among other issues. However, achievements in the development arena have been overtaken by natural disasters and the financial crisis. At current projections, the MDGs will not be met by 2015, particularly the last 3 goals, however, she emphasized the “struggle must go on”. In this context, there is a need to begin planning for post 2015 and think about “rebranding our message and image”. She affirmed that NGOs must make themselves indispensable to governments, stress their comparative advantage, and work more and harder in “smart partnerships”. NGOs must learn to engage governments as indispensable partners that can do the job better and for less money. More efforts are needed towards coherence, particularly in times of scarce and dwindling resources, to ensure that donors avoid pursuing projects in isolation. NGOs must also look at new and innovative ways of doing business (i.e. texting, more youth participation, etc) while retaining what works in the old and traditional ways. In order to further mobilize efforts, she saw the need to reset and retrain where necessary and look into Results Based Management (RBM), while also ensuring a focus on outcomes rather than only being preoccupied with outputs to meet donor requirements.

“Need to highlight the mutually supportive role of maternal health”

Ms. Susan Cohen

Ms. Susan Cohen from the Guttmacher Institute in USA, focused her presentation on US support to the population agenda. She noted that the US Global agenda requires keeping pressure on the funding front (target of \$1 billion in funding by 2014) and pushing the envelope on the policy front. On the policy front, there is a need to highlight the mutually supportive role of maternal health and women’s health and link the MDGs, particularly MDG5, with interventions already being supported so policy makers better understand the connection. The US commitment to family planning and reproductive health survived the post-Cairo setbacks as funding levels were pushed despite a very unfavorable political environment. The budget allocation stands at \$650 million with \$55 million allotted to UNFPA.

Interventions of Important Issues

Mr. William Butz

Following the presentation, several speakers were invited to provide comments from the floor. Mr. William Butz, Population Reference Bureau requested inputs on how their website could more effectively focus on important issues.

Population Growth

Other interventions during the meeting included the following key points and recommendations: as needs continue to rise while funding is stagnant, it is important to go beyond a rights based approach and recognize that population growth is still important, global advocacy must specify regions and outline specific interventions, there is a need to support the African Union (AU) summit for a stronger and better Programme for Action for SRH and rights (post Maputo), coherence at the country level remains a challenge (i.e. initiatives of WHO, UNFPA, etc), there is a need for greater emphasis on “selling” the health benefits in the population debate.

Major 2010 Events

Mr. Stan Bernstein

The second day of the consultation opened with a panel on Major Events in 2010, Chaired by Katie Chau of the Youth Coalition. Mr. Stan Bernstein, Senior Policy Adviser for UNFPA spoke of the MDG+10 summit, which will take place from September 20-22 at the United Nations in New York. The message for MDG+10 review is that MDGs are attainable. In addition, during the summit they will showcase progress made and utilize those advances to demonstrate how to scale up. He stated that the Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) agenda is well positioned but throughout this process we should remain on target and aggressive with our messages. The key messages with regard to Cairo: focus on embedding SRH issues into larger social development agenda including through broad-based partnerships, integration of services, focus on entire continuum of care, increase resources and linking to action plans, give balance to prevention not just disease-oriented aspects of health and focus on social determinants and inequities in health including access for marginalized i.e. within rural, disabled, socially excluded. Mr. Stan Bernstein concluded his statement by saying that the MDG agenda will witness partnership with civil society in national processes: our efforts will come together at the national level, in national dialogue and national action.

Beijing +15

Both Ms. Aminata Toure, Chief of the Gender, Culture and Human Rights Branch of UNFPA and Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser on Gender Issues, Advancement of Women to the Secretary General,

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Improve Maternal Health in Pacific

A new report on maternal health in the Pacific from the New Zealand Parliamentarians' Group on Population and Development (NZPPD) calls on the New Zealand, Australian and Pacific Island governments to take immediate action to improve the maternal health situation in the Pacific.

The Report, *Making Maternal Health Matter*, is the results of an Open Hearing on Maternal Health in the Pacific held by NZPPD in September 2009, where individuals and organizations working within the field were able to voice their concerns to New Zealand parliamentarians about the challenges still facing maternal health in the region. *Making Maternal Health Matter*, brings together the key messages from the Open Hearing, with recommendations from NZPPD on where urgent action is needed.



From left to right: Dr. Jackie Blue, MP (NZPPD Chair), Ms. Kathleen Gapirongo (Midwife, Solomon Islands), Ms. Jackie Edmond (Chief Executive, New Zealand Family Planning).

While progress is being made in some Pacific Island countries, other countries still have high rates of maternal deaths. Five women a day die in the Pacific region due to pregnancy or childbirth related causes. The majority of these deaths are in Melanesia, and largely preventable.

"We know what is needed to prevent so many of these deaths. Access to family planning services and contraceptives, more midwives and better facilities to name a few. But it also requires the political willingness to prioritise and invest in this area", said Dr. Jackie Blue, MP, NZPPD Chair.

Many women in the Pacific do not have access to family planning services, modern contraceptives or the necessary care during

and after pregnancy and childbirth. Teenage pregnancy rates in Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, and the Marshall Islands are among the highest in the world.

The recommendations in *Making Maternal Health Matter* include calling on the New Zealand and Australian aid programmes to ring fence 15% of Official Development Assistance for Sexual and Reproductive Health, with a proportion of that funding to be allocated specifically for family planning and care during and after pregnancy and childbirth.

"There are so many benefits to investing in maternal health and reproductive health in general. When women are able to choose when and how often they are pregnant, they are more likely to have smaller, healthier and wealthier families. Women have more time to get an education, to work, and can invest more in their children", said Ms. Jackie Edmond, Chief Executive of Family Planning International.

Making Maternal Health Matter was launched at the New Zealand Parliament on February 23. Dr. Sharon Camp, President and CEO of the U.S. based Guttmacher Institute, and Ms. Kathleen Gapirongo, President of Solomon Island Midwifery Society were invited to New Zealand to speak at the launch.

The NZPPD is a cross-party group with currently 44 members representing almost 40 percent of all New Zealand MPs. The group has provided a forum for New Zealand parliamentarians to engage and act on international population and developmental issues for eleven years. The NZPPD has a particular focus on the Pacific Region, where the population and development challenges remain great. (NZPPD) ■

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spoke on Beijing +15. The focus of 54th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will be on sharing best practices in advancing the Beijing Platform for Action and overcoming obstacles and new challenges. The focus of Beijing +15 review is on bridging the gap between rhetoric and action; the focus should be implementation of the existing frameworks; while aiming to provide impetus for gender equality at the national level. bridging the gap between rhetoric and action; the focus should be implementation of the existing frameworks; while aiming to provide impetus for gender equality at the national level.

After these presentations, the following people spoke from the floor to introduce other major events in 2010: Zachary Bleicher of the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS) about the hearings of the President of the General Assembly on the High-level Plenary on MDG+10; Jill Sheffield on Women Deliver II; and Victor Bernhardt, UNFPA, on the World Youth Conference in Mexico City.

Reflections on the Way Forward

Ambassador Brookman - Amissah speaking about the consultation, said that she felt it had been a step forward to enable UNFPA and NGOs to work together. She said that it is time to implement and operationalize action plans. We need to look at intersections and broader frameworks. She also proposed that we develop few, simple and succinct messages that enable us all to speak with

one voice, even on controversial issues while protecting rights above all.

Ms. Purnima Mane, Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA, emphasized that it was time to act together on the many ideas and recommendations which had come forward. She stated that UNFPA very much appreciates NGO's experience, insights and strategic thinking. She stressed the five key elements that came out of the meeting and added the need for stronger leadership on youth and UNFPA's commitment to a NGO Advisory Panel.

Ms. Safiye Cagar, Director of IERD in her closing remarks, assured participants that UNFPA would keep this network going, would ensure communication, and would include more participants from the "south". She also said that recommendations on marketable messaging, strengthening networks with parliamentarians through parliamentary secretariats, and capacity building would also be addressed. Some of the proposals, she pointed out, go beyond UNFPA and NGOs. For instance, there was a strong feeling about the need to treat Cairo, Beijing and the MDGs as a coherent agenda. This requires coherence at the level of governments themselves and this is something we can work on jointly at national levels.

MDG-5 Reproductive Health Agreed Upon Despite Opposition

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), was held during March 1-12 at the United Nations and marking the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action.

The most controversial resolution, adopted late on the last day of the meeting, was "Eliminating Preventable Maternal Mortality and Morbidity through the Empowerment of Women" presented by the United States. While Member States acknowledge that MDG-5 was the goal lagging the most behind, during four days and nights of intense negotiations it became quite apparent that reproductive health continued to be a controversial issue and Member States were not yet ready to address the issue of maternal mortality and morbidity in an inclusive and realistic manner. Controversies in the negotiations revolved around family planning; unsafe abortion; "early and forced marriage" versus "child marriage", and finally, whether additional financial resources were needed.

This resolution was adopted by consensus. Much of the controversy was generated by ultra-conservative NGOs influencing member states in the corridors. This is a negative trend that we can expect to surface again during the Commission on Population and Development and other negotiations at the UN. UNFPA will continue to dialogue with NGOs who support the ICPD can approach Governments to advocate for the importance of standing up for the key interventions related to maternal health.

At the time of adoption, by an orally revised text on eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity through the empowerment of women, the CSW urges leaders to generate political will, commitment, increased financial resources, strengthen health systems, international cooperation and technical assistance which are urgently needed to improve maternal and newborn health. It calls on States to address gender inequalities to eliminate the preventable phenomenon through effective health interventions and health systems strengthening and the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of all human rights by women and girls and their empowerment.

A good part is that, *inter alia*, the draft resolution reaffirms the MDGs, in particular MDG-5 on improving maternal health, including the targets to reduce maternal mortality ratio by 3/4 and to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015. Furthermore it makes the linkages between ICPD-Beijing-MDGs. It also takes note of the international parliamentarians conference in Addis and the Addis Call to Action.

The Commission on the Status of Women also adopted by consensus a resolution on "Strengthening the institutional arrangements of the United Nations for support for gender equality and the empowerment of women by consolidating the four existing offices into a composite entity". Over 181 Member States co-sponsored the text.

In addition, the CSW adopted by consensus the biannual resolution on "Ending female genital mutilation". The draft was presented by Equatorial Guinea as Chairman of the African Group. The negotiations were facilitated by the United Republic of Tanzania.

Finally, the CSW adopted an annual resolution on the "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women", presented by Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Israel called for a recorded vote on the resolution. The 45-member Commission adopted

the resolution with a recorded vote of 32 in favour 2 against (Israel and US), 10 abstentions, and one absent (Rwanda).

The resolution will now be passed on to the Economic and Social Council. (UNFPA) ■

Visitors to AFPPD

■ Ms. Nobuko Horibe, Director of UNFPA Regional Office, Ms. Nobuko Takahashi and Ms. Galanne Deressa of UNFPA Regional Office visited AFPPD to review AFPPD Parliamentary Programme and future plans.



Back row (from left): Ms. Eriko Hibi, Mr. Shiv Khare, Ms. Galanne Deressa
Front row: Ms. Nobuko Horibe

■ Mr. Kah Sin Cho of UNAIDS and Ms. Geeta Sethi of the Asia Pacific Leadership Forum on HIV/AIDS and Development (APLF) visited AFPPD to discuss AFPPD HIV/AIDS programmes.

■ Ms. Nanda Krairiksh, Chief of the Social Development Division of UNESCAP and Ms. Tone Bleie, Chief of Gender and Development Section of UNESCAP visited to discuss possible collaboration in enhancing political commitment for UNESCAP social development issues, especially with local elected representative.

■ Mr. Ton Smits, Executive Director of AHRN visited AFPPD to discuss future cooperation with AFPPD in the area of Harm Reduction.

■ Ms. Sirno Minna, MP of Finland and member of Finland Parliamentary Group on Population and Development met with Senator Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Secretary General of AFPPD, and was briefed on AFPPD activities. During that time, all members of the parliamentary delegation from Finland were visiting Thailand, Cambodia and Laos on a fact finding visit.

■ Mr. Zahid Hussein, President of the AIDS Society of Asia-Pacific (ASAP) discussed collaboration between ASAP and AFPPD and parliamentarians participated at ICAAP in Korea. ■

Parliamentarians' Forums Review Their Achievements and Plans for 2010

New York – The ICPD+15 was the opportunity to take stock and review the impact of the regional parliamentarians' forums on policies and political commitment. The IERD of UNFPA, responsible for parliamentarians' initiatives convened a strategy meeting on February 18-19 in New York. This meeting was opened by Ms. Mari Simonen, Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA and chaired by Ms. Safiye Cagar, Director of IERD, UNFPA. The meeting was attended by UNFPA regional and international focal points for parliamentary tasks and regional parliamentary forums.

Regional parliamentary forums were presented by Mr. Shiv Khare of AFPPD, Mr. Neil Datta, secretary of EPF, Ms. Fatima Deme of FAPPD, Ms. Carla Riviera-Avni of IAPG, and Ms. Shazia Rafi of PGA.

Mobilization of parliamentarians in support of population and development related issues around the world was reviewed by representatives of regional parliamentarians forums and networks and UNFPA focal points.

Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), European Parliamentarians Forum (EPF), Forum of American Parliamentarians on Population Development (FAPPD), Inter-American Parliamentary group (IAPG) are the regional parliamentarian forums that have been tirelessly working to inform, educate and mobilize parliamentarians, and these efforts have made significant progress.

Panama ICPI

The UNFPA in cooperation with the Regional Parliamentarian Forums bring together parliamentarians of the world at the International Parliamentarians Conference in ICPD (ICPI) every three years to review, plan future programmes and reinforce parliamentary advocacy. In the year 2006, the conference was held in Bangkok and in 2009, it was held in Addis Abba, Ethiopia, which was attended by more than 600 parliamentarians and others.

In 2012, ICPI is planned to be held in Panama and hosted by Inter-American Parliamentary Group (IAPG). The strategy meeting discussed issues which need to be addressed and took note of conservative forces emerging in certain parts of Europe and Inter-America and in some parts of Africa and Asia.

It was also agreed that Regional and National Parliamentarians Forums, Networks, and Committees be strengthened and National Level parliamentary advocacy advanced. Ms. Safiye Cagar, Director of IERD conducted the strategy session together with Ms. Ragga Said, Ms. Nobuko Takahashi, Ms. Lentte Lewis of IERD, UNFPA, Ms. Galanne Deressa of Asia Pacific Regional Office of UNFPA, Ms. Maria Josten of EECA and Ms. Kae Ishikawa of UNFPA.

Global Consultation

The meeting also felt that strategies of working with parliamentarians should also be reviewed on the basis of the experience of regional parliamentarians' forums. What kind of advocacy techniques work and what do not work should be reviewed and new strategies should be planned to reach parliamentarians in changing times. AFPPD conducted such a review earlier but experience at other regions could be different. It was suggested to organize such a consultation with all stakeholders taking part.



From left to right: Ms. Ragga Said, Ms. Safiye Cagar, Ms. Mari Simonen, Ms. Nobuko Takahashi



From left to right: Ms. Galanne Deressa, Ms. Kae Ishikawa, Ms. Linette Lewis, Ms. Marta Diavolova



From left to right: Ms. Shazia Rafi, Ms. Paras Vyas, Ms. Helen Tsakiris, Ms. Pernille Fenger



Far left: Ms. Carla Riviera-Avni (IAPG)
Far right: Mr. Neil Datta (EPF)

Population Surge Outstrips Efforts To Eradicate Slums

Nearly a quarter of a billion people escaped slums in the past decade, but the housing effort was outstripped by population growth and rural exodus to the cities, according to a recent report released by UN-HABITAT.



A total of 227 million people rose out of slum conditions from 2000 to 2010, thanks especially to hard work in China and India, according to the UN Human Settlements Programme, also called UN-Habitat.

It means that the United Nations has already scored a rare success in its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Under MDG-7, Target 11, UN members pledged to "achieve significant improvement" in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

The bad news is that from 2000 to 2010, the absolute numbers of slum dwellers increased from 776.7 million to 827.6 million. "Cities are growing faster than the slum improvement rate", said Gora Mboup, a Senegalese who co-authored the report, *State of the World Cities 2010/11: Bridging the Urban Divide*.

Half of the increase of 55 million extra slum dwellers came from population growth in existing slum homes; a quarter by rural flight to the cities; and a quarter by people living on the edge of cities whose homes became engulfed by urban expansion.

UN-Habitat warned: "Short of drastic action, the world slum population will probably grow by six million each year (or another 61 million people) to hit a total of 889 million by 2020."

These were among the document's highlights:

■ Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest slum population, totalling 199.5 million people, or 61.7 percent of its urban population. It is followed by South Asia (190.7 million people, 35 percent of urban population)

and East Asia (189.6 million, 28.2 percent).

■ China and India are lauded for making "giant strides" to improve the life of slum dwellers. The proportion of urban Chinese living in slums fell from 37.3 percent in 2000 to 28.2 percent in 2010. India, meanwhile, lifted 59.7 million out of slum conditions last decade. Slum prevalence now stands at 28.1 percent.

■ The world's three most "unequal cities" in terms of disparity of wealth among its inhabitants are all in South Africa: Buffalo City, Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni. The "most equal" cities are Chittagong and Dhaka in Bangladesh, which are also blighted by poverty.

■ Urban sprawl, once associated only with cities in North America, is fast engulfing many developing countries as property developers promote life in the spacious suburbs.

■ Sprawl causes transport problems because of the usual over-reliance on cars, can pose a threat to the environment if housing encroaches on sensitive zones and also adds to social segregation.

■ More than half of the world's population -- 3.49 billion people, or 50.6 percent of the total -- now live in urban areas, it notes.

Investigators determined that housing was a slum if it lacked at least one of these five amenities: it had a permanent structure; had less than three people sharing a room; access to water that was sufficient, affordable and could be obtained without extreme effort; a private toilet or a public one shared with a reasonable number of people; and secure tenure. (Bangkok Post)



Poverty, Conflict and Population

Thailand, population growth is stabilizing according to UN experts and population/family planning programmes are considered a success but poverty still prevails. Disparity between rich and poor was a reason given for recent political conflict in Thailand.

If population growth and size is not an issue but migrant workers is, even then large Thai population is poor and unemployed. Is quality of population an issue or population growth and economic development is not keeping pace resulting unrest. PAI (Population Action International) study shows that population size and lack of employment lead to social and then political unrest. Should we examine this in Thailand?

Editor



Water and Population in India

WATER availability cannot cope with population growth in India. Severe water shortage is already felt in various parts of India. Bombay alone is short of 400 million liters of water and that demand increases with every child born.

Around 300 million people in India are below poverty line. If Indian population continues to increase, can any formula provide them all food, water and shelter. Should we not examine this for India?

Editor

"Instead of controlling the environment for the benefit of the population, maybe we should control the population to ensure the survival of our environment."

Sir David Attenborough

A Message from the Secretary General



Dear fellow parliamentarians and colleagues,

In the last issue I wrote about four important characteristics one should have in order to make him or her a complete person: being a good person, a good worker, having well rounded knowledge, and a healthy body and mind. To be good at work one must have good vision, be good at dealing with people, communicate well, be good at finance, good at managing time and knows his work very well. However, of course it can be difficult to have any or all these qualities if you are starving, with no chance of an education and no access to public health services.

Today, I would like to talk about exercising for health. Not every exercise or sport is necessarily good or safe for one's health. Exercising for heart refers to any exercise that strengthens the heart, lung, and circulation. This involves the use of large muscle groups, such as the arms or legs, continuously for about 30 minutes until the heart rate reaches about 70% of the maximal heart rate. Maximal heart rate is calculated from subtracting one's age in years from 220. For example, the maximal heart rate of a 30 year old man is 190 (220 minus 30). Thus, a 30 year old man should exercise so his heart (pulse) rate reaches 70% of 190 which is 133 beats per minute. He also should exercise at least three times per week. If you know the basics of exercising for health - using large muscle groups continuously for 30 minutes (with enough intensity and frequency) - you can understand yourself of what type of exercises this should be. Exercises that are beneficial for health are walking, jogging, running, bicycling, swimming, and other aerobic exercises. Infact, any type of exercise that can be done with enough intensity, proper duration and frequency is beneficial for your health. If you understand this you will know straight away that tennis, badminton or golf are not exactly an exercise or a sport for health. This is because when playing these sports, you do not exercise continuously nor with enough intensity (sometimes with more, sometimes with less intensity depending on game). This is a major reason why you occasionally hear about people dying while playing tennis.

Of course, if you do not die during the games you are healthier than those who do not play tennis. The lesson here is that if you want to play tennis, you should exercise for health first. You should begin training your body for, say, three months to get your heart, lungs and circulation fit enough for tennis. Even then, do not play only tennis but carry on exercising for health three times a week and play tennis as a sport instead. For example, run on Sunday, Tuesday and Friday and play tennis on Monday and Wednesday, etc.

Ideally, you should not exercise for health by doing the same activity over again. For example, do not run all the time. Instead, try to run one day, swim the other, and then walk on the other, then perhaps bicycling the next. In this way you can prevent injuries. Ladies also should note that even though bicycling and swimming are good for the heart there is no weight bearing in these exercises thus it dose not help to produce bone mass. So try to walk one day and swim on the other, etc.

Sprinting (running as fast as one can, say, 100 or 200 meters) and weight lifting are not exercises for health, because they are not aerobic exercises. When you exercise with maximal intensity, the body uses only glycogen (carbohydrate) but when you exercise sub-maximally, the body uses up both fat and glycogen. The body does not use protein as a source of energy at all during exercise thus, there is no need to eat more protein (meat) than necessary. Usually for low intensity exercise, fat is used for energy. When the intensity is increased, metabolism of glycogen is increased also. This is why aerobic exercise for health is good for the heart, as it reduces the "bad fat" content (total cholesterol, triglyceride and LDL) while increasing the good fat (HDL).

I shall continue in the next issue. If you have comments, questions, please kindly send them to me.

With my very best wishes

Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya

Senator of Thailand, Secretary General of AFPPD

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