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ICPD NEWS

A Newsletter of the UNFPA Task Force on ICPD Implementation

No. 5, September 1996

CAIRO PLUS TWO

By Dr. Nafis Sadik

This second anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) presents an appropriate opportunity to take the pulse of the implementation process and assess how the Programme of Action, adopted by consensus in Cairo, is being translated into operational initiatives. There is now a broad recognition that respect for human rights and a commitment to the empowerment of women are essential messages of Cairo. Also, there is a growing realization that simultaneous investment in all social sectors is necessary if the ICPD goals and the overarching objective of sustainable development are to be achieved.

On balance, I am greatly encouraged that the commitment and momentum which characterized the lead up to Cairo and the Conference itself are carrying over to the implementation phase. In almost all developing countries, an impressive array of activities is under way to align policies and programmes with the

new paradigm of population and development that emerged from the Conference. At the international level, various intergovernmental groups, global and regional, have used the ICPD Programme of Action as a template in recasting their policy and programme directions.

The UN system has expanded its collaboration at both the headquarters and the field level. In particular, the work of the inter-agency task forces on ICPD implementation and on Basic Social Services for All has been instrumental in furthering coordination among various UN organizations at the country level, thus augmenting government efforts to operationalize the Programme of Action. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially grass-roots groups, have intensified their efforts to ensure that the promise of Cairo takes hold and flourishes in local communities.

Many countries report that they are progressing in their attempts to place family planning in the broader perspective of reproductive health. Almost immediately after the Conference, the Government of Mexico created a General Directorate of Reproductive Health, which includes a special unit to ensure that all activities in this sector are grounded in a gender perspective. Several Sub-Saharan countries are focusing on the maternal mortality aspect of the reproductive health continuum. For example, Uganda has initiated a pilot project to identify potential problem deliveries and arrange for the early transport of women with pregnancy complications to properly equipped health posts. Since Cairo, there has been increased emphasis on quality of care and responsiveness to users. For example, India has

adopted a new system of performance indicators replacing the system of targets and quotas it had relied on for several decades. Responding to the ICPD's emphasis on youth, several countries have adopted reproductive health initiatives geared to the needs of this age group -- including Ghana, Haiti, Kenya, Namibia, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.

Over the past two years, UNFPA has been working closely with countries to facilitate their attempts to put in place programmes designed to achieve the ICPD's time-bound goals: universal primary education, with particular attention to eliminating the gender gap; a major reduction in infant, child and maternal mortality; and universal access to quality reproductive health services, including family planning. In response to increasing country-level activity and increasing concern about how to measure advances in meeting ICPD goals, UNFPA is also helping to develop indicators of progress at the country level. Health indicators and demographic parameters do not register changes in a short time span, and certainly not in a two-year period. I am confident, however, that the foundations now being laid will produce results.

At this juncture -- Cairo plus two -- I am concerned about the adequacy of the financial resources so essential for the successful implementation of the Conference. If the goals of the ICPD are to be achieved, it is critical that the resource levels agreed to in the Programme of Action be honoured. In Cairo, developing countries agreed to provide, on average, two thirds of the resources needed from domestic sources; the international community committed itself to providing one third of the

requisite funding. During the past two years, a number of developing countries have increased their domestic allocations for social-sector spending, including population. It is crucial that international donors endorse and encourage this welcome trend by upholding their share of the financial goals of the ICPD.

The ICPD is often referred to as a benchmark conference. Indeed, it was. It galvanized political will, forged new partnerships, crafted a new approach to population and development and focused the spotlight on women's rights and their pivotal role in achieving sustainable development. Successful implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action will require both political and financial commitment. We must maintain the momentum of Cairo if we are to achieve its mission so that present and future generations enjoy a better quality of life.

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#### BRAZIL INSTITUTIONALIZES ITS ICPD FOLLOW-UP

Brazil's many months of follow-up activity related to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) culminated with the establishment, in August 1995, of the National Commission of Population and Development -- the first such commission in Latin America. The Commission was set up by presidential decree as an outgrowth of three conferences held immediately after the ICPD to discuss the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. Dr. Elza Berquo is President of the Commission, which includes one representative each from eight

ministries; representatives from the Presidency's General Secretariat and Secretariat for Strategic Affairs; and eight members of civil society, most of whom are professionals in the population field.

The Commission aims at contributing to policy formulation and "the implementation of integrated activities regarding population and development, according to the recommendations of the World Programme of Action." The Commission is responsible, inter alia, for collecting, evaluating and disseminating data on population and development; promoting analyses of the demographic impact of governmental and private-sector initiatives and supporting updated studies on population at national and subnational levels; promoting initiatives to increase training and education in population and development studies; mobilizing new resources for activities in population and development; and establishing a permanent dialogue with national and international institutions having objectives and activities that contribute to issues of population and development.

The Commission has undertaken the Portuguese translation of the ICPD Programme of Action. It has also provided support to women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to disseminate information and create awareness about the Cairo agenda.

Both the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education appeared before the Commission to report on the implementation of the Programme of Action. The discussions of these reports contributed to a number of protocols between these ministries and the National Council of Women's Rights. Under these protocols, signed on 8 March 1996, the Ministry of Health will carry out an

intensive programme for the prevention of cervical and breast cancers and will promote full access to family planning services under the public sector's Unified Health System. The Ministry of Education will include women's issues in the programme of long-distance teacher training and will develop curricula and training materials revised under new gender perspectives. Two other ministries -- Labour and Justice -- signed protocols with the Council. The Ministry of Labour will expand job and training opportunities for professional categories and jobs usually held by women. The Ministry of Justice will encourage discussion on the possibility of revising the criminal classification of rape to permit greater law enforcement and more severe penalties.

Since the ICPD, both the National Council of Women's Rights and State Councils of Women's Rights have become involved in policies and programmes dealing with reproductive health. In addition, the public sector has formed partnerships with NGOs, women's groups and professional societies. For example, a Safe Motherhood initiative has been launched by the Women's Health Sector of the Ministry of Health, actively involving the Brazilian Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, universities, women's organizations and international organizations such as the Pan American Health Organization/ World Health Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Children's Fund. --

George Walmsley  
UNFPA Representative  
Brazil

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## IRAN PROMOTES ICPD'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH MESSAGES

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been actively implementing the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), adjusting national programmes and projects in accordance with the principles and objectives of the ICPD Programme of Action. It has also increased its budget for such activities.

Immediately following the ICPD, the UNFPA-assisted Government programme further integrated reproductive health (RH) care information and services into the delivery of primary health care. In line with ICPD recommendations concerning the empowerment of women and in order to promote community participation in RH and family planning (FP) programmes, the Government expanded the Women Health Volunteers (WHVs) Programme at the national level. This Programme now has approximately 18,000 WHVs who provide RH/FP information and services to vulnerable groups living in urban slums. With a view to further improving RH/FP services in rural areas, the Government also established 15 new Rural Midwives (RMWs) Training Centres in nine provinces. Training curricula and materials for health personnel are being revised to include more RH/FP issues to enable service providers, including WHVs and RMWs, to offer clients improved RH/FP information and services in their own communities.

Simultaneously, the concept of quality of care has been introduced through the training of service providers. The Ministry of Health and Medical Education organized the first national RH/FP counselling workshop in early 1995 in Bushehr, southern Iran. Family planning officers and experts received

training in counselling techniques and two-way communication to help clients make informed choices concerning family planning. In November 1995, the Ministry launched a nationwide counselling campaign concerning mothers' health, during which 12,000 specially trained medical students assisted health centres by providing clients with information and advice on RH/FP issues, such as prenatal and postnatal care, breast-feeding and breast and cervical cancers. In addition, 305 pre-marriage counselling centres have been established to provide young couples with RH/FP information.

The Government is planning to enhance adolescents' knowledge concerning RH/FP issues through programmes specially designed for girls in the last year of high school. A pilot project is being launched in Isfahan Province to enhance the RH/FP knowledge of girl students and assist them in becoming healthy mothers in the future. The recently revitalized Family Planning Association of Iran (FPAI) is undertaking a survey of adolescents' reproductive health. Responding to the ICPD's call to increase women's role in decision-making, the Government has made a concerted effort to increase women's participation in implementing RH/FP activities. Women have been named to senior management posts in the Ministry of Health and Medical Education.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly those for women, have played an increasingly active role since the ICPD and the Fourth World Conference on Women. A dozen women's NGOs have distributed about 210,000 copies of posters and pamphlets on ICPD-related themes. Additionally, NGOs such as the Centre for Women's Studies and Research, Rural Women Cooperatives and the



Islamic Women's Institute have organized seminars and workshops and conducted research on RH/FP issues and women's empowerment.

Radio and television as well as print media have played an important role in publicizing and promoting ICPD messages and follow-up activities. In 1995, the Ministry of Health and Medical Education established a centre for information, education and communication (IEC), where courses and workshops are held to train policy makers, programme managers and service providers on RH/FP policy and programmes. Also, in 1995, a special workshop was organized for 25 Iranian journalists to increase their knowledge about ICPD-related subjects and UNFPA. The UNFPA field office translated the ICPD Programme of Action into Farsi, for distribution to non-governmental groups and institutes as well as the Government.

A variety of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) prevention messages are being conveyed through the media. Films on AIDS have been broadcast on national TV, and a three-minute film on HIV transmission and prevention is being shown in movie theatres around the country. A telephone hotline has been established, and pamphlets and brochures have been produced for the public and for specific groups, such as truck drivers, drug users and health workers. Training courses on HIV/AIDS have been organized. As part of the HIV/AIDS information programme, a women's NGO will hold a one-day seminar on HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention later in 1996.

UNFPA is working closely with the Government to promote population education activities in primary and secondary schools,

supporting the development of population education materials for more than 1,000 pilot schools. Within the Ministry of Education, a population division has been established to oversee and coordinate population education activities. The Literacy Movement Organization, which is responsible for non-formal education, is also incorporating population education messages into literacy curricula.

From Shu-Yun Xu

UNFPA Representative

Islamic Republic of Iran

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#### BHUTAN PREPARES TO MEET POPULATION CHALLENGES

Over the last decade, Bhutan's achievements in improving the health of its people have been striking. The infant mortality rate (IMR) declined from 103 to 71 per 1,000 live births between 1984 and 1994. Over the same period, the maternal mortality rate (MMR) declined by half -- from 770 to 380 per 100,000 live births. At the same time, however, the population grew rapidly, at a rate of 3.1 per cent in 1994.

To meet this challenge, His Majesty, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, signed a Royal Message to the people of Bhutan in 1995 encouraging them to adopt family planning as a means of safeguarding their future and that of the nation as a whole.

The Government's Annual Health Conference in March 1996 endorsed

the introduction of reproductive health and family planning (RH/FP) services as a major activity of the health sector programme. The Conference also endorsed the introduction of sex education in schools. Intent on reducing the IMR and MMR still further, the Government has decided to give high priority to RH/FP as well as population and environmental issues in its Eighth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002). In addition to its efforts to strengthen RH, the Government has organized numerous post-ICPD advocacy and awareness-raising activities, many in connection with World Population Day and the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations.

As a specific follow-up to the ICPD, the Government organized a workshop on population and development in May 1995. This was the first time that all sectoral ministries, United Nations and bilateral organizations and agencies, along with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), came together to discuss population issues. The workshop recommended the formulation of a National Plan of Action for Population and Development, the integration of population issues into the Government's Eighth Five-Year Plan, the development of reliable data to support population and development planning, and concerted efforts to implement the recommendations of the ICPD Programme of Action.

Following the workshop, the Government decided to include a separate chapter on population in the Eighth Plan as well as a chapter on issues related to gender in development. The Government recognizes clearly that population and development issues are inseparable for attaining sustainable human development. It places high priority on conservation and on a sustainable utilization of Bhutan's rich natural resources, as a

majority of the population depend upon these for their livelihoods.

In September 1996, UNFPA will undertake a Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) exercise in Bhutan. The Government's priorities, in line with the ICPD Programme of Action, will be given full attention during this mission so that a comprehensive population programme can be formulated for the next plan period.

Wasim Zaman

UNFPA Representative

Bhutan

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#### GLOBAL POPULATION ASSISTANCE REPORT PUBLISHED

External assistance for population activities appears to have increased in 1994, a likely result of the intensified focus on population in preparatory activities for the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The newly published Global Population Assistance Report 1994, with data from 118 countries and organizations, includes the following findings:

\* Funds for international population assistance from developed countries and private sources, including development bank loans, totalled \$US 1.6 billion in 1994 -- a 25 per cent increase over the 1993 total;

\* Population assistance from all donor countries represented 1.65 per cent of official development assistance (ODA) in 1994, the highest percentage in the 10 years covered by this report;

\* UNFPA was the most significant provider of population assistance among multilateral organizations and agencies, with almost \$279 million flowing through the organization in 1994; and

\* Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were important donors of population assistance, contributing approximately \$117 million for population assistance in 1994.

Financial constraints remain one of the chief obstacles to the realization of the goals and objectives of the ICPD. It is estimated that in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, the implementation of programmes for reproductive health, including family planning, maternal health and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, as well as programmes for population data collection and analysis will cost \$17 billion by the year 2000. Considerable efforts are needed to mobilize the funds necessary to implement the ICPD Programme of Action.

Copies of the Global Population Assistance Report 1994 are available from UNFPA.

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SENATOR LETICIA SHAHANI AND PATHFINDER INTERNATIONAL WIN UN  
POPULATION AWARD

At a ceremony on 17 July 1996, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali presented the United Nations Population Award to the Hon. Leticia Ramos Shahani, Senate President Pro-Tempore, Republic of the Philippines, and Pathfinder International, an international non-governmental organization (NGO) based in the United States of America.

Senator Shahani was chosen for her more than 30 years of leadership in the field of population. Sponsor of the "Shahani Bill", intended to strengthen the country's new population policy and the Commission on Population of the Philippines, Senator Shahani also spearheaded the establishment of the Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development in 1988.

In her acceptance speech at the award ceremony, Senator Shahani emphasized that "the ICPD debate provided the means by which ... consensus [was] reached on many issues previously considered irreconcilable .... Such is the unique role of United Nations Conferences." Pathfinder International, which has supported over 2,000 programmes in more than 30 countries, was chosen for its 38 years of sustained effort in developing and improving family planning programmes and creating awareness of population issues.

Daniel E. Pellegrom, President, Pathfinder International, in his acceptance speech, noted that the ICPD Programme of Action "focused the world's attention on women, their equality, their empowerment, their health and their reproductive rights."

Established in 1981 by the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Population Award is presented annually to

individuals and/or institutions for the most outstanding contribution to the awareness of population questions or to their solutions. Past recipients of the award include President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt (1994), Mr. Fred T. Sai of Ghana (1993), Ms. Shidzue Kato of Japan (1988), Ms. Carmen A. Miro of Panama (1984), and the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India (1983). Institutions that have received the United Nations award include: the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (1995), The Population Council (1992), PROFAMILIA, Colombia (1988), and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (1985).

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Southern Africa - Oshakati, Namibia, was the site of a seven-week course, "Audience Research, Message and Materials Development for Population Information, Education and Communication (IEC)," conducted by UNFPA's Regional Population IEC Training Programme in February-March 1996. The course allowed the 22 participants from Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa and Zambia to share their perspectives on demographic factors, gender, adolescent sexuality, family planning and reproductive health.

AWID Award - Citing her pivotal role in the success of the International Conference on Population and Development and her long commitment to the empowerment of women, the Association for Women in Development (AWID) honoured Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA, with the AWID leadership award at its annual conference in Washington, D.C., 5-9 September. In her statement of acceptance, Dr. Sadik noted that "the ICPD and Fourth World

Conference on Women will go down in history as major steps forward for women, and for all humanity....They established, once and for all, that women's rights are human rights and that ensuring gender equality is a critical end in its own right; it is essential to eradicating poverty, to protecting the environment and to stabilizing world population growth in support of sustainable development." In her statement, Dr. Sadik called attention to the important role that women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) played in the ICPD and underscored UNFPA's commitment to working extensively with NGOs.

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## HABITAT II

The UN Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II), which took place in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June, called on countries to strengthen their commitments to achieving sustainable human settlements. Addressing the plenary session of the Conference, colloquially known as the City Summit, Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director, UNFPA, emphasized the linkage between population and human settlements issues. She underscored the critical challenges posed by rapid urbanization: providing basic social services; creating employment; and responding to the needs of young people, who account for a large proportion of the urban population.

Pointing to rapid rates of urban growth, Dr. Sadik noted that, at present, 11 of the world's 25 largest megacities are in the developing world and that another 13 mega-cities which will emerge over the next 20 years will all be in developing



countries. She urged that HABITAT II endorse the ICPD consensus, which had been confirmed and strengthened at the World Summit for Social Development (March 1995) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (September 1995).

UNFPA participated in a number of the parallel events which were part of the Conference. Together with WHO and UNDP, it sponsored the dialogue "Creating Healthy Cities in the 21st Century", for which it organized the Panel on Women's Reproductive Health.

UNFPA supported a consortium of major youth NGOs at the International Youth Consultation on HABITAT II. As part of its activities at the NGO Forum, UNFPA, together with several UN organizations and NGOs, participated in a panel addressing interactions between the UN and the NGO community in implementing the recommendations of recent UN conferences.

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