



# UNFPA - GOVERNMENT OF CHINA SEVENTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME

中国政府－联合国人口基金第七周期国别方案  
2011-2015



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# Advancing International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in China

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has assisted China since 1979, playing a catalytic role in introducing quality standards for a voluntary reproductive health approach in China. As China's largest multilateral source of assistance for population and reproductive health, UNFPA supports the Chinese Government in fulfilling its commitments to ICPD and MDGs in the areas of population and development.

ICPD was a watershed event that forged an international consensus on population and development. It shed new light on the linkages between reproductive health and rights and other aspects of development. 179 governments, including China's, endorsed a 20-year Programme of Action (PoA), which focused on individuals' needs and rights, rather than on achieving demographic targets. Concrete goals included providing universal education, reducing infant, child and maternal mortality rates, and ensuring universal access to reproductive health care by 2015, including family planning, assisted childbirth and prevention of sexually transmitted infections and HIV.

**MDGs:** At the Millennium Summit in 2000, 189 member states of the UN General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration, agreeing to the goal of reducing by half the number of people living in absolute poverty by 2015 through the achievement of MDGs. At the 2005 World Summit, the largest-ever gathering of world leaders reaffirmed the need to keep gender equality, HIV/AIDS and reproductive health at the top of the development agenda. Subsequently, additional targets, including **universal access to reproductive health by 2015**, and related indicators under MDG5 in improving maternal health were added to the MDGs.

*"The Millennium Development Goals, particularly the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, cannot be achieved if questions of population and reproductive health are not squarely addressed. And that means stronger efforts to promote women's rights, and greater investment in education and health, including reproductive health and family planning."*

*former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan  
Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, 16 December 2002*

The Chinese Government has been a strong supporter of MDGs. The *China's Progress Towards the Millennium Development Goals 2010 Report* revealed that "by 2015, China is likely to have fulfilled all of the MDGs", but more attention must be paid to areas including gender equality, reproductive health and addressing regional and rural-urban disparities in the country.

## National Context for CP7 (2011-2015)

The seventh country programme (CP7) covers the crucial five years from 2011-2015 in realizing the ICPD PoA and MDGs. Based on the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for China (UNDAF) 2011-2015, CP7 is aligned with national priorities of the 12<sup>th</sup> national five-year development plan and addresses the gaps that China faces in achieving ICPD and MDGs.

At the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ICPD in 2009, UNFPA supported the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and China Population and Development Research Center (CPDRC) to conduct a joint review, aiming to identify the achievements and gaps in advancing ICPD goals adopted in 1994. The conclusions (see below) from the review report *"China Population and Development Report 2009—From ICPD to MDGs at 15 Years (1994-2009)"* captured the changing context for the new country programme in the next 5 years:

### Achievements:

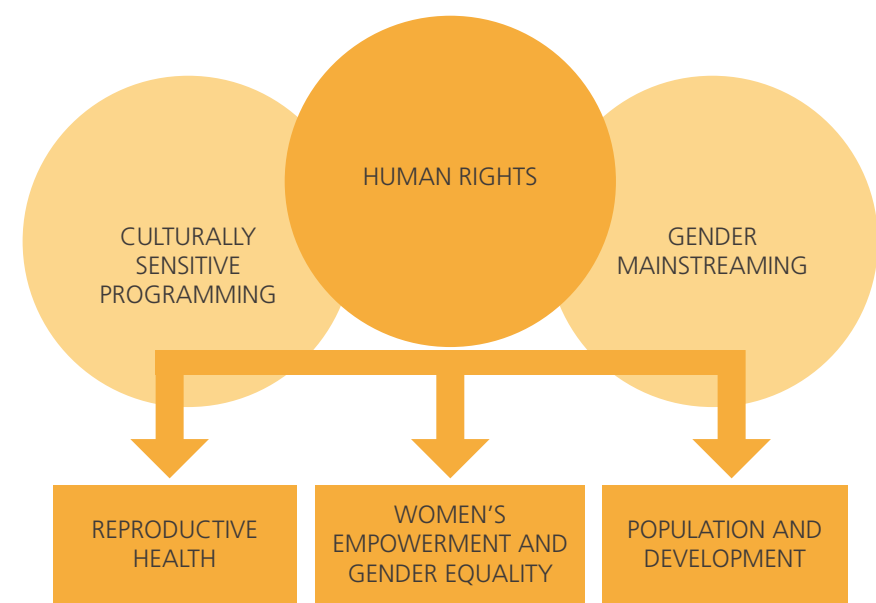
- "The spirit of ICPD has changed the road-map of Chinese population and development and has promoted national reform in the areas of population and family planning. Comprehensive, balanced and sustainable development has become the basis for the national development strategy and the concept of reproductive health has been increasingly integrated into family planning management and service. Compared with 15 years ago, China has witnessed enormous changes in population and national development."
- "Over the 15 years since 1994, China has recorded remarkable progress in many areas including: tremendous achievements in poverty alleviation; improvements in the health and wellbeing of citizens, particularly women and children; promoting gender equality and equity through policies and laws; provision of quality family planning/reproductive health services and prevention and treatment of STI and HIV."

### Challenges:

- "China is currently in a special historical time with transitions in both population numbers and structures. China will face huge challenges in further attaining the ICPD and MDG goals including:
- An enormous pressure from the population on resources, environment and socio-economic development.
  - The large gap between the current provision of basic public health services and society's demands for education, health care including primary health care, social security and public employment services.
  - Challenges regarding gender equality and equity with significant disparities between males and females in employment, income, health and participation in public policy formulation.
  - Critical challenges in addressing disparities in reproductive health and rights among regions, urban and rural areas, and between different population groups.
  - Sexual and reproductive health information, counseling and services for youths are inadequate, do not have institutional support.
  - Gaps exist between the currently fertility policy in China and the reproductive wishes of the public in certain regions.
  - China also needs to make significant progress to meet the prevailing international concept of reproductive rights."



# UNFPA approach: Integrating culture, gender, and human rights in its programming



In partnership with governments, along with other UN agencies, communities, NGOs, foundations and the private sector, UNFPA will support interventions:

- **At the Policy level:** aimed at pushing for positive changes on the part of duty-bearers
- **At the Local level:** pilot programmes designed to empower rights-holders to enable them to participate in decisions that affect their lives

- **In areas of research and data use:** to inform and support policy advocacy and interventions by obtaining in-depth understanding of issues in the areas of population and development
- **Focusing on the most vulnerable:** advocacy and programmes, where relevant, committed to realize the rights of the most vulnerable,including youth, migrants, women and the elderly, and people living with disabilities



Ethnic minority women in Gansu Province Photo: Li Baojun



Get free condoms from a family planning service station Photo: Li Baojun

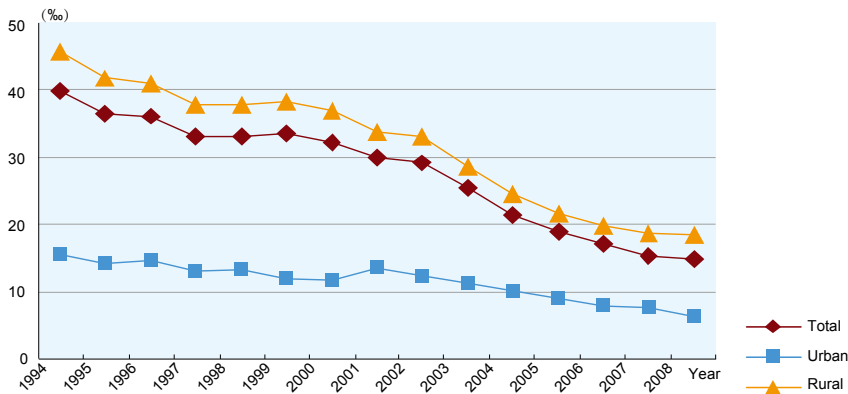
## Promoting universal access to reproductive health

Everyone has the right to enjoy reproductive health, which is a basis for having healthy children, intimate relationships and happy families.



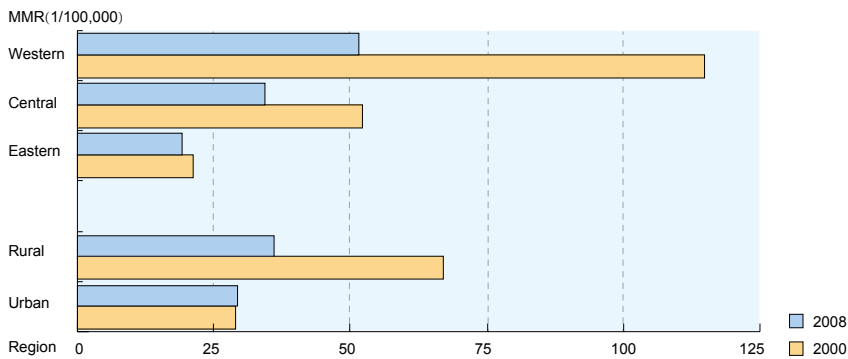
Maternal and child health:  
remarkable overall achievements but regional and urban-rural disparities

Infant Mortality Rate in China, 1994-2008



Source: The source for data from 1994 to 2007 is the Ministry of Health of China's Health Statistics Yearbook (2008). The source of data for 2008 is the website of the Ministry of Health of China, "A Circular Letter of National Monitoring Result on Women and Children Health, 2008", July 31, 2009.

Maternal Mortality Ratio by Regions and by Urban and Rural Areas, 2000 and 2008



Source: "A Circular Letter of Monitoring Results on Women and Children Health, 2008", the website of the Ministry of Health of China, July 31, 2009.

HIV and sexually transmitted infections

Data released by UNAIDS and the Ministry of Health before World AIDS Day 2009 showed the following:

- Overall HIV prevalence in China remains low – estimated at 0.05 per cent of the total population – but with pockets of high infection among specific sub-populations and in some localities.
- By the end of 2009, 740,000 adults and children were estimated to be living with HIV, 60% of which were not aware of their HIV infection status.
- It is estimated that there 48,000 new infections took place in 2009, and 75% of them were transmitted through sexual contacts.
- Over the past three years, HIV cases among students have been increasing. The percentage of total HIV positive cases who are students aged 20-24 has gone up from 20.3% to 39.8%.
- It is estimated that 20% of migrant workers have visited sex workers, and condom use is relatively low.
- The prevalence rates of STIs and HIV have been rising hand in hand. Although the history of STIs is much longer than that of the HIV epidemic in China, public awareness of STIs has been lagging behind due to weaker communication and education efforts.

Promoting linkages between reproductive health and HIV prevention

The prevention of HIV and STI is integrally linked to sexual and reproductive health. Responses to both health issues should be closely linked and mutually reinforcing. UNFPA strongly advocates for closer linkages between HIV/AIDS interventions and sexual and reproductive health care. With UNFPA support, the National Population and Family Planning Commission (NPFPC) developed the National Framework for Strengthening the Linkage between HIV Prevention and Reproductive Health and Family Planning Services. As sexual transmission has increasingly become a major driver of the HIV epidemic in China, the Framework will help to reach the general public, especially reproductive-age women, with messages on HIV prevention. The Framework capitalizes on the extensive reproductive health and family planning network at the community level and promotes integration of HIV prevention into routine family planning work.



Family planning staff talking about HIV prevention to a villager Photo: Zhang Jie

Monitoring Universal Access to Reproductive Health: National Indicator Framework on MDG5 Target B (MDG5B)

UNFPA, together with WHO, supported a significant collaboration with the Chinese Ministry of Health to develop a national indicator framework on MDG5B "achieving universal access to reproductive health by 2015". Undertaken by Peking University and Women and Children's Health Center under the Ministry of Health, the study has led to the establishment of a set of national indicators to measure all aspects of reproductive health in 2009. This framework follows the global indicator framework jointly developed by WHO and UNFPA, aimed at defining the target of "universal access to reproductive health". The framework is likely to be utilized by relevant ministries in mapping out sectoral strategic plans.

Taking cultural factors into consideration

In 2009, the Central University of Nationalities in Beijing, with UNFPA support, conducted a revealing study on the traditional beliefs and practices of six ethnic groups related to maternal and child health (MCH). Those ethnic minorities were the Miao, Dong, Dai, Jingpo, Hui and Tibetans in Guizhou, Yunnan, Qinghai and Tibet. The findings provided insights for the design of culturally appropriate interventions to improve the health of mothers and children in ethnic communities. This study also marked the beginning of an increased focus on culturally sensitive approaches in UNFPA-supported interventions in China. This study is part of the UN Joint Programme under the China Culture and Development Partnership Framework, supported by the Spanish MDG Fund. The project, as well as the culturally sensitive approach, will continue in CP7.



## Unmet sexual and reproductive health needs of young people

According to the World's Youth Data Sheet published by the Population Reference Bureau, in 2006 China had an estimated 319.9 million young people aged between 10 and 24. China's share of this age group accounts for 18% of the 1.8 billion young people in the world. Regionally, Asia is home to 61% of the world's population of young people, with China accounting for almost one third of that. Despite the large number of young people in China, family planning services have traditionally focused on married couples. As a result, the sexual and reproductive health needs of young unmarried people, especially youth aged between 15 and 24, remain largely unmet in many areas in China.

With support from UNFPA and the National Working Committee on Children and Women (NWCCW) under the State Council, Peking University conducted the first national survey on access and utilization of sexual and reproductive health services by youth aged 15-24. Preliminary findings from this survey showed that:

- About 60% of unmarried youth are open to having sex before marriage.
- 22.4% of youth aged 15-24 have had sex, and 9.4% of those aged 15-19 have had sex. More than half of them did not use any contraceptive methods for their first sexual intercourse.
- Amongst female youth who have had sex, 20% of them had unplanned pregnancies, and 91% resorted to abortion.

- About 60% of the needs for counseling and more than 50% of the needs for services in reproductive health are not met, mostly due to people "feeling embarrassed" or "not serious".
- Only 4.4% of the youth were well-informed about reproductive health and 14.4% of them had correct HIV prevention knowledge.

## Population policy and family planning

In the past programme cycles, UNFPA focused on introducing client-centered voluntary family planning approach and quality of care through working with county level family planning commissions. In the 30 counties with UNFPA assistance since 2003, strong evidences have shown declined maternal deaths, increased births with skilled attendance, and changed choices of modern contraceptive methods. The government of China is scaling up the approach in some other counties.

Following the catalytic role UNFPA has played in promoting the voluntary family planning approach at the county level, the focus of CP7 will shift to policy advocacy at a higher level. Working with provincial family planning policy makers, UNFPA will support revisions of family planning regulations in line with the ICPD Programme of Action. Interventions will be also developed to address the needs and reproductive health rights of specific vulnerable groups such as unmarried youth and migrants.

### Youth matters!

- UNFPA China will forge policy initiatives at the national level on the basis of findings from the first national survey on Youth Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health in 2010.
- UNFPA China will encourage youth participation through fostering partnerships with young people at local and national levels.
- UNFPA China will support institutional capacity building to enable national partners to provide appropriate sexual and reproductive health services and information to unmarried youth.



Youth volunteer teaching participatory training methods Photo: Li Baojun



Street Banner of the Sixth National Population Census Photo: Li Baojun

# Promoting sustainable development through utilization of population data and research





Construction workers taking a health survey

## Everyone counts: enhancing national capacity in data collection and utilization

UNFPA's collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) on population data dates back to 1982, when UNFPA assisted NBS (former State Statistical Bureau) in using contemporary electronic data-processing techniques to conduct the third national population census. While NBS has become fully competent in conducting censuses, UNFPA-NBS collaboration has expanded to improve sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis in the national statistical system and social indicators. Concrete results include *Men and Women* and *Social Progress* series at both national and provincial levels.

In November 2010, the sixth national population census took place in China. UNFPA hosted a special forum on World Population Day with its national partners at the Shanghai World Expo 2010 to highlight the sixth national population census, and the new measures being used to count migrants and other vulnerable groups. During the course of CP7, UNFPA plans to provide in-depth data analysis and utilization assistance to NBS.

## Urbanization and migration

### Informing policy makers on sexual and reproductive health services for migrants

In 2009, UNFPA China supported Renmin University and the National Population and Family Planning Commission (NPFPC) to conduct research into migrants' access to sexual and reproductive health services. This research informed national and local authorities on measures to improve access to sexual and reproductive health services for migrants. Key findings included:

- The scale of migration from rural to urban areas has increased rapidly over the last two decades. In 2008, there were 201 million internal migrants in China.
- The number of female migrants is rapidly increasing. In 2008, there were 112.52 million female migrants, an increase of 30 times in the past 20 years.
- Nearly one-third of migrant women never received any ante-natal checkups, and gave birth at home. Only 29% of migrants can give correct answers to questions related to the mode of HIV transmission, and only 60% can receive contraceptive measures free of charge at destinations with a "Marriage and Fertility Certificate".
- Unmarried youth migrants and migrants living in rural areas have less access to reproductive health services.

### Pioneering innovations to improve health services to youth migrants

In collaboration with WHO, ILO, UNFPA and city-level institutions under the Ministry of Health, youth

## Ageing

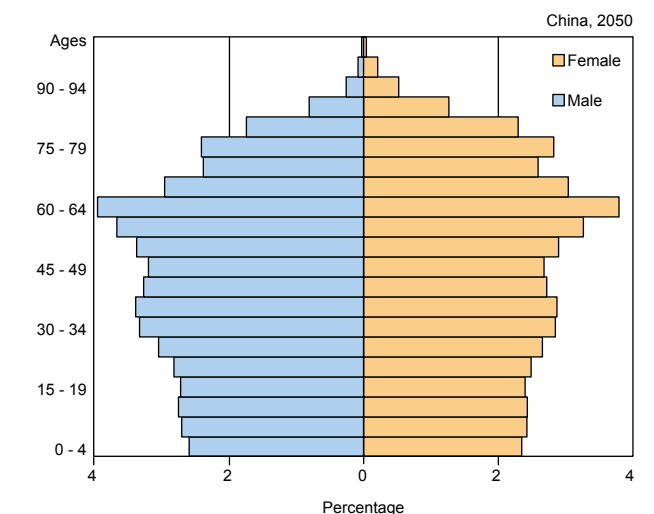
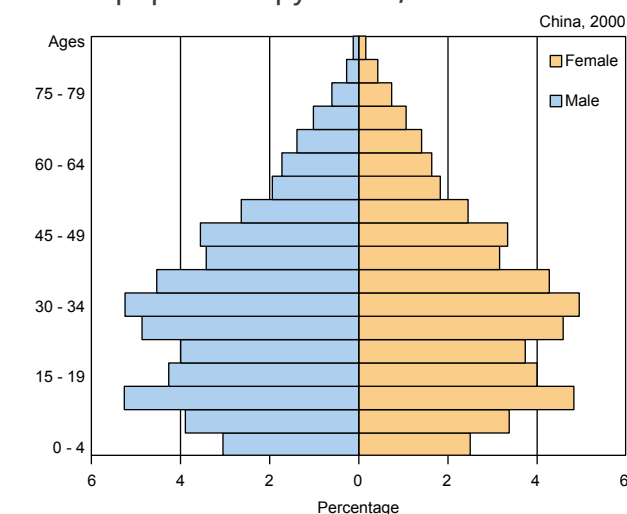
In 1999, people aged 60 and above accounted for more than 10% of the Chinese population, while those aged 65 years and above accounted for 7%, marking the beginning of an ageing society for China. According to *China Statistical Abstract 2009*, by the end of 2008, China was home to 159 million people 60 years or above, representing 12% of the total population. The percentage of people aged 65 and above will be 30% or so by 2050.

The laws and regulations related to ageing need to be improved, to better safeguard the rights of older people.

The social security system needs to be strengthened. Some groups of urban elderly have limited social security and face economic difficulties, some rural elderly still live in poverty, and the function of families in caring for the elderly is weakening.

UNFPA will be committed to assist the capacity building of national policymakers to address the challenges associated with an increasing ageing population, and support active and healthy ageing.

### China population pyramids, 2000 and 2050



Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision*, <http://esa.un.org/unpp>, (Accessed September 07, 2010)

## Climate Change

China, like other countries in the world, is concerned by climate change and its impact on people. UNFPA China has started to discuss strategies with its national partners to respond to climate change challenges in its upcoming 7<sup>th</sup> country programme for 2011-2015. Through working with leading universities and research institutions in China, UNFPA will assist cutting edge research to understand the relationship between climate change and population dynamics. Findings will lead to further evidence-based policy recommendations for integrated mitigation and adaptation strategies taking into account interactions between development, population and environment.



An old woman working in the field Photo: Community Alliance

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