



ANNUAL REPORT

# Realizing the Potential | 2013



## About this report

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, worked with 159 countries, territories and other areas in 2013 to **deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.**

Backed by \$976.8 million in support from donor governments, partner organizations, foundations and individuals in 2013, UNFPA delivered results in the seven main programming areas of the organization's Strategic Plan for 2008-2013:

- Expanding and improving maternal and newborn health;
- Increasing access to voluntary family planning;
- Making HIV and STI services more accessible to pregnant women people living with HIV, young people and key populations;
- Advocating for gender equality and reproductive rights;
- Increasing young people's access to sexual and reproductive health services and information;
- Linking population dynamics, policymaking and development plans;
- Harnessing the power of data.





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Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon speaks to a young mother at Cama Hospital in Mumbai, India.

## Foreword

Thanks to the work of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, there have been considerable advances in the two decades since the International Conference on Population and Development.

The ICPD Programme of Action, or Cairo Consensus as it came to be known, broke new ground in recognizing that reproductive health and rights, as well as women's empowerment and gender equality, are cornerstones of population and development efforts. UNFPA has played a dynamic role in advancing these causes and pursuing sustainable development.

Working with governments, other United Nations agencies and partners around the world, UNFPA has helped reduce maternal deaths by nearly half and the deaths of children by more than 40 per cent. This has

not only spared families the trauma of losing a loved one, but also given hope and opportunity to millions of women and children.

While much has been accomplished through the framework of the Millennium Development Goals, more remains to be done. We have two key priorities: to intensify efforts to achieve these life-saving goals, and to define an ambitious post-2015 development agenda in which the needs and rights of women, young people and children are at the forefront.

As this work unfolds, we must also address new challenges related to population demographics, such as changing age and household structures, rapid urbanization, migration and the provision of services in contexts of conflict and disaster. New environmental realities, including the urgent threat of climate change, are also part of the picture. These factors were less understood and appreciated two decades ago. As Member States consider the way forward, I encourage them to draw on the wealth of information and analysis that has emerged from the 2013 ICPD review led by UNFPA.

A sustainable future, where everyone can fulfil their potential, requires that we promote health, cultivate human capacities, and commit to individual dignity and human rights for every person, everywhere. UNFPA makes important contributions to that effort, and I commend this report to policy-makers and others worldwide involved in that vital work.

—United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon



## From the Executive Director

Twenty years ago at the International Conference on Population and Development, 179 governments forged a groundbreaking consensus that changed the very definition of development. Delegates from all regions and cultures put individuals, their human rights and dignity, at the very heart of development, emphasizing that sexual and reproductive health is a fundamental human right.

They recognized that empowering women and girls is both the “right” thing to do and one of the most reliable pathways to improved well-being for all.

The conference delegates’ Programme of Action, which continues to guide UNFPA’s work today, shifted population policy and programmes from a focus on numbers to a focus on individual human lives and rights. It marked a turning point on the path towards inclusive, equitable, sustainable development.

To mark the past 20 years of implementation of the Programme of Action, the General Assembly called on UNFPA to lead a global review of countries’ progress. The review, carried out in 2013, included a survey of 176 countries and seven territories, regional and thematic conferences, and extensive stakeholder consultations.

The review found that since the International Conference on Population and Development, the world has made impressive gains: fewer women are dying in pregnancy and childbirth; more women have access to education, work and political participation; more children, girls in particular, are going to school; and there are more laws protecting and upholding reproductive and other human rights.

But not all have benefited equally. Unacceptably large gaps persist in access to services, opportunities and wealth. The



Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin at youth centre in Eastern Samar, the Philippines.

review found that 53 per cent of the world’s income gains over the past 20 years have gone to the top 1 per cent of the population—and none to the bottom 10 per cent.

The gains we have made cannot be sustained unless we fully respect the rights of people, particularly young people and adolescents, to education, including comprehensive sexuality education, and help meet young people’s needs for skills development, entrepreneurship training, access to jobs and credit. There is also the need to have universal access to health services, including access to information and family planning services.

Another finding of the review is that rights are still far from universal. While most States are progressing towards gender equality, in a number of countries the rights and autonomy of women are deliberately curtailed. And in no country are women fully equal to men in political, social or economic power. Gender-based discrimination and violence continue to plague most societies. People living with disabilities, indigenous peoples, racial and ethnic minorities, and other marginalized and vulnerable people continue to face discrimination—this despite the fact that a core message of the International Conference on Population and Development was the right of *all* persons to development.

In the poorest communities, even in wealthier countries, maternal death, child marriage, adolescent pregnancy and women's overall status have seen little positive change since 1994.

Poverty occurs in all countries, but women bear a disproportionate burden of its consequences, as do the children they care for.

Harmful practices such as early, child and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation/cutting, remain prevalent despite advances in legislation. Too often laws, where they do exist, are not enforced and thus fail to protect women and girls.

We do not possess a quick fix or panacea that can address all of these issues without paying attention to the root cause, which is inequality. While human rights must be upheld universally, concrete approaches must be country-specific. In addition, we cannot expect to make any significant gains unless we pay greater attention to and make great improvements in health systems. Improvements must include the provision of appropriate human resources, building a robust supply-chain management system and providing a social protection floor that will enable all, without exception, to access services. This approach can reinforce the principles of equity and respect for the rights of all.

The findings of the review make it clear that the objectives and principles of the Programme of Action are as relevant today as they were in 1994, and have the power not only to propel development in the next 20 years but also to help rectify many of the inequalities that are impeding progress. The findings will also inform the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda—the United Nations successor commitment to the Millennium Development Goals.

What the world looks like in the future will depend heavily on how well we meet the needs and support the aspirations of young people, particularly adolescent

girls, today. There are now more young people than ever in the world. The new generation's aspirations are also greater than ever. With access to cell phones and the internet, many are better informed of their rights and the inequalities they experience. Capitalizing on their aspirations will require deep investments in their education, skills development, health and political participation. Much more attention should be placed on their ability to access comprehensive sexuality education, information and services, to enable them to make choices that will promote healthy lifestyles and build their agency to decide whether or when to have children. In 2013, UNFPA has steadfastly supported countries' efforts to realize the full potential of every young person, and we will continue to support young people for years to come, with particular focus on the most marginalized and excluded adolescent girls.

On 31 December 2013, the UNFPA Strategic Plan for 2008–2013 came to a close. The new strategic plan, for 2014–2017, equips UNFPA to respond more effectively and efficiently to emerging opportunities and challenges and to shifting needs starting in 2014—a critical year for population and development, for human rights and for reflecting these priorities in the new global Sustainable Development Agenda.

Now is the ideal time to reaffirm the core message of the International Conference on Population and Development: that individual dignity and human rights are the bedrock of a resilient, sustainable future. The path to sustainability is paved with equity and non-discrimination; with investments in health and education, particularly for women and young people; with universal access to sexual and reproductive health and secure reproductive rights; with choices and opportunities for all.

—Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin



The Maternal Child Health Assistant School in Makeni, Bombali District, Sierra Leone.

# Global initiatives

## DOCUMENTING 20 YEARS OF PROGRESS

At the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994, 179 governments adopted a landmark Programme of Action to deliver a more equal, sustainable world.

The Programme of Action, which continues to guide the work of UNFPA, made a clear connection between human rights, sexual and reproductive health, population dynamics, poverty reduction and economic development. The Programme of Action was groundbreaking because it put people's rights and dignity at the heart of sustainable development. It emphasized that sexual and

reproductive health is fundamental to human rights, and that empowering women and girls is both the right thing to do and one of the most reliable pathways for improving well-being for all.

In the lead-up to the twentieth anniversary of the ICPD, the United Nations General Assembly called on UNFPA to lead a global review of progress in implementing the Programme of Action. An ICPD Beyond 2014 Secretariat located in UNFPA coordinated and led the review in consultation with Member States and in cooperation with the United Nations system and other international organizations. The review entailed a global survey

of governments; consultations with civil society, United Nations partners and other stakeholders; and regional and global thematic conferences and meetings.

Regional population and development conferences were held in 2013 to assess the implementation of the Programme of Action and propose actions for further implementation beyond 2014. Global thematic conferences and meetings were also organized to consider specific themes or issues: youth, human rights and women's health.

Drawing on the findings of the global survey, consultations with stakeholders and partners, and the outcomes of the regional and thematic conferences and meetings, the ICPD Beyond 2014 Secretariat set out to produce an unprecedented, authoritative report on the state of population and development and propose ways to seize opportunities to speed up the implementation of the Programme of Action in support of countries' achievement of development objectives.

The report, scheduled for publication in early 2014, reflects the views of States and stakeholders and shows that the Programme of Action has significantly contributed to tangible progress: fewer women today are dying in pregnancy and childbirth; skilled birth attendance has increased by 15 per cent worldwide since 1990; more women have access to education, work and political participation; more children are going to school; and fewer adolescent girls are having babies. But the

mobility and security of place. The framework also cites the centrality of the well-being of the individual in sustainable development, the achievement of which depends also on good governance and accountability.

The report will inform the discussions by Member States at the September 2014 United Nations General Assembly special session on the follow-up to the ICPD.

### NEW STRATEGIC PLAN AND THE UNFINISHED ICPD AGENDA

At the end of 2013, UNFPA closed the Strategic Plan that had been guiding the organization since 2008. Earlier in the year, UNFPA developed a new Strategic Plan for 2014 through 2017. The new plan is focused squarely on addressing the unfinished agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development, ICPD, with a particular concentration on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

The new Strategic Plan includes a strengthened results framework, a new business model and improvements to the funding arrangements and requirements. The new Plan will enable UNFPA to have a more significant impact on the lives of women, adolescents and youth around the world.

The new Plan reaffirms UNFPA's strategic direction, with the achievement of universal access to sexual and reproductive health, the realization of reproductive

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