



Gender Snapshot

# UNFPA PROGRAMMING AT WORK

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# The Mission of UNFPA

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV and AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.

UNFPA—because everyone counts.



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## Introduction

The rights of women and adolescent girls, particularly their reproductive rights, are a priority for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). With that in mind, UNFPA is committed to fulfilling the principles and recommendations of the Programme of Action which was endorsed by 179 countries at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo. The Cairo agenda represents an unprecedented international commitment to principles of reproductive health and rights for women and men, gender equality and male responsibility, and autonomy and empowerment of women everywhere.

# Setting Policy for the International Conference on Population and Development and the Millennium Development Goals: Human Rights, Gender Equality and Culture

UNFPA's commitment to an integrated three-pronged approach, bringing together the dynamics of human rights, gender and culture, is also a strategic, cross-cutting dimension of all the priority areas. In addition to being a useful approach for advancing the ICPD agenda, this strategy serves as a roadmap for the realization of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals.

## International and Regional Commitments to Reproductive Rights

UNFPA works to ensure that gender equality and human rights of women and adolescent girls, particularly their reproductive rights, are integrated into national policies, development frameworks and laws. At the global level, UNFPA worked with the Harvard School of Public Health to develop a practical implementation manual on applying the human rights-based approach to UNFPA's mandate areas.

At the same time, wide support for this dedication is evident as various countries reported activities in this area. In sub-Saharan Africa, the governments of **Comoros**, **Rwanda**, **Cote D'Ivoire** and **Mali** drafted or revised their policies and laws related to reproductive health, with support from UNFPA. These include laws and policies concerning family planning, safe motherhood, and men's role



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in sexual and reproductive health. Similarly, in **Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, and Botswana**, UNFPA helped governments draft policies on gender equality. UNFPA was also instrumental in the passage of Domestic Violence Acts in both **Ghana and Zimbabwe**.

In **Namibia**, UNFPA supported Parliamentarians in visiting communities and households to assess whether and how laws and policies related to sexual and reproductive health and gender were being effectively implemented.

In **Venezuela**, a UNFPA-supported assessment with the People's Defence Office that evaluated the knowledge of public defenders revealed non-compliance with laws and norms relating to the sexual and reproductive health of young women and adolescents. The report underscored the importance of coordination between the health and justice sectors, and will provide more justification for a comprehensive response to gender-based violence.

In **Sudan**, in addition to supporting legislation related to women's empowerment, UNFPA supported the capacity of government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups to mainstream gender through gender auditing, gender responsive budgeting, actions related to gender-based violence, and by engendering the Sudan census.

In **Lesotho**, UNFPA supported the Government by helping to coordinate efforts on the drafting of a domestic violence bill. At the regional level, UNFPA supported a situational analysis of the Africa region, which assessed different ways to determine women's empowerment levels, gender equality and levels of gender-based violence.

In **Albania**, UNFPA has been the leading agency in ensuring that gender equality and human rights of women and adolescent girls, especially their reproductive rights, become integrated into national policies, development frameworks and laws. This includes UNFPA support for the development of the National Strategy and Action Plan on Youth, and the National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality and Domestic Violence.

Working with other UN agencies and national partners, UNFPA in Yemen provided support to the Women's National Committee to integrate the issues of reproductive health and rights, and harmful practices, such as violence against women and female genital mutilation/cutting, in the policies of different government sectors. UNFPA activities in **Turkmenistan** contributed to the passage of a new law aimed at ensuring that women have rights and freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural and other areas on an equal basis with men.

In the Asia and Pacific region, UNFPA partnered with **Indonesian** government agencies and NGOs for the passage of a trafficking law, while also supporting the integration of reproductive rights in the draft amendment of a health and population law.

In **Mongolia**, UNFPA developed a training manual titled Mainstreaming and Integration of Population, Gender and Reproductive Health in National and Sectoral Policies and Plans, and met with the Ministry of Finance to introduce ways to integrate, cost and budget health and gender concerns into national strategies and plans.

In **Vietnam**, UNFPA supported the Government by providing technical inputs for the development of gender equality law while advocating for government adoption of it and providing support for a legal guide on how to implement a new law on domestic violence.

UNFPA strongly advocated for the integration of the Cairo Agenda at the highest levels of decision making processes throughout the Latin America and Caribbean Region as well. With UNFPA support, the Quito Consensus<sup>1</sup> was unanimously adopted by all countries participating in the Regional Conference on Women of Latin America and the Caribbean - a significant advancement in positioning the ICPD agenda in the region. The Quito document has direct relevance to the UNFPA mandate, including references to women's political and economic participation, migration and trafficking; gender-based violence; feminization of the HIV pandemic; the need to ensure adolescent girls and young women have access to reproductive health, employment and political participation; and shared work/life responsibilities within the family, as well as in the private and public sectors. Examples include **Brazil**

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