



# Education is **EMPOWERMENT**



Promoting Goals in Population,  
Reproductive Health and Gender

REPORT OF A TECHNICAL CONSULTATION on UNFPA's ROLE IN EDUCATION  
8-10 DECEMBER 2003 - New York



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# Foreword

This Fund-wide technical consultation provided an important opportunity to document and review UNFPA's three-decade-long experience in Population Education (PopEd). It is a forum that is both timely and relevant as it provided a venue for reviewing past programme experiences in education, as well as to explore areas that need to be strengthened or further developed.

Together with our technical and programme advisers from Headquarters, the Country Technical Services Teams, and country offices, UNFPA has been able to assess its role in education over the past three decades. However, a great deal of work remains to be done. This report highlights the major issues and recommendations from the December 2003 consultation which need further careful review.

In light of UNFPA's programme priorities, the ICPD/POA and the development agenda set forth in the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, UNFPA has focused on at least four aspects of education. First, by promoting basic education, especially of girls, through advocacy for solid national policies that ensure access to education for all. Second, by contributing to improvements in quality of education, through support for curriculum and materials development and teacher training. Over the years, UNFPA's niche in education has been recognized in terms of our role in promoting sexual and reproductive health, population/ family life education, and gender

sensitization, especially among young people. Third, by giving a strong focus on adolescent reproductive health and HIV prevention, where education has played a key role in empowering young people with information, lifeskills and necessary health services to protect themselves and prevent the spread of this disease. Finally, UNFPA's strategic partnerships have intensified in support of global initiatives on Education for All (EFA), the UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), the launch of the Literacy Decade, and the Global Initiative on Preventive Education on HIV/AIDS (GIPE).

This meeting report provides UNFPA with more basis for addressing and strengthening education interventions within the context of its programme and funding priorities. It offers an opportunity to review some of the lessons of the past and to chart some of the ways forward. UNFPA is committed to working with United Nations system and other partners to help ensure that women, men and young people have access to relevant information, education, counseling, services and opportunities needed to live healthy, responsible, and productive lives.



MARI SIMONEN, DIRECTOR  
TECHNICAL SUPPORT DIVISION  
UNFPA

# Acknowledgements

First, it should be noted that the process of preparing this report was encouraged by the interesting discussions and debate that took place during the technical consultation itself. Inputs from participants, the background documentation and all the case studies presented at the meeting have been crucial to this Report, which reflects the views of headquarters and selected country offices and technical advisers.

Sincere appreciation to participants Uche Azie, Wasim Zaman, Betinna Maas, Genovieve Ah-sue, Makane Kane, Mere Kisseka, Robert Thompson, Barnabas Yisa, Martha Moyano, Bayar Oyun, Richard Kawooya, Daphne de Rebello, OJ Sikes, and Claude Georges for their ideas and active participation, and to Delia Barcelona for initiating, organizing and facilitating the meeting.

Special thanks to the Representatives and national staff in Burkina Faso, Mongolia, Peru, Uganda, Yemen, Mongolia, and the CST Director and

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# Introduction

An internal Technical Consultation on Population Education Programmes was held at UNFPA Headquarters 8-10 December 2003. It was attended by representatives from CSTs, COs, GDs, TSD and other UNFPA units. While over the years UNFPA has participated in numerous inter-agency meetings, workshops and conferences on education at global, regional and country levels, this was the first Fund-wide consultation on the theme of education organized by UNFPA Headquarters.

The purpose of the consultation was to review programme evidence, learn lessons from UNFPA-supported education programmes and to build consensus within the organization on how to best integrate education concerns in the Fund's policies and programmes in light of its new Strategic Direction. Desk reviews, country case studies and regional assessments were undertaken to provide background for the discussions and to serve as inputs for planned knowledge sharing in this area. The consultation discussed, *inter alia*, current approaches, clarified concepts and methodologies, shared achievements and lessons learned, and proposed ways to enhance programme effectiveness.

The outcome of the consultation is intended to guide country offices on how to more effectively programme education issues in the context of the Fund's priority areas of work. As a result, the review is expected to provide:

- Conceptual clarity: A common understanding on the role of education within the context of UNFPA-supported programmes and in light of the new Strategic Direction, ICPD follow up actions, and MDGs.
- Evidence-based programme experiences on sexual and reproductive health education to guide both policy development and programme design.
- Priority strategies and frameworks for the effective integration of education concerns in population, reproductive health, gender and HIV/AIDS programmes, especially as they relate to adolescents and youth, both in school and outside the formal system.

This report is organized around the major themes discussed in the meeting: a historical background on UNFPA support to population education; how best to create a supportive social and political environment; capacity building for curriculum development and teacher training; institutionalization of programmes; programming considerations such as HIV prevention, out-of-school programmes and links to other services; and strategic considerations in moving forward in this area. At the end, the report offers a list of recommendations for follow up actions. In addition, the report contains country case studies and a comprehensive assessment of the status of PopEd in Latin America and the Caribbean. These provide a wealth of information and lessons learned, which the consultation took into account in its discussions.

As the reader of this report will notice, education programmes are given a variety of titles reflecting their focus and local (cultural and other) preferences. In this report, in line with one of the recommendations emanating from the consultation, "population education"– PopEd – is used as a generic name for all education programmes concerned with population, reproductive health and gender issues. Moreover, as PopEd has been neglected in recent past, it is hoped that this report gives justice to the rich discussions that took place during the consultation and that it can provide some guidance on how to strengthen UNFPA interventions in education to support programmes addressing population, reproductive health and gender issues.

# Acronyms

ARH	Adolescent Reproductive Health	NCDC	Center National Curriculum Development
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health	NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training (India)
BCC	Behavioral Change Communications	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
CARICOM	Regional Action Plan Youth Summit of the Caribbean	P.L.E	Primary Leaving Examination
CIEP	Intersectoral Commission on Population Education	PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
CO	Country Office	PAP	Population Action Programmes
CST	Country Support Team	PD	Population Development
DEMP	Direction de L'Éducation en Matière de Population	PIASCY	Presidential Initiative on AIDS Strategy for Communication to Youth
EFA	Education For All	PLANESA	National Plan for Sexuality Education and Love
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	PNP	National Population Policy
FLACSO	Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales	PO Zorgaa	Mongolian Adolescent Reproductive Health Project
FLE	Family Life Education	ICPD PoA	ICPD - Programme of Action
FP	Family Practice	PopEd	Population Education
FRESH	Focusing Resources on Education on School Health	PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
GBV	Gender Based Violence	RH	Reproductive Health
GD	Geographic Division	SANEBA	Satisfaction of Basic Necessities of Learning
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	SCERT	State Council of Educational Research & Training
GIPE	Global Preventive Education Initiative on HIV/AIDS	SE	Sexuality Education
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	SIMAC	System for Improving Human Resources and Curricular Adjustment
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development	STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
IEC	Information, Education, and Communication	TSD	Technical Support Division
INFF	Interagency Network on Education	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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