

GCC Sub-regional office

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UNFPA GCC CO-OPERATES WITH WHO TO DEVELOP IEC PLAN OF ACTION ON BIRTH SPACING



Dr Samar Elfeky, technical officer/ EMRO trains the MoH staff members and community leaders

UNFPA GCC and WHO in Oman launched a mission in May 2016, within their Joint Program based on Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Plan of Action (PoA) on the Birth Spacing Program of MoH in Oman. According to this PoA, a consultant was commissioned to review the latest IEC Plans of the Ministry, assist in developing a new plan for the next 3 – 5 years, conduct an IEC training for community nurses, health educators, healthcare providers and community support group volunteers, and submit a final report including recommendations for improvement. During this mission, the consultant will have extensive meetings with staff members of the Primary Health Directorate, Women and Child Health Department, Community Based Initiatives Department and Health Education Department at the Ministry.

The goal of the Birth Spacing Program adopted by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in Oman is to improve the health of young mothers, children and families, and reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality. The objectives of the program are to provide a choice of safe and modern methods to clients, and to provide the

necessary skills to the health providers in order to ensure quality service delivery, in addition to improve counseling services, and introduce globally accredited contraceptive methods. Furthermore, the program aims at raising awareness of the benefits of birth spacing for the well-being of mothers, children and their families. The program is highly supported by the Ministry's international partners (UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF), which usually provide technical, logistical and financial assistance. In order to promote the birth spacing, national communication plans were developed by the Department of Family and Community Health, in coordination with concerned departments at the MoH and representatives from all governorates. Several mass awareness campaigns are conducted yearly all over the Omani governorates to promote birth spacing and eliminate misconceptions related to the birth spacing choices taken by women.

Health

UNFPA GCC OFFICE PARTICIPATES IN THE JOINT MISSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON THE PREVENTION OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES TO OMAN

On 10-12 April, 2016, UNFPA GCC, participated in the Joint Mission of the United Nations Interagency Task Force (UNIATF) on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) to Oman. The mission was conducted by WHO, headed by Dr. Oleg CHESTNOV, Assistant Director General, Non-communicable Diseases and Mental Health at WHO. All UN agencies in Oman participated in this mission, which addressed the causes and negative impact of NCDs. NCDs (cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and cancers) are the main cause of premature mortality and morbidity in Oman. Also the prevalence of key risk factors, and the probability of dying prematurely from one of these diseases is 18% meaning nearly one of every five adult dies from NCDs before the age of 70 years. The Joint Mission learnt from the Government of Oman of the drain on the economy that premature death and illness from NCDs is having in the country. While there has been recent progress in addressing NCDs, over one half of Omani men and women are overweight or obese. UNFPA's participated in setting the

road map to fight NCDs which will benefit women specifically in Oman and the whole community. UNFPA's role in the mission and participation was covered widely by the local newspapers.

That gave the momentum to UNFPA to build on its success stories including the Programme of Screening of Breast Cancer, which was supported before by UNFPA. Furthermore, UNFPA GCC conducted in co-operation with MOH a cervical cancer detection and audit national survey to support the expansion of services for screening cervical cancer nationwide over the past few years.

Based on the mission's recommendations, NCDs leadership and action at local levels are enhanced; and Resident UN agencies, including UNFPA, would establish Thematic Group on NCDs to help in fighting those diseases. Undoubtedly that this

mission will support the high level of political and technical commitment shown by the Ministry Health in the country. It will also promote the Health Vision 2050, National NCD Policy, and the inter-ministerial NCD Committee's action plan.

UNFPA expressed its willingness to continue providing coordinated technical assistance to catalyze NCDs action across the Government of Oman, which will be reflected in turn on the people of Oman in general, women and youth in particular to help them avoid these diseases and have a healthy life style.



Mr. Asr Toson, UNFPA GCC representative attends the ministerial meeting along with the WHO delegation

STATEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY TO END OBSTETRIC FISTULA

BY DR. BABATUNDE OSOTIMEHIN, UNITED NATIONS UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNFPA

“Obstetric fistula is almost exclusively a condition of the poorest, most vulnerable and most marginalized women and girls. It afflicts those who lack access to the timely, high-quality, and life-saving maternal health care that they so desperately need and deserve, and that is their basic human right. As a doctor myself and, most importantly, father to four beloved daughters, I am personally outraged that fistula, which is wholly preventable, still occurs in today’s world.

The theme of this year’s International Day to End Obstetric Fistula is **“End fistula within a generation”**, which is a call to transform the world. As we talk about ending polio, HIV/AIDS, female genital mutilation and so many other forms of suffering, so we commit to stepping up our efforts to end fistula, once and for all. This means heeding the call of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind, especially those most neglected, invisible and powerless, including the women and girls living with fistula. Now is the time, and I am confident we can do it.

For UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, ending fistula remains one of our highest priorities, and we will continue to accelerate efforts, both in our own work and within the United Nations system. The global Campaign to End Fistula, launched in 2003 by UNFPA and partners, has made significant progress towards eliminating fistula and supporting its survivors through prevention, treatment, social reintegration and advocacy. UNFPA has supported more than 70,000 fistula repair surgeries for women and girls in need, and Campaign partners have enabled many more to receive treatment.

Yet, far more remains to be done. We cannot give up until every woman and girl has the preventive care she needs. We cannot give up until every single woman and girl living with fistula has been treated. We cannot give up until every fistula survivor receives the social reintegration and support services she needs to rebuild her life, reclaim her dignity, and restore her hope and dreams for the future.”

May 23, 2016

UNFPA GCC VISITS THE GIRLS HOUSE IN AL-BURAIMI, SULTANATE OF OMAN

Proving success of Y-Peer programme is by achieving its main goal that every young woman and man is able to achieve his/her potentials and harness their lives. The Girls House (GH) in Al-Buraimi testifies and proves this boom, as the House's mission is to support and empower girls through education and knowledge sharing in the border governorate Al-Burami, which is adjacent to UAE.

The GH was established in 2015 and the visit aimed at learning about the House's members, activities and programmes, challenges and discuss requirements within UNFPA's mandate to collaborate and provide technical assistance (TA).

The GH is managed by one of the loyal Y-PEER Oman Alumni and former FPC (in 2014) – Ms. Ahlam Al Maqbali assisted by 3 more GH permanent members, one of them is also a Y-Peer alumni, Ms. Hanaa Al Sinaidi, who is also a certified nurse. The visit, paid by UNFPA GCC office represented by Mr. Salah Al-Saleh, Programme Analyst and Ms. Shaima Aly, Programme Coordinator, included a tour in the GH to identify the implemented recent activities and the projects undertaken by the Girls House and its members.

The GH was inaugurated as a privately-owned property of Ahlam. Since its inception, the members of the GH increased dramatically, as Al-Buraimi lacks such activities and projects which promote and support gender equality, women empowerment and knowledge-based activities for young females. It has been registered as a profit oriented company and self-funding its own activities, while endeavors to generate some income in order to ensure sustainability and durability of its activities. The activities of the house are varied as they range from Decoupage art activities, tales and education activities with the local young women and their children, the puppet and shadow technique theatre, to the educational section where young women are able to learn many life skills as cooking and handcrafts.

At the end of the visit, Mr. Al-Saleh thanked the members of the GH for all the efforts made to empower women and support gender equality in Al-Buraimi. He expressed UNFPA-GCC office's commitment to support the project under UNFPA's mandate by providing technical assistance in several topics including SRHRs and gender equality in order to ensure the sustainability of this community-based promising project.



Section of the products made by the female members of al-Buraimi Girls House

UNFPA GCC SIGNS AN AGREEMENT WITH THE NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION IN OMAN

On 16th of June, UNFPA, represented by Mr. Asr Toson, UNFPA GCC representative, concluded an agreement with the National Youth Commission (NYC) in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. Under this agreement, UNFPA will implement the development of the 2nd stage of the Internal Strategic Plan (ISP) 2016-2021, including capacity building of the NYC staff. The duration of this programme will be of eighteen months.

This agreement came as a result of the success achieved during Phase I of the ISP with the technical assistance provided by UNFPA in 2015 to the NYC. This project will also provide Technical Assistance (TA) to the NYC aiming at building the institutional capacity of NYC and its staff through the development of ISP Phase II to support the Commission's mandate of upholding the role played by youth to develop the community and increase youth involvement and awareness in regard to the national legislations and laws. The project also aims at providing the tools and modality for NYC in order to reach out for youth and fulfill their needs to help them achieve their aspirations and full potentials.

Upon this agreement, UNFPA will secure a consultant in order to develop the programmatic framework for the years 2016-2021, including the main programmes, prima-

ry and subsidiary goals of the programme, programme strategies, the main projects and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The consultant will conduct several consultative meetings, workshops and participatory training sessions in order to develop a well-tailored long term monitoring and evaluation mechanism to be utilized during the Internal Strategic Plan 2016-2021.

Furthermore, the consultant will deliver a communication and media plan to support NYC image, boost its relations and programmes, as well as enhance its visibility on national, regional and international levels.

UNFPA PARTICIPATES IN THE ARAB CONFERENCE ON THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA 2030

On 20-21 April, UNFPA represented in its Regional Director for the Arab States Dr. Luay Shabaneh, participated in the Conference on the Role of Civil Society in the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 in Doha, Qatar. The conference was held by the Qatar Social Work Foundation (QSWF), in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The two-day event gathers more than 200 participants representing local and international civil society organizations, in addition to representatives from the private sector and specialists in the development field. “The key pillars of the new sustainable development agenda focused on transferring the world into a world free of poverty and disease and at the same time capable of handling anything that can undermine the dignity of individuals,” said QSWF Chairman Munira bint Nasser Al Missned in her opening speech. The conference provided a platform aimed at generating a debate on the level of the Arab region on the role of civil society in the implementation of the 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development and monitoring progress in achieving its goals and objectives. This conference emphasized the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and highlighted the role of the civil society in adaptation and integration of the **SDGs** in national development plans, as well as monitoring progress on the 2030 Agenda. “The goals and targets are the result of over two years of public consultation with civil society around the world,” said Dr. Luay Shabaneh, UNFPA Regional Director for the Arab States. He added that “In these goals and targets, we are setting out a supremely ambitious and transformation vision. We envisage a prosperous world, where all life can thrive.”



Dr. Luay Shabaneh with the other participants in the closing ceremony



UNFPA Regional Director for the Arab States receives an award for UNFPA's Contributions delivered by QSWF Chairman Munira bint Nasser Al Missned

UNFPA PROVIDES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO GASTAT – KSA

Building up on the previous successes of past similar cooperative actions, UNFPA GCC, over a period of three weeks (31 January–18th February), provided a technical assistance to GaStat (formerly the Central Department of Statistics and Information [CDSI]) under the Trust Fund (TF) signed with the authority. UNFPA delegated Dr. Ayman Suliman, the demographics, statistics and economic expert to undertake this technical mission and help in building the capacity of the organization.

The expert undertook many activities within the scope of his work, including building the detailed database of the Agricultural Census – province and governorate levels, updating the interactive map of the Agricultural Census, Distribution Map, Tables & Graphs, and updating the content of the Agricultural Cen-

sus Map. The mission also included updating the Haj Map, providing technical support for Geographic Information System (GIS) related tasks. The mission related deliverables were diverse, including but not limited to, a detailed database of the agricultural census data on province and governorate levels and updated the interactive map of agricultural census data, in addition to a detailed mission report.



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