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Introduction of the Implanon

An Addition to Modern Birth-spacing Methods in Oman



UNFPA GCC Office in collaboration with the Department of Family and Community Health of the Ministry of Health (MOH) of Oman, conducted a 5-day training of trainers workshop that started on Sunday, 21 September 2014 at the Wattiyyah Complex for Obstetrics and Gynecology. -spacing clinics in health centres to expand the availability of modern contraceptive methods in the Sultanate. The Implanon contraceptive, an implant method, is one of the long-term contraceptive options as it can prevent unwanted pregnancies for a period of 3 years.

The goal of the workshop is part of the Ministry's plan to strengthen and enhance the health services provided as part of the birth-spacing program. The specialists in the department of family and community health are working on introducing a new birth-spacing method to be provided in birth

To achieve this goal, a group of 11 physicians (all female), from all the governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, will be trained by trainers....

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Introduction of the Implanon (.. continued)

themselves in the provision of the Implanon method (including the insertion procedure). The certified physicians will then conduct similar training workshops in their respective governorates so that more physicians become competent and certified in the procedure. This will assure the accessibility to the Implanon method all over the Sultanate.

In the beginning of the workshop, Dr. Jamila Al-Abri, Director of the Department of Family and Community Health, briefly shed light on the array of services provided by the birth-spacing program and the stages the program went through. She also familiarized the audience with the ministry's plan of enhancing health service provision through introducing new methods such as the Implanon.

The training workshop was carried out by Dr. Mohamed Bahaa Shawkat, an expert in reproductive health and family planning from the Arab Republic of Egypt. Also national physicians with training expertise in birth-spacing methods participated in the training as co-trainers: Dr. Hanan Al-Mah'rooqi (First Consultant Physician and Director of Al-Athaiba Health Centre) and Dr. Faiza Fadel (First Consultant Physician in Al-Hail Health Centre).

The workshop included theoretical lectures that addressed all aspects of the Implanon method, such as its definition, how it works, its health benefits, its side effects, and how to insert the implant as well as how to remove it. There were also lectures and discussions about the counselling services that take place before introducing the method to patients and how to treat myths and rumors that might circulate around the method. Additionally activities to strengthen the training capacity of the workshop participants took place, to prepare them to take on the leadership train-

ing role in the field. The lectures of the workshop were mixed with several training activities in order to communicate the information in a way conducive to the advanced level of the participants. Adult education technologies which are based on participation, and not just the receiving of instructions, were utilized.



In addition to the theoretical component there was practical training on the insertion of the implants, using model arms that MOH was able to secure through the support and procurement of UNFPA. After that, the insertion procedure will be carried for a number of women volunteers from the Muscat governorate. The volunteers were recruited by the officials from the directorate of health services in Muscat who coordinated with directors of health centres in all the districts to achieve this.

In this regard MOH commended the role played by UNFPA for its continuous support to the ministry to strengthen reproductive health services in all the related fields through the implementation of collaborative annual plans between the two parties. The annual plans include various activities such as holding workshops and training sessions, facilitating missions by international experts to the Sultanate to lead training and evaluation initiatives, and providing of logistical support.

(Translated from an MOH press release)

UNFPA GCC Attends HIV Orientation Workshop for UNFPA Country Office Staff and Key Stakeholders

Organized by UNFPA Arab States Regional Office (ASRO) in collaboration with UNICEF Regional Office and Dubai Police, a 3-day workshop was held in Dubai from 8-10 September, 2014.

The objective of the workshop was to deliver comprehensive HIV response competency building training sessions: HIV Programming Orientation Training for UNFPA CO Staff. The number of participants was around 40, from different UNFPA COs. Two staff from the GCC office attended: Representative Asr Toson and Programme Analyst Salah Al-Saleh. The Head of Oman MOH Department of Communicable Disease Surveillance & Control was also invited. Specific objectives of the training are:

1. Strengthen the capacities of all UNFPA country offices programme staff to implement HIV response pro-

grammes, as well as to demand, receive and monitor technical support;

2. Build institutional capacities of key national partners in the region in priority technical areas for long term sustainability, country ownership and accountability;

3. Enhance the delivery, quality and effectiveness of technical assistance.

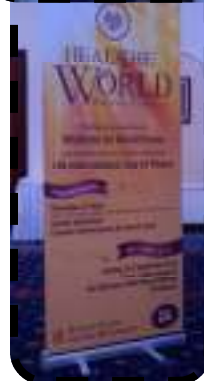
In order to continuously improve its performance in the area, UNFPA ASRO has decided to review and adjust its current approaches for capacity building in the area of HIV prevention. This process resulted with the new strategic approach. The development of ASRO Strategic Framework for the Capacity Building in the area of HIV/AIDS Prevention was participatory and inclusive, with emphasis on best practices and lessons learned from technical support and capacity development initiatives.

Issue's Light News:

Celebrating Day of Peace with the Muscat Community

The Rajyoga Centre for Self Development, Muscat, extended an invitation to the UNFPA GCC sub-Regional Office to attend an event celebrating both the International Day of Peace and the International Day of Non-violence. The event was named 'Heal the World' and took place on the 21st September 2014 at Hotel Muscat Holiday. The UNFPA programme team of Salah Al-Saleh, Maryam Al-Riyami and Gussai Sheikheldin attended the event on behalf of the UN in Oman.

The evening began by first observing a minute of silence for peace which was prescribed in UN General Secretary's speech (the video of the General Secretary's message on the International Day of Peace was played at the event). In essence, the event emphasized the coming together of diverse groups of people to meditate on world peace and celebrate that universal value.



Youth

Y-PEER Oman at Khareef Salalah 2014 Festival

Khareef Salalah Festival is an annual festival held in the Omani city of Salalah, famous for its beautiful weather and nature during the autumn (khareef) season; making it a popular seasonal destination. The festival was held this year from July 30th to September 6th.

A big team of the Oman chapter of the Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER) was there for two weeks at the festival's grounds (14 male and female members). Y-PEERs meet various people at such events to communicate with others about the work they carry forth. Y-PEERs use innovative outreach methods such as theatre performances, including puppet theatre, stage acting and shadow techniques, innovative games, competitions, street interactions, one to one sessions that involves Q&As etc. to educate the youth on various topics of concern such as HIV/AIDS, road safety, drugs, and environmental issues. At this year's festival, Y-PEERs' activities included the following:



1- In collaboration with the Omani MOH, Y-PEERs participated in the health educational campaign with MOH's National Program to Combat HIV/AIDS and other health concerns. Y-PEER booths were set-up in strategic Locations in the festival's grounds to interact with youth visitors and invite them to visit MOHs on-site

clinic for free and anonymous VCT (Voluntary Counseling and Testing).



2- Y-PEERs presented a number of silent shows and puppet theatre shows at the Municipal Entertainment Center and other venues for the Salalah visitors residents. The shows delivered health messages in the subjects of HIV/AIDS, Drugs and the rights of the people living with stigmatized diseases.

3- Y-PEERs also created colorful paintings, posters and leaflets to promote their messages, and to encourage visitors to pay visits to the free on-site MOH clinics. The paintings conveyed messages such as "My identity will remain anonymous, do the examination in minutes."

4- The team took advantage of their presence together in Salalah to make time for some group training and team-building activities. One of these activities was holding a workshop titled "The basics of the art of painting" in which senior Y-PEERs transferred techniques and expertise in painting to newer members.

UNFPA Awarded on GCC School Health Day Celebration

On Thursday, October 16, the Department of School Health, in the Ministry of Health, Oman had organized an event to celebrate the health of school pupils, adolescent and youth in Oman, in line with the annual event held by all the GCC countries for the same purpose.

The celebration was held in An-Naseem Public Park, Muscat, in the morning hours. The slogan of this year's celebration was "Strengthening Physical Activities for School Pupils, Adolescents and Youth."

The day's program included an exhibition of health-related programs and materials (including a health check corner), a walkathon for school pupils,

an acrobatic show by school adolescents, and fun games of physical activity.

The UNFPA GCC Representative, Mr. Asr Toson, was invited to the celebration and awarded on behalf of UNFPA as an appreciated partner of MOH in leading initiatives and programmes related to youth and adolescent health. Mr. Toson received the award from H.E. Dr. Mohamed Al-Hosani, Undersecretary of MOH for Health Affairs.

UNFPA GCC sub-Regional Office has been continuously active in Oman, and the entire GCC region, in leading initiatives and fostering activities for youth development and health, in partnership with GCC government agencies and the civil society.



UNFPA GCC Advocacy Campaign for the 29th United Nations General Assembly Special Session

The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo was a milestone in the history of population and development, as well as in the history of women's rights. At the conference the world agreed that population is not just about counting people, but about making sure that every person counts. A total of 179 governments signed up to the ICPD Programme of Action which set out to:

- Provide universal access to reproductive health services and reproductive rights;
- Deliver gender equality, empowerment of women and equal access to education for girls;
- Address the individual, social and economic impact of urbanization and migration;
- Support sustainable development and address environmental issues associated with population changes

Among the UN agencies, it is UNFPA that is the main agency delegated the task of assuring the global implementation of the ICPD programme of action. Therefore it is UNFPA

whose activities and programmes mainly revolve around the ICPD.

The 29th General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the Follow-up to the ICPD beyond 2014, was held in New York on 22 September 2014 from 1.00 PM to 9.00 PM in the General Assembly Hall. The purposes of the special sessions were:

- To assess the status of implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action .
- To recommit Governments at the highest political level and renew political support for actions required for the full achievement of the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action.

UNFPA—global— took the lead in taking care of the preparation for the event and promoting it. UNFPA GCC office held a wide advocacy campaign for the UNGASS, starting from mid-June all the way up to event's day. The campaign consisted of the following activities:

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UNFPA GCC Campaign for the 29th UNGASS (.. continued)

- 1– Writing briefing letters to GCC governments' Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Heads of Departments of Statistics and Information, Ministers of Health, Social Development, and Parliamentarians to encourage high GCC country representation and support for the ICPD beyond 2014 objectives at the UNGASS, and to provide all the information packages necessary to keep concerned government officials abreast with the updates and points of reporting and discussion at the event. The letters were followed by follow-up phone calls and meeting requests with officials to further assure representation and support.
- 2– Writing of briefing letters to a wide number of GCC civil society associations that work in the fields of youth, gender, and reproductive health, to inform them about the UNGASS agenda and galvanize their support and advocacy for the ICPD beyond 2014 objectives.
- 3- On August 27, 2014, UNFPA GCC Office held a press conference, and invited several media outlets, to promote the UNGASS and respond to any relevant questions from media partners. UNFPA Representative, Mr. Asr Toson, introduced the background and history that led to the event and responded to questions from the journalists regarding the various aspects of the ICPD, the role of UNFPA and the status of the implementation of the ICPD agenda in Oman and the GCC region.
- 4– High-level meetings took place between Mr. Asr Toson and relevant GCC government officials in which Mr. Toson communicated informative and concise messages in support of the UNGASS agenda.

Population Development Activities in Qatar

UNFPA GCC Office has been active in Qatar on two independent, but related, activities:

1. Finalization of a national communication strategy, and delivery of the first 5-year evaluation of the population policy: Summoned UNFPA consultants worked with the Qatari government, through the coordination and facilitation of UNFPA, to assist Qatar in its national agenda of population development. The facilitation and consultancy services provided by UNFPA to the State of Qatar are managed under a trust fund between UNFPA GCC and the Qatari Permanent Population Committee.
2. The Needs Assessment Mission for the State of Qatar (October 19-23), led by UNFPA Arab States Regional Office (ASRO) and coordinated by UNFPA GCC: The mission was led by UNFPA

Regional Director, Mr. Mohamed Abdelahad, who was accompanied by UNFPA GCC Representative, Mr. Asr Toson, ASRO programme advisors on Population & Development, Resource Mobilization, Gender, and Youth, and UNFPA GCC Programme Analyst Mr. Salah Al-Saleh. In preparation for the mission, UNFPA GCC facilitated the communication with the Qatari government to agree on the mission agenda and schedule. During the mission the RD, GCC Representative and the advisors met with a good number of key personnel in the Qatari government (including Ministers) and influential civil society organizations. The needs assessment mission means to initiate collaboration between UNFPA and Qatari government to serve the agenda of Qatar National Vision 2030 in the areas of population & development, gender and youth.

Population Development Activities in KSA

Two missions of experts were summoned by UNFPA GCC to assist the Central Department of Statistics and Information (CDSI) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with technical management and analysis of statistical data acquired from the recent national census. Also assistance was provided by UNFPA in the publication of 5 statistical reports by CDSI.

With the establishment of a trust fund agreement between UNFPA GCC and CDSI, the UNFPA GCC office has been providing technical assistance in the areas of statistical information and population development. UNFPA consultants work with CDSI's relevant departments to improve statistical data management, presentation and analysis.



GCC Members of Parliaments Participate in International Gatherings on Population and Development

UNFPA GCC Office worked with GCC Parliaments to facilitate the nomination of members of parliaments (MPs) from each GCC country to attend two important international gatherings (both organized by UNFPA global and regional offices):

- 1- The 6th International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI), held in Stockholm, Sweden, April 2014.
- 2- Meeting with Arab Parliamentarians to Operationalize the Arab Forum on Population and Development, held in Tunis, Tunisia, August 2014.

The first of the two conferences aimed at promoting dialogue among parliamentarians from all regions of the world on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, with a view to achieving further commitment to collective action in the areas of resource mobilization and the creation of an enabling policy environment for population and development.

The second conference, organized by UNFPA ASRO, was a regional continuation to the first conference, with the additional aim of bringing back the Forum of Arab Parliamentarians to active mode.

Celebrating International Days

The time period between August and October 2014 witnessed the following International days of relevance:

- **International Youth Day (August 12)**
- **International Day of Peace (September 21)**
- **International day Older Persons (October 1)**
- **International Day of the Girl Child (October 11)**
- **International Day of Rural Women (October 15)**
- **United Nations Day (October 24)**

The UNFPA GCC Office is accustomed to participating in celebrating international days of relevance— i.e. related to the UNFPA mandate and to the GCC region— in a variety of ways. Often UNFPA GCC communicates these

international days by publishing statements on the events on the website of UNFPA GCC and by circulating the messages of UNFPA Executive Director on the same events (when available) to our media network and partner agencies in the GCC region. The communication team of our office also utilizes other social media tools (such as Twitter) to promote those international days as well.

Additionally, UNFPA GCC participates in local celebrations of international days, such as participating in the celebration of the International Day of Peace in Muscat (see page 3). International days are good opportunities to highlight causes and groups that concern the mission and mandate of UNFPA and the United Nations in general.



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