

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

UNFPA & DIFI hold an expert group meeting

UNFPA GCC & AFO hold a meeting to discuss a mutual co-operation framework

The Innovative Project of Masirah Island in Oman receives technical assistance of UNFPA GCC

Y-PEER Oman marks the World Obesity Day

10 Days of Activism Campaign signalized in Oman

UNFPA GCC signs Bahrain Strategic Partnership Framework

UNFPA GCC Representative attends the 6TH Session of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers

Worlds Apart. Reproductive Health Rights in an age of inequality- UNFPA GCC launches the State of the World Population Report 2017

UNFPA joins the ceremonies marking Qatar Population Day 2017

Y-Peers Oman hold a Peer Education (PE) Training

UNFPA GCC & GSSCPD Kuwait met to consolidate relations



United Nations Population Fund
Sub-regional Office for the GCC Countries



صندوق الأمم المتحدة للسكان
المكتب شبه الإقليمي لدول مجلس التعاون الخليجي

VOLUME VI, ISSUE IV

(OCT - DEC 2017)

UNFPA & DIFI hold an Expert Group Meeting



Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund - Arab States Regional Office (UNFPA ASRO) organized an expert group meeting titled “Integrating a Family Perspective in the SDGs in the Arab Countries: Aspirations and Challenges”, on 29-30 November, 2017. Mr. Asr Toson, Representative of UNFPA Sub-Regional Office for the GCC Countries (UNFPA GCC) represented the agency in this meeting.

The Expert Group Meeting (EGM) aimed to explore role of the family to implement the Agenda 2030 and enhance “the family perspective” in the process of achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and targets, with an emphasis on the goals supporting the welfare, protection, participation and rights of individuals and family members. The primary objective of the meeting was to provide an expert analysis of the contribution of families to the achievement of SDGs and to understand the challenges faced by Arab countries, in particular, in integrating families in development strategies and national policies.

UNFPA provided a comprehensive presentation in the meeting pinpointing the importance of integrating family perspective in the SDGs nationalization process and the challenges surrounding this approach.

The EGM participants included academia, researchers, representatives of United Nations agencies, civil society organizations among other stakeholders.

UNFPA GCC & AFO hold a meeting to discuss a mutual co-operation framework



UNFPA has been always working to ensure the prosperity of the individuals and the wellbeing of the women and youth, and to underline these values, Mr. Asr Toson, Representative of UNFPA Sub-Regional Office for the GCC countries (UNFPA GCC), paid an important visit to the Arab Family Organization (AFO) in Sharjah –UAE to probe areas of co-operation between the two entities.

The visit was widely covered by the national media venues and received a public attention. The meeting was hosted by H.E Jamal bin Obaid Al Bah, Chairman of AFO. It was attended by Dr. Amna Khalifa, President of the Ajman Business Women Council and Mr. Fathi Afaneh, Ambassador of AFO.

The meeting constituted a good opportunity to discuss future collaborative programmes, including a potential hosting of UNFPA office at AFO, conducting several nation-wide activities and convening a high level conference at Ministerial level on the Arab Family issues and challenges.

The two parties discussed initiating the co-operation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) highlighting their willingness to hold national and regional level activities and UNFPA's readiness to provide the required technical support and assistance needed to AFO in this area of work.

الرئيسية | الرأي | المقالات | ملتقى | وآراء | مدونات | كتاب الأتحاد | وجهات نظر | حلبة | النقاشة | عربي وعالمي | المكتبة | الرأي | ملتقى | رأي الناس | منتدياتنا

The Innovative Project of Masirah Island in Oman receives technical assistance of UNFPA GCC

The Masirah Healthy Island Project is a programme undertaken by Ministry of Health (MoH) of Oman that is led by the Community Based Initiatives Department at the Ministry. Inspired by the innovation of this concept, UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, Sub-Regional Office for the GCC (UNFPA GCC), gave a hand in this project, by providing technical support and thematic expertise for the establishment of the Island's Community Center of Youth & Women Friendly Services.

And in order to ensure that the community center responds to the direct needs of the island's inhabitants, UNFPA kicked off the project by conducting a rapid needs assessment mission on 3-10 October 2017, to ensure that the planning process was evidence-based. The rapid needs assessment included focus group discussions with different community categories of the island's inhabitants, such as teachers, parents, women, adolescents and youth, school drop outs, people with special needs, decision makers, and citizens with different standards of income and education, totaling a number of 150 participants. Afterwards, UNFPA GCC will provide technical assistance to develop a concrete Plan of Action (PoA) for the establishment of the center and calculate an estimated costing for running the facility over a duration of 2 years.

On other hand, and due to the importance of this project, several region-wide media avenues were interested to feature this significant initiative, therefore, Masirah Island project was flagged out in many local news outlets, such as Oman TV and Al Watan newspaper, where UNFPA Programme Analyst Mr. Salah Al Saleh pinpointed the community center's future role according to the community needs. This initiative was also covered in Gulf News UAE, given its uniqueness and originality.

Going forward UNFPA will take the lead among the other members of the United Nations Country Team of Oman and provide an oversight to ensure that the other agencies provide the relevant technical assistance as well, in compatible with their mandate and areas of work. This government project will be led by the Ministry of Health, Masirah Island Governor (Wali) Office and the Island's Executive Committee's office.



UNFPA GCC commissioned consultant Rana Haddad in the focus group discussion with Masirah's Island inhabitants and officials to discuss the needs of the community for the center

Y-PEER Oman marks the World Obesity Day

Under the auspicious of the Ministry of Health of Oman, the National Center of Diabetes & Endocrinology, and the Omani Association of Diabetes Disease, Y-Peer Oman marked the World Obesity Day in an event held on 22 October 2017 at the Omani Women Association in Al Qururm district in Muscat. The event included several activities, such as the Biggest Loser competition, a lecture on the significance of a healthy lifestyle and physical activities, methods and recipes for healthy cuisines.

The Y-Peers participated in an awareness exhibition on the importance of physical activities and sports. The total number of participants in this remarkable event was about 63 person, with a very noticeable gender balance.

The efforts of the Omani Y-Peer network, supported by UNFPA GCC, were crowned by an Appreciation Certificate dedicated to its members for their continuous efforts in assisting the Ministry of Health in its mission to spread the awareness and help Omani people to have a better health, and for their ongoing contribution in the events of the Ministry.



Oman Y-Peers disseminate the Awareness Pamphlets related to Healthy Lifestyle and UNFPA mandate

10 Days of Activism Campaign Signalized in Oman



Driven by their zeal and great enthusiasm to serve their local community, spread the awareness about youth related issues and create a change, Y-Peer Oman organized several interactive events and activities to take part in the international 10-Days of Activism. The events took place on 1st –15th of December 2017 and the theme of the campaign this year was focusing on Aids awareness and sensitizing the Omani youth to know how to avoid the disease, while encouraging the young men and women to adopt a healthy lifestyle that is filled with energy and bounce.

The events were kicked off on 1st of December, with a huge social media campaign on HIV/ AIDS that included posts addressing HIV facts on several social media platforms. An HIV awareness activity was organized at Marah Land Park to raise awareness about the disease and distribute red ribbons, as a sign of solidarity to combat social stigma for the people living with AIDS. Almost 30 park visitors received the ribbons and joined the action. From 2nd to 5th December, the Y-Peers launched 4 days-training course_titled “The Happiness Program for Youth”. The training showed the participants techniques to help them meditate and embrace the life of peace and balance. And since adolescents are considered an important social group, the Y-Peers moved to schools. They paid an interesting visit to Asila Bint Qais School, to raise awareness among girls aged 13-15 years old about the HIV/Aids and the importance to convey these messages to their counterparts and other friends.

The young women and men crowned their efforts by celebrating the Olympic Day with Omani Olympic Committee at Al-Sahwa

Park. They raised awareness of the Ministry of Health sponsored National Physical Activity Campaign. The Y-PEERs facilitated activities encouraging visitors to exercise and sport. The days witnessed several competitions in volleyball, tennis, jumping obstacles, aerobics and many other activities. “It was great to know about the significance of healthy life style and exercises,” said one of the park visitors to Ms. Asila Al Harassi, Oman Y-Peer Leader. More than 300 local inhabitants and expats participated in these sportive activities.

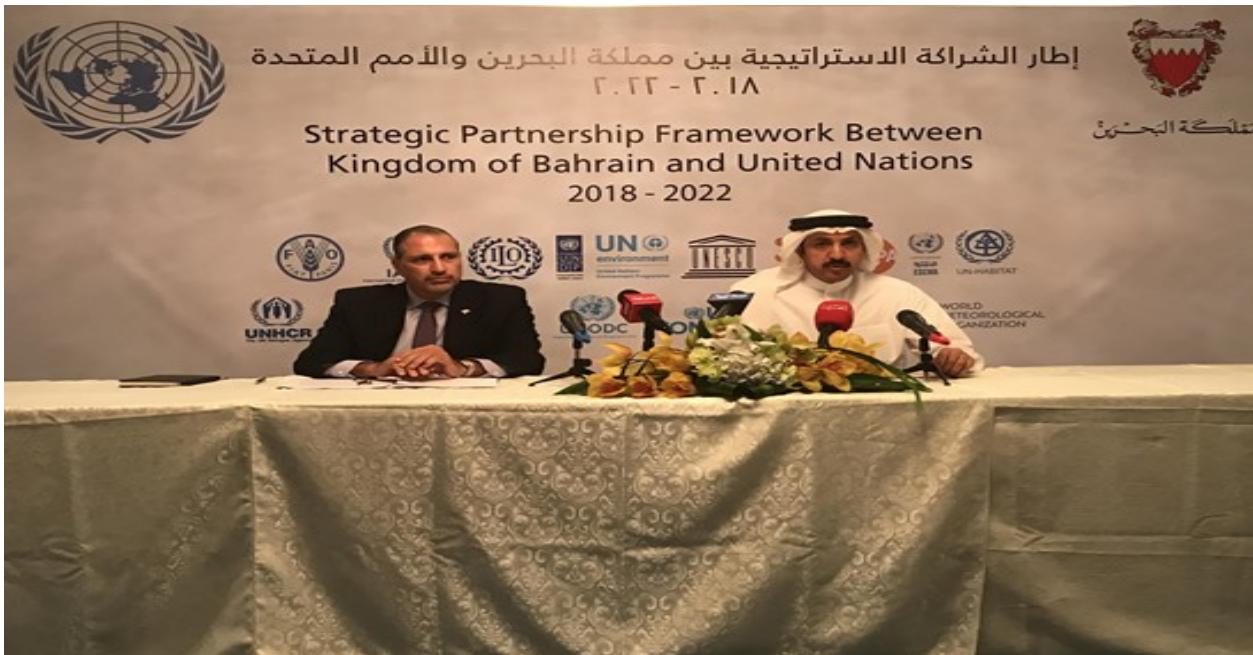


UNFPA GCC signs Bahrain Strategic Partnership Framework

Given its role as a Sub-Regional Office for the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, and its ongoing engagement with the United Nations Country Teams in the region, Mr. Asr Toson-UNFPA GCC Representative signed the Bahrain Strategic Partnership Framework on 24th of October 2017.

"This Government of Bahrain and the UN Strategic Partnership Framework offers a platform of results that is based on the Vision 2030 of the government," said Mr. Toson. "The results and strategies will contribute to the achievement of strategic priorities in the government programme of action 2015-2018 and the Sustainable Development Goals," he added.

"2017 revealed to be a remarkable year for the UN in Bahrain as sixteen UN agencies, Programme and Funds signed the very first ever Strategic Partnership Framework," said Mr. Amin El Sharkawi, UN Resident Coordinator at the Kingdom of Bahrain. Through this process the resident and non-resident UN agencies contributed positively as one team work to achieve this unique product of the country and the UN as well. All the sixteen UN agencies, including UNFPA contributed positively in this process and the celebration of this milestone.



Mr. Amin Al Sharkawi, UN Resident Coordinator in the signing ceremony with Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain

UNFPA GCC Representative attends the 6th Session of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers

On 5-7 December, 2017 UNFPA GCC Representative Mr. Asr Toson participated in the 6th Session of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers (ICHM) which was held in Jeddah, KSA.

The Session was a good opportunity for UNFPA GCC to highlight its mandate in regard to providing technical assistance to government partners in the region to ensure comprehensive health coverage for all people and work to improve the health of women and youth. During the session, the participants endorsed the establishment of the OIC Center of Excellence on Vaccines and Biotechnology Products. The event included several sessions highlighting the health policies in OIC member states, the report of the Islamic Advisory Group on Eradication of Polio, and a status report on self-reliance in production and supply of vaccines. The session ended by adoption of Declaration of the 6th ICHM and agreeing on the date and venue for the next Session.

The conference discussed several challenges facing the Ministers of Health in the region, and stating the fact that while global figures on the number of people suffering from natural disasters and conflicts are constantly rising, Muslim countries are affected more than any other parts of the world by large-scale humanitarian crises and disasters, and this trend is yet on the rise. In his report discussed in the Session, the Secretary General of the OIC, Dr. Yousef A. Al Othaimeen mentioned that "According to UNFPA, in 2015, 100 million people were displaced by natural disasters and conflicts worldwide with a large burden on OIC Member States. Protracted conflicts in Palestine, Somalia, Syria and Sudan in addition to more recent conflicts in Iraq and Yemen as well as natural disasters and climate change in countries, such as Indonesia, and the Sahel have taken a heavy toll on overall health systems".

WORLD S APART: Reproductive Health Rights in an age of inequality

UNFPA GCC Launches the State of the World Population Report 2017

On 30th of October, 2017, UNFPA GCC held a major press conference attended by well-read and renowned journalists in Oman to cover the launch of the State of the World Population Report for 2017. The news were addressed in all major media outlets and newspapers in the country given the importance of population issues and demographic changes in the region. This year's report came under "Worlds Apart: Reproductive Health and Rights in an Age of Inequality." It indicates that the costs of inequalities, including in reproductive health and rights, could extend to the entire global community's goals. According to the report unless inequality is urgently tackled and the poorest women empowered to make their own decisions about their lives, countries could face unrest and threats to peace and development.

In the press conference, UNFPA GCC Representative, Mr. Asr Toson, addressed the report's main topics and mentioned that "failure to provide reproductive health services, including family planning, to the poorest women can weaken economies and sabotage progress towards the number one sustainable development goal, to eliminate poverty". While he praised the comprehensive healthcare services targeting women in Oman, he added that "in most developing countries, the poorest women have the fewest options for family planning, the least access to antenatal care and are most likely to give birth without the assistance of a doctor or midwife".

The UNFPA report recommends focusing on the furthest behind first, in line with the United Nations blueprint for achieving sustainable development and inclusive societies by 2030. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has "envisioned a better future, one where we collectively tear down the barriers and correct disparities," the report states. "Reducing all inequalities needs to be the aim. Some of the most powerful contributions can come from realizing women's reproductive rights."



Mr. Asr Toson, UNFPA GCC Representative during the press conference with the media professionals attended the press conference.

UNFPA joins the ceremonies marking Qatar Population Day 2017

On the 30th of October each year, the Qatari Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics marks the Qatar Population Day which is considered an opportunity for the government to shed the light on the population and development strategies set for the country and the changes in the demographic trends in Qatar.

As each year, UNFPA did not miss the opportunity to join the ceremonies related to this important day to mark it with its long term public partner, the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics (MDPS). On this day, The Permanent Population Committee (PPC) launched the population policy of Qatar (2017-2022), which seeks to control the high rate of population growth and reduce the demographic imbalance, while achieve the demographic dividend under the theme of "Towards Effective Implementation of Qatar's Population Policy 2017-2022."

Mr. Asr Toson, UNFPA GCC Representative represented the agency, and gave a speech to pinpoint the achievements made by the government of Qatar and emphasize the UNFPA's availability to provide the required technical assistance to the country. "The State of Qatar has been giving great importance to the population issue, as it is the center of development for any nation. Population is the goal of any development process and the tools for prosperity. The country's interest has been translated into the launching of the population policy of the State of Qatar 2017-2022, which is considered a reflection of the great interest of the Government of Qatar in the population and development issues," Mr. Toson said in his speech.

On other hand, Minister of Development Planning and Statistics and PPC Chairman, HE Dr Saleh bin Mohamed Salem Al Nabit said, "The new population policy, launched after the approval of the Cabinet, is in line with the second National Development Strategy 2017-2022, which will be launched soon in the country". The ceremony came as a good chance for the attendants to discuss the most effective ways to implement the new population policy program in all its aspects, especially with regard to population growth, labor force and urban growth.

Y-Peers Oman hold a Peer Education (PE) Training



The Youth Peer Educational Network Oman conducted a three-days, 23-25 November 2017, Peer Education Training for the existing Y-PEER's and new comers who are interested in the mandate and civic engagement activities of the network in the country.

Thanks to UNFPA GCC long term partner, the Omani Woman Association, a venue was assigned to the training at the association headquarters free of charge. 10 participants joined the training including two Y-Peer members and two focal points, who were running the sessions and assigning roles to the participants. The workshop had very engaging agenda. The training answered all the persisting questions the new Y-Peers had and provided enriching information about the Y-Peer network, UNFPA work in the country and the importance of volunteerism and civic engagement.

The training also addressed important youth-related issues, such as HIV/AIDS, the drug addiction and how to avoid it, the importance of healthy life style and developing good communication skills.

The training was closed by an evaluation so the attendants can provide their inputs and feedback about this interesting activity and areas of improvement, when needed.

UNFPA GCC & GSSCPD Kuwait met to consolidate relations

The screenshot shows a Kuwaiti government website with several navigation tabs at the top: "مستندات المعلقة الإلكترونية" (Electronical documents), "المكتبة الإلكترونية" (Electronic library), "المجلس الأعلى للإذاعة" (Supreme Council for Radio and Television), "أعضاء المجلس الأعلى 2035" (Members of the Supreme Council 2035), "رؤية دولة الكويت الوطنية 2035" (National Vision of the State of Kuwait 2035), and "الرئيسية" (Home). Below the header, there is a banner with the text "التخطيط ومنظمة صندوق الأمم المتحدة للسكان يسعون للتعاون" (Planning and UNFPA work together to promote cooperation) and a date "07 نوفمبر، 2017". To the right, there is a sidebar titled "الخطيط في دولة الكويت" (Planning in Kuwait) containing legal information about the National Vision Law and the Planning Law. At the bottom, there is a section titled "إنشاء الأمانة العامة" (Establishing the General Authority) with a link to "صور متعلقة بالخبر" (Photos related to the news).

On 6th November 2017, Mr. Asr Toson, UNFPA GCC Representative accompanies by Ms. Francoise Ghorayeb, Senior Programme Coordinator – Iraq Country Office held a meeting with each of Mr. Othman Al-Othman, Acting Director of Kuwait Central Statistics Bureau (CSB) and Assistant Undersecretary for Statistical Affairs Sector, and Mr. Talal Al-Shammari, Assistant Secretary General for Consultation and Development Support at the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD) to discuss modalities of co-operation and UNFPA's prospective technical support to the organizations in areas related to statistics, capacity building, national surveys and population dynamics. The meeting was attended also by Mr. Ali Elmuntaser, CSB/ GSSCPD Program Liaison Officer at UNDP.

During the meeting, Mr. Toson provided a brief presentation about the potential co-operation framework and the areas of expertise of UNFPA focusing on the national priorities of Kuwait and its Agenda 2035 main pillars. "This meeting formed a very good opportunity to discuss the methods we can adopt to consolidate co-operation ties with the government of Kuwait," said Mr. Toson. "UNFPA GCC, thanks to its location in Oman and being a member in Kuwait UN Country Team, is ready to provide the required technical assistance to Kuwait in the areas related to UNFPA's mandate and according to the country's strategic priorities," he added.

The discussions also undertook technical aspects of the expected co-operation in regard to the Kuwaiti's counterparts requirements to conduct Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), Civil Registration and Vital Statistics and population censuses.



**UNFPA Sub-Regional Office for the
Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council
(GCC)**

PO Box 1960, PC130

Muscat , Sultanate of Oman

Phone: +968 24496893

Fax: +968 24496381

E-mail: gcc-info@unfpa.org

Web: gcc.unfpa.org

Twitter: [@UNFPAGCC](https://twitter.com/UNFPAGCC)

The United Nations Population Fund: Delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

UNFPA—Because everyone counts!