Inside This Issue

UNFPA Executive Director Statement on International Women’s Day 2018

UNFPA GCC participates in commencing the Programme of Co-operation of WHO and Ministry of Health & Launching the National Policy on Prevention of NCDs

UNFPA Executive Director Statement on International Women’s Day

8 March 2018

Protecting Reproductive Rights of Rural Women: A Pathway to a More Equal World

The economic inequalities plaguing much of the world today are reinforced by many other forms of inequality, including inequalities in sexual and reproductive health. More than 200 million women—many of them poor and living in rural and remote parts of the world—lack access to voluntary family planning methods. In addition, more than 800 pregnant women—many in fragile socio-economic situations—die each day from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth.

In many parts of the world, access to services is particularly limited or even non-existent for rural and indigenous women, undermining their ability to exercise their reproductive rights.

Without addressing the discrimination that these women face in both private and public spheres, many of them will remain caught in a vicious cycle of poverty, repeated pregnancies, diminished capabilities, unfulfilled human rights and unrealized potential. The denial of reproductive rights not only harms individuals, it can also put a drag on economies and stifle countries’ development.

Making reproductive health care universally accessible would not only help fulfill a poor, rural woman’s reproductive rights; it would also enable her to stay healthy, get an education and participate in all facets of life, including economic life. These benefits accrue to her, her family and her country. That’s why it is our mission at UNFPA to work with our partners to end unmet demand for family planning information and services, to end preventable maternal deaths, and to end gender-based violence and other harmful practices against women and girls by 2030.

Addressing inequalities and discrimination has always been at the heart of UNFPA’s work. We work to ensure that no one is left behind through programmes that improve the lives of excluded and marginalized women.

On this International Women’s Day, let us all renew our commitment to addressing the many different forms of inequalities that hold women back, particularly the rural and indigenous poor, and keep them from realizing their rights and ambitions, and from living their lives on an equal footing with men. A more equal world depends on it.
UNFPA is working to raise awareness about population ageing and the need to harness its opportunities and address its related challenges. And to ensure that seniors are fully engaged in the social life, and for UNFPA GCC to work on this important area of intervention, a meeting was held on Wednesday 21st of March at UNFPA GCC office in Muscat, with Oman Parents Care Team (OPCT), affiliated with the Omani Women Association.

The OPCT was represented by Ms. Jawhha bint Mohamed Al Farsi, President of the OPCT, who briefed UNFPA GCC staff about the activities undertaken by OPCT including supporting the healthcare services for seniors, developing public awareness about the importance of caring for older persons, providing psychological and emotional support to the seniors with special needs and their families, training Omani volunteers on seniors’ healthcare methods by using “simulation” training approach, & providing reduced-prices healthcare equipment needed for palliative care for those in need.

This meeting came to recognize the efforts exerted by the OPCT in supporting this population group, and stress on the importance of providing the required healthcare to the older persons in this critical life stage.

The outcomes of the meeting were focusing on UNFPA GCC participation with OPCT’s activities, through mobilizing the Y-Peer network members in future to partake in the social and fundraising events initiated by OPCT & creating a mechanism to support the “simulation-based” trainings of the Team. Undoubtedly that will help in achieving UNFPA vision in regard to preserving dignity, health and independence of the elders, and assisting in creating an ageing-friendly environment for them.

On 13-14 of March 2018, Salah al-Saleh- UNFPA GCC Programme Analyst, took part in a Forum held by Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) in co-operation with the Technical Secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs titled “Support and Encourage a Culture of Dialogue”, in Riyadh, KSA.

This forum was initiated by the University upon the Arab League’s resolution No. 699/March 2017, which adopted the Arab Declaration to Support the Joint Arab Initiative to Combat Terrorism”, and to implement the resolution issued by the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs in last November, which called for this initiative to be undertaken by the University.

This forum was attended by delegates from the Ministries of Social Affairs and Culture of the Arab countries, in addition to prominent academics and researchers in this field. The discussions aim at promoting the culture of peace and dialogue among youth in the region in order to eradicate extremism.

The forum resulted in multiple outcomes, including practical and viable solutions and programmes of actions to promote the culture of peace, understanding and dialogue among youth, by investing in several cultural and educational programmes. The recommendations also stressed on the importance of education being the main entry point to create a change in the Arab society and promote tolerance and critical way of thinking.
Masirah Island draws its Community Center Plan of Action for 2018–2021

Under its Annual Work Plan for 2017 and Oman Ministry of Health (MoH) strategy to promote for healthy lifestyle in the country, and based on the recommendations made by the United Nations Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, UNFPA GCC provided technical assistance to the Department of the Community Based Initiatives (CBI) at the MoH, to develop a Qualitative Needs Assessment and 4 years Plan of Action (PoA) to establish the Island’s Community Center.

The PoA, which was developed by UNFPA Consultant Ms. Rana Haddad, was finalized early this year and translated the findings of the conducted needs assessment. It also highlighted the values and preferences of Masirah community members, taking into account all the feedback and inputs of all the stakeholders on the Island in a participatory approach.

The PoA indicated the standards of the prospective Center, its mission, vision and guiding principles that are focused on providing the inhabitants with a better quality of life. The Plan pinpointed the beneficiaries of the center, and shed the light on the significance of such initiatives to youth in order to develop their skills and capacities and cater for the needs of other population groups. Moreover, the document provided a glance at the potential work strategies and organizational structure of the center, and the responsibilities of each management member, as well as the human resources and financial requirements for operation.

The provided needs assessment and PoA received the approval of the MoH and the respective CBI department, which is looking into the means of implementation in order to materialize this ambitious plan.

One of the focus group discussions to receive the inputs of the community stakeholders through the Needs Assessment Process.
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!