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### **UNFPA works with Qatar PSA to implement a communication strategy and takes part in the First Forum on Population and Sustainable Development**

The need to implement a communication strategy that considers the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the newly developed Population Policy 2017-2022 has arisen through the continuous discussions between the Planning and Statistics Authority (PSA Qatar-formerly the Permanent Population Committee –PPC) and UNFPA GCC. Therefore, a mission kicked off on 15th of January 2019 for three months in order to respond to this need under the current Trust Fund Agreement between the Authority and UNFPA.

UNFPA GCC deployed an experienced international consultant through this time, who worked with PSA leadership team and Authority's staff to put this inclusive strategy into action. The duties of the mission included training the national staff of PSA to ensure that the national capacity is in place beyond the mission duration. Upon an interlocutor with UNFPA GCC, the consultant held several training sessions with the staff, which were comprised of many topics including defining and reaching targeted sectors and stakeholders using the communication strategy actions, training staff assigned for the implementation of Vision 2030; defining media and communication means suitable for implementing the strategy; defining partners from other relevant sectors who would be joining the core media team at the PSA; specifying the needed resources for implementation and defining the methods of measuring the outcomes and outputs.

On other hand, a delegation from UNFPA Arab States Regional Office (ASRO) led by the Regional Director Dr. Luay Shabaneh had a mission in Qatar to attend the First Forum on Population and Sustainable Development, titled 'Toward a New Perspective on the Relation Between Population and Sustainable Development' on April 14th and 15th at Qatar University. UNFPA GCC assisted in coordinating this mission with the national counterpart (PSA), and the related preparations ahead of the mission. On the margin of the forum UNFPA held an event marking celebration of ICPD@25 and UNFPA@50, which included a video presentation on the ICPD journey from Cairo to the upcoming Nairobi summit in November 2019, high level panel on the relevance of population agenda for achieving Qatar National Vision 2030 in the context of SDGs, the launch of the Status of the World Population (SWOP) Report and a closing press conference. Through the event two papers were introduced by a panel of discussants focusing on the reproductive health from lifecycle perspective, and the regional framework for addressing youth development in the context of SDGs.



## Nairobi Summit on ICPD25: Accelerating the promise



This year marks the 25th anniversary of the ground breaking International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which took place in Cairo in 1994. At that conference, 179 governments adopted a Programme of Action, recognizing that reproductive health, women's empowerment and gender equality are the pathway to sustainable development.

Today, the world is aiming to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, and universal reproductive health is central to much of this agenda – ending poverty, security good health and well-being, realizing gender equality and achieving sustainable communities, among many other goals. Urgent and sustained efforts to realize reproductive health and rights are crucial.

From 12-14 November, the Government of Kenya, the Government of Denmark and UNFPA are convening the Nairobi Summit, a high-level conference to advance the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. The conference will offer an inclusive platform, bringing together governments, UN agencies, civil society, private sector organizations, women's groups and youth networks to discuss and agree on actions to accelerate the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.

“As we celebrate the remarkable progress we have made in advancing the health and rights of women, we must re-double our efforts to reach those who have not yet benefited from the promise of the ICPD,” said Dr. Natalia Kanem, UNFPA Executive Director. “The Nairobi Summit will help us rally a broad coalition of stakeholders to protect the gains made and advance the ICPD agenda to ensure that no one is left behind.”

The Summit will take place at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre at Harambee Avenue in Nairobi, Kenya.

Visit the website here: [www.NairobiSummitICPD.org](http://www.NairobiSummitICPD.org)

**UNFPA GCC supports capacity building of the School & University Health Department at Ministry of Health in Oman through a workshop held by the Royal Health Awareness Society of Jordan**

In order to ensure building the capacities of the staff members of Ministry of Health of Oman, being a strategic partner of UNFPA, a support was provided to the School and University Health Department senior staff member enabling her to attend a three-days workshop in Amman, Jordan titled “Advocating For Adolescent Health and NCDs In The Eastern Mediterranean Region”. The workshop, which was organized by the Royal Health Awareness Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the International Association for Adolescent Health (IAAH) and the International Pediatric Association (IPA), featured several themes including Adolescents and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), Early childhood development: enduring impact on adolescence, mental health of the adolescent girls and youth and the principles of being an adolescent health advocate.

Upon her return, the participant Dr. Nahed Ali held a group discussion with the other staff members at the Department when she introduced the knowledge she received and the linkages between the development aspects and the adolescents well-being, given the challenges they face and the transformations they have through the physical and emotional development process.

“It was a great opportunity to have such experiences from different countries and INGOs at the same event and at the same place,” Dr. Ali said. “The department has started already to form an adolescent advocacy team to start the implementation of advocacy plan targeting adolescents in Oman as per the outcomes of the workshop,” she added.

## **Joint Statement on International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation**

### **Take action to eliminate female genital mutilation by 2030**

Mary Oloiparuni was 13 when she was mutilated. Restrained in a doorway early one morning in her home, she was cut, bled profusely and experienced agonizing pain. The scarring she endured then continues to cause her pain today, 19 years later. It has made giving birth to each of her five children an excruciating and harrowing experience. Mary is not alone. At least 200 million girls and women alive today have had their genitals mutilated – suffering one of the most inhuman acts of gender-based violence in the world.

On the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, we reaffirm our commitment to end this violation of human rights, so that the tens of millions of girls who are still at risk of being mutilated by 2030 do not experience the same suffering as Mary. This effort is especially critical because female genital mutilation leads to long-term physical, psychological and social consequences. It violates women's rights to reproductive health, physical integrity, non-discrimination and freedom from cruel or degrading treatment. It is also a violation of medical ethics: Female genital mutilation is never safe, no matter who carries it out or how clean the venue is.

Because female genital mutilation is a form of gender-based violence, we cannot address it in isolation from other forms of violence against women and girls, or other harmful practices such as early and forced marriages. To end female genital mutilation, we have to tackle the root causes of gender inequality and work for women's social and economic empowerment. In 2015, world leaders overwhelmingly backed the elimination of female genital mutilation as one of the targets in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This is an achievable goal, and we must act now to translate that political commitment into action.

At the national level, we need new policies and legislation protecting the rights of girls and women to live free from violence and discrimination. Governments in countries where female genital mutilation is prevalent should also develop national action plans to end the practice. To be effective, their plans must include budget lines dedicated to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health, education, social welfare and legal services. At the regional level, we need institutions and economic communities to work together, preventing the movement of girls and women across borders when the purpose is to get them into countries with less restrictive female genital mutilation laws. Locally, we need religious leaders to strike down myths that female genital mutilation has a basis in religion. Because societal pressures often drive the practice, individuals and families need more information about the benefits of abandoning it.

Public pledges to abandon female genital mutilation – particularly pledges by entire communities – are an effective model of collective commitment. But public pledges must be paired with comprehensive strategies for challenging the social norms, practices and behaviours that condone female genital mutilation. Testimonials by survivors like Mary also help to build understanding of the practice's grim reality and long-lasting impact on women's lives. Advocacy campaigns and social media can amplify the message that ending female genital mutilation saves and improves lives.

Thanks to the collective action of governments, civil society, communities and individuals, female genital mutilation is in decline. But we are not aiming for fewer cases of this practice. We are insisting on zero.

**Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, UNFPA**

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UNFPA is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency. Our mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

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