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billion  
world population  
2011

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# NEWSLETTER

## Seven Billion People – Counting On Each Other

The second half of 2011 was unlike any other. It hosted a major population milestone: the day of 7 Billion on October 31<sup>st</sup>. On that day, world population reached 7 billion. How we respond now will determine whether we have a healthy, sustainable and prosperous future or one that is marked by inequalities, environmental decline and economic setbacks.

Our record population size can be viewed in many ways as a success for humanity because it means that people are living longer and more of our children are surviving worldwide. But not everyone has benefited from this achievement or the higher quality of life that this implies. Great disparities still exist among and within countries. Disparities in rights and opportunities also exist between men and women, girls and boys.

Today, charting a path to development that promotes equality is more important than ever. Today is occasion to reflect on what kind of world will be waiting the generations to come.

A world of 7 Billion presents challenges, ones that require actions.

- **Poverty And Inequality:** Breaking The Cycle
- **Women and Girls:** Empowerment and Progress
- **Ageing:** An Unprecedented Challenge
- **Reproductive Health and Rights:** The Facts of Life
- **Young People:** Forging the Future
- **Environment:** Healthy Planet, Healthy People
- **Urbanization:** Planning For Growth

As much as the above challenges face the world, they equally face Lebanon. In order to address those challenges UNFPA in Lebanon will continue collaborating with its partners and stakeholders to further advance and mainstream these priorities in national and sector agendas through advocacy, research, capacity development, awareness raising, service provision, and expanding partnerships.



## Celebrities' Call to Youth: "Let's Talk" about HIV/AIDS

UNFPA organized a number of activities under the "Let's Talk" campaign, which was implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH)/ National AIDS Control Program (NAP), the Youth Peer Education (Y-PEER) network, and MASAR Association. The "Let's Talk" Campaign was part of the regional "Fashion against AIDS" campaign supported by the international fashion retailer H&M.

The campaign's activities, divided into two main pillars, started in June with a peak implementation around December 01, 2011 on World AIDS Day. The first pillar was the capacity development of young people through workshops in the areas of social media and advocacy. Those workshops enabled around 35 young people to use social media channels as a tool to effectively spread educational messages and engage young people in debates related to their health. It provided them with the skills needed when meeting with celebrities and negotiating with decision makers.

The second pillar of the "Let's Talk" campaign focused on awareness raising among young people about HIV/AIDS routes of transmission and prevention, stigma and discrimination, as well as Voluntary Counseling and Testing. The campaign was implemented with the support of celebrities - selected as spokespersons for the cause by the young people themselves - and including Actress Nadine Nassib Njeim, music band Mashrou' Leila, and DJs Ronin & Nesta.

Reaching out to young people was implemented through a massive national media campaign which revolved around the slogan "Let's talk about AIDS, if not now, then when: 100% anonymity, 0% discrimination" and promoted preventive messages. It made use of pamphlets, billboards, TV spots, and social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, and blogs. The billboards were displayed in areas surrounding public schools and Lebanese university branches, across the Lebanese territory. The campaign was further reinforced by the participation of young people in various TV and radio shows.

### Box 1: "Let's Talk" on the Web

- letstalkleb.com
- www.facebook.com/letstalkleb
- twitter.com/#!/LetsTalk\_leb

Throughout the campaign, the commitment of Y-PEER Lebanon celebrities' to the HIV/AIDS cause is worth noting. Such dedication was highlighted by the participation of Andre Chedid and Firas Abou Fakher, members of Mashrou' Leila music band, in a "Training on HIV/AIDS from a Celebrities' Lens" organized by UNFPA Regional Office in Cairo along with other Y-PEER celebrities from the Philippines, Egypt, Belarus, and Macedonia. The training offered the celebrities a chance to get more knowledge about HIV/AIDS prevention and response, explore personal attitudes related to the virus, and brainstorm on various advocacy methods they can use to support a cause.

In addition, and in a sign of concretizing their support to the work of the Y-PEER network in promoting awareness on HIV/AIDS among youth, all celebrities involved in the "Let's Talk" Campaign in Lebanon signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Y-PEER network in presence of the media and implementing partners i.e. like the MOPH/NAP, and MASAR association. The event was held on November 18 at UNFPA premises and featured an Avant- Premiere screening of the TV spots produced for the campaign and testimonies from the celebrities regarding their interest in supporting the Y-PEER network.



### Box 2: On the Streets, and in the Press!

The "Let's Talk" campaign attracted wide media coverage, with a total of 68 mentions in the media: 59 in written press and websites, 3 in magazines, 3 on TV stations and 3 on radio stations.



## Celebrating International Youth Day with Youth!

The International Youth Day (IYD), celebrated on August 12 of each year, had a special place on the Y-PEER agenda in 2011 as it also marked the end of the International Year of Youth (IYY). Under the theme of "Dialogue and Mutual Understanding", the Y-PEER network in Lebanon conducted several activities to celebrate this important event.

Advocacy efforts were exerted by Y-PEER members to spread awareness on HIV/AIDS prevention among young people. As such, Y-PEERs participated in a number of TV and radio shows, whereby they conveyed information about HIV/AIDS routes of transmission and modes of prevention, rights of young people to access correct information and services, as well as availability and characteristics of Voluntary Counseling and Testing services in Lebanon.



Outreach activities were also on the agenda, as Y-PEERs took part in the yearly summer festival held in Hasbaya, South Lebanon. Between August 4 and 7, an interactive stand was set up in the festival allowing young people from local communities to engage in Y-PEER's landmark educational game 'My Health and Safety' with the young educators who distributed prizes for winners. More so, on August 7 and 13, Y-PEER members engaged around a hundred beach lovers in fun competitions and games about HIV/AIDS in Puncho Beach.

## Improving Media Approach to Women Health Issues

Within the context of the UNFPA supported project with the Ministry of Public Health, the Lebanese Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology (LSOG)/Lebanese Order of Physicians organized a roundtable discussion with selected media professionals involved in covering women's health issues, more specifically reproductive health.

The meeting was held on October 18 in presence of the Minister of Information and UNFPA Assistant Representative. It gathered more than 30 media specialists representing a wide range of TV and radio channels, newspapers and magazines. In his word, the Minister of Information praised the media's attention to women's health issues and acknowledged LSOG's efforts in that respect.

Participants were introduced to recent evidence and research assessing the current situation of women's health in Lebanon. They also discussed the challenges faced when addressing, investigating and reporting on such issues and expressed their

need for accessible, relevant, reliable, language-specific and recent data and resources, in order for them to better contribute to an improved and optimal coverage of women's health issues.

The meeting's recommendations highlighted the need for media institutions to dedicate well versed journalists for the coverage of health issues. It also emphasized the need for establishing a network of media professionals specialized in health and linked to LSOG for information sharing. It is worth noting in this regard, that UNFPA is collaborating with LSOG to update its website with necessary information and resource material that would allow the media to achieve a sound, up-to-date and proactive coverage of women's health issues.

### Box 3: From Sensationalism towards Pedagogy

The event called on the media to step out from the sensationalist approach to women health, and to adopt a scientific and comprehensive approach, one that accounts for women health across the lifecycle and plays its role in promoting awareness on various women health issues and rights.

# وسلامتي صحتي Moving FORWARD

## Interactive Tools are Essential for Incorporating Reproductive Health Concepts in Education System

Important national strategic achievements during the past two years lead to the development of a partnership with the Faculty of Educational Sciences at Saint Joseph University – in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) - for providing intermediate and secondary students with necessary educational tools to develop their skills and knowledge on a range of topics in reproductive health (RH). The overall goal aims at strengthening institutional capacities of MEHE to integrate RH education in extra-curricular activities.

Two main activities were executed and intended specifically at obtaining a national consensus on selected and pertinent educational tools (see Box 4).

The first activity aimed at reviewing the RH kit to assess its content alignment with the "Gender-Sensitive Life Skills Reproductive Health Education" curricula (see Box 5). The study revealed the need to further integrate life skills into the educational kit.

Furthermore three consultative meetings were carried out with concerned stakeholders in three cluster areas (a) in Beirut - USJ campus - covering the areas of Beirut, Mount Lebanon and Bekaa, (b) in Tripoli - USJ campus - covering the area of North including Akkar, and (c) in Nabatieh public school covering the South. These meetings aimed at reviewing three educational tools in terms of acceptability, relevance, social and cultural appropriateness of content. As such, 62 participants consisting of school and community representatives (i.e. health supervisors and educators, school principals, parents associations) as well as young people including Y-PEERS, took part in these strategic meetings. They were very participatory and yielded important recommendations that were officially submitted to and discussed with the MEHE to move forward with the adoption of these tools by the ministry.

**Box 4: Educational Tools**

The Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) kit "Sohti Bil Dounia!!" was produced by the Arab Resource Collective.

The board game "My Health and Safety" was produced by Lebanon Family Planning Association.

In addition, four focus group discussions took place among 60 female and male intermediate students from Beirut, Mount Lebanon, North and South of Lebanon to assess their opinions regarding the need for additional educational tools. The focus group discussions in each region defined reproductive health education and the related topics for cycle three. The students were given the chance to view the tools and a productive discussion followed on the language used, the approach adopted, and the preferred channels for using such tools in class whether individually or within groups. The meetings reflected the importance and the need to a comprehensive reproductive health education. The discussion among students also revealed the lack of knowledge on such topics and the difficulties faced by the students to share their health concerns with their parents.

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The second activity consisted of initiating the development of a course on *Life Skills Reproductive Health Education* by USJ's Continuous Training department at the Faculty of Educational Sciences. It was initiated through developing and pre-testing a draft of the course with a sample of 20

school health educators. The pre-testing took place over two residential meetings in December 2011 that centered on the curricula content, attitudes of the participants towards addressing RH issues in schools and means and ways to foster life skills among students - mainly critical thinking skills, decision making and communication. The practicum of the course will be planned and executed in 2012 whereby the students - i.e. school health educators - will have to develop and execute awareness projects in their respective schools on RH topics.

**Box 5: On Solid Grounds**

The framework of this partnership is the ministerial communiqué related to "Gender-sensitive Life Skills Reproductive Health Education Curriculum" issued under ministerial communiqué 18/2009 / م on August 26, 2009, and the "School Health Strategy" led by both the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Public Health and issued under ministerial communiqué 6610/11 on June 4, 2010.

## Reproductive Health Awareness-Raising for Displaced Syrian Women

Beginning April 2011, Lebanon witnessed the influx of thousands Syrian refugees across the northern border of Lebanon who initially settled in the Wadi Khaled area and its neighboring villages. These refugee families still remain in the governorate of the North residing mostly with host families and experiencing difficult living circumstances. To help ensure broader and coordinated response to the situation in the North, several UN agencies carried out joint and rapid assessments to identify immediate needs and intended to improve the living conditions of the refugees.

It is in that context, and through the Inter-Agency Health Cluster chaired by WHO, that UNFPA made available leaflets on reproductive health that were distributed with the support of UNHCR to health service delivery points operating in the North, mainly in Hisseh, Halba, Amayer and Birreh. These informative leaflets were disseminated to women - particularly pregnant ones - through outreach sessions organized by the health delivery points with the intention to provide women with valuable information on family planning methods and choices, post-partum depression, nutrition during pregnancy and yeast infection. These leaflets that were found quite useful, with straight forward simple messages, and relevant to the context of refugees relied on culturally appropriate illustrations.

الاكتئاب ما بعد الولادة

الصغوبات اليومية  
تغير نسب الهرمونات في الجسم  
خلل في الشهية وبنسبة  
الإلتهابات الفطرية النسائية



## A First Step Towards Institutionalizing Theater Based Peer Education in Public Schools

With the intention to reinforce incorporation of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) concepts in the education system, theater based peer education (TBPE) as an interactive and innovative approach was adopted in several private educational institutions (see Box 6).

This initiative supported by UNFPA was first piloted by a local NGO i.e. Visual and Performing Arts Association (VAPA) in 2010 and reached almost 600 students who got exposed to topics on HIV/AIDS, drugs, and violence prevention. Based on the success of this initiative, the partnership with the Educational Center for Research and Development (ECRD) in 2011 was further expanded to institutionalize the TBPE approach and techniques within the Continuous Training Program for teachers in the public education sector. The overall goal of this collaboration with ECRD aimed at maximizing awareness of students (15 - 19 years old) on risky behaviors with emphasis on reproductive health including HIV/AIDS prevention. It is to be noted that the adoption of the TBPE approach was brought about while ensuring compliance with the content and scope of the "Gender Sensitive Life Skills Reproductive Health Education Curriculum" (see Box 5 in article above).

To be able to reach the above goal, the project set forth several objectives among which was to create a core team of national trainers on TBPE.

This team consisted of teachers from the Continuous Training Program as well as health supervisors from the Caza of Saida and Zahle. The team also included teachers from Al Mabarrat Association who successfully implemented this initiative in 2010 and expressed readiness and enthusiasm to further expand it across all its schools. The training of trainers took place between July 4 and 14 with the technical expertise of national trainers from VAPA and International Management and Training Institute on the one hand, as well as UNFPA staff who were trained on the TBPE techniques on the other. The training module touched on a wide range of areas including – but not exclusive to – concepts and definitions of SRH, life skills, TBPE approach and techniques, adult-youth partnership, facilitation skills, coaching, monitoring, etc.

As a second step, the newly established national TBPE trainers conducted three separate workshops each within their respective Teachers' Training Center – Dar Al Moua'allemeen - between October 20 and 29. Those workshops were attended by more than 30 teachers from Zahle, Saida, and Al Mabarrat Association who are expected during the first half of 2012 to transfer this wealth of knowledge within their corresponding schools by administering the TBPE techniques with the students. A thorough monitoring mechanism was put in place to measure knowledge gained among the students before and after introducing the TBPE approach.

### Box 6: Participating Schools

- Imam Al Hassan School- Al Mabarrat Philantropic Association
- Al Rahma School- Al Mabarrat Association
- Al Kawthar School- Al Mabarrat Association
- Al Hadi School- Al Mabarrat Association
- Al Idlah School- Saida
- The Lebanese Kuwaiti School- Saida
- Saida Intermediate School- Saida
- The Intermediate Bwerij School- Zahle
- Hawsh Al Oumara School- Zahle
- Zahle School for Girls- Zahle

### Box 7: A Pioneering Integrated Project "Par Excellence"

The uniqueness of the WE PASS project is that it addressed all aspects of women empowerment in different spheres from a holistic approach. Indeed, the project was able to reach over 2000 women by introducing innovative and inter-linked interventions to promote literacy and vocational education among adult women, prevent violence against women and girls, stimulate a culture of peace building, advance women's reproductive health and rights, support women start their own business, and encourage participation of women in local governance. After 4 years, the results have been remarkable and rewarding as illiterate women were capable of reading and writing, housewives capable of running and winning the municipal election in 2010, support and community group formed for the fight against violence, municipalities committing to finance gender related activities, NGOs established by women who never worked before, women committees becoming cooperatives... and these are only mere examples of success!

## A Celebration to Unleash Women Economic Achievements at Community Level

The collaboration established between UNFPA in Lebanon and the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW) after the July 2006 war aimed at engaging women to contribute to peace building and rehabilitation of their respective communities. This pioneering project referred to as WE PASS – Women Empowerment: Peaceful Action for Security and Stability - was designed in a full participatory approach in such a way to respond to the needs and priorities of the war-affected and poor communities in a total of 20 villages (see Box 7).

One of the ground-breaking attainments realized by this UNFPA-supported project is reflected through the achievements made by more than 120 women from different Lebanese regions who embarked on the driver's seat to become economically active and independent in rather traditional societies. The small businesses developed by these determined women were made possible through small micro-credit schemes and related trainings offered by the project. As such selected women from the villages of Bint Jbeil, Dweir, Deir Mimas, Ras Baalbeck, Sibe'el, Ghaziye, Nabatiye, Kfeir, and A'aytaroun, started their small businesses in sectors related to chocolate making, sewing, photography, jewelry making, food processing and making, etc, with ongoing coaching and guidance by Al Majmoua NGO.

To celebrate these exceptional accomplishments, NCLW organized an event on September 30 with the presence of the First Lady, Ms Wafa Suleiman, the Executive Board of NCLW, ministers, parliamentarians, UNFPA representative, head of municipalities and of course all women achievers who were recognized for their self-determination and perseverance towards reaffirming their roles as productive citizens, and hence triggering gender equality within their families, communities, and the nation at large.

## Reducing Obstacles to GBV Progress

Eliminating violence against women (VAW) remains one of the most serious challenges of our time. In Lebanon, a serious obstacle to progress is the lack of population-based data on the prevalence of violence against women.

Policy makers, international agencies, NGOs, academic institutions, media and other actors engaged in fighting VAW have repeatedly stated the need for quality data to guide national policies and programmes and to monitor progress in addressing the issue. Therefore, UNFPA Lebanon has initiated preparations for supporting the undertaking of a national prevalence survey on VAW. A Technical Consultative Committee (TCC) for initiating the survey was established and consultations took place to discuss technicalities pertaining to the survey. UNFPA Lebanon will give this matter the priority attention and will allocate needed resources as this survey will provide evidence and will be useful for measuring the extent of violence against women in Lebanon, monitoring trends over time, building awareness and developing policy.

Another obstacle lies in the shortcomings in media performance; the fact which results in VAW becoming clichéd and stale. Building on findings and recommendations of the “Assessment of Media Coverage of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Lebanon”, carried out in collaboration with the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence against Women, UNFPA partnered with the Journalism Training Program at the American University of Beirut and organized a training workshop for a team of local journalists/media personnel from all types of media (print, electronic, audio-visual) in order to strengthen their capacities (knowledge, understanding and communication skills) on GBV competency, and to empower them to find new angles for effectively and ethically reporting and covering GBV issues.

By opening serious and effective discussion on GBV in the media and collecting data that draw a reliable picture of the phenomena, more pressure will be exerted on the society to acknowledge it as a problem, and on policy makers to legislate against it.

## Capacity Development for Youth and Women Leaders on Gender Equality

Within the context of the MDG-F “Conflict Prevention and Peace Building” programme in North Lebanon (Box 8), UNFPA organized a series of capacity development events followed by an outreach component aiming at empowering young people as well as women on human rights principles to become agents of change by raising awareness of their communities on equality between men and women.

Firstly, UNFPA organized training workshops for 27 women from 16 local NGOs in the North (Tripoli, Akkar, Naher El Bared and Baddawi Palestinian camps and surrounding Lebanese villages). Participants were selected according to their active role within their communities, as well as their engagement in gender related initiatives. Workshops addressed gender equality and human rights from international perspectives, women empowerment principles in various spheres (i.e. decision making, access to services, protection, etc), communication and facilitation skills, as well as techniques for designing and implementing community-based outreach sessions. The second phase consisted of establishing a coaching system that would ensure providing these well-trained women leaders with necessary guidance, tips, and confidence to reach out to their communities and play a proactive role in enhancing a culture of equality and justice.

Lastly, in parallel to the above and with the intention to respond to the needs of young people for fulfilling equality between boys and girls, UNFPA organized a two-day training workshop for a group of 13 youth peer educators actively volunteering within local NGOs. After the capacity development initiative, the young participants designed and facilitated outreach sessions targeting youth groups in the summer camps organized by UNICEF for Lebanese and Palestinian youth from the targeted area. Six awareness sessions were conducted by the Y-Peer (youth peer) educators targeting more than 180 young girls and boys.

The objective of the awareness was to increase the knowledge of youth on gender equality issues. In fact, a considerable number of targeted young people were not even aware of the concept of gender and gender equality. During the awareness sessions, group members expressed their interest in the topics and the level of participation was high. Some of them expressed that this will help them become more socially interactive, capable of building new relationships. They also pledged to share the acquired knowledge with their parents, connect to each other with less discrimination and promote



### Box 8: A Comprehensive Joint Program

The MDG-F programme is developed and supported jointly by UNFPA, UNRWA, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, and UNESCO. The priorities and interventions of the joint programme were elaborated in alignment with national goals and priorities for youth, women, in addition to building a national platform for peace. The programme aims at promoting participation and civic empowerment as well as strengthening civil society through the involvement of youth and women, regardless of affiliation or religious confession, but as agents of change.

gender equality. As stated by one of the female participants: “In our society and specifically in our family, because of the old mentality, girls quit school at early stages, while boys have more chances. Me, I took my decision to finish my studies and do my best to reach the university. It gave me more opportunities and a better life”.

### BOX 9: Encouraging Results

After its completion, UNFPA conducted an assessment of the outreach initiative led by local women for promoting gender equality and key findings can be summarized as follows:

- Women in general and young girls specifically were not aware of their rights regarding marriage and they expressed their needs to be more knowledgeable of the divorce consequences and to better understand the legal measures related to this matter.
- Local NGOs acknowledged the importance of implementing awareness activities on gender equality targeting women and young girls in the community.
- Beneficiaries showed high motivation and interest towards the proposed topics during the outreach sessions. The continuity of these discussion meetings is essential because it helps expressing themselves and it will increase their self-confidence and had a positive impact on their daily lives.
- The creation of a conducive environment to speak out about various concerns and issues was perceived as a positive factor which contributed to reducing stress and anxiety among participating women.
- Almost all women participants expressed their need for awareness and empowerment sessions specifically on the early marriage and its consequences.

## Advocating Ageing Issues on National Agenda and in National Development Plans

The proportion of elderly in Lebanon as in all developing countries is on the rise. This global phenomenon of ageing populations has been emphasized by the 7 Billion Campaign throughout 2011 which called on countries to be proactive in facing what it referred to as “an unprecedented challenge” in human history.

### Box 10: The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPPA)

The MIPAA is an important milestone in promoting the health and well-being of older people and the realization of a society for all ages. It is the first international agreement urging governments to include ageing in social and economic development priorities. Further, it calls for action on older persons’ rights to protection and humanitarian assistance in emergencies; it focuses attention on the effects of marginalization of older people—especially poverty, but inclusive of their heightened vulnerability in disasters; and it promotes a mainstreaming and intergenerational approach to ageing in responding to humanitarian crises.

On April 2002, at the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the MIPPA was unanimously supported by all as a critical vehicle for ensuring that people everywhere are able to age with security and dignity, and continue to participate in their societies as citizens with full rights.

The Population and Development Project (PD), a joint collaboration between the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) and UNFPA, and in its efforts to strengthen the institutional entities in leading policy dialogue on ageing, has concluded 2011 on few important undertakings including a major initiative in this area and related to the Assessment of the National Commission for Elderly Affairs (NCEA) and its Technical Secretariat. The assessment, which was finalized in November 2011, included an in-depth analysis of the NCEA and its secretariat’s capacities, functionality, role, and modus operandi in comparison with other countries’ experiences. The assessment also examined MOSA and the NCEA’s complementary roles in leading efforts towards achieving the MIPPA commitments (See Box 10), coordination with relevant stakeholders, partnerships with key stakeholders in the field of ageing, and linkages to International Conference on Population and Development and the Millennium Development Goals. The recommendations of the assessment emphasized the role of the NCEA as the national body responsible for ameliorating the social, health, protection and economic conditions of the elderly in Lebanon. The recommendations also called on the NCEA to work on enhancing the networking with various institutions and NGOs catering for the elderly needs in Lebanon as this will result in better coordination and improved services.

The PD will act upon these recommendations by providing needed technical support in further developing capacities of NCEA and in reinforcing its secretariat through training, development of normative tools, and improved communication.

## Enhancing MOSA's Capacities in Integrating Population in Development Plans

The need for integrated population and development planning has been recognized and expressed in various fora. Reflecting population issues in development plans has repeatedly focused on the issue of integrated social policies and the intertwined dimensions of social and economic development.

In this context, the Population and Development Project (PD), with the aim of supporting the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) through enhancing the capacities of its selected units in strategizing and mainstreaming population and development priorities and concepts within their plans and programmes both centrally and locally (through the Social Development Centers (SDCs), has developed a full-fledged capacity development program to address identified gaps and needs. The program is based on the results of the assessment of the capacities and needs of two MOSA departments (Family Affairs and Research and Planning) and their corresponding units in the integration of population in development that was undertaken during the last quarter of 2010.

This capacity development program aims on one hand at increasing networking and coordination between various MOSA departments sharing common goals and related mandates both centrally and with the SDCs, and on the other hand at improving capacities of MOSA units in conceptualizing and articulating social development interventions that integrate identified population dimensions based on local needs and priorities.

Preparations for the implementation of the capacity development program were initiated during the last quarter of 2011 with the first workshop kicking off in December. It encompassed training sessions on 5 main topics - that were underscored in the recommendations of the assessment report - and consisting of the following:

- The relationship between research and social planning with emphasis on the bottom-up approach
- Programme/Project cycle development, implementation, monitoring and management
- Integration of population dimensions in local development plans
- Administrative communication
- Community development

The three-days training program held December 14-16 aimed at reinforcing the participants' capacities in elaborating social development interventions based on local communities' needs and priorities. Participants included staff from MOSA departments (Family Affairs and Research and Planning), social assistants from several MOSA units, and staff from selected SDCs. The training adopted very dynamic and participatory approaches and tools through the use of training activities, ice breakers, collective group work, etc. Community experiences and case studies were presented along with formal presentations and discussions.

The results of the training workshop were assessed through a Pre and Post-test and the results were analyzed to determine the extent to which the participants gained conceptual clarity and understanding of the topics covered during the training. The analysis revealed that the majority of participants who were unfamiliar or unsure of the concepts related to social research and planning gained considerable knowledge and relevant skills allowing them to apply their learning in their field of work.

The PD Project will continue in 2012 to implement the remaining training workshops of this capacity development initiative with the aspiration of reaching a holistic approach that addresses two levels: the individual and the institutional.

## Enhancing Institutional Capacities To Better Strategize for Community Needs

Based on an internal evaluation process and lessons learnt, as well as the change-in-priority of the arising needs of disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups, the Lebanon Family Planning Association for Development and Family Empowerment (LFPAD) – formerly LFPA- has embarked in a vigorous restructuring and institutional building process.

Firstly, LFPAD's new organizational strategy identified 3 main beneficiary groups that have been considered, at this stage, as the targets of focus. Those are: Youth, Women and the Family. The strategy has also defined 3 crosscutting sectors of intervention that would need to be implemented at the level of the targeted groups. These sectors are: provision of services, research and studies, and capacity building and advocacy. Secondly, acknowledging the importance of enhancing existing capacities, and introducing additional skills and expertise to be able to fulfill its strategic objectives, LFPAD carried out an extensive internal problem-analysis exercise that enabled it to identify its needs and priorities in terms of human resource capacities.

Based on the above, UNFPA responded favorably to the request of LFPAD and provided support for the implementation of an internal training program between July and November that aimed at instituting among staff and Administrative Board members the culture of new working methodologies and approaches, empowering and building the capacities of LFPAD members and employees to enable them deal with the directives of the new strategy within the available financial resources in an integrated manner, promoting among LFPAD employees the concepts of efficiency, accountability, transparency, innovation, and strategic planning, and enhancing understanding and knowledge about fund raising and aid effectiveness. The outcome of this intensive training program yielded positive outcome among all participants (an estimated 30 persons) and based on the evaluation reports. It is expected that LFPAD will put into practice the acquired knowledge through strategically identifying community needs and interventions with required resources, and that would eventually result in reaching concrete and sustainable impact.

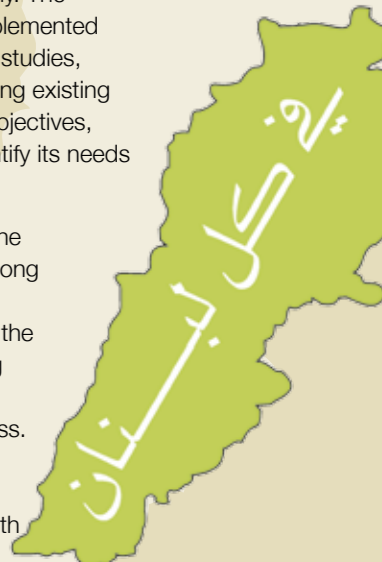
## Shedding More Light on Aging Issues and Priorities through Robust Evidence

As it has been in the past few years, UNFPA once again renewed its commitment with the Lebanese Epidemiological Association (LEA) for promoting key national priorities and issues through evidence. The LEA XVI<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Conference was organized on November 25 and 26 under the theme of "The Elderly in Lebanon: Expanding the Research Agenda to Meet Current and Future Challenges". The conference aimed at bringing together researchers and stakeholders to exchange views and share the evidence about ageing issues from different perspectives in support of sound health and social policies.

As such the rich program of the conference succeeded in attracting renowned national and international experts who looked at various related dimensions such as health resources driven by healthcare for the elderly as compared to the adult and young population, barriers faced by elderly to access healthcare, healthcare priorities among the elderly, need for elderly home care services, a closer look at the living conditions and arrangements of the elderly, society's attitude and perception at the elderly across age, genders, geographic areas, community affiliations, social classes, prospects of aging in Lebanon and potential implications for health and social policies, what pension reforms are needed in Lebanon, etc.

The preliminary findings of a related study supported by UNFPA and the Ministry of Social Affairs were presented in the conference and generated interesting discussion. The study aimed at quantitatively assessing the range of limitations in Activities of Daily Living (ADL) among older adults in Lebanon and to study the association between limitations in ADL and aging associated morbidities on one hand, and with demographic / social determinants on the other hand. A secondary objective is to compare range distribution in ADL among those attending social and healthcare centers and the rest of the elderly community. The study will be completed in early 2012 and final results will be reported in the next issue.

تنظيم الأسرة في لبنان  
على التنمية وتمكين الأسرة



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## A Multi-Faceted Campaign to Promote Awareness Around Challenges of a World at 7 Billion

On 31 October 2011, world population reached seven billion people. This date is a unique moment in human history. It constitutes an achievement and a challenge at the same time. In a world of seven billion, people live longer and healthier lives and couples choose to have smaller families. However a world of seven billion also reiterates existing - and brings on - new challenges such as inequality between men and women, insufficient empowerment in youth potentials, poor access to health services and environmental degradation among others (see Box 11). What is certain is that October 31, the Day of the 7 Billion, provided a rare opportunity for a renewed commitment to a healthy and sustainable world. It is in this context that UNFPA Lebanon launched the 7 Billion Campaign through a series of activities, highlighted below, and intended to focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues in Lebanon.



post-partum depression, contraception, reproductive tract cancers, menopause, etc. A specially designed and personalized birth certificate with the 7 promises to make the world at 7 billion a better place to live was given out to each newborn. Finally, promotional material (i.e. baby bib, key chain, etc) featuring the campaign's branding were also given away as a token to celebrate the arrival of 7 billionth babies. The tremendous assistance from the focal points of the maternal and neo-natal notification system program contributed to the success of this celebration by providing reproductive health related tips to the new mothers and distributing the welcome packages. This event gained considerable attention and coverage by the national and local media.



### Box 11: A Global Campaign

The 7 Billion Campaign in Lebanon was implemented within the larger context of the "World at 7 Billion Campaign" led by UNFPA worldwide. The campaign aimed at raising awareness on the opportunities and challenges associated with a world of 7 Billion and at calling on decision-makers, civil society, the private sector, media and individuals to take action. The global campaign focused on the following seven emerging challenges that were considered equally important in Lebanon:

- Poverty and inequality;
- Empowerment of women and girls;
- Reproductive health and rights;
- Youth;
- Aging of the population;
- The environment;
- Urbanization.

### • Partnership with the Media

Throughout August, September and October, with peaks during October's 7-Day Countdown and 7 Billion Day, UNFPA Lebanon mobilized national media and succeeded in engaging this sector who reacted proactively to this initiative.

The objective of the partnership with the media aimed particularly to increase the public's understanding of the specific challenges facing Lebanon in a world population of 7 billion by providing statistics, analysis and recommendations as to how these challenges could be met at the country level.

To this effect, UNFPA Lebanon produced a set of statistical factsheets compiling recent data on each of the messages of the campaign. In parallel, UNFPA partnered with 9 renowned national scholars and researchers, each specialized in one or more of the Campaign's themes respectively, and mobilized them to act as experts and resource persons throughout the campaign in various public appearances. UNFPA staff were also featured in some of these media coverage.

The result was astonishing indicating undoubtedly a substantial interest in the Campaign's objectives, messages, implications, challenges, etc. Indeed, the media products were diffused on national (and in some cases pan-Arab) newspapers, TVs, radios, websites and magazines. Whether in Arabic, English or French, the products varied in forms and contents ranging from investigative reports, in-series articles, special supplements, exclusive pages, open editorials, vox pops, videos, peak time TV news reports, live debate shows, talk shows, interviews, all the way to caricatures.

### • Celebrating Lebanese 7 Billionth Babies

In an attempt to concretize the symbolic importance of the 7 Billion Day, UNFPA – in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health and in collaboration with the Lebanese Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology - organized a campaign to welcome the Lebanese 7 billionth babies. It was actually the celebration of 70 babies (34 males and 36 females) who were born on October 31 in 18 different hospitals all over Lebanon and whereby Beirut registered the highest number of births followed by Saida with 20 and 17 babies respectively.

The symbolic celebration of this unique event was marked through giving out a package to all the newborns and their families. The package consisted of a folder with reader-friendly, culturally-sensitive and simple informative material (i.e. leaflets, pamphlets, etc) addressed to the new parents on topics such as child care, pregnancy, nutrition,

### Box 12: Parents Of 7 Billionth Babies: Proud And Aware

The initiative was enthusiastically received by the parents who expressed their happiness to be part of such a significant event. Hyam El Zein from Zahle hoped for her newborn girl Rahaf to "grow up in a world better than ours, with no wars and better economic situation". Both Hyam and her husband Ahmad agreed that they will allow enough spacing should they decide to have a third child.

### • Statistical Booklet on "Lebanon in a World of 7 Billion: New Figures ... Pending Issues"

In parallel, the Population and Development Project (PD), a joint collaboration between the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) and UNFPA, joined efforts to contribute to the promotion of the Campaign's themes as well as the World Population Day 2011 "Seven billion people counting on each other" and published a booklet entitled "Lebanon in a World of Seven Billion: New Figures ... Pending Issues". The booklet contains key national indicators/statistics on a number of population and development themes relevant to those of the 7 Billion Campaign. While this resource is meant to serve as an advocacy tool addressed primarily to the media professionals, it could also be used by key stakeholders such as parliamentarians, officials in public administrations, researchers, and NGOs, to draw their attention to priority population issues.

The booklet was launched on December 12, in the presence of the Minister of Social Affairs and UNFPA Assistant Representative and gained massive media coverage and participation. The media professionals showed great enthusiasm towards the information presented in the booklet and found it to be concise and reader-friendly. Of special importance to the media were the charts that showed the change of indicators over time and comparison across countries of the region. Moreover, the simple and yet comprehensive definitions of each and every indicator were highly appreciated by all participants from various sectors as they facilitated the interpretation of presented figures.

### • State of World Population 2011 Report : "People and Possibilities in a World of 7 Billion"

On December 12, along with the launching of the national statistical booklet, and in an effort to focus attention on the global dimension of population issues and needed solutions, UNFPA Lebanon launched UNFPA's landmark publication, the State of World Population 2011 report.

This year's State of World Population report, "People and Possibilities in a World of 7 Billion", looks at the dynamics behind the numbers. It explains the trends that are defining a world of 7 billion and documents actions that people in vastly different countries and circumstances are taking in their own communities.

The structure of the report, presented by UNFPA Assistant Representative, gained considerable attention given the wealth of information and data about development issues and challenges from global and regional perspectives while shedding the light on the International Conference on Population and Development and Millennium Development Goals frameworks.

### Box 13: Participatory... From Head To Toes

The PD Project adopted a full participatory approach throughout the different phases of the project. It formed a committee of media professionals to provide input at all stages of development: identification of indicators, presentation, format, design and dissemination. Besides, an expert group/technical meeting was held to allow for feedback and consensus building regarding the content and most appropriate format to be adopted for the booklet. The indicators presented in the booklet, along with their values and definitions, are based on the latest and most credible national and international references such as the Human Development Report 2011 and the Multi Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS3) published recently by the Central Administration of Statistics.



## Promising Partnership with the Private Sector

Traditionally, UNFPA has always established solid partnerships with government entities (i.e. line ministries, national commissions, public administrations, etc) and legislative bodies. Partnership has - and continues to be - equally essential and paramount with civil society organizations and particularly NGOs, faith - based organizations, research centers, academic institutions, medical and professional societies and syndicates, among other. Given its considerable role in reaching out to the wider audience, the media is particularly considered a main actor and key partner. While these actors will remain partners and key contributors in guiding and implementing the programme supported by UNFPA, the Fund in Lebanon has ventured into assessing the interest and readiness of the private sector in collaborating on specific areas based on common grounds and mutual benefit such as youth development, health, women empowerment, marginalized population, etc.



It is in this context that a study was conducted between August and December by screening the market for socially responsible companies and thoroughly scrutinizing some 35 firms categorized according to their business sector (i.e. IT, telecommunications, banking, retail, consumer brand products, manufacturing, professional services, etc). Twenty-five of which were interviewed resulting in a collection of more detailed data about their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities and preferences, previous/current UN partnerships, and future interests with UNFPA. The study revealed the fact that the private sector in Lebanon is presently experiencing CSR diffusion and development since more and more companies commit to CSR while those who already have CSR programs keep evolving it. Also it became clear that there is a current corporate trend to support Young People and Environmental Issues since the majority of the contacted firms devoted their CSR activities to either or both of these two causes. As such, 23 out of the 25 interviewed companies were interested in supporting young people initiatives. An estimated 32% of the companies had previous partnerships with UN agencies. While some firms lack adequate information about UNFPA and its values and projects, yet the findings uncovered a clear corporate interest for learning more about UNFPA. Moreover, there was an evident preference among the interviewed firms for actively participating in CSR projects in collaboration with UNFPA.

Among the 25 interviewed enterprises, those who were in the IT and Telecommunication sectors were interested in developing phone applications for UNFPA, a matter that will be pursued in 2012 within the broader strategic framework for partnering with the private sector. The latter will entail approaching the interested firms with comprehensive information about UNFPA's mandate and values as well as showcasing successful projects in terms of impact and results that could be scaled up in partnership with selected companies. Efforts will be made to discuss the importance of widening the enterprises CSR interests to areas other than only youth and environment, such as girls and women empowerment and protection, elderly people, reproductive health, etc. A seminar can draw attention to partnership benefits and promote the *UN Global Compact* initiative.

## UNFPA Lebanon's Brand New Website!

Following months of preparation UNFPA Lebanon launched a completely overhauled version of its website ([www.unfpa.org.lb](http://www.unfpa.org.lb)). This revamped platform is intended to be more dynamic, interactive and user-friendly. It aims at



emphasizing UNFPA's work in Lebanon by highlighting the wide network of partners, the innovative approaches adopted for various beneficiaries, and the concrete achievements consistent with national priorities.

The launch of the website was scheduled to coincide with the International Youth Day (August 12) and the closing of the International Year of Youth, a way for UNFPA to reiterate its conviction that young people are vibrant leaders and agents of change in Lebanon.

The totally redesigned site offers a variety of updated, pertinent, and useful information on population issues in Lebanon. It features national statistics and data, reports and publications, public awareness material, projects description, news and success stories, press releases, press clippings, photo galleries, videos, as well as several links to global campaigns and resources.

## Continuous Staff Capacity Development and Experience Enriches Knowledge and Enhances Performance

Developing staff capacity constitutes one of UNFPA's management priorities as it is the sine qua none condition for keeping staff motivated and for enhancing quality results at the national level. In addition, several staff acted as resource persons in different fora whereby they got a chance to exchange knowledge and experience with a wide array of actors regionally and globally. In line with

such overarching principle, UNFPA staff undertook the following missions (be it for training, conferences, seminars, etc) each according to his/her position and function: *Advanced Microsoft Excel* (Lebanon, August); *Joint UNFPA-ILO Consultation Meeting for Development of Joint Programming Framework for Young People* (Jordan, September); *UN Cares Sub-Regional Workshop* (Jordan, September); *Best Practices Dissemination and Youth Strategy Regional Meeting* (Egypt, October); *HIV/AIDS Strategic Regional Planning Meeting* (Egypt, October); *Meeting of Regional program Managers on Scaling Up of Adolescent Health Programs* (Thailand, October); international training in *Coordination of Multi-Sectoral Response to Gender based Violence in Humanitarian Settings* (Belgium, November); *Regional training on Financial Long Term Agreements* (Egypt, November); *Regional Symposium on Family, the MDGs, and HIV in the Middle East: Linkages, Challenges and Opportunities* (Qatar, November); *Global Young Parliamentarians' Dialogue on ICPD Issues* (Thailand, November); *Regional Training for Communication Focal Points* (Egypt, December).

## Yearly Interaction with the General Public

Loyal to its yearly appointment with the general public, UNFPA participated in the 55<sup>th</sup> *Beirut Arab International Book Fair*, held December 2 - 15, 2011, at the *BIEL* exhibit center, downtown Beirut. Along with several United Nations agencies in Lebanon and under a "One UN" banner, UNFPA took part in this highly visible cultural event. Like every year, UNFPA global and national publications were distributed, with more than 1800 reports disseminated and in two-week time. Once again, the fair offered UNFPA the opportunity to obtain the audience's feedback. In comparison with last year's opinion poll results, answers showed an increase in visitors' knowledge of UNFPA and interest in its mandate.

Also under the "One UN" banner, along with sister UN Agencies in Lebanon, and in celebration of UN Day on October 24, UNFPA took part in the UN Photo Exhibition at the UNESCO Palace in Beirut, by displaying photos of highlights episodes of its programme in Lebanon, since its beginnings in 1996. In addition, UNFPA made its publication and awareness material available to visitors to the UN stand in Beirut Martyr's Square during the Beirut Marathon in 23-27 November 2011.

## Evergrowing Interest in and Knowledge of UNFPA

