Family Planning and ICPD Beyond 2014
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If we could predict the future of family planning by the success of the conference, and by the energy and knowledge it generated, we would be hopeful that universal access to a choice of safe, reliable and affordable methods of family planning is truly within our reach!

Family planning is not a new issue on the global development agenda. Since the first Global Population Conference, in Bucharest in 1974, it is agreed by the international community that *all couples and individuals should have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and should have the information, education and means to do so*. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo, placed individuals at the center of the development discourse, and positioned family planning as a key element of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, of women’s empowerment, of sustainable development, and of poverty eradication.

Almost 20 years after Cairo, it is again a critical time to support family planning, because the agenda remains unfinished. Much has been said about the benefits of family planning: it empowers women and men – and in particular young people - to improve their health and that of their children, and to make important choices in their lives; it saves lives; it pays dividends now and in the future; it contributes to ensuring that in this world of 7 billion, every child is wanted. Much has been said also about how to increase access to family planning: as part of comprehensive reproductive health services, or part of community-based interventions; involving men; involving and educating young people and in particular adolescent girls; offering information, counseling and options of safe, reliable and affordable contraceptives, etc.

Yet, we know about the unacceptably high number of women who want to avoid pregnancy and do not use family planning; the number of abortions, and of maternal deaths that would be prevented if women had access to family planning. We also know what is needed to increase access to family planning: more commitment, resources and accountability; more implementation of known high impact approaches, including integration of SRH services in strengthened health systems; reaching out and involving communities, and multiplying efforts to reach vulnerable and disadvantaged populations; scaling up sexuality education programmes and meeting the needs of adolescents and young people; creating more demand and addressing the cultural and social determinants in settings with low contraceptive prevalence and a high unmet need of women for family planning.

Thanks to the recent efforts to reposition family planning on the development agenda - and also on the reproductive health agenda - , we have for the first time since many years observed an increase in funding. Indeed after having plummeted to less than $400 million in 2006, our most recent data on resource flows show that funding for family planning has reached $748 million in 2009. An encouraging trend – acknowledging however that this increase is far from keeping pace with current needs and the increasing number of women of reproductive age. What we need is a big push to accelerate this trend and make decisive progress to achieve Millenium Development Goal 5 on maternal health, including family planning and adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

UNFPA is ready to galvanize greater political and financial commitment for family planning, as part of SRH, at all levels together with its partners. Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of UNFPA, has outlined UNFPAs vision and commitment during the Opening Plenary of this Conference.

Thanks to this Conference we have had the opportunity to learn the ultimate *state-of-the-art* on family planning. Together let’s act on the burning and priority issues and ensure that on the road to the 20th anniversary of ICPD in
2014 and the 2015 summit on a new development goal framework we have contributed to further strengthening the position of family planning, as part of SRH, in the development agenda, with stronger evidence for advocacy, effective policies and programmatic interventions.

The U.N. General Assembly adopted in December last year a resolution extending *sine die* the 20 year ICPD Programme of Action – *beyond 2014*. The resolution called for the convening of a Special Session of the General Assembly in 2014 to assess the status of implementation of the PoA. It has been agreed that there will be no renegotiation of the existing agreements – it is all about implementation. Leading to the Special Session is a review process that UNFPA has been mandated by the General Assembly to undertake in close cooperation with partners. The process is inclusive and participatory, involving a broad range of stakeholders including Governments, Civil Society, Parliamentarians, UN agencies and donors at country, regional and global level.

The review process aims at providing the most authoritative account of the state of population and development in 2014, including by identifying and addressing new or emerging challenges and opportunities for accelerating the implementation of the Cairo agenda. It will lead to an outcome report for the General Assembly Special Session that will serve as a major reference point for discussing, implementing and monitoring population and development policies and programmes beyond 2014.

It is the expectation in UNFPA that the review will lead to a series of policy recommendations to accelerate implementation of the ICPD PoA, including family planning as a key component of sexual and reproductive health. It is also our hope that commitments and events in 2012 and 2013 will reinvigorate all partners and strengthen our collective commitment to ICPD. With the necessary know-how, new partnerships, new ways of working and a strong engagement of the communities on the ground, we can finally achieve the right of every *individual and couple to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, and to have the information, education and means to do so* - the objective carried over since 1974 Bucharest Population Conference.

Let me conclude by thanking the government of Senegal for the great hospitality during this Conference. And let me thank the Gates Institute at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and its partners for making this Conference possible and in particular for bringing us here – to Dakar, to a French speaking country and to a region whose women and youth need our particular solidarity and support in facing the challenges of population and development.

Thank you.