

THE MISSION OF UNFPA

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.

Editorial

The UNFPA country team in Myanmar looks back at 2011 as an important milestone full of challenges, achievements and opportunities. Challenges were encountered due to the ever-changing environment and the transition that the country and UNFPA are going through. At the country level, the challenge was to fulfil UNFPA's mandate of promoting reproductive health and rights, advancing gender equality and addressing population dynamics, while aligning with national development priorities amid a series of promising political and economic reform initiatives. At UNFPA, the challenge was to meet corporate expectations for results-based programme management and accountability, and align the country programme and operations with UNFPA's Business Plan and revised Strategic Plan for the biennium 2012-2013.

Despite such challenges, there were a number of tangible achievements. An independent evaluation of the UNFPA's second Programme of Assistance (2007-2011) for Myanmar concluded that the programme supported the provision of maternal health and birth-spacing services and commodities in 132 of 330 townships in the country's 14 states and regions. Through specific interventions for young people, the programme helped improve the knowledge of 400,000 youths and adolescents on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS. It contributed to a reduction in HIV infection among female sex workers (from 18.4 per cent in 2008 to 11.2 per cent in 2009), and to a reduction among men in high-risk groups (from 28.8 per cent to 22.3 per cent during the same time period).

Advocacy and policy dialogue resulted in concrete outcomes, including the establishment of a Parliamentary Committee on Population and Social Development and a Government Commission on Population and Development. These two structures will provide viable forums for development, implementation and monitoring of population policies. The Parliamentary Committee will apply for membership of the Asian Forum for Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), which includes representatives from 25 population and development committees throughout Asia. UNFPA will work closely with the two structures by providing

UNFPA Leads "7 Billion Actions" to Inspire Change

"Let us unite, 7 billion strong, in the name of the global common good" was the message of Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon on United Nations Day. As projected by the United Nations, the world's population reached 7 billion on 31 October 2011. A world of 7 billion poses many challenges: in fighting poverty and disease, in securing education and sustainable livelihoods and in mitigating climate change. But this milestone is not only a challenge, but also an opportunity and a call to action.

The "7 Billion Actions" campaign was spearheaded by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and has leveraged the power of music, film, interactive communications and social media to inspire change by highlighting positive action by individuals and organizations around the world.



Myanmar 7 billionth baby boy "Kan Htoo Maung" cradled by his mother was born at 2:30 a.m. on 31 October, 2011, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

→ continued from "Editorial"

technical assistance and policy advice and facilitating the sharing of knowledge and experience with other countries.

The third Programme of Assistance for Myanmar was developed on the basis of a thorough research, analysis and evaluation of previous assistance. The programme is an integral component of the overall United Nations Strategic Framework (2012-2015). It aims at strengthening national capacity to: a) improve availability of high-quality reproductive health care, including HIV/AIDS prevention services among women, men, young people and populations most at risk; b) increase the availability of high-quality disaggregated data on population, reproductive health and gender; and c) promote gender equality and the advancement of women. The programme places emphasis on addressing regional disparities and promoting equity and social inclusion.

As the chair of the working groups on MDG Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), Gender, Women's Protection and Sexual and Reproductive Health, UNFPA contributed to United Nations-interagency coordination. The MDG M&E Group coordinated the process of United Nations Thematic Analysis and provided inputs to United Nations Strategic Framework, and the Gender and Women Protection groups helped develop a national strategic plan for the advancement of women in line with CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action. As a member of Country Coordination Mechanism (CCM), UNFPA contributed to coordinate health initiatives, especially the Global Fund on HIV, TB and malaria. A joint programme with WHO and UNICEF on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) was developed with support from AusAID. As part of south-south co-operation, national consultations on MNCH were held on 7-8 November, with the participation of experts from the Government of Laos, WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA.

Despite the success achieved in mobilizing resources, there are still significant unmet needs for maternal health and birth spacing commodities and services. Meeting such needs is crucial to the prevention of unintended pregnancies and abortion, and to saving the lives of mothers and newborn babies. Similarly, significant investments are needed to collect reliable and up-to-date data from the planned population and housing census. Preparation for the census requires collective efforts from the Government and the international community.

The positive developments in Myanmar in 2011 give rise to renewed energy and enthusiasm for a better future for all. We seize this opportunity to pay tribute to our partners from the Government, UN sister agencies, civil society, NGOs and the donor community for their support and cooperation.

Mohamed Abdel-Ahad
UNFPA Representative

→ continued from " 7 Billion Actions "

UNFPA Myanmar country office also joined the action by producing a song about reproductive health and rights, a movie clip of "7 Billion Actions" with Myanmar narration for nationwide airing, and celebration of the birth of the 7 billionth baby.

On 31 October, UNFPA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, organized a celebration at Nay Pyi Taw's 1000-bed hospital to mark the birth of "Kan Htoo Maung", born at 2:30 that morning. The birth took place at Myitta Sanyey, a health facility run by the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA) in Nay Pyi Taw. Children and the audience welcomed the 6.82-pound newcomer and his parents with a song composed for the occasion, showered the baby with gifts and presented his parents with a certificate.

At the ceremony, Dr. Win Myint, the Deputy Minister of Health, said: "This event reminds us of our commitment towards a healthy and sustainable nation, to closing the gap between rich and poor, and to charting a path towards development that promotes equality."

To underscore UNFPA's role in promoting maternal and newborn health, the health team that attended the delivery, and Nan Than Than Oo, a midwife from Tachileik Township, Eastern Shan State, winner of the Global Health Workforce Alliance Award for 2011, were presented with gifts at the ceremony.

Ensuring safe motherhood and universal access to reproductive health is the primary goal of UNFPA. Our common goal of improving maternal health and saving women's and children's lives can be achieved only if



Dr. Win Myint, Deputy Minister of Health presented gifts to the health team that attended the delivery of the 7 billionth baby in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Government and donors provide adequate resources and ensure that they are optimally utilized. And through this opportunity we can renew our commitment to work jointly and individually for a better world of 7 billion.



Babatunde Osotimehin

Executive Director

Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations

Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of UNFPA said "Every year, 358,000 women die from pregnancy-related complications. Satisfying the unmet need for family planning in developing countries is essential to upholding women's reproductive rights. It could help prevent up to 1 in 3 maternal deaths and 1 in 11 child deaths."

BIOGRAPHY

On 1 January 2011, Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin became the fourth Executive Director of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund. He holds the rank of Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Before this appointment, Dr. Osotimehin had served as the Minister of Health of Nigeria. Prior to that position, he was the Director-General of the Nigerian National Agency for the Control of AIDS, which coordinates all HIV and AIDS work in a country of about 160 million people.

Dr. Osotimehin qualified as a medical doctor from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, in 1972, and then joined the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom, where he got a doctorate in medicine in 1979. He is a member of the United Kingdom's Royal College of Physicians and was, between 1996 and 1997, a visiting fellow at the Harvard Centre for Population and Development Studies. In 2006, he was inducted as a fellow of the prestigious Nigerian Academy of Sciences. He was appointed as a Professor at the University of Ibadan in 1980 and headed the Department of Clinical Pathology before being elected as Provost of the College of Medicine of the same university in 1990. He held the position until 1994.

Dr. Osotimehin's interests include youth and gender, within the context of reproductive health and rights.

In recognition of his contributions, especially as a leader of Nigeria's response to HIV and AIDS, he was awarded the national honour of Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON) in December 2005.

UNFPA Regional Director for Asia and Pacific observed field activities in Myanmar

Ms. Nobuko Horibe, UNFPA Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, visited Myanmar in July. Accompanied by staff from the country office, on 3 July she visited Nyaung Done Township in Ayeyarwaddy Region, and Shwe Pyi Thar and Mayangone Townships in Yangon Region, to observe health activities there.

At Nyaung Done Township Hospital, the team met with health staff and community support group members and learned about the status of activities and major reproductive health issues. The hospital provides adequate birth spacing commodities.

At the Youth Information Corner located in Sarmalauk, Nyaung Done Township, Ayeyarwaddy Region, the team met with youth volunteers, basic health staff and others for briefings and discussions on reproductive health for youth, community mobilization and the role of health volunteers in referral of pregnant women to health facilities.

The team also met with about 45 beneficiaries of the UNFPA-funded Women's Friendly Space (Centre) in Shwe Pyi Thar Township near Yangon. Many women explained how they benefit from the interest-free loans provided, and how they became more empowered. Youth volunteers shared their views on reproductive health issues.

Finally, the team visited the Targeted Outreach Programme in Mayangone Township, Yangon. The facility provides a safe haven for sex workers and men in high risk groups to socialize, exchange knowledge and experiences and receive treatment. The team were briefed on programme activities and met with several beneficiaries of the centre.

On her visit to Nay Pyi Taw, Ms. Horibe met with U Khin Yi, Minister of Immigration and Population, U Aung Kyi, Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, and Dr. Pe Thet Khin, Minister of Health.



UNFPA Myanmar Celebrated World Population Day 2011

ကမ္ဘာ့လူဦးရေနေ့
World Population Day

“The World at 7 Billion”

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11 July 2011

Nay Pyi Taw



Prize winners of various competitions on World Population Day 2011, with the Ministers, Government Officials, Diplomats and UN Representatives, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

UNFPA and the Ministry of Immigration and Population (MOIP) jointly organized a ceremony commemorating World Population Day in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 July, with the theme “The World at 7 Billion”. Ministers, deputy ministers, government officials, diplomats, representatives of United Nations agencies, NGOs, and winners of various contests participated in the event.

Minister of Immigration and Population, U Khin Yi emphasized the Government’s commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals as decided at the National Workshop on Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation. He also stressed that continued population growth, together with declining fertility, rising mobility, and a changing age structure all posed profound challenges and opportunities. He said there was an urgent need to invest in today’s young people.

Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad, UNFPA Representative, highlighted the achievements and challenges of a world with increasing population, and the choices and decisions that had to be made. This required action in seven areas: breaking the cycle of poverty and inequality; unleashing the power of women and girls; forging a better future for young people; promoting

reproductive health and rights; protecting the environment; addressing the needs of the elderly; and planning for urban growth.

Mr. Abdel-Ahad stressed the need for a two-pronged strategy. Policies should be developed to reap the benefits of the “demographic window of opportunity” represented by the increasingly large proportion of people of working age, 15-59, by promoting job opportunities and improving access to social services. This would increase per capita income, savings and investments, while boosting economic growth. A second set of policies should promote “active ageing” to enhance the health, participation, and security of older persons, while taking into account their rights, needs, preferences and capacities.

Facts for Adolescent Life (FFAL)

Information on adolescent reproductive health and HIV prevention is now available through the FAQ application in the website of Youth Development Programme of Myanmar Medical Association (<http://www.ydpmma.org>).



First, second and third prize winning posters on World Population Day 2011 displayed at the event in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Combatting poverty and inequality; reducing maternal and child mortality; meeting the need for birth spacing and preventing the spread of HIV among the most at-risk populations are some of the challenges for Myanmar as it strives to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Accordingly, Mr. Abdel-Ahad called for the increased allocation of national resources, as well as international assistance. He also reiterated UNFPA's commitment to continue to work with the Government to meet the needs and aspirations of the Myanmar people.



Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad, UNFPA Representative delivered a statement related to "The world at 7 billion" at the World Population Day 2011 event, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

World AIDS Day 2011 – The End of AIDS in Sight

The end of AIDS is in sight. "Getting to Zero: Zero New HIV Infections, Zero Discrimination and Zero AIDS-related Deaths" was the theme for this year's World AIDS Day celebration, a target whose achievement is within reach.

World AIDS Day was organized in Nay Pyi Taw by the National AIDS Programme, Ministry of Health, with assistance from UNFPA. The Health Minister reiterated his commitment to continue to provide AIDS treatment and care over the coming years. With the formation of the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Central Committee, and through the National Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS and Operational Plan 2011-2015, Myanmar will help prevent HIV/AIDS, thus realizing the sixth United Nations Millennium Development Goal.

On behalf of UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, UNFPA Representative Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad read the message of the Secretary-General, calling for political will, reasonable financial resources and a firm human rights-based approach, in order to achieve all the planned targets. The Secretary-General said the world was finally in a position to end the epidemic. "Synergies between prevention and treatment are speeding up progress. But to end AIDS, we need to deliver even greater results" he said.

UNFPA has been assisting Myanmar to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, especially the fifth, reducing maternal mortality, and sixth, preventing HIV/AIDS. In the third Programme of Assistance (2012-2015), UNFPA plans to support reproductive health through the provision of HIV prevention services in selected townships in seven states and regions. Improved availability of sexual and reproductive health services, including the prevention of HIV transmission among populations that are most at risk and their partners, and from mothers to their children, is one of the programme outputs. This will be achieved through interventions to strengthen behaviour change communication on HIV and by supporting the availability of STI/HIV counselling and testing services, including services to help prevent mother-to-child transmission.

Facts for Adolescent Life (FFAL)

Information on adolescent reproductive health and HIV prevention is now available through two telephone lines established by the Youth Development Programme of Myanmar Medical Association (white line for boys at 09-73212226 and pink line for girls at 09-73212227) with the support of the Fund from Germany.

Third Programme of Assistance (3rd PoA) and Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP)

With the conclusion of the second Programme of Assistance (PoA) in December 2011, UNFPA country office, the Government and other stakeholders, developed the third Programme of Assistance (2012-2015) based on: the Situation Analysis on Reproductive Health, Population and Development and Gender conducted in 2010; the End-of-Programme Evaluation 2011; the United Nations Thematic Analysis and United Nations Strategic Framework 2012-2015; and lessons learned from the second Programme of Assistance.



Representative of government, national and international NGOs, the United Nations and donors participated at the stakeholders meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, to develop the third Programme of Assistance.

These lessons include: 1) **Partnership** is a key to promoting resource mobilization; 2) **Evidence-based**, integrated and focused programmes maximize the utilization of resources; and 3) **Humanitarian Assistance** can provide the basis for development initiatives.

A series of meetings with the participation of government departments, national and international NGOs, the United Nations and donors, was conducted from March to August to discuss the outline and results framework of the third Programme of Assistance. The discussions centred on outcomes, outputs, benchmark indicators, overall programme partners and programme strategies.

Presentation on 3rd PoA by Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad, UNFPA Representative, at the stakeholders meeting held in Nay Pyi Taw, on 31 March, 2011.



The meetings reviewed past cooperation and lessons learned and outlined the outcomes and strategic activities to be included in the third Country Programme Action Plan covering reproductive health, population and development, and gender equality.

The programme also contributes to three strategic priorities of the United Nations Strategic Framework: 1) to increase equitable access to high-quality social services; 2) to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change; and 3) to promote good governance and strengthen democratic institutions and human rights.

Facts for Adolescent Life (FFAL)

Information on adolescent reproductive health and HIV prevention for young people is disseminated by trained youth peer educators from the Central Health Education Bureau, Myanmar Medical Association, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Mane Stopes International and François-Xavier Bagnoud, as well as through special events such as the "HIV/AIDS Knowledge Fair".

Establishment of a Parliamentary Committee on Population and Social Development

UNFPA and the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) met with parliamentarians and partner ministries on 23-24 November in Nay Pyi Taw, to discuss the establishment of a parliamentary committee on population and social development in Myanmar.

The objective of the meeting was to facilitate coordination and cooperation between the Myanmar Parliament and its regional counterparts in the area of population and development through AFPPD, and to explore the possibility of Myanmar's membership.

Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, accompanied by UNFPA Representative Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad, met with U Khin Yi, Minister of Immigration and Population, U Aung Kyi, Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, U Tin Naing Thein, Minister of National Planning and Economic Development, and Dr. Pe Thet Khin, Minister of Health, to share information about AFPPD. The role of women parliamentarians, capacity building and the protection and development of women were among the topics of discussion.

Mr. Khare also met with the Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw (Parliament), U Nanda Kyaw Swa, and other

senior officials, including U Maung Maung Swe, Chairperson of the Pyithu Hluttaw Women and Children Protection Committee and U Hla Myint Oo, Chairperson of the Pyithu Hluttaw Committee of International Relations.

During his visit, Mr. Khare made a presentation to parliamentarians on the role of parliamentarians in population and development and on the mandate, activities and membership of AFPPD.

Mr. Khare proclaimed his visit a success, saying: "The President of Myanmar has agreed to establish a population and development commission to develop and oversee population and development policies, and the parliamentarians have agreed to form a population and social development committee, with a view to seeking membership of the AFPPD."

The Tokyo-based Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) is a regional forum of standing committees of parliamentarians engaged in population and development, health and social affairs. Established following an initiative by UNFPA in 1981, AFPPD aims to promote cooperation and partnerships among Asian parliamentarians in the areas of population, development and related fields.



AFPPD Executive Director and UNFPA officials paid courtesy call to U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Deputy Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw (Parliament) and parliamentarians at the Parliament building in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, on 23 November, 2011.

National Consultative Meeting on Reproductive Health, Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health in the Context of Rural Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies

UNFPA and the Ministry of Health jointly organized the National Consultative Meeting on Reproductive Health, Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health in the Context of Rural Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies in Nay Pyi Taw on 7 and 8 November. The objectives of the meeting were to review progress under the National Reproductive Health Strategy and to share experiences of countries in the South East Asia region on reproductive health, maternal, neonatal and child health interventions for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).



Participants of National Consultative Meeting on Reproductive Health, Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health in the Context of Rural Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies, 7-8 November, 2011, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Representatives from United Nations agencies, government departments, national and international NGOs, academia, civil society and the donors participated in the meeting. International and regional experts from WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic facilitated the discussion and shared information and research findings.

Dr. Pe Thet Khin, Minister of Health, described Myanmar's efforts to improve maternal and child health services, and outlined strategies to raise rural health standards to help promote universal access to reproductive health.

Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad, UNFPA Representative, described the efforts being made to achieve the MDGs by 2015, and explained how investment in sexual and reproductive health services could contribute to economic growth, poverty eradication, equity and the reduction of maternal and newborn deaths. He expressed his appreciation for the Government's commitment to implement the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy on Women's and Children's Health, and for the increase in donor assistance.

The first day's presentations included "Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health in South East Asia", by

Dr. Thein Thein Htay, Deputy Director General of the Department of Health (DOH); and "National Reproductive Health Strategy, Process, Challenges and Contribution to Poverty Reduction", presented by Dr. Theingi Myint, Deputy Director (Maternal and Child Health), DOH.

The second day included presentations on the "Continuum of Care with a Focus on Newborn Care" by Dr. Kyaw Myint Aung, Regional Advisor, UNICEF Regional Office; "Five-Year Strategic Plan for Child Health Development" by Dr. Myint Myint Than, Deputy Director (WCHD) and "Management of Selected Complications of Pregnancy and Childbirth with a Focus on Postpartum Haemorrhage and Eclampsia" by Dr. Matthews Mathai of WHO Headquarters. Dr. Saramma Mathai of UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Office, Bangkok, also shared her experience on "Interventions for Reducing Financial Barriers for Accessing Maternal Health Services in the Region".

Participants worked in group on the topics: 1) Human Resources—Access to Skilled Birth Attendants in Rural Areas; 2) Maternal and Newborn Death Reviews; 3) Public-Private Partnership in Rural Areas; 4) Community-based Newborn Care in Rural Areas; and 5) Management of Obstetric Complications.

Launching of the State of World Population 2011 Report

With the theme “**People and possibilities in a world of 7 billion**”, UNFPA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Immigration and Population, launched the *State of World Population 2011 Report* with a round-table discussion in Nay Pyi Taw on 31 October, the day the world’s population reached seven billion.

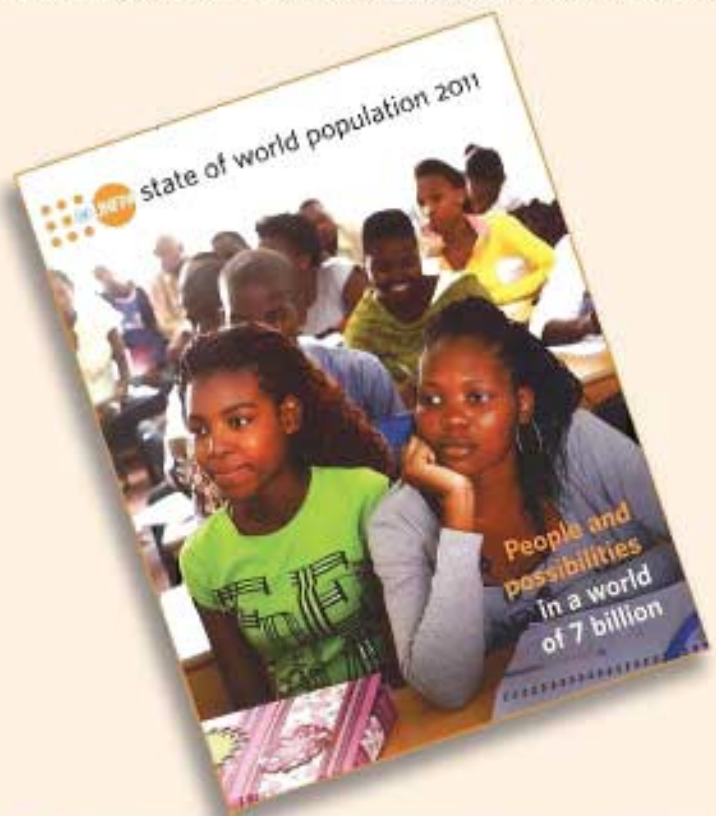
The State of World Population 2011 Report mainly reflects discussions from nine countries where ordinary citizens, national experts, demographers and policymakers talk about their lives and work, and describe the obstacles they confront, and overcome, in trying to build better lives for themselves and their families, communities and nations.

U Myint Kyaing, Director General of the Department of Population, Ministry of Immigration and Population, highlighted the trends in population growth since the early 19th century and stressed that Myanmar was already experiencing demographic change resulting from the decline in mortality and fertility. “Reaching seven billion is the result of personal choice and collective action to improve health, extend life span and raise individual expectations,” he added.

The report calls for investment in the health, education and employment of young people in order to yield returns in economic growth and development for generations to come. UNFPA Representative, Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad stressed the need to make motherhood safe by caring for pregnant women, preventing death in childbirth, providing nutrition for mothers and babies, and protecting our environment.

In order to highlight Myanmar’s experience, the round-table discussion took place on four topics: demographic change; maternal death review; population and development; and reflections from Myanmar on the themes of the *State of World Population Report*. The panel discussion drew and reflected on lessons relevant to Myanmar from global trends; identified actions towards sustainable economic development; and reiterated national commitments.

The round-table discussion resulted in recommendations for: (a) more investment in job creation and social services, especially for the 63 per cent of the population aged 15-59; (b) implementation of active ageing policies; (c) promotion of reproductive rights, including access to reproductive health information and services; and (d) improving access to youth-friendly reproductive health services.



Round table discussion at the launch of the State of World Population 2011 Report in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

100th Anniversary of International Women's Day

As the chair of the United Nations Gender Theme Group and Women's Protection Working Group in Myanmar, UNFPA organized a round-table discussion to mark the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day in Yangon on 8 March. The theme for the event, which was organized in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement was "Equal access to education, training, science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women".

Participants discussed the situation in Myanmar and the plans and programmes of the Government, civil society, the United Nations and donors in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. They also considered how to strengthen partnerships to promote the empowerment of women.

Mr. Bishow Parajuli, the former United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, said the centenary of International Women's Day was a time to celebrate the significant progress that had been achieved through determined advocacy, practical action and enlightened policy-making. Decent work for women and an improvement in the quality of their lives were linked to the education, knowledge and training they had received.

Mr. Mohammed Abdel-Ahad, UNFPA Representative for Myanmar, emphasized the need to ensure gender-sensitive quality education and training, the transition from education to full employment and decent work for women and greater participation of women in decision making positions in the executive, legislative and judiciary branches of government. He advocated for the establishment of post-graduate courses on gender to raise awareness and enable broader engagement on gender issues.

U Aung Tun Khaing, the Deputy Director General of the Department of Social Welfare, pointed out that equal access to education and training brought added benefits, including greater protection from trafficking and abuse. It was important to identify gaps in multisectoral activities.

The round-table included presentations on "Women and Education", "Women-friendly Spaces" and "Livelihood Support" from UNESCO, the Association François Xavier Bagnoud (FXB) and the Women Organizations Network respectively.

A group of women from Labutta Township, which was devastated by Cyclone Nargis in 2008, shared their experiences on how the knowledge and skills gained from "Women-friendly Spaces" and the micro-loan support had helped them to rebuild their lives after the disaster and enabled them to send their children to school.

The key message that emerged from the round-table discussion was: equal access to education, training and technology can enable women to improve the health and well-being of their families, take advantage of income-earning opportunities and protect themselves from exploitation and vulnerability.

The meeting recommended the urgent development of gender-sensitive indicators in all sectors, government coordination of the implementation of the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2012-2021), the strengthening of partnership networks through information sharing, the pursuit of dialogue on gender issues among stakeholders, and confidence building among the Government, the United Nations, national and international NGOs and community-based organizations.

Mr. Abdel-Ahad concluded by calling on all stakeholders to support the implementation of the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women.



At the Women Space in Labutta Township, Ayeyarwaddy Region, Myanmar, women beneficiaries are being supported with tailoring training organized by FXB and supported by UNFPA.

Empowering Young People with Knowledge on Reproductive Health and Rights

Mr. & Ms. SMART



UNFPA Myanmar country office provided financial support to the Youth Development Programme of Myanmar Medical Association (MMA) to conduct the **Mr. and Ms. SMART Contest 2011** with the theme of **"The World at 7 Billion"**. The objectives of the contest are (i) to empower young people with knowledge on reproductive health and rights (ii) promote awareness of messages related to seven billion actions among young people; and (iii) to promote awareness of issues related to adolescent reproductive health and general knowledge among young people.

The candidates were provided with documents related to the 7 billion actions, and their knowledge of adolescent reproductive health and HIV, and population related matters was assessed. In addition, at the final step, members of the Youth Development Programme sang the "Seven Billion Song" and comedians made jokes related to issues of the world of seven billion, using humour to get across the message. Successful candidates are expected to be role models, encouraging young people to adopt healthy lifestyles and disseminating messages on ARH, HIV and '7 Billion Actions' as appropriate. They will also participate in the youth development activities conducted by MMA.

Joint Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Programme of Three United Nations Agencies with AusAID Assistance

As the United Nations is working to address Maternal, Newborn and Child-Health (MNCH) mortality and morbidity, WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA submitted a joint proposal to AusAID to scale up the low-cost, high-impact maternal and child health interventions that these agencies are already delivering. The goal of the programme is to contribute to the attainment of objectives, outcomes and targets of National Strategic Plans for Reproductive Health and Child Health Development by reducing maternal, newborn and child deaths. Three broad strategies—enabling environment, service delivery, and capacity development/health system strengthening—underpin the programme approach. The programme aims to achieve the following four outputs:

1. Evidence-based policies for improved maternal and child health are in place and health sector coordination improved among relevant partners

2. An increased percentage of children receive preventive services and appropriate case management in project townships
3. Skilled delivery and provision of newborn care increased in project townships
4. Increased access to birth spacing services in project townships

The programme prioritizes 132 townships, of which 70 are defined as hard-to-reach. The programme will cover a projected population of 21.3 million; about 8 million live in hard-to-reach townships. The programme will provide key MNCH interventions through two distinct packages: (i) mobile outreach-based services focussing on about 3,000 remote villages in hard-to-reach townships, and (ii) facility-based curative and preventive services for common maternal, newborn and child killers through supporting skilled health providers and supplies of drugs and commodities.

UNFPA Addresses Population Ageing

UNFPA and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement jointly organized a commemorative ceremony for the International Day of Older Persons in Nay Pyi Taw on 1 October.

Twenty years ago, the United Nations adopted Principles for Older Persons, including independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity, to underscore the rights of older persons and to set targets to strive for.

People live longer and healthier lives than ever before. The challenge lies in meeting the needs of seven billion human beings while protecting the environment. This requires legislation, policy formulation and the development and implementation of programmes to cater to the needs of this growing population, including the elderly, while ensuring equity and safeguarding human rights.

The number and proportion of older persons has doubled over the past three decades. By 2050, there will be two billion older persons, more than a fifth of

the global population. The number of working-age people available to support each person aged 65 or older will decline by half worldwide, straining support systems and retirement financing. This significant shift in the world's demographic profile presents unprecedented challenges in economic growth, health care and social security.

Healthy older people should be given the chance to keep working, thus contributing to their families, communities and countries. This may include tax code revision, pension reform, training incentives, micro-credit programmes, health care subsidies and work scheduling flexibility.

UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Osotimehin said "We should plan in advance for the health care and social safety nets of the elderly at the same time as we support the largest-ever generation of youth."

Policies should be developed taking into account the three pillars of health, participation and security, in order to better understand and address the implications of ageing.



Sub-Regional Workshop on National Policies on Ageing

To share the experiences of sub-regional countries on ageing issues and to draw up a recommendation for the Myanmar Government in drafting its draft national action plan on ageing, the Sub-Regional Workshop on National Policy on Ageing was held on 26 and 27 May in Nay Pyi Taw.

Representatives from Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam presented their countries' experiences and national policy on ageing. Technical input was provided by HelpAge International East Asia Pacific Regional Development Centre (EAPRDC) and UNFPA provided assistance and support.

U Aung Tun Khaing, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Social Welfare, explained the principles underlying Myanmar's draft national plan on ageing and Mr. Eduardo Klein, HelpAge EAPRD Regional Representative, described the demographic trends.

Daw Pansy Tun Thein, UNFPA Assistant Representative, presented on "UNFPA and Ageing: The Way Forward".

Capacity Building: Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care

Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC) is an important prerequisite for reducing maternal deaths. To help strengthen EmOC, the Maternal and Child Health Section and the Medical Care Division of the Department of Health, with the support of UNFPA, organized capacity-building training for trainers in Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care (CEmOC) from 13 to 15 July at Nay Pyi Taw's 1000-bed hospital.

The training was attended by 30 obstetrics and gynaecology specialists from 14 states and regions, who used a training manual developed by the Department of Health (Maternal and Child Health Section) and the Department of Medical Science, including Professor/Heads of obstetrics and gynaecology and neonatologists at the medical universities. State- and regional-level multiplier training for medical officers and others at the township and station levels was organized between July and November.

A training manual for the basic EmOC and standard operating procedures have also been developed as the basis for training scheduled to begin in 2012 for health-care staff, especially midwives, in order to reduce maternal deaths and further improve the skills of health-care providers.

Efforts to Reduce Maternal Mortality and Prevent HIV Infection with Assistance from Germany

With financial assistance from the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany covering 2009-2012, UNFPA is undertaking three projects to reduce maternal mortality and prevent HIV infection. The first, "Comprehensive Reproductive Health (RH) Services for Communities in Myanmar," which began in 2009, helped UNFPA expand its reproductive health programme to 40 additional townships. This project is implemented through the public sector, mainly targeting rural populations in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. As a result, the capacity of health workers to provide services has improved as they learned new trends in birth spacing services and basic obstetric and newborn emergencies. Moreover, commodities provided to health centres in project townships have ensured better access to contraceptives and quality services. To complement the strengthening of RH services, Community Support Group (CSG) members, Maternal and Child Health Promoters (MCHP) and youth volunteers were also trained to disseminate information and encourage positive behavioural change. These volunteers are also saving lives by referring at-risk mothers to hospitals, thus serving as a bridge between health staff and the community.

In addition, two new projects by the Myanmar Medical Association (MMA), a private sector partner, were launched in 2011. Under the first new project, "Comprehensive Reproductive Health Services for Underserved Communities", reproductive health services to underserved communities and training of community volunteers are being provided in three areas. Reproductive health care centres with mobile services set up by MMA are serving poor people and migrant workers in collaboration with health staff from

the public sector. Under the other new project "Promoting Access to Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV Information by university students," the MMA Youth Development Programme promotes access to adolescent sexual and reproductive health and HIV prevention information by university students in five areas. There have been no such interventions before, despite the prevalence of RH problems among university students. This project utilizes trained peer educators to reach to their peers from universities and disseminate the correct messages and information. Taking advantage of youth's creative and innovative ideas, appropriate mass media such as DVDs, telephone help-lines and mobile edutainment teams are used for effective dissemination of information.



Basic Health Staff from Tharyarwaddy Township, Bago Region, being trained on Pregnancy, Child Birth, Postpartum and Newborn Care (PCPNC)

Success Stories of Health Staff : Saving Lives of Women and Newborn Babies



Basic Health Staff are being trained on Pregnancy, Child Birth, Postpartum and Newborn Care (PCPNC) with the support of the German Fund.

"Ma Myint Myint Wai, 37, lives in a village near Daung Myat Nar, Padaung Township, Bago Region, where the health centre is covered by the German-funded Project. When she was nine months pregnant with her first child, she developed a watery discharge, and her husband asked U Lay Win, Health Assistant at the centre, to examine her. U Lay Win advised her to give birth at the health centre, which had just been completed with the support of the community. The delivery bed and instruments had been provided. Ma Myint Myint Wai was the centre's first labour. Both U Lay Win and the midwife had received the training on Pregnancy, Childbirth, Postnatal and Newborn Care (PCPNC) and were eager to use their knowledge and skills. During delivery, they monitored Ma Myint's conditions by using a partograph. When they found that the labour was not progressing satisfactorily, they decided to refer Ma Myint to Padaung Township Hospital, where her baby was safely delivered. Both the mother and the baby are safe and healthy. U Lay Win said the partograph had helped them make a timely decision on referral and thus save two lives."

By : Health staff from Daung Myat Nar RHC, Padaung Township

"Ma Hla Hla Win, a 26-year-old from Kyaukpadaung, one of the project townships in Mandalay Region, was expecting her first child when she was found to have high blood pressure. Ma Hla Hla Win's midwife noticed that her urine contained protein, pointing to a potentially serious complication known as pre-eclampsia, and persuaded her to give birth in hospital instead of at home, as she had preferred. Near term, Ma Hla Hla Win's blood pressure went up, and she went into fits. Thanks to the PCPNC training and medicines they had received, the hospital staff managed the situation efficiently and helped Ma Hla Hla Win safely deliver a healthy baby girl."

By: Midwife, Kyaukpadaung
Township Hospital



Basic Health Staff from Pinlaung Township, Shan State, Myanmar, are being trained on Pregnancy, Child Birth, Postpartum and Newborn Care (PCPNC) with the support of the German Fund.

Facts for Adolescent Life (FFAL)

The Youth Development Programme of Myanmar Medical Association disseminates information for young people on youth issues and key messages, including adolescent reproductive health and HIV prevention through FM (SHWE) radio every Monday and Thursday covering five States and Regions.

Midwife Receives Global Health Workforce Alliance Award for 2011

In recognition of her tireless efforts on maternal and child health services, often in the face of risk and hardship, midwife Daw Nan Than Than Oo, was selected as a winner among 58 outstanding applicants in health care services from 27 countries and presented with the Global Health Workforce Alliance Award for 2011, on 29 January 2011. On 4 February 2011, the Ministry of Health honoured her for receiving the Global Health Workforce Alliance Award for 2011.

After completing her training in 1981, Daw Nan Than Than Oo was assigned to serve a number of hard-to-reach villages in her native Shan State. Often she had to climb mountains thousands of feet high to reach the villages in barely accessible areas, sometimes braving conflicts to do so.

When faced with a cholera outbreak near Inle Lake, severe diarrhoea in Yan Aung Myay village and the dengue haemorrhagic fever outbreak of 2010, she provided immediate care and took preventive measures. Daw Nan worked hard to curb the spread of disease and helped ensure that there was no loss of life.

She managed to achieve high coverage of ante-natal care, Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) in her area. She did her best in Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) and vitamin-A supplementation activities in hard-to-reach areas and conducted routine immunization activities in areas thought suitable for crash programmes only. As a member of the Shan community herself, Daw Nan was able to communicate with and gain the trust of local villagers.



Daw Nan Than Than Oo, a Myanmar midwife awarded with Global Health Workforce Alliance Award for 2011, in recognition of her tireless efforts on maternal and child health services.

Working throughout Shan State, travelling to hilltop villages, Daw Nan built up her experience in serving the population with dedication and skill. Through coaching and team-building with the auxiliary midwives (AMW), malaria health workers and Community Support Group (CSG) members, her team has achieved promotive, preventive and curative health care for the community. Daw Nan used weekly ante-natal clinics and Sunday school to provide health education on pregnancy, childbirth and neonatal care, birth spacing, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and nutrition promotion for pregnant mothers, including husbands and family members. She set up a board in each village proclaiming the absence of maternal deaths.

Daw Nan's achievements in serving the community are a source of pride. The Ministry of Health recognised her outstanding activities in reproductive health and honoured her as an outstanding health worker for Reproductive Health/Management Information System (RH/MIS) in 2002.

In appreciation of her accomplishments, UNFPA and the Ministry of Health honoured her with gifts and a Certificate of Recognition at Nay Pyi Taw's 1000-bed Hospital on the occasion of the celebration of the birth of the world's seven billionth baby, on 31 October 2011.



UNFPA honoured Daw Nan Than Than Oo, the winner of Global Health Workforce Alliance Award for 2011, with gifts and a certificate of recognition in Nay Pyi Taw on 31 October, 2011.

I am luckier than my mother

By: Dr. Myat Pan Hmone

Ma Tin Tin Moe, 17, lives in A Si Gyi village, Bogale Township, Ayeyarwaddy Region, which can be reached only by a four-hour boat trip. The village has a sub-rural health centre, but no midwife since the last one was transferred. Marie Stopes International (MSI), supported by UNFPA, is the only agency providing sexual and reproductive health care in the village. During the monitoring visit by UNFPA and MSI staff on 8 November, Ma Tin Tin Moe expressed her gratitude for their birth spacing project, and shared her story:

"I am the ninth of 15 children. My mother, Daw Tin Saw, is now 44 years old. Because our family was so big, and because our parents were casual labourers with no steady income, it was hard for all of us to have enough food. My mother always used to get sick because of pregnancy and childbirth. We had to rely solely on my father's income, and four of my brothers and sisters passed away during childhood as we could not afford food and proper medical treatment".

"My mother had no idea about contraception and considered her children gifts from God or *kan si man yar* (destined). I decided not to have as many children as my mother because of the hardships we suffered with our big family. I had to leave school after completing 4th standard to take care of them".

"I got married at 16, and my son is four months old now. Unlike my mother, I was lucky to have a safe delivery and practised birth spacing. After my marriage, the mobile clinic team from MSI visited our village and explained about the services they provide. I was overwhelmed with joy when I learnt that I can have ante-natal care and safe delivery at a hospital and most importantly, I can decide when I will have my second child. I was thrilled to



Ma Tin Tin Moe (17) from A Si Gyi village, Bogale Township, Myanmar, a beneficiary of UNFPA-MSI project on sexual and reproductive health, expressing bright smile.

learn that the service is free. My husband, 20 years old, who says he cannot afford to feed too many mouths, was also very pleased. Health staff advised me that I could choose any method of contraception and can be pregnant again any time I want. I am now using three-month depot injections without side effects. I can take care of my son all day, unlike my mother, who did not have enough time to care for us. My husband and I vowed to make our son an educated person, and this dream can be fulfilled because I can start doing casual work when my son turns one year old. I am very grateful to MSI and UNFPA for enlightening me. Even after the project is over and the teams don't come anymore, I will still try to set aside the Kyat 1,500 I need for depot injections".

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