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**SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAMME
OF ACTION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
POPULATION AND
DEVELOPMENT**



United Nations

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Gender, Population & Development:

The Role of the United Nations Population Fund



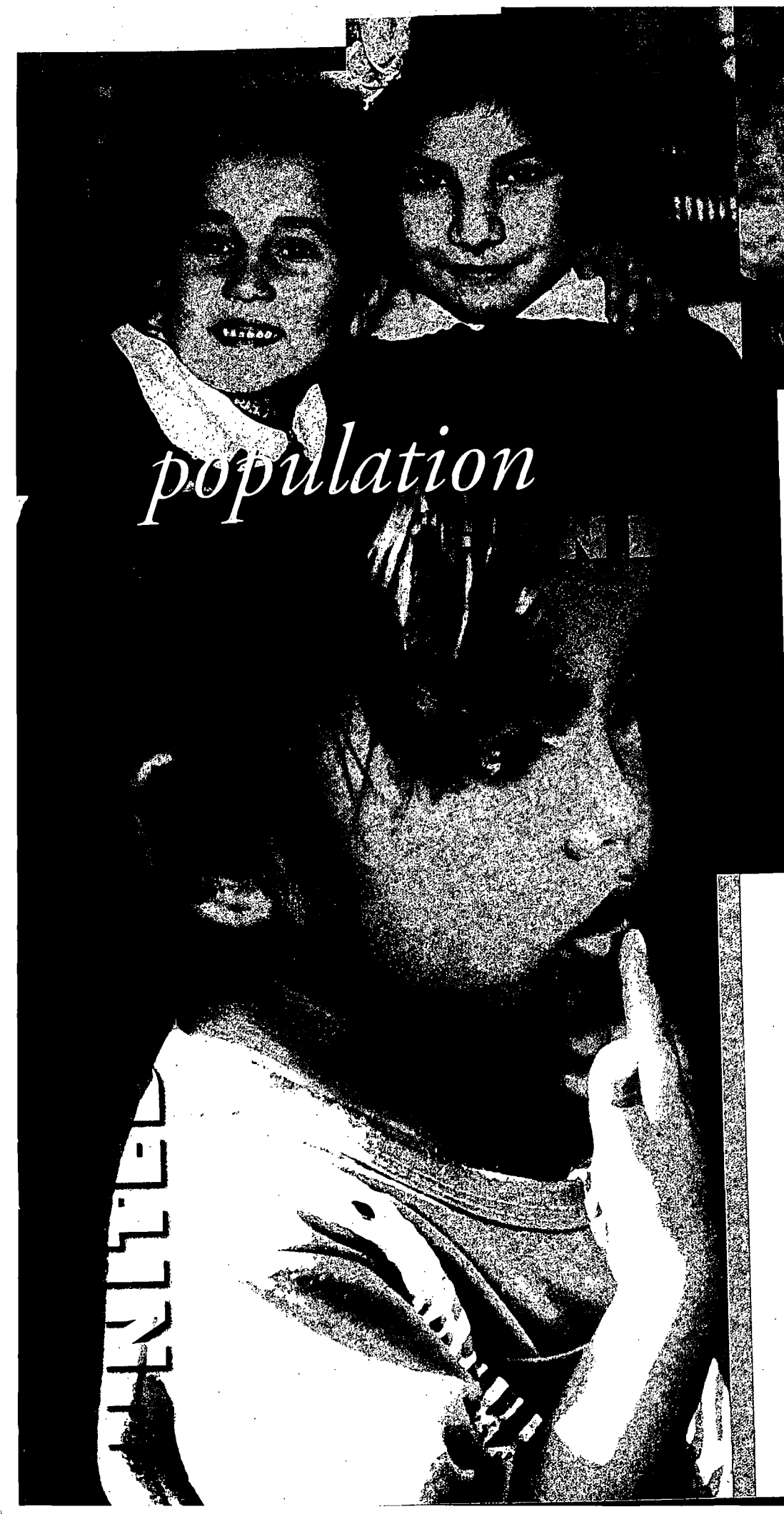
UNFPA
United Nations
Population Fund

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population



UNFPA

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1996

POPULATION ISSUES



BRIEFING
KIT

 **UNFPA**
United Nations
Population Fund

The workshop built on priorities identified by young women at a joint UNFPA-CEDPA conference for youth, held in advance of the Beijing Conference.

- **Advocating the voices of young women...** UNFPA is collaborating with the Thomas Craven film corporation, a private U.S. company, to produce a video on the needs, views and aspirations of young women the world over. The video will include footage from the 1995 joint UNFPA-CEDPA "Voices of Young Women" conference, the Beijing Conference and ICPD. The video, which offers a chance to hear young women speak for themselves on issues ranging from their health, education, the environment and poverty, will be made available for broadcast to national and educational television stations in developing and industrialised countries.

GENDER EQUALITY, EQUITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION and ICPD Programme of Action state that it is essential to design, implement and monitor, with the full participation of women, effective, efficient, and mutually reinforcing gender-sensitive policies and programmes that will foster the empowerment and advancement of women. They note at the same time that the goal of gender equality around the world can only be achieved by working in partnership with men.

INITIATIVES:

- **Monitoring progress by governments in reaching goals relating to women's empowerment...** UNFPA is supporting the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), a global network of women's organizations, to translate international commitments to women into national "contracts." Working in coalition with global and national women's groups, WEDO will strengthen NGO mechanisms for monitoring and

publicizing progress made by governments in implementing agreements and decisions reached at the Beijing Conference and ICPD.

- **Studying male sexuality in and out of the family...** UNFPA

is supporting the U.S.-based research group, the Population Council, to undertake a study on the attitudes and views of adolescent boys and men on subjects including sexual and reproductive behaviour, decision-making about contraception, and their role in the family. Extensive research and interviews, to be conducted primarily in Africa, Asia and the Middle East over a period of three years, will help to define areas for new strategies aimed at enhancing male involvement in reproductive health and family life. This research will complement work currently being done by the Population Council on adolescent girls and women.

- **Mainstreaming gender into all UNFPA programmes and projects...** UNFPA is assessing how gender considerations can be effectively integrated into all aspects of its reproductive health, population and development strategies and advocacy work. This means asking questions like: which institution is most capable of implementing projects in a gender-sensitive way; how will projects impact on different categories of women, as compared to men; how to involve women and men in different phases of projects; and how to monitor gender concerns in UNFPA programmes and projects.

- **Gender training for UNFPA field staff, NGO and national project partners...** UNFPA, in collaboration with the Netherlands' Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), is helping local institutions in Zimbabwe, Indonesia and Egypt to develop training manuals on gender, population and development. The manuals, which can be adapted for use in other countries, are intended to support efforts to mainstream gender considerations in population programme and project development.

The Beijing Platform for Action states that women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace.

UNFPA AND THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN



UNFPA
United Nations
Population Fund

220 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017



UNFPA PRIORITIES IN THE POST-BEIJING ERA

WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION and ICPD Programme of Action recognise sexual and reproductive rights as human rights, thereby affirming them as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The two action plans also recognise that violence against women is a violation of their human rights. Together they call for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women, youth and children.

INITIATIVES:

- **Strengthening national-level advocacy and legislation for enforceable reproductive rights...** UNFPA, in collaboration

Reproductive rights embrace certain human rights recognised in national and international legal human rights documents, including the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, and to have the information, education and means to do so; the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health; the right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence.

with the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy, a U.S.-based advocacy group, will work with law and policy NGOs in 51 countries to review and promote national policies

- and legislation that improve women's access to a full range of reproductive health care, and that advance women's rights, particularly in the areas that afford them reproductive choice. Regional analyses of the laws and policies will be published and widely disseminated.
- **Weaving reproductive and sexual rights into the work of U.N. human rights treaty bodies...** UNFPA is working to establish mechanisms to begin monitoring and reporting reproductive and sexual rights in the six U.N. human rights treaty bodies, namely, the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Committee on Civil and Political Rights, the Committee on Economic and Social Rights, the Committee on the Rights

of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and the Committee Against Torture.

- **Strengthening women's reproductive health and human rights networks...** UNFPA and UNIFEM are joining efforts to strengthen the constituency of women's reproductive health and human rights organizations. In addition, the two U.N. organizations will develop a framework for mainstreaming reproductive rights as human rights in their programmes.

- **Helping to make sexual rights and freedom from violence a reality...** UNFPA is stepping up its fight against female genital

Sexual rights include the human right of women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.

mutilation (FGM) and in March 1996 conducted a technical consultation on the subject. UNFPA has produced a framework for integrating activities relating to the eradication of FGM into its three core programme areas: reproductive health, population and

- development strategies, and advocacy. UNFPA, together with UNICEF and WHO has issued a joint statement on the eradication of FGM.
- **Promoting health security for women as a human right...** As part of the WHO-sponsored Global Commission on Women's Health, UNFPA is working to improve the health status of women and girls. Working within human rights frameworks, the Global Commission is developing new policy guidelines and advocacy tools aimed at enforcing the rights of women and girls in areas like violence and education, towards the overall goal of health security.

Violence against women encompasses but is not limited to: battering, rape, systematic rape, marital rape, non-spousal violence, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, dowry-related violence, female genital mutilation, prenatal sex selection, female infanticide, and other traditional harmful practices; forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, forced use of contraceptives, forced abortion.

ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION and ICPD Programme of Action highlight gender-based discrimination against young

women and girls in the area of health, including sexual and reproductive health. Together they call for new health programmes, developed with the participation of youth groups, that meet the educational and service needs of adolescents. They note that the effort to address adolescent reproductive health is uniquely important for the health of young women and their children, for women's self-determination and, in many countries, for efforts to slow the momentum of population growth.

To date, the needs and rights of adolescents in the area of sexual and reproductive health have been largely ignored by existing programmes, as by society at large. More than 15 million girls aged 15 to 19 give birth every year. One in 20 adolescents contracts a sexually transmitted disease, with the highest rates occurring in youth 15 to 24 years of age. In many developing countries, 60 percent of all new HIV-infections are among 15 to 24 year olds. Two million girls undergo female genital mutilation every year. And 10 percent of abortions, or as many as five million per year, are among women 15 to 19 years of age.

INITIATIVES:

- **Helping young women participate in decisions that affect their health and lives...** UNFPA is working with the Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA) to include girls and young women in the formulation and implementation of decisions relating to their reproductive health and educational needs. Young women leaders from all regions of the world participated in a workshop and drafted follow-up action plans for implementing the Beijing and ICPD recommendations for inclusion in national, local and youth-managed reproductive health programmes.

UNFPA IS COMMITTED to implementing the Platform for Action adopted by more than 180 nations at the September 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. The Platform for Action reinforces key concepts and goals agreed to at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), and advances several critical areas of concern to the Fund, including a commitment to sexual and reproductive rights as human rights, gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women, male responsibility, and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls. Follow-up activities by UNFPA to the Beijing Conference will be undertaken within the framework of the programmes already initiated to implement the ICPD goals and recommendations. That is, UNFPA should focus its follow-up activities to the Beijing Conference on those recommendations which are within its own mandate.

In addition to activities at the country level, UNFPA, through the Gender, Population and Development Branch of the Technical and Evaluation Division, has initiated follow-up activities to the Beijing Conference in three main areas of focus:

- **Women's Human Rights**
- **Adolescent Reproductive Health**
- **Gender Equality, Equity and Women's Empowerment**

These initiatives will help strengthen activities at the country level.

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A New Role for Men:

**Partners for
Women's
Empowerment**



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