



UNFPA's mission statement:

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.

UNFPA, because everybody counts.



For the quality of life

30 years of development cooperation between Viet Nam and UNFPA (1977-2007)

1977-2007 For the quality of life

30 years of development cooperation between Viet Nam and the United Nations Population Fund



Prominent achievements

Enduring efforts

Valuable lessons

Future orientations

and the People

Those who have joined hands to make it a success over the past 30 years. Here are some memorable stories by them or about them.

Foreword

In 1977 the Government of Viet Nam and UNFPA established the first Joint Cooperative Programme. At that time, the population of Viet Nam was over 50 million and expected to double in the next 30 years. Both the Government and UNFPA recognized that potential socio-economic development in Viet Nam, regardless of size, would never be able to cater to such a large population.

At that time, Viet Nam was still a backward agricultural land ravaged by decades of war, inexperienced in peace-time international cooperation, and still abiding by the social norm of “more children more wealth”. UNFPA, newly arrived in Viet Nam, was the only source of financial and technical assistance to address population issues. Despite such challenges, the Government of Viet Nam and UNFPA designed and implemented the first cooperative programme with determination and enthusiasm seeking a common goal based on equality, proactivity and mutual trust. In the course of the past 30 years, this cooperative relationship has expanded from relatively modest beginnings to become the comprehensive programme that exists today.

Nowadays, Viet Nam has transformed into a nation with one of the fastest economic growth rates in the region and aims to be no longer a less developed country during the first decade of the 21st century. We are proud to say that the successive Viet Nam-UNFPA cooperative programmes, implemented during the past 30 years, have contributed towards fulfilling this giant objective.

This book presents the significant achievements and enduring efforts of the past 30 years, valuable lessons learned, and some initial thoughts about the future of Viet Nam-UNFPA cooperation. It also introduces various people who have been involved in this special cooperation, with stories by them or about them.

On this occasion, we would like to thank many organizations and individuals who have contributed towards the success of the Viet Nam-UNFPA cooperation during the past 30 years, whether in thought, heart or deed. Their investment will ensure a better life for future generations living in a prosperous Viet Nam. Let us join hands in creating and sustaining a productive environment for these meaningful contributions.



Prominent achievements

Contributing to the success of the national targeted programme on population – family planning (P&FP) and poverty reduction

Contributing to building the small-size family standard and FP life-style, women's empowerment

National capacity-building in Population and Development

Consolidating and developing the RH care/FP service system

Capacity-building in project/programme development, management and implementation

1 Contributing to the success of the national targeted programme on population – family planning (P&FP) and poverty reduction

The most prominent achievement of the cooperative programme between Viet Nam and UNFPA over the past 30 years is the contribution to the fulfillment of the national target of reducing population growth, achieving the replacement fertility rates earlier than planned, contributing to hunger elimination and poverty alleviation, supporting other development targets and improving the quality of life for Vietnamese people.

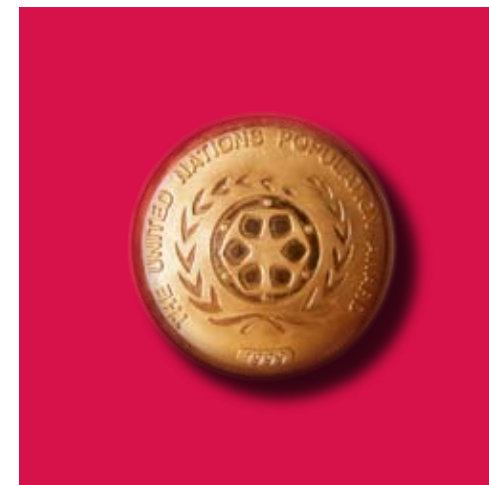
It is now possible to say that the achievements of the national targets together with maintaining fertility reduction at the current level, create a practical basis for the Government to set an earlier target for Viet Nam to become a middle income earning country with average GDP/capita of USD 1,000 by the end of this decade.

The objective of the Strategy on P&FP up to the year 2000 was “to decrease the total fertility

rate to the level of 2.9 children or lower, to keep population to under 82 million by 2000, and to have replacement fertility level by 2015”. In fact, by 2000, the population was 78 million, total fertility rate was 2.3, and replacement fertility rate was attained by 2005.

There is also evidence of notable improvement in the quality of maternal and child health care. The average life expectancy of women increased from 67.5 years during the period 1984 – 1989, to 71.6 during the period 2002 – 2006. The maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate fell significantly.

In recognition of these achievements, Viet Nam was awarded the 1999 United Nations Population Award, a great honour for the nation endorsing the success of the cooperative relationship between Viet Nam and UNFPA.



United Nations Population Award Medal 1999



Minister Tran Thi Trung Chien received the Award on behalf of Viet Nam

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Contributing to building the small size family standard and FP life-style, women's empowerment

Since 1963, Viet Nam's Prime Ministerial Directive No. 99/TTg has guided family planning practice in pursuit of the objective "To move forward with the target of having from 2 to 3 children for each family, with an interval of 5 – 6 years". However, until 1976, due to the interruption of the family planning movement caused by the war, the average number of children for each mother remained at 5 or more. With assistance from P&FP activities and the effective support from UNFPA and other donors, by 1988, this figure had fallen to 3.8. By 1997, the expected number of children/mother was 2.4. In 2002, the average number of children per family was down to 2.28; and to 2.09 in 2006. Since 1997, the proportion of couples practicing family planning has remained more or less stable at 75%, with evidence of increasing rates of modern contraceptive use.

As the small-size family becomes the social norm and family planning an integral part of modern life-style, Viet Nam's population is now projected to stabilize earlier than originally estimated, creating a foundation for sustainable development in all areas.

Notably, the Viet Nam – UNFPA cooperative programmes have consistently and systematically incorporated into their activities issues of gender equity, women's empowerment and domestic violence prevention. In particular, the model of small credit income generating support for rural women has proven very successful and contributed towards women's empowerment both within the family and society. Such success contributes towards the achievement of Viet Nam's sustainable development objectives in the spirit of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).



Small-size family has become a social norm and family planning a lifestyle.

A female representative of Ha Giang minority groups gives her opinion to the Country Programme VII



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National capacity-building in Population and Development

Capacity building is a priority objective found in all UNFPA - supported programmes, with notable achievements in directing and building population and development policy, collecting and utilizing data, studying and training on population and development issues. These capacities are the results as well as the driving force behind the success and sustainability of the P-FP programme and other development programmes.

Directing and building population – development policy - Since the 1960s, the Communist Party and the Government of Viet Nam have promulgated Resolutions, Decisions and Directives to launch and direct family planning campaigns. Following the end of the war, the 4th National Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party

(December 1976) identified specific orientations and tasks for family planning as part of the 5-year national development plan for the period 1976 – 1980. The Government has promulgated many Directives to guide implementation of this important Resolution.

From the 1980s onwards, the Constitution included family planning and maternal and child health care issues. Population & Family Planning became an inter-sectoral programme with comprehensive objectives in three important areas: population & development (PD), maternal and child health/FP, and information-education-communication (IEC). This has resulted in the inclusion of more profound and comprehensive directives from Government in many master

Some of the most important policy documents

Resolution of the 4th Conference of the CPV Central Committee- the 7th tenure – on Population policy and Family Planning and The P&FP Strategy towards 2000 in 1993 has marked a turning point in the new development of Viet Nam population programme. The Resolution put forward 5 basic viewpoints: (1) P-FP is an important part of the country's development strategy; (2) Main solutions are advocacy, education, propaganda associated with delivering services to the people; (3) The State should increase investment on P – FP and bring into full play support from UNFPA; (4) P – FP activities should be socialized on the basis of a strong specialized institution to manage the programme in line with the set objectives and ensure the effectiveness of resource investment; (5) The Party and the Government should direct and organise the implementation of P&FP programme.

Developed with support from UNFPA

The P&FP Strategy towards 2000 has institutionalized the direction, orientation, and solutions of that Resolution as well as implemented it effectively.

The Information – Education – Communication Strategy on P&FP till 2000 is a document guiding implementation of Information – Education – Communication activities during the period of 1993 – 2000.

The Viet Nam Population Strategy for the period of 2001-2010 and National Strategy on RH Care for the period of 2001 – 2010 have succeeded the above road map with new orientations in the spirit of the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo 1994, incorporating closely population and reproductive health with poverty reduction and ensuring the reproductive right of the people.

Behaviour Change Communication Strategies on Population and RH for the periods of 2001-2005 and 2006-2010 are documents guiding implementation of advocacy and IEC activities in the National Population Strategy for the period of 2001-2010.

Population Ordinance is a legal document at the highest level to regulate all relationships concerning population.

plans, developed with financial and technical support from UNFPA

Population data collection and utilization - Capacity for collecting Vietnamese population data improved significantly in the course of 3 UNFPA-supported national population censuses conducted in 1979, 1989, and 1999. In the 1979 Census, Viet Nam was still inexperienced and unable to process the collected data. Now, Viet Nam has capacity to conduct a population census using the most advanced methodologies and technologies that provide reliable and internationally comparable data and information. Besides censuses, the population database has been improved by mid-term reviews and annual population change, labour force and family planning surveys, demographic and health surveys (DHS), and migration surveys.

UNFPA has assisted many policy-making bodies as well as scientific research and train-

ing institutions to improve capacity for utilizing population data, thus serving more efficiently the processes of studying, planning, management and evaluation of development programmes and international integration.

Research and training on population – development - In recognition of the fact that building human resources forms the basis for sustainable development, UNFPA has set consistent priorities that support research and training i.e. short-term, medium-term, and long-term, to meet programme requirements. Trained staff represent a core human resource capable of contributing actively to the success of the programme from central to local levels. Some universities and research institutions supported by UNFPA have become leading institutions in conducting population-development research and providing appropriate training.

Training in preparation for the Population Census 1989



Dissemination of the 2004 migration data



4 Consolidating and developing the RH care/FP service system

Improving quality of RH care/FP services - During the past 30 years, UNFPA has provided consistent support for developing teaching materials and conducting RHC/FP training workshops and seminars with special focus on the grass roots. These have been attended by an extensive number of health workers, population workers and collaborators many of whom have completed several courses on a range of relevant topics. Training contents extended across technical/professional issues, health management, research, monitoring, supervision, counseling, and IEC skills on population-reproductive health, and were delivered via short, medium- and long-term curricula. This large contingent of trained staff has increasingly met the need for RH/FP service quality.

For the first time, the National Standards and Guidelines on Reproductive Health Care Services covering Safe Motherhood, Family Planning, Adolescent Reproductive Health, Reproductive

Tract Infections (RTIs), counseling, was developed and promulgated with UNFPA support in order to stipulate and control RH care service quality. In addition, UNFPA supported the Government in compiling the Regulation of Technical Responsibilities in Reproductive Health Care Within Health Facilities .

The cooperative programme emphasizes the need for prompt response to basic needs, particularly in disadvantaged areas, in providing contraceptives, essential drugs, medical equipment, obstetric emergency care facilities, upgraded logistic systems of specific Reproductive Health Care/Family Planning services.

UNFPA has also successfully supported Viet Nam in the study and application of advances in science and technology, including high-tech treatment for infertility.

A commune health station 1986



A commune family planning service station 1999



Elements of the Reproductive and Family Planning services package:

- Family planning
- Provision of pre-, intra-, and post-partum care services to the mothers, and infant and child care, including breast feeding
- Safe abortion, proper management of post-abortion complications and care
- Prevention and treatment of reproductive tract infections, including sexually transmitted infections/diseases, and HIV/AIDS
- Adolescent reproductive health care
- Early detection and treatment of reproductive tract cancer
- Prevention and treatment of infertility
- Domestic violence prevention

Improving capacity in advocacy and Information–Education–Communication (IEC) on Population, RH/FP

In conjunction with improving RHC/FP service quality, the cooperative programme also focuses on advocacy and IEC activities. Through these activities, a contingent of population workers, RH/FP advocates and communicators in various sectors and mass organizations at differ-

ent levels, as well as the mass media, has been formed and strengthened, contributing to the promotion of awareness and behaviour change of different target groups.

Population and RH education in schools has been a concern since the first cooperative programmes, resulting in the inclusion of relevant contents in the educational and training curricula nationwide.

Training medical staff at grass roots levels on National Standards and Guidelines on Reproductive Health Care Services



Thanks to the Information-Education- Communication activities, domestic violence and safe sex are no longer taboo subjects

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Capacity-building in project/programme development, management and implementation

Increasing Vietnamese ownership: During the first years of cooperation, most programme/project documents were developed by UNFPA and international experts based on Viet Nam's proposals. Programme/project activities, including monitoring and evaluation, were also executed mainly by international agencies. The Vietnamese side took responsibility for implementing these activities with technical assistance and management input from UNFPA staff and international experts.

At present, Vietnamese counterpart agencies, with increasing commitment and resource contribution, have taken charge of almost all the processes of formulating, managing and implementing programmes and projects, using modern scientific methods. The Government is now directly executing over 70% of the overall programme budget, with technical assistance pro-

vided by a pool of national experts equipped with diversified and profound practical experience.

Building a contingent of programme management staff: The implementation of cooperative programmes and training courses has led to the establishment and consolidation of a contingent of technical and management staff well able to contribute towards the success of the programme.

Programme management, execution and implementation modality has improved step by step towards raising the level of local autonomy with technical support from the central level, enhancing the responsibility and executing role of the Vietnamese counterparts and applying the results-based management approach. This has led to the integration of the Viet Nam-UNFPA cooperative programme with the national population programme.

The contingent of local experts with diversified and profound experience has been growing



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