



United Nations Population Fund



UNFPA AND CHINA: 40 YEARS OF COOPERATION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

1979-2019





United Nations Population Fund

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACWF	All China Women's Federation
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
CFPA	China Family Planning Association
CMCHA	China Maternal and Child Health Association
CNCA	China National Committee on Ageing
CPDRC	China Population and Development Research Center
CYN	China Youth Network
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
GBSS	Gender-biased Sex Selection
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IUD	Intrauterine Device
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MH	Maternal and Child Health
MISP	Minimum Initial Service Package
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MOFCOM	Ministry of Commerce
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NCAIDS	National Centre for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention, China CDC
NCWCH	National Centre for Women and Children's Health, China CDC
NDRC	National Development and Reform Commission

NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NHC	National Health Commission
NHFPC	National Health and Family Planning Commission
NPFPC	National Population and Family Planning Commission
NWCCW	National Working Committee on Children and Women
OCNCA	Office of China National Committee on Ageing
PoA	Programme of Action
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRB	Sex Ratio at Birth
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SSC	South-South Cooperation
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNTG	United Nations Theme Group

ABOUT UNFPA IN CHINA

UNFPA – the United Nations Population Fund – is the UN’s sexual and reproductive health agency. In China and globally, it works to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person’s potential is fulfilled. Since its inception in 1969, UNFPA has led the effort to help women in developing countries overcome socio-economic and cultural barriers to their reproductive rights and choices.

UNFPA’s mission was reinvigorated by the Programme of Action that came out of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo. This landmark event marked a paradigm shift away from population programmes that are mainly about achieving demographic targets and toward programmes where reproductive rights, gender equality, and economic development are mutually reinforcing and interdependent. The Programme of Action agreed upon by the 179 governments – including China’s – at ICPD reinforced the right of individuals and couples to decide freely and responsibly about the number and spacing of their children and underscored how exercising this right can help countries realize their development potential. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reinforces these principles with the aim to achieve universal sexual and reproductive health and rights by 2030.

During the past forty years, UNFPA has helped strengthen China’s capacity to conduct population censuses and demographic analyses, to make the most of quality data for policy planning, and, crucially, has consistently championed sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights for all.

In the early years, UNFPA focused on boosting China’s capacity to collect and use population data and supporting the manufacture of safe and modern contraceptives. As China rapidly developed, UNFPA’s role has expanded to support the Government and national institutions to address challenges around an ageing population, urbanization, gender-based violence, and young people’s sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China is the coordinating agency for UNFPA's work in China. For programme and advocacy work, UNFPA works with a range of ministries and government institutions, including the National Health Commission, National Development and Reform Commission, All-China Women's Federation, National Bureau of Statistics, and China National Committee on Ageing.

UNFPA also works with other national and international partners to advance shared concerns in population and development, reproductive health and rights, and gender equality – focusing on the most vulnerable, and aspiring to fulfill the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of leaving no one behind.

FOREWORD

2019 is a special year for both China and UNFPA.

It marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, which used to be among the poorest countries but has now developed into the world's second largest economy and is notable for the improved well-being of its population, as 740 million citizens were lifted out of poverty over the last 40 years.

2019 marks also 50 years since UNFPA began operations worldwide, 40 years since UNFPA started working in China, and 25 years since the landmark International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, which for the first time put women's rights and choices at the center of sustainable development.

Back in 1979, China's huge population was facing significant poverty and poor health issues. The Government of China for the first time received assistance from an international organization in relation to population issues.

Our cooperation had yielded numerous breakthroughs in improving the health and wellbeing of millions of women and vulnerable groups in China, including the first modern census, establishment of population teaching and research institutions, training of professional cadres in the field of population and development, self-sufficiency in safe and modern contraceptives, improvement of quality of reproductive health services, achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target on reduction of maternal mortality ahead of schedule, among many others.

Currently, China is both a developing country that receives development assistance and a significant "South-South provider" that supports other developing countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. UNFPA will enhance its role as a broker of expertise and knowledge transfer for transforming lives in China and other developing countries, working toward the building of a community of shared future for humanity.

On this special occasion, we would like to thank all of those who have contributed to this partnership, including government institutions, civil society, professional associations, research institutions, academia, youth and women's groups, media, private sector, international organizations, United Nations family, and the general public. We sincerely hope this booklet will remind us of the fruitful cooperation between UNFPA and China in the past four decades. We thank everyone for your support for our work!

**United Nations Population Fund
Country Office in the People's Republic
of China**

**Department of International Trade
and Economic Affairs
Ministry of Commerce of the People's
Republic of China**



TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS



Ms. Siri Tellier named UNFPA China Deputy Representative and Senior Advisor on Population

First UNFPA country programme in China launched

China Population Information and Research Center established with support from UNFPA

China ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

China conducted first modern census

1979

1980

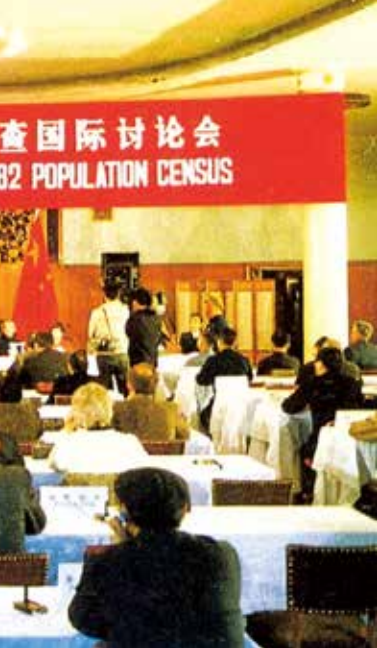
1981

1982

UNFPA and China signed Memorandum of Understanding

China's population reached 1 billion





International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo

World population reached 6 billion

1987

1994

1995

1999

UNFPA name changed to United Nations Population Fund

Mr. Ian Howie appointed as the first UNFPA China Representative



World population reached 5 billion





Millennium Development Goals adopted

China conducted first national survey on youth sexual and reproductive health with support from UNFPA

20-year review of progress implementing ICPD Programme of Action

2000

2003

2009

2011

2014

Mr. Xu Shuyun named Director of UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Division

World population reached 7 billion





2030 Sustainable Development Goals adopted, including universal access to sexual and reproductive health care and services

China announced "universal two-child" policy

UNFPA and China signed "Belt and Road Initiative Memorandum of Understanding"

The Population and Development South-South Cooperation Center of Excellence launched in Beijing

First China-Africa Conference on Population and Development held in Nairobi

2015

2016

2017

2019

First national domestic violence law took effect

UNFPA turns 50, 25th anniversary of the ICPD and 40th anniversary of UNFPA and China cooperation



OVERVIEW OF COOPERATION



1979-1989

Overview:

UNFPA has worked with the Government of China since May 1979, when the two parties signed a memorandum of understanding. The first decade of cooperation focused on introducing new population data processing technologies and advanced equipment, improving maternal and child health services, supporting the manufacture of safe and modern contraceptives, and improving technical training and institutional development in the area of population studies. This was the period when the Chinese government transitioned from the 'later, longer and fewer' family planning policy to encouraging one child for every couple policy, considering its socio-economic development situation at the time.



Former Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping meets with UNFPA first Executive Director Rafael Salas (1980, Beijing)

Major achievements

1. First modern census and one-percent population survey conducted

UNFPA provided modern methods and equipment for the third population census, conducted by the Chinese Government in 1982. This was

the first modern census using contemporary electronic data-processing techniques; the previous censuses, undertaken in 1953 and 1964, were tabulated with the abacus. The 1982 census indicated that the country's population had reached 1.008 billion, and provided the first



International seminar on China's 1982 census

“ Since the third national population census in 1982, the National Bureau of Statistics and UNFPA have increasingly expanded the cooperation in population statistics. Through participation in international trainings, international conferences and implementation of projects, NBS learned and adapted the international theories and experiences in population censuses and population sampling surveys, which contributed to the China's increasing global influence in the area of population statistics. ”

National Bureau of Statistics

comprehensive assessment of China's population, making data available for socio-economic planning. UNFPA's assistance greatly enhanced the capacity of SSB, the State Statistical Bureau (later renamed National Bureau of Statistics) to collect, process and analyze statistical data. UNFPA was the first international agency that provided technical support to SSB.

In 1987, UNFPA supported the one-percent sample survey of China's population using modern data-processing techniques. Based on the survey, government authorities established that China's population had reached 1.072 billion.

2. Improved maternal and child health

The Chinese Government reduced maternal and infant deaths in 18 pilot hospitals and local health stations with support from UNFPA. UNFPA provided technical assistance to help identify pregnant women at high risk, promote fetal monitoring at home by husbands and wives, encourage sterile techniques in childbirth, and provide intensive training for nurses and birth attendants on prenatal care. In pilot hospitals, the infant mortality rate was reduced to between 12 - 20 per 1,000 live births, while the national average was around 50 per 1,000 live births.

Maternal and child health (MCH) and family planning curricula were strengthened in three

medical colleges, namely Tongji University of Medical Sciences, Harbin University of Medical Sciences, and Xinhua Hospital affiliated with the Shanghai University of Medical Sciences. These curricula covered such vital topics as managing service delivery, data collection and analysis, as well as publicity and education.

3. Quality contraceptives made available

Modern, safe, and more effective contraceptives were made available in China in the 1980s. UNFPA invested in boosting the production of contraceptives, establishing standards for quality control, introducing better manufacturing processes and new technology, and training personnel. This led to the expansion of

A production line of condoms supported by UNFPA



contraceptive choices for Chinese people and helped prevent millions of unwanted pregnancies. Stainless steel intrauterine devices (IUDs) with high failure rate were gradually phased out for the more effective copper-T IUDs and the quality of condoms was significantly improved with support from UNFPA.

UNFPA's assistance enabled four contraceptive research institutes in Beijing, Tianjin, Chengdu, and Guangzhou to design and conduct research and clinical trials on contraceptives. UNFPA helped procure laboratory instruments, provided training abroad for researchers, facilitated collaboration with the international research community, and strengthened research and analytical capabilities. The center in Beijing served

as a national center for family planning research in China, testing the safety and efficacy of popular contraceptives, exploring new methods, assisting other institutes, and sharing information within China and abroad.

4. Strengthened national capacity on family planning education and training

A professional publicity and education network for China's new family-planning programme was established with support from UNFPA. The network consisted of a national center based in Beijing and two sub-centers based in Shanghai and Chengdu. The China Population Information and Research Centre was also established in 1980 with the support from UNFPA to collect, analyze,

Technical training conducted by international experts



and disseminate population and family-planning information in China and abroad. This center, later renamed the China Population Development and Research Centre, continued to be a vital resource center for government planners.

UNFPA provided technical trainings and state-of-the-art equipment to the two training centers established in early 1980s. The Nanjing International Training Center for Population Programme, NPFPC (now renamed the Nanjing International Training Center for Population Programme, NHC) was a regional training center designated by UNFPA and South South Partners in Population and Development. It provided practical training for government officials, many of whom are now serving in population and family planning departments throughout the country. The Sichuan Reproductive Health Institute (now renamed School of Medical and Life Sciences, Chengdu University of Traditional Chinese Medicine) provided undergraduate and postgraduate education and professional training for MCH and family planning professionals in China and other developing countries in Asia and the Pacific region. The institute also undertakes reproductive health clinical research.

5. Renewal of population studies and start of research on ageing

With support from UNFPA, Chinese social scientists became familiar with international developments in the field of demography. Before working with UNFPA, China was relatively isolated from international social science research, leading to a serious shortage of demographers and statisticians. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and 10 universities throughout China

“UNFPA provided a broad platform for policy dialogue, personnel exchange, technical support and experience sharing for our Centre. First, our management, scientific research and teaching teams had broadened their horizons and improved their capacities. Second, our Center had trained a large group of professional cadres with the state-of-the-art knowledge and management skills, who contributed to improvement of work at the grass-root level; Third, our Center had trained nearly 1,000 international students from more than 30 countries through international cooperation.”

Nanjing International Training Center for Population Programme, NHC

promoted learning about the latest international developments in demography. Demography became an independent discipline separate from sociology, economics or other fields. UNFPA supported the establishment of population science curricula in research and training institutes and the training of Chinese students abroad in graduate studies and specialized courses in demography and related disciplines.

UNFPA also started supporting research on

population dynamics to respond to population issues. A research project on ageing in China was undertaken in 1985, in recognition of the rapid increase in the proportion of older people. UNFPA assisted the Office of China National Committee on Ageing (OCNCA) in conducting policy studies on aspects of ageing, including income security, health care, continuing education, and family and community activities in support of older persons. Such studies raised important policy issues previously not recognized in China. A comparative study conducted by the OCNCA on elderly citizens in China and Japan also enabled Chinese policymakers to learn from the experiences of another society with an ageing population.

“With the support from UNFPA, we conducted a series of activities such as policy studies on ageing, revision of national law on ageing, assessment of the implementation of Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in China, and establishment of an indicator system for the 12th National Five-Year Plan on Ageing.”

Office of China National Committee on Ageing

International symposium on ageing policy issues and future challenges (1989, Beijing)





1990-1999

Overview

At the beginning of the second decade, a primary focus of UNFPA's assistance was to strengthen family planning and maternal and child health services at the grassroots level in poor and remote areas, given that services in such areas lagged behind those in the more developed coastal areas. UNFPA continued to support government efforts in the production of effective and safe contraceptives and improve national capacity in population education and studies.

The milestone event during this decade was the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994. The conference adopted the Programme of Action agreed upon by 179 governments, including China's, which recognized the right of individuals and couples to decide freely and responsibly about the number and spacing of their children, and emphasized the connections between population and development. After this landmark conference, UNFPA supported the Chinese Government in introducing client-centered and quality-of-care approaches for reproductive health and family planning, in line with ICPD principles.

Major achievements

1. Strengthened local maternal and child health and client-centered family-planning services

Better contraceptives and lower infant and maternal mortality rates were the result of a large investment by UNFPA at the grassroots level in 305 poor and remote counties. A massive training programme was carried out, covering 480,000 doctors at the township and village levels. The trainings provided health workers with the necessary skills to deliver high-quality maternal, child health, and family planning care. This was the largest project ever implemented by an international organization in the field of maternal and child health and family planning in China.

“ Universal access to reproductive health and voluntary family planning is one of the key objectives set at the ICPD in Cairo, 1994. Guided by the ICPD principles and with support from UNFPA, China had launched many effective and efficient measures, such as the client-centered quality of care in family planning, maternal health and prevention of women's two cancers which promoted informed choices and quality services for clients. ”

National Health Commission



Follow-up visit from maternal and health care staff

Building on the success of the project, the World Bank supported the replication of the model in 285 additional counties.

From 1998 to 2002, with UNFPA support, 32 rural counties shifted their administrative family planning approach to an integrated, client-oriented reproductive-health approach to expand choices of family planning methods and improve women's

health. Service providers were trained in quality-of-care, and service delivery sites were upgraded to provide reproductive health services in clinics under the National Family Planning Commission and the Ministry of Health. Emphasis was placed on giving clients opportunities to make informed choices regarding the type of contraceptives they used.

2. Self-sufficiency in producing safe, modern contraceptives

The choice and quality of contraceptives available in China had significantly improved. With more than a decade's assistance from UNFPA in the production of quality contraceptives, China had become self-sufficient in this regard.

UNFPA's assistance enhanced the capacity of the Chinese pharmaceutical industry to produce safe, modern, and effective contraceptives. UNFPA-supported research confirmed the benefits of

converting to copper IUDs. A policy decision was made to stop the production of stainless-steel rings in China, as they had a failure rate of more than 10 per cent, according to one estimate.

3. Enhanced capacity in population studies

The pool of population experts in China was substantially increased. UNFPA supported the creation and development of 22 population research and training centers in universities throughout China and four new branches of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Information and education activity on family planning in a village



Demography as a field of study was practically nonexistent in China prior to UNFPA's involvement and the organization's investment had a major impact. Chinese demographers reentered the international arena to learn new ideas through access to global networks in population research and training. Many of these trained demographers are now in positions where they are helping to shape policy-making on population dynamics and development in China.

4. Information and education on population and sexual and reproductive health introduced for young people

Over 50 million students throughout China during the programme period gained a basic understanding of population issues during their secondary schooling. Population and development concepts were introduced into

“As a product of UNFPA, I highly appreciate the UN fellowship on population which shifted significantly my professional career toward demography, and also the heavy involvement in the collaboration between China and UNFPA in efforts to reorienting China's population and family planning program concerning reproductive health and rights particularly since the ICPD in 1994.”

Gu Baochang, Ph.D., Professor of Demography, Center for Population and Development Studies, Renmin University of China

UNFPA training on reproductive health and family planning





Teaching young people about population and youth health

the curricula of teacher-training colleges and secondary schools in rural and remote areas, using textbooks and audio-visual training materials supported by UNFPA. In view of its success, the curriculum was replicated by the government in many schools beyond the original pilot schools.

To promote young people's awareness on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and increase their access to SRH services, UNFPA supported a pilot project involving volunteer youth peer educators at universities in Shanghai and Beijing. The project generated support from local leaders, teachers, parents, and family-planning workers. Further, a social-marketing project targeting young consumers lacking easy access to contraceptives

resulted in young people being better informed about the need for safer sex and condoms.

5. Knowledge sharing on reproductive health through South-South cooperation

After 20 years of cooperation with UNFPA and growing expertise in the field of reproductive health and population, China provided quality training programmes to other South-South partner countries.

Three South-South Centers of Excellence in the area of reproductive health were formally announced in 1999: the Nanjing International Training Center for Population Programme,

NPFFC (now renamed the Nanjing International Training Center for Population Programme, NHC), specializing in population programme management; the China Centre for Reproductive Health Technical Instruction and Training in Shanghai, specializing in quality-of-care and counselling; and the Sichuan Reproductive Health Institute (now renamed School of Medical and Life Sciences, Chengdu University of Traditional Chinese Medicine), specializing in higher education and reproductive health clinical research. It also provided clinical training on family planning for senior MCH/family planning professionals in developing countries. The capacity of the three institutes was strengthened and each one delivered quality training to international participants.

“ Our school received UNFPA’s generous assistance in personnel training, scientific research, procurement of advanced equipment and infrastructure construction, under its three consecutive Country Programmes in China. Our school has now developed into a higher education institution that provides trainings to clinical medical professionals in China and other developing countries along the Belt and Road. UNFPA’s support will be remembered forever. ”

Prof. Zhang Qinxu, Dean of School of
Medical and Life Sciences, Chengdu
University of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Technical exchange in a South-South Cooperation Center





2000-2009

Overview

In the third decade of collaboration, UNFPA continued to support the Chinese government in promoting client-centered, gender-sensitive reproductive health and family planning services, in line with ICPD principles. Special emphasis was placed on providing appropriate sexual and reproductive health information and services to vulnerable groups such as migrants and young people.

Multiple initiatives were carried out in different areas and major achievements were made in empowering young people, addressing gender equality, preventing HIV/AIDS, supporting the use of population data for national planning, and introducing a new approach tailored to ethnic minorities. In the aftermath of 2008 Sichuan Earthquake, UNFPA supported safe delivery and helped introduce a reproductive health response in a crisis situation for the first time in China.

Major achievements

1. Peer education launched and first national survey on youth sexual and reproductive health conducted

In 2004, the China Youth Network (CYN) was formed by a group of university students in Beijing with support from UNFPA and the China Family Planning Association (CFPA). Adopting the vision “By Youth, For Youth,” CYN youth volunteers used fun participatory methods to help their peers learn about HIV prevention and sexuality. Young people gained important life skills to form healthy relationships and negotiate condom use.

“The 2009 survey comprehensively and objectively provided data on the overall situation of youth sexual and reproductive health in China, and laid a foundation for China's formulation of sexual and reproductive health policies for young people as well as its implementation.”

**Office of the National Working Committee
on Children and Women**

“ This year marks the 15th anniversary of China Youth Network, the first-ever youth volunteer network in the field of adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR) in China which was established with UNFPA support. I am deeply touched by how young people can support each other through peer education, and am aware of the value and importance of young people as part of social movements through participation in national and international events. ”

Guo Yueping, core member of China Youth Network

In 2009, China's first national survey on youth sexual and reproductive health was conducted with support from UNFPA, the Office of National Working Committee on Children and Women under the State Council (NWCCW), and Institute of Population Research of Peking University. The survey revealed huge gaps among youth in accessing sexual and reproductive health information and services, and that most unmarried young people were open to having sex before marriage. The survey's findings have been widely used by national media and various other institutions in the last 10 years.

CYN youth participating in HIV prevention workshop





Workplace awareness raising session on reproductive health issues for migrant workers (2006, Shanghai)

2. Successful HIV prevention initiatives

A multi-sectoral approach to HIV prevention was successfully introduced during the “China Cares” project implemented by the National Centre for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention (NCAIDS) with UNFPA support. The project focused on five districts with high HIV infection rates. The two-year, USD \$1-million programme stressed public education and condom promotion, and was effective in reducing sexual transmission of HIV in targeted areas. This successful model for HIV prevention was replicated in 127 pilot counties as part of a national HIV/AIDS programme carried out by the government.

UNFPA also supported the efforts of the Ministry of Railways (MOR) to increase HIV awareness among migrants using trains. MOR targeted migrants in five districts travelling during busy periods such as the Spring Festival holiday. HIV prevention information was shared in stations and on trains using television, radio, and electronic boards.

3. Called attention to sex ratio at birth imbalance, and piloted a cross-sectoral response to violence against women

UNFPA promoted awareness among government officials and the broader community regarding the severity and potential impacts of son preference and the imbalance in the sex ratio at birth (SRB)—how many boys are born in comparison to girls. Using government data, UNFPA produced a publication on “Sex Ratio: Facts and Figures,” showing that, in 2005, as many as 120 boys were born for every 100 girls. The SRB imbalance gained increasing political attention. In 2006 the government expanded the “Care for Girls” programme to encourage parents to value girl children.

In 2008, to address violence against women, UNFPA, the All-China Women’s Federation (ACWF), and the Ministry of Health jointly launched a pilot project in Chengde county of

Hebei Province and Liuyang county of Hunan Province. The model ensured that women who experienced domestic violence were given appropriate support by the various agencies they came into contact with and moved smoothly through the referral system.

“The All China Women’s Federation and UNFPA have maintained good partnership for more than 20 years, and jointly contributed to the promotion of gender equality and women’s development. We look forward for more cooperation with UNFPA to further advancing gender equality and promoting women’s all-round development and wellbeing.”

All China Women’s Federation

Anti-domestic violence bulletin board in Liuyang, Hunan



4. Promoted the use of gender-sensitive and rights-based approaches in national planning

Since the 1990s, UNFPA has been giving its input on government actions on ageing in China. Through cooperation with the Office of China National Committee on Ageing (OCNCA), UNFPA promoted the adoption of a gender-sensitive, rights-based approach in the amended national law on the protection of the rights and interests of older persons (1996). In 2005, results from a UNFPA-supported ageing study were considered during the development of the 11th National Five-Year Development Plan on Ageing. The study, undertaken by CNCA, considered six important issues affecting older persons: poverty, rural welfare systems, grassroots organizations, HIV and AIDS, the needs of elderly women, and the difficulties people faced in supporting their ageing

parents. Later on, OCNCA and UNFPA supported national research institutes in conducting a mid-term review of the 13th National Five-Year Plan on Ageing (2018).

Following effective advocacy work since the early 2000s, sex-disaggregated data has been collected and increasingly utilized in China. With UNFPA's support, the National Bureau of Statistics has been continuously producing sex-disaggregated data for use by government in developing gender-sensitive policies. Since 2009, UNFPA has been advocating for equitable access to essential social services for populations affected by urbanization together with the Department of Social Development of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the China Center for Urban Development. The support to evidence-based policy review and development had continued and led to a joint review of priority

Elderly residents at Xi'an ancient city wall



population and development issues in China which contributed to drafting relevant sections of the 13th National Five-Year Plan on Social and Economic Development.

5. Culturally-sensitive approach introduced into service delivery for ethnic minorities

In 2007, UNFPA piloted a UN Joint Programme supported by the Spanish Fund in cooperation with the National Center on Women and Children's Health of China CDC which aimed to incorporate cultural issues in project design. Through projects to broaden the capacity of the country's ethnic minorities in five provinces in western China (Guizhou, Qinghai, Yunnan, Xinjiang, and Tibet), which the government had identified as underdeveloped, UNFPA assisted China in fulfilling its commitment to integrate the

principle of cultural diversity into policy-making and service delivery for ethnic minorities.

With the support from MOH and NPFPC, the University of Ethnic Minorities in Beijing conducted a revealing study on the traditional beliefs and practices regarding maternal and child health of six ethnic minority groups: Miao, Dong, Dai, Jingpo, Hui, and Tibetan peoples. This study was part of the UN Joint Programme and marked the beginning of a greater focus on culturally-sensitive approaches in addressing sexual and reproductive health in UNFPA-supported projects in China. A significant achievement was improving the availability and quality of maternal and child health and family-planning services targeted at ethnic minorities, acknowledging culture and traditional beliefs as vital factors in service delivery.

Women in Miao village (Yunnan, 2006)





2010-2019

Overview

For the fourth decade, UNFPA's programme in China has been shifting its attention away from pilot interventions at the sub-national level to focusing more on supporting the development of ICPD Agenda-advancing national policies. The agency's goals in China are now universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, reproductive rights to accelerate progress on the ICPD and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and South-South cooperation. UNFPA places a special focus on women and youth, and is guided by principles of human rights and gender equality.

UNFPA is valued for providing access to cutting-edge knowledge and best practices, linking with international standards and guidelines, offering innovative ideas and approaches, and providing high-quality technical support relevant to development in China.

Major achievements

1. Enhanced policy environment to promote gender equality and advocacy for China's first domestic violence law

Since 2011, UNFPA has been working with China Population and Development Research Center to address gender-biased sex selection through innovative approaches; these include revising gender-discriminatory village rules through grassroots interventions in Anhui, Shaanxi, Jiangxi, Hubei, and Guangxi, in order to address the root causes of son preference. The sex ratio at birth in China was 112.88 in 2016, which was still higher than the normal range of 103-107. Through the joint advocacy and interventions with the provincial authorities, breakthrough initiatives to empower

women with more gender-equitable terms were included in the village rules. During 2016-2018, fifteen gender-equality and SRB-related policies were issued by the county governments in six project counties.

Since 2010, UNFPA and the National Center on Women and Children's Health of China CDC has piloted health sectors' response to gender based violence (GBV) as part of the multi-sectoral mechanism to prevent and respond to GBV. UNFPA worked with national and international partners, including the All-China Women's Federation and the UN Theme Group on Gender, in advocating for the passage of China's first Domestic Violence Law.



Against prenatal sex determination advocacy in rural area

2. Advocacy for rights-based family planning policy

Guided by the ICPD principles, UNFPA has worked with national and international partners to advocate for better laws and regulations on family planning to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Since 2010, UNFPA has been working with China Population and Development Research Center on reproductive health and population and development, advocating for the development of local regulations and client-centered maternal and child health and family planning services, and setting up performance indicators in line with the national family planning policy adjustment in 11 pilot prefectures.

“China Population and Development Research Center was established in 1980 with financial assistance from UNFPA and has been strengthened since then through cooperation with UNFPA. It has involved in the implementation of UNFPA's five Country Programmes in China in areas of reproductive health and rights, gender equality, and population and development, which contributed to the country's transformation in the field of population policy, population research, management and services.”

China Population and Development Research Center

UNFPA has supported China in shifting the focus of its family-planning programme from demographic targets to client-centered approaches. The Chinese government adjusted its fertility-policy in 2013 and 2015, which marked

a step toward universal access to reproductive health and rights. The government has also made efforts to improve public services in reproductive health, maternal and child health care, and nursery services.

Consultation on family planning



“China Maternal and Child Health Association has been promoting the midwifery profession development in China in three comprehensive areas - policy development, education reform and institution establishment, with support from UNFPA under its two consecutive Country Programmes in China. In addition to policy advocacy and development of the national standards for core competence of midwives at different levels, we established the Midwives' Branch of CMCHA, which specializes in midwifery.”

China Maternal and Child Health Association

Maternal and child health training in Tianjin



3. Revived advanced midwifery education and the professionalization of midwifery in China

UNFPA has been working with the China Maternal and Child Health Association, the Nursing School of Peking University, and other partners to generate evidence to inform advocacy and policy on the profession of midwifery. A theoretical framework and policy advice on reviving advanced midwifery education in the Chinese context has been developed based on the World Health Organization (WHO) and International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) concepts. National standards for core competence of midwives at junior, intermediate and senior levels have been developed in line with the ICM standards. Policy recommendations on the

“Since its establishment in 2003, the National Center for Women and Children's Health (NCWCH) of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC) has participated in the implementation of UNFPA's 5th to 8th Country Programmes in China in the area of sexual and reproductive health. UNFPA has provided funding and equipment support and introduced new concepts on sexual and reproductive health into China. The cooperation between UNFPA and NCWCH has enhanced capacities of women and children's health institutions at all levels to providing reproductive health services, and contributed to promoting the reproductive health of Chinese people, especially women and young people.”

The National Center for Women and Children's Health of China CDC

“Midwifery 2030” for strengthening midwifery human resources and services in China have been developed based on the findings of a survey in Zhejiang province.

In 2019, UNFPA continues to advocate for the professionalization and development of midwifery, targeting policymakers and other key stakeholders. UNFPA also continues to provide technical support for a standardized national midwifery training programme and examination as well as the development of midwifery training centers.

4. Advocacy for comprehensive sexuality education and youth engagement in sustainable development

UNFPA has supported comprehensive programmes to address young people’s sexual

“Adolescent sexual and reproductive health constitutes an important component of reproductive health and population and development program. UNFPA sets a precedent for comprehensive sexuality education in China which enables Chinese young people to protect their health, well-being and dignity. It also promotes policy dialogue and investment in sexuality education programmes that meet international standards.”

National Health Commission

Peer educators training camp (2015, Zhengzhou)



“ *Cultivating young talent with social responsibility, knowledge, skills and innovative mind has always been the mission of Beifang International Education Group. In their transition to adulthood, young people need opportunities to broaden their horizons internationally, learn knowledge of youth health, and develop leadership skills. In this way, they can be both aiming high and down-to-earth. Our partnership with UNFPA provided a platform for young people to fulfill their potential, and make contribution to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.* ”

Yang Weichang, Ph.D., President of Beifang International Education Group

and reproductive health. In partnership with government agencies, in particular the National Health Commission, UNFPA supported policy research on young people's sexual and reproductive health to generate evidence required for advocacy. UNFPA is supporting the development of technical guidelines for national comprehensive sexual education, based on international guidance. Working together with UNESCO and the Shanghai Institute for Planned Parenthood Research, UNFPA has conducted a national assessment on the sexuality education implementation status in China.

In 2018, UNFPA and Beifang International Education Group launched the “Belt and Road Youth Leadership and Participation” project in Shanghai. Young people from various cities have participated in leadership trainings with the project and gained a better understanding of international development. UNFPA also nominated and facilitated Chinese youth leaders' participation in multiple international conferences, including the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum in New York, and the 1st China-Africa Youth Forum on Population and Development in Accra, Ghana.

5. Improved knowledge-sharing between China and other developing countries through South-South cooperation

In May 2017, the Population and Development South-South Cooperation Center of Excellence was launched at the China Population and Development Research Center, with support



Launch of the Population and Development South-South Cooperation Center of Excellence (2017, Beijing)

from UNFPA and the National Health and Family Planning Commission. The Centre of Excellence has become an important platform to promote South-South and Triangular Cooperation in population and development under the Belt and Road Initiative. The China-Africa Conference on Population and Development has been held annually since 2017, and boosts South-South Cooperation on population and development concerns between China and countries in Africa.

In 2018, China established the International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA). UNFPA coordinated with CIDCA and continued to

facilitate trilateral cooperation between China and other developing countries on population and development, including a project in the pipeline in Sierra Leone to improve women's health through funding and technical support from China under its South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund.

6. Humanitarian assistance and integrating reproductive health into national emergency-response plans

UNFPA introduced the first-ever reproductive health emergency response in China in the aftermath of the catastrophic 2008 Sichuan

Earthquake, which affected over 40 million people. Within the first three months of the disaster, UNFPA distributed reproductive-health kits to 200,000 women to ensure safe delivery and the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Building on its long experience, UNFPA has advocated for the integration of the Minimum Initial Service Package for Sexual and Reproductive Health (MISP) in the national emergency-response system and in selected disaster-prone counties. As a result of the joint interventions with the Red Cross Society of China and other partners, sexual and reproductive health services have been integrated into the emergency-preparedness plans of the health sector and the Red Cross in selected sites. Reproductive health actions were included in the national responses to the 2010 Yushu earthquake, 2011 Yingjiang earthquake, 2014 Ludian earthquake, and 2017 Jiangxi flood.

“ China is one of the countries frequently affected by natural disasters. There have been increasing concerns on women’s and girls’ reproductive health following the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake. The Red Cross Society of China, as a member of the international Red Cross Movement, attaches great importance to women’s health and welling in humanitarian settings, and has worked with UNFPA, the National Center on Women’s and Children’s Health of China CDC and other health institutions in addressing women’s reproductive health issues during emergencies, and promoted the integration of Minimum Initial Service Package for Sexual and Reproductive Health into the Red Cross Emergency Response System at every level of emergency preparedness and response. ”

Red Cross Society of China

UNFPA reproductive health kits arrived at Chengdu airport during 2008 Sichuan Earthquake





Group photo of UNFPA China staff (2018)