

Progress Made by Parliamentarians in Implementing the Programme of Action
of the International Conference on Population and Development

REPORT



2006 Global Survey

Cairo to 2015 The Road to Success

IPCI
iCPD

PHOTO

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NOTES

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FOREWORD

For over 30 years, parliamentarians have been actively promoting the issues of population and development. Since the first national parliamentary group on population was established in Japan in 1974, legislators in many countries have organized themselves to create national parliamentary groups on population-related issues. By 2000, almost 100 countries had a national group or committee devoted to these issues. These entities work closely with UNFPA and the regional umbrella networks of parliamentarians: the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), the Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG), the African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD) and the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF). No other area of development can boast such a long-standing, well-organized and dynamic global movement of legislators.

Parliamentarians have come a long way in tackling population issues. Since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994, they have passed laws and policies and approved budgets to implement the ICPD Programme of Action. Within and beyond the walls of parliament, they have spoken up on the importance of population, reproductive health and rights and gender equality among fellow legislators, government officials, civil society and the media. At the international level, they have participated in inter-governmental meetings and influenced their outcomes in favour of the Cairo agenda.

This report is a first-ever attempt to chronicle the activities of parliamentarians worldwide to advance ICPD issues. It summarizes the results of a Global Survey that UNFPA and the four regional parliamentary groups jointly

conducted in 2006, in collaboration with the Harvard School of Public Health. The 322 legislators from 104 countries and institutions who participated in the Survey were chosen for their strong commitment to population and development. The report documents the enormous progress parliamentarians have made since 1994, as well as their priorities, aspirations and challenges. It is a tribute to the remarkable work they have done, individually as well as collectively, to create an enabling environment and to mobilize resources for advancing the ICPD agenda.

The Survey showed that respondents were personally involved in the adoption of 250 laws and 67 policies and the introduction of 157 bills on population-related issues. A number of parliamentarians, mainly in donor countries, were successful in increasing budget allocations for ICPD implementation. Along with these outstanding

achievements, the Survey painted a compelling picture of the challenges legislators faced in fulfilling their role as advocates of population, reproductive health and rights and gender equality. For example, lack of information and awareness about ICPD issues, often compounded by active opposition mounted against some aspects of the Cairo mandate, has made it difficult for parliamentarians to effect necessary change in laws and policies. Even when appropriate laws and policies were in place, lack of implementation and lack of resources has continued to hamper progress.

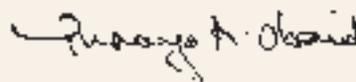
The report makes several recommendations to address these obstacles. It calls on UNFPA and the regional parliamentary groups to:

- Encourage interaction with other parliamentarians at national and regional levels, including through creating or revitalizing national population groups and through active involvement in regional group activities;
- Link the ICPD agenda to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and better monitor country progress;
- Meet parliamentarians' overwhelming need for information;
- Provide strategies to tackle opposition against the ICPD agenda;
- Meet the need of developing-country parliamentarians' for more training and that of donor-country parliamentarians' for meetings and study tours;
- Assist in the enactment of HIV/AIDS laws;
- Address regional disparities in enacting ICPD-related laws;
- Encourage increased budget allocations for ICPD;
- Increase gender awareness and gender balance among parliamentarians;

- Strengthen the implementation of laws and policies; and
- Increase financial and material support for parliamentarians' activities.

It is our sincere hope that the findings of this Global Survey will help parliamentarians and other actors working in the population field to chart the way forward for achieving the ICPD goals and the MDGs by 2015. UNFPA, for its part, will work closely with the regional parliamentary groups to follow up on the above recommendations of the report.

The legislators who attended the first International Parliamentarians' Conference on ICPD Implementation (Ottawa, 2002) agreed that "life or death is a political decision". The decision and action must be taken now, as we only have until 2015 to dramatically reduce poverty, hunger, maternal and child mortality, HIV/AIDS and gender inequality.



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IPCI iCPD



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INTRODUCTION

HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Parliament-like assemblies are as old as the Vedic societies of ancient India, but the birth of the representative parliamentary system is usually dated to 930 CE, the first meeting of Iceland's Althing, an occasional assembly of clan representatives. The English parliament, the model for many of today's parliaments, first admitted representatives of the "commons" or non-noble people in 1286. Then as now, the chief executive depended on parliamentarians to vote funds for government operations.

Today, though forms of government vary, virtually all countries have legislative bodies which make laws and appropriate funds, and the generic term "parliamentarian" usually suggests a member of such a body. The closest links between government and the people are the parliamentarians whom they elect, and who consequently are best positioned to understand the values, concerns and needs of the electorate. This is why countries often call the legislative body the "house of the people". From that position, parliamentarians have become involved in issues and events far beyond their national borders.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) began its work in 1969, with a remit to provide population assistance to developing countries at their request. Co-operation between Japan's Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi and UNFPA's Executive Director Rafael M. Salas led to the first parliamentary group in the population field, the Japanese Parliamentarians' Federation for Population, founded in 1974.

That first step to involve parliamentarians in population and development has unfolded into national parliamentary groups in all parts of the world. These groups have taken their place as participants at international meetings where population and development issues

are being debated; and in their own countries, in advocacy, adopting laws and providing funding for population programmes as a contribution to national development.

The first-ever International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in 1979. Its goal was to exchange information and improve understanding about population issues and their impact on individual wellbeing and national development, and to discuss the need for international and domestic funding. This first meeting



Credit: Marc-Steffan Unger

was financed by UNFPA and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

Later that year, parliamentarians formed Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) to discuss a range of global issues, including population. They also established the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) and the Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG), in 1981 and 1982 respectively.

Since the first global meeting in 1979, parliamentarians' action has added population and development issues to the agendas of international meetings. Many parliamentarians' meetings paralleled global inter-governmental conferences, including the International

Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century in Amsterdam in 1989; the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994; the ICPD+5 Forum in the Hague in 1999, and major UN conferences in the 1990s on the environment, women, social development and food security.

These parallel meetings enabled parliamentarians to contribute to inter-governmental conferences, and offered them an opportunity to educate themselves about the importance of social and economic development issues and how they interacted with population concerns. Contact with fellow parliamentarians inspired many to

A group picture of parliamentarians from around the world at a recent conference in Berlin.



become active in their own countries on population and development issues.

Documents coming out of these meetings, such as the ICPD Programme of Action, and the ICPD+5 outcome document, *Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development*, gave parliamentarians a formal welcome to engage in population-related issues.

The results have been inspiring. Encouraged in part by ICPD, parliamentarians created two more regional groups, the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD) in 1997, and the Inter-European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (IEPPFD)¹ in 2000 to cover all European countries and the European Parliament. Together with AFPPD and IAPG, parliamentary groups on population and development now cover all regions of the world.

As a follow-up to the ICPD+5, in 2001, the secretariats of the four regional parliamentary groups on population and development and PGA met at UNFPA headquarters in New York to determine how best to focus parliaments around the world on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. This meeting led to the first International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD).

IPCI/ICPD

The custom of holding biennial international meetings of parliamentarians began in 2002 and has led to pledges of increased official development assistance (ODA) and commitments to focus on laws and policies related to population and development.

The first ICPI/ICPD convened on 21-22 November 2002 in the Parliament of Canada in Ottawa. The gathering was hosted by the Canadian Association of Parliamentarians on Population Development (CAPPD) in collaboration with the four regional parliamentary groups and PGA.²

The declaration from the Ottawa Conference, or the "Ottawa Statement of Commitment," called on all parliaments and governments to focus on the two key issues for the successful implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action: creating an enabling environment through positive laws and policies on population and development; and mobilizing financial resources. Parliamentarians in Ottawa pledged to aim for up to 10% of national development budgets for population and reproductive health programmes. The Ottawa Statement declared:

We parliamentarians pledge, as public advocates, legislators and policy makers, to carry out these actions and to systematically and actively monitor the progress we make in doing so. We further pledge to report regularly on this progress through parliamentary groups and to meet in two years to assess the results we have made, both individually and collectively.

As the permanent secretariat, UNFPA agreed to monitor progress and to issue periodic newsletters. To date, over 70 issues of the e-newsletter UNFPA Global Population Policy Update have been distributed to parliamentarians worldwide. The newsletter tracks the latest developments on laws, policies and funding decisions, as well as major parliamentary meetings and the activities of the regional and global parliamentary groups.³

The second IPCI/ICPD, hosted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in collaboration with the four regional parliamentary groups and PGA, and held in Strasbourg, France, on 18-19 October 2004, strengthened the focus on laws, policies, domestic funding and ODA.⁴

The Strasbourg Statement of Commitment called for an additional US\$150 million for UNFPA and IPPF to meet growing needs for reproductive health commodities. It also highlighted the need to focus more attention to the continuing problems of maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS, and called on the United Nations to include universal access to reproductive health by 2015 as a new goal under the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).⁵

Parliamentarians' Roles in Advancing the ICPD

ICPD+5 outcome document: Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1999):

Parliamentarians and members of national legislatures are invited to ensure the legislative reform and expanded awareness-raising necessary for implementing the ICPD Programme of Action.

Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1994):

11.18. Members of Parliament are invited to continue to promote wide awareness on issues related to population and sustainable development and to ensure the enactment of legislation necessary for effective implementation of the present Programme of Action.

13.4 [The objectives of National Policies and Plans of Action are]

(a) To incorporate population concerns in all relevant national development strategies, plans, policies and programmes;

(b) To foster active involvement of elected representatives of people, particularly parliamentarians, concerned groups, especially at the grass-roots level, and individuals, in formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating strategies, policies, plans and programmes in the field of population and development.

13.6. Governments and parliamentarians, in collaboration with the international community and non-governmental organizations, should make the necessary plans in accordance with national concerns and priorities and take the actions required to measure, assess, monitor and evaluate progress towards meeting the goals of the present Programme of Action. In this connection, the active participation of the private sector and the research community is to be encouraged.

At the IPCI/ICPD Steering Committee meeting held in Tokyo, Japan, in October 2005, it was agreed that UNFPA should conduct a global survey of parliamentarians to determine the extent of parliamentary activities for ICPD implementation since 1994. The survey would ask parliamentarians for information on their successes and on constraints to further progress.

The third IPCI/ICPD meeting in Bangkok on 21-22 November 2006 discussed the survey with the aim of smoothing the road ahead for IPCI/ICPD and providing tools for parliamentarians working on population and development issues.

The results of the survey are amazing, inspiring and groundbreaking. Since the 1994 ICPD, parliamentarians have taken action on population and development to a new level.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The intention of the survey was to assess parliamentarians' efforts to create an enabling legislative and policy environment, and to mobilize resources in both developed and developing countries for ICPD implementation. The survey collected information on action at national, regional and global levels to pass legislation and mobilize resources; its results; and successes, challenges and lessons learned.

UNFPA assigned the Office of the Director, Information, Executive Board and Resource Mobilization Division to oversee and coordinate work. Dr. Reed Boland, population law specialist at the Harvard School of Public Health, and UNFPA Technical Support Division assisted in the design of the survey and analysis of data. The regional parliamentary groups administered the survey with assistance from UNFPA geographical divisions, country offices, national parliamentary groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

A total of 322 parliamentarians from 85 developing and 18 donor countries and the European Parliament responded, with an average of three responses per country. The respondents do not make up a representative sample

of parliamentarians in each country; but their responses give a general picture of activities by some of the key supporters of ICPD in national parliaments and their impact on ICPD implementation.

It should be noted that the survey was not a rigorous scientific study. The questions were of a general nature, allowing parliamentarians to respond in their own words rather than checking off answers. The intention was to make parliamentarians feel comfortable in answering the questions, to obtain spontaneous responses, and to avoid giving respondents the impression that the survey was seeking to elicit specific responses or making judgments.⁶

In each country a focal point⁷ chose several key members of a national cross-party parliamentary group on population-related issues to answer the survey.⁸ If there was no such group, the national focal point chose key members from relevant committees of the national parliament to respond to the survey. In countries with no relevant committee, the national focal point chose individual parliamentarians who had been involved in population-related issues.

Parliamentarians were selected for their contribution and commitment to population-related issues. Due consideration was given to gender balance, representation of major political parties, diverse perspectives and institutional memory. In order to ensure institutional memory, some former parliamentarians were invited to participate in the survey. The survey did not include members of state or provincial parliaments.

The focal point was asked to interview the selected parliamentarians orally and in person in separate ses-

sions and to write down their responses. Parliamentarians received the questionnaire in advance of the interview, to allow them to reflect on the questions and think about their answers. The national focal point was requested to explain the background and purpose of the survey succinctly and precisely before asking the questions.⁹

Focal points were asked to follow up on parliamentarians' initial responses as appropriate by asking them to speak further on points they had made or to describe possible issues, activities and outcomes which might not initially have occurred to them, and to provide concrete examples. Focal points prepared a context note for the interviews, consisting of a description of the political environment for respondents' work; the interviewer's assessment of how successful the interviews were; verification of facts from the interviews, including information on the national parliamentary group, activities carried out and the adoption of laws, policies and funding decisions; and an assessment of whether the laws and policies mentioned had been enforced, and whether mechanisms existed for their enforcement.

The questionnaire was sent out in April 2006 to all countries where UNFPA had an office or where there was a national parliamentary group on population. The deadline for completion was 15 May 2006, later moved up to 31 July to enable wider participation. The survey responses and context notes were submitted to the UNFPA New York headquarters, and then forwarded to Dr. Boland at the Harvard School of Public Health for examination and analysis. Analysis was carried out using a standard software programme and was delivered to UNFPA in September 2006.

¹ The name of the European group has recently been changed to the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF).

² CAPPD, IAPG and UNFPA served as the secretariat.

³ All issues of the Policy Update can be viewed at: <http://www.unfpa.org/parliamentarians/news/newsletters.htm>

⁴ EPF, UNFPA and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe provided secretariat support.

⁵ To read the Ottawa and Strasbourg Statements of Commitment and other materials from the two conferences, visit <http://www.unfpa.org/parliamentarians/index.htm>

⁶ The survey is reproduced in Appendix 1.

⁷ See the survey instruction sheet in Appendix 2 for description on how the national focal points were chosen.

⁸ In some countries, the survey was conducted with only one or two parliamentarians, due to various political and logistical constraints.

⁹ Note that this methodology was not followed in all cases. In many cases, the questionnaire was simply sent to parliamentarians, who filled it out without any instructions.

WHO WE ARE

Parliamentarians come from a wide range of backgrounds. Respondents to the survey varied as to age, gender, professional experience, interests, party affiliation and length of legislative experience.

1.1 COUNTRY

A total of 322 parliamentarians from 104 countries participated in the survey. Of the 85 developing countries, the regional breakdown was: sub-Saharan Africa 28, Asia and the Pacific 22, the Arab States nine, Eastern Europe ten,¹⁰ and Latin America 16 including two from the Caribbean. The European Parliament and 18 donor countries took part: Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United States and 12 countries from Western Europe.¹¹

1.2 GENDER

In developing countries, 52% of the parliamentarians responding to the survey were men and 48% were women,¹² but the sub-regional breakdown varied considerably.¹³ In Central America, 78% of the respondents were female and in Southern Africa, 70%. In contrast, in Central Asia, 82% of the respondents were men and in Western Africa and the Arab States, 64%. In donor countries, 28% were men and 72% were women.

It is difficult to determine why there was so much variation among sub-regions. It may be that certain parliamentarians were not available for interviews, or that fewer parliamentarians of one gender or other work on ICPD issues in different sub-regions.

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to look more closely into gender disparities in some sub-regions to ascertain if greater efforts could be made to involve more men or women parliamentarians, as appropriate.

TABLE 1

Male and female parliamentarians, by sub-region (per cent)

Sub-region	Male	Female
Donor countries	28	72
Central/Eastern Africa	56	44
Southern Africa	30	70
Western Africa	64	36
Arab States	64	36
Eastern Europe	50	50
Central Asia	82	18
South Asia	63	37
Southeast Asia	44	56
Pacific Islands	0	100
South America	47	53
Central America	22	78
Caribbean	60	40

1.3 AGE

In developing countries, parliamentarians interviewed were evenly divided between those over and under the age of 50. The largest group of respondents (39%) was between the ages of 40-50.¹⁴ It appears that in developing countries at least, ICPD issues are important to a wide range of age groups among parliamentarians. In donor countries, respondents were older on average: 62% were over the age of 50.

1.4 PROFESSION

Respondents were requested to indicate their former profession (or current profession if parliamentarians do not work fulltime). In developing countries, two professions stood out: educators (22%) and physicians (22%). In addition, 2% were nurses or midwives and 6% were involved in other aspects of health or public health. Other widely-represented professions were business/economics/finance and science/technology (9% each); government

(6%); law (7%); media/writing/arts (7%); social services/sciences (5%); and development (4%).

The high prevalence of health and education professionals among supporters of ICPD is perhaps not surprising, given that health is central to many ICPD issues and that educators are more often attuned than other professionals to social problems and the specific difficulties faced by children, adolescents and women.

The results were similar in donor countries, where the most commonly represented professions were health (28%) including 13% who were physicians; education (20%); business/economic/finance (15%); and government (7%). In donor countries, 73% worked in the public and academic sector, 18% in the private sector and 9% for non-profit organizations.

1.5 CURRENT AND FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS, AND PARTY AFFILIATION

Of respondents in developing countries, 96% were current and 4% former parliamentarians.¹⁵ In donor

countries, 94% were current and 6% were former parliamentarians.

In developing countries, 62% were affiliated to parties that controlled the parliament and 38% to opposition parties. Approximately 15% of parliamentarians were members of parliaments consisting of only one party. In donor countries, 59% of parliamentarians belonged to the ruling party and 41% to the opposition.

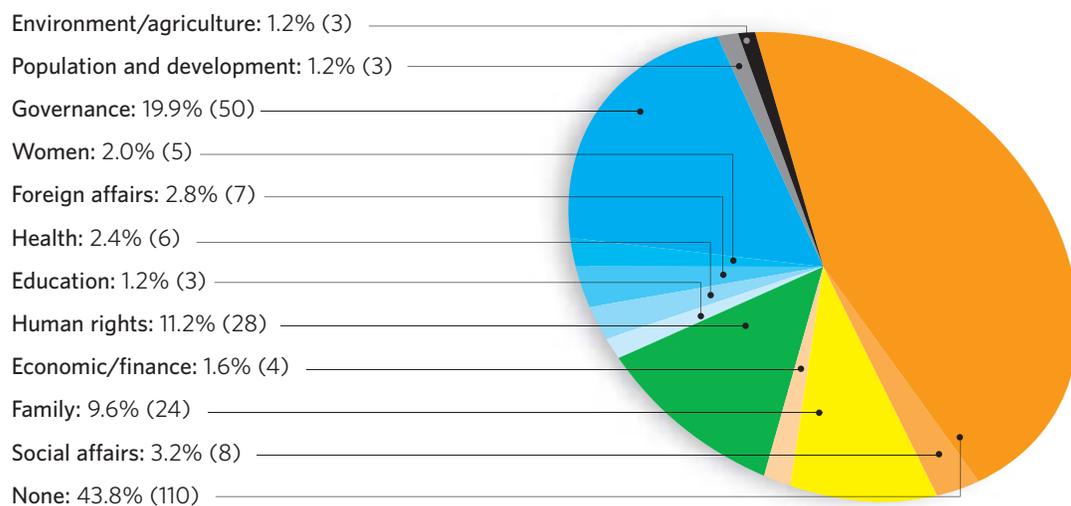
Given the high percentages of parliamentarians belonging to the ruling party, it appears that many ICPD supporters are in a good position to motivate their countries to implement the Programme of Action.

1.6 POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP AFFILIATION

In developing countries, 44% of respondents belonged to a population and development group in parliament. These parliamentarians represented 37 different countries. Most of these groups appear to be committees officially recognized by parliaments rather than informal groups

GRAPH 1

Membership in specific parliamentary groups, developing countries



established by the parliamentarians themselves. All were all-party groups.

Despite the controversial nature of some issues, population and development attracts the interest of parliamentarians with a wide spectrum of political views.

Central/Eastern Africa and Western Africa (67% each) had the highest percentage of parliamentarians belonging to a population and development group, and Central America (13%) and the Arab States (16%) the lowest. This disparity may indicate that several sub-regions were under-utilizing the mechanism of an all-party group on population-related issues. Several countries noted this in their responses.

Developing-country respondents who did not belong to parliamentary groups concerned with population issues reported membership in a wide variety of other committees. A total of 20% sat on committees devoted to social affairs in general; 11% sat on health committees; and 10% belonged to committees dealing with issues relating to women. Smaller percentages (3% or less) were members of committees on human rights, foreign affairs,

TABLE 2

Membership in a population and development group, by sub-region

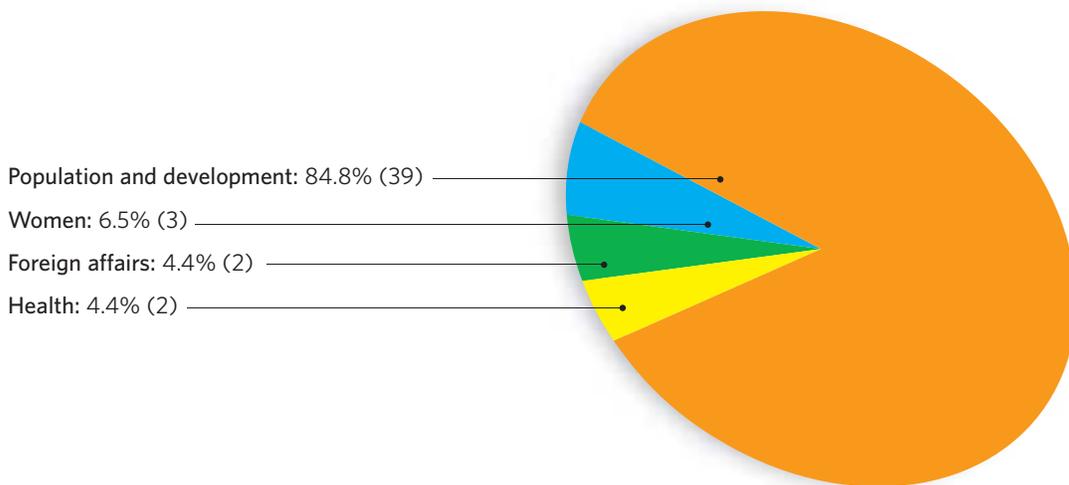
Sub-region	%
Donor countries	85
Central/Eastern Africa	67
Southern Africa	40
Western Africa	67
Arab States	16
Eastern Europe	32
Central Asia	56
South Asia	56
Southeast Asia	50
Pacific Islands	0
South America	36
Central America	13
Caribbean	0

economics and finance, governance, the family, education, and science and technology.

In donor countries, 85% of parliamentarians were members of an informal multi-party population and

GRAPH 2

Membership in specific parliamentary groups, donor countries



development group, including population and reproductive health and rights groups. Seven per cent were members of a women's affairs committee, and 4% each of health or foreign affairs committees.

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to determine if a need for a parliamentary group on population and development exists in certain countries and how they could assist in the creation of such groups.

¹⁰ For the purpose of analysis, all Eastern European countries are categorized as developing countries, although it is noted that some countries, especially the new members of the European Union, can no longer be considered as developing countries.

¹¹ The list of countries, grouped together by sub-region, is attached as Appendix 3.

¹² The regional parliamentary groups and UNFPA country offices administering the survey were asked to try to ensure gender balance in selecting the parliamentarians. It is important to note, however, that often the country focal points were only able to contact persons whom they could identify as being particularly interested in ICPD issues, or who were members of relevant committees in the parliament, or who were available for an interview.

¹³ Because so few parliamentarians from the Caribbean and Pacific participated in the survey, these sub-regions are not included in the discussions of regional differences.

¹⁴ A table illustrating these results is included in Appendix 4.

¹⁵ Former parliamentarians were included in the survey to ensure institutional memory in countries where current parliamentarians were relatively new and did not have sufficient knowledge about the progress made by parliamentarians in their countries to advance the ICPD agenda.

WHAT WE CARE ABOUT

It was not surprising to find that respondents shared many of the same interests, with gender equality and women's empowerment topping the list.

To define fields of interest more closely, the survey asked respondents first, to describe their personal population-related interests; second, to list which ICPD issues were priorities in their work; and third, to say why they were interested in these issues (Table 3).

TABLE 3

Issues of personal interest, developing countries

<i>Interest</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender equality/women's empowerment	45
Women's education	9
Reproductive health and rights (RHR)	39
Youth—RHR	5
Development—general	14
Poverty/economic development	20
Social development	9
Children	12
Youth	12
HIV/AIDS	20
Demographic concerns	19
Health/public health	17
Gender-based violence	12
FGC/traditional practices	1
Education	16
Marginalized groups	11
Family planning	6
Safe motherhood	5
Human rights	5
Family as institution	3
Early marriage and pregnancy	3

The most important issues fall into eight major groups, as table 4 shows.

TABLE 4

Issues of personal interest by category, developing countries, in order of priority

<i>Interest</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender equality and women's empowerment, including women's education	53
RHR and youth RHR	44
Development, including social and economic development	44
Children and youth	24
HIV/AIDS	20
Demographic concerns	19
Health	17
Gender-based violence	13

2.1 ISSUES OF PERSONAL INTEREST

After gender equality and women's empowerment, developing-country respondents were interested in reproductive health and rights, including youth reproductive health and rights, and various development issues.¹⁶ Included in the former category are parliamentarians who specifically used the phrase "reproductive health and rights" in their responses or referred to sex education; the right to choose; access to contraception; emergency contraception; maternal and child health; women's health, and unwanted pregnancies, among other issues. A total of 12 parliamentarians, mostly from Latin America, included sexual health and rights in their definition of reproductive health and rights, reflecting perhaps that Latin American parliamentarians have embraced this concept more fully than in other developing countries.

Lower percentages of parliamentarians reported a concern with children and youth; HIV/AIDS; demographic concerns; health, and gender-based violence. Parliamentarians interested in children and youth mentioned child labour; juvenile delinquency; drug use; pornography, and sexual abuse, among other issues. Demographic concerns fell into two categories: low fertility rates – mostly among respondents from Eastern Europe – and migration and high fertility.

Donor-country respondents reflected similar interests: reproductive health and rights, including the reproductive

health and rights of youth; gender equality and women’s empowerment, including women’s education; and various development issues.

2.2 PRIORITY ICPD ISSUES

Although the most important issues for parliamentarians were virtually the same as their personal issues of interest, there were important differences in emphasis. In developing countries, fewer parliamentarians referred to general development issues, and more to reproductive health and rights and HIV/AIDS. The responses for gender equality and women’s empowerment were about the same.

Reproductive health and rights, HIV/AIDS and gender equality are at the centre of the ICPD agenda. Parliamentarians’ priority for these issues illustrates that many supporters of ICPD have tailored their personal interests to promote the Programme of Action.

Parliamentarians from donor countries emphasised some of the more controversial aspects of the ICPD agenda¹⁷: in defining reproductive health and rights, almost 40% of the donor-country parliamentarians included the term “sexual and reproductive rights.”¹⁸ The only other region in which this term was widely used was Latin America. A total of 29% of donor-country respondents also referred to abortion rights, and a number mentioned the need to overturn the United States’ so-called “gag rule”.¹⁹ This difference may reflect the fact that abortion is generally legal and sexual rights more widely recognized in many donor countries.

Regional Disparities: When major ICPD interests are compared by sub-region, a number of differences emerge, as summarized below.²⁰

- Gender equality and women’s empowerment: highest in Central America, South Asia and Southern Africa; lowest in Central and Southeast Asia and donor countries.
- Reproductive health and rights: highest in donor countries, Central and Eastern Africa, and Southern Africa; lowest in Central, South, and Southeast Asia and Central America.

TABLE 5

Issues of personal interest by category, donor countries, in order of priority

Interest	%
RHR and youth RHR	60
Gender equality and women’s empowerment, including women’s education	57
Development, including social and economic development	38
HIV/AIDS	17
Health	12
Children and youth	9
Demographic concerns	9
Gender-based violence	6

TABLE 6

Priority ICPD issues, developing countries (per cent)

Interest	Male	Female	Both
RHR and youth RHR	46	61	58
Gender equality and women’s empowerment, including women’s education	43	66	54
HIV/AIDS	37	27	31
Development, including social and economic development	38	18	28
Health	21	15	18
Demographic concerns	20	13	16
Gender-based violence	7	20	14

- HIV/AIDS: highest in Central and South Asia; lowest in South and Central America, Eastern Europe and the Arab States.
- Gender-based violence: highest in South America and Eastern Europe; lowest in Central and South Asia and the Arab States.

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to determine whether important issues have been neglected in certain regions and carry out awareness raising activities about these issues for parliamentarians.

Gender disparities: When the responses of parliamentarians to this question were matched with gender, several interesting patterns appeared. Women were much more likely to refer to gender equality, women’s empowerment and women’s education than men and more than

twice as likely to mention gender-based violence, including sex offences, trafficking and domestic violence. Men were more likely than women to mention various development issues and demographic concerns as the priority issues. References to reproductive health and rights, HIV/AIDS and health were much more comparable. (See Table 6 on page 16.) Men’s lower interest in gender equality and gender-based violence may be understandable, since these issues affect women more directly; but it may simply reflect male parliamentarians’ lack of awareness.

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to strengthen their efforts to raise the awareness of male parliamentarians on the centrality of gender equality and gender-based violence to the implementation of ICPD.

Members of parliament from Japan visit a women’s centre during a recent study tour to Pakistan.



Credit: APDA



I was an activist since I was a student. During the political turbulences in the 1970s, I joined the student group exiled in the jungle. So I have gained experience in working with the masses. So I became interested in these issues. When I became a politician, I placed high priority on women's issues because I think many politicians have already looked after children's issues. For me, women's issues are more complicated than children's issues, but not many politicians have worked on them."

— Female parliamentarian, Philippines

2.3 REASONS FOR INTERESTS

The survey also asked why respondents became interested in these issues. While not all parliamentarians answered this question, the responses of those who did were instructive. Some saw their parliamentary work as an extension of their professional activities, for example a Japanese respondent who was a nurse and midwife:

I have first-hand experience in the impact of pregnancy and childbirth on women's lives. It is important to create a society in which the innocent lives born into this world are desired, in addition to being received with blessing. I am keenly aware of the need to create an environment that would allow women to make voluntary judgment by having their own choice as well as knowledge about sexuality and contraception.

Some were educators who were troubled about high rates of illiteracy and the lack of education for women.

Still other respondents, some economists and academics, had studied development issues and were interested in poverty and social and economic development.

A Malaysian parliamentarian said that she became interested in ICPD-related issues when she learned that:

In many countries, the rights of women are not well defined by laws or given recognition by their Governments. Child labour is still practiced and rampant in many underdeveloped- and heavily-populated countries, and infant and child mortality rates are also very high because women and children do not have easy access to health services and have poor living conditions. As a parliamentarian I believe that I can contribute in raising the rights of women in society together with regional organizations that share similar ideas and objectives.

Other respondents discovered their interests through sponsored events, for example one Kenyan parliamentarian whom UNFPA sponsored to attend the 2004 IPCI/ICPD in France:

At this meeting, a video was shown. This video made me cry and I vowed to champion the cause of women. It is in Strasbourg that I realized that life and death is a political decision... It is at Strasbourg that I realized most governments are interested in shelter and food, yet reproductive health and rights are equally important.

As a result, he helped to establish the Population and Development Network in Kenya.

¹⁶ Included in the latter category are parliamentarians who mentioned development, social development, economic development, or poverty.

¹⁷ A table illustrating these results is included in Appendix 5.

¹⁸ Sexual rights is not part of the ICPD Programme of Action.

¹⁹ The "gag rule" says that the United States will not fund NGOs that: a) perform abortions, even with funding from other sources, in cases other than a threat to the woman's life, rape or incest; b) provide counselling and referral for abortion; or c) lobby to make abortion legal or more widely available in their country.

²⁰ A table illustrating these results is included in Appendix 6.

WHAT WE DO

Parliamentarians' primary function is to represent their constituencies, much as the Icelandic tribal leaders took their people's concerns to Althing. But modern parliamentarians' jobs go far beyond their constituencies. Their work on behalf of ICPD involves not only other parliamentarians and government agencies, but individuals and organizations outside the government.

Within the walls of parliament, activities include drafting legislation; holding hearings; participating in debates or workshops with other parliamentarians; writing parliamentary reports; committee work, and liaison with government agencies. Outside the government, parliamentarians collaborate with NGOs; build support with religious or social groups and leaders; appear at meetings and seminars, and raise awareness, often through the media.

3.1 WORKING WITH OTHER PARLIAMENTARIANS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Respondents were requested to describe their experiences in working with other parliamentarians and government agencies in furthering ICPD issues. In developing countries, two responses were most often mentioned: 42% replied that they developed legislation and an equal number stated that they worked in various ways with government agencies. A total of 33% responded that they raised awareness of, or provided information to, other parliamentarians (Table 7).

Legislation is parliamentarians' primary role, and includes examining facets of the issue under consideration, consulting with lawyers and academics, drafting specific language, and creating support in the parliament for approval. In some cases, this also involves formulating budgets to support ICPD issues, or suggesting changes to the budget proposed by the government.

TABLE 7

Activities to promote ICPD in parliament and government, developing countries

Activity	%
Work with government agencies	42
Developing legislation	42
Providing information and raising awareness	33
Advocacy ²¹	30
Seminars/workshops	20
Hearings/reviews/reports	13
Overseeing implementation	4

By contrast, parliamentarians from donor countries cited engaging in advocacy and participating in hearings more frequently, and legislation less often. Most donor countries have already addressed much of the ICPD Programme of Action through legislation, and parliamentarians pay more attention to lobbying for increased population assistance for developing countries (Table 8).

TABLE 8

Activities to promote ICPD in parliament and government, donor countries

Activity	%
Advocacy	65
Hearings/reviews/reports	45
Work with government agencies	41
Providing information and raising awareness	37
Developing legislation	30
Seminars/workshops	17
Overseeing implementation	0

Many respondents in both developing and developed countries mentioned working with government agencies, showing how crucial this is to their work. Parliamentarians described coordinating with ministries in drafting legislation; in investigating social problems; in advocating for increased budgets; in negotiating legislative strategies, and in developing support for ICPD issues among other parliamentarians.

A smaller percentage of respondents considered workshops and seminars particularly helpful in raising parliamentarians' awareness through presentations by experts, NGOs and government agencies. Many of these workshops were co-sponsored by UNFPA.

3.2 WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT

A majority of respondents from developing countries (58%) mentioned working with NGOs, civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector to advance ICPD issues. Another 13% noted that they had worked with

TABLE 9

Activities to promote ICPD outside government, developing countries

Activity	%
Work with NGOs/CSOs/private sector	58
Providing information and raising awareness	46
Meetings/seminars/conferences	37
Advocacy	26
Work with religious/social leaders	17
Work with media	14
Work with women's groups	13
Work with health experts	5
Work with constituencies	3
Work with lawyers/courts	2
Obtaining financial support	1

women's NGOs.²² The activities most often mentioned were providing information to, or raising the awareness of, groups outside of government (46%) and attending meetings, seminars and conferences (37%). Activities less often noted were work with religious and social leaders (17%) and work with the media (14%).

A Member of European Parliament speaks to youths during a visit to the Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in the South Caucasus (RHIYC) project in Tbilisi, Georgia.



Credit: EPF

TABLE 10

Activities to promote ICPD outside government, donor countries

Activity	%
Work with NGOs/CSOs/private sector	92
Providing information and raising awareness	23
Meetings/seminars/conferences	19
Advocacy	19
Work with media	17
Work with women's groups	6
Work with religious/social leaders	6
Work with constituencies	4
Work with health experts	4
Work with lawyers/courts	2
Obtaining financial support	0

In donor countries, nearly all parliamentarians had worked with NGOs, CSOs and the private sector (Table 10).

In both developing and donor countries, activities with NGOs, CSOs and the private sector included co-sponsorship of awareness-raising activities; direct lobbying of various groups; promotion of draft legislation; speaking at events; joint research, and monitoring of the implementation of laws. A wide variety of organizations were mentioned, including youth organizations; organizations dealing with cultural, social and economic issues; environmental groups; trade unions and international corporations, and women's groups. Some respondents had either founded or worked with such groups before they became parliamentarians.

Some parliamentarians, particularly in developing countries, had sought the support of religious groups on the less controversial aspects of ICPD, such as protection of indigenous populations. Others built coalitions with religious groups on more contentious issues and described this as essential to their work. Occasionally, they approached prominent national figures for their support.

Some worked with the media to provide accurate information about ICPD issues and build public sup-

port, making themselves available for interviews, writing articles and books, speaking on television or the radio, holding news conferences, celebrating World Population Day and launching the UNFPA *State of World Population report*. A few mentioned use of the Internet to convey information on a wide scale.

3.3 PRIORITY ACTIVITIES

Respondents from both developing and donor countries rated providing information and raising awareness about ICPD issues vital to their work. More than twice as many mentioned it as any other activity.²³ One parliamentarian in the Democratic Republic of Congo said that, with help from UNFPA, he organized an awareness-raising workshop in collaboration with other members of the parliamentary group and the Ministries of Health and the Status of Women and the Family, at which participants drafted a law against sexual violence.



I discuss budgets with different social sector ministries: the Ministry of Women's Rights with respect to reproductive health; the Ministry of Education with respect to the fight against illiteracy; and the Ministry of Social Protection. I also work with the Finance Commission on the general budget and take part in discussions each year on the draft Finance Law to make the budget reflect gender issues."

— Female parliamentarian, Morocco

The importance assigned to information and awareness-raising activities indicates the greatest challenge to parliamentarians in promoting the Programme of Action. Understanding of ICPD issues and why they are important is fundamental to parliamentarians' other activities. A parliamentarian in Paraguay said that he helped to organize seminars on gender equality and social

The cooperation with Väestöliitto, which is the secretariat of the Finnish All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (APPG), has been unique and wonderful. For MPs, it is difficult to find and produce information, which is a basic need in our work, and one can always trust Väestöliitto for their expertise and quick provision of reliable information. It has such good national and international networks from which the APPG gets to benefit as well."

— Female parliamentarian, Finland

development, with the NGO *Centro de Promoción de la Mujer (PROMUR)*:

We invited parliamentarians and representatives of civil society, including international representatives. Last year, a prominent and interesting politician from Uruguay attended and talked about these issues within the framework of raising awareness, creating debate and sensitizing people to many issues that are "taboo" for many sectors of the population.

He added that the seminars dealt with draft laws, including a draft law on the elimination of all forms of discrimination that he presented in the Senate in collaboration with NGOs.

Most donor countries have legislation on ICPD issues, and it might be assumed that awareness of their significance is more widespread than in developing countries. However, a few donor-country parliamentarians noted that reproductive health and rights and gender equality were taken for granted – precisely because they were so widely accepted – which made it difficult to create interest in assistance to developing countries where the issues are more controversial.

²¹ The separate category on advocacy excludes activities mentioned separately (such as providing information, raising awareness, or holding hearings or work shops), and includes responses which referred to advocacy in general terms but did not specify particular activities.

²² Multiple answers resulted in some overlap in the two groups.

²³ These results are illustrated in Appendix 7.

OUR SUCCESSES

The primary work of parliamentarians is reviewing and approving legislation. The survey showed that their efforts paid off, with 250 pieces of legislation on a variety of health and human rights issues. This included drafting or amending laws or bills, as well as reviewing and approving budget allocations. Parliamentarians also approved resolutions and reports on topics of importance, and endorsed policies formulated by the executive branch.

4.1 LAWS ENACTED

Parliamentarians were requested to list their legislative contributions to the ICPD agenda.²⁴

Developing-country parliamentarians cited involvement in 217 laws, most often related to gender equality and women's empowerment (23%); gender-based violence (19%); reproductive health and rights (14%); children (7%); and social issues²⁵ (7%). Human rights, the family, youth and adolescents, HIV/AIDS, education, health, and population and development received less attention.

The countries that reported enacting most legislation represent every major region: Chile, Panama and Peru (at least nine each); Argentina, Moldova and Rwanda (eight each); Iran, Turkey and Viet Nam (seven each); Benin, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Tanzania and Sierra Leone (six each); and Indonesia and Mongolia (five each). Parliamentarians in 17 out of the 85 developing countries reported enacting no legislation on ICPD issues.

Donor-country parliamentarians listed far fewer laws, bills and policies than developing-country respondents, and far more increases in budgets. Only half of donor countries reported enacting legislation as opposed to 68 of 85 developing countries. There are two reasons for this disparity: many donor-country respondents reported on ways in which they had increased ODA for ICPD issues rather than on developments in their own countries, and

TABLE 11

Laws enacted, developing countries

<i>Subject matter</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>
Gender equality/women's empowerment	23	49
Gender-based violence	19	41
RHR	14	31
Children	7	15
Social issues- general	7	15
Family	6	12
Human rights	5	12
Health	5	10
Education	4	10
HIV/AIDS	4	8
Population and development	3	7
Youth/adolescents	3	7

many donor countries had already enacted various pieces of legislation on ICPD issues.

Donor-country parliamentarians most often reported laws prohibiting gender-based violence, including female

TABLE 12

Laws enacted, donor countries

<i>Subject matter</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>
Gender-based violence	30	10
RHR	27	9
Population and development	12	4
Gender equality/women's empowerment	6	2
Social issues	6	2
HIV/AIDS	6	2
Human rights	3	1
Children	3	1
Family	3	1
Youth/adolescents	3	1
Health	0	0
Education	0	0

genital cutting (FGC), trafficking and domestic violence (ten laws). The next most frequently mentioned subject matter was reproductive health and rights (nine laws), including four laws to increase access to abortion and three to approve the use of emergency contraception. Other laws dealt with a wide variety of ICPD issues. Parliamentarians from the following countries listed the highest number of laws: Japan (more than nine), Portugal (six) and Switzerland (five).

The volume of legislation is noteworthy. First, developing countries have legislated key parts of the ICPD Programme of Action; respondents were involved in at least 49 laws on gender equality and 31 laws on reproductive health and rights, the two ICPD issues in which parliamentarians expressed the greatest interest. Second, somewhat surprisingly, 41 laws in developing countries dealt with gender-based violence. Although it is also an important ICPD issue, the number of laws on gender-based violence does not reflect the lower emphasis parliamentarians placed on it. Third, despite the importance of HIV/AIDS to parliamentarians, only eight laws dealt with it.

Members of parliament from Latin America attending a council meeting.



Credit: IAPG

Those results may show that it is easier to build broad support for laws strengthening prohibitions against gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence, than it is to achieve consensus on such a complex phenomenon as HIV/AIDS, which challenges deeply held cultural and religious views and implicates a wide range of health, education, criminal and sexual issues. Although models of HIV/AIDS legislation exist, most are recent and there is little evidence about their effectiveness.

Given the severity of the AIDS pandemic and its adverse effect on other aspects of the ICPD agenda, UNFPA and the regional groups may want to assist parliamentarians in advocating for and developing HIV/AIDS legislation.

Regional disparities: When correlated by sub-region, a number of differences appeared, as summarized below.²⁶

- Gender equality and women's empowerment: highest in Central and South America and Central/Eastern Africa; lowest in South Asia, Southern Africa and donor countries.
- Reproductive health and rights: highest in South America and Central Asia; lowest in Central America, the Arab States, Southeast Asia and Southern Africa.
- HIV/AIDS: highest in Southeast and Central Asia; lowest in Central/Eastern Africa, Eastern Europe, the Arab States and South Asia.
- Gender-based violence: highest in South America and Southeast Asia; lowest in Central Asia, the Arab States and Western Africa.

Some of these disparities may be the result of powerful cultural and religious constraints among government and the general public in some regions. Some may arise from parliaments' failure to act; others from different perceptions of available opportunities or strategic choices on the best way to proceed.



The second piece of legislation that the group of female parliamentarians including myself has been active in supporting involves reproductive health. We analyzed the causes of the problem and drafted a law to respond to the problems. Now the draft is being promoted by the group of female parliamentarians. After we finished the draft, we went outside Bangkok 14 times to listen to what people thought of the draft. We received interesting comments from the villagers."

— Female parliamentarian, Thailand

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to strengthen support to parliamentarians in regions where legislation has not effectively addressed ICPD issues.

4.2 BILLS PROPOSED

The survey asked parliamentarians to list important draft legislation (bills) to advance the ICPD agenda in which they had been personally involved. In developing countries, they listed 152 separate bills in 58 countries, mainly on gender-based violence (17%), gender equality and women's empowerment (15%), reproductive rights and health (15%) and HIV/AIDS (13%). The first three corresponded to the laws enacted, but almost four times as many bills as laws involved HIV/AIDS. This difference reinforces the conclusion that parliamentarians are finding it more difficult to enact HIV/AIDS legislation than legislation supporting other ICPD issues. Respondents from donor countries mentioned only five bills from five countries.

4.3 POLICIES ADOPTED

Developing countries reported far fewer policies than laws or bills; only 64 policies from 32 countries. This is most probably because in most countries the executive branch of government, not parliamentarians, approve policies. The two most frequently reported

policies addressed population and gender (23% each). The prevalence of population policies is not surprising, since most countries choose policies rather than laws as the vehicle for comprehensive measures in this area. HIV/AIDS (13%) and health (9%) were the next most often mentioned. Parliamentarians from only three donor countries mentioned involvement in population-related policies.

4.4 INCREASED BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FOR ICPD ISSUES AND APPROVAL OF REPORTS AND DECLARATIONS

Parliamentarians in 44 out of 85 developing countries reported that they had been involved in increasing budget allocations for ICPD issues, and those in 24 countries had been involved in the adoption of population-related reports, resolutions or declarations. The small number of responses to these questions most probably reflects the fact that, in answering the survey, developing country parliamentarians were more focused on laws, bills and policies as important outcomes, rather than budgets, reports and declarations. This may also reflect the fact that parliamentarians had tried to increase budget allocations for ICPD issues, but were not successful, due to the lack of government's resources, among other reasons.



I have written resolutions and bills on women's rights in general. A number of them have hitherto passed; others are still waiting to be addressed. I often put forward questions to the ministers of foreign affairs and development cooperation, for instance, on women's issues at home and abroad. With colleagues from the parliamentary group on population and development, I have raised questions and organized study sessions on several occasions. The collaboration across party lines has proven beneficial to furthering the goals with regard to SRHR."

— Female parliamentarian, Denmark

In contrast, parliamentarians from 14 of the 19 donor countries and institutions reported being involved in increasing ODA, both overall ODA and assistance in specific ICPD areas such as HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and issues affecting women. Parliamentarians from six of the 14 countries specifically mentioned increases in their governments' contributions to UNFPA, including a doubling of contributions from one country. Parliamentarians from ten countries mentioned that they had been active in submitting or approving parliamentary reports and resolutions, on topics such as reproductive health and rights, FGC and support for the ICPD agenda.

4.5 EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT OTTAWA AND STRASBOURG STATEMENTS OF COMMITMENT

Among developing-country parliamentarians, 43% indicated that they were familiar with the Ottawa and/or Strasbourg Statements of Commitment and 25% of these referred in their answers to the statements' budget provisions. The sub-regions with the highest percentages of awareness were South America (64%), Eastern Europe (60%) and Southeast Asia (58%). The sub-regions with the lowest percentages of awareness were Central Asia (18%), Southern Africa (20%) and the Arab States (24%).²⁷

Respondents who indicated they were familiar with one or both of the two statements were asked to describe their efforts to implement them, including mobilizing resources for the ICPD agenda.

A significantly greater percentage of parliamentarians from donor countries than from developing countries noted that they were familiar with the Ottawa and/or Strasbourg Statements of Commitment (66% vs. 43%). One female respondent from Switzerland stated:

In Ottawa, parliamentarians committed themselves to work towards a goal of 10% of national development budgets for population and reproductive health programmes. Strasbourg strengthened this commitment; parliamentarians pledged to make every effort to allocate at least 10% of both national development budgets (for developing countries) and development assistance budgets (for donors) to population and reproductive health programmes. At both conferences, parliamentarians reaffirmed their commitment to allocating 0.7% of gross national product for ODA.

I have discussed both IPCI Conferences with officials of the Department for Development Cooperation (DDC) to ensure that Switzerland contributes funding to both. I was President of the IPCI Steering Committee in the preparations for Strasbourg and have remained on the Steering Committee since, having participated in the latest meeting in Tokyo in October 2005. In terms of follow-up, I have attempted to generate media interest in the conference and the issues in Switzerland by writing articles, giving interviews and desire to do more such work in preparation for the Bangkok IPCI. In addition, the Cairo+ group, of which I am a member, has used the Ottawa and Strasbourg Statements in our dealings with the DDC to reinforce our argument that 10% of Swiss ODA should be earmarked for SRHR, HIV and gender.

One-third of the donor-country parliamentarians who were aware of the statements referred specifically to the budgetary targets contained in the two statements.

²⁴ The information analyzed in this section is based on the responses of parliamentarians, as verified in some cases by focal points. Thus, it does not include the full range of legislative successes in various countries.

²⁵ Social issues include those issues that do not fall under other categories, such as labour laws and general social welfare.

²⁶ See Appendix 8 for more details.

²⁷ These results are illustrated in a table included in Appendix 9.

OUR PARTNERS

Parliamentarians concerned with population and development reach beyond their national borders to collaborate with UNFPA and the four regional groups, AFPPD, IAPG, FAAPPD and EPF. Support from these organizations includes the provision of information; the organization of meetings and conferences at the national and international levels; study tours; training on a wide variety of matters, among them advocacy and drafting legislation; and the exchange of experiences among parliamentarians. International NGOs, donor agencies, and other inter-governmental organizations and parliamentary networks have sponsored similar activities.

5.1 WORKING WITH THE REGIONAL GROUPS

Parliamentarians have a relatively low level of contact with the regional groups. About half of developing-country respondents worked with their regional group.²⁸ The sub-regions with the highest rates of participation were Southeast Asia (92%), South Asia (64%) and South America (60%). The lowest were Eastern Europe (11%), Southern Africa (13%) and the Arab States (31%). More donor-country parliamentarians (72%) indicated that they had worked with their regional group.

The regional groups may want to increase their efforts to involve all concerned parliamentarians in their activities.

Developing countries

In developing countries, regional groups' most popular activities were meetings, seminars, and conferences (80%), with 62% attending global and regional meetings, and 18% national meetings. Other activities mentioned were training sessions and workshops (50%); networking, building partnerships and sharing experiences (36%); and obtaining information and raising awareness (36%). Eight per cent of respondents had participated in study tours.

TABLE 13

Parliamentarians working with their regional groups, by sub-region

Sub-region	%
Donor countries	72
Central/Eastern Africa	38
Southern Africa	13
Western Africa	56
Arab States	31
Eastern Europe	11
Central Asia	33
South Asia	64
Southeast Asia	92
Pacific Islands	50
South America	60
Central America	53
Caribbean	20

The regional groups sponsored meetings, conferences and seminars on a wide range of topics, including health; reproductive health; education; women; HIV/AIDS; population and development; food security, and budgets,

TABLE 14

Activities with regional parliamentary groups, developing countries

Activity	%
Global/regional meetings, etc.	62
National meetings, etc.	18
Training/workshops	50
Networks/partnerships/ exchanging experiences	36
Information/raising awareness	36
Study tours	8
Creation of group	3
Evaluation/accountability	1
Financial/material support	1

among others. Meetings allowed them to share success stories, learn about what type of resources and legislative measures had been useful in other countries, exchange ideas for the implementation of the ICPD agenda, and maintain continuing contact with parliamentarians from other countries. For example, a female respondent from Switzerland called the IPCI/ICPD conferences "... extremely motivating. Seeing fellow MPs at each conference, learning what they have been doing and of their specific reality helps to better understand the issue. Many expert speakers at the conferences also provide further motivation to continue working on SRHR."

Networking, forming partnerships and exchanging experiences were also vital. A female respondent from Cambodia said:

The most useful activities were the ongoing exchanges and interactions amongst our global and regional assembly members. I first participated in an ICPD meeting in New Zealand. After we had the meeting, we were very well aware of the core of the ICPD and then we created the Cambodian Association of Parliamentarians on Population

and Development. Given that the main topics of the conference were women and reproductive health, it became such an important forum to allow many participants from different countries around the world to express their views, concerns and needs and come up with appropriate recommendations in addressing the needs of many women who greatly suffer from reproductive health problems.

Respondents also described meetings as an important forum for the provision of information and raising parliamentarians' own awareness about population issues in general and UNFPA's views on these issues. Meetings allowed deepening of knowledge, said a male respondent from the Philippines, sponsored by AFPPD to attend the 2006 High-Level Meeting on AIDS at the United Nations in New York:

The meeting reviewed progress in implementing the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS. Since cases of HIV/AIDS in the country are now surprisingly steadily increasing, both the executive and the legislative branches are now focusing on interventions for the prevention of the disease. Though we have pioneered

A Swiss parliamentarian visits with the South African Deputy Speaker of Parliament during a recent study tour to that country.



Credit: Michel Bühner

in crafting a law on HIV/AIDS, we believe that there should be a more aggressive implementation of the law. This meeting allowed me to deepen my knowledge on the constraints and opportunities of implementing the policy in other countries.

Many parliamentarians also said that the regional groups provided them with information outside of meetings through publications, information sheets and E-mail communication.

The other most frequently cited activity was participation in training and workshops, building parliamentarians' capacity in policymaking and advocacy. Parliamentarians placed particular emphasis on workshops which addressed how to be effective advocates for ICPD issues, and how to draft legislation, declarations and plans.

Asked about the most important activities with their regional group, fewer parliamentarians mentioned meetings, seminars and conferences, and more mentioned training and workshops, including training on advocacy and training on laws, declarations and plans. Although most parliamentarians had attended meetings, they found direct technical support on advocacy and legislation more important.

Donor countries

Donor-country respondents most often mentioned meetings, seminars and conferences (90%); obtaining information and raising awareness (38%); study tours (34%); and networking, building partnerships and sharing experiences (31%).

They were much less likely than their developing country counterparts to have taken part in training and much more likely to have participated in study tours. This is probably because most donor-country parliamentarians were more concerned with promoting the ICPD Programme of Action in developing countries rather than developing their own parliamentary skills.

Donor-country parliamentarians pointed to three activities as most important: global and regional meetings;

TABLE 15

Activities with regional parliamentary groups, donor countries

Activity	%
Global/regional meetings, etc.	69
National meetings, etc.	21
Information/raising awareness	38
Study tours	34
Networks/partnerships/ exchanging experiences	31
Training/workshops	14
Financial/material support	3
Creation of group	0
Evaluation/accountability	0

study tours; and networking, building partnerships and exchanging experiences.

A number of respondents found study tours particularly helpful for the opportunity to observe what was happening on the ground in developing countries, to learn about the “real-life” context of ICPD issues and understand the seriousness of individuals’ problems. A female Belgian respondent noted:

Study tours have been very important for the functioning of the national group on population and development and have been an important motivator for individual parliamentarians. It takes you away from all the theory. You can see different and original approaches to how information on SRHR is being distributed. Knowledge on the issues and problems of people in the South becomes much clearer. Visiting projects in the field and seeing the problems in reality gives a better idea of the things at stake and makes it easier to determine what we as parliamentarians can do.

She called the impact of her own study tour to Morocco “enormous.”

There was a meeting with [Moroccan] ministerial staff and civil servants where [Belgian] parliamentarians

handed over a list of recommendations and gave feedback on issues like maternal health, empowerment of women, etcetera. A report with the recommendations was produced and distributed widely. Local organizations and Moroccan civil society in Belgium were very interested. Visiting projects is really interesting.

Some parliamentarians felt that study tours can also lead to increases in governments’ contributions to UNFPA and overall ODA. Parliamentarians with field experience are also better able to report on and make recommendations about accountability systems to monitor assistance.

5.2 WORKING WITH UNFPA

More than two-thirds of respondents had worked with UNFPA: 73% of developing-country respondents and 68% from donor countries. The highest proportions came from Central Asia and Southern Africa (100%), South and Southeast Asia (81% each) and Central and Eastern Africa (77%). The lowest proportions came from the Arab States (50%) and Eastern Europe (52%).²⁹ In developing countries as a whole, far more respondents had direct contact with UNFPA than with their regional groups (73% vs. 51%). One explanation could be that some parliamentarians may not have been aware that their regional group sponsored meetings or activities in which they participated, or may have remembered UNFPA rather than regional-group sponsorship. But it could also be that parliamentarians from some regions have worked with UNFPA more often than their regional group.³⁰

Although UNFPA has been successful in assisting the great majority of parliamentarians, it may want to increase its efforts to reach parliamentarians in underserved regions.

Developing countries

The activities developing-country parliamentarians indicated as most important were broadly the same as those with their regional groups, with one significant differ-

ence: respondents mentioned obtaining information and financial support from UNFPA much more often. This is probably because UNFPA maintains permanent country offices in all regions of the developing world and is in a better position than the regional groups to provide information and respond to questions. Parliamentarians from seven different countries pointed to UNFPA assistance in the formation of a population and development parliamentary group.

There were many examples of how UNFPA is benefiting their work. One female respondent from Uganda wrote that UNFPA-sponsored seminars improved knowledge of the issues among the general public. “Many of these issues were not known to the communities and leaders at local government levels,” she explained. “The seminars conducted by Uganda parliamentary forum members who were sponsored by UNFPA were eye openers to the communities and other groups.”

One poignant result, she said, concerned a district chairman’s reaction to his district population report. Later, while visiting the district hospital and actually finding very young girls with birth complications, the chairman noted, “I didn’t know that this was happening in my district and worse still, I didn’t know that young

TABLE 16
Activities with UNFPA, developing countries

Activity	%
Training/workshops	59
Global/regional meetings, etc.	28
National meetings	27
Information/raising awareness	43
Financial/material support	11
Networks/partnerships/ exchanging experiences	8
Creation of group	7
Study tours	4
Technical support ³¹	4

girls suffer from pregnancy-related complications like this.” Now he is supporting programmes related to adolescent reproductive health.

In Mongolia, a female parliamentarian noted that a UNFPA-funded project implemented by the Standing Committee on Social Policy had helped her work to advance ICPD issues.

“The project is aimed at improving the capacity of parliamentarians to advocate for reproductive health and population and development issues,” she said. “It supports a consultative process on population-related laws and policies, through round tables among MPs and concerned parties and public debates.” She added that several debates and round tables were organized on population-related issues, including civil registration, internal migration, domestic violence, gender disparities in education and informal sector employment. “These consultative processes have contributed to improved laws,” she concluded.

Donor countries

Donor-country parliamentarians rated as important the same activities with UNFPA as with their regional group: attending global, regional and national meetings and receiving information. As noted by a male American



We have worked with UNFPA in drafting the Beijing +10 National Report on the Progress Achieved in the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and launching it at the Parliament House, as well as in drafting the National Report regarding the achievement of the MDGs. UNFPA also assisted us with preparing the seminar on “Preventing and Fighting Domestic Violence — legislative measures for the real protection of victims of violence”, organized by the Committee for Equal Opportunities in cooperation with the National Coalition of NGOs involved in gender-based violence programmes. UNFPA provides us with ongoing technical, logistic assistance and expertise in the areas of domestic violence, gender equity, reproductive health, etc., to keep parliament members abreast of important events organized by the UN agencies and informed about the main UNFPA areas of activity.”

— Female parliamentarian, Romania

respondent: “The ways that UNFPA is most helpful to me are twofold: 1) bringing to my attention emerging issues and information, and 2) providing information in response to needs that my office identifies.”

TABLE 17

Activities with UNFPA, donor countries

Activity	%
Global/regional meetings, etc.	59
National meetings	11
Information/raising awareness	46
Study tours	30
Networks/partnerships/exchanging experiences	16
Financial/material/support	5
Training/workshops	5
Technical support	3
Creation of group	0

5.3 WORKING WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

In developing countries, 77% had worked with other international partners: 43% of them with international NGOs and CSOs; 30% with other UN agencies and inter-governmental organizations such as the World Bank; 17% with regional parliamentary groups (other than the four mentioned above) and parliamentary groups from other countries; 9% with donor bilateral aid agencies; and 2% with academic organizations.

Activities with these organizations were similar to those with UNFPA and the regional groups; 54% found participation in training and workshops most useful.

Significantly fewer donor-country (52%) than developing-country respondents (77%) replied that they had worked with other partners: 53% of them had worked with international NGOs/CSOs; 25% with other parliamentary groups; 19% with other UN agencies and inter-governmental organizations; and 3% with academic institutions. Most important were study tours, receiving

information and raising awareness, and meetings. The relatively smaller proportion of donor-country respondents working with other partners may reflect that they do not need much support in their own countries from such organizations.

UNFPA may want to compare their activities with those of other international groups to ascertain where collaboration and coordination would be productive and where duplication of effort could be avoided.

²⁸ See Appendix 3 to find which countries are covered by which regional group.

²⁹ These results are illustrated in a table in Appendix 10.

³⁰ Another explanation could be that, the questionnaire, as opposed to the instruction sheet for focal points, did not spell out the names of the regional groups. Some parliamentarians may have been confused about which regional groups were being referred to.

³¹ Some parliamentarians responded “technical support” without specifying what type of technical support was provided by UNFPA.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Parliamentarians face significant constraints in promoting the ICPD agenda, especially with potentially controversial issues such as reproductive health and rights, HIV/AIDS and gender equality. The constraints mentioned include: opposition from religious and cultural groups; lack of interest by the public and parliament; lack of political will; lack of information or misinformation; and problems associated with governance, such as bureaucracy and corruption. A lack of sufficient resources was also a major obstacle.

6.1 OTHER PARLIAMENTARIANS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Developing countries

The constraint most often cited by respondents from developing countries was that other parliamentarians and government agencies lacked information on ICPD issues. Almost as many respondents pointed out two other major obstacles: lack of political will or support and active opposition, including religious or cultural opposition.

A fourth major set of constraints related to the operation of government, including lack of resources; difficulties with bureaucratic procedures; lack of institutional memory; and other governance issues. These results are shown in Table 18.

Respondents noted that other parliamentarians and government agencies had little understanding of issues such as reproductive health and rights and gender equality. Some thought that reproductive health and population concerns were about sexual promiscuity or only about family planning, and had little opportunity to correct their information. Some respondents said that although their governments had approved the ICPD Programme of Action, they seemed to be unaware of the fact.

Another major obstacle was a lack of political will or support. Respondents felt that other parliamentarians and government ministries had little interest in ICPD issues, giving much greater priority to economic development or the strengthening of government institutions. They would make promises, but there would be no action. Some parliamentarians also pointed to the difficulties of overcoming party politics and the agendas of their own parties. In very poor countries, officials were more concerned with the problems of poverty and day-to-day needs. A female respondent from Zimbabwe commented:

Poverty has taken us back in terms of implementation of the ICPD goals. In some cases, the allies that I rely on for support for ICPD issues are not very knowledgeable. Sometimes the government does not see the need for prioritizing issues of gender with respect to other topics, e.g. HIV/AIDS, and hence some very good interventions end up getting lost. Also, since gender roles determine the way people live and relate with each other, there is a tendency from men to resist anything that might bring about change in the benefits that men derive from maintaining the

TABLE 18

Constraints in working with other parliamentarians and government agencies, developing countries (per cent)

Constraint	Male	Female	Both
Information gap	51	46	49
Lack of political will/support	36	50	43
Opposition, including religious and cultural opposition	33	55	43
Financial/material	33	26	29
Procedural	29	15	22
Lack of institutional memory	8	9	8
Governance	9	7	8
Lack of capacity	5	4	4

I am faced with the following constraints: a) inadequate priority accorded to the population issues on the part of government institutions owing to bureaucracy and red-tape; b) lack of interest to implement population activities on the part of many government workers due to their social background; c) the difficulty of large segments of society, in daily life, in accepting population policies or attempts to affect women's empowerment and their rights; and d) lack of implementation and coordination by government institutions in raising awareness about women's issues and introducing changes in local communities."

— Male parliamentarian, Syria

status quo. Further, deepening poverty has forced the gender agenda to take a lower profile as people are battling with day-to-day food and survival issues.

Parliamentarians found active opposition from parliamentarians and government officials equally challenging. Some spoke about conservative and right-wing attitudes of other parliamentarians, the executive branch of government and general cultural “taboos.” Many others pointed to religious opposition, particularly from anti-choice groups. These obstacles were particularly serious with respect to the reproductive rights of persons suffering from HIV/AIDS—people who were often the subject of discrimination. A female respondent from Bolivia remarked:

Many officials, government agencies and legislators have conservative attitudes and are misinformed about reproductive health issues. They are very aware of the pressure of opposing institutions such as the Catholic and other Christian Churches on the handling of these issues. There is no lack of groups and sectors that treat these activities ideologically and politically to the detriment of progress.

Some parliamentarians found lack of institutional memory a significant obstacle, for example frequent changes of government officials and rapid turnover among parliamentarians. New parliamentarians did not have sufficient knowledge or experience of working on ICPD issues. A male Mongolian respondent pointed out that, because parliament members are elected for a limited time, activities can be difficult to sustain. “The committee’s activities are not institutionalized and run only on the basis of individual members’ initiatives,” he added. “Parliamentarians have a poor understanding and awareness of ICPD issues. Political forces have conflicting viewpoints on methodologies.”

Parliamentarians cited administrative difficulties in working with unresponsive bureaucracies and government ministries, and with unaccountable or incompetent government officials. Some noted poor institutional coordination or lack of a parliamentary group on population. Others mentioned even more deep-seated governance problems, including fraud and corruption, the expectation of officials to be paid for their support, bad faith and political instability. A lack of resources was also frequently mentioned.

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to explore ways to maintain parliamentary momentum for implementation of the ICPD Programme

TABLE 19
Constraints in working with other parliamentarians and government agencies, donor countries (per cent)

Constraint	Male	Female	Both
Lack of political will/support	55	61	59
Opposition, including religious and cultural opposition	36	36	36
Information gap	18	36	32
Procedural	18	15	16
Financial/material	27	6	11
Lack of institutional memory	9	3	5
Governance	0	3	2
Lack of capacity	0	0	0

of Action despite the frequent turnover of parliamentarians. This might include involving former parliamentarians in efforts to build the capacity of new parliamentarians to be effective advocates for ICPD issues.

Donor countries

In donor countries, the greatest percentage of respondents mentioned lack of political will and support. The next most frequent responses were active opposition, including religious and cultural opposition, and lack of information. Donor country respondents far less frequently mentioned financial constraints than their developing country counterparts, and pointed to a lack of political will and support far more often. These results indicate that, despite the generally liberal attitudes of most donor countries towards ICPD issues, there still exists significant opposition or disinterest in these countries. A number of



Maintaining the priority of ICPD issues in a busy, competitive political agenda is difficult. We seem to be almost constantly in an election environment, and the electoral importance of ICPD issues is not high. As mentioned earlier, we have the legacy of political deals, which has entrenched a very conservative approach to ODA funding, as well as to health education and reproductive rights. There is an electoral fear of the conservative forces, which permeates policy consideration on both sides of government at state and federal levels. This should be challenged, but still blocks progress on abortion law reform at the state level, and ODA policy federally. Seemingly the only time that overseas aid issues/MDGs get media coverage is during a crisis, such as the Tsunami period, or if there is some scandal about corruption or tax money being wasted."

— Female parliamentarian, Australia

TABLE 20

Constraints in working with other parliamentarians and government agencies, developing countries (per cent)

Constraint	Male	Female	Both
Opposition, including religious and cultural opposition	41	60	51
Procedural, including lack of institutional coordination	34	27	31
Information gap	44	32	25
Financial/material	28	19	24
Lack of interest/commitment	13	10	12
Lack of capacity	5	8	7
Lack of political will/support	1	9	5
Governance	4	3	3

parliamentarians specifically noted a resurgence of conservative religious groups.

6.2 OUTSIDE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS

Developing countries

The same constraints topped the list of obstacles cited by developing-country respondents in working with outside groups and individuals as within government, with two distinct differences.

First, more parliamentarians described procedural problems, in particular institutional coordination. They referred to conflicts with NGOs and government agencies, and lack of coordination among NGOs. Second, parliamentarians more frequently reported opposition from specific groups, mostly religious. This opposition was even greater than within government.

Donor countries

Active opposition, including religious and cultural opposition, was by far the greatest constraint cited by donor-country respondents in working outside government. In fact, they pointed to this constraint more often than their developing-country counterparts (64% vs. 51%). This may be because, while groups that oppose the ICPD agenda are a social minority in donor coun-

tries, they appear to be more organized and have more resources and political influence than in developing countries. Also, donor-country parliamentarians do not face the same procedural and financial constraints as developing-country parliamentarians, and appear to be more committed to some of the more sensitive aspects of the Programme of Action. The next most frequently mentioned constraints were lack of information, followed by lack of political will or support and lack of interest.

TABLE 21

Constraints in working with individuals and groups outside government, donor countries (per cent)

<i>Constraint</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Both</i>
Opposition, including religious and cultural opposition	29	73	64
Information gap	43	42	42
Lack of political will/support	14	12	12
Lack of interest/commitment	14	12	12
Procedural, including lack of institutional coordination	14	8	9
Lack of capacity	14	0	3
Financial/material	0	4	3
Governance	0	0	0

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to explore additional ways of helping parliamentarians counter religious and cultural opposition to the ICPD agenda. They may also want to facilitate developing-country parliamentarians' contacts and coordination with NGOs.

Gender disparities: Female parliamentarians pointed far more often to a lack of political will and active opposition as obstacles to their efforts, and a significant number of women specifically described the opposition of men. Two factors may account for this difference: women hold comparatively few seats in most parliaments and may face opposition because of their gender; they also expressed more interest than men in the controversial issues of women's empowerment and gender-based violence.

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to increase efforts to sensitize male parliamentarians on the importance of gender issues and the need to correct stereotyped attitudes about women's roles in society.

Regional disparities: Opposition was more often described as a constraint in Eastern Europe and South America, and specifically religious and cultural attitudes in South America. This may reflect the political power of the religion in Latin America and the recent growth of religious beliefs and conservative attitudes against ICPD issues in Eastern Europe.

6.3 STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME CONSTRAINTS

By far, the most prevalent answer to what activities work best in overcoming various difficulties was providing information to, or raising the awareness of, groups and individuals. Almost half of developing-country respondents mentioned this strategy. The other two most useful activities were building networks, partnerships and coalitions and engaging in advocacy. The findings from donor-country parliamentarians matched those from developing countries.

These strategies appeared to be most appropriate to the constraints identified. The provision of information and raising awareness responded to the observed lack of information,

TABLE 22

Most useful activities for overcoming constraints, developing countries

<i>Activity</i>	<i>%</i>
Information/ raising awareness	48
Networks/partnerships	28
Advocacy	22
Meetings	11
Training/workshops	8
Use of media	5
Coordination of activities	3
Obtaining external financial support	3
Creating political will	3

TABLE 23

Most useful activities for overcoming constraints, donor countries

Activity	%
Information/raising awareness	67
Advocacy	47
Networks/partnerships	25
Meetings	6
Creating political will	6
Use of media	3
Coordination of activities	0
Obtaining external financial support	0
Training/workshops	0

and engaging in advocacy and forming partnerships and networks with like-minded groups were crucial to creating political will and support for overcoming opposition.

Respondents stressed the need to involve all sectors of society, to build mass support and publicize it. Collaboration with important people is a good strategy, they thought, as well as broad-scale public discussions and debates, even with opposition groups. A male respondent from the Philippines said:

With regard to the counter-advocacy of the Catholic Church, we believe it best to stick to the facts. We must also showcase the overwhelming support of the stakeholders and the public on the issue. We conduct surveys that consistently show that more than half of the population says that they WANT population and reproductive health programs. We relate the need for the policy with what is really happening at the household levels and give a “human face” to the statistics that we present. All of these facts are disseminated through mass media, forums and conferences, and help inform our direct advocacy with decision-makers.

A female respondent from Brazil commented:

In the first place, it is important to show that you are not alone, that it is not just individual capriciousness, and that these initiatives have institutional support.

It is impossible to achieve success with any legislative proposal or public policy if you act without coalitions of women’s groups and civil society organizations. Alliances and coalitions are fundamental. They have worked with respect to achieving minimum quotas for women in legislative slates and in facing the problems of violence and the safety of citizens. It is necessary to identify allies in all institutional areas. As a political woman committed to the full support of women, I find that some issues such as reproductive and sexual health and rights are not popular politically. Thus it is necessary that any legislative proposal or policy in this area have a critical mass of support from organizations with a presence in society.



Information, education, media activities, amendments — simply keeping the key issues as much on the agenda as possible and confronting those who oppose or don’t care about ICPD-issues as often as possible. My work is largely one of raising the profile of UNFPA, women’s rights, reproductive health, family planning, obstetric fistula, gender and all the other issues in as compelling ways as possible.”

— Female parliamentarian, USA

6.4 OBSTACLES TO IMPLEMENTING LAWS AND POLICIES

The few parliamentarians who responded to the question on implementation of laws and policies identified three major problems³²: lack of resources for implementation, including lack of infrastructure (51%); lack of awareness of laws, including the fact that laws are not reproduced in vernacular languages (50%); and lack of willingness to implement, including for reasons of religious and cultural opposition, and lack of political will (47%).

The most interesting aspect of the responses is not that obstacles to the full implementation of laws and policies exist, but that so few parliamentarians mentioned them; only 53 out of the 322 who answered the sur-

vey. This may indicate that most parliamentarians who actively promote the ICPD Programme of Action do not consider implementation and monitoring as part of their responsibilities. This is a serious problem, since lack of implementation of laws is a significant obstacle to the full realization of the ICPD agenda.

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to place greater emphasis on the oversight function of parliamentarians, in order to ensure that laws promoting the ICPD agenda are fully implemented.

Parliamentarians described strategies to overcome implementation problems: 56% described efforts to raise awareness of the public about the content of laws, including having laws translated into the vernacular, and 49% referred to efforts within the parliament to monitor implementation, including raising questions with responsible individuals or agencies. Others mentioned activities on the ground to check if laws were being properly implemented, sometimes with the help of NGOs; work with the media; and training of officials about implementation.³³ A male respondent from Iran observed:

We try to supervise every sector. All partner organizations must execute the law. We have inspection teams who investigate this problem and report it to the parliament. Sometimes we get reports of wrongdoings from outside sources and the inspection team studies their accuracy. The main point of inspection is to monitor the spending of budget allocations. We had cases when money was not spent at the right time or allocated budgets were transferred to other purposes by executive bodies. Every executive body must send its operational report every six months to the parliament or the relevant committee. The reports are studied and if anything unacceptable is seen, the issue will be raised before the supreme board of supervision of the parliament with one of the board of directors as its head, and if necessary, a team of inspectors will be sent to the mentioned organization and report back to the MPs.

³² Since only four parliamentarians from donor countries responded to this question, the results are analyzed together for both developing- and donor-country parliamentarians.

³³ The small number of responses to this question did not permit meaningful correlations to gender and region.

TABLE 24

Strategies to overcome implementation obstacles

Strategy	%
Information/raising awareness	56
Monitoring in parliament, including raising questions	49
Checking on the ground	27
Working with media	5
Advocacy	4
Training of officials	4
Follow-up on complaints	3

Other respondents also had strategies to overcoming obstacles. “In order to ensure the implementation of laws, I organize departmental meetings to explain the laws to different local actors who are responsible for their implementation,” stated a female respondent from France. “I also organize meetings with members of civil society, such as associations and unions who are able to play a role in the proper application of laws.”

“I am not very proud of the rate of implementation of all the laws on the promotion of gender equality that have been passed by the Parliament,” confessed a female respondent from Zimbabwe. “There has been a tendency to think that once a law has been passed, that is the end of the story, but experience has shown that passing the law is just the beginning.”

She pointed out that NGOs have worked on court monitoring of the sentences passed on rape offences in order to make a case for stiffer penalties for sexual offenders. “I have also worked with NGOs to conduct research into the extent to which widows have used the new inheritance laws to protect their property rights,” she said.

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to explore effective methods for monitoring the implementation of laws and policies and provide appropriate training to parliamentarians.

TOOLS WE NEED

Implementing the ICPD Programme of Action is not a simple matter. It encompasses a wide range of issues unfamiliar to parliamentarians and the public at large, many of which are highly controversial in some cultural and religious contexts. As respondents noted, they face active religious and other opposition, lack of understanding and political will, and poor implementation. The survey asked parliamentarians to describe what was needed to advance the ICPD agenda.

7.1 HOW REGIONAL GROUPS AND UNFPA CAN BEST HELP

The survey asked parliamentarians how the regional groups and UNFPA can best assist their work. In developing countries, the five most frequently mentioned forms of support were: training and workshops, including training on, or help with, advocacy and work on laws, declarations and plans (55%); the provision of information and awareness raising (41%); strengthening of networks, partnerships and an exchange of experiences

with others (33%); national, regional and global meetings (33%); and financial and material support (30%).

The first four forms of support correlated well with the activities with regional groups parliamentarians found most important. Their answers indicate that they want more assistance in the work they consider most important.

Increased financial and material support was the fifth most frequent response. Most parliamentarians in developing countries have limited resources. Many are working in new democracies without strong traditions of supporting parliaments in their efforts to achieve social progress. Some may also be part-time parliamentarians. They need financial and material support to perform effectively.

The most popular response of donor-country parliamentarians was providing them with information and raising their awareness (77%). This was also among the most frequent responses from developing countries, although the percentage was not as high.

TABLE 25

Support needed from regional groups and UNFPA, developing countries

<i>Support needed</i>	<i>%</i>
Training/workshops	55
Information/raising awareness	41
Networks/partnerships/exchanging experiences	33
Global/regional/national meetings	33
Financial/material/support	30
Evaluation/accountability	8
Technical support	7
Creation of group	6
Study tours	5

TABLE 26

Support needed from regional groups and UNFPA, donor countries

<i>Support needed</i>	<i>%</i>
Information/raising awareness	77
Networks/partnerships/exchanging experiences	33
Global/regional/national meetings	23
Training/workshops	17
Financial/material/support	13
Study tours	10
Creation of group	3
Evaluation/accountability	3
Technical support	0

7.2 WHAT WE NEED FOR OUR WORK

The second time parliamentarians were asked their own needs, it was as a general question at the end of the survey and not in the context of their work with regional groups and UNFPA. The differences were striking.

In developing countries, relatively few parliamentarians referred to meetings, seminars and conferences and many more mentioned financial and material support. Because the question was posed outside the context of UNFPA and regional group activities, the responses may reflect more accurately than answers to the previous question parliamentarians' views on their essential needs.

TABLE 27

General support needed, developing countries

Support needed	%
Information/raising awareness	46
Financial/material/support	46
Training/workshops	45
Networks/partnerships/ exchanging experiences	27
Technical support	13
Global/regional/national meetings	9
Creation of political will	7
Evaluation/accountability	7
Study tours	3
Creation of group	0

Donor-country respondents' answers mirrored those of their developing-country counterparts. When asked about their general needs, they mentioned the importance of attending meetings and conferences far less often and financial and material needs far more often. Most parliamentarians, in developing and donor countries alike, have limited resources for their work.

UNFPA and the regional groups may want to explore increasing financial support for parliamentarians, targeting activities that they have found most useful.

TABLE 28

General support needed, donor countries

Support needed	%
Information/raising awareness	69
Financial/material/support	39
Training/workshops	32
Networks/partnerships/ exchanging experiences	25
Global/regional/national meetings	12
Creation of political will	11
Technical support	8
Study tours	6
Creation of group	6
Evaluation/accountability	3

7.3 WHAT WE NEED TO ADVANCE THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION GLOBALLY

The final question of the survey asked parliamentarians what they believed was needed to advance the ICPD agenda globally. Forty-two respondents expressed a need for stronger global mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action; 29 wanted more monitoring of developments in each country, including how parliamentarians had honoured their commitments. This included reporting on best practices as well as country accomplishments and progress. Thirteen respondents suggested reinforcing inter-parliamentary



We need the opportunity to discuss issues informally with major stakeholders (NGOs, MoFA, UNFPA), to share ideas prior to formulation of policies, to have practical experiences (study tours), and to have a strong network of like-minded MPs around the world and within Europe in order to share experiences and further advance the agenda."

— Female parliamentarian, Denmark

contacts. A male parliamentarian from Venezuela reflected this concisely:

What is needed is information on how the debate is going in other countries, where are the reflections headed, how legislation is being approved, and what the parliaments in Europe and other countries in the Americas are doing. I believe that comparative analysis could give us an important frame of reference for the legislative work that we can do on these issues.

Twenty-seven respondents discussed the ICPD Programme of Action in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).³⁴ Parliamentarians expressed the need to link the ICPD Programme of Action and the MDGs, stating, for example, that the MDGs could not be fulfilled without the implementation of ICPD. Some feared that the MDGs have superseded the Programme of Action. A Canadian parliamentarian stressed:

The ICPD and MDG have to be linked together. I can't see how we could talk about the MDGs without talking about the ICPD and vice versa, because the MDGs speak to the basic things such as education, health, sanitation, and a lot about the woman. All of those things are important in the implementation of the ICPD. You can't talk about women's health ...just reproductive health without talking about other things like malaria, because they are interrelated.

UNFPA may want to strengthen its activities to monitor countries' progress in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action, and increase contacts among parliamentarians outside the biennial global conferences. In light of the focus of the development community on the MDGs, UNFPA and the regional groups may want to emphasize for parliamentarians the importance of linking ICPD issues with the MDGs.

“There is still a need for funding and support, and for that funding to be for longer terms and to be increased, because interruptions may lead to a lapse in activities,” said one male respondent from Jordan. “Funding from UNFPA and other international organizations is crucial,” he stated, “to continuing achievements and to carrying on a dialogue related to population-related programs through meetings and other channels of providing legislators with information.”

A respondent from Cambodia agreed. “The most required needs are the support from UNFPA and AFPPD,” she wrote. “Once the financial and technical support is available, we can build up human resources of MPs by which the promotion of ICPD Programme of Action will be improved.”



There is a need for more collaboration among parliamentarians at all levels of government and knowledge and skill-sharing at regional and intra-regional levels. More experiences and resources should be made available to promote innovative strategies especially for young people and women. There should be effective prioritization of ICPD issues in the global agenda for development, and governments should be more accountable for making progress for the ICPD Programme of Action and the MDGs.”

— Male parliamentarian, Ghana

³⁴ In 2000, world leaders adopted the MDGs as a distillation of many of the development goals agreed at international conferences and world summits of the 1990s. The MDGs were designed to serve as an overall blueprint for development activities through 2015 and set specific goals for eliminating extreme poverty and hunger, promoting gender equality, improving maternal and child health, and addressing HIV/AIDS, among others.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Parliamentarians are among the most important contributors to the successful implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the MDGs. They pass the laws that create an enabling environment and they appropriate the resources required for successful implementation.

To be an effective parliamentarian calls for a wide range of skills. Parliamentarians must have the intelligence to understand complex issues and the expertise to formulate legislation and budgets. But legislative abilities are not enough; parliamentarians must also be advocates. They must have the capacity to marshal facts and the power to present them forcefully and persuasively. Perhaps most importantly, they must have “people skills.” They must be adept at working with individuals and groups, building coalitions, negotiating strategies and reaching compromises between the ideal and what can be achieved.

The parliamentarians who participated in this survey have significant successes to their credit. They have been involved in 250 laws in 77 countries; 157 bills in 63 countries; and 67 policies in 35 countries, most of which dealt with key ICPD issues. Among the laws passed, 51 related to gender equality, 51 to gender-based violence, 40 to reproductive health and rights, and ten to HIV/AIDS. Fifteen policies each on population and gender and another nine on HIV/AIDS were among the policies promoted by respondents to this survey. In addition, respondents from 58 countries reported increased budgets for ICPD issues, including 14 donor countries that were able to increase ODA. These achievements are all the more notable because the parliamentarians were describing successes in which they had personally been involved, not the full range of successes since the adoption of the ICPD Programme of Action in 1994.

These parliamentarians have embraced the ICPD agenda and worked effectively for its implementation.

Working with other like-minded colleagues within parliament, often through organized population and development groups, respondents have laboured assiduously to convince other parliamentarians about the merit of ICPD issues. By means of hearings, workshops and parliamentary questions, they have striven to keep reproductive health and gender equality at the forefront of the parliamentary agenda. They have also collaborated with government ministries to formulate progressive policies and negotiated with them to increase both domestic and ODA funds for ICPD issues.

Outside parliament, they have worked with a wide variety of local institutions, CSOs and NGOs, particularly women’s groups, and the media to sensitize the public at large about ICPD. Through meetings, seminars and conferences, they have educated people about the often-unfamiliar and sometimes controversial issues of reproductive health and rights, gender equality, HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence. They have contacted social and religious leaders to enlist their support in overcoming deeply held religious and cultural opposition. Their many successes are a credit to their hard work, commitment and tenacity.

Yet, despite these successes, the survey also indicated that the road ahead is still long and bumpy. Important legislation in developing countries regarding gender equality and violence against women has been enacted, but the lack of political will and growing religious and cultural opposition prevented legislation in the critical area of HIV/AIDS. Bills on HIV/AIDS were introduced, but most were not adopted. Donor countries were also faced with growing opposition, a lack of political will and apathy.

Parliamentarians’ colleagues and the public at large were not always well informed on various issues or had

conflicting priorities. Entrenched non-responsive and non-accountable bureaucracies have hampered some of their best efforts. Parliamentarians have limited staff and resources and must often contend with differing views in their constituencies. Even when they succeed in enacting progressive legislation, lack of effective implementation can defeat their hard work.

To overcome these constraints, respondents from both developing and donor countries agreed that their first need was for good and accurate information and arguments on ICPD issues. Developing-country respondents also stressed the need for training on advocacy and for technical support in crafting effective laws and policies, including the use of model laws. Donor-country parliamentarians found study tours particularly useful to see first-hand the situation in developing countries and how ODA was being used. Both groups valued global and regional meetings where they could share successes and learn from their colleagues. Finally, both groups emphasized the need for financial, material and human resources for their work.

The regional parliamentary groups on population and development and UNFPA have helped to meet some of these needs. They have been a critical source of information for parliamentarians. They have sponsored workshops and training sessions with experts to increase the capacity of parliamentarians for advocacy and drafting legislation, and they have sponsored study tours. They have also convened meetings and conferences at

the national, regional and global levels where parliamentarians have shared experiences and formed networks for continuing contacts.

The parliamentarians who participated in the survey are the backbone of local initiatives and successes, but their numbers are still relatively small. ICPD is still relegated to the back burner in many developing and donor countries. It is hoped that the recommendations contained in this report will help chart the way forward for parliamentarians, the regional groups and UNFPA in their joint effort to fully implement the ICPD goals and the MDGs by 2015.³⁵

There is much work to do. HIV/AIDS has become an even greater threat since ICPD was adopted in 1994. The statistics on maternal mortality have not changed significantly, while funding for family planning has dropped from 55% of donor population funding in 1995 to 9% today. Voluntary family planning is not only a human right; it is the first line of defence against maternal morbidity and mortality and rapid population growth. Yet over 200 million women worldwide still lack access to family planning. While funds for AIDS treatment have grown exponentially, as they should, it has been at the expense of funds for women's reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention. And the supply of commodities is far short of current and future reproductive health needs.

To succeed, all actors must work together and must work quickly. 2015 is only several years away.

³⁵ See Appendix 11 for a summary of regional disparities identified by the survey.

APPENDIX 1

Survey

IPCI ICPD Global Survey on Parliamentarians' Activities to Implement The ICPD Programme of Action

Country: _____

Completed by: _____ (name and contact information of the national focal point)

Names of individual parliamentarians answering the questionnaire: _____

I. BACKGROUND OF PARLIAMENTARIANS ANSWERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. If you are part of a national cross-party parliamentary group on population-related issues or a formal committee within the national parliament, please describe the group or committee in terms of:
 - Name of group or committee;
 - Issues of concern;
 - Number of members;
 - Party membership; and
 - Age, gender and professional background of the group members.
2. Please provide information on your age, gender, professional background and experiences, membership in the upper or lower house of parliament, political party.
3. Please describe your particular population-related interests and the reasons why you became interested in these issues.

II. PARLIAMENTARY EXPERIENCES

4. Please describe your experiences in working with government officials and agencies and other members of parliament in furthering ICPD issues.
5. Please describe your experiences in working with individuals and groups outside of government in furthering ICPD issues.

6. What activities and relationships have you found to be the most useful in promoting an enabling environment and mobilizing resources for implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action?
7. Of all the issues addressed in ICPD, which are of the highest priority to you in your work? Please explain your reasons for assigning higher priority to these issues and/or lower priority to other concerns.

III. OUTCOMES

8. Please describe important legislative and policy achievements that you have been personally involved in to advance the ICPD Programme of Action.

These achievements could be:

- a) drafting and/or adoption of specific laws and policies
- b) improved budgetary allocations for ICPD issues and UNFPA
- c) adoption of parliamentary reports, resolutions and declarations

In the areas of:

- a) overall ICPD agenda
- b) population and development
- c) reproductive health and rights
- d) gender equality, equity and women's empowerment
- e) youth and adolescents
- f) HIV/AIDS

9. Are you familiar with the Ottawa and Strasbourg Statements of Commitment? If so, please describe your ongoing efforts to implement these Statements, including mobilizing resources for the ICPD agenda.

IV. PARTNERSHIPS WITH REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS AND UNFPA

10. Please describe your experiences in working with your regional parliamentary group.
11. What activities sponsored by your regional group have you found to be most useful in your work?
12. What activities sponsored by UNFPA have you found to be most useful in your work?
13. How do you believe that the regional parliamentary groups and UNFPA might better assist you in your work?
14. Have you worked with other groups? If so, what activities sponsored by these groups have you found to be most useful?

V. CONSTRAINTS AND STRATEGIES

15. Please describe the major difficulties that you have faced in working with government officials and agencies and other members of parliament in furthering ICPD issues.
16. Please describe the major difficulties that you have faced in working with individuals and groups outside of government in furthering ICPD issues.
17. What strategies have you found to be most useful in overcoming these difficulties?
18. Please describe your experiences with the implementation of laws and policies that have been approved by your country to promote the ICPD Programme of Action.
19. What do you think is most needed to assist you in your work to promote the ICPD Programme of Action?
20. What do you believe is most needed to further advance the ICPD Programme of Action globally?

APPENDIX 2

Instruction Sheet For Survey



Global Survey on Parliamentarians' Activities to Implement The ICPD Programme of Action

Instructions for Administration of the Survey

BACKGROUND

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994 was a milestone in the field of population and development as well as in women's rights history. The Conference adopted a twenty-year forward looking Programme of Action on population, gender and reproductive health and reproductive rights, building on the success of the previous decades and addressing the needs of the early years of the twenty-first century.

A critical component in implementation of the ICPD agenda is the work of parliamentarians in individual countries. Parliamentarians create an enabling legislative and policy environment at the national level and are responsible for allocating adequate national and international resources for the implementation of the ICPD agenda.

In recognition of the importance of their role, UNFPA has strongly supported the activities of the four regional parliamentarian groups on population and development. In 2001 these groups resolved that an International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD) would be held biannually to review progress, constraints and new developments. The first conference was held in 2002 in Ottawa; the second was held in 2004 in Strasbourg; and the next conference will be held in Bangkok on 21-22 November 2006.

In October 2005, the IPCI/ICPD Steering Committee decided that the major theme for the 2006

Bangkok conference would be taking stock of the progress made by parliamentarians since Cairo, Ottawa and Strasbourg in advancing the ICPD agenda. To achieve that goal, they agreed to conduct this Global Survey to assess the progress made and lessons learned by parliamentarians in their national, regional and global activities. The report of the Survey will form the basis of discussion at the 2006 Bangkok conference and sent to all UNFPA Country Offices and the secretariats of the national parliamentary groups on population and development.

In 2000, Member States of the United Nations adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to help the world's poorest countries significantly progress towards a better life. It is our hope that the findings from this Survey will help inform UNFPA, parliamentary groups and other partners in our efforts to chart the best way forward for the full implementation of the ICPD and the MDGs by 2015.

OBJECTIVES

The major purpose of this Survey is to determine what role parliamentarians have played in creating an enabling legislative and policy environment and mobilizing resources in both developed and developing countries for ICPD implementation. To that end, the Survey will monitor and analyze the following:

- 1) Actions taken by national parliamentary groups/parliamentarians at the national, regional and global levels since Cairo to create an enabling legislative and policy environment and mobilize resources;

- 2) The extent to which these actions have led to concrete results; and
- 3) Major successes, constraints, lessons learned and recommendations for future parliamentary activities.

COMPLETING THE GLOBAL SURVEY

General Instructions

This Survey has been designed by UNFPA in consultation with the following four regional parliamentary groups on population and development:

- Inter-European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (IEPFPD)
- Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)
- African and Arab Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD)
- Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG)

Each of these groups is responsible for distributing the Survey to the UNFPA Country Representatives in all countries in its respective region in which UNFPA has a presence. (In cases where there is an independent secretariat for the national parliamentary group on population and development, the regional group may send the Survey directly to the secretariat staff with a copy to the UNFPA Country Representative.) In countries where UNFPA does not have a presence but there exists a national parliamentary group on population and development, the Survey should be sent to the secretariat of the national group.

The UNFPA Country Representative or the secretariat of the national group will designate a national focal point for the administration of the Survey. In countries where UNFPA has a presence, the national focal point should be either the Country Representative, someone from the Country Office or a person identified by the Country Office. In cases where there is an independent secretariat for the national group, the focal point should be a staff member of the secretariat. In the case of donor

countries, the focal point will be a staff member of the NGO that serves as the secretariat of an all-party parliamentary group on population and reproductive health. The regional groups will be responsible for providing technical assistance to the national focal points on how to administer the Survey and for responding to any questions and requests they may have. They will also provide support in French, Spanish and Arabic translations of the Survey.

The national focal point will choose several key members (4-5) of a national cross-party parliamentary group on population-related issues to answer the Survey. If no such group exists, the national focal point will choose several key members of a relevant committee(s) within the national parliament to respond to the Survey. In countries where a relevant committee does not exist, the national focal point may choose several individual parliamentarians who have been involved in population-related issues, regardless of their membership in a certain parliamentary committee. For all of the above cases, parliamentarians should be selected by virtue of their contribution and commitment to population-related issues. Due consideration should be given to gender balance, representation of major political parties, diverse perspectives, and institutional memory. In order to ensure institutional memory, former parliamentarians may also be invited to participate in the Survey. Members of state or provincial parliaments are not within the scope of this Survey.

The national focal point should administer the Survey orally in person with the selected parliamentarians in separate sessions and write down the responses. The questionnaire should be sent to the parliamentarians in advance of the interview, in order for them to reflect on the questions and think about their answers. Before questions are asked, the national focal point should succinctly and precisely explain the background and purpose of the Survey.

In collaboration with the country officer, the focal point should then compile the responses of individual parliamentarians into one consolidated feedback from the

country. They should also prepare a context note for the interviews. This note should consist of a description of the political environment in which the parliamentarians carry out their activities; the interviewer's assessment of how successful the interviews were, including perceptions of the level of activities carried out by parliamentarians and possible exaggerations in responses; verification of objective information that was mentioned during the interviews, including information on the attributes of the national parliamentary group, activities carried out and the adoption of laws, policies and funding decisions; and an assessment of whether laws and policies adopted have been enforced and mechanisms exist for their enforcement.

The consolidated feedback, context note, and raw responses from individual parliamentarians should be submitted to the respective regional parliamentary group by 15 May. The regional parliamentary groups, in turn, will submit feedback from all countries in the region to UNFPA by 31 May. While the consolidated feedback and context note should be in English, the raw responses from individual parliamentarians may be in the original language.

All sections of the Survey should be answered completely. They should cover the post-ICPD period, i.e. from 1994 onward. Candid responses will be greatly appreciated in order to make the Survey useful and help parliamentarians, the regional parliamentary groups and UNFPA in guiding future inputs and actions.

Instructions for Focal Points Administering the Questionnaire

The questionnaire has purposefully been kept short and the questions open-ended in order to allow the parliamentarians to express in their own words their experiences, rather than furnishing them with suggested answers in advance. Thus much depends on the skill of the focal points administering the Survey in order for it to provide enough qualitative information to allow thorough analysis.

The following principles should be adhered to:

1. Parliamentarians should at all times be made to feel comfortable in answering the questions. They should not feel that value judgments are being made about them or their work or that specific responses are expected of them.
2. The focal points should follow up on the parliamentarians' initial responses as appropriate by asking them to speak further on points that they have made or inquiring about possible issues, activities and outcomes that they might not have initially thought of describing. It would be useful to solicit concrete examples of their efforts or achievements. However, too much probing should be avoided as it may interfere with the spontaneity and open-ended nature of the questions.
3. The focal points should take detailed notes on what parliamentarians have said in order in to provide the analysts with in-depth information. Specific outcomes should be mentioned by name. The notes should differentiate, to the extent possible, spontaneous responses by parliamentarians and those that came out as a result of further probing.

Below is a copy of the Survey with issues that the focal points should keep in mind when asking questions.

GLOBAL SURVEY ON PARLIAMENTARIANS' ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Country: _____

Completed by (name and contact information of the national focal point): _____

Names of individual parliamentarians answering the questionnaire: _____

I. BACKGROUND OF PARLIAMENTARIANS ANSWERING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1. If you are part of a national cross-party parliamentary group on population-related issues or a formal**

committee within the national parliament, please describe the group or committee in terms of:

- a) **name of group or committee;**
- b) **issues of concern;**
- c) **number of members;**
- d) **party membership; and**
- e) **age, gender and professional background of the group members.**

Name of group or committee—To avoid confusion, the respondents should name only one group or committee. If a respondent is from a cross-party group, he/she does not have to specify which committee he/she belongs to in the parliament.

The national focal point should explain in the consolidated feedback the nature of the group (formal vs. informal, covering which chamber of parliament), how long it has been in existence, etc.

Party membership—Information is needed on which political parties are part of this group and if available the proportion of members from each political party. The national focal point should explain in the consolidated feedback which parties are currently in government, the nature of the parties (social democrats, conservative, etc.) and the relative seniority of the parliamentarians and/or relations with senior decision makers in the party and/or government.

Age, gender and professional background of the group members—Information on these attributes should be obtained to the extent possible.

2. Please provide information on your age, gender, professional background and experiences, membership in the upper or lower house of Parliament, political party.

The national focal point should explain in the consolidated feedback the relative seniority of parliamentarians and/or relations with senior decision makers in the party and/or government, the nature of the parties they belong to (ruling vs. opposition, social democrats, conservatives,

etc.) and if available, how long they have been in parliament. In case of former parliamentarians, specify the years of their term (for instance, 1995-2000).

3. Please describe your particular population-related interests and the reasons why you became interested in these issues.

II. PARLIAMENTARY EXPERIENCES

4. Please describe your experiences in working with government officials and agencies and other members of parliament in furthering ICPD issues.

This is an open-ended question. The national focal point should solicit the spontaneous response of parliamentarians. However, if sufficient information does not come out spontaneously, the focal point could prompt the respondents to address some of the issues below.

- a) building coalitions within and without the respondents party; working to raise the awareness of other parliamentarians or government officials about specific aspects of the ICPD agenda and the importance of action;
- b) drafting or amending policies and legislation on ICPD issues;
- c) allocating financial resources for ICPD issues;
- d) holding hearings within parliament or working on reports for parliament;
- e) submitting or signing letters, resolutions and declarations on ICPD issues;
- f) raising parliamentary questions or motions;
- g) working to include aspects of the ICPD agenda within the scope of the concerns of a specific parliamentary committee;
- h) countering misinformation on ICPD issues and finding points of agreement with persons/groups that have objections to some aspects of the ICPD agenda;
- i) exercising oversight over the implementation of laws and policies and expenditure of funds.

5. Please describe your experiences in working with individuals and groups outside of government in furthering ICPD issues.

This is also an open-ended question. The national focal point should solicit the spontaneous response of parliamentarians. However, if sufficient information does not come out spontaneously, the focal point could prompt the respondents to address some of the issues below.

- a) collaboration with NGOs, CSOs or the private sector to advance the ICPD agenda;
- b) building support among specific communities and ethnic, religious and social groups;
- c) speaking at meetings, seminars, and educational and informational sessions with various groups;
- d) working with the media to raise public awareness and publicize ICPD issues through interviews, press releases and briefings and op-ed pieces;
- e) attending population-related public events, such as the World Population Day events.

6. What activities and relationships have you found to be the most useful in promoting an enabling environment and mobilizing resources for implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action?

7. Of all the issues addressed in ICPD, which are of the highest priority to you in your work?

The national focal point should follow up this question by inquiring why parliamentarians assign higher priority to these issues and/or lower priority to other concerns.

III. OUTCOMES

8. Please describe important legislative and policy achievements that you have been personally involved in to advance the ICPD Programme of Action.

This question is ESSENTIAL to the Survey. The focal points should probe parliamentarians fully on important achievements in every area in which they have occurred and take detailed notes on the major features of these achievements.

The national focal point should explain that, in the case of developed countries, parliamentarians may refer to

achievements which address the situation in their own country (for example, adoption of a law to combat gender-based violence in one's own country), or outcomes which address the situation in developing countries (such as improved ODA policies and budgets).

Achievements at the national level should be the primary focus of this question, but in some cases, achievements at the regional or global levels could also be mentioned. (For instance, adoption of a parliamentary report in the Council of Europe, adoption of a parliamentary declaration at the Commission on the Status of Women, etc.)

ONLY IF NECESSARY, parliamentarians could be reminded that the broad themes mentioned in this question include the following sub-themes

A. Population and Development

- a) census, vital registration, data collection and research;
- b) internal and external migration;
- c) population and environment;
- d) the elderly and declining fertility.

B. Reproductive Health and Rights

- a) family planning;
- b) access to contraception, including emergency contraception, contraceptive choice, and reproductive health commodity security (e.g., supply of condoms);
- c) maternal-child health, assisted delivery and emergency obstetric care;
- d) health sector reform to increase access to reproductive health;
- e) removal of coercive family planning practices;
- f) unsafe abortion;
- g) reproductive health in emergency situations.

C. Gender Equality, Equity and Women's Empowerment

- a) comprehensive non-discrimination;
- b) equality in marriage and family relations, employment, education, social benefits, social

security, and access to economic and productive resources;

- c) participation in the political process and decision-making;
- d) violence against women, including sexual and domestic violence;
- e) trafficking;
- f) harmful traditional practices, including female genital cutting and honour killings.

D. Youth and Adolescents

- a) general human rights of adolescents and youth;
- b) reproductive health of adolescents and youth;
- c) access to contraceptive methods and information;
- d) sex and health education;
- e) access to education and employment and involvement in decision-making;
- f) early marriage.

E. HIV/AIDS

- a) testing and counseling;
- b) condom distribution;
- c) outreach to groups at risk;
- d) discrimination, stigma and human rights;
- e) care and treatment, including the prevention of mother-child transmission;
- f) information, education and communication (IEC) activities;
- g) integration of HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health.

9. Are you familiar with the Ottawa and Strasbourg Statements of Commitment? If so, please describe your ongoing efforts to implement these Statements, including mobilizing resources for the ICPD agenda.

If parliamentarians are not familiar with the Ottawa and Strasbourg Statements of Commitment, this fact should be noted and no further questions asked.

The Ottawa and Strasbourg Statements of Commitments can be found at: <http://www.unfpa.org/parliamentarians/ipci/ottawa/index.htm>;

<http://www.unfpa.org/parliamentarians/ipci/strasbourg/index.htm>.

In terms of resource mobilization, parliamentarians pledged to:

- a) strive to ensure that their government meets the 0.7% GNP target for ODA (Ottawa and Strasbourg)
- b) strive to attain at least 10% of national development budgets and development assistance budgets for population and reproductive health programmes (Strasbourg)

If appropriate, parliamentarians may be prompted to elaborate further on resource mobilization, by asking them the following: Please describe any activities and outcomes that you were involved in:

- a) to overcome political, religious and other opposition to providing international population/reproductive health assistance;
- b) to ensure that your government's funding for international population/RH assistance (developed countries)/population/RH programmes (developing countries) is properly spent and effective in achieving its desired results;
- c) to increase your government's contribution to multilateral organizations such as UNFPA.

IV. PARTNERSHIPS WITH REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS AND UNFPA

10. Please describe your experiences in working with your regional parliamentary group.

The national focal point should solicit the spontaneous response of parliamentarians. However, if sufficient information does not come out spontaneously, the focal point could prompt the respondents to address some of the activities below.

- a) study tours;
- b) educational seminars and meetings;
- c) regional, inter-regional and global meetings (including the Ottawa and Strasbourg conferences);

- d) training sessions;
- e) work on model laws;
- f) contacts and sharing information with colleagues from other countries.

11. What activities sponsored by your regional group have you found to be most useful in your work?

Parliamentarians should be encouraged to give concrete examples.

12. What activities sponsored by UNFPA have you found to be most useful in your work?

13. How do you believe that the regional parliamentary groups and UNFPA might better assist you in your work?

14. Have you worked with other groups? If so, what activities sponsored by these groups have you found to be most useful?

V. CONSTRAINTS AND STRATEGIES

15. Please describe the major difficulties that you have faced in working with government officials and agencies and other members of parliament in furthering ICPD issues.

The national focal point should solicit the spontaneous response of parliamentarians. However, if sufficient information does not come out spontaneously, the focal point could prompt the respondents to address some of the constraints below.

- a) insufficient or incomplete personal understanding of what is essential in the ICPD Programme of Action;
- b) political opposition to ICPD issues;
- c) lack of government awareness and support;
- d) conflicting pressures between personal views and the position of the party;
- e) problems in the implementation of laws and policies;

- f) changes in the government, coalitions or parliamentary membership.

16. Please describe the major difficulties that you have faced in working with individuals and groups outside of government in furthering ICPD issues.

The national focal point should solicit the spontaneous response of parliamentarians. However, if sufficient information does not come out spontaneously, the focal point could prompt the respondents to address some of the constraints below.

- a) lack of communication or coordination with NGOs, CSOs and the private sector;
- b) religious or cultural opposition against ICPD issues;
- c) lack of awareness of ICPD issues;
- d) lack of communication with specific religious, ethnic and social groups;
- e) conflicting pressures between personal views and the views of constituencies.

17. What strategies have you found to be most useful in overcoming these difficulties?

The national focal point should follow up this question by asking for specific examples of actions that have removed or eased bottlenecks with governmental or non-governmental stakeholders.

18. Please describe your experiences with the implementation of laws and policies that have been approved by your country to promote the ICPD Programme of Action.

The national focal point may follow up this question by asking the following:

- a) Do some topics/areas receive better follow-up?
- b) Which are the most effective?
- c) What kinds of activities do you carry out to monitor and ensure implementation?
- d) Please give specific examples.

19. What do you think is most needed to assist you in your work to promote the ICPD Programme of Action?

The national focal point should solicit the spontaneous response of parliamentarians. However, if sufficient information does not come out spontaneously, the focal point could prompt the respondents to address some of the issues below.

- a) increased financial and human resources for the parliamentary group secretariat;
- b) increased training in advocacy on ICPD issues;
- c) increased understanding on how to overcome religious, cultural or political opposition;

- d) increased government awareness and support;
- e) increased support from and collaboration with other parliamentarians and parliamentary groups;
- f) particular kinds of evidence and information.

20. What do you believe is most needed to further advance the ICPD Programme of Action globally?

The national focal point may follow up this question by asking about the need for linking ICPD issues with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs are reproduced at: <http://www.unfpa.org/icpd/about.htm>.

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APPENDIX 3

Countries participating in the survey, by sub-region

Southern Africa

Madagascar
Malawi
Mozambique
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Western Africa

Benin
Burkina Faso
Cape Verde
Cote d'Ivoire
Gambia
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Mali
Niger
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Togo

Central/Eastern Africa

Burundi
Cameroon
Central African Republic
Chad
Democratic Republic of Congo
Ethiopia
Kenya
Rwanda
Tanzania, Republic of
Uganda

Arab States

Algeria
Djibouti
Jordan
Morocco
Occupied Palestinian Territories
Sudan
Syria
Tunisia
Yemen

Eastern Europe

Albania
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Georgia
Latvia
Lithuania
Moldova
Romania
Turkey

Central Asia

Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Tajikistan

South Asia

Bangladesh
India
Iran
Nepal
Pakistan

Southeast Asia

Cambodia
Indonesia
Laos
Malaysia
Mongolia
Philippines
Thailand
Viet Nam

Pacific Islands

Cook Islands
Fiji
Niue
Samoa
Tonga
Vanuatu

Caribbean

Barbados
Guyana

South America

Argentina
Bolivia
Brazil
Chile
Ecuador
Paraguay
Peru
Uruguay
Venezuela

Central America

Costa Rica
Honduras
Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama

Donor Countries

Australia
Belgium
Canada
Denmark
European Parliament
Finland
France
Germany
Iceland
Ireland
Japan
New Zealand
Portugal
Republic of Korea
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
United States
United Kingdom

Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD)-Africa region

Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD)-Arab region

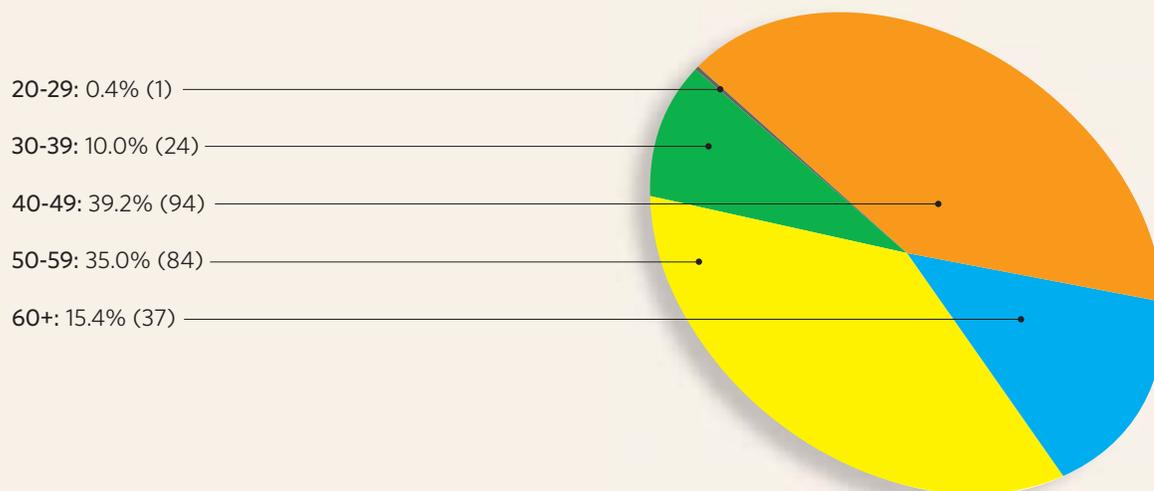
European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)

Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)

Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG)

APPENDIX 4

Developing country parliamentarians, by age



APPENDIX 5

Priority ICPD issues, donor countries

Issue	%
RHR and youth RHR	68
Gender equality and women's empowerment, including women's education	32
HIV/AIDS	32
Development, including social and economic development	15
Health/public health	4
Demographic concerns	9
Gender-based violence	6

APPENDIX 6

ICPD issues of interest, by sub-region (per cent)

	Donor	Central/East Africa	Southern Africa	Western Africa	Arab States	Eastern Europe	Central Asia	South Asia	Southeast Asia	Pacific	South America	Central America	Caribbean
Children and youth	8	6	30	17	29	27	0	56	18	0	16	19	20
Demographic concerns	9	10	0	8	13	27	0	38	18	0	19	25	0
Development including social and economic development	15	32	10	20	33	28	100	13	27	0	34	25	0
Gender equality/ women's empowerment and women's education	34	54	80	59	58	42	26	68	27	67	50	75	40
Gender-based violence	6	6	20	6	0	31	0	0	21	0	31	6	0
Health/public health	4	13	10	14	13	12	25	38	30	0	16	19	0
HIV/AIDS	32	42	40	31	25	15	50	56	33	0	19	19	40
RHR	68	67	70	61	58	58	50	50	48	33	53	50	60

APPENDIX 7

Priority activities to promote the ICPD Programme of Action

<i>Developing countries</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Donor countries</i>	<i>%</i>
Information/raising awareness	40	Information/raising awareness	54
Advocacy	20	Work with NGOs/CSOs/private sector	27
Meetings	19	Advocacy	27
Partnerships/sharing experiences	18	Meetings	24
Work on legislation	15	Work with government agencies	19
Work with NGOs/CSOs/private sector	9	Partnerships/sharing experiences	11
Work with media	9	Work with media	8
Work with government agencies	5	Workshops in parliament	5
Obtaining outside funding	5	Reports/studies/reviews/hearings	3
Reports/studies/reviews/hearings	4	Work on legislation	3
Workshops in parliament	0	Obtaining outside funding	0

APPENDIX 8

Average number of laws enacted per country, by sub-region and subject

	Donor	Central/East Africa	Southern Africa	Western Africa	Arab States	Eastern Europe	Central Asia	South Asia	Southeast Asia	Pacific	South America	Central America	Caribbean
Children	0.06	0.10	0.00	0.23	0.13	0.20	0.33	0.00	0.13	0.00	0.67	0.00	0.00
Education	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.08	0.13	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.00	0.11	0.20	0.00
Family	0.06	0.10	0.00	0.08	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13	0.20	0.44	0.80	0.00
Gender equality/ women's empowerment	0.11	1.20	0.40	0.54	0.50	0.50	0.67	0.40	0.75	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00
Gender-based violence	0.56	0.30	0.60	0.38	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.60	0.88	0.00	1.22	0.60	1.00
Health	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.33	0.20	0.25	0.00	0.22	0.20	0.00
HIV/AIDS	0.11	0.00	0.20	0.15	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.11	0.20	0.00
Human rights	0.06	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.13	0.10	0.33	0.00	0.38	0.00	0.11	0.60	0.00
Population and development	0.22	0.00	0.00	0.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.40	0.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
RHR	0.50	0.30	0.00	0.46	0.00	0.30	0.67	0.40	0.25	0.00	1.33	0.20	0.50
Social development/ government	0.11	0.00	0.20	0.08	0.13	0.70	0.00	0.00	0.13	0.00	0.33	0.20	0.00
Youth/adolescents	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.22	0.80	0.00

APPENDIX 9

Parliamentarians' awareness of one or both of the Ottawa and Strasbourg Statements of Commitment, by sub-region

<i>Sub-region</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Sub-region</i>	<i>%</i>
Donor countries	66	South Asia	38
Central/Eastern Africa	34	Southeast Asia	58
Southern Africa	20	Pacific Islands	0
Western Africa	34	South America	64
Arab States	24	Central America	44
Eastern Europe	60	Caribbean	80
Central Asia	18		

APPENDIX 10

Parliamentarians who have worked with UNFPA, by sub-region

<i>Sub-region</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Sub-region</i>	<i>%</i>
Donor countries	73	South Asia	81
Central/Eastern Africa	77	Southeast Asia	81
Southern Africa	100	Pacific Islands	75
Western Africa	72	South America	74
Arab States	50	Central America	66
Eastern Europe	52	Caribbean	20
Central Asia	100		

APPENDIX 11

Regional Outcome of the 2006 Global Survey on Parliamentarians' Activities on Population and Development

IPCI
ICPD

	Africa		Asia and the Pacific		Arab States		Latin America and the Caribbean		Eastern Europe		Donor Countries	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Participating countries	28		22		9		16		10		19	
Gender	57%	43%	52%	48%	64%	36%	40%	60%	50%	50%	28%	72%
Party affiliation	Ruling	Opposition	Ruling	Opposition	Ruling	Opposition	Ruling	Opposition	Ruling	Opposition	Ruling	Opposition
	67%	33%	66%	34%	63%	37%	53%	47%	58%	42%	59%	41%
Members of a national parliamentary group/committee	63%		50%		16%		27%		32%		85%	
Has contact with a respective regional parliamentary group	44%		71%		31%		57%		11%		72%	
Personal/ICPD issues of interest	1. Reproductive Health and Rights 2. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 3. HIV/AIDS		1. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2. Reproductive Health and Rights 3. HIV/AIDS 4. Development		1. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2. Reproductive Health and Rights 3. Development		1. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2. Reproductive Health and Rights 3. Development		1. Reproductive Health and Rights 2. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 3. HIV/AIDS 4. Development		1. Reproductive Health and Rights 2. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 3. HIV/AIDS 4. Development	
Low priority issues of concern as compared to the other regions	N/A		N/A		HIV/AIDS		HIV/AIDS		HIV/AIDS		N/A	
Laws enacted	1. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (17) 2. Gender-Based Violence (11)		1. Gender-Based Violence (9) 2. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (9)		1. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (4)		1. Gender-Based Violence (16) 2. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (14)		1. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (5) 2. Gender-Based Violence (5)		1. Gender-Based Violence (10) 2. Reproductive Health and Rights (9)	

	Africa	Asia and the Pacific	Arab States	Latin America and the Caribbean	Eastern Europe	Donor Countries
	3. Reproductive Health and Rights (9)	3. Reproductive Health and Rights (6) 4. Population and Development (5)		3. Reproductive Health and Rights (13)	3. Social Development (5) 4. Reproductive Health and Rights (3)	
<i>Less often enacted laws</i>	HIV/AIDS	HIV/AIDS	HIV/AIDSs	HIV/AIDSs	HIV/AIDS	HIV/AIDS
Increase in funding for ICPD or overall development assistance	17 Countries	9 Countries	5 Countries	5 Countries	7 Countries	14 Countries
Important activities for promoting ICPD issues carried out with the regional groups and UNFPA	1. Training 2. Receiving Information 3. Attending meetings/Conferences 4. Networking/ Sharing Experiences	1. Attending Meetings/Conference 2. Receiving Information 3. Training	1. Attending Meetings/Conference 2. Networking/ Sharing Experiences 3. Receiving Information	1. Attending Meetings/Conference 2. Networking/ Sharing Experiences 3. Receiving Information 4. Training	1. Attending Meetings/Conference 2. Training	1. Attending Meetings/Conference 2. Receiving Information 3. Study Tours
Constraints (within parliaments/governments)	1. Lack of Political Will 2. Lack of Information 3. Lack of Financial and Material Resources	1. Lack of Information 2. Lack of Political Will 3. Active Opposition (religious and cultural)	1. Procedural Problems 2. Lack of Financial and Material Resources 3. Lack of Information	1. Active Opposition (religious and cultural) 2. Lack of Information 3. Lack of Political Will	1. Active Opposition (religious and cultural) 2. Lack of Information 3. Lack of Political Will	1. Lack of Political Will 2. Active Opposition (religious and cultural) 3. Lack of Information
Outside obstacles	1. Active Opposition (religious and cultural) 2. Lack of Financial and Material Resources 3. Lack of Information	1. Lack of information 2. Lack of Interest	1. Active Opposition (religious and cultural) 2. Lack of Institutional Coordination 3. Lack of Financial and Material Resources	1. Active Opposition (religious and cultural) 2. Lack of Information	1. Active Opposition (religious and cultural) 2. Lack of Information	1. Active Opposition (religious and cultural) 2. Lack of Information 3. Lack of Interest

	Africa	Asia and the Pacific	Arab States	Latin America and the Caribbean	Eastern Europe	Donor Countries
Needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training 2. Information and Activities to Raise Awareness 3. Financial and Material Support 4. Networking/ Sharing Experiences 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information and Activities to Raise Awareness 2. Meetings/ Conferences 3. Training 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training 2. Information and Activities to Raise Awareness 3. Networking/ Sharing Experiences 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information and Activities to Raise Awareness 2. Training 3. Meetings/ Conferences 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training 2. Meetings/ Conferences 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information and Activities to Raise Awareness 2. Financial and Material Support 3. Training 4. Networking/ Sharing Experiences

Observations

- Regional disparities in the parliamentarians' membership in a national parliamentary group/committee on population-related issues may indicate a need for the creation of such groups in certain countries.
- The regional parliamentary groups on population and development are: the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF), Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG) and the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD).
- The relatively low levels of parliamentary contact with the regional groups in some regions may indicate a need for greater regional group activities.
- Interest in HIV/AIDS was low in the Arab, Latin American and the Eastern European regions, and laws on the subject were difficult to pass in all the regions due to their controversial and complex nature, even though many were proposed.
- More than half of the laws that developing country parliamentarians mentioned as having been personally involved in related to gender equality and women's empowerment, gender-based violence and reproductive health and rights. The remainder related to a wide range of issues, including children, social issues, human rights, family issues, youth and adolescents, HIV/AIDS, education, health and population and development.
- Donor country parliamentarians listed far fewer laws, bills and policies than developing country parliamentarians, and far more accomplishments in terms of increased budgets.
- Parliamentarians from 43 developing countries noted that they had been successful in increasing budget allocations for ICPD issues. The relatively smaller number of developing countries reporting budget increases in comparison with those reporting enactment of laws may reflect the lack of resources in poor countries, or the lack of political will to prioritize funding for ICPD issues.
- When asked about the most important activities they had engaged in with the regional groups and UNFPA, many parliamentarians from developing countries pointed to training and workshops, including training on how to be effective advocates for ICPD issues and on how to craft effective laws. Donor country parliamentarians stressed the importance of meetings and study tours.
- Opposition is listed as a major constraint in every region which may account for the dearth of laws on HIV/AIDS and may also account for the lack of political will of other parliamentarians and government officials to go forward on this issue.
- Most regions listed information and training as critical areas of need.

GLOSSARY

AFPPD	. . . . .	Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
CSO	. . . . .	Civil society organization
EPF	. . . . .	European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development
FAAPPD	. . . . .	Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development
FGC	. . . . .	Female genital cutting
GNP	. . . . .	Gross national product
ICPD	. . . . .	International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994)
ICPI/ICPD	. . . . .	International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action
IAPG	. . . . .	Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development
MDGs	. . . . .	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	. . . . .	Non-governmental organization
ODA	. . . . .	Official development assistance
PGA	. . . . .	Parliamentarians for Global Action
RHR	Reproductive health and rights
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

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