



UNFPA's mission statement:

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

UNFPA, because everybody counts.



For the quality of life

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

1977-2007 For the quality of life

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



Prominent achievements

Enduring efforts

Valuable lessons

Future orientations

and the People

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

Foreword

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

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

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

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

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



Prominent achievements

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

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

National capacity-building in Population and Development

Consolidating and developing the RH care/FP service system

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



United Nations Population Award Medal 1999



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

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

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

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

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



Small-size family has become a social norm and family planning a lifestyle. A female representative of Ha Giang minority groups gives her opinion to the Country Programme VII



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National capacity-building in Population and Development

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

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

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

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

Some of the most important policy documents

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

Developed with support from UNFPA

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

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

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

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

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

plans, developed with financial and technical support from UNFPA

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

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

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

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

Training in preparation for the Population Census 1989



Dissemination of the 2004 migration data



4 Consolidating and developing the RH care/FP service system

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

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

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

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

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

A commune health station 1986



A commune family planning service station 1999



Elements of the Reproductive and Family Planning services package:

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



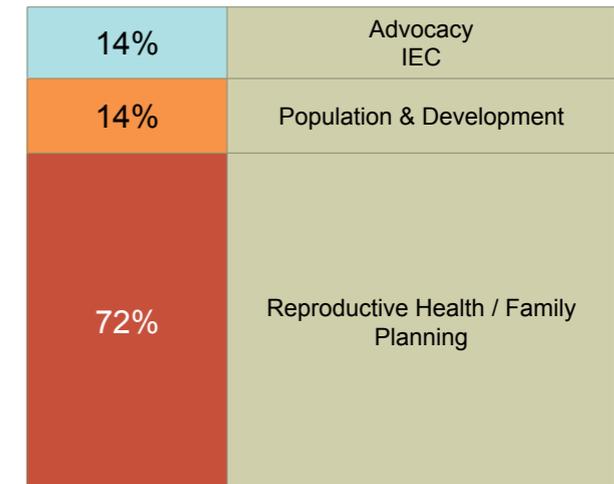


Enduring efforts

Those prominent achievements result from the enduring efforts of cooperation between Viet Nam and UNFPA throughout 7 successive Country Programmes, with a total UNFPA grants of USD 170 million. These efforts are reviewed here in two main phases: (1) Introducing and expanding family planning (1977-1996); and (2) Shifting the programmes in the spirit of the development partnership and ICPD (1997 till now).

Country Programmes	Duration	UNFPA Budget (Million USD)
I	1978-1983	15
II	1984-1987	14
III	1988-1991	22
IV	1992-1996	36
V	1997-2000	25
VI	2001-2005	30
VII	2006-2010	28 (committed)
Total		170

Budget of all country programmes over the last 30 years



Three main areas of support and their budget allocation

Phase 1- Building and developing FP achievements (1977-1996)

This was the period when UNFPA was spearheading international support in Viet Nam by providing the largest proportion of financial aid for P&FP activities. This was also a period when Viet Nam was healing from the wounds of war and laying the foundation for the Doi Moi (Innovation) policies under great population growth pressure and the context of unfavourable international relations. The establishment of a specialized government population agency boosted the effectiveness of the Viet Nam-UNFPA cooperation in this period.

UNFPA concentrated support for Viet Nam in the area of FP, aiming to lower the fertility rate, reduce the pressure of population growth and improve the quality of maternal and child health care. UNFPA actively supported the policy-making process, provided almost all contraceptive commodities, built the first ever condom production line in Viet Nam, established and consolidated logistics for MCH/FP services and strongly

supported comprehensive communication and advocacy activities that mobilized popular support for the small-size happy family model promoted by the national P&FP programme. In addition, UNFPA provided technical and funding support to Viet Nam to conduct two Population Censuses in 1979 and 1989.

Budget and technical assistance for the implementation of the Cooperative Programmes between 1977 and 1996 was largely provided by UNFPA and international agencies, with participation from many leading world experts. Viet Nam's ownership of the programme, including the use of locally available experts was still limited. The management approach of the cooperative programme was highly centralized and focused on individual projects.

Phase 2—Shifting the programmes in the spirit of development partnership and ICPD (1997 to present)

Since 1997, the cooperative programmes for PD and FP projects and activities have been implemented in the context of new directives issued at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and with the benefit of expanded funding from the international community. Conditioned by the socio-economic success after 10 years of innovation and boosted by higher commitment and investment from the Government, the P&FP programme has fulfilled several initial achievements.

Following the Fifth Joint Programme of Cooperation, Viet Nam and UNFPA reached consensus on some important orientations regarding cooperative approaches, specifically:

- Shifting the focus of the programme from FP to PD/ RHC with an approach more comprehensive and responsive to specific needs and basic human rights in the spirit of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

- Shifting from centralized management in accordance with the decentralization policy of Viet Nam to direct support for localities with technical assistance from the central level.

- Shifting the support modality from individual projects to a programmatic approach to improve programme efficiency.

- Promoting national ownership by increasing responsibility of Vietnamese counterparts in

management, execution and implementation of UNFPA grants. The Vietnamese side has directly executed over 50% of the total programme budgets.

- Increasing the application of technical assistance provided by Vietnamese experts; on the other hand, continuing to utilize international experts particularly in new areas and the areas where domestic technical capacity is still limited.

1978 - 1991

Country Programmes I+II+III

Maternal and Child Health and FP

- Provision of equipment, essential drugs and contraceptives
- Training on MCH/FP and population communication
- Support to build MERUFA condom production line

Population data and information:

- Support for conducting Population Census in 1979 and 1989
- Capacity-building for 3 regional infomatic centres of GSO
- Demographic analysis of Population Census data
- Improvement of regular vital registration system
- Building the Population Data and Information Centre (PDIC)

Information – Education – Communication:

- Education of P&FP for parents
- Support for developing curriculum on population education in schools
- Training of FP communicators
- Education for the youth on family life and FP

Research and Training

- Capacity-building on research and training on population - development

Gender equality and women empowerment

- Improvement of rural women's empowerment through activities to increase family income and FP

1992 - 1996

Country Programme IV

Maternal and Child Health and FP

- Provision of equipment, essential drugs and contraceptives
- Training of health workers and population staff on MCH/FP and population communication
- Support for quality control in MERUFA condom manufacturing factory
- Consolidating and elaborating the MCH/FP service logistic system
- Building and piloting the Health Management Information System (HMIS)
- Support for piloting condom social marketing

Population data and information:

- Establishment of database and training on utilisation of 1989 Population Census results
- Developing the indicator system for monitoring social changes
- Support for population information and data management
- Consolidation of regular vital registration system

Information – Education – Communication:

- Support for coordination of IEC activities
- Support for developing curriculum on population education in schools
- Support for mass organisations on P&FP communication
- Training on population communication for journalists

Research and Training

- Support for research and training on population – development, including research on investment efficiency of FP programme.

Policy development

- Support for developing P&FP Strategy till 2000 and Information – Education – Communication Strategy on P&FP till 2000.

Gender equality and women empowerment

- Improvement of rural women's empowerment through activities to increase family income and FP

1997 - 2000

Country Programme V

Population and Development Strategy

- Support to develop strategies on population, reproductive health care, behaviour change communication for the period of 2001-2010
- Capacity-building in research and training on population -development
- Support for 1999 Population Census and capacity-building in population forecasting, data dissemination
- Capacity-building in utilizing population variables in the process of development planning
- Capacity-building in cooperative programme management and coordination

Advocacy

- Training for leaders, managers and journalists on population – development and reproductive health
- Capacity-building on advocacy of population, RH for elective representatives

RH/FP

- Support for developing National Standards and Guidelines for Reproductive Health Care Services
- Updating and elaborating Regulation of Technical Responsibilities in Reproductive Health Care Within Health Facilities
- Emergency support of contraceptives
- Piloting the Health Management Information System (HMIS)
- Adolescent RH education in and out of schools
- Implementing Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia project (RHIYA phase 1)
- Focusing on improvement of RHC service quality in 8 provinces: Hà Giang, Yên Bái, Thái Bình, Đà Nẵng, Quảng Nam, Khánh Hòa, Bình Phước and Bình Dương

2001 - 2005

Country Programme VI

Population and Development Strategy

- Support to research, assess implementation of population and RH policies
- Training for leaders, managers and journalists on population – development and reproductive health
- Capacity-building in incorporating population variables in the process of development planning
- Technical support for 2004 migration survey
- Capacity-building in cooperative programme management and coordination

Reproductive health

- Elaborating and applying National Standards and Guidelines for Reproductive Health Care Services
- Support for implementation of Phase 1 in Safe Motherhood Master Plan
- Developing and applying RH training curriculum in nationwide medical secondary schools
- Implementing Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia project (RHIYA phase 2)
- Incorporating the content of population and adolescent RH in school curriculum
- Provision of additional contraceptives
- Focusing on improvement of quality and utilisation of RHC services in 12 provinces: Hà Giang, Yên Bái, Phú Thọ, Hòa Bình, Đà Nẵng, Quảng Nam, Khánh Hòa, Bình Phước, Bình Dương, Tiền Giang, Bình Định and Viet Nam FP Association.

Real-life experiences of the past 10 years have proved that the above-mentioned shifts in approach were reasonable, opening a new page in the Viet Nam – UNFPA cooperative relationship. The two national strategies on Population and Reproductive Health, Behaviour Change Communication Strategy, Population Ordinance, National Standards on RH care services were promulgated and developed during this period. In addition to piloting new contents such as safe motherhood, adolescent and migrant reproduc-

tive health care, improving effectiveness of integrating gender equality into population and RH activities, integrating population variables into development planning, UNFPA supported the introduction of sophisticated technologies for treatment of infertility, including in-vitro fertilization.

2006 - 2010

Country Programme VII

Population and Development

- Support for developing population strategy, reproductive health care in 2011-2020 period, strategy on contraceptive commodity security in 2007-2015 period
- Support for 2009 Population Census
- Support for capacity-building in population – development training in some universities
- Women's empowerment and implementation of gender equality
- Capacity-building in cooperative programme management and coordination

Reproductive health

- Updating and applying National Standards and Guidelines for Reproductive Health Care Services
- Updating and applying RH training curriculum in nationwide medical secondary schools
- Developing and piloting model of provision of RH service information to (i) migrants in urban area, (ii) youth and adolescents
- Piloting the model of domestic violence prevention.
- Developing and piloting the model of obstetric emergency care services in the mountainous and disadvantaged areas
- Advocacy and support for HIV/AIDS prevention and control
- Focusing on improvement of quality and utilisation of RHC services in 8 provinces: Hà Giang, Hòa Bình, Phú Thọ, Ninh Thuận, Kon Tum, Tiền Giang, Bến Tre, and Bình Định

The priority target groups of Country Programme VII are youth, women, infants and minority groups and the disadvantaged migrants.



Main partners in 30 years of cooperation

Government Aid Coordination Agencies

The Government Office
 Ministry of Planning and Investment
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 Ministry of Finance

Umbrella institutions acting as executing and implementing agencies

Ministry of Health	Parliamentary Committee for Social Affairs
National Commission for Population and FP, later National Commission for Population, Family and Children	Viet Nam Fatherland Front Viet Nam Women's Union Viet Nam Farmers Union
Ministry of Planning and Investment	Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union
Ministry of Education and Training	Viet Nam Federation of Labour
Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs	Viet Nam Family Planning Association (VINAFFPA)
Ministry of Culture and Information	
Ministry of Justice	
Ministry of Construction	
Ho Chi Minh National Political Academy	
General Statistics Office	
National Center for Social Sciences and Humanities	
Radio Voice of Viet Nam	
Viet Nam Television	

International Technical Backstopping Organizations

WHO, UNESCO, UN ESCAP, ILO, UN Statistic Division, UN Development Training and Communication Planning (UNDTCP), UN Population Division, UNFPA/CST Bangkok, Australian National University, Future Group International, Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Populations Africaines et Asiatiques (CERPAA), Population Development International (PDI), Pathfinder, Path, Save the Children/US, IPAS, Care International, World Population Fund, Marie Stoppes International (MSI), DKT.

Civil organizations participating as implementing agencies

VINAFFPA, Viet Nam Association of Midwives (VAM), Reproductive and Family Health (RaFH), Vietnamese Community Mobilization Centre for HIV/AIDS (VICOM), Supporting Centre for HIV/STD Control (SUCECON), Ho Chi Minh Youth consulting Centre, Light and others.

Other donors

The governments of The Netherlands, New Zealand, Denmark, Canada, Japan, Australia, Belgium, Luxembourg, Finland, Switzerland, France, European Union.

Valuable lessons

From their enduring efforts in the past 30 years, the Government of Viet Nam and UNFPA have learned many valuable lessons on why their cooperation has been a success.

Equality and Mutual Respect

The Vietnamese side has increasingly demonstrated its ownership capacity in the process of cooperative programme development and implementation, founded in the spirit of equal partnership with UNFPA. The Vietnamese side also appreciates and respects donor principles, goals and regulations, and makes the best use of UNFPA support.

Likewise, the UNFPA side fully understands and respects the Vietnamese ownership role, and makes every effort to meet the needs and enhance the managerial role of the Vietnamese side.

Both sides have worked together in a straightforward and constructive manner to ensure the development of a comprehensive and multi-faceted cooperative relationship.

High Commitment and Responsibility

From the outset of the cooperative relationship, commitment and sense of responsibility have prevailed. Together, both sides have identi-



fied goals and priorities, and worked towards flexible solutions relating to all aspects of programme direction, execution, management and implementation. The spirit of cooperation has allowed both sides to overcome challenges, especially in mobilization of resources.

Appropriate and Effective Implementing Modality

Both sides have made efforts to strengthen the National Execution (NEX) through the integration of national ownership with programme responsibility and improved implementation capacity of the Government. The decentralization of programme management has assisted partners to become more proactive in identifying needs, planning and implementing activities. Cooperative programmes are designed synchronously and systematically in line with the principles of inheritance to ensure comprehensive integration with other related development programmes of the Government.

During programme implementation, both sides have been adjusting interventions to make them appropriate to specific conditions, meeting the needs of all target groups at central, local and community levels.

Partnership Building

Viet Nam and UNFPA have not only succeeded in building a significant partnership but also expanded this partnership to include other UN organizations, the donor community, mass organizations, civil society and the private sector.



Future orientations

Initial thoughts about the future of the cooperation between the two parties have taken shape from a situation analysis regarding population and reproductive health, international cooperation in this field, and the organizational changes that are going on in both sides - Viet Nam and UNFPA.

Population and reproductive health

Population

Despite the fact that the national fertility rate has fallen continuously over the last 15 years and reached the replacement level, the population of Viet Nam continues to grow. Projections suggest that in 40-50 years time the population will stabilize at 115-120 million. However, it is important to acknowledge that the fertility reduction rates reported across regions are uneven. Specifically, there is evidence of relatively high fertility rates in the northern mountainous areas, the central coastal region and the central highlands with some locations reporting 4 children/mother.

Preference for sons constitutes a risk of the sex ratio imbalance. From 1989 to 2006, the national sex ratio at birth has increased from 105/100 to 110/100 (boy/girl).

Urbanisation and internal migration, besides having positive impacts, have created disadvantaged groups without adequate access to a number of social services such as shelter, health

care and education. The movement of population also places additional pressure on the environment and social order. These new and developing issues require urgent consideration and prompt intervention.

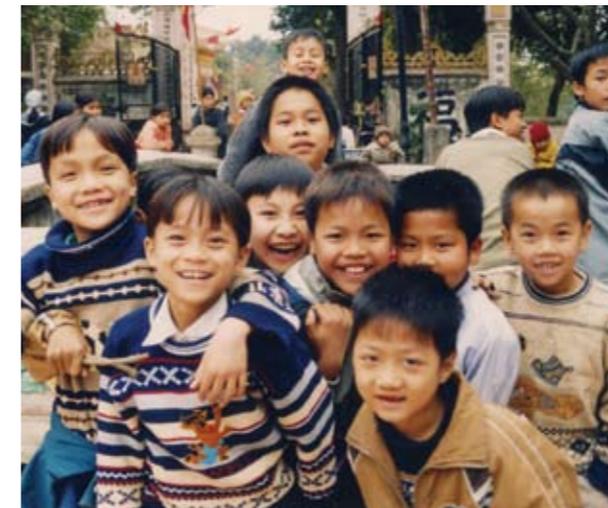
Viet Nam has an aging population. The over 60 age group is predicted to increase from 6.2 million in 1999 to 6.9 million by 2010, and to 11 million by 2020. Elderly care issues increasingly present new challenges for social security and health care in general and RH in particular.

Reproductive health/Family planning

Maternal mortality and infant mortality rates remain high, especially in remote and disadvantaged areas. The risks of unwanted pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS among the youth are reportedly reaching an alarming level.

Ensuring the full and efficient compliance of quality criteria in RH care/FP as stipulated by the national standards presents a significant challenge, especially in the remote and disadvantaged areas.

Son preference and the poor urban migrants are population issues that need attention



International cooperation in the area of population and reproductive health

Funding from UNFPA and the international community for PD & RH shows a decreasing trend. Many new and urgent priorities confront the donor community and the Government of Viet Nam. These will influence the scope and focus of investment in the reproductive health area unless appropriate policies and solutions for mobilizing additional resources, especially the socialization of population tasks, are put into place.

Organisational changes in both Vietnamese side and UNFPA side

Current changes in the organizational structure of the population management, with the establishment of a professional focal point for effective integration of PD/RCH activities within the national health care system, is expected to bring about new developments. These changes will become more effective if the population and



“Free Hug” movement in Hanoi. Adolescent reproductive health including safe sex is becoming a challenge

RHC activities are integrated into the health system with priorities sustained at national level.

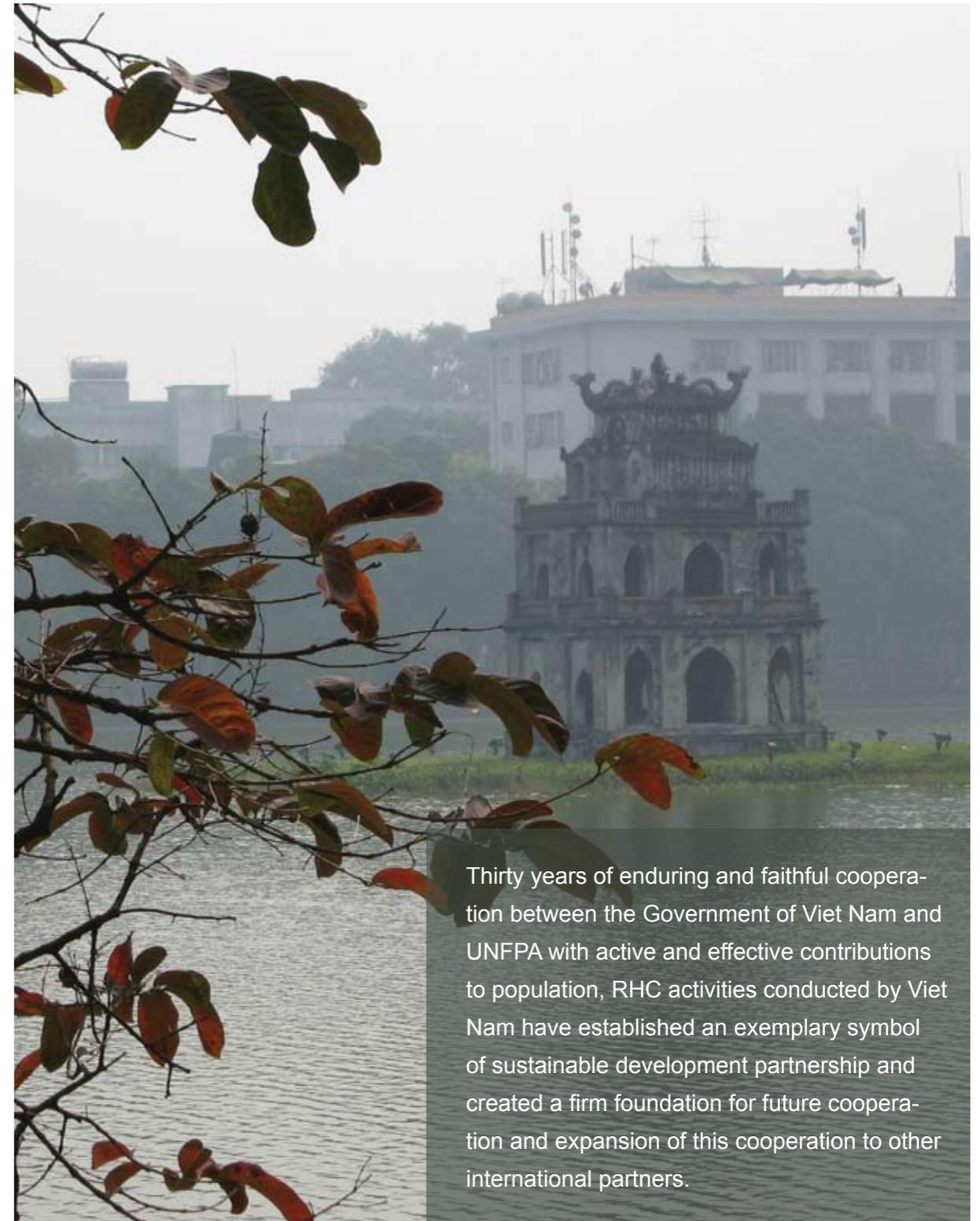
The One UN pilot initiative in Viet Nam aims to improve cooperation between Viet Nam and all UN agencies. However, the success and efficiency of this initiative depends on agreeing priorities that serve to strengthen the inter-organizational partnerships. The One UN process also requires each UN organization to identify more clearly their comparative advantages as joint participants in the next cooperative period with Viet Nam.

Initial thoughts on future cooperation between Viet Nam and UNFPA

In the context of the above-mentioned situations, the Viet Nam-UNFPA cooperative programme will continue with new visions and appropriate priorities, prepared to respond to new challenges as the population becomes more stable and the socio-economic condition undergoes profound change.

UNFPA will bring further into play its strategic catalyst role in the process of developing population and RH-related policies and, at the same time, concentrate on building pilot models for direct intervention among prioritized target groups, seeking the best solutions to the most burning problems. Successful models will be scaled-up for wider application, with support from the Government, donors, and the society.

UNFPA will support the Government in mobilizing resources and bringing into play its coordinating role in PD/RHC including safe sex for youth and adolescents.



Thirty years of enduring and faithful cooperation between the Government of Viet Nam and UNFPA with active and effective contributions to population, RHC activities conducted by Viet Nam have established an exemplary symbol of sustainable development partnership and created a firm foundation for future cooperation and expansion of this cooperation to other international partners.

and the People

Leaders of the Vietnamese government and UNFPA, programme staff on both sides from central to local levels, international and local experts... These are the people who have joined hands to make it a success over the past 30 years. The followings are some memorable stories by them or about them.



Flag raising ceremony in New York on 21 September 1977 when Viet Nam became an official member of the United Nations. Second from right is Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh. Thong Nhat Hotel is now Sofitel Hotel. One of those rooms was the first office of UNFPA in Ha Noi.

The very first days...

Mr. Sjaak Bavelaar

The first UNFPA Head of Office in Viet Nam (1977-1979)

Thank you very much for inviting me to this celebration. It instantly took me back to those days in the late seventies when I was one of a small group of people who went to Vietnam to help rebuild the country after it had been so thoroughly devastated in that horrible war.

Perhaps I am the only one left now who will remember that the first UNFPA office in Hanoi was room 101 in the Thong Nhat Hotel. This was an early example of inter-agency collaboration as I shared the room with the WFP Programme Officer who arrived at the same time as me to start their first programme up. UNDP was in room 105 and 106, UNICEF was in the Hoa Binh Hotel and WHO in Trung Tu.

I remember being a bit embarrassed when Mr. Salas showed up in Hanoi to sign the first Country Programme. I had only been in Hanoi for a week and did not even have a typewriter in the office! So much progress has been made in these thirty years!

I did have a chance to be back in Vietnam twenty years later. When I went on an advocacy trip in 1997 with a group of MPs and journalists from Finland, Switzerland and Austria it was great to see that the clinics we had built and equipped from scratch in Song Be province were still fully operational and that trees had grown back around them where I had seen a desert wasteland since all vegetation had been thoroughly killed by Agent Orange.

The group was so impressed by what UNFPA had accomplished together with the Vietnamese people that upon return they organized hearings in their respective parliaments where they spoke passionately about what they had seen and managed to increase the contributions of all three countries to UNFPA as well as their bilateral programmes to Vietnam.

Unfortunately I could not join you in the celebration in Vietnam. I wish you all a happy celebration.



Viet Nam

Mr. Michel Amiot

UNFPA Programme Director in Viet Nam (1982-1985)

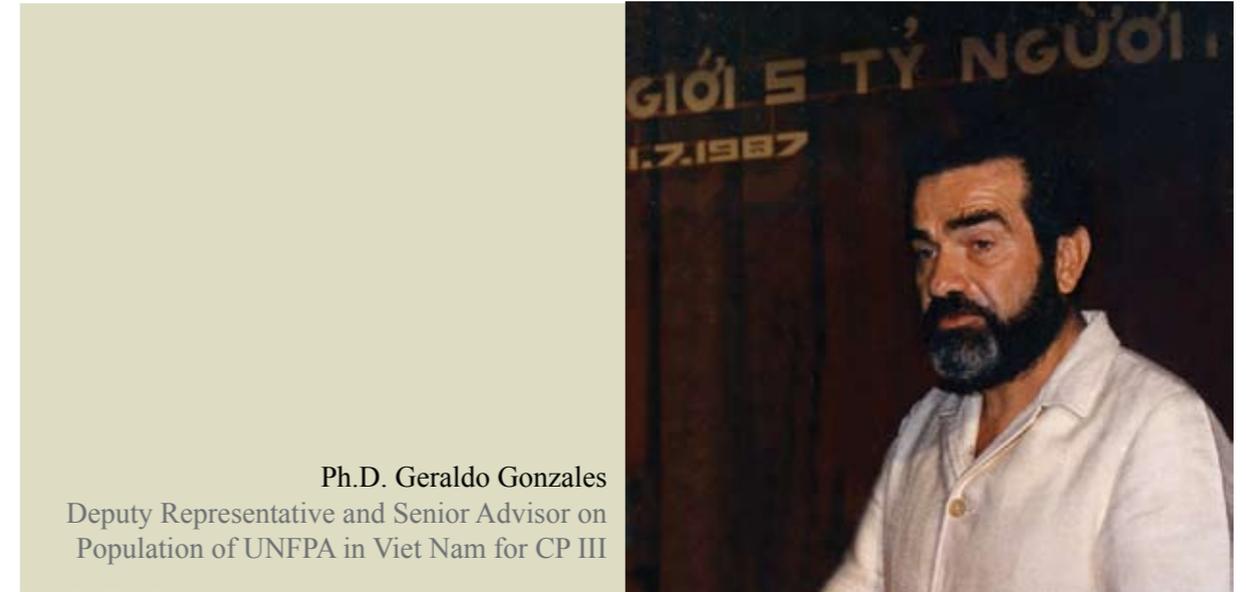
Landing in Ha Noi in July 1982, being greeted by the office staff, driving the 60 kms from the airport, arriving at the office on Phan Boi Chau street, settling into the ground floor flat at Trung Tu, it all seemed so strange yet fascinating! I was 35 years old then, on a voyage of discovery, of learning and of commitment, hoping to give back a bit of what I had been given myself. As I looked around me, I felt as if I was in a Federico Fellini film, out of time and of space – I was literally living the past, as if a time machine had carried me back to the 1940s..... It was all so surreal!

But reality sunk in very fast. Our incredible administrative secretary, Daw Kaye Aye Winn from Burma, knew everybody in Viet Nam, or so it seemed... and she made life so very easy for me. Mr. Ky, our programme assistant, was serious, supportive, extremely dedicated and hard working. He helped me negotiate officialdom and avoid the pitfalls... Our driver, Mr. Thao, was my sunshine and my mentor as I slowly found my way around the country! Our office was strong! We also depended on UNDP for support, and all their local staff were equally generous with us.

Those were extremely difficult times, just after the war, and the solidarity, the respect and the friendly disposition of the Vietnamese towards me touched my soul.

After criss-crossing this magnificent country for more than 2 ½ years and visiting some incredible places and even more incredible people, it was – all of a sudden – time to go! So I left quickly, with a pang in my heart, like when you must let go of someone you love deeply.... And as I boarded the plane one last time in the late December rain, I closed my eyes so that I would not see the land disappearing beneath me as the plane rose into the sky! And I remembered the hauntingly beautiful voice of a lovely FP volunteer in Thanh Hoa province, as her convincing speech slowly and effortlessly glided into a traditional folk balad on the steps of the cultural centre, in total darkness, as the assembled villagers sat before her in silent awe... A purely magic moment!! And I shed a tear....

Viet Nam taught me the meaning of truth, honor, solidarity and pride. As I left Ha Noi, I knew that I had become more of a MAN – in the true sense of the word.



Ph.D. Geraldo Gonzales

Deputy Representative and Senior Advisor on Population of UNFPA in Viet Nam for CP III



Dr. Bernard Coquelin

International Programme Officer (CP III and IV), currently UNFPA Representative in Beijing



The Gonzales and the Coquelins each adopted a Vietnamese child. The girls are young ladies now. Hang in the Gonzales's is planning for a working mission in Viet Nam.



Some of my warm memories

Ph.D. Sheila Macrae
Deputy Representative and Senior Adviser on Population (DRSAP) and later as Country Director of UNFPA in Viet Nam (1988-1992)

My time in Viet Nam, where I spent my first assignment with UNFPA, was special. It was a period of national isolation, economic deprivation, and community and personal hardship. Despite the difficulties, the people worked hard without complaint and, in the office, there was a great work ethos and team spirit. There were also some significant programme contributions, most notably to the 1989 Census - a milestone event in Viet Nam. I have a kaleidoscope of memories about this: the total dedication of every single person associated with the census; the wonderful hospitality received wherever I went and the many “tram phan tram” (100%) toasts to the success of the census; an entire day spent in a meeting in HCMC on the wording of one question in the census schedule; coordinating the inputs of the many consultants who came to assist; partici-

pating in many workshops in Hanoi and HCMC; observing training courses in the communes, where the cotton sheet with the schedule inked on it was used and then rolled up to be taken to the next commune; having a whole room full of main frame computers; driving around remote areas with GSO singing the very catchy census songs, doing our own bit of advocacy to add to that on the tannoy systems; seeing the mountains of completed census schedules to be processed; meeting up with dedicated enumerators on bicycles; and especially having the Government put out a Red Alert to all provinces to tell them to do the census enumeration correctly because Macrae was coming! I could go on and on; these are just a few of my warm memories of a unique personal and professional experience.

With Dr. Coquelin on a field trip



With the Census Steering Committee of Ha Tinh Province in 1989



The awareness and capacity of the health and population system have been improved significantly

Prof. Academician Pham Song,
Former Minister of Health

I still remember during the period 1978-1988, there was not yet any demographic expert in Vietnam. During the field trips with specialists and Mrs. Sheila Macrae - UNFPA Director in Country Programme 3, I used to carry a Glossary book that gave the definition of population terms. I have learnt a lot and recognized the importance of population issues so much that I decided to convert the budget of CPIII from Institute of Mother and Child Protection to the Ministry of Health and separated the Population Committee as a Ministry equivalent agency.

The Law on the Protection of People’s health 1989 has a separate chapter on family planning emphasising on the “voluntary” feature.

In 1960s, Vietnam had the Committee of Mother and Child Protection & Family Planning chaired by the Minister and later by the Deputy Minister. This means the awareness of reproductive health issues existed in Vietnam before ICPD Cairo. With UNFPA’s support, the awareness and capacity of the health and population system have been improved significantly and gained remarkable achievement, for which Vietnam won the United Nations population award in 1999.

Prof. Pham Song (in the middle, carrying a briefcase) conducted a field trip of needs assessment survey on the formulation of CP IV. The lady with the hat on is Ms. Nguyen Thi Hoi (MOFA).





A combination of Vietnam's working approach and UNFPA's assistance

Prof. Mai Ky
Former Minister – Chairperson of the National Committee on Population & Family Planning (1992-1997)

I was the minister, in charge of the population and family planning from 1992 to 1997, equivalent to the CP IV of the Viet Nam-UNFPA cooperation programme. Although the family planning was promoted by the government since 1961, it was not until 1976, the country reunification's period, that specific targets e.g. decreasing the population growth to 1.7% (the population growth rate at that time) in 5 years' time were set out. Unfortunately, the targets though repeated for three 5-year plans were not reached. The Population census 1989 states the population growth of Vietnam of 2.2%, and the fertility rate of 3.8. Based on the situation analysis, I think Vietnam's working approach needs to be changed e.g. in terms of target setting, programme management as well as the human resource on population and family planning as identified in the 1993-2000 strategy. UNFPA's support approach needs to be changed as well. In the context of UNFPA's decreasing support for Vietnam, we recommend that UNFPA focus on its own strength in areas e.g. communication, data collection and surveys, especially independent surveys, the maximum supply of FP commodities while mobilize funds together with us from other organisations and donor countries.

During the cooperation, we both have been straightforward and frank e.g. the replacement of unqualified consultants or poor equipment with a shared effort of creating great changes in population and Family Planning. Generally speaking, the combination of Vietnam's working approach and UNFPA's support has resulted in remarkable and durable success over the years. United Nations decided to offer population award for the National Committee on Population and Family Planning 1999. Up to now, the image of an active, sincere and competent director of UNFPA office in Vietnam at that time – Ms. Linda Demers still bears in my mind.



Happy celebrations!

Ms. Linda Demers
UNFPA Representative in Viet Nam (1992-1995)

Dear friends,

This is truly exciting, but unfortunately I will not be able to come to Ha Noi. I am so happy to see that both Sheila and Bernard will be there. Enjoy each and every moment!

Viet Nam will always be one of my favorite places in the world, and I still hope I can come back one day... but not this year, unfortunately.

Happy celebrations!

Linda.





About 30 years of UNFPA - Viet Nam cooperation

Prof. Dr. Tran Thi Trung Chien

Former Minister of Health

Former Minister – Chairperson of the National Committee for Population – Family Planning

The cooperation between the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Viet Nam over the past 30 years has gained great achievements. Viet Nam has engaged in the population – family planning programme since the 60s, but due to the inactive programme implementation together with the incomplete legal corridor in this period, the efficiency of programme implementation was not high. After the 70s, the Viet Nam population – family planning programme received support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Thanks to that, the Viet Nam population programme has consecutively made great achievements. Those achievements have proved the very important role of UNFPA to Viet Nam’s population programme:

Firstly, it incorporated the world’s population policy in developing countries where high fertility rates were negatively affecting the socio-economic development, the life of the people, especially the poor labourers. Viet Nam is one of those developing countries, and UNFPA has helped Viet Nam to understand clearly the strategy on birth rate in order to stabilise socio-economics and contribute to the reduction of population growth all over the world.

Secondly, UNFPA has also provided techni-

cal support so that population – family planning could reach the people, particularly those who have the need of birth rate reduction and of support in terms of equipment and favourable conditions to implement the programme.

Thirdly, financial support is of great importance. During the 80s and afterwards, UNFPA mostly provided contraceptives, technical facilities, expertise, conducting research on diversified and effective contraceptive methods, and helping Viet Nam train human resources in skills related to effective contraceptive use. In particular, support was given to IEC to raise the people’s awareness, behaviour change in birth and understand about the use and selection of appropriate contraceptive methods.

On the other hand, initiatives and approaches have always been created by UNFPA during different periods and points of time. For example, when the open policy had not yet been introduced in Viet Nam and the subsidy economy was still dominant, UNFPA provided support through the Health sector to develop a Programme that would reach the target groups. Then, with the shift in the Vietnamese economy from a system based on central-planning to the socialist-oriented market economy, UNFPA also stepped into a new era,

that involved taking a wider approach through mass organisations to make the support more operationally active, efficient and dynamic in the market mechanism. In the past, all contraceptives were subsidised and provided by the State, but now they were provided by the suppliers. That is to say, UNFPA provided variety of equipment and commodities for us to carry out FP such as IUDs, contraceptive pills, condoms, etc. through firms or companies. This served to diversify options, and especially to intensify the advocacy and education activities. Moreover, UNFPA supported the building of a policy system for organising, training and developing strategies for policy makers, members of the Vietnamese Communist Party, the National Assembly and Party executive committees as well as authorities at all levels, for population – family planning tasks. This process led to the implementation of population activities in Viet Nam, especially in the recent years when significant reduction of fertility rate could be seen.

We highly appreciate the cooperation between UNFPA and the Government of Viet Nam,

including the health sector – a cooperation of mutual respect, participatory discussion and effective implementation of programmes, with experience being drawn during the process of cooperation. As a result, this cooperation has gradually developed. Since 1994 - with the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, UNFPA, apart from paying attention to FP, has taken reproductive health care and population quality improvement into account. It is possible to say that UNFPA has achieved success for population activities in Viet Nam, particularly in carrying out the maternal and child health and reproductive health care programmes. We would like to express our thanks to UNFPA, other donors and organisations in helping Viet Nam develop a system and a contingent of staff specialised in population – family planning, statistics, communication, sociological study approach on population, and socio-economics. Thanks to UNFPA, Viet Nam has gained much experience in implementing population programme during the past 30 years.

Minister Tran Thi Trung Chien and Executive Director UNFPA Nafis Sadik and UN General Secretary Kofi Anan in New York





Practical contribution

Ms. Le Thi Thu
Former Minister, Chairperson of the National Committee for Population, Family and Children

Over the past 30 years, the cooperative programme between the Government of Viet Nam and UNFPA has made a practical contribution to the Population/Family Planning cause of Viet Nam. Given that many discrepancies in terms of the fertility rate as well as RH care condition and services existed among different regions and inhabitant groups, the prioritized target groups of the Country Programmes VII for the period of 2006-2010 are the youth, adolescents, women and infants, ethnic minority groups and disadvantaged migrants. The objective of the

programme is to reduce unwanted pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV, to provide support for improved service quality for RH care, safe motherhood, and to meet all RH needs of the target groups. Thanks to such support, these prioritized target groups will have favourable conditions to improve their health and live a better life.

UNFPA's cooperative spirit, mutual understanding, timely and efficient support during my term of service (2002-2007) have provided me with sincere and kind sentiments.



International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo



UNFPA becomes familiar...

Ms. Nguyen Thi Hoi
Former Vietnamese Ambassador to Canada (2002-2006) and Austria (1993-1996); former Director of UNESCO Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

It is not coincidental that the acronym “UNFPA” has become familiar with Vietnamese people. The sympathy towards UNFPA stems from its effective cooperation and aid provision in terms of policy making as well as technical assistance for population activities in general and the family planning programme in particular in

Viet Nam during the past 3 decades, especially during the 70s and the 80s when Viet Nam has just came out of the war with numerous difficulties and hardships. It is the dynamic and diversified activities in Viet Nam that have positively contributed to the overall development of UNFPA and the world.

Ms. Hoi was involved in the programme management and the cooperative relationship with UNFPA since the 70s, and attended IPCD in Cairo when she was the Vice Director of Department of International Organisations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



UNFPA General Director Nafis Sadik visited Hanoi office in 1998. UNFPA Representative in Vietnam **Erik Palstra** stood on the second row to the right.

I was struck by the enormous commitment from Government, both in Ha Noi and the provinces...

Mr. Erik Palstra

UNFPA Representative in Viet Nam (1996-1998)

It has been a privilege and fantastic experience to have served the programme in Viet Nam. I was struck by the enormous commitment from Government, both in Hanoi and the provinces, to improve the situation of their people, the team spirit of the UN Country Team and the professionalism of our national and international staff.

There have been many highlights, but to mention a few: the dialogue to develop the country's first reproductive health strategy, preparations for and the actual taking place of the 1999 population and housing census, with the only female ambassador at the time, Ms. Frank, the Netherlands, to observe the census in the extreme northern part of the country. I vividly remember the invitation from Vietnam television to look at the enormous piles of entries received for the poster contest: about a million, with strong support from the Youth and Women's Unions. The coverage given by CNN International to the programme, and the strong political and financial support from many donor countries. Also my wife Nora contributed by visiting hospitals and clinics with Ambassadors' spouses to obtain their understanding and support to give reproductive health a high priority on the agenda.

I will always treasure the many monitoring field visits we made together with officials from MPI, Ministry of Health, NCPFP and MOFA, forging a mutual understanding of the key issues to be addressed.

In sum, I am most grateful for the opportunity given to contribute to the programme and wish to thank my counterparts, colleagues and friends in Vietnam profoundly for this.

Re-training remains the concern of country programmes of UNFPA in Viet Nam, especially at grass roots level.





Training courses on population and development for provincial leaders have been organized throughout the country.

The awareness of the leaders and the mass media has been improved

Prof. Dr. Le Huu Nghia

Director of Ho Chi Minh National Politics and Administration Academy

The Ho Chi Minh National Politics Academy, presently the Ho Chi Minh National Politics and Administration Academy has had a close and effective cooperative relationship with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). During the 1997 – 2005 period, thanks to UNFPA’s support, the Academy has successfully implemented the capacity-building project for leaders, policy makers and journalists on population - development and reproductive health. Through project activities, the policy makers, managers and journalists have raised their awareness and commitments in supporting activities on population –develop-

ment and reproductive health across the country. It is possible to say that the cooperation between the Academy and UNFPA has made a practical contribution to the country’s socio-economic development over the years.

May the cooperative relationship between UNFPA and the Government of Viet Nam record new successes!



Those 30 years, much affection

Mr. Nguyen Tuc

Presidium member

Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland

Thirty years have passed since the day when Viet Nam officially became a member of the United Nations, and also 30 years of cooperation and development between Viet Nam and UNFPA in the area of population and reproductive health – family planning.

Just coming out of the longest, the fiercest war with the biggest losses – at that time, discussion of population – family planning was considered as utopian and impractical by lots of Vietnamese.

Through 30 years of cooperation and development between Viet Nam and UNFPA, we have been able to turn the utopian impossibility into the reality and the possibility.

From a country with one of the highest fertility rates in the world, thanks to UNFPA’s support in terms of experience, financial and technical support, our people have made every effort. As a result, a 30-year process of continuing fertility reduction was achieved, and the 1999 UN Population Award – a good symbol of Viet Nam – UNFPA cooperative relationship, was given to Viet Nam.

“A present is important but how to give such a present is more important”, UNFPA has helped Viet Nam honestly and sincerely with the fish, the fishing rod and the way to fish. We will keep in mind all those deeds and good sentiments at all times.

Mr. Nguyen Tuc at the Forum on Population-Development and Community Health with religious leaders in 4 Central provinces





Mr. Omer Ertur
UNFPA Representative in Viet Nam (1999 -2004)



UNFPA Country Office in Ha Noi 2002



Mr. Omer Ertur gave opening speech for a training course on programme formulation and implementation



A programme of high efficiency

Dr. Nguyen Thien Trung
Chairman of the Viet Nam Association of Family Planning
Former Vice Chairman of the Commission of Population Family and Children

Being a person who has devoted all 30 years in joining with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), I feel assured that this is one of the most significantly efficient programmes, reflected on the following aspects:

1. UNFPA has given support to us as soon as the Party and the State laid down the family planning advocacy in order to have a direct impact on the country's development. UNFPA proved to be very active in activities that were conducted right after the liberation of our whole country.
2. Actively collaborating with Viet Nam during the process of the Doi Moi (developing strategies,

policies on the area of population – Family Planning), technology transfer in terms of Population Census, advocacy and communication with diversified formats, provision of contraceptives -when Viet Nam's financial matter was still in difficult situation as well as model development, etc.

3. Practical and effective execution and coordination, from which Viet Nam has gained significant achievements recognised by the Government and the people, welcomed and encouraged by international friends, and endorsed by Viet Nam receiving the international award in 1999.



A stage of effective and faithful cooperation

Ms. Nguyen Thi Thanh Hoa
Chairperson of Viet Nam Women's Union

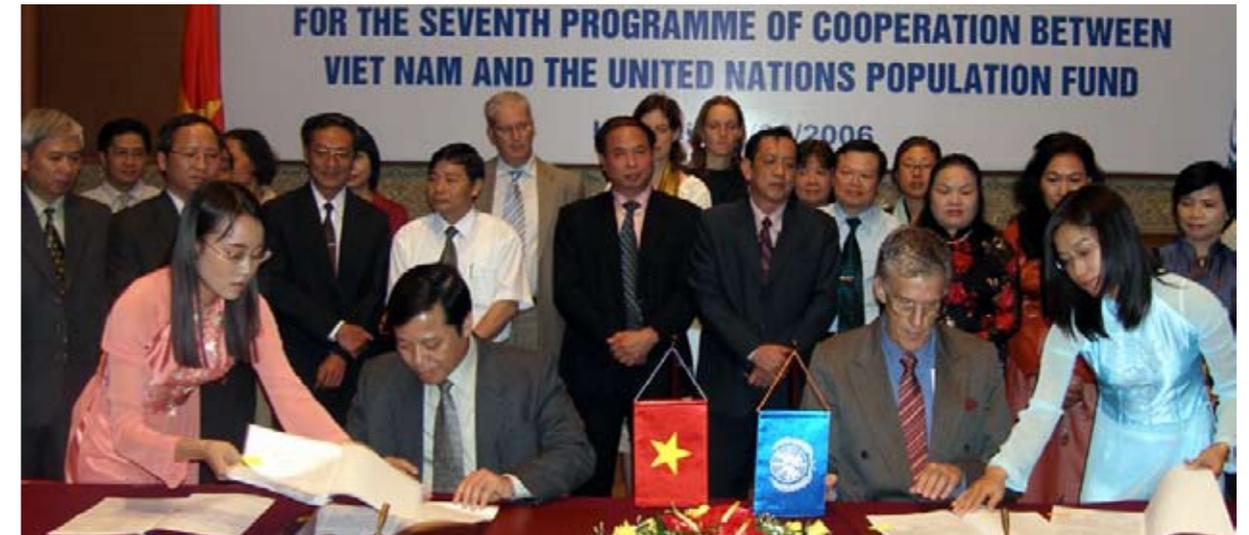
During a person's working life, there are always some unforgettable moments. For me, those were the days when I participated in the UNFPA-supported Population/FP programme together with my colleagues in the Viet Nam Women's Union.

Those first days were full of new and strange things, but step by step the Union's staff at different levels acquired new and useful knowledge and skills for their work. We highly appreciated the dynamic, flexible, creative and innovative operational activities in each successive country programme.

Particularly, we have always experienced cooperation, sharing and the sympathy of the UNFPA Office staff in Ha Noi.

On behalf of the Viet Nam Women's Union, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to UNFPA whose contribution has helped us fulfil the mission of the Union towards the Vietnamese women. In every circumstance, UNFPA always selects women and the Viet Nam Women's Union as a priority group of the programme.

Thirty years of UNFPA - Viet Nam, represents a milestone for effective and faithful cooperation. My congratulations for the great achievements recorded during the past 30 years. May the UNFPA - Viet Nam friendship and cooperation continue to be strongly built and developed.



The signing ceremony of the CP VII's Action Plan between General Statistics Office and UNFPA

UNFPA's cooperation and support have substantially improved the quality of population statistics in Viet Nam

Mr. Le Manh Hung
Former Director General - General Statistics Office

Population statistics have contributed actively during the 60-year history of existence and development of Vietnamese Statistics. To obtain population statistic targets, the General Statistics Office must conduct the population census every ten years and also an annual survey on population changes. Since the country's re-unification, in addition to the annual surveys, our country has successfully conducted 3 population censuses in 1979, 1989, and 1999. These were very large-scale and important population censuses with complicated sampling. UNFPA has collaborated and supported the General Statistics Office in all these activities at different levels. In each 5-year Country Programme, the Government of Viet Nam and UNFPA allocated substantial support to population statistics, actively contributing to

the improvement of population statistical quality. Currently, the Prime Minister has issued a Directive on the preparation of the 2009 Population Census. During the 2006-2010 Country Programme, UNFPA will continue to support the application of new technologies in conducting the Population Census. On the occasion of celebrating 30 years of cooperation and development between Viet Nam and UNFPA, and as a former leader of the General Statistics Office, with many years involvement with UNFPA, I would like to express my sincere thanks and high appreciation for the valuable cooperation and support given by the United Nations Population Fund to Vietnamese Statistics and do hope that such cooperation and support will continue to prosper.



All of us have many reasons to be proud - a personal reflection

Mr. Ian Howie
UNFPA Representative in Viet Nam since 2005

On my arrival in Viet Nam three years ago, I found a prosperous country well on its way to achieving many of the Millennium Development Goals. How different my impression would have been thirty years ago when UNFPA established its first office in Ha Noi at a time when the country was emerging from a devastating war of liberation.

I remember well arriving at the airport to be greeted by staff bearing flowers. Having never been here before and knowing no one, this warm welcome set the scene for what proved to be the smoothest of transitions. Since that time I have travelled widely throughout the country, worked closely with counterparts from central and local governments and participated in the launch of a unique UN reform initiative. Although prosperity in Viet Nam remains elusive in certain segments of the population, there is satisfaction in knowing that the interventions we advocate for are being supported by other donors and widely replicated by the government.

Common to all the activities has been the friendship with my country office colleagues. We are a happy crew! We enjoy travelling together,

eating together, even arguing together. There is an openness to our communication that reflects both humour and commitment to what we are trying to achieve.

Indeed, it has been a true partnership between people of diverse backgrounds. All of us have many reasons to feel proud of the results of our efforts. We really have made a difference.

Viet Nam and UNFPA! Partners since '79, together into the future!

International and Vietnamese experts at UNFPA Ha Noi



UNFPA Country Office in Ha Noi, 2007



General Federation of Labour has made active participation ...

Mr. Vu Kim Quynh
 Presidium Member of the Viet Nam General Federation of Labour

The population programme is an important component of the country's socio-economic development. In this regard, the Federation has proactively and effectively participated in the advocacy movement for the implementation of Population – FP and RH care, thus contributing to an important part of the Population programme. During the process of directing and implementing this task, the Federation of Labour has always received enthusiastic support from NCPFP (later NCPFC) and especially the financial and technical support from UNFPA. Madam Linda Demers, UNFPA Representative in Ha Noi (1992-1995) paid many visits to the Federation to exchange

operational experience with the Federation leaders and the PMU, a reflection of the concerns and whole-heartedness of UNFPA towards the Federation. Activities conducted in CPs have contributed to the improved skills of programme officers, awareness of employer needs as well as raising awareness of RH/FP, HIV/AIDS prevention for labourers through the application of the integrated model for RH/FP.

On this occasion, I would like to sincerely thank the United Nations Population Fund and hope that support and assistance from the UNFPA Office will continue to be given to the Viet Nam Federation of Labour.



A friendly companion

Ms. Hoang Dieu Tuyet
 Vice Chairperson of Viet Nam Farmers Union

The United Nations Population Fund – UNFPA has been a partner and friendly companion of the Viet Nam Farmers Union throughout almost 4 of the Country Programmes (CP IV, V, VI and currently CP VII). Thanks to this cooperative relationship, UNFPA has provided the Viet Nam Farmers Union with financial and technical support to fulfill its pioneering role in achieving the objective of awareness raising, behaviour and attitude change in RH/FP among males, especially the male farmers; and at the same time, has assisted the Viet Nam Farmers Union to train a contingent of staff with good knowledge and

skills in organizing and implementing population-development activities, building some integrated population-development communication models in the rural communities, with exemplary models of Population - Development Club, the integrated RH communication team and credit/saving and agriculture promotion team. UNFPA support is an important influence in various areas of socio – economic development, especially poverty and hunger elimination in Viet Nam. The Viet Nam Farmers Union respects and highly appreciates UNFPA's effective cooperative relationship.





Tre (24 years old, left) bore her first baby at home but Linh (20 years old, 4-month pregnant) said she would have her baby delivered at the reproductive health service centre, newly built with support from the New Zealand Aid Agency and UNFPA.



Mrs. H'Dop, 47 years old, from Ba Na ethnic group, had all her 5 children delivered at the commune health stations, creating an example for her community to trust in the state's reproductive health services.



UNFPA's effective technical support

Ms. Nguyen Thi Thanh Binh

Vice Chairperson of Bình Định provincial People's Committee

Throughout the past 30 years, UNFPA Viet Nam has made enduring efforts to contribute to substantial changes in the field of population/FP and reproductive health care in Viet Nam. Those achievements have helped improve the quality of life and health condition of Vietnamese people, especially women and children.

UNFPA Viet Nam is the first United Nations agency to encourage effective ownership for implementing UNFPA-supported programmes and projects through the "National Execution" management modality, to provinces/cities. Thanks to the application of this management model, UNFPA-supported projects and programmes have

achieved positive outcomes and sustainability.

Staff of the UNFPA Viet Nam Office are people with rich knowledge, skills and experience in programme management and implementation. They have provided proper technical assistance to programme staff at the provincial level in order to achieve the best outcomes.



We understand why the programme has been a success

Ms. Tran Thi Van

UNFPA Assistant Representative in Viet Nam

I started working in the UNFPA Office in April 1990 and have witnessed many changes as well as achievements recorded in the Population, RH Care programmes in Viet Nam. In particular, the contingent of staff involved in UNFPA projects from the central level to local level has grown up and become stronger. UNFPA office and myself have developed vigorously in order to meet the increasing and diversified needs of the cooperative relationship with domestic and international partners.

When I first become an UNFPA staff member, the Office was very small with a Representative, one international programme officer, 3 programme assistants and some administrative staff. The equipment consisted of only one simple computer for shared use. Almost all technical support at that time was dependent on international organisations. Currently, the Office employs nearly 30 staff and is responsible for all coordination of technical assistance to local partners involved in programme development and implementation.

We will never forget pleasant memories of those people who have been working wholeheartedly to implement the population communication and reproductive health care for people at the grass roots level. I still remember Ms Thiep,

Head of the Women's Union in Yên Bái, who offered her house as collateral for a bank loan, making it possible for timely advances to cover the cost of conducting communication activities in the province. The images of doctors, communication staff at provincial, district level coming down to hamlets, villages in the mountainous and remote areas to assist local staff with technical issues, pregnancy care, counseling and provision of FP to women. The images of project staff in Hòa Bình who have been working very hard, day and night, to help people living with HIV/AIDS in Luong Son, Mai Chau, their eyes glittering when PLWHAs stood up by themselves to give thanks for the supportive activities. And we now understand more clearly why the programme has been a success, because the country has such people as I have mentioned. We are always proud of working and collaborating with them.





Many thanks to UNFPA

Associate Prof. Dr. Nguyen Duc Vy
The People’s Physician
Chairman of Viet Nam OB/Gyn – FP Association

I am very lucky to express my good impression about the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

In 1976, at a workshop on Population and Family Planning organized by UNFPA and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) in Hanoi Ob/Gyn Hospital, I heard Mr Raphael Salas – a previous director of UNFPA speaking: “... population explosion will upset all plans and will increase the number of people who do not have conditions to live with adequate and just human rights: right for education, right for labour and being treated fairly, right for having shelter, being given medical care, etc., right for living with justice and political freedom”. I was really impressed by his speech and since then we have received support from UNFPA and IPPF in various fields, the diversification of contraceptive methods including the female sterilization with the “Minilab – pomeroy” technique. The “VY-86 the lever used for uterus lifting and rotating” then came into existence.

The past 30 years is also a time when I have been involved in many national and local projects supported by UNFPA, one of the most prominent being the “Safe Motherhood” programme.

During 1999 – 2000, with support from the Ministry of Health and partial financial support

from UNFPA, the Center for Infertility Support within the Institute of Mother and Newborn, was established. In 2001, some infants were born thanks to in vitro fertilization (IVF).

I can confirm that UNFPA is an international humanitarian and human-oriented organization and provides practical and useful support to Viet Nam.

Many thanks to UNFPA.

The cry of a new born baby in a reproductive health service station supported by UNFPA in Ha Giang.



The “monkey bridge” in 1987. Mai Huong, Sheila Macrae, Tuan, Van remet after 10 years since working in UNFPA, Ha Noi



A bridge linking UNFPA with our people

Trinh Huu Tuan

NPO (1986-1991), communication & training consultant

In 1987, at a village in the Mekong Delta, Mr. Gonzales and I had to wait for a “monkey bridge” to be put in place for us to enter. Mr. Gonzales said: “Tuan, you are a bridge connecting UNFPA with your fellow countrymen.” Many people and events connected on that bridge are memorable indeed.

I’ve never known anyone who is as dedicated to work like Ms. Tan of the Women’s Union and Ms. Xuyen of the Youth Union. Ms. Tan made it possible for the first family planning KAP survey of Vietnamese women and the first income generating project for the poor rural women. Thanks to Ms. Xuyen, the youth got their first project in our program, all fresh novices but full of beans and creative ideas. The famous song “Dieu Bong Leaves” by Tran Tien, the winner of the first national song writing competition on the theme of love and family planning for the youth, was initiated and organized by Ms. Xuyen in our project. The first training workshops on how to manage a UNFPA-funded project were also requested by these two special ladies. I was honored to be part of those initial probing steps towards what

has now become a comprehensive set of guidelines on national execution. There was also the first training program on population communication for the radio Voice of Vietnam, the first pool of microcomputers in service of population activities. Being a bridge connecting those first achievements has indeed been a privilege.

But I was merely an IEC bridge. Mr. Gonzales, followed by Ms. Macrae, in turn put in place new bridges for UNFPA: Ms. Mai Huong – an MCH bridge; and Ms. Tran Thi Van – a PDS bridge. Goodness me! What resilient “monkey bridges” we were!

Well, after being absent for many years, I have found myself being back with UNFPA now as a consultant, helping to formulate the first training courses on how to control the quality of the training activities in the program and how to adapt and produce advocacy materials and to adjust the organization of the office.

UNFPA Viet Nam now has quite a team of steel and concrete bridges. But we should never forget that the *raison d’être* of a bridge is what being connected from one end to the other.



UNFPA's support is "pioneering" and very effective

Asso. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Dinh Cu
Director of Institute for Population and Social Affairs, National Economics University

Though conducted since late 1961, but due to the war, the population area in Viet Nam remained an "uncultivated land" when UNFPA started its support - in 1977. UNFPA "sowed the seed" on this land. It could be said that there is no area unmarked by UNFPA's support: staff training, study/research, communication, provision of contraceptives and new approach of provision - social marketing; policy formulation, etc. Early achievement of replacement fertility rate and the UN Population Award in 1999 for Viet Nam are evidence and recognition of Viet Nam's success in the area of population - FP. The great effectiveness of UNFPA's support resulted from the project's focus on capacity-building for those agencies responsible for implementing Population-FP activities, and the "leading" agencies - leaders and policy makers, and "replication" agencies - educational, training and research institutions.

The Institute for Population and Social Affairs under the National Economics University has received UNFPA support since its establishment in January 1992, for scientific staff training, textbook development, building the library and computer room, provision of modern teaching equipment, etc. This has meant the capacity of the Institute has been increasingly improved with contributions towards training nearly 4,000 persons/time working in the area of Population, Family and Children across the country and conducting many studies for the policy making of the Party and the Government.

On this occasion, we would like to express our gratitude to UNFPA for its great contribution to the success of Viet Nam's Population Programme in general and for the development of Institute for Population and Social Affairs in particular. I hope that UNFPA disseminates the successful Vietnamese experience to other developing countries.

Mr. Omer Ertur together with several scientistst after a field trip on situation analysis of CP VI



The quality of reproductive health care in Yen Bai province has been significantly improved

Ms. Ha Thi Sam
Chairperson of Committee for Population, Family & Children of Yen Bai province

Yên Bái is one of the provinces that has received direct UNFPA support for 3 consecutive Country Programmes IV, V and VI.

Through UNFPA's support for reproductive health and Population – Development, the two strategies i.e. strategy on Population and Development and the RH Care Strategy for the period of 2001 – 2010, the provinces have made obvious improvements in quality. Formats and contents for advocacy and communication were diversified and updated to accommodate the needs of each specific target group, training materials and manuals comprehensively developed in order to strengthen technical and management capacity of RH care service providers, decentralisation of management in CP V, VI enhanced the execution capacity at all levels to take on an ownership role. National and international experts have provided

important technical assistance. Support from policy makers from central level to local level have clearly improved the quality of RH care and, at the same time, increased community awareness of the need for quality RH care services.





Quang Nam people always remember what the programme has contributed...

Mr. Nguyen Tat Thang
 Director of Education and Training Department
 Former Director of Quang Nam Committee of Population, Family & Children

I have had opportunities to cooperate and work with UNFPA during CP 4, 5, 6 as Project Deputy Standing Director in Quang Nam and as the national trainer on advocacy and behaviour change communication on reproductive health. I will always keep in my mind good memories and deep impressions of the effective support from UNFPA to the Quang Nam people, especially women, adolescents and those living in remote

areas, in providing better quality of life, through efficient implementation of National Strategies on Population and Reproductive Health. Management and communication capacity of staff involved in the programme has clearly improved.



I have been trained on communication content and communication skills

Ms. Pham Thi Thanh
 Chairperson of the Women's Union, Tan Hoa Tay commune, Tan Phuoc district, Tien Giang province.

Tan Hoa Tay commune, with a population of 40,000 people, live scattered with incomes earned mainly from rice and pineapple cultivation. Women in the reproductive age represent a quarter of the population. Women work really hard for a living.

Prior to training, my communication work just focused on family planning. However, after attending the UNFPA-supported training on behavioural change communication, I learnt how to communicate on other issues such as safe motherhood, reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS prevention,

adolescent reproductive health care and gender equality. I learnt how to prepare communication plans and, together with other women, organized the integration of 30 monthly communication groups with the community's meeting and credit-savings groups. I am one of the key communicators of the 17 communication groups. Knowledge gained from these training courses has made me more confident. I both enjoy and feel committed to this work. I find myself responsible for helping poor women of my homeland by teaching them about prevention of diseases and building a happy family.

Local radio actively persuade people to use local reproductive health services





Mr. Vu Mi Pao, 32 years old, H'Mong ethnic, 32 years of age, population collaborator of Huu Vinh commune, Yen Minh district, Ha Giang province

Training courses are essential

I have been trained in training courses on behaviour change communication in population/RH – FP supported by UNFPA’s project VNM7PG – 0001 in Hà Giang province.

Attending those training courses, I have acquired knowledge and skills in advocacy, communication for inhabitants in my commune (especially those couples in the reproductive age and adolescents to implement properly RH care and FP).

Those training courses are very necessary for us because they help us to improve the quality of our work on Population – FP communication issues.



Mr. Nguyen Van Thinh, 31 years old, Da Bac hamlet, Lien Son commune, Luong Son district, Hoa Binh province

Let’s use condom!

Discovering that both my husband and I were HIV infected, made me feel I was rapidly decaying. Everyone thought that I could not live for much longer.

Then to my assistance came the staff of the commune health station and they encouraged me to join the “Friend helps friend” team, and now the “Sharing together” club. Since then, I have benefited from medical service for PLWHAs at the Infectious Disease Department - Hoa Binh Provincial Hospital. My health condition has improved gradually.

I also attended training courses on HIV/AIDS prevention communication and community-based care for PLWHAs organized by the Women’s Union in collaboration with a UNFPA – supported project. We have applied knowledge acquired from those courses to counsel friends and their family members who are in the same circumstances.



Ms. Tran Thu Thuy, Class 12A3, Lac Long Quan Secondary School, Hoa Binh City

Mothers no longer avoid the subject

Since I was in grade 10, I have always visited this friendly corner with my friends. In this corner we learn information about adolescent RH through books, newspaper and flyers. Staff in this friendly corner regularly organize such activities as RH knowledge contests, painting contests, music performances etc.

An activity that I am most interested in is to be involved in “the Mother and the Daughter” Club activity. Coming here, I find more openness between the mothers and us. We can ask comfortably about things that we are normally afraid of asking, and the mothers also find it much easier to share knowledge without any reluctance – previously, they used to tell us: “you will know when you grow up”.

I find that knowledge and skills gained from the friendly corner are particularly relevant and essential for my age group.

My biggest desire is ...

When I was 4 months pregnant, I found out I had been infected with HIV by my husband. Five days after giving birth to my child, my husband passed away. I felt that my life ended completely at that time.

The “Sharing together” Club supported by UNFPA project has changed my life. Currently, I am a communicator of the club. I have joined some fora with the mass media in order to appeal to all people to get involved in AIDS prevention activities.

I want to give gentle advice to young friends to ensure their future happiness, that they should go for testing before making a decision about marriage.

I have been given ARVs for PMTCT very early. My biggest desire is that my daughter is free from getting a disease like me.



Ms. Nguyen Thi Hien, 23 years old, Da Bac hamlet, Lien Son commune, Luong Son district, Hoa Binh province

Photographs

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