



National Population Council



Partners in Population and Development (PPD)

NATIONAL SOUTH-SOUTH 2008/2009 ANNUAL REPORT

GHANA

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1.0 INTRODUCTION:

In November 2008, Ghana was accepted as the twenty-fourth member of Partners in Population and Development (PPD) at the PPD Annual Board Meeting in Kampala, Uganda. Ghana has however over a period of time actively participated in PPD activities as a collaborating country. The National Population Council, Ghana (NPC) and the Ministry of Health/Ghana Health Service have participated in PPD meetings and workshops.

Ghana's commitment to south-south cooperation dates back to the late 1950s. PPD provides another opportunity to strengthen south-south activities in the country.

2.0 SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

2.1 National South-South Support Structure Meeting

A National South-South Support Structure Meeting was held in Accra, Ghana on 19th May 2009. The meeting brought together a cross section of stakeholders in Population and Development and Reproductive Health from the public and private sectors, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Development Partners, Academic Institutions and the Media in Ghana to discuss modalities for the establishment of a National South-South Support Structure (NSSS) for Ghana. The meeting which was chaired by Prof Fred Sai also discussed the ICPD+15 Ghana Country Report.

Mr. Harry Jooseery, Executive Director of PPD, Mr Patrick Mugirwa, Programme Officer and Mr. Abdelylah Lakssir, International Programme Officer, both of PPD Africa Regional Office (PPD ARO) visited Ghana as part of the Programme to i) support the National Population Council to hold the NSSSS Meeting ii) to hold consultations with senior government officials and training institutions; (iii) to undertake consultations for the West Africa Reproductive Health Network (WARHN) Meeting slated for Ghana.



Prof. F. T. Sai, delivering the opening remarks at the National South-South Structure Meeting held at Alisa Hotel, Accra on May 19, 2009. Looking on are Mrs. Esther Apewokin, Executive Director, NPC and Dr. Harry Jooseery, the Director, PPD.

Prof F. T Sai noted that, though Ghana was one of the first African countries to adopt an explicit Population Policy in 1969, after so many years, the country was still grappling with a number of population issues including a high population growth rate of 2.7 per cent, high incidences of maternal mortality (451 per 100,000 live births) and infant mortality (50 infant deaths per 1,000 live births). He charged the meeting to provide workable strategies for the implementation of a south-south support structure in Ghana.

The Executive Director of NPC, in her welcome address indicated the important role Ghana has played in promoting south-south cooperation. She also said that Ghana has been in the forefront of population and development issues both at the national and international levels. It is in this vein that the NPC is eager to be part of the broader South- South Structure and welcomes the efforts of PPD in that regard.

In his statement, Dr. Jooseery commended Ghana for becoming the 24th member of PPD. He noted with concern the dismal reproductive health statistics in many developing countries and the role that south-south cooperation could play in changing this. He recounted the support that Ghana would receive as a member of PPD and hoped that the meeting would come up with modalities to facilitate the establishment of a National South-South Support Structure.

There were four technical presentations at the meeting. They were as follows:

- *ICPD+15 Ghana Country Report* by Mrs Esther Apewokin, Executive Director NPC,
- *Reproductive Health* by Dr. Gloria Quansah-Asare, Director and Mrs. Gladys Brew, Coordinator, Safe Motherhood both of the Family Health Division, Ghana Health Service.
- PPD Mission and South-South Cooperation by Mr. Patrick Mugirwa
- Modalities for South-South Cooperation by Ms Marian Kpakpah, Director Technical Services, NPC.

At the end of the meeting stakeholders lauded Ghana's membership of PPD. The National Population Council was requested to be the focal point for PPD activities in Ghana. The meeting also showed appreciation to the Government of Ghana for incorporating South-South activities into NPC's budget to ensure sustainability. Lastly the meeting recommended that the NPC Technical Advisory Committee should be renamed Population Experts Group to include issues of south-south cooperation in its activities.

2.2 Courtesy Calls

Mr. Jooseery paid courtesy calls on the Honourable Chief of Staff of the Office of the President and the Honourable Minister of Health. He also visited the Regional Institute for Population Studies to discuss areas of possible collaboration.

Courtesy Call on the Honourable Chief of Staff

The PPD team and the Executive Director of the NPC met the Honourable Chief of Staff at the Castle, Osu. The NPC Executive Director highlighted the assistance that PPD had offered Ghana prior to her joining the PPD. She also briefed the meeting on Ghana's role in reactivating the West African Reproductive Health Network. The PPD Executive Director congratulated Ghana for joining the PPD as the 24th member. He mentioned the

key role Ghana is playing in the population field globally which has been acknowledged by PPD. PPD would assist Ghana to package and disseminate her achievements internationally. PPD would also strengthen the Regional Institute of Population Studies to provide the relevant short training in demography and related issues. Lastly, the PPD would support the Ministry of Health to promote Contraceptive Security in the country. The Honourable Chief of Staff welcomed the PPD Team to the country. He asked for clarification on certain pertinent issues such as the effect of socio-cultural beliefs on the Family Planning programme especially in the rural areas and the effects of promotion of small family-size on agricultural production with reference to the cocoa sector. It was explained that that with advancement in technology, the cocoa sector does not necessarily need a large labour force to improve its output. On the issue of socio-cultural practices, improvement in education of girls to the secondary level has positively influenced their fertility. The meeting was informed that RIPS changed its status from a Regional to a National Institution about three years ago. The Hon. Chief of Staff pledged the Government of Ghana's support to PPD activities.

Meeting with the Honourable Minister of Health

The delegation from PPD accompanied by officials of NPC and the Ghana Health Service (GHS) paid a courtesy call on the Deputy Minister of Health. The team was received by Mr. Azumah, Director, Administration, of the Ministry of Health on behalf of Deputy Minister who was unable to meet the delegation at the last minute due to a pressing national issue. Mr. Jooseery briefed the Ministry on PPD. He said the purpose of his visit to Ghana was to congratulate Ghana on joining the PPD and also to discuss ways to galvanise national efforts at addressing burning population and development issues including reproductive health in Ghana.

He also outlined major activities to be undertaken by PPD in 2009. These include the PPD Board Meeting to be held in Beijing, China, in October, the 5th Asia Pacific Conference on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights which will be held at the same venue and Ghana would be invited to participate in the meetings. There will also be a Policy Dialogue on Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS in Nairobi in August 2009 to which Ghana will also be invited to participate.

Mr. Jooseery also mentioned some of the benefits accruing to Ghana as a member country. These include a one year fellowship tenable in population and development at the Cairo Institute for Demography, the training of Professional in Reproductive Health in China in 2010 among others.

Visit to the Regional Institute for Population Studies, University of Ghana-

At the Regional Institute for Population Studies, (RIPS), University of Ghana, the team met with the Director, Prof Francis Doodoo, and two other members of staff, Prof Tawiah and Prof Chuks Mba.

Mr. Jooseery informed the meeting that PPD had undertaken an assessment of some training and academic institutions to assess the programmes of the institutions and also a survey on how best these can be strengthened to help meet the ICPD and MDG goals. As a result PPD had developed training modules to be integrated in the curriculum of seventeen collaborating academic and training institutions. PPD has therefore proposed a Training of Trainers to facilitate effective integration of the training modules. PPD will also facilitate the exchange of experts among the institutions to provide technical

support, learning and information-sharing. Mr. Jooseery invited RIPS to join the network of training institutions PPD is currently working with to contribute to learning and exchange of ideas.

Prof Dodoo briefed the delegation on the programmes offered by RIPS. It was proposed that RIPS ran short courses to strengthen the capacity of professionals already in the field of population and development and reproductive health. The meeting also agreed to the institutionalization of regional tours. Furthermore it was agreed that the modules developed by PPD presents an area/opportunity for collaboration between RIPS and PPD. RIPS therefore requested for copies of the Modules, Survey Report and Reports of the various meetings. RIPS will review the documents and see how best the modules could be integrated in the RIPS programme.

At a separate meeting Mr. Patrick Mugirwa and Mr. Abdelylah Lakssir held a meeting with the Executive Director and other staff of NPC on preparations for the West Africa Reproductive Health Network (WARHN) Strategic Plan Meeting scheduled for Ghana.

The following broad outcomes were achieved in meetings between PPD and Ghanaian officials

- The endorsement of Ghana's membership of PPD.
- Participation of Ghana in upcoming PPD meetings
- Provision of contraceptive requirements to PPD for support
- Review of PPD training manuals by RIPS and identification of areas of integration with RIPS programme
- Collaboration between RIPS and NPC in the organization of Study Tour programmes.
- Organization of the WARHN Meeting in Ghana

The National Population Council has submitted both a technical report and a financial report to the PPD Secretariat on the NSSSS meeting held in Accra. As a result of preparations for the WARHN meeting and other follow-up activities, the Expert Group Meeting has been scheduled for October 2009.

2.3 West Africa Reproductive Health Network Strategic Plan Meeting

The West Africa Reproductive Health Network Strategic Plan Meeting was held at Akosombo, Ghana from 25th to 27th August, 2009. Delegates from six West African countries namely Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo met to formulate a Strategic Plan aimed at reviving and strengthening the West Africa Reproductive Health Network (WARHN) which was set up under the Abuja Declaration on Population and Development. The Declaration was adopted on 17th September 2005 by Heads of Government of ECOWAS. The meeting was Chaired by Prof. F. T Sai, a renowned public health physician and consultant and former Presidential Adviser on Population and HIV/AIDS

In her welcome address, Mrs. Esther Apewokin, Executive Director, NPC, assured the meeting that Ghana fully endorsed the strategy of PPD to promote South-South cooperation in the area of Population and Reproductive Health.

Dr. George Sipa Yankey, the Honourable Minister of Health, delivered the keynote address and reiterated the Government of Ghana's commitment to south-south

cooperation. He recalled that the first President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was one of the founding fathers of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), a group of developing countries committed to the ideals of south-south cooperation and noted with satisfaction that with the exception of Yugoslavia, four out of the five founding members of NAM, namely, India, Indonesia, Egypt and Ghana are currently members of Partners in Population and Development (PPD).



The Honourable Minister of Health, Ghana, Dr. George Sipa Yankey delivering the keynote address.

The Honourable Minister further observed that countries in the West Africa sub-region face similar health challenges and therefore concerted efforts aimed at tackling population, development and reproductive health problems would help improve the quality of life of the people.

The meeting also received a solidarity message from UNFPA. Which was read by Ms. Bridget Asiamah National Programme Officer on behalf of Mr. Jude Edochie, the Acting Representative. She recounted the importance UNFPA attaches to networking and south-south cooperation in the achievement of developmental goals. She expressed the UNFPA's pleasure at the reactivation of WARHN and believed that the strategic plan to be developed would help improve the lives of mothers, children and the youth of countries in the sub-region. She further reaffirmed the support of the UNFPA and its sister UN agencies to the network so as to facilitate speedy reduction in maternal mortality in Africa.

Prof. F. T. Sai, observed in his closing remarks that sub-saharan Africa has the fastest growing population in the world. He said the total fertility rate (TFR) of most countries in the region was over 5 with some countries such as Niger reporting rates of above 7. He said in 2005, the region's share of the global population was 14 percent and this is projected to increase to 22 percent by 2050. The region should therefore be prepared to deal with the socio-economic challenges including poverty, hunger, disease, ignorance,

maternal and child mortality which come with a rapidly growing population. He underscored political leadership as the most important challenge confronting the sub-region and hoped that the network would be a strong advocate for change in the reproductive and population sectors.

Technical papers were presented at the meeting were as follows:

- Profile of PPD, ARO by Dr. Jotham Musinguzi, PPD ARO
- SWOT Analysis of RH Networks and Coalitions in West Africa by Prof Afua Hesse, University of Ghana Medical School
- Overview of RH Situation in West Africa by Dr, Bouwaye Aissa, West Africa Health Organization
- Next Steps: Modalities for Implementation of WARHN Strategic Plan by Mrs. Esther Apewokin, Executive Director national Population Council

The first three papers formed the basis for discussions on the vision, mission, core values, focus areas, objectives and activities of the WARHN Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is being finalized by the Consultant. As part of the meeting proceedings the 2009 Akosombo Communiqué was adopted (Appendix 1)

The meeting also agreed on the following Modalities for the Implementation of the WARHN Strategic Plan:

(i)

- Adoption of the 2009 Akosombo Communiqué on WARHN
- Finalize and Distribute the WARHN Strategic Plan to Delegates
- Establish the Interim WARHN Secretariat
- Bring all ECOWAS countries into the network
- Lobby Ministers of Health of ECOWAS to adopt WARHN Strategic Plan at the November meeting in Abuja
- Develop Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the WARHN Strategic Plan
- Network with EARHN, SARHN and PPD ARO
- Mobilize Resources to support the implementation of the WARHN Strategic Plan (Governments, Private Sector, NGOs and Development Partners etc).

(ii) WARHN Member Countries

- Elect Focal Institution in each of the Countries
- Identify all Major Stakeholders including Politicians, Policy Makers, Parliamentarians, NGOs, Civil Society Organizations
- Introduce the WARHN Strategic Plan to major Stakeholders
- Develop Country Specific RH Network Plan
- Mobilize Resources to implement network activities
- Liaise with WARHN Secretariat
- Advocate for countries to join PPD where necessary

(iii) PPD ARO

Support WARHN activities.

- Provide Technical Backstopping.
- Mobilize Financial Resources for WARHN and National activities.
- Promote collaboration with other Networks in Africa and other Regions.

The Report on the WARHN Strategic Plan Meeting and the WARHN Strategic Plan has been finalized and are being distributed to ECOWAS member countries.

3.0 CAPACITY BUILDING

3.1 Fellowship: Cairo Demographic Centre

Ghana has been offered a fellowship by PPD with assistance from the Cairo Demographic Centre (CDC) to pursue a one-year diploma in Demography at CDC. A programme Officer of the National Population Council was selected to undertake the course. It is expected that knowledge and skills acquired would contribute to achieving the objectives and targets of the National Population Policy.

3.2 Equipment

PPD Africa Regional Office provided a laptop to facilitate the work of the National Population Council during the year.

3.3 Partner Institutions: Asia Regional Meeting

The Regional Institute for Population Studies, (RIPS) University of Ghana was invited by the PPD Secretariat to participate in the Asia Regional Meeting of Partners Institutions, held in India from 23rd-24th September 2009. The Deputy Director of RIPS, Dr. Stephen Kwankye participated in the meeting.

3.4 Study Tour by Government Officials from Zimbabwe

A two-member delegation from the Population and Development Unit of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment Promotion, Zimbabwe, visited Ghana in August 2009 to understudy Ghana's population programme and institutional arrangements especially at the decentralized levels. The team was hosted by the National Population Council, Ghana.

They visited and held meetings with both public sector and private sector agencies as well as training institutions at the national and decentralized levels and also visited some project sites. The visit facilitated the sharing of ideas and experiences which would contribute to improving population programmes in the two countries.

4.0 POLICY DIALOGUE

4.1 Policy Dialogue on Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS with Afro-Arab Parliamentarians

Ghana participated in the Policy Dialogue on Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS with Afro-Arab Parliamentarians in Nairobi in August 2009. Prof Fred Sai presented a paper

on *Reproductive Health, Population and Development: New Challenges* Ghana. Two Parliamentarians from the Parliamentary Caucus on Population and Development also participated in the meeting.

5.0 INFORMATION SHARING/DOCUMENTATION

5.1 Completion of Questionnaires

Ghana completed three questionnaires from PPD during the period. They included the following:

a) National Best Practice Identification: Ghana submitted information on four best practices in Ghana. They are i) National Health Insurance Scheme ii) National Youth Employment Scheme iii) Community Health Planning Strategy iv) The Population Integration Training Modules: Training Manual for Integration of Population Variables into Development Planning.

The Population Integration Training Modules: Training Manual for Integration of Population Variables into Development Planning has been selected by PPD for further research and documentation. Ghana has since reviewed the questionnaire and resubmitted to PPD.

b) “Inventory on Products and Services” Exchanged among countries to promote south-south cooperation. Ghana identified products which included PPD capacity building workshops and study tours to Ghana from other African countries

c) “Profile of Ghana” which was a questionnaire on selected indicators on Ghana which included population growth rate, fertility ratio and other indicators.

d) A list of questions for PPD Africa Regional Office on the work and responsibilities of PPD ARO aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Office.

6.0 PPD SUBSCRIPTION

Ghana accepts the obligation of member countries to pay the yearly subscription of \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand Dollars) to PPD and arrangements are being concluded to effect the payment before the Board Meeting in October 2009.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The Government of Ghana is committed to south-south cooperation and this is reflected in the decision of the country to become a member of PPD in 2008. Activities undertaken in the year 2008/2009 is a further indication of the commitment of the country to PPD. It is hoped that there will be more opportunities in the following year to work with PPD and also undertake in-country activities to strengthen south-south cooperation.