

Consultative Meeting of Experts on Capacity Development, China, May 07

Address

By

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Mr. Hu Hongtao, Deputy Director General, Department of International Cooperation,
National Population and Family Planning Commission (NPFPC) of China
Mr. Jianhua Cai, President, CTC
Mr. Rabbi Royan, Sr. Technical Advisor, Population and Development, UNFPA, New
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Consultants, Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you to this consultative meeting which is being organized here in this beautiful city of Taicang in collaboration of the UNFPA and the China Training Center. We have had a long preparation for this meeting with our lead consultants deeply involved in the enquiry process, preparing the instrument for a comprehensive collection of relevant information, the analysis of the data, the preparation of the regional papers by the four experts, the discussion with UNFPA, the sharing of feedback among consultants, experts and PPD staff, the logistic preparations by PPD & CTC, and I take this opportunity to thank all of you who have been involved in the whole process. I am very appreciative to all those who have put their precious time in filling the inquiry questionnaire, and also in preparation of the regional papers. Thank you also Messrs Jyoti Singh, SLN Rao, K.S. Seetharam, Siswanto Wilopo for your hard work and valuable contribution. I would like also to thank Mr. Cai, President of CTC and his team for all the logistic arrangements for the holding of this meeting at Taicang. My special thanks go to Mr. Rogelio Fernandez-Castilla, TSD Director of UNFPA for his unrelenting support and assistance to us. Unfortunately he could not be with us today due to other commitments. I do welcome Mr. G. Giridhar and Mr. Rabbi Royan from UNFPA at this meeting and we would request you to convey our best regards and greetings to Mr. Rogelio Fernandez-Castilla.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are all here to bring together our expertise and experience, synergize our efforts to discourse on the way forward for our strategic capacity development initiative. Capacity building has become the buzz term on many fronts internationally and indeed drawing the attention it deserves. This is the recognition of the importance of continued and constant sharing of knowledge as a dynamic process to adapt and to grow to the fullest potential. For us, capacity building refers to the development of abilities, skills, attitudes and values, the imparting of knowledge to enable the effective performance of functions, problem solving and achievement of objectives in a sustainable manner. Sustainability entails

that we need to keep abreast of new development, equip ourselves with skills and resources that will enable us survive, adapt and thrive in the fast changing world.

The emerging environment ushered by globalization imposes a readjustment of the human system that will enable us to survive, grow diversify and become more competent. Capacity is most sustainable when it responds effectively to the needs of the people and is strategically based on long term vision. PPD has embarked on the development of a new Capacity Building Framework that will respond to the specific needs of its member states. We have utilized the Mc Kinsey capacity framework to assess the human resources, systems and organizational structure in relation to the development of aspirations, strategies and skills. You have all participated in the assessment exercise and our consultant Dr. S.L.N. Rao has analyzed the data and come up with very valuable information that will help all of us understand capacity gaps and capacity development potentials, and develop effective capacity building programs.

We need to consider 5 essential elements:

1. We desire a program that is **comprehensive** enough that will offer some degree of “one-stop shopping”. We would like to partner with institutions to be able to reach a wide array of Reproductive Health issues that would contribute to the attainment of ICPD and MDGs.
2. We need capacity building program to be **customized** to the specific needs of member states. Recognition of the commonalities among developing countries would help to cluster needs and develop programme interventions as per regional specificity.
3. Capacity building efforts need to be **competence based**. They should be offered by competent professionals; more so, requested by “enlightened customers”, who are committed to make a difference. We do not get trained for training sake.
4. We need to be **assessment based**. We should start with the assessment of the needs and assets to be able to drive the type of capacity building program we want.
5. Capacity building program needs also to be **contextualized**. We need as I said before, to develop program that will galvanize efforts for the attainment of the ICPD & MDGs, and also that will consider the context of the new population and development agenda imposed by globalization.

Ladies and gentlemen, we contend that capacity building forms an essential base for South-South Cooperation. Countries of the South have got lots of expertise and know-how which need to be redefined, refined, reconstructed and re-channeled to meet emerging needs. We are questioning conventional wisdom for the promotion of competency and result oriented capacity development program. Mr. Jyoti Singh, Mr. Rao, Mr. Seetharam and Mr. Wilopo have been kind to support our initiative and to assist PPD in the development of the strategic framework for capacity building and I am very thankful to them. We are also thankful to Mr. Mari Bhat, Ms. Joy Mukhaire, Prof. Abdelghany and Mr. El Hadji Dioum for having worked on regional papers on capacity building program. 17 Partner Institutions represented here and from Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Senegal, Thailand Tunisia and Uganda participated in the Training and Research Capacity Needs Assessment, and I am thankful to all of them.

This meeting would not have been possible without the financial and technical support and assistance from UNFPA, to which I am very grateful. Last but not least, I wish to place on records the tremendous assistance and support provided by the Government of the People's Republic of China and most particularly Hon. Zhang Weiqing, the Minister of National Population and Family Planning Commission of China and the Chair of PPD in initiating our Capacity Development programme. PPD has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with China on Capacity Development, and this has been spearheaded by Hon. Zhang Weiqing, the Chair of PPD. China has committed to provide financial and technical assistance to PPD for the organization of yearly 2 training programme for participants from our member states till 2010. We wish by the end of this meeting to be able to agree on the priority RH themes and for which training modules will be developed. This will serve as a basis for the organization of a series of training programme to be organized by PPD, CTC and also Partner Institutions.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are today among experts in the field of capacity building and I am convinced that by the end of this 4-day meeting we will come up with concrete proposals that will enable us move forward with meaningful results, and turn dilemmas into opportunities because we believe, as the dictum says: "If we give someone a fish, he eats for a day, teach someone to catch fish, he feeds himself for a life time".

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention.