

SHARING INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCES
FROM PPD MEMBER COUNTRIES



POLICY COMMUNICATIONS BEST PRACTICE IN KENYA

October 2019

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By

Partners in Population and Development (PPD)

PPD Secretariat Office Complex, Block-F

Plots-F/17 B&C

Agargaon Administrative Zone,

Sher-E-Bangla Nagar

Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh

<http://www.partners-popdev.org>

Phone : +88029117842, 9117845

In collaboration with

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

605 3rd Ave, New York,

NY 10158, USA

<https://www.unfpa.org>

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+880 1925 865 364

67/D, Green Road, Dhaka-1207

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OVERVIEW

Partners in Population and Development (PPD) as Intragovernmental organization of 27 countries has been engaged in promoting South-South Cooperation to improve reproductive health, population and development in its member countries. Documenting best practices, Knowledge and experience sharing as well as replication of the best practices is one of the intervention areas of PPD.

The WHO Regional Committee for Africa during their Fifty-Six Session in 2006 adopted strategic directions and a related resolution on knowledge management¹ to enhance knowledge-sharing and replication. Knowledge management (KM) is taken here to refer to the process of providing the right knowledge for the right people (i.e. policy-makers, practitioners, health systems managers and the public) and in the right format to strengthen health systems and improve health outcomes. A best practice is commonly defined as a technique or method that, through experience and research, has proven reliably to lead to the desired result². These practices need to be shared and adopted to benefit of more people.

A practical definition of a best practice is knowledge about what works in specific situations and contexts which can be used to develop and implement solutions adapted to similar problems in other situations and contexts³. However, one of the significant barriers to knowledge-sharing and replication of experience in Africa is the limited culture of information and knowledge documentation and sharing⁴.

The Population, Health, and Environment approach, (PHE) recognizes the complex inter-connection between people, their health, and the natural resources upon which they depend. In view of this interconnection, a number of organizations initiated integrated programming to address both social and environmental challenges dating back to the mid-1980s⁵. Since then a subset of these programs have employed an integrated approach referred to as Population, Health, and Environment (PHE), aiming to simultaneously improve access to primary health care services, particularly family planning and reproductive health, while also helping communities conserve the critical ecosystems and natural resources upon which they depend⁶. The number of PHE projects increased throughout the early 2000s⁷ and proponents of such integrated approaches argue that they can be more effective and more efficient than single sector programs for many reasons⁸.

There was lack of documentation among the previous lesson learnt in regard to the benefits of PHE integration and therefore projects needed to document the benefits to fill this data gap⁹. Similarly, early interventions faced skepticism about the value added of the integrated PHE model¹⁰.

¹ WHO Regional Committee for Africa resolution AFR/RC56/16. Knowledge management in the WHO African Region: strategic directions. In: Fifty-sixth WHO Regional Committee for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 28 August– 1 September 2006 (<http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/92662/1/AFR-RC56-16.pdf>).

² Engaging for health: Eleventh General Programme of Work 2006–2015: a global health agenda. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2006 (http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/69379/1/GPW_eng.pdf).

³ Best practices. In: Bitpipe [website] (<http://www.bitpipe.com/tlist/Best-Practices.html>).

⁴ Ibid

⁵ A Guide to Identifying and Documenting Best Practices in Family Planning Programmes. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

⁶ Yavinsky, R. W., Lamere, C., Patterson, K.P. and Bremner, J. June 2015. The Impact of Population, Health, and Environment Projects: A Synthesis of Evidence, Working Paper. Washington, DC: Population Council, The Evidence Project

⁷ Yavinsky, R. W., Lamere, C., Patterson, K.P. and Bremner, J. June 2015. The Impact of Population, Health, and Environment Projects: A Synthesis of Evidence, Working Paper. Washington, DC: Population Council, The Evidence Project

⁸ Honzak, Cara, Judy Ogleshorpe, and David López-Carr. 2012. "Conservation and family planning: What is the value of integrating family planning into conservation projects?" Papers of the Population Association of America Annual Meeting 2012, May 3-5, 2012.

⁹ Edmond Janet, K Holbrook, A Macharia, J Mandima, and N Simonea 2017 Exploring Cross-Sector Linkages Between Population, Health, Environment, Nutrition And Food Security: A Review of Best Practices and Lessons Learned

¹⁰ www.pathfinder.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Pathfinder_Kenya_Policy_Brief.pdf

PHE for sustainable development in Kenya is an ENGAGE project that serve as an advocacy to promote integrated PHE approach value of the FP/RH investment by decision maker in health and environment sector. During the first international training on PHE held in Kisumu Kenya in January 2017¹¹, with participants drawn from East and Southern Africa, there was a call among others to:

- Strengthen documentation for PHE and experience sharing among stakeholders;
- Undertake countrywide awareness campaign and institution building;
- Mainstream PHE in all government planning and structures.

At the same time, the evaluation of HOPE LVB program in 2018 recommended that at national level, there was need to:

- Provide additional resources to undertake intensive advocacy and technical assistance at all levels, and provide support and supervision at the community level;
- Continue to work on demystifying misconceptions around some of the PHE issues and continue advocacy and training;
- Prioritize institutionalization by engaging all sectors at all pertinent scales to ensure scale-up and continuity of PHE programs;
- Promote PHE in the Country Integrated Development Plans (CIDPS).

In order to address these challenges, there was need to galvanize efforts of several stakeholders whether in public or private sector. Such efforts require strengthened policy advocacy and communication activities that have clear messages¹² and supported with evidence generated from reliable data and information systems. In today's world there has been a paradigm shift in policy process because communications is part of the policy mix. In addition, policymakers today want to govern in partnership with citizens by helping them understand why changes in their everyday behaviours will lead to better social outcomes. These actions demand ingenious approaches to communication structures because the policy objectives should be anchored on the management of a wide range of stakeholders. Previous policy communication approaches were mainly based on written forms¹³ that cannot meet the demands of several audiences simultaneously. In this report, the main argument is that strategic policy communications should be understood beyond messaging activity by including, comprehensive strategic engagement effort which integrates; multi-media, multi-outlet, community outreach and face-to-face efforts in a single campaign designed for adaptation to a complex and changing environment¹⁴. Altman and Petkus (1994) noted that legislators are more likely to place the problems on the policy agenda, if these problems become salient issues among individuals or groups¹⁵.

Integrating PHE for Sustainable Development in Kenya is an ENGAGE project that serves as an advocacy tool to promote integrated PHE approaches, and the value of family planning/reproductive health (FP/RH) investments by decision makers in health and non health sectors, such as natural resource management and conservation¹⁶. It is based on the previous lesson which demonstrates that PHE can be more effective than single-sector efforts in improving people's lives¹⁷. In addition about 12.6 million deaths could be prevented every year by making our environments healthier worldwide¹⁸.

This documentation was done by National Council for Population and Development in Kenya with support from Partners in Population and Development (PPD).

¹¹ Short course on integrated population-health-environment (PHE) programs for a sustainable Eastern and Southern Africa, 23rd January to 1st February 2017. This course was organized by University of Nairobi with support from Pathfinder International.

¹² Good communication is about getting the right message to the right person in the right medium at the right time.

¹³ Examples of such tools include policy briefs and media briefs. Policy briefs are short documents that present the findings and recommendations of a research project to a non-specialist readership-. See Nicola Jones and Cora Walsh 2008: Policy briefs as a communication tool for development research. Background note Overseas Development Institute. May 2008

¹⁴ Paul Cornish, Julian Lindley-French and Claire Yorke Strategic Communications and National Strategy. A Chatham House Report. September 2011. www.chathamhouse.org

¹⁵ Altman, J., and E. Petkus. 1994. Toward a Stakeholder-based Policy Process: An Application of the Social Marketing Perspective to Environmental Policy Development." Policy Sciences 27: 37–51.

¹⁶ <https://www.prb.org/for-sustainable-development-in-kenya/> accessed 16th September 2019

¹⁷ <https://www.prb.org/engage-population-health-environment/> - PRB's ENGAGE presentation, "Population, Health, and Environment Working Together"

¹⁸ WHO department of public health Issue 84 / May 2016 e news .

PROJECT IMPLEMENTING INSTITUTIONS/DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

The ENGAGE project was implemented by The National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) with support from Population Reference Bureau (PRB) under the Policy, Advocacy, and Communication Enhanced for Population and Reproductive Health (PACE) project.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

The ENGAGE presentation toolkit offers the best available knowledge and information dissemination platform that can act as catalyst to trigger or stimulate policy dialogues to promote, and advocate for PHE programs and policies in Kenya. The main elements include information about:

- a) integration benefits, PHE links, and emerging issues;
- b) Experiences about program design, training materials, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and scale-up and replication of PHE efforts;
- c) PHE research outputs.

In this project, a multimedia presentation was developed (in both English and Kiswahili) which highlights many of Kenya's development successes, including the national climate change strategy and national population policy. It breaks down complex concepts and uses nontechnical language which shows the connections between people's access to FP/RH information and services, their health, and their reliance on natural resources. It draws on examples of successful PHE efforts in Kenya.

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

In 2007 National Coordinating Agency for Population and Development (NCAPD) carried out a study to assess the state of integration of PHE in Kenya with the assistance from Population Reference Bureau (PRB) of USA. The lessons from this assessment, suggests that integrated programs require greater efforts in planning, coordination, and communication¹⁹. In addition to research reports as well as experiences from projects both in and outside Kenya, this tool kit was developed in 2017 by the PACE Project in collaboration with the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) and an ENGAGE task force made up of Kenyan experts in the fields of health, FP/RH, conservation, and PHE²⁰. PRB also drew lessons from series of previous PRB dynamic multimedia ENGAGE presentations (both at local and global level) on issues related to family planning, reproductive health, and other key development issues. The overall purpose was to document and collate important materials that are publically available that can help plan or develop a PHE project/program, conduct research, or learn about emerging issues from current and past PHE projects/programs around the world. Policy, advocacy, and communication remain an important aspect of PHE implementation, and are crucial to the uptake and buy-in of PHE integration by decision makers and practitioners in other development sectors that align with PHE²¹.

¹⁹ National coordinating agency for population and development (NCAPD): Integrating Population, Health and Environment in Kenya . Policy Brief number 8 June 2008

²⁰ This was developed following success story of Kenya Leading the Way developed in June 2011 which highlights both the improvements in development indicators over time as well as the disruptions and "stall" in family planning use in 1998- 2003. The focus of the initial ENGAGE multimedia was on the high level of unmet need for family planning, consequences of unplanned pregnancies, including high-risk births, maternal mortality, and rapid population growth.

²¹ www.pathfinder.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Pathfinder_Kenya_Policy_Brief.pdf.

<https://toolkits.knowledgesuccess.org/toolkits/population-health-environment-toolkit/policy-advocacy-communication>

GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

Goals

The main goal of the project was to promote policy dialogue among various stakeholders by enhancing the understanding of how PHE addresses the complex and interrelated challenges in the areas of family planning, access to health services, management of natural resources, and livelihoods faced by families and communities. The specific goals were to:

- Increase awareness of population issues among policy makers, FP advocates media and religious leaders
Explain how the PHE approach works to improve health, livelihoods, food security, and natural resources.
- Highlight success stories from select PHE projects in Kenya.
- Foster discussion among audience members about the need for increased investment in integrated PHE

Principles

This policy communication and advocacy tool is anchored on clear messaging derived from reliable data, and stunning visuals that draw the audiences into critical conversations about development. It uses innovative technology to offer a new perspective on cross-cutting development issues such as family planning, reproductive health, population growth, the environment, and nutrition, and highlight outcomes across sectors.

The other principle is the extent to which the tool can be used at several levels and different audiences. The ENGAGE presentations are an effective means for advocates at the grassroots, national, and international level to promote policy dialogue about the costs, consequences, and proven solutions to today's challenges, and achieve a positive impact through greater knowledge, policy changes, and increased funding.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Main activities of the project is the organization, implementation and monitoring advocacy engagements for dialogue. The presentations are available online to stream or download for future use. Presenters at various engagement activities can choose to use narrated videos or to deliver ENGAGE presentations live themselves. In addition, ENGAGE “Snapshots” can be embedded into other platforms such as Power-Point. Supplemental presentation materials, including discussion guide and references, are available for each presentation at PRB websites. A separate PHE toolkit hosted by K4Health provides current and high-quality resources for the PHE community and others interested in learning more about the PHE approach and integrated development.

For audiences who intend to design new projects or scale up their projects, these materials can be supplemented by toolkit developed by pathfinder on policy brief based on the experiences from the integrated PHE initiative called Health of People and Environment-Lake Victoria Basin (HoPE-LVB), in partnership with several environmental and health sector partners in Uganda, Kenya, and the US. Funded primarily by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, with technical support from the USAID-funded Evidence to Action project .

In addition, these toolkits taken together can be used for training of various cadres of personnel involved in PHE projects following the lines of PRB policy communication training workshops²² .

²² Population Reference Bureau (PRB) has trained researchers and advocates to communicate to policy audiences, bringing small groups of Ph.D. candidates, family planning experts, youth leaders, and health advocates together to learn how to translate health and family planning for over 30 years.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN RESPECT TO OUTCOMES

The presentation has enabled a number of users to engage non technical people and change views about issues on family planning. It has also triggered policy discussions even among the media fraternity. Some of existing projects have expanded with reports of great success²³ while new projects have been initiated²⁴. The policy engagements and dialogue have resulted in the development of PHE strategy paper 2018-2022 which is expected to guide future intervention packages and projects. Following engagements with policy makers and politicians HomaBay county government (sub national government) in Kenya have embedded PHE into County Programming.

STRENGTHS

The following are some of the key strengths of the toolkit:

- The toolkit has been based in previous experiences by PRB which span over 30 year of training of research as well as developing policy communication tolls worldwide²⁵.
- Simplicity and use of both English and local language Kiswahili to expand access and use at various levels of policy and advocacy engagement s and dialogues.
- Use of non technical language also ensures understanding and discussion with both technical and non technical people such as media personnel (journalists)
- Ease and flexibility of use²⁶ expands platforms for communication such use of on line, broadcasts as well as PowerPoint presentations.
- Capability to be adapted to other situations – can be used at grass root level, national and at global levels and scope expanded.

WEAKNESS

The following are some of the key weaknesses that need to be taken into account:

- 1) At the time of its inception, there was no explicit policy supporting integrated PHE programming, although many previous such as the Sessional Paper Number 3 of 2012 on national population policy calls for greater multi-sectoral collaboration and integration²⁷. Pathfinder in their report of experiences in supporting HOPE LVB hoped that there will be a national level Kenya PHE strategy in response to a call from the East African Community, which policymakers could reference to guide activities and allocations²⁸.
- 2) So far there is no elaborate M and E system for implementing activities based on the ENGAGE project at the national level to document how well other stakeholders are using the both the resources and the multimedia tools. In addition, concerns are still raised on clear documentation and producing evidence on “added value” of PHE projects, and therefore PHE projects need to pilot new approaches to document the “added value” of PHE projects. Part of this difficulty stems from the fact that at national level, the low or lack of implementation science and substantive technical assistance partnerships with research and academic institutions including assistance and data on ecological assessments, livelihoods, climate change adaptation, and resilience, where applicable.

²³ HOPE LVB by pathfinder along Lake Victoria.

²⁴ FHI 360 implements Afya Uzazi, project which means “healthy parenthood” in Kiswahili. The goal is to improve access to quality, client-centered and linked health care services that include family planning and reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent services. The project’s work is focused in Baringo and Nakuru counties in Kenya. For more details see <https://www.fhi360.org/projects/afya-uzazi>

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ The presentations are available online to stream or download for future use. Presenters can choose to use narrated videos or to deliver ENGAGE presentations live themselves. ENGAGE “Snapshots” can be embedded into other platforms such as PowerPoint. Supplemental presentation materials, including discussion guide and references, are available for each presentation.

²⁷ www.pathfinder.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Pathfinder_Kenya_Policy_Brief.pdf

²⁸ ibid

- 3) A number of lessons have been drawn from the use of experiences from HOPE LVB supported by pathfinder international, yet there are no other situations different from experiences around Lake Victoria Basin.
- 4) Currently, support for national activities is heavily dependent on donor (PRB and USAID). There is need for diversity as well as national resources for the implementation of key activities of such projects.
- 5) There were no mechanisms for updating the presentations especially where was new data from surveys and evaluation.

PLANNING AND DESIGN: EXPERIENCE

The planning for the project several stages during which specific information needs to be gathered from project areas, such as during proposal and/or work plan development, strategy development, activity design. The planning process involves analyses and production of evidence-based materials that communicate clearly to policymakers at all levels and across diverse geographies, targeting messages and products using state-of-the-art social media analysis tools to enhance digital communications.

Several stakeholders were involved including mapping, bring together experts from population, health and environment together and jointly developing the materials.

The tool kit itself is designed for community engagement with local individuals and institutions however it can as well be used for high level discussions at national and global levels. A review of evidence in Kenya as well as other African countries with similar projects, PACE anticipated 10 key ways that the tool can help to reach policy makers²⁹. These are:

1. Interpret data to provide the “so what”—the underlying stories and their implications for policy action.
2. Communicate complex concepts such as the demographic dividend through wellcrafted analyses and accessible presentations.
3. Produce multimedia presentations, such as PRB’s ENGAGE, that can catalyze commitment to FP/RH goals among decision-makers, at global conferences, and during in-country policy trainings.
4. Construct a roadmap for your policy-focused work toward reaching FP2020 and SDG objectives.
5. Create infographics that tell stories about your country in compelling and innovative ways.
6. Conduct thematic media trainings for print, broadcast, and digital journalists to make sure relevant stories are told, and told accurately.
7. Develop new influencers and leaders in FP/RH through our policy communication trainings.
8. Conduct demographic analyses to help explain key trends.
9. Explain linkages among population, health, and the environment to inform your integrated programs.
10. Sharpen the gender lens and highlight gender’s critical role for NGOs, countries, and communities.

SUCCESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

ENGAGE presentations are an effective means for advocates at the grassroots and national level to promote policy dialogue about the costs, consequences, and proven solutions to today’s challenges³⁰. Because strategic policy communications should be a comprehensive strategic engagement effort integrating multi-media, multi-outlet, community outreach and face-to-face efforts in a single campaign that seeks to address complex issues.

The ENGAGE multimedia tool for PHE was anchored on the success story of Kenya Leading the Way developed in June 2011 which highlights both the improvements in development indicators over time. In addition to the long collaborative partnerships with PRB who had trained researchers and advocates to communicate to policy audiences, family planning experts, youth leaders, and health advocates together to learn how to translate health and family planning for over 30 years.

A key lesson can be derived from the experiences of the HOPE LVB in which NCPD participated in supporting the scale and institutionalization of PHE project in Homabay and Siaya the use of materials already developed for continuous advocacy. The findings from evaluation of these projects revealed that the PHE approach has helped many local government officers from different departments do their work effectively. They were able to engage with stakeholders and the community, which enhanced integration through PHE activities. The second important message is the contribution is the development of PHE strategy document.

²⁹ <https://thepaceproject.org/about/>

³⁰ <https://www.prb.org/engage-presentations/>

The success in which PRB leveraged digital platforms to extend the reach and ease of use of our policy training programs and tools is an aspect which can not only scale up PHE activities but also be used to support other complex programmes and projects .

PRB developed a new, self-guided PHE e-learning course designed to engage and educate users. The course, housed in the United States Agency for International Development's Global Health e-Learning Center, which is managed by the Knowledge for Health project (K4Health), includes new modules on policy, advocacy, and communication; scale up; and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as information on PHE linkages with climate change adaptation and mitigation. This aspect of the entire ENGAGE projects is worth taking up at national level in order to expand scope of use since information a global asset. This is to enhance gathering and using information needed for exchange of ideas and to pursue collaboration³¹ .

PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE PLANS

Since the presentation includes recommendations for civil society, and national and county leadership. It is expected that stakeholders from diverse sectors within Kenya will continue to use this resource to promote a policy dialogue about the critical role of population dynamics with health and the environment, and the ways that investments in FP/RH can propel progress towards Kenya's many development goals.

Policy, advocacy, and communication are crucial to the uptake and buy-in of PHE integration by decision makers and practitioners in other development sectors that align with PHE. The Resources are divided into three sub-sections related to global, regional, and national/local development priorities and frameworks. It also has a sub-section on communication, which highlights resources focused on crafting messages and working with the media³². It is thus important for improving knowledge management for those responsible for gathering and using information to exchange ideas and pursuing collaboration, and dissemination of results³³. PRB has creates these spaces for data users and for those focused on priority themes in population, health, gender, and the environment. It is important to note that a separate PHE toolkit hosted by K4Health provides current and high-quality resources for the PHE community and others interested in learning more about the PHE approach and integrated development.

The ENGAGE project will be a useful tool to promote the implementation of the forthcoming, PHE strategy specifically that of advocacy and awareness creation on PHE integrated approaches whose outcome is to enhance better awareness and support for PHE integrated approaches at all levels. For this to take place there will be need for periodic updates based on new data and information including the development of a simple monitoring and evaluation tool to measure the progress made.

REPLICABILITY AND SCALABILITY

Lessons from the projects will be used to develop and support the dissemination and communication for the forthcoming PHE Strategic Plan for increased access, awareness and ownership of the plan document. It is envisaged that effective communication of the PHE Strategic Plan will be based on web-based tools (such as ENGAGE multimedia), mass media and inter-personal communication channels to enable exchanges between PHE stakeholders and Development Partners.

³¹ <https://www.prb.org/communities-of-practice/>

³² <https://toolkits.knowledgesuccess.org/toolkits/population-health-environment-toolkit/policy-advocacy-communication>

³³ <https://www.prb.org/communities-of-practice/>

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR REPLICATION

- Advocacy is an important component of PHE programs. Other projects should apply the lessons learned by the HoPE-LVB project to the extent helpful to advance their work and PHE as a movement to address the Sustainable Development Goals but advocacy takes time and is labor-intensive. A very intensive process of community engagement is required especially in the start-up phase, but also continuing through the project as new community members became involved. Experiences for replicability and scalability can be obtained from the experience based on lesson on the experience of “*HOPE LVB* in Homabay³⁴ and *Siaya* and *Afya Uzazi* in Nakuru and Baringo.
- There is an opportunity to guide a next generation of PHE projects to use standard frameworks and metrics to better link PHE and family planning integration with emerging priorities such as resilience and climate change adaptation³⁵.
- Periodic updates to the multimedia projects to take into account new data and information derived from evaluation of projects and new studies on the interlink ages.
- Re-introduce policy communication trainings especially the revised versions that can be implemented in either two or five days. Tools for implementation are already available from PRB website.
- ENGAGE project should be extended to policy communication in other policy thematic areas. Cornish et al have noted that strategic policy communication ought to be self-sustaining and iterative system of information and exchange which involving leaders, communicators, agents and stakeholders to foster a dynamic, versatile and responsive approach to policy³⁵. Strategic communications also operate within a complex ecosystem involving a broad range of organizations, actors and individuals, many of whom may be unaware of the communicative value of their role³⁶.

³⁴ HoPE-LVB worked with County-level officials to form a steering committee with terms of reference. The Committee was tasked with promoting the integrated Population, Health, and Environment approach, as a mechanism for sustainable development, to all stakeholders, including the County government. Led by the County representative of the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD), under the Ministry of Devolution and Planning, the committee meets quarterly to review progress, share ideas, and set new targets. While this steering committee is not directly involved in project implementation, they have been kept informed of the data and results achieved by the HoPE-LVB project and have used this evidence to advocate with policymakers to advance the PHE agenda.

³⁵ Yavinsky, R. W., Lamere, C., Patterson, K.P. and Bremner, J. June 2015. The Impact of Population, Health, and Environment Projects: A Synthesis of Evidence, Working Paper. Washington, DC: Population Council, The Evidence Project.

³⁶ Paul Cornish, Julian Lindley-French and Claire Yorke Strategic Communications and National Strategy. A Chatham House Report. September 2011. www.chathamhouse.org

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PPD SECRETARIAT

Partners in Population and Development (PPD)
PPD Secretariat Building Complex
Block-F, Plot 17/B&C, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar
Administrative Zone, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207
Tel: +88-02 9117842, 9117845
Fax: +88-02 9117817
Email: partners@ppdsec.org
Web: www.partners-popdev.org

PPD AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE

Statistics House, Third Floor, Room 3.2
9 Colville Street, P.O. Box 2666
Kampala, Uganda
Telephone: (+256) 414-705-446
Fax line: (+256) 414-705-454
Email: aro@ppdsec.org
Web: www.partners-popdev.org/aro

CHINA PROGRAM OFFICE

No.30 Rd. Dong Xianfu, Taicang,
Jiangsu, 215400, China,
Tel: +8651253719188, Fax: +8651253719126