



# 17<sup>th</sup> International Inter-Ministerial Conference on South-South Cooperation in Population and Development: Nairobi Commitments and the 2030 Agenda: Taking stock and looking ahead in post COVID-19 crisis

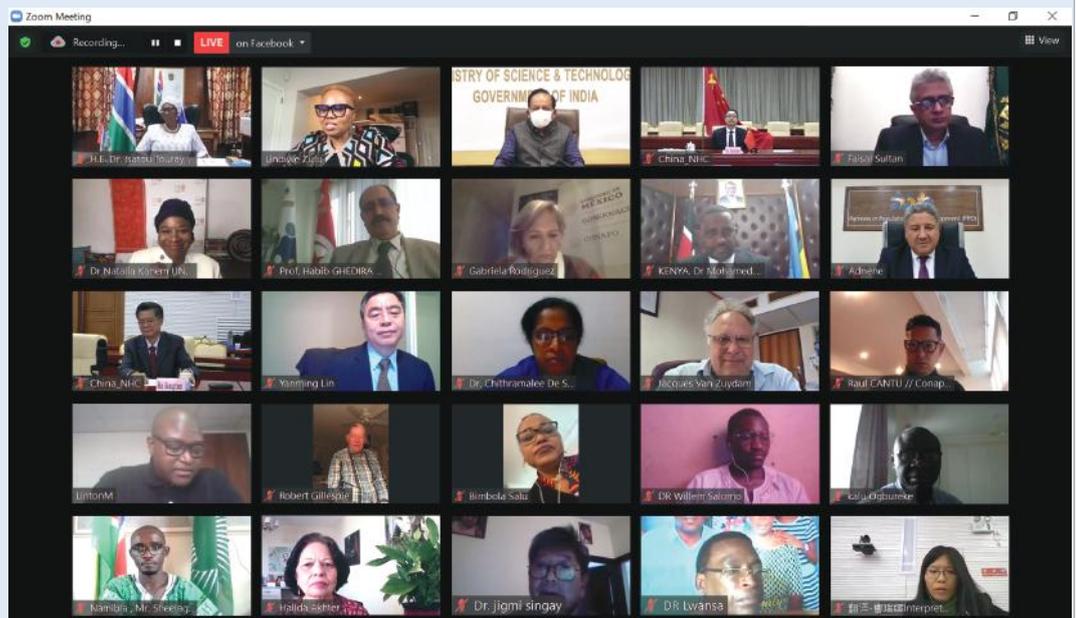
## Call for Action

We, the Board Members of Partners in Population and Development (PPD), representatives of the Governments of PPD member countries; representatives of non-member countries, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other UN agencies, international organizations; representatives of civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), youth groups, academia and media, attended the virtual sessions of the 17<sup>th</sup> International Inter-Ministerial Conference on South-South Cooperation in Population and Development: the Nairobi Commitments and the 2030 Agenda: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead in Post COVID-19 Crisis, held on 19<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> November and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020, adopt this call for action. The conference is jointly organized by PPD, the UNFPA and National Health Commission of China (NHC).

This Inter-Ministerial Conference was held one year after the Nairobi Summit on ICPD@25 and in the midst of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, with the objective of advocating and ensuring political support and investment to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and to achieve the "three zeros" by 2030 through South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC).

The International Inter-Ministerial Conference focused on the specific thematic subjects on implementation of the Nairobi Commitments in the post COVID-19 pandemic, and accelerating meaningful youth engagement through South-South cooperation (SSC) in advocacy and innovative programming.

The Conference concluded that South-South Cooperation, which received an important impetus with BAPA+40, is needed more than ever today in the achievement of the ICPD Program of Action and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the post COVID-19 period. Emerging issues and challenges in SSC for population and reproductive health in the achievement of the ICPD and SDGs need to be specially addressed under the context of COVID-19 pandemic. Innovative approaches need to be developed and applied at scale in order to strengthen the resilience of communities and preparedness of public systems to future crises and adapt to the "new normal" with the COVID-19.





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### We, the delegates of the Inter-Ministerial Conference,

**Recognized** the importance and value of the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 held in November 2019, in Kenya, for the achievement of goals of the ICPD and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Reaffirmed** our collective commitment to multilateralism, with the aim to promote international unity, solidarity and multilateral cooperation confronting COVID-19 through effective actions.

**Reaffirmed** the commitments made by PPD and its member countries for accelerating the implementation of the ICPD and the commitments for achieving the "three zeros": zero unmet need for family planning, zero preventable maternal deaths, and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices against women and girls by 2030.

**Recognized** that the COVID-19 is one of the greatest challenges in modern history. It has brought far-reaching negative impacts on all spheres of society including poverty, health and well-being, and disruption to economic and social development of all countries, especially developing countries.

**Noted** with deep concerns that family planning and reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health are among the most seriously affected essential health services in countries of the South by the COVID-19 pandemic; and with countries on lockdown and household tensions heightened due to the COVID-19, sexual and gender-based violence is on the rise.

**Acknowledged** the remarkable progress in South-South and triangular cooperation made by PPD and its member countries in responding to COVID-19 pandemic in the aspect of family planning, reproductive and maternal health by knowledge and experience sharing, policy dialogues, best practice development, innovative project implementation, expert assistance, medical equipment and supplies donation.

**Acknowledged** with appreciation the great contribution made by the UNFPA, UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), World Health Organization (WHO) and other UN agencies and international organizations in promoting SSC for population and reproductive and maternal health in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Expressed appreciation** for the capable leadership and remarkable contribution of the PPD Chair and the other Executive Committee members made in the past six years in advancing SSTC and sound development of PPD, particularly in the aspects of institutional capacity building, including PPD office infrastructure, resource mobilization and innovative project implementation.

**Recognized** that young people have been playing a vital role as frontline responders in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic around the world including through risk communication and community engagement. Concerted global action, prioritization of young people's needs, including their sexual and reproductive health, well-being and livelihoods, and meaningful participation in policy and decision making will be crucial for effective response and recovery, and for building a more inclusive, just and sustainable world. Meaningful participation of young people in all decisions that affect their health and well-being should be supported, and good practices should be encouraged and exchanged in the spirit of SSC.



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**Reaffirmed** the particular importance of SSC of population and reproductive health in achieving the three zeros and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, as SSC provides an effective horizontal development cooperation mechanism between State and non-States actors in the health sector of developing countries, and more than ever, country-to-country learning proved its value.

**Reaffirmed** the relevance and value of the strategic priority areas for SSC in population and reproductive health identified in the PPD Strategic Plan (2020-2024) in the process of achieving the "three zeros" and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The seven identified priority areas are: population and development; universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights-based family planning, including in all phases of humanitarian emergency and disaster risk reduction; women's, children's and adolescents' health; ending gender-based violence; healthy ageing; migration; and poverty alleviation with particular emphasis on emerging population issues.

**Acknowledged** with deep appreciation to outgoing PPD Board Chair for her dedication to the promotion of SSC among member countries and her urge during the 25th Board Meeting held on 16 October 2020 to continue its work to pursue Sustainable Development Goals; to deepening South-South Cooperation (SSC); and to support PPD's Development to address the new challenges that PPD member countries are facing due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Recognized** the fundamental and important role of UNFPA, WHO, UNOSSC, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other relevant UN agencies in catalyzing and coordinating the global efforts in improving reproductive and maternal and child health, especially under the context of COVID-19.

**Determined** to promote the SSTC in the context of COVID-19 pandemic based on unity, solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation among States and other relevant stakeholders to fully implement the ICPD and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to build a community with a shared future in health for all.

### **We, the delegates of the Inter-Ministerial Conference,**

**1. Call upon** the member countries to integrate the Nairobi Summit commitments into national development plans and take concrete actions, based on PPD Strategic Plan (2020-2024), to fulfill the commitments through SSTC for achieving the ICPD and the SDGs set to be accomplished by 2030, with specific emphasis on achieving the three zeros and responding to emerging issues and challenges on population and reproductive health generated and to be generated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2. Call upon** the member countries to further advocate SSC in population and reproductive health, as part of the joint efforts to promote unity, solidarity and multilateral cooperation among countries, and to build the SSC into their international cooperation programmes, since SSC has never been so important as it is today when countries are facing the COVID-19 pandemic and global dramatic changes in century, and no country can win the battle against pandemic and achieve sustainable development alone. Encourage the member countries to increase their advocacy on the SSC for



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population and reproductive health in their government statements on the international occasions, whenever appropriate.

**3. Call upon** the member countries to ensure its more active participation in and contribution to PPD activities and initiate at least one SSTC activity each year.

**4. Call upon** the member countries and relevant UN agencies and international organizations to further promote experience sharing, knowledge exchanges and strategic dialogues for SSC in the innovative manner under the context of COVID-19 pandemic, by taking advantages of the new digital technologies for instance, online webinars and workshops, virtual meetings and social media. Encourage the member countries to pay more attention to innovative approaches and give more special emphasis on new technology transfer for SSC.

**5. Call upon** UNFPA, UNOSSC, WHO, UNICEF and other relevant UN agencies to provide appropriate technical guidance in SSC for reproductive, maternal and child health in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, as UN agencies are recognized as trusted partners by governments and their people in technical guidance and reliable information provision.

**6. Also call upon** the member countries, relevant UN agencies, international organizations and academic institutions to strengthen research capacity and advocacy on reproductive and maternal and child health in responding to the emerging issues and challenges of COVID-19 pandemic.

**7. Call upon** the member countries and other relevant stakeholders to develop COVID-19 response and recovery plans that are youth-inclusive and youth-focused and continue to adopt a youth-centered approach and ensure meaningful participation beyond this crisis.

**8. Further call upon** the member countries, relevant UN agencies and international organizations to increase their efforts for national capacity building on SSC for achieving the objectives of ICPD and SDGs, as COVID-19 is spreading beyond our imagination in many ways, and developing countries need to systematically upgrade the national capacity for reproductive, maternal and child health.

**9. Call upon** the member countries, relevant UN agencies, international organizations, donors and other relevant stakeholders to support SSTC, build multilateral partnerships, international solidarity and support multilateralism so as to build back better from COVID-19 for our people.

**10. Call upon** the member countries and relevant stakeholders to ensure sustainable financing in SSC for reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health programmes by 2030, for fulfilling the Nairobi Summit commitments and accelerating the implementation of MCH and RH-related SDGs, and make sure that no one is left behind in these challenging and critical times.