



UNITED NATIONS
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Wok Bung Wantaim

WanWok

Issue 20, Friday 10 October

PNG Parliamentary Committee on Population and Development Established



The Minister for Community Development with the Member for Gazelle and UNFPA have spearheaded moves towards the establishment of the country's own parliamentary forum on Population and Development. The inaugural meeting was attended by Mr Ken Fairweather, Defence Minister, Mr Bob Dadae, Member for Kerema, Mr Puri Ruing, a representative of the NCD Governor, Member for Finschaffen Mr Theo Zurenouc, Prof. Glen Mola and UNFPA staff members. The Parliamentarians expressed their commitment to address population, reproductive health (RH) and gender issues in their respective electorates and in PNG. The Committee will become part of a Regional and Global network.

Addressing the Committee, Dame Carol Kidu cited the exciting initiatives undertaken by parliamentary groups on population and development in many other countries including those in the Pacific and also revealed that she had benefitted tremendously from activities organized by the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD). Mr Duah Owusu-Sarfo, UNFPA Representative, made a presentation of the history and activities of parliamentary groups on population and development and pledged UNFPA's readiness to provide funding for the initial activities of the Committee and secretariat support. Mr. Ken Fairweather promised to release a staff of his company to assist in coordinating activities of the Committee.

This initiative is in line with the consensus reached at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo, Egypt in 1994 as well as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It was agreed that population and development issues cannot be considered in isolation from wider considerations such as gender, poverty and human rights. Since then, the ICPD, parliamentarians become more active in supporting efforts to improve RH and promote gender equality and equity. In addition, they have become instrumental in keeping the ICPD agenda on the national and legislative agendas and have contributed to reducing fertility and ensuring that population growth commensurate with national development especially in Asia.

UPCOMING EVENTS

10th October 2008

EUROPE/WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

There will be a debate on FM100's Talk-Back show with Mr Roger Hau'ofa in the presence of EMTV & NBC at 11:00 am to 12:00 pm—FM100 Studio, 2nd Floor, Technology Haus, Telikom Compound, Waigani Drive

24 October

UN Day and the
Launch of the *State of Asia Pacific's Children 2008*
Children 2008

COMMON ADVOCACY CORNER

SECRETARY GENERAL'S MESSAGE ON THE
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION
8 October 2008

The observance of the International Day for Disaster Reduction for 2008 takes place in a year that has seen more than its fair share of natural calamities, and falls on the third anniversary of the earthquake in South Asia. With the casualties of that disaster and of this year's Wenchuan Earthquake and Cyclone Nargis still fresh in our minds, it is all the more appropriate to recall the lessons we have learned.

Nearly four years ago, Governments adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action, which aims to reduce our collective vulnerability to natural hazards. But we must do more to turn commitments on paper into deeds that can keep the next major disaster from taking so many lives and destroying so many livelihoods. Now more than ever, when we are trying to accelerate national and international efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, disaster risk reduction needs to be acknowledged and incorporated as a key plank of that work. The threats posed by climate change – including increasing droughts, floods and storms – increases the urgency further still, particularly in the world's poorest, most vulnerable communities.

The World Disaster Reduction Campaign for 2008-2009 focuses on making "Hospitals Safe from Disasters". When health facilities are damaged, so, too, is our ability to improve maternal and child health and to provide other essential health services. But in resilient communities, health systems are better able to withstand natural hazards. We need to mobilize society at every level to reduce risk and protect health facilities so that they can save lives.

I urge all partners – Governments, civil society, international financial institutions and the private sector -- to step up implementation of the Hyogo Framework. Disaster risk reduction is everybody's business. Only by investing in tangible risk reduction measures can we reduce vulnerability and protect development. On this International Day, let us renew our dedication to this vital task.

This is YOUR weekly update. Please tell us about the progress on "Delivering as One". We would love to hear from you. Send your article ideas or suggestions to elizabeth.turi@undp.org

UN COMMUNICATIONS TEAM