

Press Release



United Nations Population Fund
Office for the Pacific

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity.

UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.

UNFPA – because everyone counts.

Investing in reproductive health through strategic partnership



The Government of New Zealand and the UNFPA Office for the Pacific joined forces and signed an agreement in an amount of NZ\$1.5 million in support of reproductive health programmes in the Pacific. This generous contribution from NZAID in the form of a new strategic partnership will help the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) reach those most in need of reproductive health information and services in the Pacific. The Strategic Partnership agreement was signed by Mr. Michael Green, New Zealand High Commissioner, and Mr. Najib Assifi, UNFPA Representative & Director CST on 15 June 2006, at the UNFPA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Velop House, Victoria Parade, Suva.

Pacific countries are characterized by high fertility rates, low contraceptive usage rates, high prevalence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as well as rising rates of unplanned pregnancies, especially among adolescents. The high prevalence of Chlamydial infection amongst women of reproductive age in the Pacific is a cause for concern, as it indicates the need for better surveillance and management of STIs. Surveillance studies of STIs and youth risk behaviour in several Pacific countries reveal high risk-taking behaviour including early sexual debut, unprotected sex and multiplicity of partners.



The Strategic Partnership Programme supported by New Zealand, provides vital funding for UNFPA to further strengthen adolescent sexual and reproductive health activities and to scale up condom programming to vulnerable groups with a focus on developing capacity of NGOs to promote and distribute female and male condoms. The partnership programme is envisaged to have a multiplier effect that will benefit many, including those that are difficult to reach.

Strategic partnership and investments are critical to the collective response to ensure universal access to reproductive health. The UNFPA Office for the Pacific is pleased with this generous support and contribution from the New Zealand Government. According to the UNFPA Representative and Director CST, Mr. Najib Assifi, "This crucial partnership will help UNFPA scale up reproductive health services to address unmet needs of vulnerable women and men in the Pacific, particularly young people. It will also help the countries pursue the Millennium Development Goals of improving maternal health and preventing HIV through universal access to reproductive health"

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