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THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE FOLLOW-UP
AND REVIEW OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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**Current progress and future strategies for South-South Cooperation
in Population and Development in achieving the SDGs**

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In this brief note, I would like to focus on the current progress and future strategies for South-South Cooperation (SSC) in population and development in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

I. Progress Made in SSC

SSC in population and development has become an increasingly critical means to strengthen partnership for the achievement of the SDGs 2030 and unfinished ICPD Agenda. Fifteen percent of the world population lives in developed country only and remaining 85 percent lives in developing countries or underdeveloped nations. Population dynamics, reproductive health and gender equality are critical to sustainable development. Deepening South-South Cooperation in these fields will greatly contribute to the health and well-being of the people in developing countries and sustainable development. Over the decades, countries of the South have accumulated considerable expertise, experience, lessons and capabilities in their own implementation process of ICPD, MDGs and SDG agendas, which have been shared with other developing countries in the form of technical assistance. Furthermore, middle-income countries, as emerging donors and providers of technical cooperation, have significantly influenced the landscape of the SSC. Some of the progress made for promoting SSC ever since ICPD are listed as follows:

One of the milestones for SSC in population and development is the establishment of Partners in Population and Development (PPD) during the ICPD in Cairo, Egypt in 1994, which was initiated by ten developing countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Currently, PPD has 26 developing countries as its member states, representing 59% of the world population. Within a short period of its establishment, PPD as an inter-governmental organization has become a main driving force for promoting South-South Cooperation. It has its own headquarter building, and strategic SSC planning with regular budgeting and institutionalized capacity at its member state levels.

Evidence-based experience sharing is the unique feature for SSC. PPD in cooperation with its member countries and UNFPA, has organized fifteen international inter-ministerial conferences on SSC which has become the unique high-level platform of developing countries for experience sharing, policy dialogue and strategic discussion in the field of population.

Human resource development and capacity building are one of the main strategies for SSC. PPD has trained more than 4,000 personnel from its member countries and other developing countries in the areas of population and reproductive health since its inception in 1994. As the PPD China Program Office, China Training Center of Reproductive Health and Family Care, with the government fund of China, has trained more than 1,300 senior government officials, program managers and health service providers for other developing countries over the past 10 years, and become the largest training provider in the organization.

PPD, in collaboration with the UN Office for South-South Cooperation and the UNFPA, documented, published and disseminated a series of Best Practices in reproductive health and family planning programs in PPD member states. A series of international conferences, forums and seminars including China-Africa Forum on Population and Development have been established in recent years to exchange and disseminate successful experience of developing countries in the field of population and

reproductive health.

Technology transfer and commodity exchange in reproductive health is another area where remarkable progress has been made in SSC. For example, the Government of China has donated over USD 1 million worth of contraceptives and USD 600,000 worth of reproductive health medical equipment to some PPD member states. The Government of India contributed USD 1.2 million to construct 36 community clinics in rural Bangladesh to facilitate community health care services. With the technical support from UN Population Division and UNFPA, China Population and Development Research Center developed in 2010 a web-based population projection software in six UN working languages, which has been utilized in more than 10 developing countries free of charge.

We greatly appreciate the substantial contribution made by UNFPA, UNPD and all other stakeholders in advancing SSC since the ICPD in 1994.

II. Challenges and Opportunities

We should also recognize challenges and future opportunities for SSC, which include: translating the goals of SSC into specific programmes and policies; realizing the difference between operational and articulate principles; coordinating stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels; strengthening information-sharing; improving the capacity and efficiency of SSC; devoting more resources for SSC and national level institutions building for SSC; and, increasing engagement of the private sector and civil society.

We are pleased to note the increased funding facilities by Southern countries, especially emerging economies, such as China, India, South Africa, Brazil and Turkey that are increasing their support to SSC and are allocating more resources to accelerate the implementation of the ICPD PoA and the attainment of the SDGs. For instance, in September 2015 at the United Nations, on occasion of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced that the Government of China would provide USD 2 billion for South-South Cooperation (SSC) toward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. China established in 2016 the Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development, and the South-South Cooperation Development Fund in 2017 with USD 2 billion as the first group fund, and China International Development Cooperation Agency in March 2018.

III. Proposed Future Strategies

Institutionalization and operationalization stands as the fundamental task for SSC. Beijing Call for Action adopted by Ministerial Strategic Dialogue on SSC for Population and Development held in Beijing in March 2016 and Bali Call for Action adopted by Inter-Ministerial Conference on South-South and Triangular Cooperation held in Bali, Indonesia in September 2018 provided a roadmap for SSC in population and development. Based on these, I would like to emphasize the following recommendations.

First, we urge governments and international organizations to undertake more political commitment to SSC in population and development, particularly in emerging issues of low fertility and ageing in some developing countries; youth development for harnessing the demographic dividend, peace and

security; sexual and reproductive health and family planning services in humanitarian and conflict situation, and big data utilization.

Secondly, we recommend the following as the strategic priority areas for SSC: population dynamics and development; universal access to sexual and reproductive health and family planning; women's, children's and adolescents' health, and gender equality; healthy ageing; migration; and poverty alleviation with particular emphasis on emerging population issues. These six strategic priority areas are identified from a SSC needs survey done by PPD, and endorsed by the recent SSC Conferences including the Inter-Ministerial Conference on SSTC held in Bali, Indonesia in September 2018. A follow-up SSC survey is undergoing by PPD now which will further identify the priority aspects and format for SSC activities under each of these priority areas.

Thirdly, we should make more efforts to institutionalize the organization of the International Conference on SSC in Population and Development, which has been served as a unique global high-level platform of developing countries in the past 15 years for sharing experiences and good practices, conducting policy dialogues, and developing capacity in population and development. PPD is encouraged to continue this annual high-level international forum on SSC in cooperation with relevant stakeholders.

Fourthly, we should accelerate international coordination for SSC to better share information, identify and coordinate support for concrete SSC programmes. In order to make SSC successful, the international SSC players need to be working together in a coordinated manner. We should also make more efforts to follow up the initiative for establishing an international coordinating group for SSC which was proposed by the Ministerial Strategic Dialogue on South-South Cooperation for Population and Development held in Beijing, China in March 2016.

Fifthly, we should make more efforts in strengthening the multi-stakeholder partnerships for SSC. It is critical to renew and expand already existing partnerships and create new ones, among the various existing mechanisms for SSC, based on the specific mandates and comparative advantages of the diverse organizations involved. We should encourage and support the initiative of the Roundtable on SSTC at the International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP), which aims at bringing state and non-state stakeholders together to achieve a solid community of practice in SSC around specific shared/common goals related to ICPD and SDG agendas through drawing on each other's strengths.

Sixthly, we should make more efforts for strengthening human resource development for SSC. As human resource development and knowledge sharing remain at the centre of technical cooperation initiatives among Southern countries, and this form of cooperation will be prioritized in the agenda of national governments, international organizations, inter-governmental bodies, civil society organizations (CSOs). More efforts should be given to providing technical support towards capacity building of the Southern institutions involved in training activities for SSC. UNFPA and PPD are called upon to lead in such efforts.

Seventhly, we should encourage and support the establishment and development of the Centers of Excellence on SSC for Population and Development. The evidence both inside and outside population

and family planning sectors have demonstrated that the SSC Centers of Excellence have been playing an active and effective role in knowledge sharing, technical transfer and institutional networking for SSC, and it is a part of the institutionalization efforts for SSC in population and development. More resources at the national and international level should be allocated to assist and promote this initiative in the aspects of providing enabling policies, capacity building, and sustained and regulated financial support.

Eighthly, we should support the efforts for high-quality and validated evidence on what works on SSC, to be informed by country-led Monitoring and Evaluation systems and research on SSC. We should encourage the national governments, UNFPA, PPD and other international organizations, donor agencies to make joint effort to develop a follow-up and review mechanism of SSC that will promote accountability to citizens, identify good practices, mobilize support to overcome shared challenges, and identify new and emerging issues. It should be aligned with the review mechanism of the 2030 Agenda in order to create synergies and efficiencies by avoiding duplication. We should encourage and support more academic research, which may include the comparative advantages and innovative modalities of SSC, and appropriate linkages between South-South cooperation and North-South cooperation in population and development.

Ninthly, we should encourage relevant UN agencies and international organizations to follow the example of UNFPA in establishing SSC as a programming strategy in its strategic plan. SSC programme should be incorporated into development and humanitarian programmes of the international organizations and into the national population and reproductive health programmes. Basic indicators such as national strategies, national task force, regular national budget line, and government-funded activities for SSC, as well as results indicators, should be established for monitoring and evaluation of SSC.