

# Media Update

17 October 2017

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## UNFPA

Press Release

### The State of World Population 2017

***Unchecked inequality, failure to protect the rights of poorest women could threaten unrest, undermine peace and world's development goals, new UNFPA report warns***

- Only about half of the world's women hold paid jobs
- Globally, women earn 77 per cent of what men get
- Three in five women worldwide lack maternity leave, many pay "motherhood penalty"

UNITED NATIONS, New York, 17 October 2017--Unless inequality is urgently tackled and the the poorest women empowered to make their own decisions about their lives, countries could face unrest and threats to peace and to their development goals, according the *The State of World Population 2017*, published today by UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund.

The costs of inequalities, including in sexual and reproductive health and rights, could extend to the entire global community's goals, adds the new UNFPA report, entitled, "Worlds Apart: Reproductive Health and Rights in an Age of Inequality."

Failure to provide reproductive health services, including family planning, to the poorest women can weaken economies and sabotage progress towards the number one sustainable development goal, to eliminate poverty.

Economic inequality reinforces and is reinforced by other inequalities, including those in women's health, where only a privileged few are able to control their fertility, and, as a result, can develop skills, enter the paid labour force and gain economic power.



“Inequality in countries today is not only about the haves and have nots,” UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem says. “Inequality is increasingly about the cans and cannots. Poor women who lack the means to make their own decisions about family size or who are in poor health because of inadequate reproductive health care dominate the ranks of the cannots.”

In most developing countries, the poorest women have the fewest options for family planning, the least access to antenatal care and are most likely to give birth without the assistance of a doctor or midwife.

Limited access to family planning translates into 89 million unintended pregnancies and 48 million abortions in developing countries annually. This does not only harm women’s health, but also restricts their ability to join or stay in the paid labour force and move towards financial independence, the report argues.

Lack of access to related services, such as affordable child care, also stops women from seeking jobs outside the home. For women who are in the labour force, the absence of paid maternity leave and employers’ discrimination against those who become pregnant amount to a motherhood penalty, forcing many women to choose between a career and parenthood.

“Countries that want to tackle economic inequality can start by tackling other inequalities, such as in reproductive health and rights, and tearing down social, institutional and other obstacles that prevent women from realizing their full potential,” Dr. Kanem says.

The UNFPA report recommends focusing on the furthest behind first, in line with the United Nations blueprint for achieving sustainable development and inclusive societies by 2030. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has “envisaged a better future, one where we collectively tear down the barriers and correct disparities,” the report states. “Reducing all inequalities needs to be the aim. Some of the most powerful contributions can come from realizing...women’s reproductive rights.”

### **About The United Nations Population Fund**

UNFPA is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person’s potential is fulfilled. UNFPA reaches millions of women and young people in 155 countries and territories.



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## IOM

Press Release

### Mainstreaming Human Mobility

*Experts and policymakers in Pakistan stress the need for a shared understanding of human mobility across national policies on climate change, sustainable development, and disaster risk reduction*

Islamabad, 17 October 2017: Increasing human mobility in Pakistan and throughout South Asia has a complex association with other important aspects of development in the region, such as climate change, sustainability, and disaster risk reduction. For this reason, experts and policymakers convened in Islamabad this week to share ideas and research regarding the important relationship between development, human movement, and natural resources.

The Global Climate Risk Index for 2017 ranks Pakistan seventh on its list of countries most affected by natural hazards from 1996–2015. The country's diverse topography, coupled with variations in the climatic conditions across regions, makes it highly susceptible to natural hazards. Several factors influence Pakistan's ability to anticipate and bounce back from disaster – factors such as poverty, intense pressure on natural resources, ineffective urban planning measures, uneven development in disaster prone areas, and insufficient awareness regarding disaster risk.

Human mobility manifests in various forms in communities affected by disasters and environmental change: evacuation, planned relocation, migration as adaptation, temporary or protracted displacement, and internal



or cross-border movement, among others. However, human mobility continues to exist in the periphery of policy discourse associated with climate change and disaster risk reduction.

A workshop entitled, “National Consultation on Mainstreaming Human Mobility in Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction Plans,” was organized at Serena Hotel in Islamabad, Pakistan from 16–17 October. The consultation provided a platform for stakeholders to share their experience of human mobility in the context of disasters and climate change; to identify gaps in capacity, knowledge, and policy; and to explore means to synergize ways in which different national institutions address human mobility in policies on climate change and disaster risk reduction.

Rab Nawaz, Senior Director, Programmes, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF); Abdul Wahid Jasra, Country Representative, the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD); and Eric Peasah, Humanitarian Operations Manager, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Pakistan, emphasized the need to integrate human mobility in climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) plans.

Shehzad Hassan Shigiri, Director, Gilgit Baltistan (GB), the Environmental Protection Agency, acknowledged the efforts of WWF-Pakistan (WWF-P) and ICIMOD in the Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral regions to highlight this emerging issue and assist in the formulation of the ‘Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for Gilgit Baltistan 2017’, which also discusses human mobility and remittances. The document is currently with the GB Council for final approval. Shigiri emphasized on taking measures at the national level to leverage the need for incorporating human mobility in CCA and DRR plans. The workshop concluded with recommendations to improve inter-agency coordination on human mobility, mobilize funding at different administrative levels, and strengthen institutional capacities for better governance.

The national consultation was co-organized by WWF-P, ICIMOD, and IOM as a follow-up to the regional knowledge forum, ‘Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change Adaptation, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Hindu Kush Himalaya’, organized in Kathmandu in September 2017.

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## Note to Editors

### About International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

<http://www.icimod.org/>

[ICIMOD is a regional knowledge development and learning centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan – based in Kathmandu, Nepal. Globalization and climate change have an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities, while addressing upstream and downstream issues. ICIMOD supports regional transboundary programmes through partnerships with regional partner institutions, facilitates the exchange of experiences, and serves as a regional knowledge hub. We strengthen networking among regional and global centres of excellence. Overall, we are working to develop economically and environmentally-sound mountain ecosystems to improve the living standards of mountain populations and to sustain vital ecosystem services for the billions of people living downstream – now and in the future.]

### About World Wildlife Fund-Pakistan (WWF-P) <http://wwfpak.org/>

WWF-Pakistan was formed in 1970 to address the growing environmental and conservation issues in Pakistan that not only affected the flora and fauna, but were also affecting the human population. WWF-Pakistan is a non-profit organization, working to preserve, conserve and save our environment and natural resources. Today, WWF -Pakistan works through 26 offices with a team of approximately 350 dedicated staff members. With its head office in Lahore, and five regional offices in major cities of Pakistan, it has project offices wherever there is a need and the potential to make a difference. WWF-Pakistan, the pioneer in Community based conservation, particularly Trophy Hunting Programme, is actively engaged in conservation of nature and biodiversity, management of critical habitats and ecosystems, and promotion of sustainable uses of natural resources since early nineties in Gilgit-Baltistan.

## About International Organization for Migration (IOM)

<https://www.iom.int/>

The IOM, the UN migration agency, is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. With 166 member states, a further 8 states holding observer status and offices in over 100 countries, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. IOM has been addressing the links between migration, environment and climate change for more than 25 years on all fronts, research, policy and operational and at all levels, global, regional and national. IOM is also engaged in a number of partnerships, through the Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative, and with the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD).

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