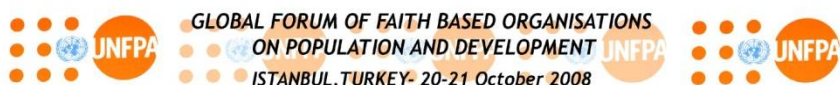


**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**“UNFPA Global Forum of Faith-Based Organizations on Population and Development”**  
**(Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>s</sup>, 2008)**



**Background**

In the lead up to this historic gathering of the faith-based organizations mobilized around the ICPD Programme of Action, UNFPA hosted four regional fora on FBO engagement. The regional fora took place in Durban, South Africa (December 2007), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (May 2008), Cairo, Egypt (July 2008), and Buenos Aires, Argentina (September 2008).

The theme of each regional forum was built on the issues around which a legacy of partnership with FBOs evolved in the different regions. FBO participants were selected from among existing and potential partners of country and regional offices. In each forum, discussions focused on lessons learned, and successful partnerships between UNFPA and FBOs on ICPD areas (family planning, violence against women, women’s empowerment, HIV&AIDS, youth and migration). Outcomes of the deliberations included a series of recommendations to enhance partnerships (see attached).

**The Global Forum**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2008 over 160 Religious Leaders, faith-based organizations and United Nations representatives<sup>1</sup> spanning the globe gathered in Istanbul, Turkey, to establish an Inter-faith Network for Population and Development. The Forum featured close to 60 representatives of UNFPA and wider other United Nations bodies, as well as over 80 representatives of faith-based organizations (FBOs) from the five regions (Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean). In addition to the regional faith-based representatives, the Forum hosted 16 Religious Leaders, 10 representatives of international FBOs, and 14 resource people, including

<sup>1</sup>WHO, ILO, UN-Habitat, UNAIDS, UNDESA, UNDP, and UNICEF

representation from Swiss government donors, who have made UNFPA's Culture work possible since 2002.

In addition to FBO outreach, in July 2008 UNFPA brought together partner development agencies within the United Nations for the first Inter-agency Consultation on Engagement with Faith-based Organizations. The Proceedings Report of the Consultation provides an overview of outreach and initiatives undertaken by participating United Nations representatives in FBO engagement. Taking into account the experience of each body, the report reflects on lessons, challenges, and best practices, and considers the parameters of more systematic, system-wide engagement with FBOs.

As noted by UNFPA Executive Director, Ms. Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, discussions at the Global Forum revealed overlap and similitude of language used by UNFPA and faith-based representatives. Together, faith-based representatives and the United Nations increasingly speak of the "right to human dignity". The Executive Director stressed that "this is an important development, as it shows a greater understanding of each other's worldviews".

***Highlights from opening addresses:***

Mr. Mahmood Ayub, UN Resident Coordinator, Turkey, affirmed that the Global Forum was "about political action, empowering women, reducing HIV and AIDS, violence against women, and human rights".

Ms. Safiye Cagar, Director of UNFPA Information and External Relations Division (IERD), stated that "UNPFA has a record of sustaining partnerships with FBOs, by providing technical, logistical, and financial support". UNFPA can play the role of facilitator by bringing years of experience in building partnerships with parliamentarians and youth networks. Ms. Cagar went on to say that networks bring many benefits, including knowledge sharing and enabling South-South partnerships.

Ms. Obaid noted: "I firmly believe that partnerships are the only way forward if our ideals of human rights are to become living realities for every man and woman, young and old, and this network can help further our common goals. Sustainable social change must be deep-rooted in communities, and while UNFPA and FBOs have different mandates and different means, we can work together towards common objectives."

Mustafa Cagrici, Deputy President of Religious Affairs, reminded participants of the value in using religious texts to promote and defend fundamental human rights. He reiterated the multiple references in the Qura'n, the Holy Book of Islam, to the equal rights of all human beings, and the obligation to protect them.

The opening address was followed with the first part of a two-part video developed by IERD, in close consultation with the Technical Division. The two videos are entitled “The Power of Faith”, and “How to Reach Common Ground”.

The opening ceremony included a session led by Religious Leaders, in which representatives from different faith traditions made statements of commitment to UNFPA-FBO partnerships. The following quotes are excerpts from their statements.

*“When the essence of religion & spirituality is universal human values, it is vital that we drop our miniscule identities, join hands and take bigger responsibilities to make this world free of disease, stress and social evils”*

Mr. Anish Dua, On Behalf of His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, India

*“I would like to emphasize that it is in our duty as faith-based organizations and religious figures to take action in cooperation with UNFPA and many other organizations.”*

Ven. Phramaha Boonchuay Doojai, Thailand

*“In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to be religious is to be inter-religious”*

Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh, United Kingdom

*“We should no longer stay silent, and should walk, hand in hand.”*

Mr. Elias Szczyński, Peru

*“Globalization of poverty, HIV and AIDS, family violence, and racial discrimination are not localized problems – they are global. We have to have interfaith cooperation to bring ethics to forefront”.*

Dr. Hassan Ezzeddine Ali Bahr al Uloom, Iraq

*“We recognize the participation of our sisters, but yet they are the object of violence and discrimination”*

Rt. Rev Julio E. Murray, Panama

The Global Forum hosted five thematic panels designed to facilitate the sharing of experiences of FBOs in tackling challenges in population and development, as well as their success stories.

The first day of the Forum hosted panels on “HIV and AIDS and Maternal Health”; and “Youth and Migration”. FBOs from different religious traditions and representing the five regions (Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean) presented respective activities and initiatives on ICPD areas, much of which was done in partnership with UNFPA. Each presentation addressed ongoing challenges, successes, and provided recommendations to enhance the Interfaith Network.

### ***Highlights from day one -- The Power of Faith:***

- All agreed on the role of FBOs in fostering effective change and transformation in local communities, including the part they can play in the development of government policies;
- FBOs are strategically placed on the ground to nurture and enrich human life, especially in the context of globalization and in the face of contemporary global challenges such as HIV and AIDS, the global financial crisis, the food crisis, and the rising cost of living;
- This is a period of interdependence wherein FBOs and UNFPA need to work together for social transformation;
- There are values and beliefs in all faiths traditions that provide the foundation for a set of common fundamental rights, including the right to physical and mental health;
- All faiths have shared visions and common denominators in human dignity and human rights;
- There is a need for national and regional interfaith alliances to support a *global* interfaith alliance, and vice versa, to strengthen on-going FBO efforts on ICPD areas;
- In all regions of the world, FBOs continue to serve as community centers - they are respected in society, and seen as co-leaders along with the elected political leaders. In this respect FBO actions are significant in influencing local norms;
- This is a moment when many FBOs are reaching out to the international development community in a call for partnership.



Press Conference L-R: Interpreter, Sheikh Tayseer Tamini, Rev. Pax Tan, Sheikh Shaaban Mubaje, Ms. Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, Sirster Ngozi Uti, interpreter.

***How to Reach Common Ground:***

- UNFPA should respond to the knowledge and capacity building needs expressed by FBOs, including support for development of evidence based advocacy, comparative practice, for example methodologies on including reproductive health in school curricula, etc;
- UNFPA should support the documentation of evidence-based resources that measure impact of how FBO engagement has improved the lives of people, especially vulnerable and marginalized groups such as migrants, IDPs/refugees, youth/adolescents;
- UNFPA should continue to examine existing initiatives which have brought together diverse faith communities and use to inspire future interfaith and secular collaboration;
- Many Forum participants expressed the need for a consolidated database that allows FBOs to learn from each other's experiences. UNFPA pointed to 'Culture Matters II' as a living document which provides a comprehensive overview of FBO activity on ICPD areas around the world.;
- An Interfaith Network can constitute a safe space, a "sacred space", where challenges can be raised by different faith traditions, based on the everyday experiences of FBOs as they attempt to enhance service-delivery; or issues that are being interpreted differently within the same faith;
- The Interfaith Network should work with UNFPA to advocate for implementation of international legal standards, including the protection of migrants;
- The Interfaith Network should actively target and work with youth and adolescents.

*"No-one can claim that domestic violence is a private issue. It is a public health issue. This is why the Church must be involved in combating it."*

Rev. Blanca Armand Pilon, Uruguay

Four panels took place on day two of the Forum. The first covered the issue of "Violence against Women and Women's Empowerment". Many Forum participants emphasized the need to view violence against women as a human security issue. FBO

representatives agreed on the urgent need to foster the social and economic empowerment of women. Participants concurred that this would necessitate partnering with men and boys, including the provision of gender-sensitive training.

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*"Through gender-justice programming, we have created transformative spaces, safe spaces, grace spaces...Women have moved from being bearers of stereotypes to bearers of human rights."*

Rev. Judith Van Osdol, Latin America

FBO representatives also pointed to the ongoing need for amendments to national legislation on women's status, and to tackle trafficking of women in the global sex trade. FBO representatives concurred on the need to emphasize *prevention* of violence against women, which requires integrated advocacy between FBOs, government, and the international development community to transform attitudes that perpetuate the phenomenon.

The second panel on day two addressed "Emergencies and Humanitarian Settings". The discussion illustrated the critical role of FBOs in providing safe spaces for peace and reconciliation, as witnessed in the aftermath of the genocide in Rwanda. Other key issues included the need for an ongoing, transparent, and constructive dialogue between UNFPA and FBOs. A number of FBO representatives acknowledged UNFPA's role in capacity-building and technical training of Religious Leaders on population and development, and urged for ongoing programme initiatives to provide faith communities with scientific, evidence-based research. Several stressed the importance that faith-based partners be treated as equal members of the development community, along with UNFPA's more secular counterparts. Equal partnerships between UNFPA and FBOs allow the exchange of needs to be articulated clearly, thus enhancing the collaborative nature of the Interfaith Network on Population and Development.

The fifth session of the Forum hosted a special panel on "Comparative UN Experiences with FBO's", which looked at evolving relationships between FBOs and a number of United Nations agencies and bodies (UNICEF, UNDP, UNAIDS, WHO, DESA, and ILO). Concrete examples of how FBO partners have worked with United Nation agencies were shared, along with discussions around how a Global Interfaith Network could be instrumental in the deliverance of mandates of the respective agencies.

Of particular concern to the United Nations panel was the need for awareness-raising around the criminalization of HIV-infection. A critical point was made regarding the importance of developing a common language for use between United Nations bodies and FBOs, especially since faith-based communities do not form a homogenous entity. Additionally, panelists agreed on the central role of the media to combat stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS. Subsequently, FBOs and Religious Leaders agreed that a greater effort must be made to inform the media of its role in combating stigma in their local communities. In addition, Forum participants agreed that discrimination against HIV and AIDS can only be countered when effective legislation is made to work through the sensitization of community leaders.

*"Enough is enough of giving speeches in the mosques and the churches. Religious Leaders and FBOs now have to act collectively for the common good. This is the time for building an interfaith humanitarian network."* Dr. Hany El-Banna, Humanitarian Forum

The final panel of the Global Forum was on "Sharing Consensus on Interfaith Networking with UNFPA". Key points included the need for FBOs to partner with non-faith-based civil society organizations, and the need for FBOs to solidify approaches to population and development issues by working to resolve competition for resources within their own communities. As Rev.

Pax Tan of the Lutheran Church in Singapore and Malaysia noted, “there is a need to see more examples of partnering, so that we build and test the boundaries, take more risks, push each other, and say to one another, ‘come on we can do it’ ”.

### **Highlights from day two**

- Violence against women is a violation of human dignity, and therefore, human rights. Violence against women knows no religious boundaries, and FBOs are critical to break the culture of silence and taboo around the issue;
- In addition to their role of responding to violence against women through service provision, FBOs should be supported in utilizing their unique positions as influential agents in area of prevention;
- FBOs should be involved in any needs assessment exercise carried out by international actors especially during emergencies and humanitarian situations, in addition to their role of delivering services. FBOs can be supported through specialized consultations for Religious Leaders on integrating responses to emergency situations, including the development of gender-sensitive approaches;
- UNFPA can build bridges between FBOs, media and other stakeholders to enhance awareness and generate opportunities for partnership. These could be explored through the creation of public awareness media campaigns on diverse subjects, such as violence against women, human trafficking, and HIV and AIDS;
- United Nations agencies should strengthen their ongoing, systematic, and collective efforts to support FBOs by facilitating knowledge-sharing and capacity-building;
- There is a strong need for country and regional engagement to make the Global Interfaith Network effective.

*“The regional and global forums have enriched us in many ways, empowered us, given us greater impetus to cross over barriers which we thought was the end of the line. We need to see more examples so that we can build and test the boundaries. We hope that we will do it, we are already doing it - but now it is time to upscale and break barriers and use our faith to do this.”*

Rev. Pax Tan, Malaysia

### **Closing comments by UNFPA Executive Director**

The Executive Director of UNFPA summed up the main recommendations reached by the panelists and stated the organizations’ commitment to partnership on common objectives.

- Religious Leaders and FBOs should always be part of the solution and not part of the problem- they play a pivotal role in bringing peace with justice, because all faiths believe in peace and always in justice;

- There is a the need for a safe space, virtual or real, where free discussions can take place on difficult issues, such as sexuality, so that we can move forward in supporting people looking for improved physical and mental health;
- Scientific-based evidence, information, research and technical support to build knowledge and capacity are needed to help FBOs support their constituencies, both in terms of the messages they deliver and the services they provide;
- There is widespread sentiment that to achieve concrete results and build bridges between Religious Leaders, political decision-makers and secular civil society organizations need to be engaged collectively and simultaneously.
- FBOs have a role to play in advocacy to promote the adoption of people-centered policies;
- Efforts should be inclusive and strategic so that work continues on two levels—with mainstream populations and also with vulnerable and marginalized populations;
- UNFPA will convene a similar conference in 2010 to assess progress in building the networks at all levels and the challenges that meet them, and to agree on a set of measures to meet these challenges.

Ms. Obaid ensured the participants that UNFPA will establish focal points for the networks in country and regional offices, to join the already existing focal point at Headquarters. She concluded by saying:

*“The Network is yours. You build it and sustain it by your commitment. It is yours and we, at UNFPA, will be with you to support your efforts. It will live and grow by your faiths and your energies.”*

In the conclusion of the Forum all participants committed to the establishment of a Global Interfaith Network formed upon a basic consensus (the Istanbul Consensus, below). The Global Interfaith Network will reinforce the mandate of the UNFPA, 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.

## **Istanbul Consensus on the Principles of a Global Interfaith Network on Population and Development**

**The gathered representatives of UNFPA and FBOs from around the world are committed collectively:**

- To the principle that faiths share the same aims to safeguard the dignity and human rights of all people, women and men, young and old;
- To work together to advance human well-being and realize the rights of all individuals with attention to women and young people;
- To identify regional and national FBO focal points;
- To exchange experiences and learn from each other, through the Interfaith Network;
- To ensure that FBOs partners own the principles of the Network and maintain linkages with each other, with the support of UNFPA;
- To continue to maintain strong regional and national networks supported by UNFPA country offices, feeding into a Global Network facilitated by Headquarters, as a working modality to realize the ICPD mandate.

### **Launch of UNFPA publications on culturally sensitive approaches to population and development**

The Global Forum provided an arena for the launch of UNFPA's latest publication on culturally-sensitive approaches to population and development. *"Culture Matters II: Lessons from a Legacy of Engaging Faith-based Organizations"* maps partnerships between UNFPA and faith-based organizations in the areas of population and development, including human rights, reproductive health, women's empowerment, adolescents and youth, humanitarian settings, and HIV and AIDS. The publication provides an analysis of best practices and lessons learned in faith-based partnerships around the world, and suggests key resources on faith-based engagement and organizations.

### **Launch of the UNFPA Online Global Directory of Faith-based Organizations in Population and Development**

On Day two of the Forum, information was shared with the participants on how they can utilize an online database of FBO partners engaged in ICPD areas around the world. The Directory is available for members of the Interfaith Network at: <https://extranet.unfpa.org/Apps/FBO>, and for UNFPA staff at <http://www.myunfpa/Apps/FBO/>. The Directory provides the details of FBOs working on ICPD related areas, particularly reproductive health, gender equality, and population and development. Those same FBOs participated in the UNFPA regional forums on faith-based partnerships in ICPD areas, as well as the Global Forum on strengthening FBO partnerships.

## **Recommendations made by Faith-based Organizations at the UNFPA Regional Fora**

**Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Arab States, and Latin America and the Caribbean**

### **BROAD AGREEMENTS**

Faith-based Organizations (FBOs) play a significant role in realizing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). This includes combating HIV and AIDS, providing care and support for those infected and affected by the disease, eliminating violence against women (VAW), improving reproductive health and rights, and assisting in humanitarian crises. Through partnerships with UNFPA, FBOs gain increased and enhanced access to resources. Concurrently, FBOs partnerships allow UNFPA access to local communities in ways that might otherwise be more problematic. There is significant value in continued regional exchanges and learning from FBO best practices in confronting issues on population and development. Through partnerships, a wider range of stakeholders are able to bring their experiences and resources to the table. Networking also helps to ensure that those most in need are identified. The following recommendations were adopted by participants across the various Regional-level Forums:

#### **Recommendations for FBOs**

- Build faith-based partnerships, as interfaith collaboration has proven more effective to fight VAW, and HIV and AIDS;
- Encourage positive attitudes towards women in all engagements and programs;
- Build long-term commitments, partnerships, and opportunities for greater resource sharing;
- Differentiate between negative cultural norms and actual religious precepts;
- Promote greater involvement of women in FBOs, and in decision-making roles in all spheres;
- Build partnerships with civil society organizations to deliver scientific knowledge to the community easy-to-understand terms;
- Employ religion to promote gender equality and gender relations based on equal human dignity;
- Educate youth to be more gender-sensitive.

#### **Recommendations for UNFPA**

- Mainstream partner FBOs into wider non-governmental and government partnerships at the national, regional and international levels;
- Undertake capacity and resource building to ICPD-oriented FBOs, as part of broad constituency mobilization;
- Work with FBOs to promote ongoing and successful interfaith initiatives on the ICPD mandate areas with UN Country Teams, and with donors;
- Support intra and interfaith initiatives for local, regional and global long-term sustainable partnerships;

- Produce educational and informational materials for dissemination, and tailor messages pertaining to the ICPD agenda to a religious perspective;
- Adopt country-specific, culture-specific, and context-specific approaches and strategies;
- Simplify the mechanism for partnership and collaboration.

### **AFRICA REGIONAL FBO FORUM, DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA, 4-5 DECEMBER 2007**

The emphasis at the Africa Regional Forum was on partnership building among organizations committed to the ICPD and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Participants deemed it vital to develop partnerships that are not tokenistic, and that encompass both lateral and vertical collaboration. This includes South-South engagement, as well as engagement with governments and international agencies. International organizations need to mainstream the inclusion of like-minded FBOs into their partnerships and programmes. FBOs need to increase their participation in national and international forums to enhance outreach efficacy in delivering on the MDGs. The following recommendations were adopted at the Africa Forum:

#### **Recommendations for FBOs**

- Take into account the multidimensional nature of VAW and design interventions accordingly;
- Consider the importance of “healing” for combatants (men, women and children) prior to their reintegration into society;
- Dig deeply into the different cultural issues in order to address gender and the challenges that impact on social and economic development;
- Clarify the criteria for FBO inclusion within faith-based partnerships and for partnership seeking with international bodies.

#### **Recommendations for UNFPA**

- Formulate an inventory of existing FBO engagements on UNFPA’s mandate issues (for example, reproductive health and population);
- Provide information and sharing of lessons learned about UNFPA-FBO partnerships (particularly South-South engagement);
- Provide FBOs with research linking VAW to HIV and AIDS;
- Mainstream VAW issues into programmatic partnerships with FBOs;
- Integrate, in UNFPA-FBO partnerships, outreach to men, women and children combatants to facilitate “healing” and reintegration into society.

### **ASIA REGIONAL FBO FORUM, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, 5-7 MAY 2008**

Participants at the Asia Forum concluded that FBOs in the region need to work more deliberately and synergistically. The importance of committed leadership among FBOs in combating HIV and AIDS, reproductive health and rights, and VAW cannot be underestimated. As such, there is a need to identify key FBO leaders with proven track records of success in these areas. Further, there must be more work toward transforming FBO approaches towards men and boys. The following recommendations were adopted at the Asia Forum:

### **Recommendations for FBOs**

- Develop the infrastructure needed to face emergency and crisis situations, including natural disasters, and social and political unrest;
- Promote men's involvement in improving reproductive health, combating violence against women, and promoting women's empowerment;
- Sensitize communities on the use of condoms to prevent HIV;
- Establish centers to empower women on how to negotiate for their rights;
- Address the problem of violence within religious institutions.

### **Recommendations for UNFPA**

- Utilize the outreach capabilities of FBOs to provide services at the grassroots level;
- Engage the key players who can act as bridges to the community, and translate policy into plain language;
- Support FBO-sponsored media campaigns to sensitize the public to issues related to HIV and AIDS;
- Establish a task force of religious leaders, policy makers, and civil society members to initiate in-depth analysis of harmful practices in specific countries, and formulate appropriate strategies to deal with them;
- Ensure follow-up to the FBO Forums by creating a network of diverse FBOs that can synergize their efforts and build mutually constructive partnerships;
- Engage in capacity building of FBOs to respond to disasters and humanitarian crises;
- In collaboration with FBOs, design strategies for the prevention of exploitation and abuse in cases of emergencies and humanitarian crises;
- Establish long-term partnerships with FBOs, and inform them of the technical support that UNFPA can provide during crises, as well as the procedures to access such support;
- Engage FBOs in dissemination of information and awareness-raising of adolescent sexual and reproductive health during conflicts and emergencies;
- Continue with family planning initiatives to help people make informed choices, especially during times of conflict and disaster;
- Collaborate with FBOs to plan and implement women-focused interventions to meet the specific vulnerabilities and needs of women in times of humanitarian crisis;
- Support integration of FBOs within National Disaster Risk Management bodies;
- Support the preparation of a directory of FBOs that are already working in the area of disaster relief and crisis response.

### **ARAB STATES REGIONAL FBO FORUM, CAIRO, EGYPT, 20-21 JULY 2008**

For the Arab States, the experiences of some countries shows that different faiths and stakeholders do put aside differences when working towards the common goal of helping those in need, and to safeguard the wellbeing of their communities during conflict and disaster. Nevertheless, participants at the Forum recognized the need to expand and strengthen cooperation and partnership among FBOs, and with UNFPA. By laying down a foundation of mutual assistance, cooperation and collaboration, UNFPA and FBOs can work to bridge the divide towards successful and sustainable partnerships. The following recommendations were adopted at the Arab States Forum to strengthen partnerships among FBOs and with UNFPA in addressing population and reproductive health issues:

### **Recommendations for FBOs**

- Educate local populations on the relationship between development work and existing values and beliefs;
- Advocate for the establishment of women's rights committees in the Ministries of Religious Affairs;
- Develop social awareness programs to help define both women's and men's roles in Islam;
- Offer reinterpretations of certain religious terminology so that it is more gender sensitive and supportive of women;
- Encourage youth engagement in civic participation;
- Engage more with the media (print, radio, television, and electronic);
- Provide training on psycho-social support and religious sensitivity for all those working in the field of population and development;
- Ensure that family reconciliation is part of the treatment in VAW cases;
- Generate faith-based, community-level statistics for use by policy makers;
- Form faith-based advisory committees;
- Provide premarital training and SRH counseling for unmarried couples;
- Ensure accessibility of services, especially in rural areas;
- Revise curricula in schools and universities so that it is more gender sensitive.

### **Recommendations for UNFPA**

- Publish case studies of success stories of UNFPA-FBO engagement in the areas of reproductive health, family planning, and VAW;
- Allow FBOs to choose and implement the medium or tools that are most in accord with cultural beliefs and practices.

### **LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL FBO FORUM, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA 16-17 SEPTEMBER 2008**

The Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region has a history of effectively engaging FBOs in addressing sensitive elements of the ICPD agenda related to reproductive health and rights, family planning, women's empowerment and gender equality, HIV and AIDS, and ending violence against women. The priority issues in the region are sexual and reproductive health and rights (including specifically those for adolescents), family planning, gender equality, and migration. Programmes target youth, women and girls, religious leaders, institutions and communities, indigenous groups and teachers. UNFPA-FBO partnerships include advocacy in the form of forums, seminars and workshops for communities, as well as support for media platforms and information dissemination. Capacity-building activities involve training, sensitization and awareness-raising among religious leaders and other FBOs and NGOs. Other activities include mobilization of religious leaders for outreach and the establishment of faith-based health care facilities. The following recommendations were adopted at the LAC Forum:

## Recommendations for FBOs

- Seek increased government intervention and policy making on the issue of violence against women;
- Identify and highlight the needs and realities of their respective communities in order to better contribute to the public policy making process;
- Build partnerships to more effectively address long-term assistance for battered women and their children (housing, rehabilitation, education, and training);
- Build partnerships with government-level institutions to sensitize and train key actors, such as the police and judiciary officials, on the issue of violence against women and mechanisms of protection and support;
- Provide training to staff members on how to assist victims of gender-based violence;
- Foster family reconciliation as one approach to combat violence against women;
- Encourage community-level discussion and critical thinking about the causes of maternal mortality;
- Support legal and institutional frameworks to improve maternal health;
- Implement health care services that are accessible to adolescents;
- Promote healthcare and ensure access to accurate, up-to-date and complete information on reproductive health;
- Incorporate information on *prevention* of HIV and other STIs in policies, as well as engage in care and support for those already living with disease;
- Emphasize the shared responsibilities that countries of origin and destination have regarding human rights and migration.
- Disseminate and implement the Migrants' Rights Convention, and encourage inclusive social practices in the wider community;
- Create a permanent forum to discuss migration and place the issue firmly on the public agenda;
- Provide rehabilitation and support to victims of human trafficking;
- Provide reproductive health services to migrants;
- Promote respect for the human rights of individuals of all sexual identities.

## Recommendations for UNFPA

- Encourage the use of religious institutions as neutral spaces, available for uses such as for mediation, and family reconciliation;
- Work with FBOs to improve access to high quality health care services, particularly in rural areas;
- Design and implement educational strategies that seek to transform particular social norms, and foster understanding of sexual and reproductive rights;
- Together with FBOs, develop strategies to address migration;
- Establish partnerships with FBOs to protect migrants in countries of destination;
- Ensure balanced regional and religious representation in partnerships and networks.