



## GLOBAL

### Photo exhibition at UN depicts plight of refugee women

UNFPA is sponsoring a special photo exhibition featuring the work of internationally renowned photographer Fazal Sheikh. The show will be open to the public at the UN Secretariat in New York in October and November 2004, and will include photos of women and adolescent refugees in Sudan, Somalia and Afghanistan, accompanied by short narratives and testimonies.



Fazal Sheikh's pictures have documented the plight of refugees in camps across Central and East Africa and the Middle East. This latest exhibition will include images from the series "A Camel for the Son", which is comprised of images taken by Mr Sheikh during his visits to refugee camps for Somali exiles in Northern Kenya in the early 1990's and images of the same people revisited in 2000. As a part of a delegation of journalists sent by the United Nations, Sheikh was deeply affected by the strength of the Somali women who had fled their homes in search of safety, endured attack by neighboring clans and been stigmatized as 'unclean' women. When he revisited the same sites ten years later, Mr Sheikh discovered that many of the women had become bolder in talking about their experiences, in some cases forming groups in their communities to bring their assailants to justice. For more information about the exhibition, please contact Christian Del Sol at [delsol@unfpa.org](mailto:delsol@unfpa.org) or +1-212-297-5032.

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### Photo exhibition in refugee camps helps start dialogue about HIV/AIDS

With support from UNFPA and UNHCR, the mobile photo exhibition Positive Lives is continuing its tour of refugee camps in Africa. In July and August 2004, the exhibition visited three refugee camps in Kenya.



Positive Lives is a mobile photo exhibition depicting people from all over the world who are living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. Positive Lives travels to refugee camps and local communities, where it is supplemented by activities to encourage community discussion on related discrimination and stigma, along with peer education activities, condom promotion and distribution, street theatre and sports activities.

During the exhibitions in Kenya – as in other exhibition sites – ten refugees were trained as exhibition facilitators in each camp. These facilitators received refresher training on basic HIV/AIDS-related issues and helped to select the photos that would be shown in their particular camps. Facilitators originally decided to show only photos of Africans, to address the high level of denial among local refugees that HIV/AIDS was a threat to them personally. Later, when the facilitators met with community leaders, however, the leaders asked that photos from Asia and the Americas be included as well, so local people could see and discuss how people from other parts of the world were managing with the epidemic.

Once the facilitators were trained and the photos were set up, sessions were held to sensitize camp leaders, who were then engaged to help promote the exhibition within their communities and to participate in opening ceremonies. Other means of promotion included use of mobile public address systems, banners and an opening procession including agency representatives, community leaders, youth groups and theatre groups. Once the exhibition started, the facilitators were on hand to answer questions about the photos and related issues, and to direct visitors who wanted more information about HIV prevention and treatment to special reproductive health educators residing in the camps.

Positive Lives was developed through a partnership between the Terrence Higgins Trust, the international agency Network Photographers and the Levi Strauss Foundation. From Kenya, the photos will travel to camps and communities in Ethiopia, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Other countries visited already include Angola, Namibia and South Africa. For more information about the traveling exhibition, please contact Wilma Doedens at [doedens@unfpa.org](mailto:doedens@unfpa.org). View the photos at: <http://www.positivelives.org>.

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## UNFPA web film recognized by film festival

The short UNFPA web film Women War Health has received an honorable mention from the Media That Matters Film Festival. Out of 300 entries, Women War Health was one of only 24 selected as featured films or to receive an honorable mention.



Women War Health is a three-minute Flash presentation highlighting the urgent need to protect women's health in war and refugee settings. It depicts the indirect ways that war can threaten women's lives and well-being – from the danger of unassisted childbirth to increased incidence of sexual violence and HIV transmission – and can be viewed online in English, Spanish, French and six other languages.

Created by MediaRights, an organization dedicated to building communities bringing together filmmakers and social activists, the mission of the Media That Matters Film Festival is to celebrate moving and engaging films and new media that encourage social action.

View Women War Health: <http://www.unfpa.org/emergencies/psa/>

Visit the film festival web site:

[http://www.mediathatmattersfest.org/mtm04/archives/media\\_that\\_matters\\_and\\_mediariights.php](http://www.mediathatmattersfest.org/mtm04/archives/media_that_matters_and_mediariights.php)

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## COUNTRY ACTIVITIES

### SUDAN



#### Minimizing sexual violence in displacement camps in Darfur

A recent assessment by UNFPA confirms that women in the Darfur region of Sudan are being targeted with sexual violence during armed attacks on their villages, during flight, and in and around refugee settlements. It also suggests that, despite growing international attention to the phenomenon, sexual violence in Darfur is under-reported and under-treated.

Cultural taboos prevent many victims of sexual violence from talking about it outside their own families, even to doctors or nurses. The assessment also indicates that some women may be afraid to seek medical treatment due to mandatory reporting requirements, and lack of confidentiality.

In addition to physical injuries, unwanted pregnancies and infection, victims who fail to receive appropriate treatment and counselling can suffer from post-traumatic stress and debilitating depression for years. UNFPA and partners are helping communities organize women's groups to support victims of sexual violence and help their families and communities cope with broader social aspects, from stigmatization of victims to trauma suffered by their families. The women's groups can also serve as an entry point for treating victims who are reluctant to visit hospitals or clinics.

In addition, the Fund is training doctors, nurses and counsellors in Darfur to better recognize and treat the effects of sexual violence, while providing clinics, hospitals and partners with drugs and medical supplies to treat it. UNFPA is also working to raise awareness of the need for women to seek treatment, and advocating for more victim-friendly protocols, including confidentiality, so that more women can safely seek the treatment they need.

Finally, the Fund is collaborating with partners working in settlements of internally displaced people to ensure that camps are designed and managed in ways that minimize the possibility of rape. With the start of the rainy season, simply providing seeds for growing vegetables and grasses within the camps could help by diminishing the need for women to venture out to collect fodder or firewood.

UNFPA's humanitarian response in Darfur also includes support to pregnant and lactating women, training of midwives, and childbirth assistance, including emergency obstetric care. The Fund is asking donors for \$3.14 million to expand these efforts to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of displaced Sudanese in the coming months.

Read the full press release: <http://www.unfpa.org/news/news.cfm?ID=485>

View the inter-agency Flash Appeal: <http://www.reliefweb.int/appeals/2004/files/sud04.pdf>

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## LIBERIA

### Protecting and empowering returnees



The end of Liberia's long civil war has brought large migrations of returnees and Sierra Leoneans to Liberia's border towns in search of work. The sudden population movement has increased the risk of HIV transmission and sexual violence in this porous border area, which has also seen the rapid development of a sex industry in response to the influx of truck drivers, uniformed personnel and ex-combatants.

To confront these issues, UNFPA is working with the local partner Community Development Services (CDS) to educate women and adolescent girls in Cape Mount and Lofa counties about the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS and sexual violence. Vocational training is also being provided to help destitute women avoid or leave the sex trade.

In late 2004, UNFPA will begin working with the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to educate and train peacekeeping contingents in Cape Mount, so the peacekeepers in turn can educate their peers and people living in their host communities. For more information about these projects, please contact Priya Marwah at [marwah@unfpa.org](mailto:marwah@unfpa.org) or +1-212-297-5272.

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## AFGHANISTAN

### Promoting women leaders in Afghanistan

In May 2004, dozens of women from NGOs, civil society groups and heads of departments in the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs attended a UNFPA-hosted workshop on leadership, media and conflict management in Kabul. The five-day workshop was the follow-up to a global-level meeting that convened women from NGOs around the world in Bratislava in 2002, and is an important part of UNFPA efforts to help implement Security Council Resolution 1325 on addressing gender in conflict and post-conflict situations.



Participants included women and men from a wide range of work backgrounds, ages, ethnicities and regions in Afghanistan. Some had been refugees in Pakistan.

The workshop was designed to build local skills for improving reproductive health and gender equity in Afghanistan. According to UNFPA, such training is critical in male-dominated, post-conflict Afghanistan, where few Afghan women serve as ministers, heads of civil service departments or NGOs, and women's literacy rates are among the lowest in the world.

International trainers with expertise in post-conflict countries were invited to address participants in the training initiative, which will soon be expanded outside Kabul to raise gender awareness and empower women in rural areas. The next workshop in the series will be for women working in post-war Liberia. Read the full article: <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=40882>

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## UGANDA

### Researching HIV/AIDS among internally displaced Ugandans

UNFPA is providing technical support to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for an HIV/AIDS participatory research project among internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Uganda. The five-month pilot intervention, funded by UNAIDS, was designed to address the specific needs of displaced populations living in and around conflict areas, where HIV prevalence rates have been found to be higher than in the rest of Uganda.

The first set of activities will include a review of ongoing HIV/AIDS interventions in northern Uganda. During the second phase, a survey of HIV/AIDS issues will be undertaken in eight IDP camps in the war-affected districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Pader



and Lira.

The research field team will explore the communities' views of risk and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and perceptions and attitudes on the impact of HIV/AIDS on livelihoods and coping strategies. Key informants – including teachers, health service providers, local leaders and NGO representatives – will support the compilation of socio-demographic information and help identify existing resources and gaps with regard to current service provision. Based on these findings, the research teams will design and implement pilot tool kits for addressing HIV/AIDS in the context of permanent insecurity and gender-based violence in four selected camps.

For more information, please contact Aisha Camara at [camara@unfpa.org](mailto:camara@unfpa.org).

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## ETHIOPIA AND DJIBOUTI

### Treating STIs along trucking routes between Ethiopia and Djibouti

UNFPA and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are providing supplies for the treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) to government health institutions and local NGOs operating along major trucking routes between Ethiopia and Djibouti.

These corridors are an area of concern due to findings that the AIDS epidemic tends to travel from town to town along trucking routes in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa – largely as a result of interaction between truckers and sex workers.

The kits – which include drugs, condoms and information about how to stay HIV-free – are being distributed to 17 government health institutions in the regional states of Afar, Oromiya and Dire Dawa, and to clinics run by the Organisation for Social Services for Aids (OSSA), a local NGO.



"The kits will particularly address the needs of mobile populations along the Ethio-Djibouti trucking route, which is often referred to as the high-risk corridor," says Charles Kwenin, IOM's Chief of Mission in Addis Ababa. The kits provided by UNFPA and IOM will be used to treat some 42,000 people infected with STIs.

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## SWAZILAND

### Training food relief committees to fight HIV/AIDS

When food shortages struck Swaziland in late 2002, the World Food Programme (WFP) and local NGO partners established community-based Relief Committees to help distribute food aid more efficiently. The 13-member committees are comprised mostly of women, both to lessen the possibility for sexual exploitation by food distributors and because women have generally been found to be more aware of the needs of individual households in their communities than men.



Now, UNFPA is partnering with WFP and other organizations to train members of the Relief Committees to also serve as community counselors for a range of health and safety issues, including the prevention of HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse and exploitation. In a country where nearly 40 per cent of the adult population is infected with HIV and many rural populations are not reached by mass media campaigns, UNFPA believes these women can play a critical role in raising awareness about HIV, sexual abuse, and other reproductive health issues.

The five-day trainings are being conducted in collaboration with the Swazi Ministry of Health. Each community committee will send two of its 13 members, who will then come back and train the rest of the group.

The content of the trainings is based on a community assessment carried out in December 2003, which set out to determine health service access and usage, gender roles, and the level of knowledge and awareness regarding HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse and exploitation. The assessment found general understanding of the seriousness, cause and prevention of HIV/AIDS to be very low. Another finding was that even women who knew how to minimize the risk of transmission were often helpless to do so because their partners were uncooperative. These and other findings were used to develop curricula, training tools and a comprehensive action plan – including outreach to men on the gravity of HIV and the importance of wearing a condom.

After the trainings, Relief Committee members will help raise awareness in their communities about HIV/AIDS and other STIs, and will go to schools to teach children to avoid situations that can make them vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation. The members also plan to share these messages on food distribution days, when people have time to listen and talk while they wait in line.

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## RESOURCES



### State of the World Population 2004

The new State of the World Population 2004 includes a chapter charting a decade of progress in the area of reproductive health for refugees and other communities in crisis – with a special look at gains and gaps in the areas of safe motherhood, family planning, sexual and gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS and other STIs, and adolescent reproductive health.

Read the State of the World Population 2004: <http://www.unfpa.org/swp>

Read the chapter about reproductive health in emergencies: <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2004/english/ch10/index.htm>

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### Forced Migration Online: Reproductive Health



Forced Migration Online (FMO) provides instant access to a wide variety of online resources dealing with the situation of forced migrants worldwide. A [special section on reproductive health for refugees](#) has links to overviews, documents, web resources and organizations treating a wide range of issues including family planning, safe motherhood, HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence. Prepared to complement Forced Migration Review 19, which features articles on all of these issues and more.

Visit Forced Migration Online: <http://www.forcedmigration.org/>

Read section on reproductive health for refugees: <http://www.forcedmigration.org/browse/thematic/reproductivehealth.htm>

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### Lifesaving Reproductive Health Care: Ignored and Neglected



This assessment of delivery of the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) of reproductive health for Sudanese refugees in Chad was conducted by UNFPA and the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children on behalf of the inter-agency global evaluation of reproductive health services for refugees and internally displaced persons.

MISP Assessment: [http://www.rhrc.org/pdf/cd\\_misp\\_final.pdf](http://www.rhrc.org/pdf/cd_misp_final.pdf)

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### Gender-based violence: field guide and checklist for response in displacement settings



A field guide and an action checklist for practitioners working to prevent and treat gender-based violence (GBV), including rape, are now available from the Reproductive Health Response in Conflict (RHRC) Consortium Technical Support Project. This group assists humanitarian organizations working to address GBV among populations affected by armed conflict, and can be reached at [gbvresources@jsi.com](mailto:gbvresources@jsi.com).

GBV field guide: <http://www.rhrc.org/pdf/Fact%20Sheet%20for%20the%20Field.pdf>

GBV checklist for action: <http://www.rhrc.org/pdf/Checklist.pdf>

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