

Foreword

 **The importance of sexual and reproductive health and rights to poverty reduction and development cannot be understated. When women, men and young people have access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights information, education, supplies and services, they have more freedom to manage their lives, to contribute to their own well-being and realize their potential. This strengthens their families and communities, helping to break the poverty cycle. The experiences of those involved in this poverty eradication programme demonstrate the value of such critical interventions.**

Implemented in some of the poorest African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, this project resulted in profound changes in people's lives, vividly demonstrating the potential of IPPF's work. In eight of the projects, we worked with young people in innovative ways, discovering that they bring unexpected and truly impressive solutions to meet our goals. IPPF and UNFPA, each with its own capacities and entry points to communities and governments, complemented the strengths of each other, resulting in a greater impact. This project represents the synergy of partnership, across generations, organizations and sectors, in ways that isolated initiatives could not.

On behalf of the 200 million women who still lack access to the contraceptives that they need and want, and the 1.75 million young people beginning their sexual and reproductive lives, IPPF congratulates the European Commission and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States on giving priority to individual choice, well-being and human rights. We look forward to continuing this partnership to achieve our shared goals.

Dr Gill Greer
Director-General, IPPF

 **For over 40 years, UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, has been a key partner in providing expertise and support to countries in the area of sexual and reproductive health and women's empowerment. Partnerships such as the ones described in this joint IPPF/UNFPA publication – with the European Commission, the governments of the 10 partner countries, and NGOs such as IPPF, made progress in these areas possible.**

As a result of this partnership, eight countries in Africa and two in the Caribbean increased their capacity to deliver a basic package of reproductive health services. There was a significant increase in both access and quality of services in target areas to improve the status of vulnerable populations such as women, adolescents, youth and persons with disabilities.

UNFPA's approach of working with governments and other local partners is designed to ensure sustainability. But much more needs to be done. Without increased political will and additional resources, there will be little hope of achieving the Millennium Development Goals and achieving universal access to reproductive health by 2015.

At UNFPA, we remain committed to supporting country-led development and reaching people who are most in need.

UNFPA works to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV and AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect. This publication documents UNFPA's diverse and groundbreaking work in these vital areas.

Thoraya Ahmed Obaid
Executive Director, UNFPA