



World Population Day 2009: "We Respond to the Economic Crisis Investing in People"

The UNFPA, Chisinau, 10 July 2009 – the topic of the World Population Day in 2009 was chosen in the context of the world economic crisis, which increasingly impacts communities and affects vulnerable persons, particularly women, young girls, migrants.

During the economic recession, budgets decrease, investments in the health infrastructure and healthcare quality shrink, affecting thus reproductive and sexual healthcare. As a result, the risk of unwanted pregnancies increases and women resort more often to the abortion, many times even in inappropriate conditions, endangering their life.

The reproductive health indicators in the Republic of Moldova have improved over the last years, but these efforts could be compromised by the crisis. There are already signs that the economic recession creates barriers to seeing a doctor, young girls are more often involved in hazardous relationships, in sex work, young families defer birth of their first child and/or limit themselves to only one child. The HIV/AIDS infection rate keeps increasing alarmingly, particularly among young people of reproductive age.

That is why UNFPA urges that decision makers go on with the population and development policies aimed at diminishing the poverty, maternal and infant mortality rate, securing access to education and family planning services. Important investments are needed in the area of maternal assistance, in equipping maternities with modern equipment and facilities.

"Today, on World Population Day, I call on all leaders to make the health and rights of women a political and development priority. Investing in women and girls will set the stage not only for economic recovery, but also for long-term economic growth that reduces inequity and poverty. There is no smarter investment in troubled times", stated Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, UNFPA Executive Director.

During the crisis period the budgets required for studies and data collection also decrease, and this may influence the quality of the statistical data and affect the future development policies. In this context, the National Bureau of Statistics delivered the Demographic Map of the Republic of Moldova for 2008, which was produced as part of the joint project funded by UNFPA, UNDP, UNIFEM and UNICEF. The map provides data disaggregated by rayons, aiming at stimulating the public interest for demographic policies and appropriate use of the statistical data in the national and local development policies.

Along the same line, Larisa Rotaru from the Minister of Economy and Trade delivered the first ever National Strategy in the Area of Demographic Security for 2009 – 2023. The strategy aims at improving the demographic indicators in the Republic of Moldova in the

medium and long term, through favoring birth of more children, improvement of the health state and living conditions, as well as reduction of the population aging phenomenon.

As part of the celebrated World Population Day in Moldova, UNFPA, in collaboration with the professional photographer Mihai Vengher, inaugurated a photographic exhibition in the premises of the exhibition hall of Press House. A study visit was also organized in Drochia town, where journalists were informed about the work of "Ariadna" Maternal Centre and of "Ana" Woman's Health Centre.

The World Population Day was declared by the United Nations on July 11 in 1987, the year when the world population reached 5 billion. This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of World Population Day and the number of world population got beyond 6, 7 billion people.

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and 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.