

## **Engaging Creative Writers and Artists on the ICPD Agenda**

### **Introduction:**

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that works to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every child birth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

As part of the Communication and Media Strategy to advance the ICPD agenda beyond 2014, the United Nations Population fund (UNFPA) seeks partnership with Creative Writers and Artists (including poets, film makers, musicians, actors/actresses, comedians, etc.) to champion sexual and reproductive health and gender issues.

### **Key objective:**

To use Artists and Creative Writers to document and promote inter-sectoral and Inter-generational dialogue to address socio-cultural barriers that hinder access to sexual and reproductive health rights and services

### **Specific Objectives:**

- i) Facilitate evidence-based documentation of reproductive health issues and convert it into popular literature for public consumption;
- ii) Use story to inspire public and policy makers understanding of the factors hindering universal access to sexual and reproductive health;
- iii) To strengthen analysis and inspire action at policy and community level for MDG 5 and ICPD issues.

### **Background**

Globally, consensus is that the achievement of nearly all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) depends upon the success in meeting the principle agenda of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) – universal access to reproductive health information and services, which is a target in the MDG5.

Globally there has been a reduction of maternal mortality by 40 percent over the last decade. In Uganda however, the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) has been stagnant or even slightly increased over the same period. In the last twelve years, the number of mothers dying during pregnancy or in child birth has reduced from 524 per 100,000 live births in

2001 to 418 death per 100,000 live births in 2006, then to 438 per 100,000 live births (UDHS 2011). Still, 20 women die every day due to child birth and pregnancy related complications, posing significant challenges for Uganda to reach the MGD 5 target of reducing maternal mortality ratio to 131 by 2015. No woman should die while giving birth!

There is a whole spectrum of contributing factors including; teenage pregnancies, lack of access to skilled birth attendants, lack of access to family planning services, as well as harmful traditional and cultural practices, including FGM and women's low socio-economic status.

**Skilled Birth Attendance:** 58% women deliver in the hands of skilled personnel, and 57% women deliver in a health facility. Although this indicates progress compared to statistics in 2006 (42% for both skilled birth attendance and delivery in a health center), there is still a long way to go. The circumstances under which women give birth is an indicator of a nation's progress in terms of health care.

**Teenage Pregnancy:** Chances are that the earlier a woman starts having children, the more likely they will have many. 24 per cent of girls between the age of 15 and 19 are either pregnant with their first child or are already mothers. Girls under the age of 19 face two times higher the risk of death or disability from pregnancy related complications compared to their counterparts in their 20s. Their babies face special health risks. Besides, early pregnancy forces girls to drop out of school, limiting the possibilities of exploring their full potential. Every young person should get the chance to fulfill their potential!

**Access to Family Planning:** Many women who would like to stop or delay pregnancies cannot access contraception; up to 34% of married women have an unmet need for family planning. Four in 10 pregnancies in Uganda are unintended. An estimated 297,000 induced abortions are performed each year in Uganda, which translates into an annual abortion rate of 54 per 1,000 women aged 15 – 49years. Unsafe abortion is another consequence of teenage pregnancy, out of the 297,000 abortions that are done very year, 140,000 of these happen among girls between the age of 15 and 24. Almost half of the abortions are performed by nonprofessionals, putting women's and girl's lives in danger. Lack of access to contraceptives is an indicator for maternal health and a driver to Uganda's high population growth. Uganda's fertility rate stands at 6.2 children per woman, being one of the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa. Slowing down the population growth will enable Uganda to achieve the MDGs, and to increase the rate of economic growth.

**Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:** Ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment, expanding the capabilities of adolescents and youth, is a fundamental pillar to enhancing universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. At the 1990's international conferences– Vienna, Cairo, Beijing and other– world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to promote and protect the human rights of all people. They also affirmed that

women's rights are human rights, and they placed discrimination and acts of violence against women, including harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), at the forefront of the human rights discourse. In Cairo (1994), it was agreed that women's sexual and reproductive health and rights should be at the centre of population and development policies. Full enjoyment of sexual and reproductive health and rights can mean the difference between life and death for hundreds of thousands of women and adolescent girls. It can mean; the difference between dying during pregnancy or childbirth from preventable causes and delivering safely; the difference between an unintended adolescent pregnancy and the possibility of pursuing an education and an autonomous life; and the ability of any individual, irrespective of their social condition, personal identity or status, to enjoy a safe and satisfying sexual life without fear of sexual violence or sexually transmitted infections.

In Uganda, 60% women report violence by current spouses, and 16% women experience violence during pregnancy, while 58% and 44% women and men respectively believe that wife beating is justified (UDHS 2011). Only 38% women participate in decision making regarding their health care, major household purchase, and visits to family. The primary driver of gender based violence (GBV) is the power imbalance between women and men, deeply entrenched in social, cultural and religious beliefs and practices.

### **Deliverables:**

The service provider is expected to produce a concept note for a project to be implemented within a period of not more than six months (1<sup>st</sup> November 2014 – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014), following the guidelines below:

1. The concept note should target a particular audience in line with the theme and issues of safe motherhood, family planning, teenage pregnancy, gender-based violence, and female genital mutilation.
2. It should have a clear implementation methodology on how the issues of access to reproductive health services and information will be documented and disseminate to engage the targeted audience.
3. Must be willing to engage in post-project activities including launch of the final output – book, song, film, etc, during major events, such as International Women's Day, International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Safe Motherhood Day, International Day of the Midwife.
4. Each work will be original and not a duplicate of already existing work.
5. The work will be based on stories of beneficiaries, illustrating clearly their challenges, their resilience and carrying a message with a call to action from duty bearers.

**Duration of Project: 3 Months**

**Coverage:** Nationwide

**Budget:** Bidder who presents the most cost effective campaign, visa vis results in line with the objective will be selected.

UNFPA will provide technical support to ensure quality and timely delivery of results.

Sealed bids to be addressed to The National Procurement Officer and delivered to Plot 12A Baskerville Avenue, P.O. Box 7184, Kampala-Uganda, not later than 17th November 2014.