



# MODEL UNITED NATIONS

# 2020

# **DIRECTORS WELCOME LETTER:**



Dear Delegates and Faculty Advisors,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the American University of Sharjah Model United Nations (AUSMUN) 2020. This conference has been the home of fruitful debate, practical resolutions, dedicated moderators, spectacular delegates, and diligent advisory and executive boards for the past twelve years and is continuing to do so for its thirteenth year. With 1000 delegates registered from more than 45 national and international educational institutions, this conference will be the biggest one yet!

This year's theme 'Embracing Diversity, Shaping the Future' has been designed to capture the essence of issues that surround our globalized society. Even though we have come this far in time, there has been little to no improvement in accepting diversity as portrayed by the latest atrocities in several countries around the world. However, the future can be successfully shaped for us, the youth, only by embracing diversity in every sector of life and we hope to draw attention to this.

This background guide has been formulated by our hard-working chairs and the research team to provide delegates with the starting point of their preparation for this three-day conference. The guide is initially divided into two sections based on the two topics and is further split into logical components. Firstly, the Summary and History section acts as an introduction to the issue by highlighting important events, terms, history, and global implications. Secondly, the Discourse on the Issue section establishes a link between the issue, its implications, significance, and the United Nations Charter. Lastly, the Past International Organization (IO) Actions and Latest Developments section elaborates on the previous action that has been taken and latest development in terms of the last actions taken with regards to the issue. At the end of each issue, delegates will find sections of Questions the Discussions and Resolutions Should Address and Suggestions for Further Research that aim to streamline the process of delegate's research. However, in order to grab a better understanding of the topic and be able to position yourself better to participate during the conference, it is advised to go beyond the background guide since this guide does not encapsulate enough information to be sufficient for every country and is only a brief introduction to the issues at hand. It is highly encouraged for delegates to view the 'Delegate Handbook' on the AUSMUN website and the 'How to Research' video on YouTube created by AUSMUN.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all the contributors to this background guide. It is the collaborative work of the Moderators, AUSMUN Research Team, and the AUSMUN Media Team. On behalf of them all, I truly hope that this guide will be of great help to you.

All the very best for the conference and if you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at [research@ausmun.com](mailto:research@ausmun.com).

Sincerely,  
Manaswi Madichetty  
Director of Research  
AUSMUN 2020

# MODERATORS WELCOME LETTER:



**Nadin Mahmoud**



**Yazan Hamdan**

**Sara Asaf**



Dear Delegates,

It is an honor to welcome you to the 13th annual AUSMUN and to our committee, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). It is beyond words how excited we are to meet you all and begin a journey of learning, self-development and fun with you.

Based in New York, United States, The United Nations Population Fund was a confirmed trust fund in the 1967 and began operations in 1969. Moreover, in 1987 it was officially renamed to The United Nations Population Fund and that was in reflection to their leading role in the United Nations as the sexual and reproductive health agency. The main objectives of the UNFPA are to make sure every pregnancy is wanted; every young individual's potential is fulfilled and every child birth is safe. (Unfpa.org, 2019)

During the conference, you will be getting involved with interesting debates and in return, this will help you build your public speaking and argumentative skills. We are aware that being a delegate is intimidating at times, especially when you have to think on the spot, or give your first speech, but it is all worth it. As long as you research well and present your country's perspective thoroughly and confidently, you can be guaranteed a fruitful experience.

Lastly, we would like to inform you that you are expected to submit a position paper which addresses the stance of your country on the issue being debated. The date of submission is Tuesday, 4th February 2020. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [b00073820@aus.edu](mailto:b00073820@aus.edu) for any questions you may have. Thank you for being interested in this conference. We can't wait to meet you all!

Sincerely,  
The UNFPA Chairs.



**UNFPA**

**The United Nations Population Fund**

# Topic I

## **Funding The Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP) to assist women protection services**

### **1. Summary & History**

Yemen, a nation torn by war and economic failure, is currently home to an estimated 30.5 million people; 24.1 million of which require some sort of humanitarian assistance (UNOCHA, 2019). Launched in 2013 and has since become more vital since the rise of conflict in 2015, The Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP), funded by international organizations, looks to supply Yemenis with food, water, medicinal needs and life-saving basic services, in addition to protection, shelter, and medical attention. Moreover, the YHRP emphasizes protection and support provision to women as there currently are 1 million malnourished pregnant women and at least 120 thousand women and girls at risk of gender-based and sexual violence (UNFPA, 2019). The number of pregnant and lactating women receiving nutritious and health support has been little due to the limited funding the YHRP is receiving. In the most recent response report released by the UNFPA (July 2019), the report states that for the months June and July the funding status has remained at \$33.7 million out of the \$110.5 million required to resume the response throughout 2019 (UNFPA, 2019). The UNFPA is trying to encourage further funding in order to be able to support the women in need, otherwise the response plan will either have to downscale its projects or completely shut down.

Ever since the rise in conflict in Yemen during late 2014 through early 2015 up until now, the safety of women has been far exposed than it ever was before. A report by the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs states that violence against women and girls has increased by around 63% since the start of the current conflict (International Rescue Committee (IRC), 2019). Even before the conflict in Yemen, inequality towards women was common due to cultural norms and a lack of female encouragement and support. Furthermore, when the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan was launched in 2013, women protection services were not on the top of the list of issues to solve. However, the escalation of conflict and the gender-based violence that resulted from the war urged the response plan to prioritize women and girls' protection. Furthermore, malnourishment and malnutrition of women and children were at a rise before the 2015 conflict due to Yemen's limited resources and financially poor public healthcare system. Yemen as a geographical location faces water scarcity; the country was not able to provide a solution to this scarcity due to the high levels of poverty, both of which factor into the malnourishment of not just women, but the population as a whole.

### **2. Discourse on the Issue**

Yemen is one of many countries which have entered a delicate transition phase towards democracy. It is time for the longstanding violations of women's human rights to be addressed; women in Yemen face systemic discrimination and pervasive violence. They are treated like second class citizens as per Yemeni laws and tribal customary practices. They face discrimination in matters of marriage, divorce, inheritance and child custody. In regards to this, the state fails to take action in order to prevent, investigate and punish domestic violence.

Discriminatory laws and practices which encourage and facilitate violence against women have caused violation of women's rights as devised by the UN charter. Women in Yemen lack freedom of speech, respect and personal integrity. They are not free to marry whom they want; some are forced to marry while they are still children. Therefore, violating their child rights as well. They also lack freedom of movement as they have to obtain their husbands permission to leave their house. Furthermore, authorities in Yemen deal with women more harshly when accused of immoral acts, whereas men are treated leniently even if they murder female relatives in honor killings. Such an incident took place on October 24th, 2013, when a 35-year-old man burned his 15-year-old daughter for speaking with her fiancé. The father felt shame as his daughter spoke to a man whom she is not married to, regardless of their engagement, and in result committed an honor killing to redeem his honor and dignity in his society. Although the man was arrested at the time, there were not any public statements about the punishment he received, leaving it unclear whether the authorities had actually taken action against this man or not (Jamjoom, 2013).

Women in Yemen have contributed abundantly in order to create a vibrant society. They have played a big role in Yemen protests; however, despite their contributions, they have been constantly harassed, arrested, and in some cases beaten for their protests. Even though several women's non-governmental organizations have achieved some success in advocating for women's rights, additional pressure from the UN is still needed (Amnesty International USA, 2019).

### **3. Past International Organization (IO) Actions & Latest Developments**

Over the years, the YHRP has been able to make progress towards attaining several of its objectives such as; helping millions of Yemenis overcome hunger, reducing outbreaks of cholera and several infectious diseases, promoting the dignity of displaced families living in emergency and IDP settlements, reducing the risk of violence against citizens and facilitating the recovery of people traumatized by the conflict and lastly, preserving the capacity of public sector institutions to deliver life-saving basic services. Because Yemen's biggest problem is the civil war, the situation demands immediate attention and aid towards the health, food, water and sanitation sectors. Hence, education and women's rights are aspects that the YHRP is yet to make progress towards, however; the program has been successful in providing food and healthcare to women who were in need of it. In addition, the program has been successful in taking the domestic pressure of these women by providing their families with basic necessities (UNOCHA, 2019).

### **4. Questions the Discussions and Resolutions Should Address**

- What are some initiatives/methods UNFPA can turn to increase funding?
- What are methods that could be implemented to raise awareness on the issue?
- How can the scarce water supply in Yemen be resolved?
- What can be done to make sure women in Yemen see their rights and privileges attained?
- How can Yemen's public healthcare system be boosted?

### **5. Suggestions for Further Research**

- Awareness on the funding
- Strategies to change in the YHRP
- Ensuring women's rights are protected even under drastic circumstances
- The effect of the ongoing conflict on Yemen's resources
- Preventing malnutrition of lactating and pregnant women



# Topic II

## Promoting Family Planning Programs in Developing Countries

### 1. Summary & History

The UNFPA is a UN agency that focuses on reproductive health and family planning as one of its top priorities. According to the UNFPA itself, family planning is “the information, means and methods that allow individuals to decide if and when to have children” (Unfpa.org, 2019). In other words, the UNFPA invests its efforts into making sure that pairs can start a family when they desire to, at their comfort, with the safest methods, and give their children access to a bright and promising future. Furthermore, the UNFPA is a major partner in the Family Planning 2020 global partnership and has also constructed three strategic plans to be fulfilled by 2030, the first of which to be accomplished by 2021. The plans look to ensure worldwide access to sexual and reproductive health and rights in which they focus on women, youth, and adolescents (Unfpa.org, 2017). The issue at hand is global; some women worldwide have difficulties accessing modern contraceptives, while other women in more undeveloped regions are in no way able to access modern contraceptives. This results in unwanted offspring; the child will grow in a below the poverty line community, where there is hardly any hope for a safe or promising future. In addition to that, there is a possibility that the mother could face life-threatening consequences due to poor health and medical quality, support, and accessibility. Similarly, in certain developed regions, some parents want to conceive a child, but are afraid of what the future holds for their offspring.

Since its formation in 1967, the UNFPA had massively helped in the international population movement as new contraceptive methods were being developed. It witnessed an increase in the availability of funds in developed nations like the United States, Sweden, Finland, and Norway (Robinson, 2010). During this time period, the world population was around 3 billion people, while now the population stands at almost 8 billion. The growth in population had since become out of hand, making overpopulation a bigger issue, in consequence demanding for more emphasis and attention into family planning. In 1974, the first world population conference took place and since then, there has been focus on family planning in Asia, research and training in Latin America, population censuses in Africa, and funds world fertility surveys (Robinson, 2010). The UNFPA being funded by international governments and organizations still seeks to take control of unwanted pregnancies but has been limited by the inability to reach everyone, everywhere.

### 2. Discourse on the Issue

One of the biggest problems faced by developing countries is poverty. Family planning is a fundamental tool that has the potential to alleviate poverty; it helps achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of eradicating poverty, combats hunger and promotes good health and gender equality. Overpopulation in developing countries such as India has been described as one of the causes of poverty. A high population results in lower GDP per capita in an economy, which reduces the standard of living for its citizens. The lack of family planning has resulted in several households having more children than they can feed and cater to. These families believe that having more children means a bigger source of income, as each child would someday go to work and earn. However, these families fail to consider the problems that come with having more children than they can provide for.

Family planning aims to provide guidance to parents and teach them about the risks and benefits that come with having children. Educating the parents through counseling sessions will likely reduce the number of children in households. This will gradually alleviate overpopulation and the pressure it asserts on a country's resources. Family planning also prevents pregnancy related risks in women as a woman's ability to choose if and when to become pregnant has a direct impact on her well-being. Family planning allows spacing of pregnancies which help reduce child mortality and prevents unintended ones which may have negative effects on women's health. In addition, reducing unintended pregnancies reduces the risk of unsafe abortion. Lastly, educating women on the benefits of having fewer children will provide them with opportunities in the workforce. They would not have to stay home and look after their children; instead, they can find jobs. This will increase family income and improve their standard of living, which would contribute to economic growth (Who.int, 2018).

### **3. Past IO Actions and The Latest Developments**

In 1946, the United Nations founded the population commission. Later in 1966, a resolution on population was made and as a result, a trust fund was created for population activities. In 1980, the UNFPA becomes a full member of the UN Administrative Committee on Coordination. During the 1990's, the UNFPA had very strong involvements in nine major UN conferences, and in the early 2000's, the Millennium Development Goals were announced. In 2008, the 2008-2011 strategic plan was created, emphasizing on a new aid environment (Robinson, 2010). In 2017, the UNFPA strategic plan for 2018-2021 was published, and is in the works for two more strategic plans up until 2030 (Unfpa.org, 2017).

It was during the 1960's where the UN was most involved in world population issues, prior to the establishment of the UNFPA as a full member of the UN Administrative Committee. The major involvement of the UN included a population mission to India, a demographic conference in Belgrade in association with the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), the UN resolution on population, the foundation of the trust fund mentioned earlier, and their declaration of "ability to determine the number and spacing of one's children" a basic right (Robinson, 2010).

The UNFPA works with governments, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), non-profit organizations, and the private sector. Currently, in the UNFPA Supplies program, the UNFPA receives funds and donations from various governments and organizations from around the world like Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, the Winslow Foundation, the Children's Investment Fund Foundation and many more (Unfpa.org, 2007). The UNFPA Supplies program works on expanding access to family planning in 46 countries. Furthermore, the UNFPA is a "key partner" in the Family Planning 2020 (FP2020), a global partnership which works on expanding access to contraceptives throughout Africa, some parts of Southeast Asia, and minor regions in South America (Unfpa.org, 2019).

### **4. Questions The Discussions and The Resolutions Should Address**

- What are some ways international governments can work together to increase the uptake of family planning?
- What measures should the UNFPA make to ensure all countries are not discreetly obstructing family planning?
- What are solutions the UN has to implement to make sure that women's rights, mainly in Yemen, are granted?
- How can the development of the country be affected by the failure of instating successful family planning methods?

## **5. *Suggestions For Further Research***

- Family planning and religion
- Feminism and family planning
- Sustainable development
- Family planning and the workplace
- Family planning in developing countries.

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