



Founding IBP Partners

World Health Organization/
Department of Reproductive
Health and Research(WHO/RHR)
United States Agency for
International Development
(USAID)
United Nations Population Fund
(UNFPA)
EngenderHealth
Family Health International (FHI)
International Planned Parenthood
Federation (IPPF)
INTRAH
JHPIEGO
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of
Public Health Center for
Communication Programs
(JHUCCP)
Management Sciences for Health
(MSH) and Advance Africa
Consortium
Pathfinder International and Catalyst
Consortium
Public Health Institute

New IBP Partners

Centre for African Family Studies
(CAFS)/Kenya
Institute for Reproductive Health,
Georgetown University
Partners in Population and
Development (PPD)
Program for Appropriate Technology
in Health (PATH)
Regional Centre for Quality of
Health Care, (RCQHC), Makerere
University/Uganda
University Research Co, LLC. and
Quality Assurance Project

IBP India Steering Committee

USAID/India
WHO/SEARO, Department of
Family and Community Health
Office of the WHO Representative
Ministry of Health and Family
Welfare/Government of India
Centre for Development and
Population Activities (CEDPA)
CARE/India
EngenderHealth/India
FHI/India
INTRAH Regional Office
JHUCCP/India
Pathfinder International and Catalyst
Consortium
State Innovations in Family Planning
Services Agency (SIFPSA)
UNFPA/India

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CONTACT:

Ms Maggie Usher
WHO/RHR
Phone: (41 22) 791 4370
Fax: (41 22) 791 4189
Email: usherpatelm@who.int

WHO, USAID, UNFPA, and 16 International Organizations Work with Local Partners to Launch the Implementing Best Practices Initiative in India

AGRA, INDIA—Partners working with the **Implementing Best Practices (IBP) Initiative** are committed to demonstrating a **dynamic model of international cooperation**. The IBP Initiative works with countries to ensure that the **latest available evidence-based technical guidelines, materials, and tools are speedily introduced, adapted, and applied in the health care setting to improve access to and the quality of reproductive health**.

An Intra-Country Meeting with Partners and State Teams will convene more than 250 international and local senior health officials and reproductive health specialists from four states—Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, and Andhra Pradesh—to launch the IBP Initiative in India. The meeting will be held from 21-25 September 2003, at the JayPee Palace Hotel in Agra.

The IBP Initiative is supported by the IBP Consortium, a partnership of the World Health Organization (WHO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and 16 international organizations. The Consortium has worked in close collaboration with the Government of India Department of Health and Family Welfare, WHO South East Asia Regional Office, the USAID/India Mission, the office of the WHO Representative in India, and a team of local partners agencies to prepare for the launching of the IBP Initiative in India.

Why is the IBP Initiative so important? In the words of Poet Laureate Amartya Sen, "Health, (like education) is among the basic capabilities that gives value to human life." The Government of India is committed to improving the health of the nation, particularly reproductive health. WHO and partners note that meeting reproductive health needs is challenging. It involves addressing not only basic health needs, such as ensuring access to family planning and the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity, but also working with families and communities to promote equity, dignity, empowerment, and responsibility in relationships.

In simple terms, women should be supported by their families and empowered to access appropriate health care services so that they can go safely through pregnancy and childbirth. Men and women should be able to choose when to have a child; they should have access to safe, effective, affordable, and acceptable methods of family planning. Men and women should be informed regarding their reproductive rights and responsibilities and have sufficient information to make choices. Such choices can range from choosing when to get pregnant, to making a conscious decision to follow safe sexual practices in order to prevent the further spread of sexually transmitted infections including HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

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Meeting these needs may be challenging, but it is not impossible. WHO and its partner agencies have generated a considerable body of knowledge that provides the evidence base for establishing internationally recognized norms and standards in reproductive health. We have the knowledge. But knowledge alone will not change anything unless it is effectively managed, disseminated, and used as a tool that helps health professionals develop further the capacity of existing services. And to be used effectively, our knowledge must be adapted to meet the reproductive health needs and priorities of the people, in a culturally acceptable manner. In addition, the IBP Initiative encourages the transfer and exchange of local knowledge so that we learn from each other, share our experiences, work together to overcome some of the challenges we are facing, and ultimately, achieve improved reproductive health.

As the Minister of Health, Her Excellency Ms. Sushma Swaraj notes, "we have generated the evidence, we have the knowledge, our major challenge is applying this knowledge in practice in a cost efficient manner so that we can provide equitable access to high quality services and meet the reproductive health needs of the populations we serve. Knowledge is our fuel, but only we as individuals, as professionals, as parents, and responsible members of the community can decide how to harness its power so that it has a discernible impact on the health of our communities. The Implementing Best Practice Initiative offers a number of innovative and interesting approaches to working collaboratively towards the goal of taking evidence into practice. Let us harness this power and work with this Initiative, our partners, and collaborative networks towards the goal of improved reproductive health."

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