Fifth International Conference on Family Planning Report

NOVEMBER 12-15, 2018
KIGALI, RWANDA

Investing for a Lifetime of Returns
Core Organizing Group

Conference Sponsors
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On behalf of the Government of Rwanda and the Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health, we thank you for attending the 5th International Conference on Family Planning, held 12-15 November 2018 among the beautiful rolling hills of Kigali, Rwanda, at the state-of-the-art Kigali Convention Centre.

The theme of the 2018 ICFP, *Investing for a Lifetime of Returns*, spoke to the various returns on investment family planning provides — from education and empowerment to economic growth and environmental health. We hope that you found the conference worthwhile and inspiring, and returned to your home country with a renewed sense of urgency and energy to improve and strengthen family planning programming around the world.

More than 4,000 people from 120 countries around the world attended the 2018 ICFP, marking a conference record. The 2018 ICFP was also the largest to date, with over 600 youth at the Youth Pre-conference, a 40% increase in abstract submissions from previous years, over 300% engagement increase on the ICFP hub and the highest-ever reach on social media, with conference hashtags earning 46.2 million impressions on Twitter alone.

These results are impressive, but they would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the leadership of the host country, the ICFP Core Organizing Group, the International Steering Committee, the National Steering Committee, and the many sponsors, media partners, vendors, logistics staff and, of course, the thousands of delegates who traveled from around the world to Kigali for this important gathering. We hope that you also enjoyed visiting Rwanda, the land of a thousand hills and a million opportunities.

We welcome you to reflect on your experience during the 2018 ICFP as you review the enclosed evaluation summary. To view recordings and photos of the daily plenaries, special events and scientific sessions you may have missed during #ICFP2018, please visit FPConference.org. And please be sure to stay in touch with ICFP by signing up for our email list and following us on social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) — that way, you will be among the first to know the date and location of the next conference, which will be announced in mid-2019.

Thank you again for your continued support of the ICFP and the family planning community!

Dr. Diane Gashumba
Minister of Health
Republic of Rwanda

Jose "Oying" Rimon II
Chair, ICFP International Steering Committee
Director, Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health
Population Family and Reproductive Health
Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health
COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

A Worldwide Movement

In 2012, the global family planning community set an aspirational goal to enable 120 million more women and girls to access voluntary family planning by 2020. Such a goal requires continued commitment, collaboration and coordination. The International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) has been an important factor in the build up to establishing that goal, ensuring that momentum continues and that enthusiasm does not fade.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHBSPH) organized the fifth ICFP in Kigali, Rwanda, from November 12 to 15, 2018 in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, Right Honorable Édouard Ngirente, Prime Minister of Rwanda; Dr. Diane Gashumba, Minister of Health of Rwanda; and over 60 global partners. Dean Ellen J. MacKenzie from the JHBSPH spoke enthusiastically about the conference: “There was a hopeful feel to it. There are a lot of challenges, but I came away thinking there’s a future here—with so much enthusiasm and commitment from the ministers, the faith community, the funders and of course the youth.”

The energy of the family planning movement at the fifth ICFP was unprecedented, but it doesn’t end here! Click the photo to watch the recap video of the 2018 ICFP.
The theme of the 2018 ICFP was “Investing for a Lifetime of Returns” and spoke to the various returns on investment family planning provides, from education and empowerment to economic growth and environmental health. Underlying many of the conference sessions was a focus on the ways in which countries can harness the benefits of the demographic dividend to reap these returns on the macro and micro levels. As well, the demographic dividend was a highlighted track for the first time.
ICFP Attendance

Great progress has been made since the inaugural ICFP in Kampala, Uganda, in 2009, which urged the family planning community to scale up best practices with effective programs and policy changes.

Two years later, the 2011 ICFP convened the family planning field in Dakar, Senegal, to focus on improving family planning services in Francophone Africa.

Following the successful launch of Family Planning 2020 (FP2020) during the 2012 London Summit on Family Planning, the 2013 ICFP brought together more than 3,400 people in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to celebrate progress made toward achieving “Full Access, Full Choice.”

The 2016 ICFP was held in Indonesia, a leader in innovative family planning programming, and attracted more than 3,500 delegates and participants from about 100 countries.

In 2018 ICFP returned to Africa, hosting more than 4,000 people in Kigali, Rwanda, to focus on family planning’s returns on investment.

Thousands of attendees eagerly await the opening ceremonies for the 2018 ICFP.
2018 Conference Highlights

» Highest-ever number of registrants – 4,031 (does not include staff or exhibitor-only badges)

» Highest-ever number of countries represented – 124

» Highest-ever number of youth at the Youth Pre-conference – more than 600

» Highest-ever number of submissions to the Youth Leader video contest, which provided conference scholarships to outstanding youth on the basis of video submissions – 550

» Highest-ever number of abstract submissions – 3,200 abstract submissions (40% more than the 2016 ICFP)

Real-Time Conference Evaluation

The ICFP PMA2020 Resident Enumerators surveyed 462 conference attendees, or about 10% of the total 4,000 attendees, to determine if there were any issues that needed to be immediately addressed to make the delegates' experience better. As well, general information about their overall conference experience and impressions were also gathered. Highlights include:

PMA2020 Survey of ICFP Participants

- 78% first-time ICFP attendees
- 97% learned something new
- 93% said ICFP met or exceeded their expectations
- 82% were planning immediate actions or collaborations as a result of the ICFP
- 98% said there should be another ICFP
- 93% said the global FP community should set a new goal after 2020
ICFP Subcommittee Returns on Investment

Six National and International Steering Committee Subcommittees, with representation from over 60 organizations, invested time and resources to help plan and execute the 2018 ICFP. Their hard work produced multiple dividends. A few highlights from each of the subcommittees are below.

Scientific Subcommittee

» 16 conference tracks
» 32 track organizers
» 794 reviewers
» 64+ preformed panels
» 280+ individual oral sessions
» 216 oral flash presentations
» 864 poster presentations
» 46 papers presented at ICFP submitted to the Gates Open Research ICFP Gateway
Youth Subcommittee

- 600 attendees at the Youth Pre-conference (61% were female)
- 104 Youth Leader Video Contest Winner Travel Grant Awardees
- 75 Young Researcher Grant Awardees
- 65 (of the current 80) 120 Under 40 Next Generation of Family Planning Leaders attended
- 150 Rwandan youth delegates were sponsored by the Rwandan National Steering Committee
- 75 breakout session facilitators (with youth leading the way) during the Youth Pre-conference
- 54 countries represented by youth delegates

The 2018 ICFP Youth Pre-conference was organized by the International Youth Alliance for Family Planning (IYAFP) in collaboration with 64 partner organizations. IYAFP is a youth-led advocacy movement that was formed out of the 2013 ICFP and includes membership from more than 80 countries worldwide.

The 2018 ICFP Youth Pre-conference provided a space for youth all over the world to convene, network and develop the soft and hard skills to take back to their organizations and communities. There were a total of 63 different breakout sessions over the course of two days, and 96% of participants walked away with a new skill. While, 98% of the participants rated the overall pre-conference 8 or more out of 10. Almost everything was led/co-facilitated by a young person, and the presenters were diverse in sex, gender and culture.

During the ICFP, youth piloted “Sex O’Clock News,” a daily email providing quick snippets of news about the world of sex and reproductive rights; were well-represented by Sadia Raman on the ICFP Opening Ceremony stage; planned and executed a youth-focused plenary session “I See FP: Our Stories - See, Hear, Engage”; and performed an original song, “We Are Family,” written by William Otuck (Tanzania), during the ICFP Closing Ceremony.
Demographic Dividend Subcommittee

» 120 attendees at the Demographic Dividend Pre-conference

» 80+ attendees at the DD-focused High-level Ministerial Meeting

» 12 ministerial-level participants, including Hon. Professor Nicolas Meda, the Minister of Health of Burkina Faso; Hon. Ernestor Pernia, Secretary of Socioeconomic Planning of the Philippines; Marie Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development of Canada

» 28 parliamentarians from 19 different countries

» 1 plenary session dedicated to “Investing in Family Planning for a Lifetime of Returns”

The Demographic Dividend (DD) Pre-conference equipped attendees with the information and skills to effectively move policy and advocacy efforts around the DD agenda forward, and to identify existing gaps in DD interventions. A total of 120 participants from parliaments, government ministries, international and local nongovernmental organizations, foundations and bilateral and multilateral donors attended the pre-conference.

The 2018 ICFP showed how the demographic dividend framework has been accepted and embraced by more policymakers and stakeholders around the world. In a session on the demographic dividend, Julia Bunting noted the difference in this meeting compared with the one that she and Amy Tsui convened in 2011 on the topic: “Now people have taken on board the language and ideas of the demographic dividend.” Annette Dixon, Vice President of Human Development at the World Bank, described her demographic dividend elevator speech: For any country that has doubled its population in 23 years, it’s likely they’re also suffering negative health and education outcomes, she says, and “the idea is to turn that around, and to turn this vicious circle into a virtuous circle, to get to that point where we’re bringing population growth down at the same time we’re bringing health and education up.”
Faith Subcommittee

» 34 attendees at the official Faith Pre-conference
» 151 Instagram posts using #ICFPFaith
» 105 attendees at the pre-conference interfaith prayer
» 139 attendees at the faith pre-conference celebration
» 1 Facebook Live Virtual Conference Session - “Straight Talk on Family Planning and Religion”

Advocacy & Accountability Subcommittee

The numbers below highlight the continued increasing prominence of advocacy and accountability (A&A) at ICFP and among the family planning community. In 2018, the A&A subcommittee welcomed:

» 80 subcommittee members
» 30 national and global organizations
» 12 discussion table topics with more than 160 participants
» 1 advocacy-focused flash mob
The formal opening ceremony included remarks from the Right Honorable Édouard Ngirente, Prime Minister of Rwanda; Dr. Diane Gashumba, Minister of Health of Rwanda; Dr. Ellen J. MacKenzie, Dean of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund; Dr. Christopher Elias, President of the Global Development Program at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Honorable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development of Canada; Jose “Oying” Rimon II, Director of the Gates Institute and Chair of the ICFP International Steering Committee; and Sadia Rahman, ICFP youth leader from Bangladesh.

There were also video messages from Melinda and Bill Gates, Co-chairs and Trustees of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, with Warren Buffett, Chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway; Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization; and Jane Goodall, noted anthropologist.

The Global Humanitarian Award for Women’s and Children’s Health was presented by Prime Minister Ngirente and Dr. Christopher Elias of the Gates Foundation to Susan Packard Orr, founder and CEO of Telosa Software and member of the Board of Directors of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The award recognizes individuals for their contributions and commitment to advancing maternal and child health and wellbeing, especially family planning, in communities around the world.

Daily plenaries brought the conference attendees together every morning to focus on key issues.

The Return on Investment (November 13): Family planning yields wide-ranging dividends both locally and globally. This plenary featured expert round-table discussions on the demographic dividend and family planning’s health, financial, environmental and security benefits.
Youth & Diversity in Family Planning (November 14): Young people face unique challenges in family planning. Through monologues and artistic storytelling, this youth-led plenary showcased experiences of youth from all over the world as well as family planning programs that ensure the inclusion of diverse voices. The monologues were broad and tackled components of sexual and reproductive rights and family planning.

FP2020 Progress (November 15): The FP2020 partnership is driving momentum towards family planning commitments and country-specific FP2020 goals. This plenary spotlighted successful national, rights-based family planning programs and their personal impact on women and girls, and looked ahead to where the sector will go in the future.

Official closing ceremonies included:

- The bestowing of the Excellence in Leadership in Family Planning (EXCELL) Awards to Uganda and Burkina Faso (country category), Profamilia Colombia (organization category), Save the Children Yemen (team category) and Dr. Nicolas Meda, Minister of Health of Burkina Faso (individual category).
- The Faith, Youth and Parliamentarian contingents made statements about key take-aways from the ICFP and their pre-conferences, any requests they had for the family planning community and their continued commitments to family planning.
- The winners of the 2018 Packard Quality Innovation Challenge were announced.
- Youth dancers and special celebrity guests Naveeni (Sri Lanka), Avril (Kenya), Knowless (Rwanda), Yvonne Chaka Chaka (South Africa), Trevor Arnett (United States) and William Otuck (Tanzania) gave a special performance of Otuck’s new original song, “We Are Family,” commissioned by Gates Institute for the ICFP. The song’s proceeds will support IYAFP’s important family planning work with youth across the globe.
Special Events

Several special events invited all ICFP delegates to celebrate leaders in family planning, hear cutting-edge ideas in the making and enjoy world-class entertainment. At the Red Carpet Evening Among the Stars, attendees were invited to walk the red carpet and join the ICFP and PSI to raise a glass to international family planning advocates, leaders and celebrity supporters who have helped pave the way toward worldwide access to family planning, with the inaugural Lifetime Achievement Awards in Family Planning & Reproductive Health.

The Women of Impact: Global Leaders Creating Positive Change panel discussion featured four high-profile female leaders from around the world who have impacted the family planning, economic empowerment and social justice fields in extraordinary ways: H.E. Mrs. Jeannette Kagame, First Lady of the Republic of Rwanda; H.E. Martine Moise, First Lady of Haiti; H.R.H. Sarah Zeid, Princess of Jordan; and H.E. Toyin Ojora Saraki, Wellbeing Foundation Africa Founder.

Lastly, the inaugural FPitchfest featured ten CEOs onstage pitching ideas to the audience that they believe will transform the family planning and reproductive health community in the next ten years. The audience voted in real time, and the winner was Julia Bunting, Population Council President, for her pitch about their work on a male contraceptive gel. The second Pitchfest segment featured the top two AmplifyChange @ ICFP youth grantees, who competed for additional grant funding for their projects. The nail-biting, live voting ended in a tie, with both Francophone youth winners given an additional 10,000 Euros for a total of 30,000 Euros each.

Since the first ICFP in Kampala, Uganda in 2009, the conference has continued to grow and serve as an important meeting place and platform for change and connection in the global family planning community. As we approach 2020, this is an opportune moment to step back and assess the usefulness and impact of the conference.
Measuring Conference Goals

There were several key outcomes that the Gates Institute worked to achieve with the 2018 ICFP.

**Intermediate**

- create a space for researchers, policymakers, advocates and implementers from the developing and developed world to *come together to share ideas and pinpoint best practices in family planning*,
- *generate presentations and discussions focused on family planning issues*, including the work of youth,
- involve a wide range of countries, including francphone, and *encourage all policymakers to focus on family planning*, and
- create a platform to recognize donors and *encourage additional support for family planning*.

**Overall**

- host a successful conference where *research findings and best practices are shared* and acted upon,
- create a space where *organizations focused on reproductive health* can promote their work and achievements,
- *garner high-quality press coverage* for family planning around the world,
- influence policy change and *generate new commitments from countries for family planning*, and
- ignite a sense of urgency for best practices that will “*bend the curve*” and move us closer to the FP2020 goal.
Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation of the 2018 ICFP included several data collection methods, described below. An external consultant synthesized this information from the five sources below.

1. A survey sent to all participants via Survey Monkey was completed by 360 individuals (332 in English and 28 in French). Respondents were 53.2% female, 46.8% male, and represented 50 countries, with the largest number of respondents from Rwanda (65) and the United States (48). The age of respondents is shown below, with over one-third being under 30 years old.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;20</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Performance Monitoring and Accountability 2020 (PMA2020) resident enumerators conducted a daily survey at the conference to provide real-time feedback for conference organizers (enabling them to address heating/cooling, transportation and noise issues, for example) as well as data for the evaluation. The six data collectors (see below) interviewed 462 people (70% in English, 30% in French). Of the 450+ respondents, 54% were female, 52% were under 34 years old and 78% were first time ICFP attendees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident Enumerator</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Magdaline Mahokha</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophie Isiru</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hafsat Musa</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Mistre Yilma</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maimiunata Ouedraogo</td>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamie Sumbu ILAKA</td>
<td>DRC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. An external consultant interviewed 12 individuals (both alone and in groups), and targeted conference delegates who had attended all five ICFPs. In addition, given the difficulty of scheduling interviews during conference hours, the consultant took advantage of opportunities while waiting in line, riding the elevator or eating a meal to ask a number of people about their experience. In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, we are not including a list of people interviewed since it might be possible to match quotes with names. We are thankful to all the people who candidly shared their views.
4. A staff member from the Gates Institute conducted a focus group discussion (FGD) with 14 youth participants after the ICFP. This 1½ hour discussion elicited useful feedback on youth perspectives.

5. Observations by the consultant during the conference and at the ICFP Thank You Celebration in Washington DC on December 12, 2018.

Findings

The Growth of ICFP

ICFP has grown over time (see Table 1), mirroring and contributing to the growth in achievements and attention paid to family planning. The number of participants tripled from 2009 to 2018. In addition, the 2018 conference hosted a robust virtual conference program, expanding the conference reach and impact and allowing those who could not attend the conference in person to still participate meaningfully for the first time.

In general, people spoke highly of the 2018 ICFP: “I thought this was the best conference of the five. It was well organized, pleasant and convenient.” Among survey respondents who had attended previous ICFPs, 61.5% thought the 2018 ICFP exceeded the others, 30% considered it the same, and 8.5% thought it was worse than earlier ICFPs. Many praised the organization of the conference and youth participation, while the negative comments tended to be about the conference being too crowded. According to survey responses, most people felt that the conference either exceeded (47%) or met (43.9%) their expectations, with only 7.9% saying the conference only somewhat met their expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Countries Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kampala 2009: Research and Best Practices</td>
<td>1,372</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dakar 2011: Research and Best Practices</td>
<td>2,207</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addis Ababa 2013: “Full Access, Full Choice”</td>
<td>@ 3,500</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nusa Dua 2016: “Global Commitments, Local Actions”</td>
<td>3,200 (after false start due to volcano)</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kigali 2018: “Investing for a Lifetime of Returns”</td>
<td>4,031</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why Delegates Attend

ICFP serves multiple purposes — for individuals, for organizations, for countries and for the global movement. “Rally the troops,” “learn,” “network” — these are some of the purposes attendees mentioned for their attendance at ICFP. Some noted that the overall purpose has shifted over time. While the Kampala conference was organized strictly around a scientific program, one respondent explained that side events and other activities have been added over the years and have taken the sole focus off of the scientific program. One person described this as a “natural progression for a social movement.” Several respondents felt that this was a good time to think critically about the purpose of the next ICFP. Survey respondents were asked about the importance of six different aspects of the conference, echoing this shift in priorities at the conference. While all aspects were seen as important, the largest proportion of respondents saw youth engagement (52%) and professional networking (46%) as extremely important, while only 26% described learning about state-of-the-art technical content this way.

Survey respondents’ perceptions of importance of different aspects of ICFP*

* The category ‘not important’ was included in possible responses, but fewer than 1% of respondents (between 0-4 individuals) answered this way, so this is not included in the graph.

The PMA2020 survey found that 84.7% of respondents were very excited about attending ICFP, with 14.5% being somewhat excited. As one respondent explained, the conference is “an event that a lot of the community looks forward to, as a reinforcement, galvanizing, solidarity for a field that is still embattled. And seeing what your sister agencies are doing.” Another respondent described the main purposes as “networking and inspiration... there are all these sessions on inspiration, with stories from young people and dancing. I left more inspired and dedicated to the field.”

One participant reflected on his experience at the conference by asking a few key questions: “Did I accomplish all I planned to achieve during the meeting? A resounding yes! Did I learn anything new? Yes. I found the sessions I attended of high quality. A panel on the GFF [Global Financing Facility] was especially informative. Was the networking useful? The conference was exceptional as a networking forum. The high attendance, the physical layout of the conference center, and the
scores of receptions all provided a setting for reestablishing old and establishing new connections. Lastly, the conference ‘vibes’ were so positive. They reinforced everyone’s commitment to family planning. Bottom line, a super conference.”

A group discussion with USAID staff highlighted the importance of conference attendance to the agency for multiple reasons. Field staff get exposed to state-of-the-art knowledge from outside their country. In addition, much of the work presented is USAID-funded work, and this importance is reinforced by having USAID staff present and visible. The conference also provides a valuable outlet for disseminating information, including the High Impact Practices (HIP) briefs.

ICFP also allows for important donor meetings. Much interaction in the global community is done virtually, but there is power in meeting face-to-face. “We meet as a donor group and we meet virtually but ICFP provides a platform for donors to come together and discuss in person. We share ideas, discuss our priorities and understand how best we can collaborate, and expand access and choice.”

Scientific Program

There was a 40% increase in the number of abstracts submitted to the 2018 ICFP (see figure below), reflecting the growing size and importance of ICFP to the family planning community. Almost all (96.5%) survey respondents stated that they learned something new at the conference. The graph below shows survey respondents’ perceptions of the quality of the standard oral sessions, the oral flash sessions and the poster sessions.

With 99.2% of respondents to the PMA2020 ICFP survey stating that they were excited to participate in ICFP and 99% planning to attend the next ICFP, we can expect to see growth in
the number of abstracts submitted, as most need to present at the conference in order to garner funding to attend. As the competition for a program slot intensifies, due to the exponential increase in abstract submissions, we are assured that we will have an even higher-quality abstract pool to pull from in 2020/2021.

ICFP 2018 tried a number of innovative approaches to share information. One respondent noted, “they did a nice job breaking out of the mode of panels — the pitch fest, the youth plenary and the other innovative approaches. I think more learning happens that way.” Roughly 90% of survey respondents thought that each of the new approaches — the oral flash sessions, interactive voting, poster judging and the FPitchfest — should be included in the next ICFP.

A common concern was that the conference had too many sessions. While 60.8% of survey respondents were able to attend all or most of the sessions they were interested in attending, 22.4% of respondents said that they couldn't attend all of the sessions that they wanted to due to the vast number of simultaneous sessions and events.

Respondents recognized the difficult balance between being inclusive and being selective. Many people cannot attend unless they have a paper accepted for presentation. If the conference were to be lengthened by a day, this would have significant cost implications. In addition, if it had fewer sessions, those sessions would be even more crowded and there would be even less opportunity for dialogue, one respondent pointed out.

At the same time that many feel that there are too many sessions, around 30% of survey respondents felt that there were topics not covered in the conference. These included some topics that respondents felt should get more emphasis, particularly safe abortion and male involvement in family planning, and other issues listed below:

- I strongly recommend that menstrual hygiene management could be a topic at ICFP. Reason being, it is the logical entry point of family planning for very young adolescents.
- I would love to have seen more cutting-edge topics and those more relevant to an intersectional and rights-based or justice-aligned approaches, like more presentations on pleasure, sex and sexuality; presentations on SRHR and disability; presentations on what it means to implement rights based family planning programs with increased focus on the environment, IUDs, etc.
- Impact of family planning on climate change.
- Subfertility management.
- Reproductive and sexual health of incarcerated people particularly women and LGBTQ persons.
- Sustainable Development Goals.
- Less focus on small pilots and boutique efforts. We need to see more about scale.

Many expressed the need for a better way for attendees to identify which sessions to attend. This could include somehow categorizing sessions more clearly, such as highlighting sessions talking about new contraceptive methods, new service delivery methods, innovative research design, etc.
Another respondent suggested that there be a symbol next to sessions related to specific High Impact Practices. Currently, there is a feeling that with such a large program some important topics are lost in the crowd. For example, a respondent mentioned that a new family planning method — the vaginal ring — was only discussed in one poster, even though this is an important topic for people to learn about.

Several respondents felt that the conference could use more provocative thinking. One respondent felt that the “scientific program seems a bit dry. There are fewer blockbuster exciting new things.” In part, this could be a reflection of the maturation of the field, this respondent explained: “In Kampala, it felt so new and exciting. Now the excitement might be with the youth and the fun things.” Another respondent was concerned about the lack of new contributions to the field and suggested that there be more effort to bring in different opinions and views and push the field forward: “I don’t know how many contributions to the field we’re getting from the conference. Maybe the purpose is coming together and recommitting, bringing people together. I think it’s a good time for a shift. There is always rah, rah. That is what the field needed. Now look how much interest there is. This has put us on global health field, and legitimized family planning for a lot of poor countries. Do we have enough legitimacy now to refocus? Can we use it to re-evaluate what we’re doing? Make it a setting about dissenting views, use debates and push the field. We have the world’s attention, so what do we do with it?”

Many respondents noted in particular the growth in youth involvement, with 600 young people at the 2018 ICFP Youth Pre-conference. “Everywhere I look in this conference there are young people,” explained one respondent. This included many young people serving in prominent positions in the program, such as the Emcee of the Women of Impact session, giving a powerful speech in the opening ceremony and adding energy via the original ICFP song “We Are Family.” Youth are not just included or involved; they are actively driving and leading much of the conference. In an idea emphasized throughout the conference, youth are not beneficiaries but actors and leaders, sharing and spreading their passion and personal stories. When asked about the increasing youth involvement, one respondent explained how getting youth on board is “great for long-term change and for momentum change.”

Ten International Youth Alliance for Family Planning (IYAFP) Executives were financially supported to chair the ICFP Youth Sub-committee and attend and lead all ICFP youth activities including: the Youth Pre-conference, youth plenary, the Youth Lounge, IYAFP booth and 2018 ICFP theme song. Find the International Youth Alliance for Family Planning’s Youth Pre-conference recap here: https://iyafp.org/icfp2018/
Youth Engagement

Most survey respondents (91%) felt that the youth involvement made a difference in the conference, saying that it made the conference more lively and vibrant, that youth voices were heard and that it “brought new ideas, innovation, energy and power to contribute to the family planning agenda.” Interviewees pointed out that it contributed to the conference feeling “more playful” and that “there is a nicer vibe” and “a buzz.” In illustrating this feeling of greater playfulness, people mentioned the theme of superpowers, the youth panel and the closing song composed by youth. The PMA 2020 survey found that 98% of respondents were excited about the youth participation at this conference. One conference participant explained, “The youth focus is coming across strongly. They’re doing it right. The youth involvement affects the mood. You’re engaging with people with a personal, passionate interest. Compared with PAA [the Population Association of America annual meeting], which is more academic, this brings the personal side to it. Contraception isn’t just a service or a product, it’s people’s lives.”

The representation of youth at this conference will likely increase at the next conference as the focus on ensuring that youth have a hand in moving the field forward only seems to be intensifying. The launch of the ICFP Mentor Match-up, including a special dinner and other activities for mentors and mentees, matched 413 youth with those in the family planning sector in which they were most interested in learning more about. We will continue to give youth tools to submit solid abstracts and encourage them to continue their relationship with their mentor. One mentee stated, “My experience with my mentor has been so amazing. She gave me courage and confidence to build my skills for moderating … I felt so motivated when she attended the session which I was moderating.”

We have, once again, earmarked a portion of the ICFP budget to ensure youth have the funding and support to attend the conference through our Youth Leader Video Contest and Young Researcher grants. In 2019, the Gates Institute has also announce the Future of Family Planning Thought Leadership Fund that will allow young researchers, program implementers and advocates to submit their innovative ideas to exponentially increase access to and uptake of contraception within the next 10-15 years. We will include the winners in a special 2019 Future of Family Planning convening in September 2019 and fund their participation to the 2020/2021 ICFP where they will present their research.

Funding Announcements

Several groups now use ICFP as a powerful platform for innovative small grants programs. This includes the Packard Foundation’s Quality Innovation Challenge luncheon, which had an impressive 350 applicants. Amplify Change also hosted a youth pitchfest at the Youth Pre-conference to determine a winner of its small grants program. The top two finalists had the chance to pitch for an additional 20,000 Euros. After a nail-biting audience vote, it was declared a tie and both winners received an additional 10,000 Euros for a total of 30,000 Euros each.
The conference is also a time for making new commitments to family planning, including:

» The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced a new $15 million Commodity Matching fund (plus $3 million in technical assistance) for the 9 West African Ouagadougou Partnership countries, to be managed by the United Nations Population Fund.

» The UK Department for International Development will invest approximately $260 million in a new global Women’s Integrated Sexual Health program.

» The Canadian government announced $78.8 million to fund sexual and reproductive health and rights around the world, for projects that take a comprehensive approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including universal access to family planning and access to safe and legal abortion.

» Grand Challenges Canada launched Options for Pregnancy Termination (OPTions) Innovation Initiative to fund 20 grants of $250,000 to support Bold Ideas with Big Impact for women’s and girls’ access to safe abortion in low- and middle-income countries, where there are one or more legal grounds to support it. Proposals were accepted until February 12, 2019, which, if successful, will award seed grants of up to CAD $250,000 for 18 to 24 months.

Political Engagement

» ICFP 2018 welcomed 13 Ambassadors, 27 Parliamentarians, 38 Ministers and 113 total high-level government officials from 44 different countries.

» Government officials and representatives of major foundations and bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as additional attendees from the DD Pre-conference, attended the High-level Ministerial Meeting. Among the participants were 12 ministerial-level participants, including Hon. Professor Nicolas Meda, the Minister of Health of Burkina Faso; Hon. Ernestor Pernia, Secretary of Socioeconomic Planning of the Philippines; Marie Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development of Canada; 28 parliamentarians from 19 different countries, including a delegation from the Rwanda parliament; and a large number of high-level staff from foundations including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; multilateral organizations such World Bank, WHO, UNFPA; and bilateral organizations such as USAID.

» South-to-South Collaboration Meeting organized by UNFPA, IPPF, PPD and the Gates Institute to bring together high-level officials from the global south to focus on shared learning between countries about family planning needs and how to move beyond dialogue to take action.

» Political statement by Parliamentarians at the Closing Ceremony.
Demographic Dividend

The 2018 ICFP showed how the demographic dividend (DD) framework has been accepted and embraced by more policymakers and stakeholders around the world. The conference included a DD pre-conference attended by 120 participants from parliaments, government ministries, international and local nongovernmental organizations, foundations and bilateral and multilateral donors. Several key takeaways and recommendations emerged from the panel presentations and participant discussions.

- There is need to advocate for increased budget allocations for family planning by working with a coalition of partners from across sectors.
- Specific, evidence-based policy recommendations are needed to support decision makers in resource-constrained environments to identify and prioritize high-impact policy investments.
- The DD will not happen automatically. Countries need to invest now to create an enabling policy environment to attain a DD.
- Development partners sometimes promote different perspectives on priority investments to promote a DD, such as innovation in the agricultural sector versus human capital development to strengthen competitiveness in emerging markets.
- To stimulate action by politicians, advocacy efforts on the DD must explain both the long-term benefits of the dividend and the short-term benefits of age structure change for households and communities.
- Adequate funding for voluntary family planning, as a direct influence on fertility decline, should not be omitted from advocacy messages.
For the 2018 ICFP, media (traditional and digital) and communications support were provided by Global Health Strategies and Torchlight Collective. The ICFP organizers also worked closely with the communications subcommittee of the Rwandan National Steering Committee.

Together, we developed and implemented a comprehensive strategy aiming to expand the global footprint of this year's ICFP, cultivate quality media coverage, drive key messages in target markets and align and engage CSO partners.

**Media Highlights**

- 261 original media hits in more than 20 countries across the globe
- 180+ reporters in 40+ countries followed the conference virtually
- 120,000+ people reached via Facebook
- 4600+ icfphub.org users
- 20 live segments from the ICFP Facebook Live Studio
- 1500+ virtual registrants
- #ICFP2018 and #ICFPYOUTH earned over 55M impressions collectively – highest in ICFP history!
**Media Partners**

» Global Health Strategies  
» The Torchlight Collective  
» FHI 360  
» Girls Globe  
» The Moth

**ICFP Virtual Conference**

The 2018 ICFP saw the debut of a virtual conference, designed to enable engagement with people around the world. The ICFP Hub featured livestreamed sessions, daily recaps, social media coverage, partner content and videos from the conference.

Now it will serve as an archive of key highlights and daily recaps, as well as a convening point for conversations and online events designed to keep the conversations going beyond the immediate life of the conference.

**Virtual Conference Program Highlights**

» Highest engagement on the ICFP Hub, where all the content (daily recaps, livestreamed sessions, guest columns from partner organizations, videos and social media coverage) for the virtual ICFP is stored. The 2018 Hub saw 16,396 total page views (number of times a page is viewed), an increase of 11,781 over 2016.

» 261 original media hits and 131 reposts mentioning ICFP were published from May 2019 to December 2019. An additional 63 original articles and 187 reposts were also published about the FP2020 report, which was released at the conference.
» 40+ international reporters from 15 countries attended the conference, including:
  » 6 GHS scholarship journalists from leading outlets in DRC, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Senegal and Uganda
  » 12 PRB scholarship journalists from leading regional outlets and top publications in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia,
  » 7 UNF scholarship journalists from top US outlets including Christian Science Monitor, New York Magazine, Quartz, Teen Vogue and Thomson Reuters Foundation.

» 180+ reporters in 40+ countries followed the conference virtually.

Coverage echoed conference key messages, exploring topics including youth leadership, country progress and male involvement in family planning. Many articles highlighted the family planning funding announcements made on November 12 and referenced data from the FP2020 report. Coverage acknowledged that while the 2020 goal is unlikely to be met, significant progress has been made and more women than ever before are using contraceptives.

» Media coverage prominently featured Global South voices, including youth and local leaders and advocates.

» 18 satellite and partner events in 15 countries were attended by over 1,750 people and generated close to 30 media hits.

» 100+ partner organizations were highly engaged, publishing 35 blog posts and press releases throughout the conference, and submitting over a hundred family planning stories and spokespeople to support media engagement before and during ICFP.

Social Media

» Digital and social media engagement was the highest ever.

» On Twitter, the hashtags #ICFP2018 and #ICFPYouth earned 46.2 million and 10 million impressions respectively; the top tweet using #ICFP2018 was from @MelindaGates, earning 4.4 million impressions.

» More than 120,000 people were reached through Facebook.

» Between October 23 and November 20, original conference video content received 28,165 video views, representing an increase of 5,300% over ICFP 2016.

» There was also excellent engagement on the ICFP Hub, where all the content (daily recaps, livestreamed sessions, guest columns from partner organizations, videos and social media coverage) for the virtual ICFP is stored. The 2018 Hub saw 16,396 total page views (number of times a page is viewed), an increase of 11,781 over 2016.

» For the first time, Instagram was used as a prominent platform for ICFP. Between June 1 and November 21, the number of followers for @ICFP2018 increased from 195 to 777, and currently has over 1k followers. The audience was highly active, contributing individual posts and stories.
Impact of the ICFP

The conference is impactful on a number of levels: raising the profile of family planning, sharing research and best practices, contributing to global efforts, celebrating successes in the field, mapping out the continued trajectory to the FP2020 goal, strengthening connections and helping to build skills of the next generation of family planning leaders. Close to two-thirds (60.4%) of survey respondents stated that the conference is extremely useful to their family planning work, with 29.8% saying it is very useful and 7.8% useful, while less than 2% said it is only somewhat useful and only one person said not at all useful.

Survey respondents were asked about how significant ICFP’s role is for various aspects of impact, with it being seen as particularly important in raising the profile of family planning and increasing the visibility and engagement of youth advocates, while being relatively less significant in terms of building the evidence base for family planning.
Bending the Curve and Recognizing Success

In looking at trends over time, it is clear that efforts have already bent the curve and led to more rapid progress than before the launch of FP2020. The conference has become an important platform for both celebrating and building on success. In spite of the fact that many people accept that meeting the 2020 goal is not likely, the respondents to the PMA2020 survey were generally optimistic, with 19.5% believing that meeting the FP2020 goal was likely, 51.7% stating that it was possible, and 28.4% stating that it was not likely. Regardless of whether we reach FP2020 goal, there is a recognition of the impressive increase in the 69 poorest countries using modern contraception by 46 million more clients.

The ICFP closing included a number of awards recognizing country success in Uganda and Burkina Faso. The latter has seen an impressive increase in modern method CPR from 20% to 30% in the last three years. In accepting the award, the Minister of Health of Burkina Faso declared that “Burkina Faso is Wakanda!”

Using Knowledge and Building Relationships

A large proportion of survey respondents (82%) said that they were planning immediate actions in terms of programs, policies or collaboration as a result of the conference.

» I learned that Uganda is doing a tremendous job in advancing family planning. After the conference I got more motivated to have the sexual and reproductive health related policies for my university reviewed in partnership with the SHE DECIDES Reproductive Health Uganda campaign. I am also more motivated to start up my initiative to offer antenatal care to all pregnant girls and women in Uganda. This is great motivation for me to add to efforts that my fellow country mates have significantly worked on.

» In Rwanda, right after the conference, a few NGOs, which I am part of, gathered and started advocating for the removal of the law that prevents young people under 18 from getting SRH services, including family planning commodities. The position letter has been sent to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Health submitted it at the Senate. We are confident that this law will be removed. Thus, young people could enjoy FP services.

» As a finalist of the Amplify Change FPitchfest 2018, I was able to present my idea on how to engage policy makers in my country, Nigeria, to be able to reform the penal codes that speak against abortion and in the long run, through my project, advocate for the increase of safe abortion.

» We learned that partnership is a great key to succeed. Therefore we are building our youth-led coalition to support girl child education and reduce early marriages in East and Southern Africa. www.educateher.org

» After fielding many questions about my organization’s storytelling work in India and about my storytelling work in general, I’m submitting a proposal to lead a storytelling workshop at the University of Chicago’s Delhi Center in 2019.
I have been motivated as a young person to start my own initiative for meaningfully engaging youth in SRH.

I actually joined the IYAFP in my country. And created already a networking group between youth delegates to begin new projects.

Youth: “We are not the future, we are the present.”

Youth have been a fundamental part of ICFP since the 2011 ICFP, but their involvement and presence has grown with each new conference. One of the concrete outcomes of this was the formation of the International Youth Alliance on Family Planning (IYAFP) at the 2013 ICFP, a group that has exponentially grown and proudly celebrated its 5th birthday in Kigali. Many praised the innovative Sex O’Clock News initiated by IYAFP at the 2018 ICFP.

During a focus group discussion, youth participants described their experience at ICFP as “eye-opening.” When asked what they gained from the conference, youth mentioned networking, sharing strategies and learning from the experiences of others. Highlights of ICFP included the Youth Pre-conference, meeting with ministers, co-moderating sessions and seeing youth involvement in plenaries as well as presenting in and moderating sessions. Some also talked about learning new skills, such as the SMART advocacy approach, the power of social media and the use of storytelling to communicate effectively. Several respondents also praised the sessions that brought together youth and high-level decision makers.

The Youth Pre-conference organizers were responsive and helpful, and youth appreciated the efforts taken to keep them “in the loop” both ahead of and during the conference. One participant stated, “The pre-conference is the place youth feel at home. It was a safe space.”

It is notable that the majority of sessions were led or co-facilitated by a young person. Youth who co-moderated sessions appreciated being given this responsibility. Youth had the most positive co-moderating experience when their co-moderator reached out to them ahead of the conference and “let [the youth] take control” during the session, with the co-moderator “just helping along the way.” An interviewee described the mutually beneficial aspects of the co-facilitation: “I heard from one person who was paired up with a youth to co-chair an event- the older person thought it was great. For the young person, it felt like the older person was steadying.”

Common goals for youth at the conference were networking, socializing, and experience sharing. Youth expressed that they were only “halfway” able to meet their objectives because certain programs intended to support youth participation/networking fell short of expectations. For example, the high-level luncheon was a highly anticipated event, however, there were logistical issues that prevented some youth from getting to meet the ministers from their country while in attendance, as the ministers and high-level government officials did not sit at their country table as asked. Similarly, the mentorship program was only effective for some youth. Most youth at the focus group discussion had some issue with the mentorship program. For some, their mentor never connected with them, didn't attend the conference or was too busy to meet during the conference.
Others were not assigned a mentor despite requesting one, which made them feel left out. In some cases, the mentor was the same age and at the same level professionally as the youth. French-speaking youth in the focus group discussion were given mentors who only spoke French, which they felt held them back from making connections to English organizations. These youth felt that a French- and English-speaking mentor would have opened more doors. Despite these setbacks, a number of youth found that they were able to connect with a mentor figure at the conference. In one case, a mentor assigned to one youth ended up taking two more under his wing as mentees, which the youth appreciated. The youth who had positive experiences in the mentorship program shared that they reached out to their mentors ahead of the conference, and some had video chats leading up to the conference.

The ICFP mentorship program saw the matching of 826 participants, resulting in 413 mentor-mentee matches based on language, career interests and geography. In the follow-up mentorship survey, completed by 125 participants, 90% of both mentors and mentees rated their mentorship relationship as “good,” “great” or “excellent.” Sixty-eight percent of respondents said they were able to connect before ICFP and 65% continued to have active relationships. Mentors in the program represent a wide variety of organizations in the family planning field including; the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, UNFPA, DKT, PATH, IPPF, PSI, ministries of health, finance and other government institutions. One of the challenges mentioned in the survey was that many of the original enrollees in the mentorship program were not able to attend ICFP and therefore could not meet with their counterparts, leaving many participants without mentors and mentees during ICFP. While some attendees were rematched in person at the mentorship dinner, this will be something to look out for in the future. Many of the attendees were excited for the program and believed it was particularly beneficial for their participation in the conference and in their future. Below are a few quotes from some of the participants.

“My experience with my mentor has been so amazing. She gave me courage and confidence to build my skills for moderating international conference. I felt so motivated when she attended the session which I was moderating.”

“I have been paired with a super talented and inspirational mentee, Innocent Grant from Tanzania. We live on completely different continents but we are connected by our passion for mobile health technology and its ability to make family planning accessible. We talk almost daily as I try to support him to achieve his dreams.”

Youth insisted that the mentorship program should continue; however, they suggested a higher level of accountability for the mentors who sign up. In addition to this, youth should be encouraged to reach out to their mentor ahead of the conference and to contact the organizers if their mentor is unresponsive so that an alternative mentor can be assigned.

A key objective for many young people at ICFP was to make connections with organizations working in SRH in their home countries, which was challenging to do in the conference setting because there wasn’t designated time or space. The youth felt that there should be some sort of roster of youth working on SRH in a given country so that organizations seeking to engage youth can contact them after the conference. One idea to help youth meet this goal at the next ICFP is to set up a “Youth Opportunity Booth” where young people and organizations seeking to
engage youth can connect. There was a “Youth Zone” at the 2018 ICFP where these conversations could organically occur. However, having a more formalized process within that setting to connect organizations and youth from the same country should be considered such as a roster. Youth suggested inviting stakeholders to this booth and to the Youth Pre-conference as well. It would be beneficial to look for ways to increase opportunities to form in-country connections for youth seeking employment in SRH.

Interviewees talked about the continued need to ensure that the energy and emotion that youth bring to ICFP is better translated into concrete changes in policies and programs. For example, one person explained that “the youth plenary as a storytelling event was effective at an emotional level, but what do you do with that? We’ve heard all these stories, so what should the system do?” In describing the impact of youth involvement on the conference, some survey respondents echoed some of the ideas from the FGD and interviews in terms of the need to improve mentoring and impact: “Gave it life and energy. It is not clear, however, how this translates from the hype ‘yeah, yeah’ to genuine youth-driven programs and youth involvement in truly substantive ways. A bit too much show rather than substance.”

The Impact of Data Collection

In the case of ICFP 2018, there were powerful effects from the process of including six PMA2020 Resident Enumerators (REs) in data collection. This included personal impact on the REs and also impact on their in-country teams. The REs spoke about how grateful they were to be recognized and have the opportunity to travel, to interview people from all over the world, to learn new things and to see how the data they collect is being used. After the conference, the REs’ involvement continued to have an impact, particularly on the team in Burkina Faso. The REs who stayed behind were excited that their teammate was able to represent them at ICFP which boosted their morale, as they saw it as a testament to all the hard work they have done.
Thoughts on the Next ICFP

Almost all (98%) of the survey respondents say there should be another ICFP and they are planning to attend. In addition, 89% said they plan on submitting an abstract for the next ICFP. One respondent gave kudos to the organizers for asking the question rather than assuming that there should be another conference. “Not ready to sunset yet. Keep momentum, but ask about the purpose. If we had the same conference we just had and it was 2022, I would be less convinced. It should not just be a conference that is an excuse to travel or just becomes a ‘see and be seen.’”

A participant at the December ICFP Thank You Celebration for the Core Organizing Partners in Washington DC suggested that the conference be held in 2021 in order to have full data on what was achieved by the end of 2020 and also know the results of the 2020 US elections. The group at the gathering agreed that this made sense. Some survey respondents recommended reviewing achievements of 2020 goals by each country at the next ICFP. Most respondents (93%) would like to see a new global goal after 2020, and having the conference in 2021 would allow for a full launch of such a new goal.

There is less agreement about where to hold the next conference. At the Thank You Celebration in December 2018, this issue led to a heated discussion with one participant concerned about choosing based on “where it’s fun to go vs. where it matters. Don’t go to the easy solution; the optics matter.” Some suggested Latin America: “the future is where countries are putting money in and leveraging the private sector.”

In the ICFP feedback survey, people were given eight options and able to select more than one. While Canada got the most votes, other countries, such as Mexico, Kenya and Thailand, were not far behind. Some feel that “ICFP has been too Africa-centric,” “Africa has hosted the majority of ICFPs” and “it might be wise to alternate with another region,” while others point out that “Africa is where FP issues are seen most due to high fertility and mortality levels.” When selecting Canada, the Netherlands or London, some respondents also questioned whether holding the conference in a developed country is the right move. But, some noted that “voices from the conference
would possibly be projected more.” A large number of respondents brought up visa issues, with some countries being particularly challenging. For example, it would be very difficult for Pakistani nationals to obtain an Indian visa. Some of the other specific pros and cons identified are included here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/City</th>
<th># of votes</th>
<th>Comments: pros and cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>Pros: capacity for a large conference and being able to manage both English and French. Cons: not a developing country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico City</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>Pros: there has not been an ICFP in Latin America. Latin America has been neglected for too long. Cons: would require significant additional translation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Pros: Kenya is an African country which still needs great intervention as far as SRHR is concerned. Especially family planning for adolescent girls and young women. Services are still not as free and affordable and comprehensive for everyone. Men are still not involved, and this has been attributed to most programs typically targeting women and girls. Cons: logistics and security issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Pros: Opportunity to visit clinics/FP sites in Thailand. Use of contraceptives has increased from 15 to 70 percent, and in 15 years Thailand’s population growth rate has been cut in half, from 3.2 percent to 1.6 percent. I believe it would be great to go in such a country to honor its success story. Cons: could logically accommodate a large conference, it is time for the conference to come to Europe. Cons: expensive, it would be difficult to get a visa from African countries to the United Kingdom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Pros: London is my first choice because it helps generate great opportunities for sustained advocacy for Government funding and break the ground with religious bodies. Cons: political situation, Church might mobilize to oppose the conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Pros: Philippines is my first choice because it helps generate great opportunities for sustained advocacy for Government funding and break the ground with religious bodies. Cons: political situation, Church might mobilize to oppose the conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Pros: the Netherlands would get more EU donors. Cons: not a developing country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Pros: India is one of the emerging economies and the second most populous country. Cons: logistics challenges, visa issues for Pakistan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all respondents (96%) thought that the Gates Institute should continue to coordinate the conference, with 93% indicating that the 2018 ICFP was equal to or better than previous conferences.

» “Planning gets better every time, especially the quality of presentations and posters.”

» “The spaces for exhibition and poster sessions were too congested. The side meetings and professional networking spaces were limited.”

» “I couldn't get into over 25% of the sessions I wanted to attend because the room was at capacity by the time I arrived.”

» “More interactive and participatory!”

While the Gates Institute currently works with over 60 partners in organizing the ICFP, a number of respondents talked about including a broader group to represent more viewpoints and to spread out the responsibility. Others noted that it would be good to hire a professional event company. Since 2013, a local Professional Conference Organizer (PCO) has been hired to help plan and execute the conference in-country.
Survey respondents were asked about aspects of the conference that needed improvement and the most common response - mentioned by 107 respondents - was the poster sessions. This was echoed by the lower rating of quality of poster sessions mentioned earlier as well as comments regarding the space for posters being too small, a number of posters not being displayed, confusion over judging and other issues. Other aspects mentioned as needing improvement by at least 70 respondents were logistics (79), sponsorship opportunities (78) and technical content (77).

ICFP is all about the people and the interactions. Some interviewees mentioned issues around the make-up of participants at the conference. "I thought I would see more non-traditional players — that is key to our staying relevant, increasing access, penetrating more groups. I didn’t see a lot of manufacturers," explained one person. One of the Resident Enumerators also noted a comment she heard from several people who felt that the conference always had the same people in attendance: "It would be good to have some more people working in the field — not just people from the office. Bring people from the ground so they can see and then go back and tell their friends." Given the importance of networking, attendees would like to see more quiet spaces made available for people to meet during the conference.

There were also a number of comments regarding the emphasis on youth with a concern of a possible loss of balance: "It seems like such a shift that it's a youth conference with some family planning." Another interviewee talked about how there was “a lot about youth. What about me, a middle-aged woman? The focus on youth is wonderful, but there are other women." In discussing youth involvement, one of the winners of the 120 Under 40 program emphasized the idea of partnership: “Youth involvement should continue. Let participants know how important youth participation is, but that shouldn’t negate the participation of middle-aged people. It is a partnership between youth and the older generation. For example, go forward with the mentorship program, make connections for working together for one purpose. Youth can gain experience from the more experienced generation."

Survey respondents and interviewees had various suggestions regarding strengthening the scientific program. To encourage more provocative thinking, some people recommended incorporating debates or a point-counterpoint approach. If there was concern about people being too associated with one side of an argument, one idea would be to have the two speakers conducting the debate switch positions midway and argue the other point of view. Conference organizers could use a pre-conference participatory process to identify topics where there is disagreement, debate, etc.
Also, a survey respondent mentioned that the scientific program committee should look at the balance in the agenda topics. Some interviewees echoed this sentiment, suggesting that there be a systematic look at all papers on a specific topic, e.g. postpartum family planning, and identify the few strongest ones to include. Finally, there was a concern voiced by some that “the interest in something glitzy takes over the focus on making sure there is strong scientific content — I would cut back on the glitz.” However, over 85% of survey respondents felt the special evening events were worthwhile to extremely worthwhile.

The 2018 ICFP incorporated a number of new approaches to presenting information, and many commented on the creative energy brought by the increased youth involvement. However, some feel there is still room for improvement: “There is a creativity in Women Deliver that is not here — maybe identify someone for creativity,” explained one person. An interviewee suggested, for example, that in order to liven up the plenaries there could be one in a Jeopardy! quiz show-type format.

Finally, some people brought up the issue of follow up. The conference is such a busy and fruitful time, but there is little follow-up afterward. So, is there a way for organizers to help facilitate continued connections?
Addressing 2016 ICFP Feedback

The conference organizers kept the feedback from the 2016 ICFP top-of-mind when planning for the 2018 conference, addressing a number of the recommendations in the 2016 ICFP evaluation, including:

» A shorter Opening Ceremony
» Fewer sessions with more focus/on a wider variety of topics, including sex
» Increase the types of sessions — more creative and interactive
» Make more room for advocacy
» Increase youth involvement
» Discuss failures as well as successes
» Increase translation throughout the conference
» Leave room for independent thinking and debate
» Bring more donors and countries on board
» Pull back amount of time asked of co-organizers
» Keep the conversation going between conferences
Organization & Logistics

There are still concerns about the program being overwhelming and also a certain stagnation around the scientific program. The 2018 ICFP tried some innovative new approaches which many participants liked, but there is also an interest in seeing more provocative debate around family planning issues. Attendees also mentioned a number of logistical challenges. These are important issues to consider in choosing the location for the next ICFP. Some of this feedback is included below:

» Not enough room for everyone to attend the opening ceremony
» Attendees couldn’t get into some sessions they were interested in and questioned how the organizers decide which sessions get the bigger rooms
» Names on the badges should be much larger
» A large number of participants had problems with the mobile app
» Poster corridor was too crowded, problems with supplies for setting up posters and confusion over the scoring process
» Trouble with presentations that had been uploaded not being available at their sessions
» A number of people had issues with hotel bookings
» Having the same lunch for 3 to 4 days was “tiresome” and 31% of respondents in the PMA2020 Survey said they didn’t have enough time to eat lunch.
» Use the mobile app or other means to communicate key messages from each day so attendees receive important information that they may otherwise miss given the large number of sessions
» Strengthen the Youth Mentorship Program with youth and create a elements within the Youth Zone that foster more in-country networking.
» Incorporate the real-time PMA2020 survey again- this served multiple purposes, including providing useful immediate data, sharing knowledge about the PMA2020 methodology, rewarding and building capacity of the data collectors and celebrating achievements.

Conference participants generally spoke very highly of their experience at the 2018 ICFP. Many cited the good energy- “the positive vibes and buzz”- in large part due to the youth presence. A number of respondents felt that the 2018 conference was the best-organized ICFP to date.

» Usefulness of the pre-conference logistics webinars
» Appreciation for the “Welcoming Tent” at the airport
» Encouraging moderators to stick with the schedule of order of presentations being helpful for people who want to go to multiple sessions in the same time period
Recommendations for the Next ICFP

» Hold the next ICFP in 2021 rather than 2020. This will allow time to assess achievements until the end of 2020 and provide a powerful opportunity to commit to a new global goal after 2020.

» Hold the next conference in a more spacious venue that allows everyone to attend the Opening Ceremony together.

» Include more provocative presentations, possibly using debates or other approaches to grapple with challenging questions facing the field.

» Continue using more interactive methods of presentation that were used in Kigali and solicit new ideas to add even more creativity to the next ICFP.

» Add annotation to the program to help attendees identify the cutting-edge sessions that would best meet their needs. This could include adding symbols that highlight new technologies, new service delivery approaches, new research methodologies, etc.

» Introduce the mobile app several weeks before the conference so that people can download and utilize it beforehand.

» Strengthen communications leading into ICFP between session chairs and presenters and mentors and mentees. Send out multiple reminders and ensure all language is very clear regarding the expectations for presenters, session chairs and mentors.

» The use of the webinars this year was helpful at keeping people informed.

» Explore ways to continue the conversation after the conference possibly through the ICFP website, webinars, etc.
Appendix 1: AmplifyChange Winners of Youth PitchFest and FPitchFest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evans Ouma</td>
<td>Stretchers Youth</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Building upon previous work of using youth advocates to campaign for budget allocations for AYSRHR services and improved policies at the county and national levels. This project focuses on building the capacity of adolescent girl's participation in key decision making around policy, advocacy, budgeting, planning and implementation processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ankita Rawat</td>
<td>Beyond Eve</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>To educate adolescents between 10-15 years from the government schools of Uttarakhand and Rajasthan on CSE by creating visual tools using famous cartoon characters that they relate to. This includes short films which would include CSE topics including neglected topics like emotions, relationships, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvain Muzungu Hirwa</td>
<td>Tantine Grouo Ltd</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>SRHR card game developed by medical students and young people to reduce stigma and taboo around youth SRHR for use by youth and parents/teachers, with a focus on to reach hard-to-reach populations like refugee camps. Project aims at creating a reliable teaching material, a source with enough information and concepts on sexuality while remaining funny, interactive and youth friendly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FPitchFest Joint Winners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mariama Abdou Gado</th>
<th>Réseau des Jeunes Ambassadeurs pour la Santé de la Reproduction et la Planification Familiale au Niger</th>
<th>Niger</th>
<th>Youth-led network working to put in place an advocacy strategy to integrate CSE in schools and improving the environment around youth SRHR in Niger. This would be done by integrating and working with young religious leaders as supporters and leaders of this policy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prisca Manyala</td>
<td>Les ailes du cœur</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Menstrual hygiene management (MHM)-focused project on youth advocating for the integration of MHM into politicians' agendas in upcoming elections. The final objective is to have an institutional environment supporting the prioritization of menstrual hygiene management as a major theme of reproductive health as family planning, HIV / AIDS, STIs and fertility are. This may result in the consideration and/or adoption of a bill on menstrual hygiene at the National Assembly. There is a movement building component of bringing together youth-led organisations to be advocates on this issue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>