



**UNFPA Syria**  
**Press Release**  
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## **Symposium to Draft National Health Promotion Strategy Ends Today**

Today the National Health Promotion Strategy Multi-Sector Symposium in Damascus ends with recommendations and a promise for continued cooperation between parties. Conducted by the Ministry of Health with UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO support, the seminar aimed at drafting the National Health Promotion Strategy that encompasses all types of health promotion, from nutrition to seatbelts to healthy pregnancy.

Underlining the cross-cutting nature of the issues, representatives attended from programs related to health promotion in the ministries of Social Affairs and Labour, the Education, Industry, Transport, Information, Culture, Tourism, Agriculture, Economy and Commerce, Religious Affairs, Interior, Local Administration and Environment, and the State Planning Commission. Several NGOs, including the Association to Strengthen Health, the Family Planning Association, and the Anti-Smoking Association, as well as the European Union's Health Sector Development Program.

The first day, August 10<sup>th</sup>, opened with remarks from Dr. Jameel Alaweid, the Deputy Minister of Health, continuing with presentations on health promotion in the Ministry of Health's 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, the main components, approaches and strategies of health promotion in international conferences and in the Middle East. UNICEF and UNFPA presented the national nutrition strategy and the national reproductive health program, respectively. Dr. Abd al-Halim Jukhadar, an international WHO specialist in health promotion led the presentations and moderated discussions throughout the symposium.

On the second day the basics of a health promotion strategy was presented, which included: declarations to define priorities, decision-making, the execution of studies and reviews; strengthening the national capabilities and institutions to execute activities using best practices; building partnership across sectors in order to advance health; and effective partnerships with local communities through initiatives that aim to increase individual and community control over their own health at all levels.

Each day, working groups broke off after presentations and discussions to draft suggestions on sections of the National Health Promotion Strategy, such as priorities, general policy directives for health promotion, and defining inter-sector cooperation in the execution of the National Health Promotion Strategy.

On the final day, there were discussions based on working group discussions, including on priorities, sources of health promotion financing, and integration of roles in coordination. The

draft of the National Health Promotion Strategy is currently being finalized and is expect to be released soon.

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**UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.**

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