A FAREWELL TO ENTRE NOUS

As we now hold the last issue of Entre Nous in our hands, it is fair to say that a formidable era is coming to an end. For more than 30 years, Entre Nous has been the go-to magazine for the sexual and reproductive health community in Europe, central Asia and beyond. It has provided a platform for policy dialogue, advocacy and information-sharing and contributed to strengthening the regional network of policy-makers and experts.

For me personally, Entre Nous has been an extremely valuable companion during my years working on population and sexual and reproductive health and rights issues. I joined UNFPA roughly at the same time as the first edition of Entre Nous went to print. Since then, I have had the privilege to contribute articles myself and I have actively used in my own work the state-of-the-art expertise, good advice and lessons learned published in the magazine. Entre Nous has helped me with doing my work for the women, men and young people we serve and I know this is the case for many of my colleagues at UNFPA and in the broader sexual and reproductive health community.

Over the years, the magazine’s format, focus and content changed. Its outlook broadened. Additional language versions widened the audience. Most recently it underwent a redesign to make it more compatible with social media platforms.

Yet what remained constant was Entre Nous’ ability to take up newly emerging issues and serve as a platform for experts and policy-makers to debate them, at times long before these issues were recognized as priorities by the wider development community. The magazine thus contributed to putting new priorities on the agenda, shaping the policy dialogue and, ultimately, new responses.

For example, back in 2006 Entre Nous No. 63 (see Image 1), titled “Low-fertility – The future of Europe”, drew attention to a demographic trend now on many people’s mind in the Region and Entre Nous No. 77 (2013) broke new ground discussing sexual health in ageing societies (see Image 2). Entre Nous No. 78 (2013) charted the way “From ICPD to post-2015” and helped shape the transition in our Region from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals (see Image 3). Entre Nous No. 84 (2016) provided strong evidence and served as an advocacy platform for the adoption of the European SRH Action Plan by Member States in 2016 (see Image 4). Entre Nous No. 82 (2015), with its focus on the life-course approach, preceded the adoption by the 2015 WHO European Ministerial Conference of the Minsk Declaration on the life-course approach (see Image 5).

Going through Entre Nous’ electronic archive and looking at the topics covered is like a journey through this Region’s trajectory over the past quarter of a century. It tells the story of the many opportunities that have opened up, the new challenges that have emerged for people to realize their rights and what can be done to empower people to fulfill their potential. With its Russian and Spanish language versions, Entre Nous reached audiences that have had very limited access to a variety of ideas and experiences at the international level.

UNFPA, in partnership with WHO, has been a proud supporter of Entre Nous over the years, most recently as part of


the joint UNFPA-WHO Regional Programme with a renewed concept and format, wider coverage and stronger inputs to interagency cooperation at the regional and national levels.

I would like to thank all those who have supported and engaged with *Entre Nous* over the years – as readers and as contributors. We are also grateful to the current and former members of the editorial board and the editors, in particular Gunta Lazdane, the WHO Regional Office for Europe’s Regional Adviser on Sexual and Reproductive Health, who is retiring this year after having championed sexual and reproductive health in our Region, including through *Entre Nous*, for many years.

The new Agenda 2030 brought a new stimulus for tackling the persistent sexual and reproductive health challenges in our Region. While we have made a lot of progress over the past 25 years, much more remains to be done to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and ensuring that no one is left behind. It is therefore of utmost importance that the policy dialogue, debates and information-sharing so far facilitated by *Entre Nous* will continue on other platforms and that we secure *Entre Nous*’ legacy of bringing together the thinkers and doers in a powerful sexual reproductive health community equipped to bring about the change we need for the people we serve.

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