



# MARCHING FORWARD IN ACTION

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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The contributions of the following are gratefully acknowledged

**Editor-in-Chief:**

Dr. Ademola Olajide, UNFPA Representative, Kenya

**Deputy Editor-in-Chief:**

Dr. Ezizgeldi Hellenov, Deputy Representative

**Writing & Editorial Team**

Zipporah Gathiti, John Wafula, Irene Wangui: Editors

Ezekiel Ngure, Dr. Rael Mutai, Stine Vest Nielsen, Satsuki Arai, Kigen Korir,  
Lillian Langat, Caroline Murgor, Dr. Dan Okoro, Charity Koronya, Faith Osore, Jackson Kilonzo,  
Asenath Mwithigah, Dinah Mutinda

**Photography:**

Luis Tato, Mukiza Mwenesi, Irene Wangui

**Design & Layout:**

Mukiza Mwenesi

**Operational Support:**

Ira Oversen, Agnes Ngechu, Nick Kariuki, Benjamin Akwah, Anna Cherutich, Leonard Kangogo,  
Daniel Muania, John Gitahi, Sammy Kinyua, Calen Miyaki, Dorcas Muthengi, George Kabare,  
Mwongeli Muthuku

## FOREWORD

The year 2020 began on a high note for us, bolstered by the hope and promise of the commitments made at the ICPD25 Nairobi Summit in November 2019. The Seventeen Commitments made by Kenya crystallized our focus towards achieving transformative results for women and girls, and other vulnerable constituents of the Kenyan population, as we embarked on collaboration and synergy with the national and county governments, and other partners to ensure their full implementation. 2020 was also the year that ushered in the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

Unexpectedly, the Covid-19 pandemic hit across the globe triggering a ripple effect that intensified the root causes of inequality in society. The development architecture was upended, and the momentum towards sterling milestones stalled and pushed to the precipice of irredeemable loss. Provision of essential services suffered near rock bottom declines due to the stringency of pandemic containment measures, an overstretched health workforce that lacked requisite equipment and protective gear, disruption in supply chains, and compromised community capacities and attitudes for service uptake. All of this affected the gains that had already been attained in human health and social development.

We have documented and interrogated drastic shifts in vulnerabilities during the Covid-19 pandemic. The surge in protection risks especially for women and girls even in supposedly secure home environments is a wake-up call for watertight vigilance and strategic responses to the pervasiveness of gender based violence in all its forms, including female genital mutilation and child marriage. The Covid-19 pandemic has affirmed our enduring concern for the youth, the ageing and elderly, and persons with disabilities as population categories that face amplified challenges in emergencies.

The pandemic did not diminish our resolve, [www.kenya.unfpa.org](http://www.kenya.unfpa.org)



but rather propelled us to embrace innovative approaches to delivering on the ICPD agenda. We leveraged new and strategic partnerships to retool and expand our capacities, making sure we reach the furthest behind. We partnered with government ministries, development agencies, civil society, the private sector, as well as religious groups in the fight to end preventable maternal deaths, the unmet need for family planning, and gender-based violence and harmful practices. We are conscientious in our plans and passionate in our actions to protect human dignity and renew hope after the worst health, economic and social catastrophe ever experienced any human alive today.

We are emboldened and exude legitimate pride for what we collectively attained in 2020. Our singular commitment is to the Government and people of Kenya to promote holistic realization of the transformative aspirations spelt out in the Kenya Vision 2030 blue print, the Big 4 Agenda, and the ICPD25 Commitments. The lessons learnt, the phenomenal triumph of our partnership, and the undying glow of our common dreams are precious pillars of the future we seek to co-create. We survived the worst in 2020; we can only achieve the best in 2021. Today, let our commitments translate into action as we build forward better!

**Dr. Ademola Olajide,**  
UNFPA Representative

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# Part One: COVID19 Response



*Photo: Prof. Margaret Kobia Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of public service and gender hands over relief materials donated by UNFPA and other partners to the county government of Meru.*



## KEY RESULTS

Distribution of

**40,000**

PPE kits to health workers for continuity of essential services

**1,588**

healthcare workers oriented / trained on COVID-19 and continuity of RMNCAH services

Distribution of

**1,210**

mama kits to maternal & child health facilities in Nairobi County



**14,000**

dignity kits distributed to women, girls and families experiencing increased vulnerability due to the pandemic.

**5,000+**

Survivors of gender-based violence received counselling and referral services through UNFPA supported programmes.

Kenya, like the rest of the world was hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, with women and girls bearing a disproportionate impact of the disease. The first Covid-19 positive case was reported on 13th March 2020, with a total of 96,458 positive cases and 1,670 deaths reported throughout 2020. UNFPA assisted the government of Kenya in launching a sustained response to the pandemic through technical assistance to various ministries. We deployed gender specialists to the Ministry of Public Service and Gender who played an integral role in developing the National Covid-19 Gender Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation Response Plan.

A team of sexual and reproductive health specialists and communications officers were deployed to the Ministry of Health for further technical assistance to the government on the provision of essential services, as well as public outreach and sensitization during the pandemic.

UNFPA provided financial and technical support to the health ministry in the development and roll-out of the National Covid-19 Reproductive, Maternal and Neonatal Health (RMNH) guidelines, and the country's home based care programme. The guidelines included service delivery protocols on clinical management of rape in response to the increased risk of sexual and gender based violence. The technical specialists were instrumental in ensuring a focus on reproductive, maternal, and neonatal health services even as

health facilities prepared to deal with a surge in Covid-19 patients. UNFPA worked with county health departments to build staff capacity on these guidelines for improved service delivery. A total of 1,200 community health workers were trained on the integration of sexual and reproductive health services into home-based care for Covid-19 cases.

As is normally experienced in a crisis, the risk of sexual and gender based violence and incidences of such violence against women and girls spiked during the pandemic. UNFPA provided both material and psychosocial support to at risk women and girls as well as survivors of GBV through the supply of dignity kits and beddings to seven rescue centres in Nairobi, Mombasa, Machakos, Kajiado, Narok, Nakuru, and Kiambu counties. 13,058 dignity kits; 1,000 family kits; 1,000 Covid-19 kits and 1,210 mama kits were distributed to households and in county health facilities, to reach the most vulnerable and in need. Among the beneficiaries of dignity kits were 300 women and girls living with disabilities, 600 refugee women and girls, 350 elderly women in refugee camps who received dignity items that included adult diapers.

By the year's end, UNFPA was able to reach more than 13,000 survivors of sexual violence with psychosocial support services provided through funding to the Kenya Red Cross Society..



As part of the crisis response, a significant need for personal protective equipment (PPEs) by frontline health workers was identified. UNFPA procured and distributed over 40,000 assorted PPEs through the Kenya Red Cross Society, to the benefit of health workers in 16 counties. Community health workers in Kakuma and Kalobeyei refugee camps were also issued with PPEs. UNFPA also targeted 500 sex workers along the trucking corridor from Mombasa to Nairobi who received sanitisers and masks, as well as sensitization on how to safeguard against the spread of Covid-19. In Kilifi county, 200 community health volunteers (CHVs) were trained on behaviour change communication as it pertains to Covid-19. The CHVs were instrumental in spreading awareness among more than 20,000 community members on the pre-

vention of Covid-19. This enhanced adherence to Covid-19 infection prevention and control measures among community members and strengthened uptake of sexual and reproductive health services.





## Toll-free helpline offers a saving grace during pandemic lockdown

At the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020 in Kenya, an increase in incidences of gender-based violence revealed a ‘shadow pandemic’ occurring behind closed doors. Health Assistance Kenya (HAK) 1195, a national GBV hotline supported by UNFPA reported a drastic upsurge in the number of calls received. From 100 calls received in January 2020, the number had risen to 785 by June 2020, an increase of nearly 600%. Left without the ability to travel for an escape to safety, and with the closure of schools, rescue shelters and other safe spaces, survivors of gender-based violence turned to their mobile phones for crisis support during the pandemic.



# 6,297

**calls were made to the helpline between March-December 2020, by GBV survivors and at risk women and girls.**

The helpline was on hand to offer psychosocial first aid services to survivors, linking them to additional services such as nearby facilities that provide medical treatment, local police, as well as legal aid and rescue shelters. HAK responders also offer confidential tele-counselling and referral services for additional psychosocial support.

In 2020, UNFPA supported HAK 1195 in upgrading the hotline’s data collection and management system and providing technical support for data analysis. This assistance was instrumental in tracking the prevalence of GBV during the pandemic. The data generated also provided evidence based insights that informed GBV response and programming by the government and other stakeholders.

# Part Two:

## Innovating to end the unmet need for family planning

UNFPA supports the government of Kenya in the delivery of quality family planning services especially for women living with HIV, persons with disabilities, people living in humanitarian settings, and young people across the country. Much is involved in making the full range of quality contraceptives and services consistently accessible for women, enabling them to make their own decisions about whether, when or how often to become pregnant. Community mobilization efforts throughout the year have been geared towards stimulating increased demand for family planning information and services.

During the year, significant progress was also made in the strengthening of supply chain management systems to ensure delivery of family planning commodities down to the last mile.



## Mobile App Qualipharm helps avert stock-outs

For the longest time, the end of month reporting period had proved to be a nightmare for pharmacist Pascalia Ghati. As the commodity manager at Kuria West sub-county hospital in western Kenya, she would wait patiently as pharmacists and health officers from remote facilities within the sub-county made the long journey to manually submit paperwork with facility consumption reports, including family planning commodity data. “After receiving these reports, I would begin the process of entering this data manually into the Kenya Health Information System (KHIS) The amount of paperwork involved was quite tedious and cumbersome,” she says.

In Isiolo county, northern Kenya, Maurice Wario would have to travel 300 Kilometres every month from his work station at Dadacha Basa dispensary to reach Isiolo Referral Hospital, in order to submit commodity status reports. The journey would take him up to three days, and cost 5,000 shillings (\$50) for transport and accommodation. With the manual reporting systems, delays would often prove inevitable, which would in turn interfere with stock planning and ordering of family planning commodities.

In 2019, UNFPA in partnership with HealthStrat, began the roll-out of Qualipharm, a mobile-based digital reporting tool that tracks consumption of family planning commodities at a county and sub-county level. The app is loaded onto tablets distributed to pharmacy staff at public health facilities, who use it to electronically key in commodity numbers after taking stock at the end of each day. QualiPharm has an in-built data validation rule and a multilevel review and approval process which gives alerts for overstocking, wrong entries and irrational orders, minimizing errors in the process. The app can run on any android platform device making it easily accessible for download on mobile phones.

So far, Qualipharm has been introduced in 573 healthcare facilities in six counties including

*“After receiving these reports, I would begin the process of entering this data manually into the Kenya Health Information System (KHIS) The amount of paperwork involved was quite tedious and cumbersome,” she says*

Homa Bay, Migori, Kilifi, Isiolo, Marsabit and Nairobi. The impact of the innovation is already being felt, not only by health workers whose work has been made easier, but also by the citizen beneficiaries of family planning. Isiolo County resident Rachel Gisoyo confirms that unlike before, she is able to access her preferred contraceptive method at any health facility in her village, unlike before where stock-outs of the five-year family planning method would force her to go for pills with a 3 month effectiveness period.

Through QualiPharm, the amount and quality of data going into the Kenya Health Information System (KHIS) such as quantities received, quantities consumed and ending balances of each product at the sub-county level has increased. The data is then used to come up with rational orders, thus averting stock outs. This ensures uninterrupted supply of family planning commodities, ensuring that quantities ordered reflect actual needs, hence reducing wastage of resources, while averting stock outs and loss through expiries.

## Last Mile Assurance: Learning best practice from the Coca-Cola supply chain

In 2018, UNFPA launched “Last Mile Kenya,” a program implemented through a public-private partnership (PPP) between the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (KEMSA) and Coca-Cola Beverage Africa. The partnership sought to enhance delivery of family planning and maternal health commodities to all parts of the country including difficult to reach and humanitarian contexts. With a presence in almost every country in the world, Coca-Cola’s supply chain management system is an established and seamless operation with much to be admired. Through the program, Coca-Cola worked with KEMSA to share knowledge and build the capacity of the authority’s staff on supply chain management for more effective distribution of commodities across the country.

The sharing of best practices has resulted in a more optimized supply chain through the adoption of applicable practices by KEMSA. A new web based warehouse management system that links to KEMSA’s Logistics Management Information System (LMIS) and the country’s health information system (DHIS) has led to improved efficiency by enabling greater stock visibility at regional warehouses. Using Coca-Cola’s method of supply chain management, KEMSA decentralized depots in Mombasa and Kisumu and adopted depot automation, paving way for the operationalization of regional distribution centers. These regional centers are closer to the surrounding counties than the central warehouse in Nairobi, thus moving commodities closer to health facilities, and reducing distance and delivery time.

Borrowing from Coca-Cola’s approach, KEMSA has further been able to implement an automated communication system which has contributed to improved acknowledgement of deliveries by health facilities through the adoption of electronic proof of deliveries. KEMSA also adopted Coca-Cola’s practice of last mile commodity monitoring by developing a similar tool which is currently being used to conduct post-distribution monitoring in selected counties. The tool has already provided valuable insights in identifying areas of improvement in strengthening



# Part Three:

## Zero preventable maternal deaths

Kenya has made significant progress over the years towards safe pregnancy and childbirth as indicated in the steady decline of the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) from 432 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2010 to the current MMR of 342 deaths per 100,000 live births (WHO, 2017). Eliminating preventable maternal deaths requires strong health systems, able to provide quality maternal and newborn care to the population when required. It is a priority of UNFPA's programmes undertaken through various programmes implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Health, AMREF, ICRH(K), the Beyond Zero Initiative, among other partners.

Our work in 2020 focused on improving the quality of service through training of midwives on obstetric ultrasonography and mobile obstetric monitoring to improve pregnancy outcomes and prevent complications. Across counties with poor maternal and newborn health indicators, UNFPA supported the training and mentorship of health personnel in emergency obstetric and newborn care (EmONC) and maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response (MPDSR).



## KEY RESULTS



1,325 expectant mothers facilitated to reach health facilities during lockdown, under Wheels for Life initiative."

4,318

maternal deaths averted due to family planning commodities procured



Developed RMNCAH guideline for health care workers to maintain continuity of services during COVID19 pandemic



2,000

women with disabilities reached via mobile-based services with information on sexual and reproductive health, family planning and gender-based violence.

441,285

new acceptors of modern contraceptives in 12 Counties.

337,462

adolescents and youth reached with integrated sexual and reproductive health information.

128

health facilities in 12 counties equipped to provide high quality adolescent and youth friendly services.

12,000

adolescent girls from Kibera informal settlements equipped with life skills and information to help them make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.



A hand book for sensitizing adolescents, parents/caregivers and leaders in the community was developed in partnership with ministry of health

9400

Adolescent girls and parents from Kibera Informal settlements were sensitized on prevention COVID 19 and associated SRHR risks through community radio.



*Photo: Midwives perform an ultrasound screening using a portable device at a health facility in Kenya.*

## **Joint Programme on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH)**

The \$21 Million Joint Programme on RMNCAH jointly implemented by the Government of Kenya and UN H6 partners (UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UN Women, and the World Bank), supported the reduction of preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths in the country's highest burdened regions for maternal and infant mortality including Isiolo, Lamu, Mandera, Marsabit, Migori and Wajir. The programme was implemented during the period July 2015 to December 2020 with an overall goal of increasing utilization of integrated, quality reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health, HIV, and gender-based violence (GBV) services.

The end term evaluation of the programme showed significant results towards improved access to and utilization of quality integrated services, capacity building of healthcare workers, as well as the strengthening of referral systems in the target counties. From 2015-20, the number of women who utilised antenatal care services increased by over 32%, while access to skilled attendance at birth also increased by 30% as a result of sustained community-based advocacy, improved infrastructure and the provision of health equipment, by the UN H6 Joint Programme. At the policy level, the programme successfully held advocacy campaigns that resulted in counties increasing their domestic budget allocation to the health sector and the county integration of SRH and GBV in their policies, programmes, and plans.

Are you in a pregnancy-related emergency?



Call **1196** free  
and talk to a doctor.

**Wheels  
for  
Life**



## Wheels for Life Initiative

The disruption of services and deepening inequalities brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic posed a disproportionate risk to the overall health and well-being of women and girls everywhere. In Kenya, the dawn to dusk curfew imposed by the government to limit the transmission of COVID-19 at the onset of the pandemic restricted women from accessing emergency maternal health services during curfew hours. Over 1.6 million births occur in the country annually, with about 10% developing complications that require referral for specialised care. In a lockdown situation, women are forced to give birth at home without access to skilled birth attendance. This situation severely increases the risk of obstructed labour, severe bleeding during labor or other critical complications that can put the women's and the child's life at risk.

In response to the unfolding crisis, UNFPA partnered with the Kenya Healthcare Federation (KHF), AMREF Kenya, ride-hailing company Bolt, emergency response network Rescue.co, and other private sector partners to launch the Wheels for Life initiative. Wheels for Life provided assistance to women with pregnancy-related emergencies occurring during curfew hours by providing a toll-free helpline connecting them to a doctor, and if necessary, free emergency transport to a hospital or maternity clinic. Transport is provided through an ambulance dispatched by Rescue.co or a taxi provided by Bolt's team of dedicated riders who are equipped with special passes that allow them to operate during curfew hours.

In 2020, the Wheels for Life initiative received 54,518 calls and dispatched 732 cabs and 593 emergency ambulances to expectant mothers in need. An additional 3,054 mothers received assistance from doctors via the toll-free line. The additional telemedicine component was valuable in educating pregnant women on their health and wellbeing at the comfort of their home, as preliminary reports showed that many were missing their antenatal check-ups due to a fear of contracting the Covid-19 virus at health facilities or during travel using public means. The wheels for life initiative continues to be operational in six counties including Nairobi, Kiambu, Uasin Gishu, Machakos, Nyeri, and Nakuru

## Restoring dignity through Fistula Surgery

On May 23rd 2020, the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula, mother of three Evelyne Shani woke up at the Narok County referral hospital with a feeling of elation and hope for her future. After two years of suffering from obstetric fistula, Evelyne had undergone repair surgery the day before, and the operation had gone well. With her husband Wilson Shani by her bedside, the recovering mother told of how she developed fistula complications. “My first and second deliveries went well, but after my third child was born, I started experiencing difficult symptoms. I was unable to hold my urine, and persevered with the issue for a long time before finally getting the courage to seek help,” she says.

Dr. Otulo Francis, an obstetric gynecologist and fistula surgeon at the Narok referral hospital says the hospital performs an average of eight surgeries per month. “We started performing restorative fistula surgeries in this facility just eight months ago, and many women have come forward to receive help,” he says. In order to prevent the condition, WHO recommends cessation of harmful traditional practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), delaying of the age of first pregnancy, and timely access to obstetric care

**In 2020, 46 obstetric fistula repairs were conducted with support from UNFPA in collaboration with the Beyond Zero Medical Safari, held at the Mama Lucy Hospital, Nairobi.**

To address the stigma faced by fistula survivors, UNFPA has trained a community of survivors known as “Ambassadors of Hope,” who sensitize and mobilize communities within the 12 priority counties to identify those suffering from fistula. UNFPA further facilitated the training of service providers in prevention and management of obstetric fistula. According to UNFPA Kenya Country Representative Dr. Ademola Olajide, expansion in human resource capacity, and provision of quality data are integral to achieving comprehensive results in fistula treatment. “There is an increased number of fistula surgeons from the initial three surgeons in Kenya 10 years ago to the current 10 specialized fistula surgeons. The number of nurses, midwives and anaesthetists who provide supportive care during treatment has also grown impressively over the last decade,” says Dr. Olajide.



*Photo: The First Lady of Kenya, Her Excellency Margaret Kenyatta presents dignity kits to a Fistula surgery patient during the Beyond Zero Medical Safari supported by UNFPA.*

# Part Four:

## Zero GBV and harmful practices against women and girls

Marching towards zero gender based violence and harmful practices is an undertaking that requires unity in action at all levels of society and government. Despite gains made, women and girls in Kenya remain vulnerable to various forms of sexual and gender-based violence, including Child, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and femicide. 45% of Kenyan women and girls aged 15-49 have been affected by gender based violence, while 1 in 5 women have suffered from female genital mutilation. 23% of the nation's girls are married before their eighteenth birthday, 4% are married before their fifteenth birthday.

UNFPA works closely with the national and county governments to strengthen prevention and response programmes aimed at ending gender based violence and harmful practices. In 2019, President Kenyatta made the bold and important pledge to eliminate FGM in Kenya by 2022, eight years ahead of the global target of 2030. This will require not only accelerated political intervention but also a shift in socio-cultural norms and behaviours that propel FGM amongst communities.



## KEY RESULTS



**22**

Anti-FGM steering committees established in various counties

**101**



Religious leaders trained to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, FGM, and child marriage.



**48**

safe spaces for women, youth and adolescents supported by UNFPA

**60,000+**

people engaged through community sensitization forums and dialogues on ending FGM.



**5,000+**

Survivors of gender-based violence received counselling and referral services through UNFPA supported programmes.

## Accelerating the delivery of ICPD25 commitments through women empowerment



*Photo: Maendeleo Ya Wanawake members celebrate during the 2020 annual general meeting.*

President Uhuru Kenyatta was the chief guest at the recently held MYWO annual general meeting, where UNFPA partnered with the organization to sensitize over 760 delegates on the 17 commitments made by Kenya during the ICPD+25 Nairobi Summit last year. “I am happy to note that Maendeleo Ya Wanawake is working in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the First Lady’s Beyond Zero initiative on matters of maternal healthcare at the grassroots level. huge boost for our Big Four Pillar of Universal Health Coverage (UHC),” said President Kenyatta.

President Kenyatta lauded Maendeleo Ya Wanawake as pioneers in the fight against Female Genital Mutilation, being the first organization to roll-out alternative rites of passage that protected girls from FGM. “Your efforts as an organization and other like-minded organizations, made it easier

for the Government of Kenya to enact the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act (2007) and established the Anti-FGM Board,” added President Kenyatta.

The women of MYWO remain critical partners in advocating for the delivery of Kenya’s ICPD25 commitments, particularly on the elimination of FGM by 2022, the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence, and the elimination of preventable maternal and newborn mortality. UNFPA Kenya representative Dr Ademola Olajide called on the women of MYWO to work towards changing the national narrative around gender equality and in particular, the attitudes and values of men and boys in regards to the respect of the rights of women and girls. “As we strive to build back better and move towards the ICPD25 commitments, the programs that the government has put in place

and the empowerment initiatives of the MYWO will be catalyzed when we are able to create a core group of boys and men who perceive women and girls as equal partners in society and equal partners in nation building,” said Dr Olajide.

Delegates congregated at various Kenya School of Government campuses in Nairobi, Baringo, Mombasa and Embu joined a virtual plenary session on the ICPD25 commitments, led by UNFPA Gender advisor Caroline Murgor. The session featured an in-depth look at the 17 Kenya ICPD25 commitments and the role of women in advocating for the mainstreaming of the commitments at the county level. “Maendeleo Ya Wanawake has an established network at the grassroots level that can form strong surveillance systems to protect women and girls in communities across the country from FGM,” said Murgor.

With a better understating of the country’s ICPD25 commitments, the women return to their constituencies as active champions and agents of change in advocating for better health and development outcomes for women and girls in Kenya.



*Photo: Maendeleo Ya Wanawake members during the 2020 annual general meeting at the Kenya School of Government*



*Photo: His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Public Service and Gender Affairs Prof. Margaret Kobia, and UNFPA Representative Ademola Olajide at the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake general meeting.*

## Strengthening accountability and response mechanisms to end FGM, GBV, and Child Marriage

In 2020, significant progress was made about the contributions made towards enhancing the policy and legal frameworks to prevent and respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Kenya. At the National level, the costed Presidential acceleration action plan to end FGM was developed with financial and technical support from UNFPA. The national plan is reinforced by county action plans developed for the 22 counties identified as FGM hotspots.

With financial and technical support from UNFPA, the Ministry of Public Service and Gender, and the Anti-FGM board visited twenty FGM hotspot Counties to gather support for the Presidential acceleration plan on ending FGM. At the community level, 75 inter-generational dialogues were conducted on ending gender-based violence and harmful practices. 1,625 people, including 855 youth participated in the conversations. Through the provision of legal aid clinics, 329 women were provided with legal and psychosocial support in Mombasa, Kilifi, and Nairobi counties. 240 women received legal aid, while 39 received training on self representation. A further 50 benefited from group therapy and individual counselling sessions provided with the support of UNFPA.

UNFPA supported the development of a training curriculum of judicial officers on prevention and response to GBV and FGM as well as an e-course for the National Police service which will be used to train police officers on response procedures to GBV and FGM cases. Two community-based teacher lobby groups and a social media platform were established to identify FGM, child marriage and teenage pregnancy cases. The lobby groups supported 332 girls through mentorship and psychosocial support provided by youth and community health volunteers trained on first-aid provision.



*Photo: Women in West Pokot, Alale during the elders commitment to end FGM*

## Empowering women in Kibera informal settlement through integrated GBV & Family planning response



*Photo: FPRJC's leader and feminist activist Editar Achieng and other women discuss about Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) during a women meeting at Kibera slums in Nairobi, Kenya on December 11, 2020.*

At the heart of Kenya's largest informal settlement, Kibera, more than 30 women congregate in a four roomed house that serves as the headquarters of the Feminists for Peace, Rights and Justice Center (FPRJC). The women are here to attend a legal aid camp organized by the center to help victims of gender based violence access justice. The center's founder is Editar Achieng, who has rallied other women in the community in taking a stand against the high rates of sexual and gender based violence in the community. A survivor of GBV herself, Editar established the center to act as a safe space for women and girls in Kibera, who face a heightened vulnerability due to their social and economic circumstances.

The center reaches nearly 600 women in Kibera with various services, including monthly support group meetings for survivors of gender based violence, training on income generating activities such as soap making, legal aid, and the distribution of contraceptives. FPRJC also operates a shelter for women and girls who have suffered gender-based violence, offering emergency accommodation within its premises for 48 hours. "In a night, we can shelter upto 14 women and girls, but due to the limited space, we are only able to

offer first response before referring the survivors to larger shelters for long term help," says Ochieng.

In 2020, UNFPA entered into a new partnership with FPRJC to provide technical and financial support in the provision of GBV response services, including the refurbishment of the rescue shelter as well as support for the center's legal aid and economic empowerment activities. Through a \$10,000 grant provided by Japanese company Meiji Holdings Co., Ltd, UNFPA will work with the center to enroll 200 women and girls in a training program that will equip them with income generating skills.

**The Feminists for Peace, Rights and Justice Center center reaches nearly 600 women in Kibera with various services, including monthly support group meetings for survivors of gender based violence, training on income generating activities**

According to Ochieng, poverty and a lack of awareness on bodily autonomy has led to many women and girls relinquishing their basic rights to their male partners and guardians, including their sexual and reproductive health rights. “When a woman’s reproductive health is stuck, her life is also stuck. Access to contraceptives is one of the most crucial empowerment tools that women in Kibera need to improve their lives, but often this is not available,” notes Ochieng.

Eunice Akinyi is a beneficiary of the center’s services who regularly attends self-help forums organized by FPRJC. As a survivor of gender based violence, the centre has been a lifeline in providing her with the information and psychosocial support needed to rebuild her life. “One of the main causes of domestic violence in the home is when as women we disagree with our husbands on matters of sex and family planning,” says Eunice. Fellow beneficiary Emily Rajab agrees, saying that for many women in

Kibera, dealing with unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases can often lead to violence from their intimate partners. “We have had cases of women being violently beaten after confronting their partners who have infected them with a disease. If a woman gets pregnant and her partner does not want to deal with it, this can also result in physical abuse,” explains Rajab.

Community health volunteers from FPRJC regularly conduct door to door visits distributing contraceptives such as male and female condoms, as well as pill refills to vulnerable women living in Kibera. The volunteers also give health talks and encourage victims of sexual and gender based violence to seek medical attention if required.



*Photo: A feminist activist from FRPJC Center delivers condoms to a group of women during a women meeting at Kibera slums in Nairobi, Kenya on December 11, 2020.*



*Photo: Pokot elders at a community forum on ending FGM. UNFPA/Mukiza Mwenesi*

## **Supporting elders and religious leaders to cascade national level commitments on ending FGM**

For a long time, men voicing their opposition to the practice of female genital mutilation was seen as interfering in women's affairs. However, a recent shift in male attitudes brought about by a greater understanding of the impact of the cut on women and girls has led to increased participation by men in the fight against FGM. Where once considered a prerequisite for marriage in some cultures, young men are finding the courage to speak out publicly and state their willingness and preference to marry girls who have not undergone FGM.

Key in leading the change in cultural and social norms that drive FGM have been male elders, who are considered authorities in the community. In West Pokot County, the Pokot Council of Elders have been instrumental in conducting advocacy campaigns against FGM. At a recent community gathering held in Tamugh area of West Pokot, the elders gathered the community for a sensitization meeting to campaign against the practice. "We encourage the community to educate young girls, and also speak against child marriage and domestic violence," says elder Joseph Lopetokori. According to Lopetokori, efforts by the council of elders are bearing fruit, as evidenced by the decrease in cases of FGM in the county. "As elders, we have the power to give orders in the community, and our word against FGM is taken seriously. We have largely been able to traverse the West Pokot lowlands where cases of FGM are on the decline, but in highland areas such as Lomut and Masol wards, we have more work to do," he noted.

The engagement of elders in the fight against FGM has been a key focus of UNFPA's community outreach and advocacy efforts. UNFPA worked with elders and religious leaders over the course of the year to cascade national level commitments on ending FGM. The elders have led community dialogue, convened education sessions and issued statements and public declarations renouncing FGM. Among such declarations is one made by the the Borana Council of Elders at the 41st Gummi Gayo (community elders) assembly that declared FGM as an outlawed and forbidden practice within the community. The declaration also outlawed rape, child, and early marriage, and called for the equal access to education for both boys and girls.



## Community based surveillance to protect women and girls from harmful practices

A text message notification flashes across the screen on George Ndungu's mobile phone. "Six girls from Kacheptiol and Kachemwotin were rescued from the cut this morning at around 4.00 a.m. at Kabetwo, a few kilometers from Chesongoch. Thanks to surveillance groups for information. Mr. Rotuk, ACC Tot"

Ndung'u is the Gender and Development Specialist at World Vision Kenya, coordinating the organization's anti-FGM efforts in 22 hotspot counties. A few days earlier, he had received a similar message from a local chief who is part of a community surveillance team set up to monitor incidents of FGM in his locality:

"Marakwet east FGM incident: One adult woman in Endo ward underwent the cut with the aid of her sister. Through the youth and women surveillance team both have been arrested and in police custody at Tot police station. Boys are undergoing circumcision in Area of Kapkopil, kabetwa, koibirir and mokoro locations. The surveillance teams are vigilant on any case of FGM being cover up of the boys."

The COVID-19 pandemic has led UNFPA and partners like World Vision to innovate around the fight against FGM. Strict measures introduced by the government such as the closure of schools and temporary girls' rescue centers has meant that more young girls are left at risk of undergoing the cut in the secrecy and isolation accorded by curfew and movement restrictions. The limiting of public gatherings has also curtailed community sensitization efforts on ending FGM. "We realized that we had to quickly shift our approach to focus more on enhancing the capacity of individuals to act as protection agents in watching out for girls at high risk of FGM," says Ndung'u.

In Elgeyo Marakwet County, UNFPA supported World Vision in piloting a community based surveillance framework, where local administrators, community leaders, anti-FGM champions and youth are trained to work within the community to detect and report suspected cases of FGM and gender based violence (GBV). So far, the surveillance team in the pilot program has conducted a mapping of 450 girls in the Chesong and Aror areas of Elgeyo Marakwet County. Of the 450, 26% had already undergone the cut, while 74% had not yet been cut. Among the uncut, the surveillance team believed 64% to be at high risk of undergoing FGM. This information will guide the follow up mechanisms deployed to ensure that the girls do not suffer FGM.



*Photo: A youth-led community dialogue on ending FGM, supported by UNFPA.*

# Part Five:

## Harnessing the youth dividend





*Photo: UNFPA Representative, Dr. Ademola Olajide, Chief Administrative Secretary Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs, Nadia Abdalla join the youth in commemorating the launch of the Kenya Ni Mimi Upper Eastern Region chapter.*

Youth make up 75.1% of Kenya’s population, firmly placing them at the forefront of UNFPA’s work as a critical group whose inclusion is key to achieving the three transformative goals. The 2019 census shows that adolescents (10-19 years) stand at 11, 809,518, ( 24.5% ) of the total population, while the youth (18-34 years) constitute 13,777,600 (29 %) of the total population. Through various programmes, great progress was achieved in creating an enabling policy environment for Adolescent and Youth Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (AYSRHR).

A key initiative that was undertaken in 2020 was the launch of the #KenyaNiMimi youth engagement and advocacy campaign in partnership with the Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs. The nationwide initiative was commissioned by President Uhuru Kenyatta, as a vehicle to drive [www.kenya.unfpa.org](http://www.kenya.unfpa.org)

youth participation in social, economic, and leadership processes in the country. Coming a year after the ICPD25 conference that was hosted by the government of Kenya under the leadership of His Excellency the President, the launch of the #KenyaNiMimi youth campaign adds momentum to the realization of commitments made by the country to the youth. They include the commitment to harness the demographic dividend through investments in health and wellbeing, education and skills training and empowerment of young people by 2022; the commitment to end FGM by 2022, and the commitment to end teenage pregnancies, new HIV infections, child marriages and Gender Based Violence (GBV) by 2030.

# Highlights of Youth events in 2020



February

## Youth Caravan to end FGM:

On 3rd of February 2020, UNFPA organized a six day youth caravan traversing Samburu, Isiolo, Meru and Embu counties, to raise awareness on the need to end FGM in Kenya by 2022, in line with President Uhuru Kenyatta's commitment to accelerate the elimination of the practice. The caravan was organized in partnership with the national Anti-FGM Board, the UNFPA Youth Advisory Panel and the Youth Anti-FGM Network. Youth representatives from the 22 hotspot counties with high prevalence of FGM took part in the caravan festivities as part of activities to mark the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation observed on 6th February.

March

## National Dialogue and Launch of the "Let's Act" to end Teenage Pregnancy Campaign

UNFPA in partnership with the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD), UNESCO and select CSOs convened a national multi-sectoral dialogue on teenage pregnancy that culminated in the launch of a national campaign dubbed "Let's Act" to end teenage pregnancy.





April

July

**Twitter Chat on Youth voices amidst the COVID-19 pandemic:**

On 30th April 2020, UNFPA organised a one hour twitter chat aimed at providing young people, policy makers and stakeholders working in the youth space an opportunity to deliberate on the Impact of COVID-19 on Kenyan youth. The chat explored ways of leveraging technology and social media to bridge the gap in provision of COVID19, SRHR and mental health information and services to the youth.

**Youth led conversations on emerging SRHR challenges during COVID19**

The UNFPA Youth Advisory Panel convened live virtual sessions with young people across the country on topical SRHR issues such as teenage pregnancy, GBV and FGM that were emerging during the COVID19 pandemic period. A total of 71,418 young people were engaged.





July

August

**Fursa Vs Virus Challenge:**

UNFPA partnered with the National Youth Council and Nailab to tailor a mentorship programme for 47 innovative youth across the country to develop innovative ideas aimed at dealing with the challenges brought about by the COVID19 pandemic. in an initiative dubbed “Fursa Vs Virus” Opportunity vs virus



**Top 35 under 35 Award**

UNFPA took part in events to celebrate Youth Week which was marked from 6th – 11 August 2020. In an initiative spearheaded by Youth Agenda in collaboration with the State Department for Youth Affairs, UNFPA recognized youth excellence by awarding 35 outstanding Kenyan youth in the “Top35 Under 35” for their accomplishments in the areas of youth engagement in leadership and governance, gender development and advocacy, as well as youth economic empowerment.



August

September

### International Youth Day

On 12th August 2020, Joe Mucheru EGH, the Cabinet Secretary in the Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth, launched the Kenya Youth Development Policy on the International Youth Day celebrated. The policy provides a framework for holistic empowerment of the youth and their meaningful engagement in national development processes.



### Teen Moms of Kibera

UNFPA partnered with 15 year old Cheryl Chebet in the making of a documentary feature on teenage pregnancy in Nairobi's Kibera Informal Settlement. The documentary explored the social challenges faced by adolescent girls in the slum, launching a conversation on how they correlate to the existing high teenage pregnancy rates. It was aired on national media outlet Citizen TV, reaching an audience of over four million.



October

October

**World Mental Health Day**

UNFPA reached 300 youth with information on safeguarding their mental health and well-being.

**International Day of the Girl Child**

200 youth were engaged in capacity building activities around sexual and reproductive health and rights, and opportunities for economic empowerment.





October

### Launch of the Female chapter of the boda boda sector

UNFPA supported the launch of the Women Chapter of the Boda Boda Safety Association of Kenya, an association of riders providing transport services to individuals in different parts of the country, with a view to sustain the momentum created towards ending teenage pregnancy and harmful cultural practices such as FGM and child marriages in the country. The launch was officiated by CS Public Service and Gender.

December

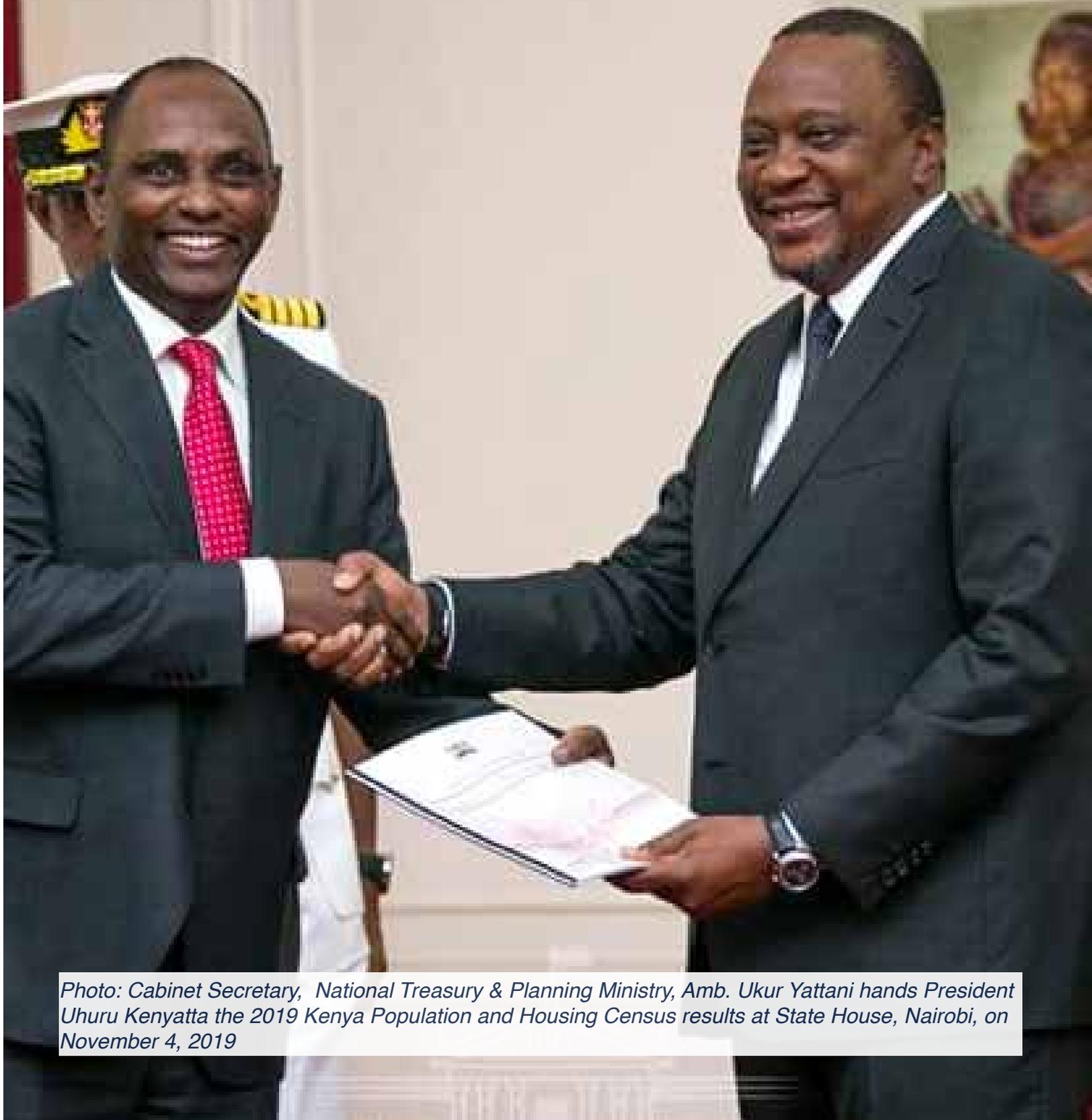
### Return to school

UNFPA supported the Ministry of Education in finalizing the National guidelines for school re-entry in early learning and basic education. The guidelines provide a framework to enhance re-entry for learners who drop out of school due to several reasons including teenage pregnancies and harmful traditional practices such as child marriages and FGM.



# Part Six:

## Population and Data



*Photo: Cabinet Secretary, National Treasury & Planning Ministry, Amb. Ukur Yattani hands President Uhuru Kenyatta the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census results at State House, Nairobi, on November 4, 2019*

## KEY RESULTS



An Action Plan for implementation of the ICPD25 Kenya Commitments was developed.



1st Annual report on implementation of ICPD25 Commitments in Kenya was developed.



New online module created to track and monitor the implementation of the ICPD25 Nairobi Summit commitments on government performance monitoring system e-NIMES.

12

Kenya Population and Housing Census analytical reports (monographs) produced with financial and technical support from UNFPA.



Kenya Demographic Dividend Roadmap was revised to align it with the ICPD25

19

Senior county staff from Migori and Kitui counties equipped with M&E skills to facilitate establishing and operationalization of County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (CIMES)

43

officers from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and other government institutions trained on analysis of census data and drafting of analytical reports from the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census monographs.

The Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 held in November 2019, was an exceptional moment to recalibrate and re-energize strides towards prosperity and dignity for all. Kenya made 17 Commitments at the summit, encompassing all facets of national life, collective community aspirations, and individual interests. Implementing these commitments requires availability and accessibility to high-quality, timely and reliable population and related data at national, county, and sub-county levels. Disaggregation of data by income, gender, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location further ensures that every person everywhere is counted and accounted for.

In 2020, UNFPA provided technical and financial support in the development of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Kenya country commitments. Further, UNFPA's monitoring and evaluation department worked closely with the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) in developing a new online module to track and monitor the implementation of the ICPD25 Nairo-

bi Summit commitments through the Government of Kenya's online performance monitoring system e-NIMES. The new module will be used to monitor select indicators from the ICPD25 Acceleration Action Plan, providing real-time performance monitoring and evaluation of key priority programmes and projects.

Following the successful national enumeration exercise conducted in 2019, UNFPA provided financial and technical support in training officers from the Kenya National Bureau Of Statistics (KNBS) and other government institutions on analysis of census data and drafting of the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census monographs. These reports provide indicators that will be used in programming, monitoring and reporting achievements of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and Vision 2030.

## Monographs developed in 2020



Fertility and Nuptiality



Mortality and Health



Migration



Education



Disability



ICT and ICT Related Household Assets



Housing Conditions and Amenities



Youth and Adolescents



Elderly and the Vulnerable Populations;



Urbanization



Household and Family Dynamics



Albinism



Photo: Principal Secretary for the State Department for Planning, Torome Saitoti, UN Resident Coordinator ad interim Dr. Medhin Tsehau and Amb. Ukur Yatani, the Cabinet Secretary, National Treasury and Planning and Director General, NCPD, Dr Mohammed Sheikh launch 1 year progress report on ICPD25.

## Taking stock of gains made one year after the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25

Kenya made 17 commitments at the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25, that included pledges on improving access to sexual and reproductive health services, universal education, promoting gender equity, harnessing the demographic dividend, and financing for population programmes.

A year later, the government with the support of UNFPA, undertook an evaluation of the progress made in the realization of these country commitments. The 2019/2020 Annual Report on the Implementation of Kenya Country Commitments was launched by Amb. Ukur Yatani, the Cabinet Secretary, National Treasury and Planning. He was joined by Dr. Medhin Tsehau UN Resident Coordinator ad interim, who lauded the government of Kenya’s dedication to delivering on the promises made in the ICPD Programme of Action, which underscores that sexual and reproductive rights are central to sustainable development.

The report launched by the NCPD shows that despite challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, efforts towards achieving the 17 commitments have led to significant results.

Some of the highlights included in the government report are:

**4 Billion ksh**

allocated to the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) Free Maternity Programme “Linda Mama.”

**1.6 Million Ksh**

provided with sanitary pads under government programmes

**473.3 Million +**

in credit disbursed to youth and youth enterprises, benefitting 94,680 youth.

**17,000**

health care workers trained on Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC), provision of family planning services, obstetric fistula care, among other maternal and neonatal health issues.

# Part Seven:

## Partners in leaving no one behind



UNFPA's work in Kenya is made possible through the close collaboration and partnership with the government of Kenya, donors, Civil Society, religious groups, and non-governmental organizations working tirelessly to expand the possibilities for women and young people to lead healthy and productive lives. Accelerating progress towards universal access to sexual and reproductive health rights requires alliances that ensure our work is inclusive, reaching the furthest behind, including women and girls in humanitarian settings, as well as persons with disabilities in providing access to consistent, reliable, and effective SRH services.

### **This-Ability Trust**

This year UNFPA Kenya formed a new and rewarding partnership with This-Ability Trust that is aimed at increasing access to sexual and reproductive health services for women and girls with disabilities. UNFPA supported This-Ability trust in the establishment of a national USSD data collection platform and a toll-free number to facilitate access to family planning by women with disabilities. At the end of December 2020, more than 2,000 women and girls with disabilities had enrolled to receive integrated SRH, family planning, and GBV information through a bulk messaging service.

### **UNFPA Youth Advisory Panel**

UNFPA works with a pool of young people under the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) to ensure that its programmes are responsive to the needs of young people, giving them an opportunity to learn and contribute to policies and programmes on issues affecting them. In 2020, we said goodbye to our dedicated cohort of 16 youth advisors whose two year term limit as members of the YAP Kenya chapter has come to an end, paving way for the recruitment of new members in 2021. UNFPA remains extremely grateful for the diligence and passion exhibited by the outgoing members who worked diligently to ensure that our programmes are responsive to the needs of young people. The panel included leading voices and changemakers working in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality, development, and social inclusion.

Led by the outgoing chairperson Faith Opiyo, the YAP members have made significant contributions to UNFPA's programmes on youth participation, including through conducting sustained outreach to the young people of Kenya on social media platforms, to reach them with information and knowledge of UNFPA's activities and core mandate.



*Photo: UNFPA Representative, Dr Ademola Olajide, with the Youth AntiFGM Network and the UNFPA Youth advisory panel members during an end FGM stakeholders meeting,*

**UNFPA Kenya appreciates all our partners and donors for their support in achieving the highlighted results, as we work together towards the three transformative goals of Zero Preventable Maternal Deaths, Zero Unmet Need for Family Planning, and Zero Gender Based-Violence and harmful practices against women and girls.**



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