

TRANSFORMING LIVES

FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS' HEALTH AND DIGNITY

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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Message of the Representative



As we reflect on the journey of UNFPA – the Sexual and Reproductive Agency in South Sudan, we are inspired by the resilience, partnership, and progress that mark our collective efforts towards advancing sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, and youth empowerment in the country for the year 2023.

The hearty smiles of the people we serve in South Sudan signifies the small but catalytic victories achieved on the journey towards empowerment, rights and choices, reflecting resilience and triumph over challenges.

The strides we have made together with the Government of South Sudan, our committed development partners/ donors, Partners, and the communities we serve, underscore a shared commitment to improving the lives of women, girls, and young people across the Country, leaving no one behind.

2023 was the beginning of our fourth country programme and as it unfolded, it was inspiring to see the continued progress that powerful partnerships achieve, transforming the lives of countless individuals and helping to build a healthier, more equitable society in South Sudan. With the operationalization of the new country programme, more focus was and will continue to be on interlinkages between humanitarian, development, and peace sectors and how this nexus will effectively meet the needs, mitigate risks and vulnerabilities of the people of South Sudan so that there is sustainable peace.

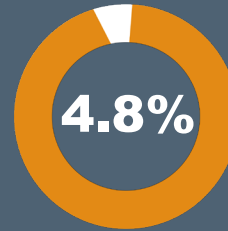
With optimism, we bring to you the UNFPA in South Sudan 2023 Annual Report which captures the essence of our work highlighting key achievements in lifesaving particularly focusing on the most vulnerable in hard-to-reach communities, empowering people and communities.

Dr. Ademola Olajide
UNFPA Representative

COUNTRY CONTEXT



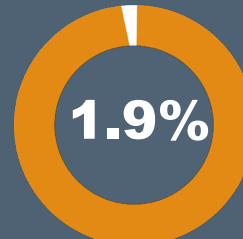
• 12.4 Million Total Population of South Sudan



Modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate



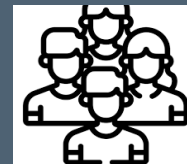
• 9.4 million people need humanitarian assistance



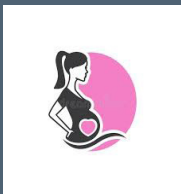
HIV Prevalence



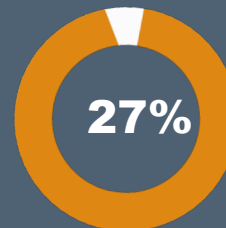
Child Marriage



73% Young People are below 30 years



Estimate 1,223 per 100,000 live births Maternal Mortality Ratio



Intimate Partner Violence

A photograph of a man and a woman sitting at a desk, looking at documents together. The man is on the left, wearing a dark blue shirt, and the woman is on the right, wearing a red shirt. They are both smiling. On the desk, there are several sheets of paper, a stethoscope, and other medical supplies. The background shows a whiteboard and a framed picture on the wall.

Ending Unmet Need For Family Planning

UNFPA South Sudan contributed to national achievements of the family planning programme realized during the year 2023. UNFPA continued to be the sole procurer of both short-term and long-acting reversible contraceptives to support the South Sudan Government.



Key results 2023

- **USD 2,546,174**
Worth of contraceptives procured and donated to the Government to support the family planning programme and contributed to improved FP commodity security. Average availability of contraceptives at the central warehouse commodities was maintained above **90%**.
- **367,118**
Couple years of protection (CYP) attained through commodities distributed to the last mile.
- Number of unintended pregnancies averted due to modern contraceptive use increased from **30,000** in 2022 to **32,000** in 2023.
- National family planning policy developed which looks to reposition FP as a development and socioeconomic factor in South Sudan.
- **250**
Parliamentarians Oriented on the importance of FP as a socioeconomic issue and the need to increase financing for FP
- **51**
Supply chain officers at service delivery points were trained to implement basic SCM practices.
- **241**
Service Providers were trained in the provision of quality and rights-based FP methods
- **34,229**
clients reached with FP methods.
- Guidelines for medicines registration revised to improve oversight of medicines regulatory on product quality
- Curriculum for Pharmacy Technologists revised to institutionalize and incorporate critical supply chain management components in the national training programmes

Taking family planning to the last mile communities



Enzo County is located one of the remote Counties in South Sudan in Western Equatorial State. The area grapples with challenges of access to medical facilities and services let alone the access to Family Planning (FP) services which often is hampered by heavily entrenched social cultural norms.

To overcome the barriers to access, the Ministry of Health with support Hope Restoration Platform (HRP) and Amref Health Africa and funding from UNFPA instituted community-based health interventions to help improve access to FP services.

The interventions orientation of stakeholders in the communities of implementation and this included the State Security, Community and Religious Leaders as well as other gate-keepers within the community. Bi-weekly community dialogues were conducted to ensure communities were given chance to air their views and to sustain sensitization on the importance of the FP programme.

During implementation of the interventions, door to door awareness was conducted and community-based distribution of FP commodities was initiated. With Ezo Central, Andari, Naandi, Yanggih, Bagidi and Bariguna Payams covered, a total of fifteen thousand six hundred and twenty eight (15,628) people were reached with FP messages while one thousand one hundred thirteen (1,113) clients received FP services in the three months of interventions.

“There is need for multi-stakeholder engagement especially the involvement of men if women are to be empowered with FP. Engaging women alone cannot end the misconceptions about sexual reproductive health and FP. The men are key decision makers at the household level, their involvement in the conversation is very important,” said Aluma Moses the Hope Reviving Platform Programme Manager on his experiences supporting the community-based interventions. Laku, who attended one of the community dialogues aired his thoughts on the sensitization and awareness received. “The common misconception among men in the community is that if women use contraceptives, they become barren. This is a very strong myth in the community,” he said.

“I was glad to hear from someone who has used the contraceptives and how they have been able to have children even after using Family Planning drugs. My wife is here, and we are already talking about this, and I will support her to use FP” Laku added.

UNFPA in South Sudan has empowered local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) such HRP to engage in community-based interventions around providing information and services especially in hard-to-reach areas.



Ending Preventable Maternal Deaths

UNFPA South Sudan provided support to strengthen direct provision of MH/SRH services targeting 32 Health Facilities including in crisis affected areas. The support included provision of MH supplies and equipment, training and deployment of service providers including in Minimum Initial Services Package and payment of incentives to critical midwifery professionals and essential health workers in the wake of extremely low and delayed salaries. Ensuring availability of emergency obstetric services and building a system for maternal and peri-natal death surveillance and response were also critical interventions implemented.



Key results 2023

- **Over all 606,676** people were provided with Maternal Health/SRH services and information.
- **241** Service Providers were trained in the provision of competency-based and rights-based FP methods.
- **75** Health workers trained in the use of new molecules Heat Stable Carbetocin and Tranexamic Acid for use in the prevention and management of PPH.
- Supported maternity units in **22** targeted health facilities to improve provision of MH/SRH services. Support included continuous professional development, payment of incentives, supply of medicines and commodities and low-cost infrastructure.
- **262,816** persons were provided with SRH services at 22 targeted health facilities:
 - **32,829** deliveries conducted by skilled birth attendants,
 - **34,229** of visits (first time and repeat) for modern family planning services,
 - **77,537** visits for 1+ antenatal care,
 - **118,221** reached with STI treatment services.
- HIV Prevention and Integration: **22,896,000** condoms procured and **14,633,424** condoms distributed. **15,501** Female Sex Workers provided with HIV prevention package of services.
- A functional maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response system is in place with the existence of national guidelines on MPDSR.
- **414** male champions promoting women and girls' access and utilization of SRH/GBV services.
- **72,270** traditional, religious, and civic leaders received messages to promote women's utilization of SRH/GBV services.
- **21,092** stakeholders including policymakers reached with messages on Universal Health Coverage/ SRH integration.
- **18,132** individuals and couples were provided with FP services through Community Health Interventions including Boma Health Workers (BHWs).
- Support to Health Science Institutes (HSIs):
 - **12** HSIs supported to meet the minimum educational standard for training health professionals
 - **20** National tutors trained in Health Personnel Education at College of Physicians and Surgeons
 - **1,159** persons undertook continuous professional development sessions on SRH/GBV/HIV
 - Over **3,000** student nurses, midwives, and other health professional students benefited from UNFPA support for strengthening skills lab, computer rooms and libraries across the country.

Health facility-based delivery saves the life of a 28-year-old.



The Bentiu IDP camp has been a home to many South Sudanese who hail from Unity State since the onset of the 2013 war, the camp managed by the UN provides shelter as well as health-care services to vulnerable groups.

28-year-old Nyalok Gatyiel is one out of the many women whom UNFPA through its partners like the International Rescue Committee are reaching out with Integrated Sexual Reproductive Health Services. In early September, Nyalok, a returnee affected by the Sudan crisis was rushed unconscious and, bleeding in a wheelbarrow in the middle of the night to the IRC-run health facility in the camp in sector 4 block 11, already a mother of six Nyalok was in unbearable pain, the duty midwife immediately received her and proceeded with her to the labor ward without a waste of time, and she was bleeding. Upon investigations by the midwife, she noticed the placenta did not come out, which was why she bled and was in deep pain, the midwife then quickly provided controlled cord traction for each contraction by guarding the uterus while providing controlled cord traction for one hour after the baby is born and identifies that the placenta is retained.

From 2:00 am up to 7:00 am Nyalok was able to give birth to a baby girl weighing 3. kg under the care of IRC a midwife, who ensured respectful care was accorded, this was when she breathed a sigh of relief; days later she was able to compose herself,

“I am thankful to the IRC midwife who cared for me, I do not think I would be able to be alive and see my baby, I was received and taken good care of, I appreciate IRC for helping to deliver services in the community,” she said.

Lessons learned are that Health providers should encourage the importance of delivery in Health facilities in case of any complication. It can be managed very well, as home-based deliveries are risky.

I am honored to have assisted Nyalok, as a trained midwife, it is my duty to provide support and care to mothers like Nyalok, Immediate, and effective professional care at the time of delivery makes a difference in saving the lives of both mother and the baby, I am glad she is safe with her baby, when duty calls, one has to respond and I responded Said, Anna chouch Dak, IRC midwife

The arrival of the new baby sparked joy as her mother-in-law joined in celebrations and thanked their hero-midwife Modong, Nyalok’s mother-in-law also appreciated the midwife, for saving the life of her grandchild and daughter-in-law, Nyalok was given postnatal counseling and she was encouraged to always give birth at a health care center should she wish to have other babies in the future.

UNFPA with funding from donors like Canada, Sweden, and Norway, through partners like IRC, has had significant interventions in healthcare systems in the hard-to-reach areas of South Sudan including responding to refugee and returnee needs.



Ending Gender Based Violence and Child Marriage

UNFPA South Sudan continued to champion the provision of Integrated GBV case management services under the One Stop Centre Model. The 13 GBV OSCs located in Hospitals across the country, provided 5,148 women and girls with integrated GBV services, including medical, psycho-social and legal assistance. Besides, safe accommodation was provided to 197 survivors of GBV through the safe house in Juba and Wau. UNFPA support has resulted in functionality of multi-stakeholder national and state-level mechanisms to address discriminatory gender and social norms, at the individual, social and institutional levels.

Key results 2023

- All the **10** states and **3** Administrative areas have vibrant mechanisms for ending child marriage and GBV through declaration of end to Child Marriage and GBV, enactment of by-laws, establishing community-based mechanisms to prevent and respond to Child Marriage and GBV. Total **102** Community Action Groups were established in the communities and schools to provide tertiary support assistance to the survivors of GBV.
- **5,148** women and girls were provided with intergrated GBV response serives. **2511** GBV cases were taken to court through the OSC resulting in a conviction of the perpetrators.
- **216,822** individuals reached with massages on gender equality, social norms, GBV and ending child marriage and early pregnancy during community mobilization and sensitization.
- **13** One-Stop centres within public health facilities provide multi-sectoral case management services for survivors of gender-based violence.
- **30,765** Community level leaders, women and girls reached through the targeted leadership development program.
- For effective policy change in favour of the GBV survivors, the engagements with the Government and civil society resulted in the Anti-GBV Bill being opened for review and revisions.
- **102** Community Action Groups were established to create social safety for GBV survivors and **25** by-Laws were designed by the communities.
- **61** Communities declared elimination/abodment of child marriage.
- **834** service providers were trained on GBV core concept, GBV case management, safe referrals, GBV guiding principles and GBV prevention and mitigation measure.
- Over **20,000** individuals were reached with massages on gender equality during the commemoration of International Women's Day in partnership with other UN agencies and under the leadership of Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare
- **426** boda boda riders were reached out, of which **76** were trained as champions of positive masculinity in Torit, **172** in Yambio. Through the national campaign more than **10,005** community members were reached and 118 school and university students engaged in positive masculinity reflections.
- Through the Health Sector Gender Technical Working Group (HS-GTWG), three trainings were conducted with multi-stakeholder police, health professionals, lawyers and other government officials at the national level reaching **70** security and health sector personnel
- **150** implementing partners, government and young women leaders were trained on human rights based approaches for development.



UNFPA Rep and Minister of Gender at Luanch of Juba Safe House

Discovering hope at the Safe Shelter: The journey of Amina, a young survivor



Amina*, a 17-year-old girl's journey to find sanctuary unfolds, casting a light on the profound impact of dedicated support systems for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). Amina faced challenges that no person, let alone a child, should endure but she represents both the struggles faced by countless individuals and the beacon of hope that the family protection centres or one-stop centres, a safe place designed to offer comprehensive support to GBV survivors.

At the centre, Amina was a person deserving of care and respect. Medical professionals provided the essential healthcare she had long been denied. But the healing didn't stop there. Legal officers offered her guidance, ensuring she understood her rights and the steps available to seek justice. Most importantly, Amina found a space where her voice was heard and valued—a stark contrast to the oppressive silence she had been forced into.

"I received so much support, counselling and help that I don't know what I would have done without this" she stated.

The safe shelter in Wau, where Amina found refuge, serves as more than just a place of temporary safety; it is a community of survivors and advocates, a place where stories of resilience and courage are woven into the very fabric of its existence.

For Amina, the shelter became a turning point, a place where the isolation and fear that once defined her experience gave way to solidarity and hope.

Amina's journey is a testament to the strength found in the face of adversity, and the crucial role that comprehensive support services play in enabling survivors of GBV to reclaim their lives. The one-stop centre and safe shelter in Wau stand as beacons of hope, not just for Amina, but for all survivors seeking a way forward in the aftermath of violence.

The One Stop Centre in Wau operated with funding from UNFPA and donors such as SWISS, Sweden, and Norway. This centre, part of a broader initiative to combat and address the consequences of violence, offers medical, legal, and psychosocial services under one roof, ensuring that survivors like Amina can access the holistic care they desperately need.



Humanitarian Response

UNFPA through partners continued to provide life-saving interventions through integrated gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) activities in South Sudan. With funding support from ECHO, South Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SSHF), Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Victims of SEA victims and Ferring Global as well as Canada, Sweden, and Norway, UNFPA expanded integrated GBV and SRH activities in emergencies through static and mobile service delivery points. The services were provided through static and mobile health facilities; women and girls' friendly spaces; one-stop centers and safe houses. UNFPA has also been the core pipeline lead for Reproductive Health (RH) and Dignity Kits and have distributed 42,000 dignity kits and different types of 510 RH Kits that were distributed through different partners.

In addition to humanitarian preparedness and response, UNFPA has played key roles in humanitarian coordination, to this effect UNFPA led the GBV sub-cluster at national and sub-national level. Equally, UNFPA activated and led the SRH technical working group at national sub-national level in close coordination with the National and State Ministries of Health, Gender, and Social Welfare and Health and Protection Clusters. UNFPA has co-led the Protection from Sexual and Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Taskforce at sub-national level under the overall leadership of PSEA National Taskforce.

Key results 2023

- **294,842** individuals were reached with integrated lifesaving GBV and SRH Services through static and mobile outlets.
- **42,000** dignity kits prepositioned and distributed across the country.
- SRH and GBV priorities were integrated into an Action Plan that was developed by six ministries following climate change training.
- **1,796** individuals from partners and government counterparts were trained on the Minimum Initial Service Package for reproductive health in emergencies.
- **356** service providers were trained on the provision of psychosocial support.
- **6** community-based complaint mechanism networks supported for raising awareness on PSEA within the community.
- A deep-dive study on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) was conducted on behalf of the Humanitarian and UN Country Teams, the findings of this study will inform the development of a system-wide PSEA strategy.
- UNFPA maintained leadership of GBV Area of Responsibility and SRH sub-cluster.



Restoring hope to the integrated returnees in Renk: How income generation activities and cash assistance change lives



Renk-Upper Nile- Fleeing from war, Angelina Yowin Abwol Deng took a dangerous journey to South Sudan. The 55-year-old left her home in Fit-Hab-Khartoum and escaped empty-handed through Kordofan to get to safety. Now, she is working to heal from this experience with the help from a UNFPA-funded gender-based violence response center.

I was exhausted the entire trip, I left everything in my house in Khartoum, I came in April, I was traumatized, a mere mention of Khartoum sends shivers in my spine, but I am healing, thanks to the group members here at the GBV response center, we laugh and joke counsel ourselves.

In Renk, the gender-based violence response center supports women and girls like Angelina who have fled Khartoum because of

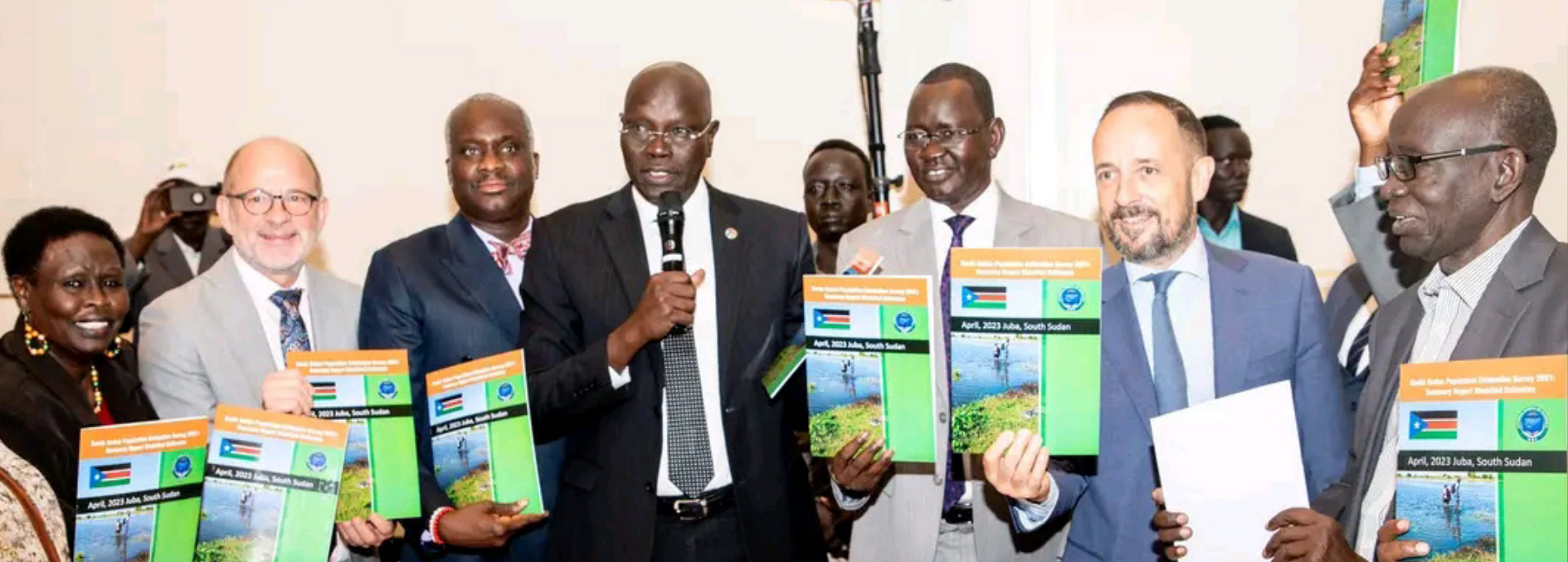
war. Through income-generating activities such as the knitting of tablecloths, bead making, and bedsheet weaving, they are creating new lives for themselves and building a supportive community of women.

We have Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk, but we do not view each other through a tribal lens, we all share the same trials and tribulations, when we gather here at the center, we discuss issues affecting us, talk about violence and family planning, and look for a common solution. Thanks to Hope Restoration for providing us with this space, when we return to our respective homes, we are at ease” Tereza John, another returnee explains.

With support from the United Nations Population Fund-UNFPA and funding from CERF, GBV response center has become a space where women and girls are allowed to heal and become empowered.

Population Data for Development

UNFPA continues to support national efforts to ensure generation and access to population data and demographic intelligence and their use to advocate for integration of ICPD issues into national sector plans. It will also assure the availability of high-quality data and evidence to accelerate and measure progress towards the SDGs. The support focuses on building the capacity of statistical system to generate, analyse, produce and disseminate statistical reports on key population, SRH, GBV indicators for evidence-based planning; support the production of studies on the demographic dividend and other population-based themes related to sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence, to measure progress in achieving the transformative results and contribute to peacebuilding; strengthen health and GBV information management systems and support preparations for the Population and Housing Census in South Sudan.



Key results 2023

- UNFPA Supported the Government of South Sudan to finalize the 2021 Population Estimation Survey (PES). The main product from the Survey were the Modelled Population estimates. The modelled population estimates were approved by the Council of Ministers chaired by H.E Silva Kirr Mayandit, the President of the Republic of South Sudan and launched by the Minister of Finance and Planning. The estimates have provided up-to-date population data for South Sudan, given that the last Population and Housing Census was conducted in 2008 when South Sudan was still part of Sudan.
- The PES estimates have been used to inform the Humanitarian Needs Assessment as part of the compilation of the South Sudan 2024 Humanitarian Response Plan.
- UNFPA supported the government to conduct the first ever GBV Survey. The report has been finalized and validated by stakeholders.
- Strengthened the capacity of 5 targeted institutions including NBS, MOH, Bank of South Sudan, Commission for Refugees Affairs, and Ministry of Interior to generate, analyze, disseminate, and utilize SRH/GBV administrative data.
- Supported the government of South Sudan to compile a national report on the Implementation of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development that formed part of South Sudan input into the continental report. The report highlights key recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the ICPD PoA, domestication of the Demographic Dividend agenda and implementation of the Voluntary National ICPD@25 Commitments.

South Sudan Parliamentary Network on Population and Development commits to championing reduction in Maternal Mortality



Members of the South Sudan Parliamentary Network on Population and Development under the Revitalized National Transitional Legislative Assembly (RNTLA) have pledged to support strengthening national efforts to improve maternal health outcomes in the country. This commitment was arrived at in a series of meetings held on 17-18 August 2023 in Juba, Established in 2018 with support from UNFPA, the South Sudan Network on Population and Development launched its first strategic plan (2023-2028).

The goal of the plan is to contribute towards the National Effort of responding to Sexual Reproductive Health and other population needs and supplement government efforts in fulfillment of the commitments made towards enriching the lives of the people. Graced by the deputy Speaker RNTLA, Hon Nathaniel Oyet Peri, and the government chief whip, Hon. Rebecca Joshua Okwac, the two senior government officials assured UNFPA of the government's commitment to ensuring the enactment of the Nursing and Midwives Act, as well as organizing a high-level meeting with the President of the Republic of South Sudan on addressing maternal mortality with the objective of establishing a Maternal Mortality Reduction Fund.

UNFPA South Sudan Country Office partnership with the South Sudan Parliamentary Network on Population and Development to , enact and improve relevant laws and policies, parliamentarians help to create an enabling environment for the achievement of the ICPD goals and the SDGs; advocate for the rights and needs of the people and playing a critical role in safeguarding the health, rights and well-being of women and girls as well as play a critical role in mobilizing necessary resources and ensuring resources appropriately used and through appropriation and oversight functions.

Other objectives of the strategic plan are to among others is to advocate for the enacting of laws and policies that will facilitate better implementation of Sexual Reproductive Health and other population programs, and advocate for increased budget allocation for health in a bid to speed up the move for Universal Access to Health Services.



Shaping the future of Young People

In 2023, UNFPA South Sudan made significant strides in addressing the unique needs and challenges of young people, particularly through targeted interventions that fostered youth engagement and access to sexual and reproductive health services. Our efforts centred on empowering young individuals, especially those in marginalized communities, to improve their health outcomes and participate actively in peacebuilding and societal transformation. These initiatives were crucial in a context where young people face numerous obstacles to accessing information and services critical to their development and well-being.

Recognizing the pivotal role of youth in shaping the future of South Sudan, our programs were designed and implemented to bridge gaps in knowledge and services. Through innovative platforms like Tukul Talks and direct outreach in cattle camps, we facilitated critical dialogues on peace and security, while also ensuring that young people received comprehensive sexuality education and gender-based violence prevention information. Our integrated approach not only enhanced the availability of youth-friendly health services but also supported the development of social and economic assets for young individuals, contributing to a more inclusive and resilient community.



Key results 2023

- Established mechanisms for engaging young people in peace building initiatives. UNFPA organized 2 High-level Intergenerational dialogues dubbed “Tukul Talks” in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. These initiatives reached about 1,000 young people.
- **21,986**
Youth participated in events to amplify youth participation in decision making for SRH, FP, Gender Equality and GBV.
- **798**
adolescent girls, including girls with disabilities and girls affected by other furthest left-behind factors, reached by girl-centred programmes that build their life skills, health, social and economic assets.
- **21**
health facilities provided adolescent and youth friendly SRH Services according to national standards.
- **162,693**
adolescents and youth were reached with SRH/HIV information.
- **34,960**
young people reached with CSE information; 16,474 in-school 18,486 out-of-school
- To foster community cohesion through young people’s participation and leadership, a Common Ground Approach sessions were conducted across 10 states

A Beacon of Hope - How Torit Youth Centre Empowers Young People



“Understanding how to protect myself from STIs and unwanted pregnancies has been enlightening. The center has given us the tools to take control of our health.” shares Mary.

Through collective efforts, the Torit Youth Centre is indeed changing the narrative, shattering taboos, and sowing seeds for a more educated and aware generation. Amidst the challenges that come with growing up in South Sudan, this sanctuary of empowerment is a beacon of hope, enabling students like Mary and Jane to navigate the complexities of youth with confidence and dignity.

In Torit, South Sudan, where resources are scarce, but aspirations are plenty. The Torit Youth Center located within the premises of Torit Hospital—is changing the lives of local students in remarkable ways. This haven has become a safe space for students from Torit Day Secondary School, where they access not just vital information but also practical services that impact their daily lives.

Jane*, 18-year-old student who found herself in a potentially distressing situation, her menstrual period began unexpectedly while she was at school. A situation that could be a simple inconvenience elsewhere can become a significant hurdle here due to lack of immediate access to menstrual hygiene products.

Torit Youth Center provides an array of sessions and programs targeting adolescent health concerns. Students attend sessions that offer deep insights into teenage pregnancy and how to protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV. The holistic approach also includes topics often considered taboo like puberty and gender-based violence.

“The Youth Centre is more than just a part of the hospital. It’s a lifeline for these students, equipping them with the knowledge and resources they need to forge brighter futures.” Peer counsellor Sarah



Fostering Innovation

Engaging youth in innovation is critical to addressing social challenges and promoting economic transformation, in order to achieve inclusive growth & reduce poverty, youth should have access to skills training, education, and employment opportunities.

UNFPA South Sudan partners with various organizations to harness the power of female in Sports, engaging youth and senior government officials in intergenerational dialogues, creative events with young people to reach a wider audience, and innovations to scale-up family planning, improve menstrual hygiene management, promote gender equality, promote positive masculinity, prevent Gender Based Violence (GBV) and end child marriage.

● Use of female sports to promote positive social norms, gender equality, SRH/GBV information and services especially girls, and Menstrual Health Management. Expanded partnership with the South Sudan Football Association, South Sudan Boxing Federation, and South Sudan Tug Trust. These female teams function as a role model and mentor for other young girls.

- Innovate Family Planning workshop that brought together young people with innovative ideas to contribute to achieving 3 zeros.
- Valentine's Day celebrations "Lost in Love" and "Spread the Love" events to engage young people on ending child marriage, SRH and GBV information
- Worked with Boda-Boda Association to provide SRH/GBV information and services, engagement of young people in peace and security initiatives
- Rujal Bi Akder – the Men cooking challenge to engage men in addressing GBV and promoting the use of SRH services.
- Reached youth in cattle camps with SRH/GBV information and services, to enhance menstrual health hygiene, prevention of harmful practices, mental health and community resilience.

The power of female sports in norms shifting: UNFPA collaboration with the Bright Starlets, the National Women's Football team



Women's participation in sports has a long history. It is a history marked by division and discrimination but also one filled with major accomplishments by female athletes and important advances for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Increased involvement of women and girls can promote positive development in sports by providing alternative norms, values, attitudes, knowledge, capabilities, and experiences. The contributions of women, particularly in leadership positions, can bring diversity and alternative approaches and expand the talent base in areas such as management, coaching, and sports journalism.

Women in sports leadership can shape attitudes toward women's capabilities as leaders and decision-makers, especially in traditionally male domains. Women's involvement in sports can make a significant contribution to public life and community development.

"The participation of women and girls in sports challenges gender stereotypes and discrimination and can therefore be a vehicle to promote gender equality. Football cuts across tribes and borders which accelerate peace and unity, and the empowerment of women and girls for the benefit of communities" said Grace Soga.

Particularly in traditionally masculine fields, women in sport leadership can influence opinions around leadership, decision-making ability, can significantly improve society and their communities.

"UNFPA South Sudan is partnering with Starlets for Change Organization to harness the power of Sports to improve menstrual hygiene management, promote gender equality, prevent Gender Based Violence (GBV), and end child marriage. "Exploring the intersection of football and reproductive health in South Sudan reveals not just the current knowledge, attitudes, and practices of adolescents and young people, but also the potential to empower and educate through sports."

– Stella Bosire, SRH consultant

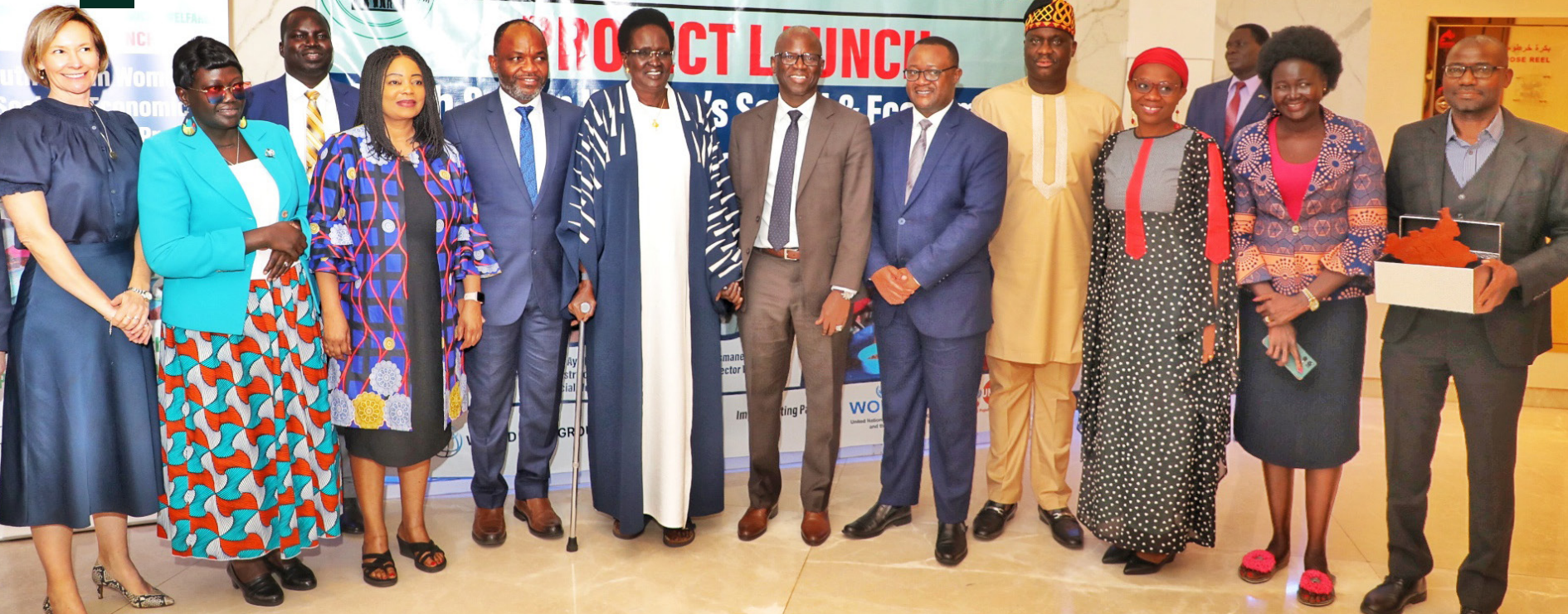
UNFPA conducted a focus group discussion with sportswomen, adolescent boys, and girls from various schools in Juba to understand their sexual and reproductive health needs. The engagement offered a platform for young girls to share their experiences on menstrual health management, access to reproductive health services, and understanding of gender-based violence, including the dangers of forced and child marriage. The discussions will inform the development of a handbook/training manual which will be used in a yearlong cascade training by youth-led networks and adolescent reproductive health.

To improve menstrual health management during sports time at the stadium, UNFPA is further supporting the installation of a self-care facility for female footballers and support the team with training equipment for their talents to grow and become change makers in their communities

Strategic Partnerships

UNFPA recognizes that sustainable development requires dynamic and inclusive strategic partnerships that involve a variety of stakeholders. To this end UNFPA South Sudan Country Office partnerships engaged with Government of the Republic of South Sudan including Vice Presidents' Offices, Ministries, Revitalized National Transitional Legislative Assembly (RNTLA) and key national institutions, Development Partners/ Donors, Delivering As One with other UN Agencies, Academia and other strategic partners.

In addition, UNFPA supported national partners to attend various international conferences to advance the ICPD Agenda.



UNFPA Delivering As One with other UN Agencies

- In line with the common chapter of the SP and Country Program Document, UNFP actively engaged in the UN Country Team coordination mechanisms. UNFPA chaired key coordination groups including the H6+ partnership for the first three months in the year, the Interagency Network on Adolescent and Youth development, and the UNSDCF outcome 4 results group. The Country Office was also active in the UN Working Groups
- UNFPA continued to actively engage in several coordination mechanisms at the national and sub-national levels including the RH Coordination Forum and technical working groups in key UNFPA thematic areas of family planning, midwifery, adolescent sexual and reproductive health, and youth.
- UNFPA engaged with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization for implementation of activities based on the Letter of Engagement for partnership signed in 2022.
- UNFPA partnership with UNMISS in implementation of peacebuilding and GBV prevention and response related initiatives
- Joint UNFPA and UN-WOMEN to implement, a \$70 million South Sudan Women's Social Economic Empowerment project.
- Population Estimate Survey [PES] was jointly launched in collaboration with other UN Agencies.



Partnership with Government of South Sudan

- UNFPA with the Members of South Sudan Parliamentary Network on Population and Development under the Revitalized National Transitional Legislative Assembly (RNTLA) pledged to support strengthening national efforts to improve maternal health outcomes in the country. Established in 2018 with support from UNFPA, the SSNPD launched its first strategic plan (2023-2028).
- UNFPA East and South Africa Ms Lydia Zigomo attend the first ever International Conference on Women's Transformational Leadership Conference in Juba, South Sudan. She paid courtesy on Vice President, Mama Rebecca Nyande de Mabior, Gender and Youth Cluster, Ministry of Health, Minister of Gender, Child and Social Welfare.
- UNFPA supported delegation of South Sudan led by the Vice President in charge of Gender and Youth cluster showcasing the strength and resilience of women from South Sudan during CSW67 in New York
- ICPD 30 and review of Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development [AADPD]: UNFPA supported National partners to participate in the conference in Lusaka, Zambia and Parliamentary forum in Kigali, Rwanda.
- Parliamentarians and the Legislative Committee on Health and HIV; UNFPA supported and engaged with over 300 Members of Parliament on ending preventable maternal deaths and enacting health legislation, in particular the Nursing and Midwifery Bill and budget allocations for the health sector. Additionally, a meeting was also held between the representative the Members of the health and HIV Committee of Parliament to further discuss collaboration and support to strengthen maternal health initiatives.
- UNFPA engaged with the University of Juba Vice Chancellor/ Deputy Vice Chancellor on areas for collaboration, demographers from University of Upper Nile, and John Garang Memorial University on the thematic analysis for the Population Estimation Survey.
- UNFPA continued to engage with the Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of South Sudan and the Association of nurses and midwives on advocacy on maternal health.



Together with donors for sexual and reproductive health

With the dedicated support of key donors and continued commitment work of UNFPA South Sudan, the future looks brighter for the women, girls, and young people of this resilient nation.

As a country that has faced numerous challenges due to prolonged conflict and natural shocks related to climate, South Sudan's population has long needed aid and assistance. The joint efforts of UNFPA and its donors have made impact in 2023, providing vital support to women and girls in both development and humanitarian settings.

- Donors roundtable meeting to present achievements, evaluate progress and advocate for unfinished business
- Joint field visit with donors to Rumbek, Wau and IDP Camp in Juba
- UNFPA signed a multi-year programmatic partnership agreement with ECHO to support access to GBV prevention and response services.
- Swiss Development Agency for Cooperation and UNFPA have come together to support the survivors of GBV through One stop Centres and Shelter in two states.
- Canada continued contribution to UNFPA and their commitment to SRHR has been a hallmark in the Country's long-term partnership.
- Signing of Sweden's contribution to UNFPA's Country Program. Sweden has been one of UNFPA's long term partner in SRHR
- Joint Donors visit to Juba One Stop Center to assess the integrated services provided to survivors of GBV.
- Periodic joint program meeting with key donors to review progress and achievements of sexual and reproductive health and rights for the women and girls of South Sudan.
- Signing of Norway's contribution to UNFPA: Norway's commitment to gender equality and SRHR has been the hallmark of their global and in country long-term partnership with UNFPA.
- U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration supported UNFPA response to Sudan Crisis.
- UN Action Trust Fund initiated supporting a joint programme to promote social and economic empowerment of the survivors of conflict related sexual violence.
- The partnership with Global Fund further signed the next phase of initiative to support the HIV positive population and GBV survivors.



Appreciation to our Donors

Thank you to our Donors for continued contribution to UNFPA to implement the Country Program of support to the Government and people of South Sudan, especially for the wellbeing of women, girls and young people.

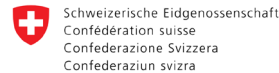
UNFPA funding in addition to that of Donors enables us to scale-up Sexual & Reproductive Health services which encompasses crucial issues such as health, rights, gender equity and equality, humanitarian, development context and peace nexus.



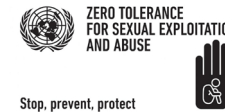
European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



United Nations
Peacebuilding
Peacebuilding Fund



Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



Stop, prevent, protect



United Nations
CERF



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DELIVERING A WORLD WHERE
EVERY PREGNANCY IS WANTED
EVERY CHILDBIRTH IS SAFE AND
EVERY YOUNG PERSON'S POTENTIAL
IS FULFILLED

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