



PATHWAYS TO EQUALITY: SAVING
LIVES AND ADVANCING RIGHTS
FOR ALL IN ETHIOPIA

ANNUAL REPORT | 2023



ETHIOPIA

About UNFPA

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, also known as the United Nations Sexual and Reproductive Health Agency, is an international development agency leading global efforts to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled. UNFPA Ethiopia's Country Programme, which is currently in its 9th cycle (2020-2025), draws from the priorities of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2020-2025). The Country Programme is aligned with the Ethiopian Government's 10-Year Development Plan, sectoral plans, and the UNFPA Strategic Plan (2022-2025). UNFPA Ethiopia operates strategically at the Federal level and in 12 Regions in Ethiopia to address critical challenges and advance the rights and well-being of women, adolescents, and youth.

Transformative Results

In pursuit of contributing to the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNFPA Ethiopia is committed to achieving four transformative results:

1. Ending Unmet Need for Family Planning
2. Ending Preventable Maternal Deaths
3. Ending Gender-based Violence and Harmful Practices against women and girls

Strategic Priorities

- **Integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health Services:** UNFPA Ethiopia prioritizes universal access to integrated sexual and reproductive health services, safeguarding reproductive rights and eliminating coercion, discrimination, and violence. Our comprehensive programs aim to reach every woman, adolescent, and youth, especially those who are marginalized and the furthest behind.
- **Empowerment of Adolescents and Youth:** Central to our mission is empowering adolescents and youth, particularly girls, to access sexual and reproductive health services and exercise their reproductive rights in all contexts. Through empowerment, education, and awareness, we equip young people with the knowledge and resources necessary for informed decision-making about their health and well-being and support them in contributing positively to peacebuilding and social cohesion.
- **Advancement of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment:** UNFPA Ethiopia works tirelessly to advance gender equality, women's empowerment, and reproductive rights in both development and humanitarian settings. By addressing underlying inequalities and promoting rights-based approaches, we strive to create an environment free from discrimination and violence.
- **Data-driven Development:** Recognizing the importance of data for evidence-based decision-making, UNFPA Ethiopia prioritizes population data collection, analysis, dissemination, and improvement in utilization. By ensuring everyone is counted and accounted for, we support evidence-based development planning and monitor progress towards achieving the sustainable development goals and national development indicators.

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ENSURING RIGHTS AND CHOICES FOR ALL



ETHIOPIA

ANNUAL REPORT

 **2023**





1 | ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DONORS

UNFPA Ethiopia extends sincere gratitude to the Governments of Canada, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Netherlands, South Korea, Japan, Italy, Spain, Iceland, United States, UK, alongside the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the World Bank through UNOPS, the UN Central Emergency Fund (CERF), the Ethiopian Humanitarian Fund, and the UN Swedish Association, whose invaluable contributions have played a pivotal role in advancing UNFPA's mission across sexual and reproductive health (SRH), midwifery, gender-based violence (GBV), adolescents and youth, and population and development. We're also thankful for our recent partnership with ITOCHU Corporation, which underscores the importance of public-private partnerships in advancing UNFPA's mission in Ethiopia. This collaboration will leverage the expertise and resources of both sectors to address critical reproductive healthcare needs and promote sustainable development, highlighting the significance of such partnerships. With the unwavering support of these esteemed partners, including from the private sector, UNFPA Ethiopia can expand its reach and impact, ensuring essential aid reaches those most in need and leaving a lasting positive impact on the lives of Ethiopians.



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3 | ACRONYMS

AYH	Adolescent and Youth Health	SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
AOR	Area of Responsibility	SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
BeMONC	Basic Emergency Obstetric & Newborn Care	STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
CP	Country Programme	TOT	Training of Trainers
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate	TWG	Technical Working Group
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics	WGFS	Women and Girls' Friendly Space
CSO	Civil Society Organization	YFS	Youth Friendly Space
EPSS	Ethiopian Pharmaceutical Supply Service		
ESS	Ethiopian Statistical Service		
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation		
FP	Family Planning		
GBV	Gender-Based Violence		
HEWs	Health Extension Workers		
HP	Harmful Practices		
IARH	Inter-Agency Reproductive Health Kits		
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development		
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons		
INVEA	Immigration, Nationality, and Vital Events Agency		
IPs	Implementing Partners		
MHNTs	Maternal Health & Nutrition Teams		
MOH	Ministry of Health		
MPDSR	Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response		
MHPSS	Maternal Health and Psychosocial Support		
OSC	One-Stop Center		
PPE	Population Policy of Ethiopia		
PPP	Public-Private Partnership		
RHB	Regional Health Bureau		
RHC	Reproductive Health Commodities		
SDP	Service Delivery Point		



4 | FOREWORD

The year 2023 was an important milestone for UNFPA - the 50th Anniversary of the start of our operations in Ethiopia. We celebrated five decades of partnership and progress in advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights with our partners and stakeholders.

As we reflect on the achievements and challenges of the past year, I am pleased to share the Annual Report for 2023, documenting the impactful work of UNFPA Ethiopia and partners in advancing sexual and reproductive health, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and empowering adolescents, youth, and other vulnerable sections of communities across the country.

In 2023, UNFPA Ethiopia made significant strides in various areas of work, contributing to realizing our strategic priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals. Despite facing numerous challenges, including ongoing conflicts, insecurity, and natural disasters, our dedicated team, in collaboration with government partners and stakeholders, we remained steadfast in our commitment to serve the people of Ethiopia.

In the realm of sexual and reproductive health, UNFPA provided crucial support to ensure access to family planning services, resulting in one full year of contraceptive protection for 3.3 million couples through in-kind donations of both short- and long-acting contraceptives to the country. This support also encompassed efforts to strengthen the supply chain, regulatory systems, and the quality of FP services. Additionally, we bolstered maternal health services, with close to half a million safe deliveries conducted by skilled birth attendants, thus making meaningful contributions to the effort to end preventable maternal deaths. Similarly, the treatment of obstetric fistula and pelvic organ prolapse (PoP) for 953 women and girls also represents a positive step forward in addressing maternal health challenges.

Furthermore, through persistent advocacy efforts with federal and regional governments and the introduction of initiatives like the Compact for co-financing the procurement of reproductive health commodities, UNFPA facilitated an increase in domestic resource mobilization for reproductive health products, demonstrating our commitment to financial sustainability in advancing reproductive health goals. Additionally, the promotion of the UNFPA Supplies Partnership Compact's co-financing initiative has spurred additional donors to engage in a broader co-financing compact agreement with the Ethiopian government. This catalyzing effort, involving key stakeholders such as the Ministries of Health and Finance, enhances the sustainability of family planning programs and accelerates progress towards achieving universal access to reproductive healthcare services, ultimately contributing to the achievement of the SDGs.

Addressing gender disparities and combating social norms perpetuating inequality have been central to our work. By providing comprehensive services to survivors of gender-based violence and supporting initiatives to prevent child marriage and female genital mutilation, UNFPA has made significant progress in safeguarding the rights and well-being of women and girls. Our efforts have resulted in a substantial increase in the number of survivors reached and young girls protected from harmful practices.



Our focus on adolescents and youth empowerment continued in 2023. Through life skills education and integrated HIV prevention initiatives, we empowered young people to make informed decisions about their health, education, and future. These efforts were essential for ensuring that young people fulfill their potential and contribute to Ethiopia's peace and sustainable development.

As part of our population change and data initiatives, UNFPA continued to invest in data-driven insights, generating reports to illustrate vulnerability to climate and humanitarian crises. We also expanded regional web-based integrated management information systems and knowledge platforms, promoting online access and utilization of data for evidence-based decision-making.

In times of humanitarian crisis, UNFPA remained at the forefront, providing life-saving sexual and reproductive health services to affected populations. Our efforts reached nearly two million individuals, while more than 200 health facilities were equipped with essential supplies and equipment to respond to emergencies. Moreover, our GBV prevention and response services reached nearly 250 thousand women and girls, highlighting our commitment to protecting the most vulnerable in times of crisis.

Ethiopia continues to face multiple and overlapping crises, including conflicts, displacement, and the impacts of climate change. Considering these challenges, I call upon all partners and stakeholders to renew our commitment to advancing the rights of women and girls through a nexus approach, integrating humanitarian and development efforts to address the root causes of gender inequality and vulnerability. Additionally, as we mark the 30th Anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), let us reflect on our collective achievements and recommit to the ICPD Programme of Action principles and SDGs, ensuring rights and choices for all.

In closing, I thank the Government of Ethiopia, our donors, and implementing partners for their continued support and collaboration. Together, let us work tirelessly to build a future where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled.



Koffi Kouame
UNFPA Ethiopia Country Representative



5

OUR TRANSFORMATIVE RESULTS



5.1 | TOWARDS ENDING PREVENTABLE MATERNAL DEATHS

Significant strides have been made in reducing the maternal mortality ratio in Ethiopia, with a notable decline from 1,250 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 267 per 100,000 live births by 2020 [1], representing a commendable 79% reduction. A corresponding 55% reduction was observed in neonatal mortality rates over the past four decades, as well as decreases in stillbirth and infant mortality rates [2]. This remarkable progress can be attributed to various factors, including the expansion and enhancement of healthcare facilities, the extraordinary increase in institutional delivery, the capacity of health professionals, the establishment of maternity waiting homes, and the deployment of midwives, especially in regions affected by conflict and natural disasters.

However, despite these achievements, Ethiopia is still among the top ten countries with the highest maternal mortality rates. Key maternal health indicators are worrying: 26% of births take place in a health facility, and only 14% take place in facilities equipped for emergencies. Additionally, 12% of women aged 15-19 had begun childbearing [3], indicating a significant prevalence of teenage pregnancy, which can pose risks to both maternal and child health.

UNFPA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and development partners, played a pivotal role in improving access to quality maternal healthcare services and outcomes across the country. UNFPA's response to end maternal and newborn deaths involves a comprehensive approach that addresses health system strengthening, service provision, community engagement, advocacy, and data-driven interventions to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted and every childbirth is safely attended by skilled health personnel.

Access to skilled birth attendance remains uneven across Ethiopia, particularly in rural and remote areas. According to the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) 2016, while 52% of births in urban areas were attended by skilled health personnel, only 15% of births in rural areas benefited from skilled attendance.

Afar's Unyielding Mothers: A Tale of Courage and Empowerment

Assia Jubako's life in the Afar village of Aboyta is a testament to the trials and triumphs of motherhood. Married off at 19 without formal education, Assia has raised 10 children amidst significant challenges. Her journey took an even more harrowing turn during Ethiopia's conflict, forcing her to flee with her newborn and eight other children to seek refuge in an IDP camp, walking 25 kilometers on foot. Despite the ordeal, Assia's love and determination never wavered, ensuring her family's safety and receiving vital medical care just in time.

At the IDP camp, UNFPA provided her with essential maternal and newborn healthcare services such as prenatal check-ups, delivery assistance, postnatal care, and access to emergency obstetric care. This support has been instrumental in safeguarding the health and well-being of Assia and her newborn amidst the challenging circumstances of displacement.

Assia's story resonates as a testament to maternal resilience globally, highlighting UNFPA's dedication to maternal and newborn health even in the most challenging circumstances. Through their steadfast commitment and interventions, UNFPA has played a pivotal role in preserving the lives and well-being of thousands of expectant mothers like Assia and numerous newborns affected by conflict, underscoring the UNFPA's invaluable support to leave no one behind in humanitarian crises.

[1, 2, 3] Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS), 2016.

BY THE NUMBERS

439,249

births attended by skilled birth personnel

115,578

women and girls were screened for cervical cancer

2,148

pregnant women could use 54 maternity waiting homes to access safe deliveries.

953

women received fistula and pelvic organ prolapse repairs and treatment

222

midwives deployed in climate and conflict-affected regions

100,970

units of blood collected to support safe delivery

56

public health facilities strengthened to report, review, and respond to the maternal death system

1,495

health professionals trained in various maternal health topics, including fistula

303

health facilities were equipped with EmOC equipment and supplies to provide SRH services.

Areas of Focus



Maternal Health: Access to comprehensive maternal health services, including antenatal care, skilled birth attendance, emergency obstetric and neonatal care (EmONC), and postnatal care, is a top priority for UNFPA to prevent maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity, including obstetric fistula. The establishment of 54 Maternity Waiting Homes (MWH), alongside the mobilization of 19 Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNT) as part of a broader strategy to enhance access to skilled delivery, even in the most challenging and remote areas.



Midwifery: In Ethiopia, where maternal mortality remains high, UNFPA advocates for increasing the number of midwives particularly considering that midwives can provide 87% of essential care and prevent over 80% of all maternal deaths, stillbirths, and neonatal deaths [5]. UNFPA, in collaboration with the MOH, RHBs, and Ethiopian Midwives Association, continued supporting the capacity-building efforts of over 1,495 midwives and healthcare providers while deploying 222 midwives to reach those furthest behind in climate and conflict-affected regions.



Provision of maternal supplies and equipment: In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Civil Society Organization (CSO) partners, EmONC equipment and supplies were made available in 218 healthcare facilities to support the rollout of essential packages of health services.



Policy & Advocacy: UNFPA has actively supported Ethiopia's Ministry of Health in developing policies and guidelines to improve maternal and neonatal health. This includes initiatives like the Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response (MPDSR) plan and guidelines for managing conditions like pre-eclampsia/eclampsia and safe abortion care. Through national technical working groups, UNFPA helps strengthen healthcare systems to improve service access. Additionally, UNFPA has assisted in compiling reports on obstetric fistula and conducting advocacy workshops to raise awareness about maternal health issues.

Innovations



The Impact of Pregnant Women Conferences and Mother-to-Mother Groups

Another pivotal UNFPA strategy designed to improve institutional delivery involved early identification and registration of pregnant women, engaging them in monthly pregnant women conferences and mother-to-mother groups at the community level. In 132 sessions, over 18,000 expecting mothers and more than 1,200 partners and community leaders actively participated. We identified and registered 11,401 pregnant women through these gatherings for vital antenatal care services. Additionally, more than 1,400 members of our mother-to-mother groups received crucial information on sexual and reproductive health as well as gender-based violence, empowering them to spread awareness throughout their communities.

Integrating Fistula Identification in National Vaccination Campaigns

National vaccination campaigns, in partnership with the Ministry of Health (MOH), Regional Health Bureaus, and UNFPA, have broadened their focus to include the identification of obstetric fistula cases, marking a notable advancement in maternal health care. By harnessing the extensive reach and mobilization efforts of vaccination campaigns, this integrated approach has facilitated the detection and referral of more fistula cases, ensuring affected women receive prompt access to treatment facilities. This strategic integration serves as a valuable lesson learned and an innovative practice in maternal health care, showcasing the effectiveness of collaboration and partnership. By replicating and expanding upon this initiative, significant progress is being made in the eradication of obstetric fistula and the protection of maternal health in Ethiopia.



[5] The State of the World's Midwifery by UNFPA, ICM, WHO, 2014.

5

OUR TRANSFORMATIVE RESULTS



5.2 | ATTAINING ZERO UNMET NEED FOR FAMILY PLANNING

Family planning services play a crucial role in promoting the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities by enabling them to make informed choices about the timing and spacing of pregnancies. In Ethiopia, the landscape of family planning has witnessed remarkable progress in recent decades, characterized by significant increases in contraceptive prevalence and reductions in total fertility rates. From 1980 to 2019, the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) surged from 1.25% to an impressive 41.4%, while the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) halved from 7.7 in the 1990s to 3.8 in 2020, positioning Ethiopia among the leaders in TFR reduction from 2010 to 2019.

Moreover, the country has achieved near-universal awareness and utilization of contraceptive methods, with 99% of women acquainted with at least one contraceptive method by 2016. This progress has significantly reduced unmet contraceptive needs, dropping from 37% in 2000 to 22.3% in 2016. However, despite these advancements, disparities persist among urban and rural areas, regions, and demographic groups, necessitating targeted efforts to ensure equitable access to family planning services. To address these disparities and advance family planning goals, the country has developed a comprehensive 7-year (2023-2030) costed implementation plan for the family planning program. This strategic plan will serve as a guiding framework for all family planning endeavors at national and regional levels, setting region-specific targets for key family planning interventions to be implemented over the coming years.

Challenges in the family planning landscape stemming from demand and supply issues. Inadequate provider skills, high staff turnover rates, limited funding, sporadic supply shortages, and cultural barriers continue to hinder progress. UNFPA remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting Ethiopia in overcoming these challenges and advancing reproductive health and rights through strengthening supply and supply chain systems, capacity building of healthcare providers, advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives, evidence-based interventions, and collaborative partnerships.

For every 1 dollar invested in family planning, there can be up to US \$8.40 in returns due to savings in healthcare, education, and social services [6].

Reviving Hope for Dubti Hospital Amidst Crisis

The northern conflict and drought devastated Afar region's health sector, forcing professionals to flee, and leaving Dubti Hospital, once serving 350,000 people annually, to now care for over 1.6 million. CEO Hussein Aden laments the strain on maternal and child health services.

To address this, 16 nurses were trained in long-acting family planning by UNFPA and International Medical Corps (IMC), funded by the Government of Ireland. Amanuel Mellese, a trainee, praises the comprehensive program's impact on decision-making for women. Abaynesh Yimam, now trained in long-term methods, anticipates better service provision for HIV-positive women.

Yassin Habib, Head of the Health Bureau, acknowledges UNFPA's support, including an ambulance for emergency obstetric care. Since 2018, UNFPA has partnered with Dubti Hospital to enhance maternal and child health services and establish a one-stop center for gender-based violence survivors.



[6] UNFPA Family Planning Strategy (2020-2025).

BY THE NUMBERS

3.3 million

couples protected from unintended pregnancy and STI/HIV through the use of UNFPA-donated contraceptives



1,447

health professionals were trained on supply chain management, FP service provision, and FP quality control.

953

experts from FP stakeholders improved their knowledge on SMART Advocacy for Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM) for Family Planning in Ethiopia

237

public health facilities implemented electronic logistics management system (eLMIS) countrywide.

246

public health facilities implemented family planning service quality standards.

Areas of Focus



Provision of family planning commodities: UNFPA plays a pivotal role in supporting the government of Ethiopia in ensuring the provision of essential family planning commodities across the country. In 2023, UNFPA contributed one-third of all family planning supplies nationwide worth over \$12 million, underscoring its commitment to improving access to reproductive health services for all. Simultaneously, a 7-year Costed Implementation Plan (FP-CIP) was launched to increase CPR to 54% and reduce the unmet need for FP to 17%, with an estimated implementation cost exceeding USD 0.5 billion.



Supply Chain Strengthening: UNFPA is actively strengthening the supply chain for family planning commodities through various initiatives in Ethiopia. In 2023, UNFPA supported the capacity-building of over 1,400 healthcare professionals on supply chain management and service provision for FP, including medical device testing for experts of the regulatory authority, the Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority (EFDA). Additionally, capacity-building training materials were developed to enhance the skills of the supply chain workforce and university staff, with a focus on improving responsiveness to humanitarian situations. Furthermore, collaborative efforts with the Ministry of Health have resulted in implementing electronic logistics management systems and family planning service quality standards in 483 public health facilities, enhancing product data visibility and overall service quality in the sector.



Resource Mobilization & Advocacy: UNFPA spearheaded the mobilization of \$12.1 million for short- and long-term contraceptives, benefiting 3.3 million couples with one-year protection from unintended pregnancies and HIV/STIs. Through targeted capacity-building sessions on SMART Advocacy for Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM) in Family Planning (FP), 25 experts from FP stakeholders gained vital skills in developing strategic advocacy plans. Collaborative workshops involving key stakeholders resulted in a comprehensive advocacy plan to mobilize resources from diverse stakeholders, including federal and regional authorities, and the private sector. With a core team overseeing its execution in 2024, this plan aims to drive sustained support for FP initiatives and advance DRM efforts effectively.

Innovations

Catalyzing Change: UNFPA's Co-Financing Compact Spurs domestic financing for Family Planning in Ethiopia

The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance, in collaboration with UNFPA, have taken a monumental step towards advancing family planning in Ethiopia. By signing a Country Compact, they have committed to gradually increasing domestic financing for family planning, paving the way for sustainable progress in reproductive healthcare. This flagship initiative aligns with the global agenda to achieve zero unmet need for family planning by 2030, as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Furthermore, the promotion of the UNFPA Supplies Partnership Compact's co-financing initiative has spurred additional donors to engage in a wider co-financing compact agreement with the Ethiopian government. This collaborative effort, involving key stakeholders such as the Ministries of Health and Finance, enhances the sustainability of family planning programs and accelerates progress towards achieving universal access to reproductive healthcare services, ultimately contributing to achieving the SDGs.



5

OUR TRANSFORMATIVE RESULTS



5.3 REACHING ZERO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES

Gender-based violence and harmful practices such as Child Marriage (CM) and FGM remain pervasive issues in Ethiopia, exacerbating the challenges faced by women and girls. A significant percentage of women still endure physical or sexual abuse throughout their lives. According to the 2016 Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey, approximately 35% of ever-married women have experienced spousal violence, encompassing physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Shockingly, instances of physical violence can begin as early as age 15.

During humanitarian crises, the disruption of social structures and support systems, coupled with displacement and loss of income-generating activities, leaves women and girls more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Limited access to essential services, including health care and law enforcement, further exacerbates their vulnerability, hindering their ability to seek protection and support. Deep-rooted cultural norms and gender inequalities may become more pronounced during crises, perpetuating harmful practices and marginalizing women and girls in their communities.

In response to this critical issue, UNFPA's efforts aim at strengthening multi-sectoral capacity to prevent, protect, and provide services for survivors of GBV in all settings and enhance the ability of the government and key stakeholders to respond to the elimination of harmful practices. By supporting the establishment and operation of safe houses, rehabilitation centers, women, and girls' friendly spaces, and 'One-Stop Centers', UNFPA aims to increase access and utilization of comprehensive services for survivors. However, there are still challenges to overcome, as a significant percentage of ever-married women and men in Ethiopia believe that a husband is justified in beating his wife under certain circumstances. Thus, UNFPA's efforts not only support service provision but also advocate for integrating gender-based violence elimination into broader policies and programs, recognizing the need for a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach involving health and law enforcement agencies as key entry points for survivors.

Ethiopia is home to 25 million girls and women who have experienced FGM, the largest absolute number in Eastern and Southern Africa [7].

Safe Spaces, Stronger Futures

In Chifera Woreda, Afar region, the Women and Girls Friendly Space (WGFS) provides a sanctuary for women and girls to discuss domestic issues, violence prevention, and skill-sharing.

Aregash Hussien, a regular attendee, emphasizes the practical approach to creating peace at home and avoiding confrontations. Sessions, guided by experts, focus on gender-based violence prevention, early marriage, and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), especially relevant for the post-conflict. Iman Jemal, GBV response officer, highlights the WGFS's role in changing attitudes and providing resources like sanitary pads and family planning.

The space offers after-school sessions for girls, empowering them to resist early marriage. Zahara Sultan, 17, credits the space for her decision to stay in school and refuse an early marriage.

Supported by UNFPA and the Government of Ireland, the WGFS faces challenges in securing permanent housing, but stakeholders like Mohamed Hussein, Regional Head of Disaster and Risk Management, are committed to ensuring its sustainability and recognize its importance in post-conflict recovery.



[7] A profile of FGM in Ethiopia, UNICEF, 2020.

BY THE NUMBERS

247,444

women and girls accessed different GBV services, including MHPSS

67,800

young girls aged 10-19 received prevention and protection services related to child marriage

347,321

girls received support related to female genital mutilation

190,599

women and girls reached with dignity kits and other personal hygiene items

732,617

community members were informed on SRH & GBV services, and risk mitigation measures.

7,750

planned child marriages were averted

5,550

cases of FGM were successfully cancelled

11,675

women/girls provided with livelihood support

111

service points (WGFS, OSCs, Safe Houses, etc.) supported to provide standard & comprehensive services for survivors of GBV

Areas of Focus



Service provision: UNFPA played a vital role in combating gender-based violence (GBV) in Ethiopia by supporting the establishment and operation of 33 One-Stop Centers (OSCs), 68 Women and Girls' Friendly Spaces (WGFS), and 10 Safe Houses across 12 regions. These service points served as crucial hubs for survivors to access essential services like medical care, counseling, legal aid, shelter, skill-building activities, and referrals. In addition to direct support, UNFPA strengthens systems by providing necessary resources, training frontline service providers, and implementing ethical reporting mechanisms to ensure data accuracy and accountability. Through these initiatives, UNFPA addresses immediate needs while also working to prevent GBV and create a more supportive and responsive system for all affected individuals in Ethiopia.



Policy & Advocacy: Through targeted initiatives during 2023, UNFPA raised awareness at the community level on GBV and harmful practices prevention and response, reaching over half a million individuals from 72 communities with critical information and support on child marriage and FGM. Similarly, over 700,000 individuals were informed about their rights with initiatives fostering social and behavioral change, awareness raising, and promoting positive masculinities. By advocating for policy reforms and implementation strategies, UNFPA aims to strengthen legal frameworks, enhance access to justice for survivors, and promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Through collaborative partnerships with various stakeholders, UNFPA is amplifying voices, advocating for rights, and catalyzing transformative change to eliminate GBV and create a safer, and more equitable society for all.



Coordination Strengthening: UNFPA leads the GBV Area of Responsibility (AoR) at national, regional, and woreda levels, aiming to support a coordinated and standardized approach to GBV prevention and response. Thus, UNFPA supported the development of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for GBV service provision, while providing technical assistance to update the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment national policy. Similarly, UNFPA is providing support to the country through the National Alliance to End Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation in realizing the country's commitment to end these two harmful practices by 2025.

Innovations

Nekakat Serial Drama Challenges Social Norms on Ethiopian Airwaves

Between 2020 and 2022, three national and FM radio stations regularly broadcasted the *Nekakat* Serial Drama, presenting a magazine-style format comprising 338 episodes. This compelling narrative reached a vast audience of 2,340,302 listeners, including 1,167,811 men and 1,172,491 women.

The drama, centered on characters navigating life with resilience and wit, served as a powerful tool to challenge entrenched social norms and address GBV and harmful practices such as FGM and child marriage. The drama aimed to reshape societal narratives and foster dialogue around these pressing issues by presenting relatable stories that resonate with audiences.

Utilizing the extensive reach and accessibility of radio, the *Nekakat* Serial Drama served as a significant platform for educating and engaging audiences on gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful traditional practices. Through compelling storytelling and nuanced character depictions, it effectively heightened awareness and empowered young listeners to critically assess prevailing attitudes and behaviors. Ultimately, this intervention marks a pivotal stride in cultivating a culture of gender equality and advancing the rights and welfare of youth in Ethiopia.



6

KEY AREA



6.1 | HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE FULFILL THEIR POTENTIAL

In Ethiopia, where 70 percent of the population is under the age of 35 [8], prioritizing youth empowerment is paramount to unlocking the country's demographic dividend. Prioritizing initiatives that safeguard their well-being and empower them to thrive is essential for the current generation and lays the foundation for the country's future prosperity and sustainable development.

UNFPA's programme aims to equip adolescents and youth, particularly those who are vulnerable, with the skills and knowledge to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). It seeks to create an enabling environment for them to access SRHR information and services in all settings, including life skills interventions for marginalized adolescents and young people. Additionally, the programme focuses on the operationalization of Education for Health and Well-being both in-school and out-of-school through youth-serving platforms. It also aims to institutionalize the participation of young people in policy dialogue and programming, while integrating peace building and sexual and reproductive health and rights of youth into various initiatives.

This support is closely aligned with strategies aimed at building the capacity of youth-serving institutions to ensure the provision of youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health information and services at all levels. Moreover, UNFPA facilitates coordination, evidence generation, and partnership with the media for advocacy and outreach efforts.

As part of its commitment to HIV/AIDS prevention, UNFPA leads the prevention component of the UN Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS. This initiative contributes to the Government's efforts to prevent and mitigate the spread of HIV, with a special focus on vulnerable segments of the population such as adolescent girls. UNFPA is dedicated to realizing the 90-90-90 target and the global goal of eliminating HIV/AIDS by 2030.

UNFPA is supporting the Youth Department of the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs to develop the Ethiopia National Action Plan (NAP) on Youth Peace and Security (YPS) through conducting community level YPS assessments and stakeholders mapping. UNFPA has also supported YPS capacity development activities for responsible government and civil society stakeholders to support the development of the Ethiopia NAP-YPS, including the formation of the YPS Taskforce which it co-Chairs alongside IOM and the office of the UN Resident Coordinator.

The modern contraceptive prevalence rate (mCPR) among adolescents in Ethiopia currently stands at 36.4% [9].

Empowering Youth: SRH Education and Support Transforms Lives in Kombolcha Industrial Park

Fatuma, a 25-year-old cutter at Traybus Garment Factory in Kombolcha Industrial Park, had limited knowledge about sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) issues. Thanks to the "Integrated SRH and SGBV Prevention and Management Project for Vulnerable Groups," led by the Health Development and Anti-Malaria Association (HDADA) in partnership with UNFPA, Fatuma gained essential knowledge through weekly peer-to-peer sessions.

During these sessions, Fatuma shared her struggles with irregular menstrual cycles and deep depression during menstruation. With support from peer educators and parasocial workers, she sought professional counseling and treatment, discovering that her suffering was caused by long-term use of Depo-Provera contraceptives. Switching to alternative family planning methods, she found relief and improved health.

The peer sessions provided Fatuma and her peers with a platform to openly discuss SRH issues, leading to significant improvements in their health and well-being. They now regularly visit nearby health centers for youth-friendly SRH services and actively participate in SGBV prevention campaigns at Kombolcha Industrial Park and surrounding communities. Through peer-to-peer learning, Fatuma and her peers have transformed their lives, becoming advocates for SRH and SGBV awareness and support.



[8] Ethiopia Central Statistical Agency, Ethiopia Mini Demographic and Health Survey 2014

[9] Ethiopian Public Health Institute and ICF. Ethiopia Mini Demographic and Health Survey 2019: key indicators. Rockville: EPHI and ICF; 2019.

BY THE NUMBERS

304,162

adolescents and young people reached with life skills education and SRH/GBV information and services.

10,470

vulnerable young people reached with integrated HIV prevention interventions

6,080

youths across Afar, Amhara, SNNPR, and Oromia regions reached with SRH/FP information.

35,046

women and girls reached with outreach activities and youth sexual and reproductive health (AYSRH) services

667

young people empowered through 'Her Space' and peer educator programs

73

youth-serving platforms have operationalized out-of-school comprehensive sexuality education

29

functional mechanisms available for young people's participation in policy dialogue, peace-building, and programming in all settings

Areas of Focus



Skill building: Skill-building initiatives have successfully reached over 200,000 adolescents and young people, providing them with direct sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV information, comprehensive training, and effective behavior change communication services. These efforts aimed at equipping youth with the necessary knowledge and skill set to make informed choices regarding their sexual and reproductive health. Through tailored programs and interventions, adolescents and young people are empowered to confidently navigate complex SRH decisions, ensuring their well-being and promoting positive health outcomes.



Service Delivery: Service delivery has been enhanced through the strengthening of capacity among duty bearers, including community leaders, parents, service providers, and members of youth-led organizations. Through skill-building training focused on HIV/SRH, coordination, leadership, and monitoring and evaluation, over 3,000 duty bearers were equipped to respond to the diverse needs of adolescents and youth effectively. Additionally, parental skill-building activities were conducted to further support caregivers in guiding and nurturing young people.



Creating an enabling environment: Adolescent and youth leadership, along with their meaningful engagement, is actively supported and strengthened by establishing platforms and safe spaces. These avenues allow young people to participate in policy dialogues actively, contribute to program implementation, and engage in peace-building efforts. Moreover, 73 youth-serving platforms have operationalized out-of-school Education for Health and Well-being, providing vital information to adolescents beyond the classroom setting. Additionally, 29 functional mechanisms have been made available for the participation of young people in policy dialogue, peacebuilding, and programming across various settings.



HIV/STI Prevention: UNFPA spearheads a comprehensive approach to combat HIV/STIs, focusing on prevention, education, and access to services through the distribution of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Kits, vital in crises for safeguarding individuals from infections. Similarly, our strategy includes supporting the establishment of the HIV Positive Adolescents and Youth Association called ASKUS to enable them to have space and voice to advocate for themselves and their peers to access a stigma-free environment to access HIV testing, information, and services. Additionally, efforts are bolstered by robust advocacy and awareness campaigns aimed at dispelling myths, reducing stigma, and encouraging healthy sexual behaviors.



Peace Promotion: In response to the adoption of UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) on December 9th, 2015, and considering the current realities in Ethiopia regarding peace and security, UNFPA has made youth engagement in conflict resolution, dialogue, and peacebuilding a top priority. UNFPA Ethiopia is actively supporting the Federal Government in formulating and implementing YPS policies, while also integrating a culture of peace into its Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) programs. This collaborative effort with young people aims to promote peace and discourage violence, thus creating an enabling environment for the realization of the ICPD Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Innovations

'Tech for Youth's Rights': YeneTAB and Minch Apps

In Ethiopia, adolescents face unique challenges in accessing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information. Meet Selam, a determined young woman navigating the complexities of adolescence in a bustling city. Despite barriers to accurate SRH services, Selam discovers hope in YeneTAB and Minch, UNFPA-supported tech tools.

YeneTAB, a user-friendly app tailored to young people's needs, offers Selam vital SRH information. From sexuality education to contraceptive guidance, YeneTAB empowers her to make informed choices about her well-being. Meanwhile, Minch, an inclusive IVR (Interactive Voice Response) powered tool, provides personalized support for Selam and her peers with a disability, allowing them to access SRH services discreetly.

UNFPA ensures adolescents like Selam are central to these innovations. With targeted interventions in 2023, over 105,000 vulnerable individuals have gained the skills to navigate SRH and rights, fostering informed decision-makers and advocates for change.

Selam's story spreads across her community, showcasing the impact of technology and innovation. YeneTAB and Minch break down barriers, empowering youth across Ethiopia to shape their SRH and rights, creating a brighter future for generations to come.



6

KEY AREA



6.2 RESPONDING TO HUMANITARIAN CRISES

UNFPA is actively responding to humanitarian crises in Ethiopia, addressing reproductive health, HIV, and gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response needs within the framework of the National Policy and Strategy on Disaster Risk Prevention and Management. Amidst the multiple and often overlapping crises in 2023, including conflict, climate-related shocks such as floods and droughts, agricultural infestation, and disease outbreaks, vulnerable populations, particularly women and girls, are disproportionately affected. These crises exacerbate existing challenges and render women and girls more susceptible to sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation, and HIV infection.

In addition to these challenges, Ethiopia hosts one of the largest refugees and internally displaced populations globally. As the third largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, it is currently home to nearly 1 million refugees [10] – mainly from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan – while an estimated 3.5 million Ethiopians are internally displaced [11]. This influx of refugees further strains resources and compounds the humanitarian situation, especially in areas already burdened by existing challenges. The ongoing crises in neighboring countries, such as the conflict in Sudan and the political instability in Somalia, continue to drive new waves of asylum-seekers, adding to the complexities of the humanitarian landscape in Ethiopia.

To address these pressing needs, UNFPA actively supports the supply of dignity and reproductive health kits, providing essential life-saving services to affected populations. Additionally, the Fund facilitates the deployment of health professionals, including midwives, to deliver critical maternal health services in affected areas. Collaborating closely with the government and other partners, UNFPA ensures that sexual and reproductive health and rights, along with responses to gender-based violence, are fully integrated into humanitarian responses. By prioritizing these interventions, UNFPA strives to alleviate the suffering of affected populations and promote the well-being and dignity of women and girls amidst crises.

According to the Humanitarian Needs Overview, 7.2 Million people need GBV services in 2024, having increased from 6.7 million in 2023

Restoring Maternal Healthcare Post-Conflict in Tigray

On November 22nd, 2023, Adi Daero Primary Hospital saw its first childbirth in over a year post-conflict. Wahid Hadush, 40, became the first mother to undergo a successful Cesarean section after doctors discovered her baby had an abnormal heartbeat. Previously operating at minimum capacity due to conflict, the hospital, vital for over 130,000 people, had struggled to recover.

With 90% of accessible health facilities damaged, UNFPA and Medical Teams International intervened in March 2023, refurbishing two hospital wards and revitalizing services. Supported by Canada's USD 15.9 million aid, the hospital saw a surge in deliveries and resumed surgeries. Yet, challenges persist infrastructure remains damaged, and staffing shortages plague operations.

Yemane Tesfa, the hospital's CEO, highlights the pressing need for psychosocial support for exhausted health workers. The hospital's expansion plans remain on hold, leaving communities like Adi Daero dependent on ongoing UNFPA support. With the Humanitarian Response Appeal 2023 seeking nearly USD 48 million, sustained assistance is crucial for rebuilding Ethiopia's shattered health infrastructure.



[10, 11] UNHCR - Jan, 2024: <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/ethiopia-unhcr-s-grandi-urges-more-support-people-fleeing-sudan#:~:text=Ethiopia%20hosts%20one%20of%20the,million%20Ethiopians%20are%20internally%20displaced>.

BY THE NUMBERS

1,712,142

million emergency-affected individuals benefited from SRH/GBV services with the support of UNFPA ^[12]

1,772

Metric Tons of SRH kits, medical equipment, and supplies distributed to health facilities in affected regions.

900,942

crises-affected individuals reached with lifesaving SRH services

87,857

women and girls at risk of GBV reached with GBV services

732,617

individuals reached with GBV/SRH awareness raising activities in affected regions

59,268

individuals received different MHPSS services at facility and community levels

141,982

women and girls of reproductive age received female dignity kits

184,791

women and girls who accessed services at WGFS/OSCs

2,132

health professionals trained in the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP), GBV in emergencies, and other related topics across affected regions.

[12] Based on the UNFPA's standard calculation

Areas of Focus



Service Delivery: During emergencies, essential service provision is often disrupted, limiting access to critical SRH and GBV services. Recognizing the critical importance of maintaining these services amidst the crisis, UNFPA deployed skilled health professionals, including 222 midwives to affected areas, ensuring access to vital SRH care and support. Additionally, UNFPA has mobilized 19 Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNTs) to reach remote or inaccessible communities, delivering essential SRH services directly to those in need. UNFPA also provided over 1,772 metric tons of crucial supplies, such as reproductive health kits and dignity kits, to bolster the capacity of local health facilities for SRH service provision in emergencies. Those supplies aimed to reach over 1.7 million people across 12 affected regions in Ethiopia.



Leadership & Coordination: As the national lead in the GBV AoR, UNFPA collaborates with the Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth Affairs (MOWCYA) to enhance coordination mechanisms, resulting in the expansion of membership to 72 member organizations, including INGOs, NGOs, UN agencies, donors, and government entities. Furthermore, nine regional GBV AoR mechanisms were activated in various regions across Ethiopia, ensuring comprehensive GBV coverage. Additionally, area-based coordination mechanisms were established at the zonal and district levels in 17 locations nationwide, responding to the specific needs of affected communities. Similarly, UNFPA co-led the SHR Technical Working Group at national level as well as the Ethiopia PSEA Network, ensuring a more effective and well-coordinated response to GBV and SRH needs during emergencies.



Resource Mobilization: In 2023, efforts were initiated for the establishment of a dedicated team led by a Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Specialist to bolster resource mobilization efforts through advocacy, partnership building, and proposal development. Additionally, field missions were conducted with development and humanitarian donor groups to market UNFPA's efforts and highlight the urgent needs on the ground. Through these multifaceted approaches, UNFPA Ethiopia secured 64% of the humanitarian funding appeal to effectively address the multiple humanitarian crises across the country.



Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Nexus: Within the growing international consensus about the need to anchor humanitarian and development efforts in the pursuit of peace, UNFPA is an active advocate of mainstreaming the humanitarian-peace-development (HPD) nexus in all the ongoing programming in Ethiopia. The addition of a Youth and Peace Security Specialist to the team underscores our commitment to addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by young people in conflict-affected areas. Additionally, UNFPA supports the UN and national initiatives aimed at fostering peace and reconciliation across communities. Moreover, we work to mainstream the HPD nexus across all our responses, ensuring that our interventions address immediate humanitarian needs and contribute to long-term peace and stability in Ethiopia.

From Silence to Empowerment Amidst Gender-Based Violence

Azeb*, 33, resides in the Mambuk IDP camp in Benishangul Gumuz, Ethiopia, having fled an armed attack. Her life became even more unbearable after a sexual assault left her shattered. Despite her silence, the pain consumed her. Eventually, confiding in a friend led her to support the Ethiopian Midwives Association, backed by UNFPA and funded by the Government of Japan.

Through social support groups and counseling, Azeb found solace among women who shared similar experiences. Realizing she wasn't alone, Azeb embarked on her healing journey, understanding that society's stigma on gender-based violence was misplaced. UNFPA's assistance proved transformative, offering hope and empowerment to survivors like Azeb in their path to recovery.



6

KEY AREA



6.3

ADVANCING POPULATION DYNAMICS & DATA MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

In Ethiopia, UNFPA plays a central role in shaping population data and information management to drive evidence-based decision-making and foster sustainable development outcomes. Through comprehensive collaborations with governmental bodies and other stakeholders, UNFPA actively contributes to enhancing data infrastructure and capacity-building initiatives, facilitating the effective utilization of population data for policy formulation and program implementation, performance monitoring, and impact evaluation.

UNFPA's involvement spans diverse areas, including support for the Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) and establishing an open-access data system. By providing technical expertise and financial assistance, UNFPA ensures the successful execution of essential surveys and strengthens the analytical capabilities of national statistical agencies. This collaborative approach not only enhances the quality and availability of disaggregated population data but also fosters a culture of data-driven decision-making at various levels of governance.

Furthermore, UNFPA's engagement extends beyond mere data generation to encompass capacity-building endeavors and strategic advocacy efforts. Through targeted workshops, training programs, and disseminating policy briefs, UNFPA empowers stakeholders with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively interpret and utilize population data in policy formulation and program design. These capacity-building initiatives enhance the analytical capacities of government officials, researchers, and civil society organizations, thus enabling them to leverage population data for informed decision-making and strategic planning.

Moreover, UNFPA's strategic advocacy events are crucial in raising awareness about population issues and advocating for evidence-based policies and programs. By convening key stakeholders, including government officials, policymakers, and civil society representatives, UNFPA facilitates dialogue and consensus-building around population-related challenges and opportunities. Through these platforms, UNFPA reinforces the importance of prioritizing investments in women's and girls' health and empowerment to accelerate progress towards achieving national development goals. Likewise, UNFPA has been pivotal in providing technical and financial support in the process of revising the Population Policy of Ethiopia, which will play a significant role in placing the population at the center of development planning, speeding up the demographic transition, and thereby making demographic dividend a reality. Towards that end, the ongoing study on Ethiopia's Demographic Dividend Roadmap' is one of the major activities supported by the UNFPA.

UNFPA's Crucial Support for the Ethiopian Population and Housing Census and other Data Initiatives in Ethiopia

UNFPA has been pivotal in bolstering Ethiopia's data infrastructure, particularly through vital initiatives such as the Ethiopian Population and Housing Census (PHC) and the Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS). Despite initial setbacks delaying the 4th Census in 2017, UNFPA's proactive measures, including mobilizing funds, offering technical assistance, and advocating for international standards, have significantly advanced the census execution. Embracing innovative methodologies like Hybrid census approaches, UNFPA ensures comprehensive data collection, even in challenging regions.

Census data serves as the cornerstone for policy formulation, development planning, and resource allocation, profoundly impacting Ethiopia's governance and development trajectory. These efforts are especially crucial for advancing national and global development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In parallel, UNFPA continues its support for the upcoming Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) in 2024, focusing on critical areas such as maternal health, family planning, and gender-based violence. This comprehensive data collection underscores UNFPA's commitment to empowering decision-makers with actionable insights, driving targeted interventions to enhance the well-being of Ethiopia's population. As preparations for both the census and the EDHS gain momentum, UNFPA's steadfast support reaffirms its dedication to Ethiopia's sustainable development journey.

BY THE NUMBERS

Investment in technical equipment and capacity strengthening for the upcoming Census.



Supported the development of the **Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD) +10 national review report** produced under the leadership of the Ministry of Population & Development (MoPD).



Launched the **Harari Regional Integrated Management Information System (IMIS)** in collaboration with the Ethiopian Statistical Service (ESS) to create awareness about the establishment of the Harari IMIS and /or promote its utilization.



Supported the development of the **third Annual Vital Statistics Report** in collaboration with ESS. Supported the development of the third Annual Vital Statistics Report in collaboration with ESS.



Supported the ESS' preparatory activities - revision and translation of survey tools, training of field staff, etc. - of the **Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS)**, planning to complete data collection activities in 2024



Supported the development of **3 policy briefs** on Youth Migration: Policy Options for Development in Ethiopia; Harnessing the Demographic Dividend in High and Low Fertility Regions of Ethiopia; and Unemployment and Development in Ethiopia, in collaboration with the MoPD.



Supported the production of a **Revised Module on Integrating Population Variables into Development Plans, Policies, Strategies and Projects** in Ethiopia, among others.

197

Professionals **trained** in various topics such as the National Transfer Accounts (NTA) Methodology, the REDATAM training, techniques of Enumeration Areas (EA) mapping and use of mobile technology in preparation for the upcoming 4th Population Census.

Areas of Focus



Institutional Building/System Strengthening: UNFPA Ethiopia has made significant strides in institutional building and system strengthening to bolster data infrastructure and enhance capacity for effective population management. Notable achievements include the investment of 1 million USD in technical equipment and capacity building for the upcoming 4th Population Census, as well as collaborations with key partners like WorldPop to address accessibility challenges in data collection. Initiatives such as the launch of the Harari Regional Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) and training sessions for field supervisors on Enumeration Areas (EA) mapping demonstrate UNFPA's commitment to building robust data systems that support informed decision-making.



Policy & Advocacy: UNFPA Ethiopia's efforts in policy development and advocacy have played a crucial role in advancing population dynamics and data utilization for sustainable development. Noteworthy accomplishments include the support for the development of policy briefs on critical topics like youth migration, demographic dividend, and unemployment, in collaboration with the Ministry of Population and Development (MoPD). Additionally, UNFPA's contributions to the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD) +10 national review report underscore its advocacy for evidence-based policies that address population-related challenges and promote inclusive development agendas.



Capacity building in population dynamics and data management: UNFPA Ethiopia has prioritized capacity building initiatives to strengthen expertise in population dynamics and data management, empowering stakeholders across federal and regional sectors. Through comprehensive training sessions, 22 experts have been equipped with the National Transfer Accounts (NTA) Methodology, enhancing their proficiency in demographic analysis and planning. Collaborations with the Ethiopian Statistical Service (ESS) have facilitated the training of 68 Data and ICT regional experts, while efforts to support the production of policy briefs and revised modules on integrating population variables into development plans underscore UNFPA's commitment to building sustainable capacity for informed decision-making in population dynamics and data utilization.



Preparation for a Successful Census and Health Survey: UNFPA Ethiopia's proactive approach to preparation ensures the success of crucial data collection endeavors, including the Census and Health Survey. Investment in technical equipment and capacity strengthening, alongside partnerships with organizations like WorldPop, fortifies the infrastructure needed for comprehensive data gathering. Collaborative efforts with the Ethiopian Statistical Service (ESS) for the revision and translation of survey tools, as well as the training of field staff, underscore UNFPA's commitment to meticulous planning and execution. Moreover, support for policy briefs and advocacy initiatives contributes to the alignment of data collection objectives with national development priorities, ensuring that the forthcoming Census and Health Survey serve as robust foundations for evidence-based decision-making and effective policy formulation in Ethiopia.

The State of World Population Report 2023 launched nationally at high-level event

A high-level event was convened in May 2023 to mark the national launch of UNFPA's flagship report, **The State of World Population 2023**. The report, themed "*8 Billion Lives, Infinite Possibilities – The Case for Rights and Choices*," sheds light on widespread population anxieties and government policies aimed at fertility rates, cautioning that such efforts can often prove ineffective and potentially erode women's rights. H.E. Sandokan Debebe, State Minister of Planning and Development, emphasized the integration of population issues into Ethiopia's development plans and the importance of reproductive rights in realizing women's potential. UNFPA Country Representative, Mr. Koffi Kouame, underscored the need for enabling informed choices to contribute to prosperous societies. The report calls for reframing population narratives and emphasizes the importance of individuals, especially women, making their own reproductive choices. The event included a panel discussion with representatives from various sectors and was attended by government officials, civil society organizations, development partners, UN agencies, and other stakeholders.

7 | 2023 KEY HIGHLIGHTS



UNFPA Ethiopia undertook a year-long **commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the start of its operations in Ethiopia** in 2023. The commemoration was launched with a high-level event on 16 March in the presence of the Ethiopian Minister of Health, the State Ministers of Finance and Women and Social Affairs, and the Heads of various Diplomatic Missions in Ethiopia.



Senior officials from **KOICA visited UNFPA-supported intervention sites in Southern Ethiopia and Oromia regions**. The visited sites were part of the five-year KOICA funded project entitled *"Integrated Programme on Family Planning and Sexual and Reproductive Health among Adolescents and Youth."*



The UNFPA-supported One-Stop Center at the **Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Addis Ababa was visited by the Canadian Minister of International Cooperation, H.E. Harjit Sajjan, and Honorable Arielle Kayabaga, a member of parliament in May 2023**. The OSC is among the 16 centers UNFPA is supporting nationwide with funds from Canada.



UNFPA collaborated with the Ministry of Planning and Development in organizing the **commemoration of the World Population Day 2023** under the theme *"Unleashing the power of gender equality: Uplifting the voices of women and girls to unlock our world's infinite possibilities."* The event was attended by high government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, UN agencies, and civil society organizations.



Representatives from Canada, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark embarked on a significant visit to UNFPA-supported sites in Tigray, Ethiopia. This visit, aimed at gaining firsthand insight into the impact of UNFPA's initiatives, underscored the commitment of these nations to supporting reproductive health and rights in crisis-affected regions.



A high-level delegation from the **Steering Committee for the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** visited Ethiopia from October 2 to 6, 2023. Representatives from Canada, Germany, Nigeria, Sudan, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States had the opportunity to observe progress towards achieving SDG 5.3, focusing on eliminating harmful practices such as FGM and child marriage. They visited the Dalocha woreda of the Silte Zone in Central Ethiopia and met with senior Ethiopian Government officials to discuss challenges facing these efforts.



UNFPA handed over five high-spec ambulances worth over 13.5 million Birr to the Oromia and Afar regions on 6 September 2023 in the presence of H.E. Hans Henric Lundquist, Ambassador of Sweden to Ethiopia. The ambulances were purchased with the generous non-earmarked funding of the Government of Sweden and other donors as part of their support to UNFPA Ethiopia's humanitarian response



The UNFPA Humanitarian Response Division Director, Ms. Shoko Arakaki, and the Director of the UNFPA Management Services Division, Mr. Andrew Saberton, visited humanitarian intervention sites in Tigray in October 2023. The field visit aimed to assess the progress and the way forward on UNFPA's humanitarian response in the region and across the country.



UNFPA Executive Director, Dr. Natalia Kanem, undertook a visit to Ethiopia to participate in a working session with members of The Lancet Commission on *21st Century Threats to Global Health*. During her visit, Dr. Kanem also engaged in courtesy meetings with the President of Ethiopia, H.E. Sahle-Work Zewde, and various stakeholders.



A high-level panel on GBV in Ethiopian crisis contexts was held on December 6th as part of the **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence**. The event, organized by the Embassy of Spain, Ireland, Sweden, Belgium, and the EU Delegation in Ethiopia, along with UNFPA and UN Women, aimed to strengthen commitments to address this pervasive issue in the country.

8

FUTURE DIRECTION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: OUR VISION FOR 2024 AND BEYOND

As we reflect on the achievements and challenges of the past year, we envision a bold new direction for UNFPA Ethiopia in 2024 and beyond. Our vision is not merely one of incremental change, but rather a transformative leap towards catalyzing systemic shifts that confront the underlying causes of gender inequality, while championing the fundamental rights and choices of all individuals. With a steadfast commitment to accelerating progress towards the UNFPA three transformative results, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, we embark on a journey marked by innovation, collaboration, and unwavering dedication to building a more equitable and inclusive future for all in Ethiopia.

Transitioning towards Systemic Change: In recognition of the need for systemic change, we are shifting our focus from providing individual services to catalyzing broader systems change. By collaborating with governments, civil society organizations, and stakeholders, we aim to develop policies and programs that foster gender equality and women's empowerment at all levels. This transition reflects our understanding that lasting progress requires structural transformations that address the underlying drivers of gender inequality.

Prioritizing Long-Term Impact: Embracing the principles of sustainable development, our programs will prioritize long-term impact over short-lived outcomes. We recognize that sustainable change requires a shift from focusing solely on immediate results to nurturing lasting transformations that positively impact the lives of women and girls for generations to come. By forging partnerships and nurturing sustainable initiatives, we aim to create enduring positive changes in communities across Ethiopia.

Commitment to Quality Services: Quality services lie at the heart of our mission. As we transition towards systemic change, we remain committed to delivering evidence-based, effective, and rights-based services to women and girls. This commitment ensures that each intervention contributes meaningfully to their well-being and empowerment, laying the groundwork for sustainable progress.

Localizing Solutions: Understanding the nuanced needs of communities requires working closely at the grassroots level. Our transition involves a shift from focusing solely on global-level initiatives to prioritizing localized solutions that address the specific challenges faced by women and girls in their communities. By engaging with local stakeholders and co-creating tailored programs, we aim to ensure that our interventions are contextually relevant and responsive to the needs of those we serve.



Shifting focus to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach: Bridging the gap between humanitarian, development, and peace building is imperative. By recognizing the complementarity of these interventions, we aim to enhance coordination and effectiveness, ensuring that individuals and communities receive the support they need, when they need it.

Enhanced Integration: Our commitment to integration aims to maximize impact and optimize resources by promoting a holistic approach that cuts across sectors and thematic areas to address the complex and interconnected challenges that individuals and communities face in Ethiopia ensuring we are leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest left behind first.

Innovation and Data: Investing in data collection and analysis will be paramount in tracking progress and informing evidence-based policies and programs. Through innovative approaches, we will harness the power of data to target those areas more in need, advocating for the rights of women and girls and drive impactful change.

Partnerships, South-South, and Triangular Cooperation and Resource Mobilization: Strengthening partnerships and mobilizing resources are essential for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By promoting collaboration among diverse stakeholders and leveraging resources effectively, including domestic, international, public, and private funds, we aim to accelerate progress towards sustainable development and leave a lasting legacy of change. The Country Office is also shifting from funding to financing to unlock private funding and bridge financial gaps to achieve the three transformative results.




9 | ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PARTNERS

Our heartfelt appreciation extends to a broad alliance of implementing partners whose unwavering support and commitment have been instrumental in our journey toward securing rights and choices for all in Ethiopia. This diverse coalition spans government bodies, regional bureaus, academic institutions, specialized agencies, international and national non-governmental organizations, and grassroots organizations, each contributing unique strengths and insights toward our shared goals. Their collective efforts have paved the way for significant advancements in healthcare, protection, women's and youth's empowerment, and much more, reflecting a powerful commitment to collaborative success and the well-being of communities across Ethiopia.

Our Implementing Partners:

- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Women and Social Affairs
- Ministry of Planning and Development
- Federal Supreme Court
- Ethiopian Public Health Institute
- Ethiopian Statistics Services
- Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority
- Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission
- Ethiopian Pharmaceuticals Supply Agency
- Refugees and Returnees Service
- Addis Ababa City Administration Bureau of Finance
- Tigray National Regional State Bureau of Plan and Finance
- Oromia Regional State Bureau of Finance and Economic Cooperation
- Amhara National Regional State Bureau of Finance and Economic Cooperation
- Afar National Regional State Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
- Benishangul Gumuz Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
- Gambella Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
- Somali Regional State Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
- Sidama Regional State Finance Bureau
- South Ethiopia Regional State Finance Bureau
- Central Ethiopia Regional State Finance Bureau
- Afar Pastoralist Development Association
- DKT Ethiopia
- Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association
- Mujejeguwa-Loka Women Development Association
- Association for Women's Sanctuary and Development
- Women Association of Tigray
- Ethiopian Midwives Association
- Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia
- Health Development and Anti-Malaria Association
- Organization for Welfare and Development
- Talent Youth Association
- Action for Social Development and Environment
- Partnership for Pastoralists Development Association
- Maternity Foundation
- Population Media Center Ethiopia
- Consortium of Reproductive Health Associations
- Maedot Charity Organization
- MUMS for MUMS
- Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development
- Amhara Women Association
- Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia
- Norwegian Church Aid
- German Foundation for World Population
- Food for the Hungry
- MSI Ethiopia Reproductive Choices
- Medical Teams International
- University of Cape Town
- International Medical Corps
- World Vision Ethiopia



A young girl with braided hair, wearing a yellow dress with a pink floral pattern and a colorful beaded necklace, is sitting on the ground outdoors. She is smiling warmly at the camera while holding an open book. The background is a soft-focus natural setting with trees and foliage. The overall tone is warm and positive.

**Delivering a world
where every pregnancy
is wanted, every
childbirth is safe and
every young person's
potential is fulfilled.**



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