



THE GAMBIA

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AYSRH	Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health
BEmONC	Basic Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care
CBD	Community Based Distributor
CEmONC	Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care
CP	Country Programme
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EmOC	Emergency Obstetric Care
FP	Family Planning
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBoS	Gambia Bureau of Statistics
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GFPA	Gambia Family Planning Association
GoTG	Government of The Gambia
MDR	Maternal Death Audit Reviews
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MoH	Ministry of Health
NDP	National Development Plan
NYC	National Youth Council
POP/FLE	Population and Family Life Education
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SSTC	South-South & Triangular Cooperation
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



Editor-in-Chief

Ndéye Rose Sarr

Editorial Team/Production Team

Lamin Camara
Mbasireh Saidybah
Haddy Jonga
Maimuna Denton

Contributors

Lamin Camara
Maimuna Denton
Alieu Jammeh
Alhagie Kolley
Ramou Sonko
Joy Michael
Fatima Sonko
Mbasireh Saidybah
Haddy Jonga
Faith C. Ememodo
Yusupha Jarjusey
Bakary Juwara
Sheikh Sadibou Secka
Jankey Kassama

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FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE



Kunle Adeniyi

Country Representative
2018 - 2021

The year 2021 was marked by significant investments towards accompanying The Gambia to achieve the three transformative results, through strategic partnerships, programming for results and advocacy. This report documents the key results achieved through our Delivering for The Gambia agenda with particular focus on investing in women, girls, and young people.

Through our interventions to achieve zero unmet need for family planning, 16,099 unintended pregnancies were averted and 61,347 couple years of protection generated. The agency also strengthened the capacity of community-based distribution volunteers under the community-based Family Planning (FP) Programme, to reach the last mile and provide

access to modern contraceptive commodities for women even in the remotest parts of The Gambia.

Towards achieving zero preventable maternal deaths, we supported the training of health workers including midwives on the delivery of Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC). This was coupled with support support to strengthen teaching and learning at two nursing training schools through the provision of equipment and furniture amounting to over USD28,000.

In order to achieve zero Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and end all harmful practices inimical to the health and wellbeing of women and girls, we have been able to support the establishment of the first shelter for survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) dubbed the "The Orange Centre." Established to address the existing gaps in providing essential services to survivors, the centre is equipped with materials, supplies and human resources with the capacity to ensure quality care and facilitate the integration of GBV response services. This investment is crucial in aiding the recovery and promoting the resilience of survivors.

We are also pleased that during the year, the findings of the 2019-2020 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) were released. The DHS provides up-to-date estimates of basic demographic and health indicators at the national level, for urban and rural areas separately. We are

particularly pleased to see notable improvements in maternal and child health in the country. However, while the report highlights progress in many areas, challenges still remain, particularly in the area of women's empowerment and spousal violence. The results provide valuable data for the development of The Gambia's next National Development Plan, will inform the formulation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and the next UNFPA-Government of The Gambia Country Programme Document.

In line with the UN Secretary General's commitment to achieve gender parity within the UN, we are pleased to have achieved an improvement in our gender indicators on staff composition within the Country Office. In 2021, our staffing composition was made up of 55% women and 45% men. This is a step in the right direction and demonstrates our commitment to promote the provision of equal opportunities for men and women and ensuring that women are empowered to be self-reliant and live in dignity.

While we look forward to an even more successful 2022, we would like to recognise the invaluable work of Government and Civil Society partners for their tremendous commitment to ensure rights and choices for everyone, everywhere in The Gambia.

Kunle Adeniyi

UNFPA Country Representative

2018 - 2021

FROM OUR PARTNERS ABOUT OUR INTERVENTIONS



L I M I T L E S S

CHAPTER ONE



PROGRAMME REPORT



ENDING PREVENTABLE MATERNAL DEATHS

Maternal ill-health often measured by maternal mortality is a major concern around the world and a significant reproductive health challenge for The Gambia. According to the 2019/20 DHS, the country's current Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) is at 289 per 100,000 live births. It is important to note that there are sharp rural-urban differences in MMR with the level

for rural areas two-folds greater than that of the urban areas. These high figures are attributed to the sub-optimal availability and limited utilisation of quality EmOC services. The issue of skilled attendants at birth is also very critical. National data indicates that the distribution of EmOC facilities across the country is less than equitable with rural areas losing

out considerably. Coupled with the above factors, the high attrition rate among trained personnel and the poorly equipped health facilities contribute in no small way to compromising the quality of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services, hence contributing to maternal deaths and also causing obstetric fistula.

RESULTS



Medical supplies and equipment worth USD283,000 procured to strengthen emergency obstetric care services



Teaching aids and furniture worth over USD28,000 provided to two Nursing Training Schools



750 pregnant women supported with dignity-kits



15 Service Providers trained on EMONC Signal functions to facilitate provision of emergency obstetric care services

8 Maternal Death Audit Review Meetings conducted in major hospitals and major health facilities across the country





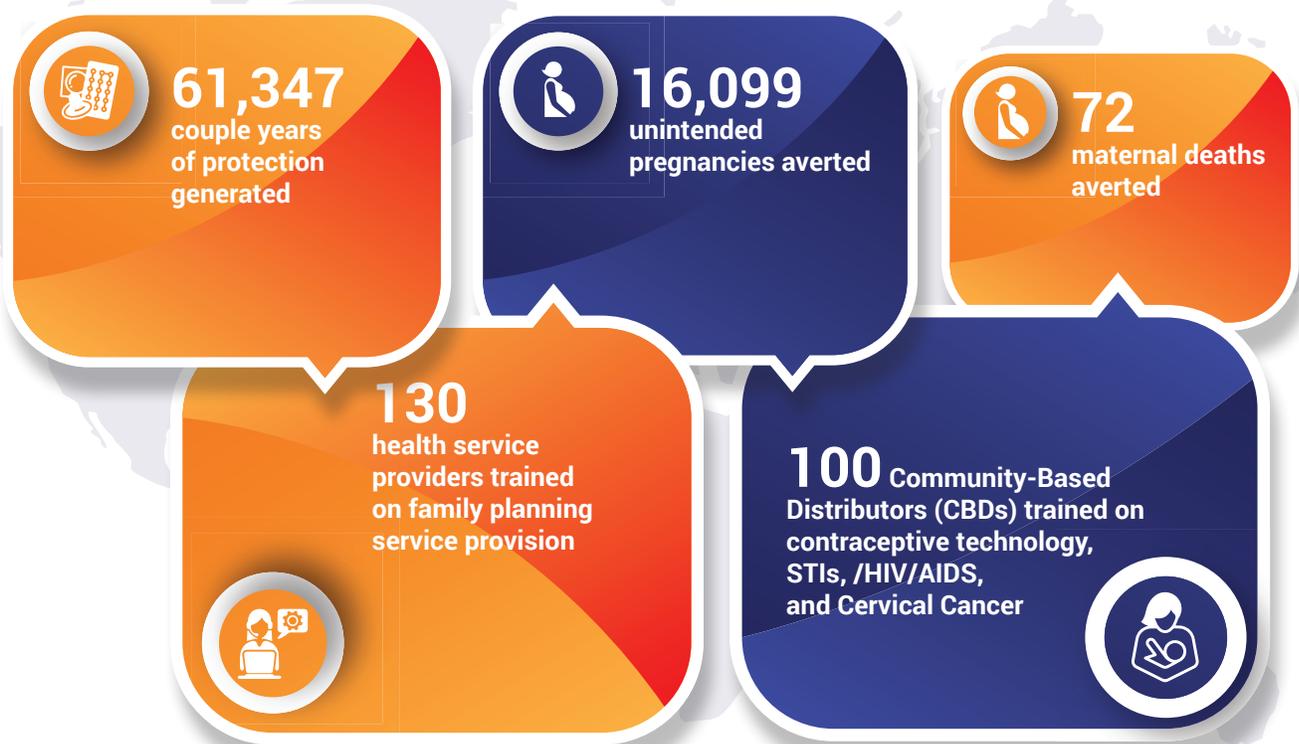
ENDING UNMET NEED FOR FAMILY PLANNING

Ending the unmet need for Family Planning (FP) could result in a reduction of maternal deaths due to conditions associated with too frequent deliveries and an improvement in the overall wellbeing of the family. FP is not understood by most people as a strategy for national development and as a key tool for improving the health of mothers and families. The new Phase III

of the UNFPA Supplies programme (2021-2030) which calls for partnership, builds on years of experience and innovation to create a more strategic approach to meet the needs of even the hardest-to-reach women and girls for modern contraceptives. The Government of The Gambia, in the National Health Strategic Plan (2014-2020), has articulated a need to reduce maternal and newborn

mortality in the country using Family Planning as a key strategy for realising this goal. However, there are several challenges facing the Family Planning programme especially with regards to rumors and misconceptions. Key among them are the beliefs that Family Planning is associated with promiscuity, that is against religious teachers or that it leads to infertility, among many others misconceptions.

RESULTS



ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES

The Gambia is a low-income country with a population of about 2.5 million, of which more than half (51%) are females. Despite a significant proportion of the population being female, gender disparity is apparent in many aspects of life

in Gambia, induced by a mix of social, cultural, and institutional factors. The Global Gender Gap Report which measures several key variables including poverty, education, health, and political participation ranks The Gambia 127 out of the 153 countries. Despite

the introduction of relevant policy frameworks, legislation and women empowerment initiatives all aimed at addressing gender disparities, significant disparities continue to exist in The Gambia.

RESULTS



CHAPTER TWO



PROGRAMME ENABLERS



GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Gender equality and women's empowerment is a strong programme enabler and critical in the attainment of the three transformative results. Anecdotal evidence has indicated that GBV has increased during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, this can also be attributable to the fact that there is a lot of awareness raising leading to the reporting of cases

on gender-based violence. Gender inequality impacts on maternal health as women do not have the voice to make decisions that affect their sexual and reproductive health including access to family planning commodities. Harmful traditional practices such as FGM and child marriage impede on the growth, voice and development of women and ultimately lead to maternal

death and other complications. These need to be addressed if we want to attain the SDG targets in The Gambia. Programme emphasis should be on equal power relations, bodily autonomy and women's leadership and participation in decision making processes to stem out GBV and accelerate the attainment of the three transformative results.



INVESTING IN YOUTH

More than half of The Gambia's population are young people below the age of 24 years old with a further 42 percent under 15. With increasing fertility, rising population trends coupled with a high unemployment rate amongst youth, there are worrying signs for The Gambia that the youth bulge could result in a demographic disaster as the dependency rate continues to rise.

However, this youthful "bulge" can be turned into an opportunity as it presents a time-limited window for the country to harness its demographic dividend if prioritised and strategic investments are made in this all-important demography. The achievement of national development, effective humanitarian action, peace and security demand the prioritisation and participation of young people so that their

needs are met, and their rights are respected. In recent years, thanks to investments in both human and material development, many young women and young men in The Gambia engage positively in many spheres including political space, leadership and decision-making at all levels. There is some way to go but these are encouraging times for young people in The Gambia to realise their fullest potentials.



SOURCING POPULATION DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

As the lead UN agency responsible for data for development, UNFPA is supporting preparatory work on the 2023 Population and Housing Census beginning with the drafting of the Census Project Document. There are plans to continue to provide financial, material and technical support to the census in addition to leading the resource mobilisation efforts. In 2021, UNFPA supported the in-depth analysis of

the 2019/2020 Demographic Health Survey (DHS) to better understand factors impacting some of the rates observed in the indicators.

UNFPA in collaboration with the Government of The Gambia has initiated the development of an Investment Case for the three transformative results in 2021. The investment case will help in better understanding the needs, funding flows and gaps pertaining

to the transformative results in The Gambia and provide a clear and up-to-date representation of maternal health, family planning, and gender based-violence, including harmful practices (female genital mutilation and child marriage) service needs and gaps, in-country plans and options of how to step up efforts to meet needs in a sustainable manner. The final report is expected by June 2022.



LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

To realise the three transformative results, it is imperative to ensure that no one is left behind irrespective of their location, age, gender or other considerations. To this effect, UNFPA ensured that marginalised groups such as persons with disability had their capacities built to make informed choices and decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health needs. In the area of addressing the unmet need for family planning.

Community-based distributors of family planning commodities have been supported in hard-to-reach communities to ensure that there is access to commodities wherever you may be. Young people were engaged and trained to ensure their participation in leadership and decision-making processes at community, regional and national level. Women's participation in politics was also supported. UNFPA advocated for a minimum 30% quota for seats in the National Assembly

of The Gambia to be allocated to women including those with disability. In ensuring equitable access to maternal and other reproductive health services, midwifery schools were supported to train more midwives to be deployed in health facilities in rural communities. UNFPA will continue to advocate and ensure inclusivity with regards to access to services and information for the wellbeing of all in The Gambia.



DELIVERING ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH SRH INFORMATION AND SERVICES

In The Gambia, 42% and 64% of the population are below the ages of 15 and 24 years respectively, with young people aged 15-24 years representing almost a quarter of the population. Yet one in five young women have given birth before age 18 mainly attributable to child marriage and lack of SRHR information and services for young people including comprehensive sexuality education. Even though the percentage of young people who have sexual intercourse at age 14 or younger is encouragingly low in

The Gambia (4.7% and 5.8% for girls and boys respectively), the data is not showing the true picture as sexually transmissible infections could be high due to 46% of unmarried young people having an unmet need for family planning and only a fifth having comprehensive knowledge of HIV/AIDS. Delivering comprehensive and undiluted adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health information and services is critical to their development and well-being. Both in-school and out-of-school AYSRH information and

service provision are critical to the attainment of the three transformative results, ensuring completion of at least secondary education and building healthier families. It also provides young women and men equal opportunities to realise their fullest potentials.





CHAPTER THREE



ADVOCACY, COMMUNICATION AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION



ADVOCACY



As part of efforts to promote the adequate representation and inclusion of women in decision making processes, the Country Office led engagements with National Assembly Members (NAMs), to mobilise support for the Women’s Reservation Bill.

These consultations were geared towards setting the pace for when the bill arrives in parliament for voting in early 2022. The advocacy engagements were also aimed at encouraging NAMs to promote women’s participation in leadership processes at their individual party levels, in order to inspire increased interest in women to vie for leadership positions at both national and local government levels.

The Country office also rolled out its maiden campaign on SRH and addressing GBV dubbed the #Iam4ZERO campaign. This flagship initiative seeks to use a multi-dimensional approach to promoting sexual and reproductive health and addressing GBV in communities. The campaign employed a multi-disease approach as an entry point to promoting the utilisation of modern contraceptive commodities, encouraging positive male involvement in SRH conversations and the utilisation of services by their spouses and highlighting the role of men in eradicating all forms of GBV and harmful practices in their communities. Through the campaign, over 150 community opinion leaders also known as the “Kandas” in Mandinka such as the Governors, Chiefs, Alkalolu, women leaders and members of the VDCs among others across various regions of The Gambia were engaged on the benefits of seeking SRH information and services, supporting their spouses to practise birth spacing and steer conversations within their households and communities on the need to protect women and girls from violence.

Positive change informed by collaborative action towards achieving the three transformative results, can only be realised through advocacy and constant engagement with stakeholders. In 2021, the Country Office championed several advocacy efforts in order to lay the ground for more conversation around gender equality, women’s health and wellness and inclusive representation in decision making processes.

ADVOCACY EFFORTS IN THE YEAR

CELEBRATING GRASSROOTS ACTION TO END FGM

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated vulnerabilities of women and girls and increased their exposure to GBV and harmful practices and has particularly created room for increased prevalence of FGM everywhere around the world

and The Gambia is no exception.

In commemoration of the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation on the global theme “Unite, Fund and Act to end Female Genital Mutilation” UNFPA The Gambia in partnership with

UNICEF and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare organised a high-level commemoration event on 9 February 2021. The event which brought together Government and Civil Society actors, women’s groups, young people and the media, among a range of others,

unveiled 10 “End FGM Champions” who were recognised for their efforts to accelerate the abandonment of the harmful practice in The

Gambia. The champions who are already leading grassroots conversations and national level advocacy to support the end FGM agenda in

the country, are expected to intensify their efforts and serve as the face of the End FGM campaign in The Gambia.



CALLING FOR COMMUNITY ACTION TO PROMOTE SRH ON WORLD POPULATION DAY

At a time when the world is battling a global pandemic, the impact has been visible in the daily lives of people across societies. Amid this reality, what is evident is that women and girls have been at the receiving end of the bigger brunt of the pandemic. This is why, the 2021 theme for World Population Day was “Rights and choices are the answer: whether baby boom or bust, the solution to shifting fertility rates lies

in prioritising all people’s reproductive health and rights.”

In commemoration of this global event in The Gambia, UNFPA in partnership with the Government of The Gambia and its implementing partners organised a regional celebration in Soma, Lower River Region (LRR) of The Gambia bringing together women from various districts in the region, community leaders, students, and men, among others.

The gathering was used as an opportunity to call on traditional, religious and community leaders to involve in efforts to ensure rights and choices for all as community & institutional structures currently contribute towards preventing women from accessing sexual and reproductive health services.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, A CALL FOR WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS

In commemoration of International Women's Day, UNFPA partnered with the Fajara Golf Club to organise the UNFPA-Fajara Women Leadership Open, a three-game tournament in golf, tennis and badminton among women players

on 6 March 2021. The event was used to shed light on the theme for this year's Women's Day, sensitise people on gender equality and encourage women and girls to engage in sporting activities. The gathering celebrated the

tremendous efforts made by women and girls around the world and in The Gambia, in shaping a more equal future and informing the response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic through sports.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT CENTRE TO PROVIDE INTEGRATED CARE TO SURVIVORS OF GBV

As part of investments to strengthen The Gambia's GBV response mechanisms and ensure the delivery of quality care to GBV survivors, UNFPA supported the establishment of the Gambia Women Empowerment Centre dubbed the "Orange Centre" with funding from the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund. Inaugurated by Her Excellency the First Lady, Madam Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow, the centre is the Country's first fully integrated facility for the protection of women and girls, particularly for providing safety and protection for survivors of GBV.

The Orange Centre will provide critical health, psycho-social and

legal services including the clinical management of rape, as well as temporary overnight stay to survivors of GBV through an integrated approach that delivers care to them in dignity and safety. The centre is linked to the GBV Helpline-1313 thus it forms part of the GBV referral pathway through which UNFPA is supporting partners to deliver survivor-centred care.

In addition, survivors who come to the centre will participate in communities of interaction and be supported to access socio-economic opportunities that will facilitate their smooth reintegration back into their communities. Within the space at the centre, a

youth multi-purpose arena has been created to provide a space for young people within the community to engage, learn and share on various issues around GBV and SRH.

Through sustained strategic partnerships, the centre will be run by the Network against Gender-Based Violence with guidance from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Health. The Orange Centre is a key milestone in UNFPA's support to strengthening the country's GBV response mechanism and ensuring that women and girls of The Gambia are protected and prioritised in development endeavours.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVE TO END PERIOD POVERTY AND ADDRESS WOMEN'S CLIMATE-RELATED VULNERABILITIES

The utilisation of climate-friendly material in the production of reusable sanitary pads will reduce environmental hazards resulting from disposable sanitary pads, thus translating into positive climate indicators and

contributing towards tackling global warming. This will also inform solutions to period poverty which fuels stigmatisation, low self-esteem, and limited possibilities for girls to realise their fullest potential. Additionally, such solutions have

the potential to bring communities together, protect women and girls from stigma and discrimination related to menstruation and address inequalities. Given that women farmers bear a significant brunt of climate-induced tensions

due to their limited access to and control over land, the involvement of women farmers in the production of reusable menstrual products will provide them an alternative source of income thus addressing their vulnerability to climate-induced tensions which result from their sole reliance on farming to earn a livelihood.

In October 2021 the Women Empowerment and Peacebuilding Initiative was inaugurated in Basse. Through this initiative, the agency supported the establishment of a reusable sanitary pad production centre which provides innovative

solutions geared towards promoting the use of climate-friendly products and diminishing dependency on natural resources through income diversification and climate-friendly solutions.

Women and girls know what it feels like to need and not be able to access products for their health and hygiene. They know and understand what it means to live with sexual and reproductive health challenges resulting from the alternative material and methods of managing their periods in sometimes poor and unhygienic conditions. Adolescent girls know how it feels to miss 4 to

7 days of school while menstruating each month. Women know the implications of missing several days of work on the farm or trading in the markets while on their periods. Thus, through their training to produce and package reusable menstrual products, the women and girls of the Upper River Region have the answers to addressing these challenges and bringing hope and dignity to themselves, their daughters, and the entire womenfolk of their communities. This is progress and this is what UNFPA commits itself to delivering for The Gambia.



RESOURCE MOBILISATION

Accelerating the achievement of the three transformative results requires building new partnerships and strengthening existing partnerships to secure the necessary resources to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every child birth is safe and where young people's potentials are fulfilled and providing critical healthcare assistance for COVID-19 response.. Through rigorous resource mobilisation efforts on securing joint partnerships and support from our partners, the country office in 2021, mobilised Two Million, Four Hundred and Ninety-Seven Thousand, Six Hundred and Fifty-Eight Dollars, to provide critical support to our lifesaving work in delivering for The Gambia. The resources mobilised for the year were from the generous contributions of the following partners and donors:

-  UN Trust Fund for Human Security- Localising SDGs -Improving the Livelihood of vulnerable women and youth around the Senegambia Bridge
-  UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Project - Promoting peace and social cohesion through provision of mental health services and psychosocial well-being of SGBV survivors in The Gambia
-  People's Republic of China-South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund (SSCAF) - Providing Health Assistance to Sao Tome and Principe and Gambia in the West and Central Africa Region for COVID-19 Pandemic Response
-  Italian Agency for International Cooperation-Youth Enhancement to harness the Demographic Dividend (YE4DD) in Guinea, Guinea Bissau, and The Gambia
-  UNICEF -Gambia CO partnership support to UNFPA Gambia CO - Support to One Stop Centers and GBV/ Sexual Violence on Children, and the Organization of the International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM
-  UNDP Gambia CO support to UNFPA Gambia CO - For The Gambia's 2020 Demographic and Health Survey.



COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

In 2021, the Country Office intensified its communication and visibility efforts by producing and disseminating information and products through its existing platforms. On social media, traction was significantly increased with 703,700 impressions recorded on Twitter, and 510,015 impressions recorded on Facebook. By developing quality and up-to-date content, the Country Office website received increased traction. 12 human impact stories in addition to news articles and documents were published. As a result, 8200 unique visitors to the site were recorded during the year.

Media engagement and collaboration was also strengthened in the year. Based on the need to build the capacity of media practitioners to better engage with their audiences on GBV, SRH and harmful practices, 23 community radio journalists were trained on content development around UNFPA's three transformative results. In order to build synergies between community media houses and community based-experts on GBV and SRH, 30 community health workers were also trained on leveraging community radios to increase public information and awareness on the three transformative results and to bolster GBV and SRH messaging and advocacy.

Contributing towards the Country Office's flagship #IAm4ZERO campaign, social media updates, community mobilisation and media engagement were some of the approaches used to maximise



reach, bring visibility to the campaign and enhance public information on the three transformative results. Through these approaches, live phone-in talk shows on community radio stations, community sensitisation through the use of a Public Address System and social media updates were leveraged.

Ahead of the December 4th Presidential Elections, the Country Office rolled out a media campaign targeting young people, to tackle hate speech and violence in their

communities. The #PeaceForMe campaign, captured the voices of influential young Gambians in various sectors including sports, health, activism and entrepreneurship sharing messages of hope and peace with their peers. The campaign messages were aired on community radio stations across the country and amplified through social media platforms.

RESULTS

Over 15,000 young people reached with information on SRH and GBV through the #IAM4Zero campaign

480 minutes of airtime across community radio stations used to sensitise communities on SRH including FP and addressing GBV

9 communities reached through film shows on family planning

703,700 impressions recorded on Twitter

510,015 impressions recorded on Facebook

8200 unique visitors recorded on the Country Office website



CHAPTER FOUR



PROJECT REPORTS

UN PEACEBUILDING PROJECTS



The UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is the financial instrument of the UN that supports initiatives to sustain peace in countries or situations at risk of being affected by violent conflict. Following regime change

in January 2017, The Gambia has been a beneficiary of the PBF since May 2017 with investments totaling USD 26m to date supporting catalytic peacebuilding initiatives at the country level. From 2018 to date the UNFPA Gambia Country office has

secured funding of US\$9.2m from the PBF in collaboration with other sister agencies. In 2021 UNFPA secured funds for a new PBF project focusing on survivors and mental health.



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ACCESS TO JUSTICE, COMMUNITY POLICING, AND EFFECTIVE SGBV RESPONSE

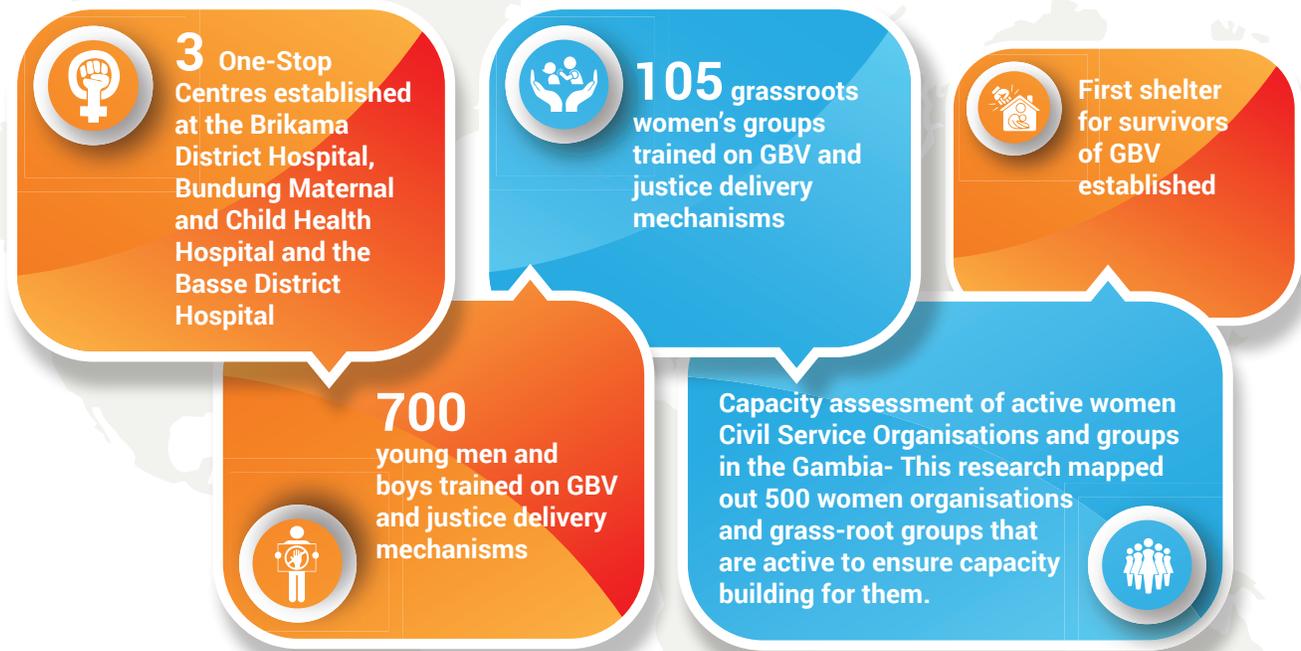
The Gambia represents a country with a 51% female population. Analysis done before the start of the project in 2019 showed the prevalence of physical, sexual and intimate partner violence was 20%, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) rate among the girls 0-14 years was 50.6% and the prevalence of child marriage was 34.2%. Based on the limited available

data, a total of 672 GBV cases were reported in 2018, which was almost double from the 366 cases in 2015. However, only 20% of the cases (135 cases cumulatively) received a judgement in 2018, a decrease from 35% (125 cases cumulatively) in 2015 according to High Court records. This data clearly indicates the gap between the increased demand for legal services by the

survivors of GBV and the weak judicial capacities of the justice system in the Gambia to ensure justice for the survivors of SGBV. The project is poised to improve public confidence, address citizens' frustration with justice service delivery and take the initial steps towards building resilient rule of law institutions and facilitate effective and efficient SGBV response in the Country.



RESULTS



YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN AS STAKEHOLDERS IN PEACEFUL DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES AND AS ADVOCATES IN THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AND HATE SPEECH

The PBF project on youth was conceived to address the institutional barriers (such as exclusion from decision making) for young people, to strengthen youth capacity for engagement and participation in governance and leadership, and to address hate speech and counter fake news and misinformation of young people through media and

local community structures. The 24 months \$2M PBF funded project which was approved in 2020 whilst implementation commenced in 2021 seeks to mobilise young men and women to participate in community dialogue initiatives at intra and intergenerational levels to enhance inclusion, social cohesion and sustainable peace. Through the Ministry of Youth, the project

is supporting the review and revision of statutory legal instruments dealing with young people such as the National Youth Council Act, Strategic Plans and all youth and sectoral policy documents related to youth to reflect young people's engagement in governance and leadership and to enhance their involvement in violence prevention and social cohesion.





STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY COPING MECHANISMS AGAINST RISKS OF CLIMATE INDUCED CONFLICTS AND TO MINIMISE GENDER RELATED VULNERABILITIES AND TENSIONS IN THE GAMBIA

The Gambia is primarily an agrarian society and the effect of climate change on local agriculture is hugely deleterious to the careers and livelihoods of the average Gambian. The arable land available for agricultural purposes is continually reducing due to saline water intrusion, drought, sand mining and population pressure. As the supply of viable land decreases, the increased demand of such land for farming purposes is generating conflict among communities. Additionally, as farmers seek new agricultural land, encroachment into

traditional grazing areas has also created a source of conflict between herdsman and farmers. Over the past two decades and beyond there has been a significant increase in conflict over grazing areas due to rapidly shrinking green areas for cattle grazing.

The project is aimed at addressing climate change induced conflict and tensions in target communities by supporting community driven mitigation and adaptation strategies and approaches. The project will put in place coping mechanisms

for the most vulnerable, especially women and young persons who are often the most affected by climate change induced conflict. The use of local resources and innovative locally available technologies to address the negative impact of climate change thereby reducing the conflict and related tensions in the communities will be used. The implementation of the project is crucial and catalytic in creating sustainable peace in a fragile context where the effect of climate change is already imminent.





STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABLE AND HOLISTIC REINTEGRATION OF RETURNEES IN THE GAMBIA

The Gambia represents a country of origin, transit and destination for increasing numbers of domestic and international migrants. In recent years Gambians have emigrated at a higher rate per capita

than every other nation in Africa, and since January 2017 up to July 2020, over 5,200 migrants have returned to The Gambia, primarily from Libya and other countries in Africa. Based on IOM Data: A Survey on Migration Policies in West Africa, emigration from The Gambia is particularly unique in that Gambians constitute a disproportionately high percentage of the arrivals in Europe, considering the small size of the country. They opt for Europe (rather than other African states) as a destination more often than is the case for migrants from other

West African countries (who tend to migrate within Africa).

Studies have shown that most migrant returnees are male approximately 97% and their departure resulted in some communities being left with women, children and the elderly to economically, psychosocially support themselves. Whilst hoping that their economic statuses will be improved through financial support from the migrants. This unmet expectation often leads to discrimination, stigmatization and potential tensions when these

young men return without any meaningful or no improvement to their financial/economic status.

The project which commenced in 2018 seeks to Strengthen Sustainable and Holistic Reintegration of Returnees in The Gambia is a United Nations (UN) Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) project intended to facilitate sustainable reintegration of returnees in order to promote increased social cohesion, youth engagement, job creation as well as community stabilisation and development, thus contributing to peacebuilding.

RESULTS





PROVIDING HEALTH ASSISTANCE TO SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE AND GAMBIA IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGION FOR COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the health system, UNFPA in collaboration with Government of The Gambia secured funding from the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) to support the procurement and distribution of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and sexual reproductive health commodities. The project is aimed at contributing towards efforts to prevent and control the spread of the coronavirus

and ensure the continuity of sexual and reproductive health services and interventions including the protection of health personnel in the country.

Through this project, UNFPA is leading the procurement of equipment and supplies such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) dignity kits and delivery kits.. As most of the efforts of the government and the entire health system will be directed to the treatment of COVID19, PPEs

procured under this project will also target nurses, midwives and other health workers who are working to ensure the continuity of critical life saving services including antenatal and postnatal services for pregnant women. Non-PPE equipment such as delivery kits will support the set up of facilities to replace the current structures that are being converted to COVID=19 treatment centres.

RESULTS



400,000
pairs of examination gloves provided to enable the continuity of essential health care services



2400
pieces of reusable sanitary pads produced and distributed

ITALIAN AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECT



ITALIAN AGENCY
FOR DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION



YOUTH HEALTH ENHANCEMENT TO HARNESS THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

UNFPA and the Italian Agency for International Cooperation entered a partnership to use the “Demographic Dividend” (DD) framework, to take advantage of the youth bulge in Guinea, Guinea Bissau and The Gambia while putting in place relevant social, economic, governance and health policies, in a manner that ensures a multi-sector approach to make inclusive economic growth a reality. The main objectives of the project are to ensure young people have access to quality health for increased well-being and to build

and strengthen a cadre of youth leadership and empowering young people

Guinea, Guinea Bissau and The Gambia are already entering into a demographic transition. Improvements in health are being seen with some decline in child mortality. However, efforts on improving health are still needed. Young people make up a substantial – and still growing - proportion of the population. The youth need to be supported to become productive members of

the community, thus reducing the high proportion of dependency in the countries and imitating appetite for taking risky routes of migration. The project has three components, namely: Youth Health: Ensuring availability of, and access to, adolescent and youth-friendly health services for increased well-being; Youth Empowerment: Setting-up an environment for youth empowerment and leadership; Social and Behaviour Change.

RESULTS



#Iam4Zero Campaign conducted in three regions sensitising communities on Gender and GBV, menstrual hygiene management and conducting screening of Cervical Cancer



UNFPA is part of a joint UN initiative to strengthen SRHR for young people through the set up of an outdoor wellness facility in a community park for access by young people. A further region will be selected to ensure that young people in rural communities having access to such facilities



Evidence generated on menstrual hygiene and the use of sanitary products in rural communities in The Gambia



A mobile phone app Suma Tyme (my time or Summer time) is in the final stages of development using the mHealth platform. Content has been developed and fit gap analysis conducted

Sexuality and Leadership Development Fellowship conducted for 35 young people who were equipped with knowledge and skills to implement out-of-school CSE in their communities



CHAPTER FIVE



OPERATIONS AND FINANCE

OPERATIONS

The operations and finance team continues to support the Country Office to ensure proper operational and financial management and contribute towards maximum programme effectiveness.

The operations team renders support to both programmes and IPs in the form of training and knowledge sharing on best practices on internal controls and other fiduciary management duties. The team participated in the conduct of three training sessions for implementing partners on the Global Programming System (GPS), internal controls, and procurement. The trainings were aimed at improving quality delivery, ensuring comprehension of the Implementing Partner Agreement with UNFPA, and strengthening understanding of the assurance activities. The IPs that were targeted were mostly the new IPs such as WANEP and NGBV, as well as the new Contractees working with the IPs.

In a separate arrangement, the IPs working under the PBF projects were also taken through the financial management procedures of UNFPA and procurement policies and procedures during the PBF Annual Review meeting for effective documentation and record keeping at a local hotel at Kololi. These trainings were conducted in June and October 2021.



STAFF RECRUITMENT

UNFPA Country Office underwent five (5) recruitment processes in 2021 and these are;

-  Assistant Representative
-  Administrative Assistant
-  U N V - C o m m u n i c a t i o n Associate
-  Driver
-  Programme Analyst Adolescents and Youth

These vacant positions were filled to close the existing gap in human resources within the office and an approach to lower the workload on staff in order to achieve productivity thus resulting in timely delivery of tasks. The recruitment time in 2021 has reduced significantly compared to the previous years as highlighted in Atlas eRecruitment dashboard and the CO will work to further lower the recruitment time which will positively impact the work-Life balance in the office.

In terms of Gender composition, the CO has 55% women and 45% men and in the 2021 recruitment process out of 5 vacancies occupied, 3 (60%) vacancies were occupied by women and 2(40%) men, demonstrating the country office's commitment to gender equality within the workplace.



STREAMLINING PROCUREMENT PROCESSES

The Country Office established procurement processes and control measures to acquire goods and services for revised common operational framework for transferring cash to government and non-government implementing partners, the adoption of the Harmonized Approach for cash transfer(HACT) to implementing legal entities in compliance with UNFPA's Financial Regulations and Rules, including in particular the principles of public procurement. As a result, all the procurement activities undertaken were conducted at the highest level

of fairness, transparency, integrity, economy and effectiveness.

For the period under review, the procurement focal point coordinated the procurement processes of Request for quotations and shoppings starting from the need assessments to the closure of the procurement contracts satisfying the procedural requirement and process documentation. This resulted in the successful procurement of goods and services at best value for money considering all relevant factors, including costs and benefits

to UNFPA.

Various solicitation methodologies with respective thresholds were used to have all the requested goods and services from potential suppliers

-  24 Request For Quotations (USD 5,000 or above and below USD 100,000)
-  2 Long Term Agreements
-  39 Shoppings (below USD 5,000)



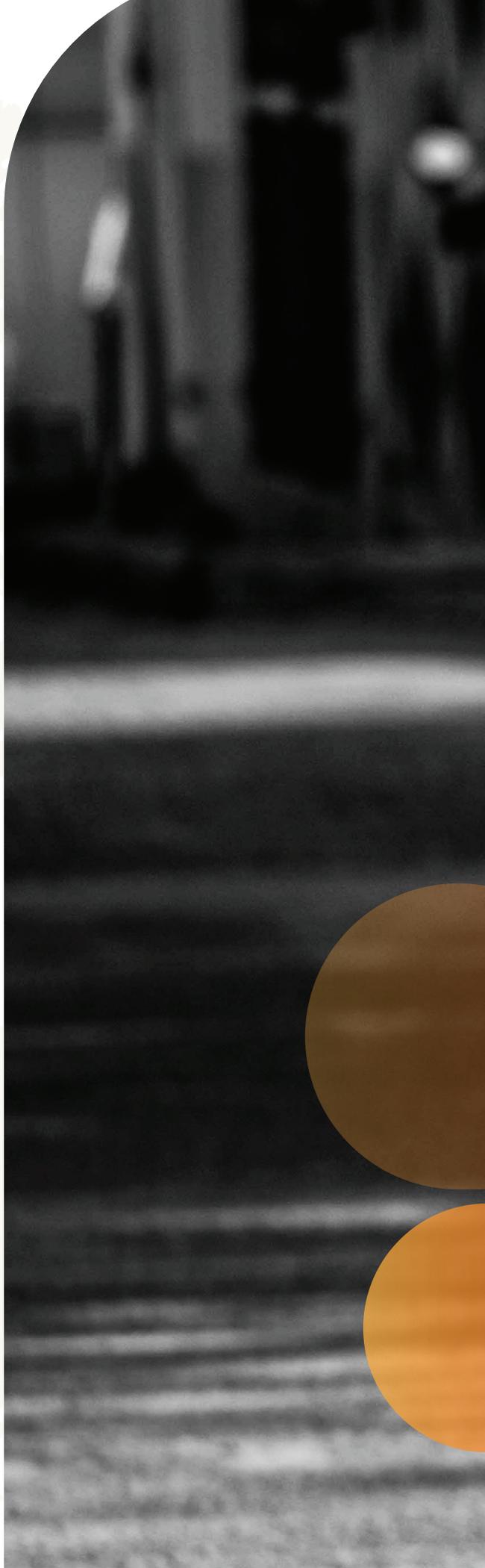
ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES

The Framework for transferring cash to government and non-government implementing partners HACT requires assurance activities on Implementing Partners (IPs), in the form of Audits and Spot Checks on risk ratings and the cash transferred to an IP exceeding a certain threshold prescribed in the Framework. The purpose of the assurance activities are to determine whether the funds transferred to IPs were used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the agreed work plans. Without appropriate completion of the assurance activities, the

HACT framework would only serve as a mechanism for risk assessment/identification, rather than a mechanism for risk management and mitigation. Assurance engagements are also performed to assess the accuracy of the financial records for cash transfers to IPs, status of the programmes implementation and whether there have been any significant changes to applicable internal controls of the IPs and follow up on micro assessment recommendations.

In 2021 five of our IPs were subject

to Spot Check reviews conducted by Augustus Prom Audit and Tax Advisory, a firm of Accountants selected through a competitive process locally, and an Audit Engagement on Network for Gender Based Violence conducted by BDO LLP London, an international firm hired through an LTA held by UN ExCom agencies at HQ level. The outcome of this assurance engagement was an Unmodified Opinion.



THE GAMBIA



United Nations Population Fund
UN House, 5 Koffi Annan Street
Cape Point, Bakau
Banjul The Gambia

Website: gambia.unfpa.org

Facebook: UNFPA The Gambia

Twitter: @UNFPATheGambia

Instagram: @unfpa_thegambia

Youtube: UNFPA The Gambia