



## UNFPA celebrates the International day of the Midwife and Launches the State of the Midwifery Report

The International Day of the Midwife was celebrated on the 5th of May with the theme: “Follow the Data, Invest in Midwives”. The data included the launch of the 2021 State of the World’s Midwifery report which was last published in 2014. In the report, statistics show that achieving universal coverage of midwife-delivered interventions by 2035 would avert 67 percent of maternal deaths, 64 percent of newborn deaths, and 65 percent of stillbirths and would save an estimated 4.3 million lives a year. Midwives continue to risk their own lives above the new life they are welcoming into this world during the COVID-19 Pandemic. They have gone the extra mile to reach the hard-to-reach populations by: making house calls, traveling great distances via mobile clinics, or even not leaving the house at all after transforming rooms in their homes into maternity

clinics to alleviate the strain on local health care systems. This was done with UNFPA support for education, training, and enabling working environments for midwives, towards attaining the goal of achieving zero preventable maternal deaths by 2030.

“Midwives deserve greater investment in their capabilities and workplaces that empower them and fully acknowledge their skills and contributions,” said UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem in a statement.

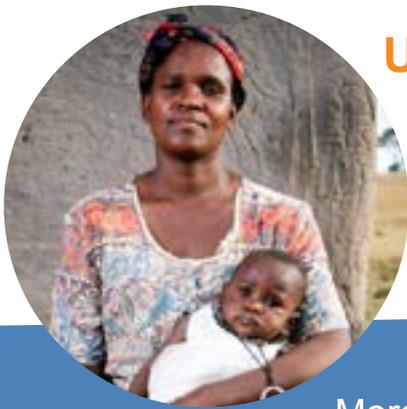
You can download the report here: <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/sowmy-2021>

Find Dr. Natalia Kanem’s Statement here: <https://www.unfpa.org/press/trust-evidence-invest-midwives>



*“Midwives deserve greater investment in their capabilities, and workplaces that empower them and fully acknowledge their skills and contributions.”~*

Dr. Natalia Kanem-UN-Under-Secretary-General and UNFPA Executive Director



## UNFPA supports the African Union in preparation for the roll-out of the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction on Maternal Mortality phase II (CARMMA Plus) 2021-2030

More than a decade ago on the 7th of May 2009, African Union (AU) in partnership with UNFPA responded to the egregious maternal mortality in the Continent by launching the Campaign for the Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA), the campaign's slogan was, 'Africa Cares: No woman should die while giving life.' To date, more than 50 African Union member states have launched CARMMA. The campaign made significant progress. At the end of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, the Maternal Mortality Ratio improved from 965/100,000 to 542/100,000 live births in Africa, a reduction of about 44%. However, there still remains unfinished business, particularly within the backdrop of the on-going COVID19 pandemic, where the estimated annual total number of maternal deaths in Africa still remains high.

With this background, the African Union issued a policy instrument

to extend the CARMMA campaign to 2030, coinciding with the target date for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. The new CARMMA-plus campaign will run from 2021-2030 under a revitalised theme, "Africa Cares: Better reproductive health for women, children and adolescents by 2030". The campaign aims at promoting and advocating for renewed and intensified implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action (MPoA) 2016-2030 that seeks to reduce maternal, newborn and child mortality by improving health outcomes for women, children and adolescents in Africa; scaling up domestic resource mobilization; and strengthening data systems for improved reporting.

UNFPA is one of the key stakeholders working with the AU in the upcoming rollout of the CARMMA Plus campaign through technical support on key campaign frameworks.

Learn more about the CARMMA initiative: <http://carmma.org/>

## UNFPA's Participation in the African Girls Pre-Summit event on "Culture Matters: Protecting and Enhancing the Role of Youth in Creative Arts to Accelerate an End to Harmful Practices in Africa."

UNFPA participated in the African Union-led convening by the Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs, and Social Development of the Pre-girls summit under the theme, "Culture Matters: Protecting And Enhancing The Role Of Youth In Creative Arts To Accelerate An End To Harmful Practices In Africa." The meeting was inline with the African Union theme of the

year - "AU Year of the Arts, Culture and Heritage". The main objective was to create a platform for discussions on how young people can leverage on the arts, culture and heritage to effectively address harmful practices in their communities. Among the key speakers were Saleema Victorious Ambassadors, who called on other young people to use their talents in arts and

culture to speak out and speak up against all forms of Gender Based Violence (GBV) especially Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation.

The meeting also assessed the key roles that culture and heritage play in society, either positively or negatively, with regard to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights. The meeting was significant in highlighting difficulties young girls face, including online child exploitation and bullying, which are sometimes linked to culture and perceptions. An awards ceremony was held during the pre-summit which honoured and recognized

outstanding journalists that continue to raise awareness on Gender Based Violence including child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation in the continent.

Almost 100 diverse stakeholders attended the AU African Girls' Pre-Summit including Member State technical experts, civil society organizations, UN agencies, religious, traditional, and community leaders. The key recommendations and decisions drawn from this event will inform the preparations and outcome of the upcoming African Girls' Summit scheduled to take place in November 2021.

## African Union Commission's Compendium documenting female leaders on the continent



The African Union Commission is developing a first-of-its-kind continental book that will recognize and celebrate outstanding African female leaders. Through its Women, Gender and Youth Directorate in collaboration with UN Agencies like UNFPA, UN Women, and OHCHR, the directorate aims to bridge the mentorship gap that young aspiring female leaders experience. The publication will feature women and girls from diverse backgrounds within civil society organizations, grassroots organizations, traditional setups, science and technology, health and many other sectors where women are working towards achieving African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. The initiative aims to inspire African girls and women to see beyond the existing structural barriers that curtail their participation in public and private spheres of their

lives and motivate them to thrive in their chosen field and reach their full potential. The book will provide evidence that Africa can prosper, be peaceful, and integrated if it leverages the potential of its women and girls. The contents of this book will include the documentation of lessons learned and experiences of female continental leaders through intergenerational dialogues and exchanges. This initiative hopes to create a book that will have a long-lasting impact on women and girls' active engagement in the achievement of the sustainable development goals in this decade of action.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has exposed weaknesses in health care systems globally, particularly in relation to the provision of Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) services for women and girls. Consequently, UNFPA is working closely with the multi-stakeholder selection committee to identify the female leaders to be profiled in the health sector.

Learn more about the selection process of women: <https://au.int/en/women-leadership-book>



## Annual Spotlight Coordination Platform for the AU Member States Implementing National Spotlight Programmes calls for legislative reform.

African Union Commission's Women, Gender and Youth Directorate (AUC-WGYD) in collaboration with UN Women hosted the inaugural Annual Continental Coordination platform for the Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Program (SIARP) on the African continent from 1-2 June 2021. In Africa, this global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030, is being implemented in partnership with the African Union. The Annual Continental Coordination platform created a dialogue space for African member states, regional economic communities (RECs), UN country teams, civil society organizations, and other implementing partners to share information informed by statistical data on the progress and challenges faced in addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG), Harmful Practices (HP) especially Child Marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and access to sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR).

The inaugural event underscored the importance of adopting data-driven transformative approaches in implementing the Spotlight Initiative across the continent. It was recalled during the meeting that in 2020, UNFPA provided integrated, quality services for gender-based violence and sexual and

reproductive health to 18,460 survivors in eight (8) African countries where the Spotlight Initiative is being implemented. The meeting further exemplified the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage for taking a lead in data-driven approaches through the development of a gender transformative tool that has so far been rolled out in Mozambique and Ethiopia. The tool helps to identify drivers, bottlenecks and explores opportunities of developing a roadmap of actions through an assessment of interventions across the gender continuum.

The event was attended by more than 100 participants from 20 countries including the eight African countries where the Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Program (SIARP) is currently being implemented, namely Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. One of the meeting outcomes was an agreement to develop a knowledge product that documents and outlines lessons learned and best practices on SGBV, HP, and SRHR programming which would be published by AUC and UN Women later in 2021.

Learn More about the Spotlight initiative: <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/wither/wither>



## Third Government-Government Policy Dialogue on Demographic Diversity and Dividends Theme: “Education and Skill development for demographic Dividend(s)”

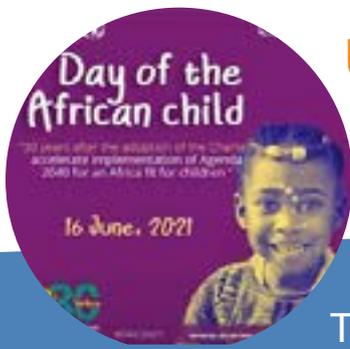
Following its launch in October 2020, UNFPA, the African Union Commission, and the Government of Germany convened the third quarterly Government-Government Policy Dialogue on Demographic Diversity and Dividends (4D). In recognition of the fact that education is essential to any prospects of harnessing the demographic dividend, the meeting ran under the theme, Education and Skill development for Demographic Dividend (s).

Mr. Wolfgang Lutz, Founding Director of the Wittgenstein Centre for Demography and Global Human Capital, Ms. Rose Wachuka from the Nala Feminist Collective, and Mr. Hambani Masheleni, Head of Department of Education at the African Union Commission, set the stage as keynote speakers in the dialogue that welcomed more than 120 delegates from 27 countries. They included technical and policy experts from governments, African Union, academia, civil society and youth representatives, and UN agencies, who tackled a wide range of policy issues on education including: measuring the quality of education, bridging the digital divide, secondary school dropouts and mitigation measures, managing school-to-work transitions, lifelong learning, and promoting equality.

The 4D series underscored the fact that an enabling environment for women and girls' education is vital to the prospect of the demographic dividend as it is linked to economic empowerment, access to SRHR services, leading to

higher productivity and earning as well as overall economic growth. The dialogue further called for urgent action in addressing barriers that create unequal access to education especially for women and girls through training of teachers to tackle negative gender stereotypes, gender-sensitive textbooks, and materials that empower women and girls. It also called for the strengthening of the provision of quality, age-appropriate sexuality education to provide students with youth-friendly information and services on adolescent sexual reproductive health and rights, empowering them to make informed decisions on their health and well-being. Additionally, the need to urgently bridge the digital divide within the backdrop of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic was highlighted as a key area of action, to equip students with digital tools for education facilitation to ensure we leave no one behind.

Learn more here: [https://www.berlin-institut.org/fileadmin/Redaktion/Aktuelles/20210526\\_4D\\_Dialogues\\_Education\\_and\\_Skills\\_Development\\_FFTP\\_Final.pdf](https://www.berlin-institut.org/fileadmin/Redaktion/Aktuelles/20210526_4D_Dialogues_Education_and_Skills_Development_FFTP_Final.pdf)



## UNFPA joins the African Union in Commemorating the Day of the African Child.

The Day of the African Child has been commemorated on June 16 every year since 1991 when it was first initiated by the African Union. The event which honors those who participated in the Soweto Uprising in 1976 is significant to all African Union member states as it provides a platform for raising awareness on the need to accelerate and improve the education of African Children.

UNFPA joined the African Union in commemoration of the 2021 day of the African Child through an exciting social media campaign that intended to impart knowledge and spark conversations on the significance of children's issues on youth development. One of the activities of the campaign was a 'before-and-after' photo series that provided the perspectives of the AUC and partner organisations' leadership on the child to youth continuum. The campaign featured quotes from influential individuals working on children's rights and development across the African Continent including the former Minister of Youth in Sudan's Transitional Government, Hon Walaa Isam Elboushi. UNFPA Representative to the AU and UNECA and Chief a.i, Ms. Caroline Ngonze was also featured among the key figures in this campaign where she seized the opportunity to highlight the work UNFPA was doing with African member states and the AU to foster an Africa fit

for Children through the promotion, protection, and investment in young people's education, health and safety as the cornerstone in building forward better and reaping the demographic dividend. These actions are poised to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development as well as Agenda 2063 for the "Africa we want".

In a separate social media campaign posted on all UNFPA Representation Office to the AU and UNECA social media platforms, UNFPA reiterated the need for accelerated implementation of the 2017 AU Demographic Dividend Roadmap as a way of advancing an Africa fit for Children.

Learn more on the selfie campaign: <https://twitter.com/AUYouthProgram/status/1405102794781114368>

Learn more about the AU DD Roadmap : <https://cutt.ly/omDkWug>

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## UNFPA participation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Africa Coalition Symposium on Menstrual Health



The Africa Coalition Symposium on Menstrual Health was organized by the African Coalition on Menstrual Health Management (ACMHM) together with UNFPA, in June 2021. The symposium identified good practices and innovative solutions on improving menstrual health and integrating them into Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) policies and programmes, and sustainable financing towards universal access to menstrual health information, products, and services. It also recognized the progress made from the first symposium in 2018 on menstrual health policies rolled out across the continent. However, most of the 400 million women and girls of reproductive age, and the 300 million who menstruate are still unable to manage their menstrual health in a safe, hygienic, and

dignified manner. Many still experience shame, indignity, depression, and ill health during menstruation. More than 90 experts shared their research findings and experience during the symposium and called for renewed commitments and accelerated action to improve menstrual health in Africa.

The high-level opening session featured President of Ethiopia, H.E Mrs. Sahle-Work Zewde; the First Lady of Malawi, Mrs. Monica Chakwera; UNFPA's Deputy Executive Director for Programme, Dr. Diene Keita; and Mr. Robert Kampala, Regional Director of WaterAid representing the leadership of the ACMHM.

Learn more here: <https://esaro.unfpa.org/en/news/symposium-exposes-urgent-need-improve-menstrual-health-africa>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbnzQTdSUx8>



*“We need to redouble our efforts to increase external as well as domestic financing by developing costing models, investment cases and using innovative financing instruments”~*

**Dr. Julitta Onabanjo**

Regional Director, UNFPA East and Southern Africa Office

## UNFPA's Participation in the Experts meeting of the AU Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning, and Integration

Africa is among the most hard-hit continents by the COVID-19 pandemic which has weakened social protection systems and left the most vulnerable groups especially women and girls, to suffer from massive job losses, shrinking economies, and loss of livelihoods. The African Union Commission Specialised Technical Committee (STC) on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning, and Integration is the leading continental convening for Ministers and senior government officials responsible for finance, economy, planning, integration, and economic development, and central bank managers. The 2021 STC was convened to discuss the development of Africa under the theme: "Developing integrated and complementary value chains for sustainable recovery and reinforcing operationalization of the AfCFTA", with 241 participants from African 46 countries including from the UNFPA Representation Office to the AU and ECA. Within this STC theme, UNFPA is working with partners at regional and country levels to address the prolonged socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on

economies, livelihoods, and lives, especially for women and youth who account for the significant proportion of the population. This is being done through cutting-edge research and implementation of initiatives that harness the demographic dividend in the continent, such as economic empowerment programs for youth and women; tailored-technical support to governments on demographic intelligence concerning population dynamics for integrating young people in local, national, and regional AfCFTA value-chains; and UNFPA partnership with UNECA and other agencies in the pooled procurement of Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health supplies for the regional Pharmaceutical Initiative of the AfCFTA being piloted in 10 countries in East and Southern Africa.

### Upcoming Events for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter

Date	Event
<b>23 August 2021</b>	International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition
<b>31 August 2021</b>	International Day for People of African Descent
<b>8 September 2021</b>	International Literacy Day
<b>9 September 2021</b>	Africa Union Day
<b>12 September 2021</b>	United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation
<b>18 September 2021</b>	International Equal Pay Day
<b>14- 30 September 2021</b>	76 <sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly



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