

Launch of State of World Population SWOP Report 2015

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Response to crises should focus more on women’s and girls’ sexual Reproductive health needs.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has urged world leaders to do more to cater for the reproductive health needs of women and girls during times of disasters and conflicts, a move that would help save lives and enable more women in crises access health services.

The call was made by UNFPA Rwanda at the launch of the “State of the World Population 2015” report in Kigali. The report calls for special attention to the needs of women and girls in crises, and urges world leaders to intervene and help women displaced by conflicts and natural disasters access reproductive health services.



Burundian Refugee girls from Mahama camp entertain officials during the launch of SWOP report

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Titled, “The State of World Population 2015: Shelter from the Storm”,

The report shows that, of the 100million people in need of humanitarian assistance around the world today, about 26 million are women and adolescent girls in their childbearing years.

“Without access to health services, they are at higher risk of getting sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS,

unwanted pregnancies, maternal death and illness, as well as sexual and gender-based violence,” it indicates.



UNFPA Representative Jozef Maerien speaking to media at the launch

About the state of the world's population that focuses on the needs of women and girls in crises.

Jozef Maerien, the UNFPA Rwanda representative, said "health and rights of women and adolescents should not be treated like an afterthought in humanitarian response".

"For the pregnant woman who is about to deliver, or the adolescent girl who survived sexual violence, life-saving services are as vital as water, food and shelter," he added.

In Rwanda, where the country received over 70,000 refugees from Burundi in the last few months, the Minister for Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs, Seraphine Mukantabana,



minister Seraphine Mukantabana MIDMAR speaking to media at the launch

pledged government's support to cater for women and girls' health needs.

"The Government of Rwanda's policies are inclusive, and gender is a cross-cutting issue. We shall continue to ensure that our humanitarian response is gender sensitive, and that the special needs of women and girls are met," she said at the launch of the UNFPA report.

With UNFPA help to Burundian refugees in Rwanda, 1,107 pregnant women tested for Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV, 660 deliveries were facilitated, 501 women were provided with family planning services, 1,056 others received antenatal care services, while 51 mothers gave birth by caesarean-section.

Korea Donates 450,000 Usd for Family Planning Services in Mahama Camp



Amb Yong-min (R) signs the Memorandum of Understanding with Jozef Maeriën UNFPA Representative

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on 29th December, 2015 signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the embassy of the Republic of Korea in Rwanda to support sexual and reproductive health with more specific to family planning, among Burundian refugees in Mahama camp in Kirehe District.

According to the agreement, the Republic of Korea will provide up to \$450,000 (about Rwf335 million) in form of financial assistance to ensure continuity of UNFPA activities in the camp. The camp currently hosts more than 40, 000 refugees.

Jozef Maeriën, UNFPA Representative said the objective is to make sure the goal of achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health, for the displaced women and girls is realized.

In May, UNFPA initiated maternal health services and in August 2015 started family planning (FP) services for the Burundian refugees in Mahama camp. And so far a total of 652 women have received modern family planning methods.

There is however, need to increase these services to meet the increasing demand and deter any unwanted pregnancies, spread of HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) in the camp, Maeriën explained.

“Sexual and reproductive health is critical to be integrated into humanitarian emergency response to save the lives of women and adolescent girls. With this financial support from the Republic of Korea, UNFPA will be able to continue providing access to sexual and reproductive health as one of the most critical life-saving interventions,” Maeriën said.



Deputy Rep UNFPA Daniel Alemu (L) handover to the Midwifery representatives.



Park Yong-min, the ambassador Republic of Korea to Rwanda, said the support is part of the global initiative to support those displaced by conflicts UNFPA offers family planning services and works closely with partners to ensure refugees access SRH services including family planning.

The State of the World Midwifery Report indicated that when midwives are well trained, are properly equipped and supported and if all women deliver with a midwife in a fully functioning BEmONC (basic emergency obstetrics and neonatal cares) facility, there will be a reduction of 61% of maternal deaths, 49% of fetal deaths, and 60% of new born deaths, which equates to as many as 3.6 million lives saved in 2015 (The State of the World's Midwifery Report 2011).

It is in this perspective that UNFPA committed to support midwifery program in Rwanda through technical and financial assistance to strengthen midwifery Education, Association, Regulation and Advocacy with the aim of improving midwifery services and contribute to the reduction of maternal and new born mortality and morbidity.

UNFPA donated equipment include materials and anatomical models to be used in skills and simulation lab to University of Rwanda and other midwifery schools which are; Kibogora school, Byumba Campus, Kibungo Campus, Nyagatare Campus, Ruli school, Kabgayi school, Rwamagana school and Nyarugenge.

“We truly appreciate the commitment and support from UNFPA towards improving health status of the population with a particular focus on maternal health.

The equipment will improve the quality of practical teachings to students” a representative of midwifery colleges said