



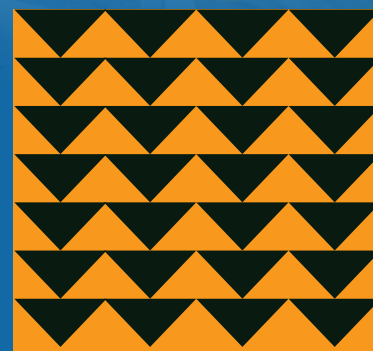
UNFPA Rwanda



TOGETHER AGAIN FOR WOMEN, GIRLS AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2, 2023



STRENGTHENING THE MIDWIFERY PROFESSION TO SAVE THE LIVES OF MOTHERS AND NEWBORNS ITERAMBERE RY'UMWUGA W'UBUBYAZA MU KURENGERA UBUZIMA BW'UMUBYEYI N'UMWANA



RWANDA TO GET THE FIRST MIDWIFERY CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Over the past decade, Rwanda made significant progress in decreasing Maternal Mortality Rates from 487 to 203/100,000LB. Currently, 93% of women give birth in a health facility. One of the main contributing factors to this has been educating midwives in the country.

Celebrating the international midwives day, UNFPA Rwanda renewed its commitment on strengthening midwives' profession through signing an agreement with Rwanda Association of Midwives (RAM) to set up the country's first-ever midwifery center intended to ensure that mothers and infants do not lose lives due to preventable deaths. Adding on this, UNFPA Rwanda in collaboration with the Ministry of Health established a new sub-sector taskforce on midwifery to reinforce collaboration among stakeholders to ensure synergy and coordinated efforts around Midwifery in Rwanda.



"The government has a vision to build a middle and later, a high income country within a certain period. This means that midwives have a role to play. Will this make us dream big? Are we going to look at the big picture? UNFPA is planning to work with RAM in the coming years. We want to create a midwifery center of excellence and that's where we are going to put our focus."

Kwabena Asante-Ntiamoah,
UNFPA Representative.

RWANDA EVALUATES ICPD25 COMMITMENTS WITH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

U RWANDA RWIFATANYIJE N'URUBYIRUKO MU GUSUZUMA IBIMAZE KUGERWAHO MURI ICPD25



In May 2023, the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the African Youth and Adolescent Network on Population and Development (AfriYAN) Rwanda hosted a Follow-up Action meeting on the implementation of ICPD25 commitment that the Government of Rwanda committed in 2019 during the Nairobi Summit.

During this meeting, the Government of Rwanda and its partners conducted a self-evaluation to gauge their advancements and charted the course for the next steps in fulfilling Rwanda's commitments that sees for instance, Rwanda health sector development

budget increasing from Rwf166.0 billion in 2020/21 to Rwf 232.7 billion in 2021/22, representing 61.7% of the total health sector budget. This has enabled Rwanda to reduce maternal mortalities to 203 from over 1200 per 100,000 births and, some districts have attained zero death rates.

Building on this achievements, the youth made their commitment to engage with the government in activities towards ICPD30, like engaging trained youth ambassadors from Youth-led Organizations as agents of change in reproductive health education.



“Rwanda ICPD25 Commitments are part of the momentum around efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including a renewed commitment to health for all.”

Hon. Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana Minister of Health



“The present and the future of Rwanda rests in the hands of its youth. They are not merely beneficiaries of the national programs and policies but active agents of change who can shape the course of our society. It is imperative that we provide them with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities to fully participate in decision-making processes concerning their sexual and reproductive health.”

Dr. Evode Niyibizi, Country Director, AfriYAN Rwanda

Six commitments made by the Government of Rwanda in 2019 at the Nairobi summit on ICPD25:

1

Increase domestic budgetary allocation for health in line with the Abuja Declaration of 15%;

2

Ensure that the necessary legislative, policy and strategic frameworks which provide for all persons to have access to quality integrated health services are in place;

3

Improve further service delivery, access and update of health services in order to increase ANC attendance, as per the WHO guidelines by 2030, and decrease Maternal Mortality Ratio;

4

Increase demand for ASRH service for all Rwandans through awareness raising, community engagement, education, and by expanding the number of HFs that offer youth friendly services;

5

Improve further FP services delivery, access and uptake by increasing the number of HFs, skilled healthcare providers and by expanding the available contraceptive method mix, including emergency contraceptives, in order to decrease unmet need for family planning;

6

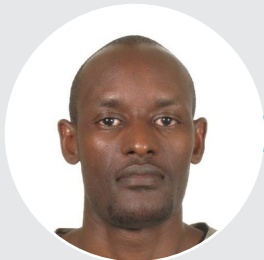
Strengthen governance systems that use reliable disaggregated FP/ASRH data to inform planning, decision making and accountability.

EXTENDED REFERENCE GROUP: COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY IN RWANDA

ISUZUMA KU BYAVUYE MU BUSHAKASHATSI KU NDA ZITATEGUWE ZITERWA ABANGAVU

According to the Demographic Health Survey conducted in 2019-2020 by National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) the proportion of adolescent girl's pregnant increase proportionally with the increasing of their age, from less than 1% at the age of 15 to 15% at age of 19 compared to 1% at age of 15 and 20% at age of 19 as reported by the previous 2014/15. The data clearly shows a decline. However, it is not at the required speed, and it is rather slow.

To further understand this phenomenon to inform policy and programmes, UNFPA in collaboration with line Ministries, Development Partners and other key stakeholders is conducting a comprehensive study on adolescent pregnancy in Rwanda and to ensure the quality and accuracy of the preliminary findings, a reference group was established to provide technical support and advisory guidance to the research team. Their involvement is a crucial step in producing a reliable and robust research output.



"The study undertakes a comprehensive assessment of the magnitude/prevalence, drivers and experiences of adolescent pregnancy, gaps in data and current interventions in addressing adolescent pregnancy and to consequently support knowledge/evidence generation to contribute towards strengthening national efforts to prevent and respond to adolescent pregnancy in Rwanda."

Rugema Lawrence, Researcher School of Public Health,
University of Rwanda



UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA LAUNCHES A MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN MIDWIFERY KAMINUZA Y'U RWANDA YATANGIJE AMASOMO Y'IKIRENGA MU BUBYAZA



STRENGTHENING THE MIDWIFERY PROFESSION THROUGH EDUCATION

In May 2023, the University of Rwanda, College of Medicine and Health Sciences through its School of Nursing and Midwifery launched a Masters of Science in Midwifery program. The program is competency-based and equips midwifery students with more capacity in decision making and better interpretation of research findings. In support of the launch of this Midwifery master program, UNFPA underscored that by investing in the professional growth and development of midwives, we are investing in the health and well-being of women, adolescents, newborns, families and the future of Rwanda and beyond.

The University of Rwanda also expressed their appreciation and received a Certificate of Appreciation for outstanding support to midwifery education in Rwanda.

“

By investing in the masters of Science in Midwifery program in Rwanda, we are not only investing in the professional growth of midwives but also in the well-being of our nation's mothers and newborns. We firmly believe that well-trained and skilled midwives are the backbone of a robust healthcare system, and their contributions play a pivotal role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 3 - ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.

Dr Bazirete Oliva (RM, PhD), Dean School of Nursing and Midwifery, College of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Rwanda



UNFPA PARTICIPATES IN A FAMILY PLANNING REGIONAL WORKSHOP IN UGANDA

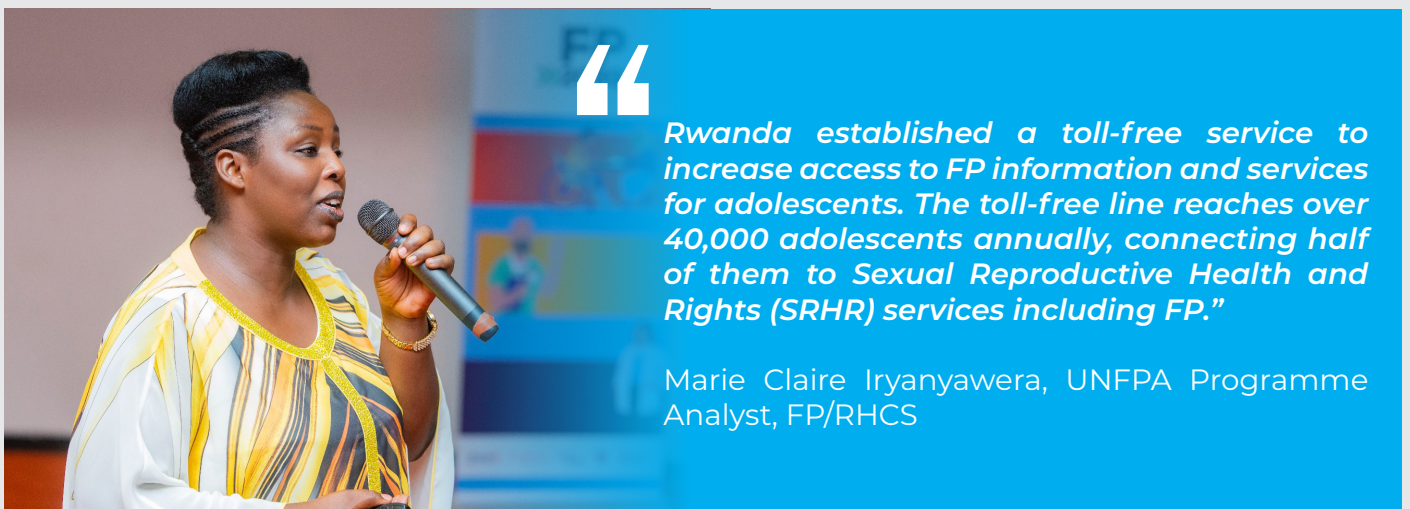
UNFPA YITABIRIYE INYUNGURABUMENYI KU KUBONEZA URUBYARO MURI UGANDA



In June 2023, a Family Planning (FP2030) Workshop was held in Kampala, Uganda and presented an opportunity for countries from East, South, and West Africa. Under the theme, ***“The Renewed vision: Marching towards 2030 for Family Planning rights and choices,”*** The participating colleagues from Rwanda, Tanzania, Botswana and Zambia shared best practices and experiences in advancing FP as part of the development agenda.

During her presentation, Marie Claire Iryanyawera, Programme Analyst, FP/RHCS at the UNFPA Country Office highlighted Rwanda's achievements and lessons learned in scaling up postpartum in family planning (PPFP). This served as an opportunity for Rwanda to highlight best practices to other countries to consider integrating FP into postpartum care and leveraging existing health services to reach women during this critical period.

The topics in the discussions focused on FP Financing and Mobilizing Domestic Resources, Supply Chain Management; Understanding data and trends for decision making; Implementing successful emergency preparedness strategies; and Implementing and scaling up High Impact Practices.



“

Rwanda established a toll-free service to increase access to FP information and services for adolescents. The toll-free line reaches over 40,000 adolescents annually, connecting half of them to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services including FP.”

Marie Claire Iryanyawera, UNFPA Programme Analyst, FP/RHCS

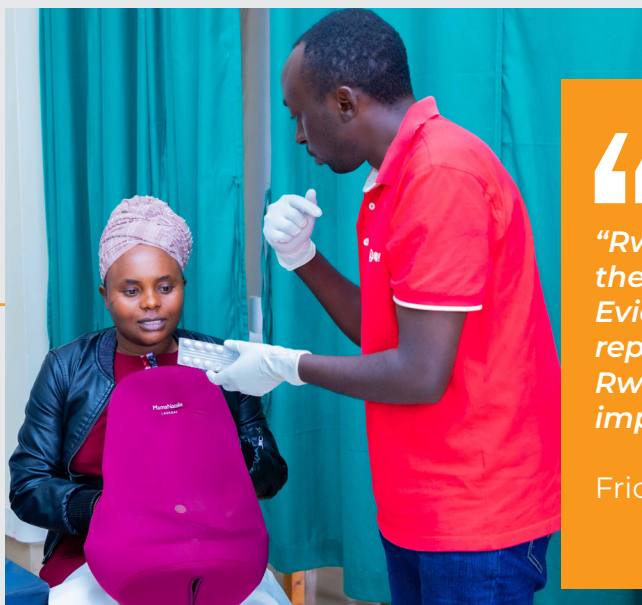
THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF MIDWIVES GLOBAL TRIENNIAL CONGRESS IHURIRO MPUZAMAHANGA KU MWUGA W'UBUBYAZA



TOGETHER AGAIN: FROM EVIDENCE TO REALITY

The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) supports, represents and works to strengthen professional associations of midwives throughout the world. There are currently 140 Members Associations, representing 119 countries across every continent. Every three years, ICM organizes a global congress. This year, the 33rd triennial congress took place in Bali, Indonesia with the theme: ***“Together again: from evidence to reality.”*** This theme highlights the importance of in-person interaction and the organization’s commitment to implementing evidence-based practices that reinforce the value of investing in midwifery.

Representing UNFPA Rwanda, Frida Temple, Midwife Speciality, presented the progress in midwifery in Rwanda. A highly influential panel engaged in discussions and presentations on the progress of midwifery in various countries. The session sparked significant interest, with participants eager to learn from Rwanda’s progress and explore opportunities for South-South collaboration.



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“Rwanda is one of the first countries to launch the SimBegin training with UNFPA support. Evidence supports that simulation training can replace up to 50% of clinical practice! UNFPA Rwanda is thrilled to witness the positive impact of SimBegin training in 3 institutions.”

Frida Temple, UNFPA Midwife Speciality

HEALTH POSTS ARE THE CORNERSTONE OF RWANDA DECENTRALIZED HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

KUNOZA ITANGWA RYA SERIVISI Z'UBUZIMA TWEGEREZA ABATURAGE IBIGO BY'UBUVUZI BW'IBANZE



Joint Programmes contribute to achieving greater system-wide coherence that supports national priorities. In a bid to fast track the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, the one UN Rwanda in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda (GoR) through the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) developed a joint programme dubbed ***“A Thousand Health Posts in the Land of a Thousand Hills: Promoting Universal Health Coverage by Catalyzing Investments in Financially and Environmentally Sustainable Primary Health Care.”***

The Joint programme is led by UNFPA, in collaboration with UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, and other UN agencies, including UNCDF, UNHabitat, and UNHCR, and aims to support the Government of Rwanda to reach its vision towards achieving Universal Health Coverage

and Universal Energy Access by 2024 through increasing the financial viability and sustainability of rural health posts.

There are two categories of Health Posts which differ by their service package, for instance, first generation health posts (FGHP) provide basic health services and laboratory tests and prescribe medicine in line with the list of drugs authorized at the HP level; and second generation health posts (SGHP) offer all services of the FGHP and additional maternal services as well as paramedical services like dental.

It is against this background that a steering committee of UN partners convened to assess the implementation status of this impactful initiative and strategize on the best approach to make the joint programme a success.



“

Having health posts at the cell level including hard-to-reach areas gives assurance that all people and communities including refugees can access health services without exposure of financial hardships”

Dr. Ozonnia Ojielo,
UN Resident Coordinator

RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN NEW DRIVE TO EDUCATE YOUTH ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

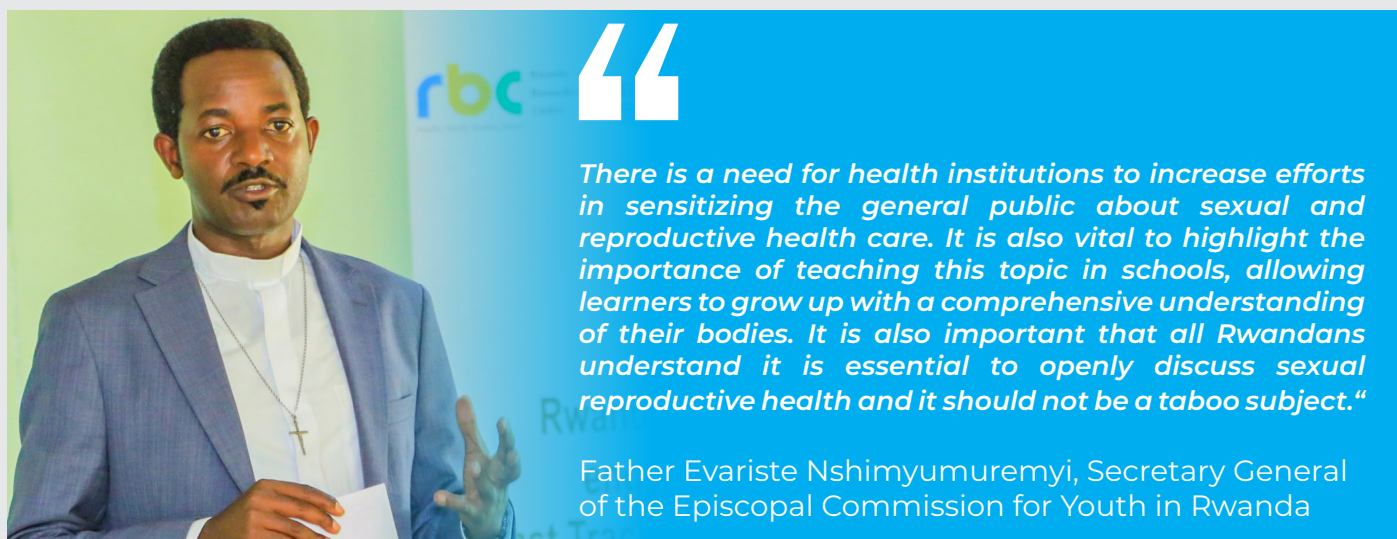
ABAYOBOZI B'AMADINI MURI GAHUNDA YO KWIGISHA URUBYIRUKO UBUZIMA BW'IMYOROROKERE



Sexual and reproductive health challenges continue to affect the well-being of adolescents and youth in Rwanda. In an effort to address this issue, religious leaders joined forces with government and private organizations for a national consultation meeting. The meeting aimed to discuss the crucial role of religious leaders in promoting maternal, infant, and adolescent health in the country.

The gathering was organized following an initiative by the Rwanda Interfaith Council on Health (RICH) in collaboration with UNFPA. The initiative focused on supporting the role and involvement of religious leaders in tackling maternal, child, and adolescent health issues in Rwanda. During the consultation meeting, Sheikh Ahmed Munyenamu, the head of religious practices at Rwanda Muslim Community, emphasized the importance of transparent communication when teaching youth about sexual and reproductive health. He stressed that religious leaders should openly discuss body parts and use clear language to ensure the message is understood.

The participants underscored that through collaborative efforts between religious leaders, government organizations, and private bodies, Rwanda aims to address sexual and reproductive health challenges among the youth, promoting a healthier future for all.



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There is a need for health institutions to increase efforts in sensitizing the general public about sexual and reproductive health care. It is also vital to highlight the importance of teaching this topic in schools, allowing learners to grow up with a comprehensive understanding of their bodies. It is also important that all Rwandans understand it is essential to openly discuss sexual reproductive health and it should not be a taboo subject.”

Father Evariste Nshimyumuremyi, Secretary General of the Episcopal Commission for Youth in Rwanda

COMMEMORATION OF THE 1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI

KWIBUKA KU NSHURO YA 29 GENOCIDE YAKOREWE ABATUTSI 1994



REMEMBER-UNITE-RENEW #KWIBUKA29

Every year, 7th April marks the beginning of Rwanda's national mourning period to commemorate "Kwibuka" (To Remember) and mourn the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Commemoration is the time to mourn with Rwandans and to engineer initiatives and events that aim at making Never Again a reality. The United Nations in Rwanda joined the Government, the Rwandans, friends of Rwanda, and the families of UN staff victims of the genocide to commemorate the 29th anniversary

of the genocide against the Tutsi on 12th April 2023 under the theme Kwibuka29: Remember, Unite, Renew.

Presiding over the ceremony, Mr. Ozonnnia Ojielo, UN Resident Coordinator, reiterated the solidarity of Africans with the people of Rwanda and appreciated the level of courage, resilience and tolerance they displaced throughout the rebuilding of the country.



UNFPA Rwanda joined the UN Rwanda family to commemorate the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi & remembered our former UN colleagues that were mercilessly killed.

On behalf of UNFPA staff, Deputy Representative, Ms. Renata Tellarico and Dr. Kathy Kantengwa, the Representative Assistant laid a wreath in Honor of the victims.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS TO FOSTER EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

GUSHIMANGIRA UMUBANO MWIZA N'UBUFATANYE

UNFPA REPRESENTATIVE AND DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE PAY A COURTESY CALL TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH



Meeting Hon. Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana, the newly appointed Honorable Minister of Health

The UNFPA Representative and the Deputy Representative of UNFPA Rwanda paid a courtesy call to Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana, the newly appointed Honorable Minister of Health, had a discussion on how to advance the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) agenda and foster action towards achieving the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) commitments.

"An absolute pleasure to discuss ways of accelerating reduction of maternal mortality, increasing access to FP and eliminating early and unintended pregnancies with Hon. Minister Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana. It can be done, it must be done! Together!"

UNFPA REPRESENTATIVE AND DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE PAY A COURTESY CALL TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION



Meeting Hon. Dr. Valentine Uwamariya, Minister of Education

Mr. Kwabena Asante-Ntiamoah, UNFPA Representative met with Dr. Vestine Uwamariya, the former Minister of Education and currently the Minister of Gender and Family Promotion as of August 2023. The discussion was about the ongoing interventions under the Rwanda Basic Education Board, and served as an opportunity to highlight UNFPA's priorities, as well as discuss further partnership in a way to accelerate the gains to date.

"UNFPA recognizes the Government of Rwanda's leadership in education for all especially in girls' education programmes and we commend the efforts undertaken to integrate the Comprehensive Sexuality Education into the Competency Based Curriculum."

UNFPA REPRESENTATIVE AND DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE PAY A COURTESY CALL TO THE MINISTER OF YOUTH

Mr. Kwabena Asante-Ntiamoah, UNFPA Representative, Dr. Kathy Kantengwa, Assistant Representative and Vestine Mutarabayire, HIV Prevention and Humanitarian Response Officer paid a courtesy call to H.E. Dr. Adballah Utumatwishima, the newly appointed Minister of Youth. In their meeting, discussions focused on strengthening the existing partnerships, particularly the need to generate evidence for effective and holistic youth empowerment models

"To move from symptoms to root causes on youth issues to achieve the Rwanda We Want, we can't continue to do the same thing & expect different results. UNFPA supports your vision."



Meeting Hon. Dr. Adballah Utumatwishima, the newly appointed Honorable Minister of

MEDIA MENTIONS/ AMAKURU MU BINYAMAKURU

UNFPA DONATES MIDWIFERY SIMULATION KITS TO NURSING SCHOOLS



The Ministry of Health (MoH) has received support that will enable the country to increase skills and the numbers of midwives in the health sector.

The United Nations Population Fund UNFPA Rwanda country programme donated the midwifery simulation kits (worth \$100,000) for seven newly created nursing secondary schools. This support also comes on the advent of marking the International Day of the Midwife 2023, which is celebrated annually on May 5.

Link: <https://www.ktpress.rw/2023/05/unfpa-donates-midwifery-simulation-kits-to-nursing-schools/>

RWANDA EVALUATES ICPD25 COMMITMENTS WITH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



Rwanda has reaffirmed its focus on reducing maternal and child mortality rates to zero, as part of the country's action plan in implementing its commitments to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

Health Minister Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana made the statement at the ICPD25 Follow-up Action 2023 meeting on May 18, 2023, that evaluated six of Rwanda's commitments to the ICPD25, which showed that progress has been made in most of the commitments except for a few.

Link: <https://www.ktpress.rw/2023/05/rwanda-evaluates-icpd25-commitments-with-youth-engagement/>

MAHAMA REFUGEE CAMP GETS SECOND HEALTH CENTER WORTH RWF350M



The Ministry of Health has inaugurated a second health center in Mahama Refugee Camp. According to authorities, the facility Rwf350 million-worth facility will be delivering cesarean sections and blood transfusion services at the camp that is based in Kirehe District.

At least 140 deliveries are conducted in the Mahama Refugee camp every month with 70 of these being conducted at Mahama Refugee Camp II alone. Due to obstetric complications, 60 per cent

Link: <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/7968/news/health/mahama-refugee-camp-gets-second-health-center-worth-rwf350m>



**UNFPA, the United Nations
Sexual Reproductive
Health and Rights Agency.**

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

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