

UNFPA Rwanda

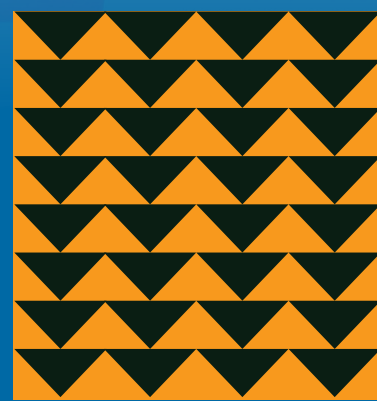
Ensuring rights and
choices for all

*Guharanira uburenganzira
n'amahitamo ya buri wese*



FOSTERING INNOVATION FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 4, 2022



YOUTH CONNEKT AFRICA 2022

IHURIRO NYAFURIKA RY'URUBYIRUKO 2022



INVESTING IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH: ACCESS TO SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

Hosted by the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the 5th edition of the YouthConnekt Africa Summit took place in Kigali Rwanda from 13th to 15th October 2022.

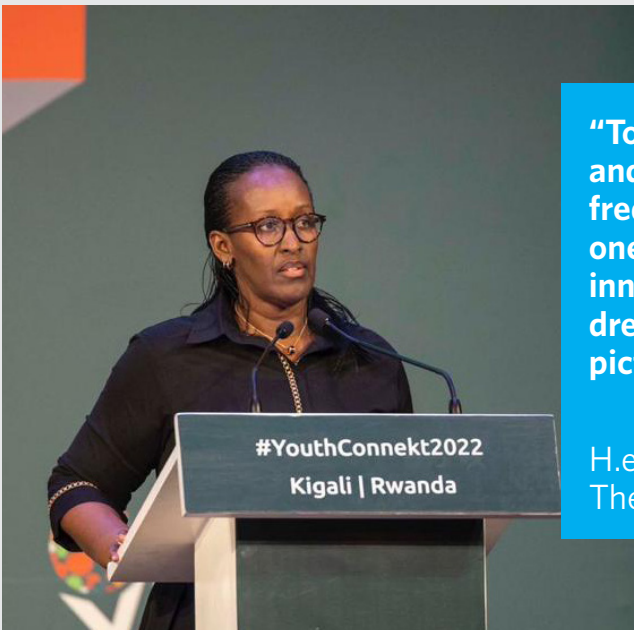
Inspired by the African Union's theme of the year, this year's summit focused on building the resilience of young people on the African continent to accelerate human capital and socio-economic development.

As part of the 2022 Youth Connekt Africa Summit, over 2500 young people from different African countries gathered in Intare Arena

Auditorium in Kigali, for a high level session on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Mental Health, organized by UNFPA and Imbuto Foundation.

Under the theme : ***"Investing in young people's health: A call for Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Mental Health"*** , this session was officially opened by H.E. Mrs Jeannette Kagame, the First Lady of Rwanda and discussed investing in young people's health with a focus on integration of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Mental Health in all approaches for their development as they are essential for the Sustainable Development Goals.





"Today, we connect through addressing sexual and reproductive health, mental health, and how frequently the two interact. The Africa we want is one led by healthy, ambitious, empowered, creative, innovative, educated youth; so to get to this dreamstate, we must look at the full developmental picture, leaving no problem unattended."

H.e. Mrs. Jeannette Kagame,
The First Lady of Rwanda

UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Director, Ms. Lydia Zigomo was among the main speakers at this high level session and took the opportunity to emphasize on the importance of addressing Sexual and reproductive health and rights and mental health as a pillar to any youth development programmes and strategies.



"We must speak about it, so together we find the best ways to integrate this topic into other initiatives which, at first glance may seem unrelated and yet, have a direct correlation."

Ms Lydia Zigomo, UNFPA East and Southern Africa
Regional Director



SHARING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES

GUSANGIRA UDUSHYA TW'IBISUBIZO N'INGAMBA



FOSTERING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO END EARLY AND UNINTENDED PREGNANCY

As part of the 2022 Youth Connekt Africa Summit, UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Director, Ms Lydia Zigomo, attended the final pitching of 6 innovative solutions to end early and unintended pregnancies. The 6 innovative solutions were selected through the Early and Unintended pregnancy Hacklab, received an online bootcamp in September 2022 and were presented at the final pitching event at Youth Connekt Africa summit.

Interacting with young innovators, Ms Zigomo reaffirmed UNFPA's commitment to continue empowering young people with knowledge and skills and linking them to services so as to take ownership of their health and well-being.

The 6 innovative solutions were selected through the Early and Unintended pregnancy Hacklab, received an online bootcamp in September 2022 and were presented at the final pitching event at Youth Connekt Africa summit.

FemConnect by Ms. Asonle Kotu from South Africa and Inspirelearn by Mr. Sam Masikini from Malawi, emerged as winners and were awarded USD 10,000 as seed investment for their early stage venture. In addition, they will receive further investment readiness preparations support.

"Your innovative solutions are not only inspiring to us who have seen them today but will undoubtedly make a difference in the lives of young women and girls and the society at large." She said

"Social enterprises like yours, have the potential to create jobs for the innovators but also other young people in your communities. This is the economic empowerment we aim to develop jointly."

Ms Lydia Zigomo, UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Director



INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS BY YOUNG PEOPLE

UDUSHYA TW'URUBYIRUKO MU GUSHAKA IBISUBIZO



ENGAGING THE YOUTH IN FINDING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

On November 1, Imbuto Foundation in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Ministry of Youth and Culture, with the support of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), launched the fifth edition of iAccelerator (Innovation Accelerator) programme with a focus on engaging young people to think critically and creatively about issues associated with Sexual Reproductive Health, and more specifically in relation to mental health issues.

The iAccelerator seeks to generate innovative, youth-led solutions for youth in Rwanda, to have increased utilization of health services and adopt healthy and safe attitudes and behaviors. Prior to the beginning of its 5th edition, a survey was prepared and sent to the public to determine the issue young people should aim to solve. The participants proposed two challenges: (i) Promote family (parent-children and adolescent) dialogue on sexual reproductive health and (ii)

Innovative approaches aiming at reducing mental health and enhance access to information and services.

In the boot camp, the 10 selected innovators received training from DOT Rwanda and other potential partners including incubators in the country such as K-Lab, Westerwelle Startup Haus, and RBC, to help them develop their ideas into innovative and lucrative projects and also received helpful pitching skills.

On 16th December, the 10 Young innovators were given the opportunity to showcase their fine-tuned innovations in front of a panel of judges. 4 innovations emerged as winners and were awarded seed funding of \$10,000, marking the end of the competition.



"Following the closing of the application process on 5th December, we received 500 applications. Then 40 selected innovators pitched their innovations in front of a panel of judges, which selected top 10 innovators that joined the boot camp from 09 to 15 December 2022"

Said Geraldine Umutesi, Deputy Director General at Imbuto Foundation



"Young people need skills and knowledge relevant to the current economy to enable them to become innovators, thinkers and problem-solvers. Investments in education, health, including sexual and reproductive health, are therefore central. As we enable young people to make a healthy transition from adolescence into adulthood, more options equally expand for their future."

Therese Karugwiza, UNFPA Adolescent & Youth Unit Lead, Speaking At The Awarding Ceremony Of iAccelerator 5.



"Imbuto Foundation and UNFPA are doing amazing work by supporting the creation of innovative solutions and empowering youth. We really appreciate the impact of Imbuto Foundation and UNFPA in empowering young talented adolescents. They are changing a lot in the life of youth and their impact contributes to the development of our country."

Urungano Best Friend Book, iAccelerator Phase 4 winner

ENDING PREVENTABLE MATERNAL & NEWBORN DEATHS

KURANDURA BURUNDU IMPFU Z'ABABYEYI N'IMPINJA



MOBILE MENTORSHIP INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE MATERNAL AND CHILDCARE IN RWANDA

On 03 November 2022, the Health Development Initiative (HDI) in partnership with Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) launched an ambitious mobile mentorship initiative dubbed "MobiMenta" as part of other existing interventions to reduce preventable maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality.

Supported by Laerdal Global Health, the initiative will facilitate a capacity-building model which allows the tailoring of training packages to specific individual needs of the targeted health facilities. The continuous support of on-the-job mentorship will lead to long-term improvements in the health sector and will bridge gaps in emergency obstetric neonatal care (EmONC), family planning (FP) and comprehensive abortion care (CAC).

Mobile mentorship is a capacity-building model well-adapted to the context of Rwanda. Karongi and Nyamasheke in particular are known for their hills, which contribute to the delay of service delivery since patients travel a distance to get to health facilities.

This cost-effective initiative will not only save the lives of women and children but will also improve their health and well-being. The on-site training offered to healthcare providers in health facilities will incorporate active learning and structured simulations and use mobile classrooms to reach healthcare providers in the most rural areas in Rwanda.

*"I am glad that the program implementers are going to use mobile clinics to move around and reach the furthest behind in rural settings. Women in our District will have access to quality care at their nearest health post without having to travel miles to get the services"*said Ms Valentine Mukase, the Vice Mayor of Karongi in charge of social affairs, at the launch of the mobile mentorship initiative in Karongi District





PROMOTING QUALITY EDUCATION OF NURSES AND MIDWIVES

Skilled nurses and midwives significantly contribute to achieving healthy lives and high standards of living towards realizing a world where every pregnancy is wanted and every childbirth is safe.

UNFPA continues to provide teaching and learning materials, furniture and technical assistance to the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery in Rwanda as part of the agency's commitment to enhance the human resources capacity of the health sector.

Seven newly established schools of the Associate Nursing Program in upper secondary level of education (A-Level) in Rwanda were launched in 2021. In December this year, UNFPA distributed quality simulation laboratory equipment to the seven high schools' simulation labs situated all across Rwanda.

This support will contribute to promote quality education of health professionals and nursing care enhancement through improved practical application of theoretical learning in the simulation laboratories and will serve approximately 630 nursing students annually.

Good education grants quality care and will lead to reduction in maternal and neonatal mortality.

The schools were in great need of material for their simulation labs and were very thankful for the donation. More equipment has been procured and will be distributed in the first quarter of next year.

"We used to make long trips to rent simulation equipment in the neighboring hospitals. But now some of the things that we were lacking, UNFPA has handed them to us. I am sure it will help us improve the quality of education we provide here at this school."
Emmanuel Ukizebaraza, Head teacher, Groupe Scolaire Frank Adamson, Nyamasheke District.





CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS TO ENSURE ACCESS TO SRH SERVICES AT COMMUNITY LEVEL

In November 2022, the Ministry of Health introduced the Community Health Workers' polyvalent model where Community Health Workers (CHWs) are currently being trained on 14 competencies (training modules), that will enable them to have an equal distribution of tasks in service provision towards ending preventable maternal and newborn deaths, unmet need for Family Planning and Gender Based Violence in their respective communities.

The training of Community Health Workers on the Polyvalent Model is a response to an evaluation done in 2016, which found that there is a high turnover of Community Health Workers (10 per cent on average) and usually overloaded and being asked to work on a range of interventions.

The evaluation recommended developing a Business Case for the Community Health Workers program with suggestions of upgrading Community Health Workers through a Diploma/Certification and possible financial reward.



" UNFPA will continue to ensure the pre and in-service capacity building of the Community Health workers towards ensuring access to quality human right based Family Planning services within the health facilities and at the community level."

Kwabena Asante Ntiamoah, UNFPA Representative.

"My job consisted of looking after children but now I'm gaining extra skills that will help me to also provide other basic health services. Within this context, I think our clients will no longer need to travel a long distance seeking for health services."

Mushimiyimana Joseph, a Community Health Worker from Bubazi Cell, Rubengera Sector of Karongi District in Western Province

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

IMINSI 16 YAHARIWE KURWANYA IHOHOTERWA RIKORERWA ABAGORE



UNITE FOR A NATION FREE FROM VIOLENCE

On 25th November 2022, the Government of Rwanda through the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion in collaboration with One UN family in Rwanda and other partners, joined the community of Nyamasheke District to observe the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls and launch of the 16 days of activism campaign.

The 16-days of activism campaign is an opportunity to raise awareness of violence against women and girls and mobilize the general public and the community to understand their contribution to combating GBV and Defilement and to the reduction of teenage pregnancy.

As part of this year's campaign and with UNFPA Rwanda support, The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion conducted a series of awareness activities including a training session with the media to engage and educate media personalities and social media influencers about deeds that promote and perpetuate Gender-Based Violence through media and the role of media in addressing this issue.

Different Media personalities had an opportunity to exchange with seniors leaders and human rights activists, on various challenges hindering Gender Based Violence. The discussions revolved around how to better communicate about Gender Based Violence, the better practice in information sharing and the role of media in educating the society around Gender Based Violence and human rights information.



"We thank our partners for the continuous support and contributions towards the efforts of the government of Rwanda in creating a better society free from any form of GBV. There cannot be any single or unique approach to solve this issue but rather a multisectoral and collaborative approach towards our common goal." Prof. Jeannette BAYISENGE, Minister of Gender and Family Promotion at the launch of the 16 days of activism campaign, in Nyamasheke District.

BRINGING HEALTH SERVICES CLOSER TO THE COMMUNITY

KWEGEREZA ABATURAGE SERIVISI Z'UBUZIMA



FUNCTIONAL HEALTH POSTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Accessibility, availability, affordability and quality are key components in the provision of adequate healthcare services for everyone to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Some avenues to meet these services include availing Service Delivery Points (SDPs) within reasonable distance for Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Health posts have proven to be viable in providing community healthcare needs in Rwanda, particularly in hard to reach areas.

To help the Government of Rwanda to achieve Universal Health Coverage, the Joint SDG Fund Programme known as "A Thousand Health Posts in the Land of a Thousand Hills" was created to have functional health posts across the country and ensure accessibility, for community members, especially those furthest behind.

In 2022, through the UN Joint SDG Fund project **"1000 Health Posts in the Land of 1000 hills"** and funded under the UNFPA Strategic Investment Facility (SIF), in collaboration with Ministry of Health through the Society for Family Health (SFH) Rwanda, supported the establishment of eighteen health posts in Nyagatare (4), Gicumbi (4), Burera (4), Nyaruguru (3) and Rusizi (3) Districts.

By bringing the health posts closer to the community and engaging community members in the establishment and functionality of the health posts, there has been an increase in the awareness and appreciation of health services, thus promoting the sustainability of health posts in the communities.

In December, 2022, UNFPA together with partner UN agencies and implementing partner, SFH Rwanda, visited first and second generation health posts in Nyagatare District. During these visits, the team toured the health facilities and learned about the various services offered in the respective health posts according to their capacities.

"We used to walk around 20 km to reach the health facility for antenatal care services and other health care services, but since they established the SGHP that offers a comprehensive health services package, there is a significant decrease in financial burdens and strenuous long distance travel. The community is now able to seek services as well as work hard for family living." Expressed Faissa Ntayoibera from Ndama Cell, Nyagatare District.



DISABILITY INCLUSION

KUGEZA SERIVISI ZOSE NO KU BAFITE UBUMUGA



ENSURING ACCESS TO SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INFORMATION AND SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

To Commemorate the International Day of Persons with Disability (IDPD), the United Nations Fund for Population Agency (UNFPA) joined the National Council of Persons with Disabilities, Rusizi District officials, and Young People from Nyamasheke and Rusizi Districts in a week-long campaign where dialogue sessions were conducted to discuss many factors behind the exclusion of Persons with disabilities from accessing Sexual Reproductive Health information and services. The dialogue sessions brought together persons with disabilities, duties bearers and health care service providers.

As part of the celebration of the 2022 IDPD, UNFPA joined the community of Rusizi District in a sports event that brought together Young People with Disability from both Rusizi and Karongi districts. The event aimed at increasing awareness on Sexual Reproductive Health and Right of Young People with Disability through sports and promoting continued dialogue among key stakeholders on challenges limiting Persons With Disability from accessing Sexual Reproductive Health information and services.



"When it comes to children with disabilities, their story is tragic. Many of them are confined by their parents, they are not sent to school and therefore they have limited access to reproductive health information."

"Our target is to extend these dialogues to many more communities and families, especially those who have persons with disabilities as members of their families so that we can all work together to promote Reproductive Health and Rights for all" said Anathalie NTANKOVU, National Women Council in Rusizi District.

ADVANCING THE ICPD25 AGENDA IN RWANDA

GUTEZA IMBERE GAHUNDA YA ICPD25 MU RWANDA



PARTNERING WITH RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO ADVANCE SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY IN RWANDA

In 2022, UNFPA continued to support the Government of Rwanda and advocate for universal access to SRH services. The engagement of Religious Leaders was identified among the high impact interventions in promoting Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in the Rwandan communities.

UNFPA is supporting faith-based partners' work to advance SRHR as a human right for all from the decision making to the community level. Yet they often encounter stiff opposition, particularly to their efforts to promote Sexual and Reproductive Health, Gender Equality and zero tolerance for Gender-Based Violence.

From 14-17 November 2022, 583 Clergies of the Anglican Church in Rwanda, Bishops and Pastors from all parishes countrywide, were trained on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, with the support from UNFPA, to enable them to empower their respective communities to end teenage pregnancy and Gender-Based Violence.



"The role of Religious Leaders to promote Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights is important to achieve the International Conference on Population and Development programme of action. UNFPA welcomes the partnership of the Anglican Church in Rwanda on this important agenda." Bernadette Ssebadduka, Program Coordinator, UNFPA Rwanda

"It is our responsibility as religious leaders to preach the gospel of love, preach against sin and promote ethical behaviour. The extent of teenage pregnancy shows that there is a problem in the community, we reassert our conviction that we are all, collectively, implicated in this challenge." The Most Rev. Dr. Laurent MBANDA Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church of Rwanda

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS KUBAKA UBUSHOBOZI MU BAFATANYABIKORWA



From 28 November to 1 December 2022, UNFPA conducted capacity development training on Results-Based Management (RBM) for its Implementing Partners.

The 4-day training aimed at enhancing the awareness of the UNFPA's RBM Principles and strengthening results-based planning, monitoring and reporting. The training allowed UNFPA Implementing Partners to gain knowledge on the UNFPA RBM Principles and Standards also served as an opportunity to empower them with skills and capacity to accelerate the progress of the three transformative results and achievement of the UNFPA 8th country program, as well as identify the priorities for the upcoming year.



"I learned from this training how to drive a project from the planning phase up to its impact on the beneficiaries and how to report efficiently using the result-based approach and Principles". ISHIMWE Alliance, HDI Communications Officer

"It is important for UNFPA to increase capacities of its staff and implementing partners on how to be results-focused in planning, programming and reporting. This was proved throughout the active practical group sessions to review of implementation of the 8th country program by far and planning priorities focusing on results beyond processes and activities." Said Hakyung KANG, UNFPA M&E Specialist

"UNFPA and the partners are committed to continuously promoting the RBM culture and practices." She added



**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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