



**THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND  
at the 2023 Women Deliver Conference:**

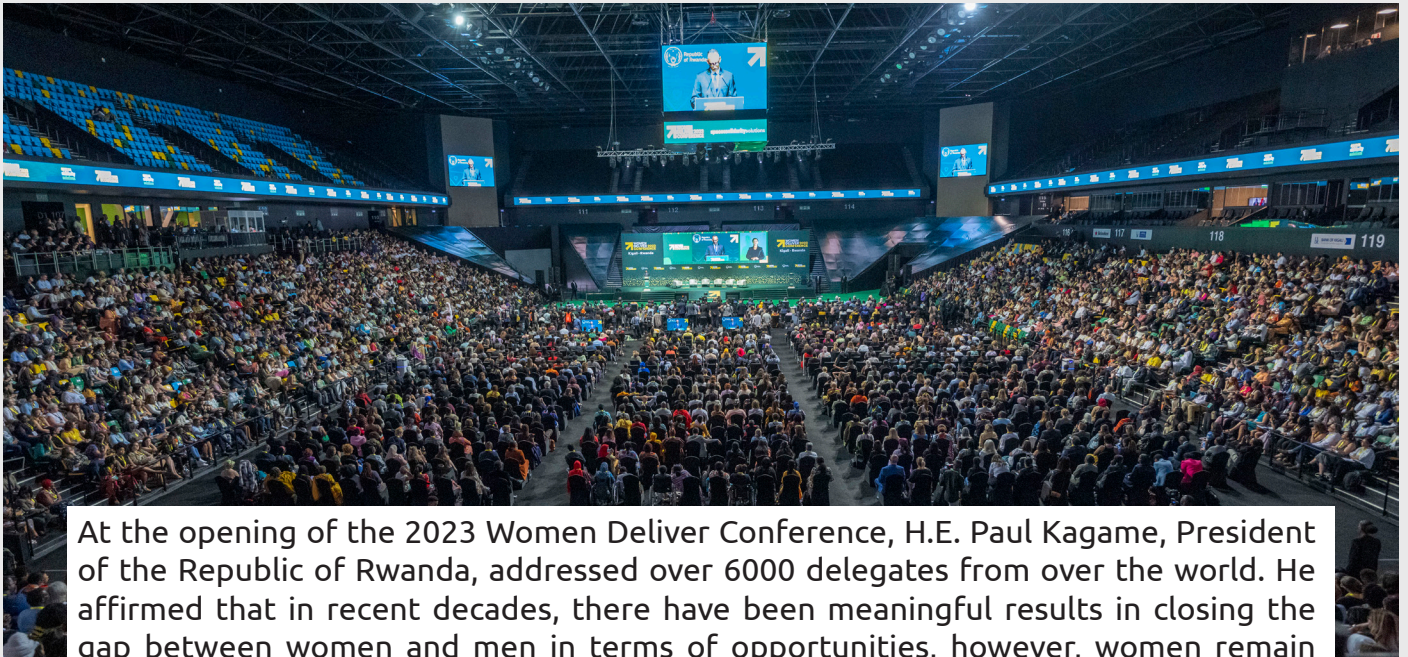
**ALL IN FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

**Spaces ·Solidarity ·Solutions**

***[THIS NEWSLETTER HAS INTERLINKED VIDEOS]***



# Moving from commitment to action, a journey to gender equality



At the opening of the 2023 Women Deliver Conference, H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, addressed over 6000 delegates from over the world. He affirmed that in recent decades, there have been meaningful results in closing the gap between women and men in terms of opportunities, however, women remain vulnerable to various forms of injustice and are still often employed in the informal sector or even expected to provide unpaid labor.

Despite the many efforts in bridging the gender gap, inequalities have been exacerbated by some political pushback movements in certain contexts. Moreover, women and girls are bearing a disproportionate share of the burden of the overlapping health, climate, and economic crisis which the world has faced over the past few years. President Kagame underscored that commitments that are not followed by action cannot fulfill the promise to build a more just and prosperous future for future generations.



Much more remains to be done to tackle bias attitudes about gender which are deeply embedded in our political, social, and economic systems. All of us share the responsibility to play an active role in changing these negative mindsets.

**H.E. PAUL KAGAME,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
RWANDA**



**WOMEN  
DELIVER 2023  
CONFERENCE**  
Kigali - Rwanda

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DELIVER 2023  
CONFERENCE**



## Opening WD2023 - A Panel discussion reflecting on the status of gender equality

At the Opening, Dr. Natalia Kanem, UNFPA Executive Director joined a panel composed of Heads of State, H.E. Sahle-Work Zewde, President of Ethiopia, H.E. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal and H.E. Katalin Novák, President of Hungary as well as Shabana Basij-Rasikh, Founder of School of Leadership Afghanistan (SOLA) to assess the status of gender equality with the aim of sharing recommendations and actions to be operationalized to ensure acceleration.

Dr. Kanem stressed the importance of never losing track of the reason why gender equality is essential to development, reminding us of the 10 year old girl who counts on us to be given the chance of fulfilling her potential.

“

I am excited to be here, because women deliver on their promises - on strategy and peace. UNFPA supports women-led local organizations that speak the language, the midwife that knows what to do; and this is the leadership that we want. The change you are speaking of is seeded at the local level in the respect of women's dignity and I think that is what we have to join hands on.

**Dr. NATALIA KANEM**  
**UNFPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**





# The Power of Choice: Fostering Partnerships to Realize Bodily Autonomy



The Women Deliver Conference started with a high-level pre-conference event on Fostering Partnerships to Realize Bodily Autonomy. The Pre-Conference convened women-led organizations (WLOs), social movements, feminists including young feminists, and provided strategic direction for how international organizations such as UNFPA can best support WLOs and social movements, and leverage their potential for the ICPD mandate. Speakers and panelists emphasized that Bodily autonomy is the foundation for gender equality and socio-economic transformation and it's a fundamental right.



**"May the leaders on whom women's fates depend, realize that every day of gender inequality is a moral, social and economic failure. Do we really want indifference to be our legacy to a world that needed us to act?"**

**H.E. MRS JEANNETTE KAGAME  
THE FIRST LADY OF RWANDA**



**"Our leadership is very important to affirm the rights of young people. And I am so comfortable, happy and proud to have young women in the driver's seat, especially here in Africa. UNFPA will continue to stand for advancing the rights of women and girls, defending their autonomy that promotes gender equality, because we know that is the right path to the world we want"**

**Dr. NATALIA KANEM, UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL  
AND UNFPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



**"Adolescents are capable! Give us the chance to express our needs & voices. Give us all the adequate, adolescent-friendly & timely info we need to make decisions about our bodies & lives. Nothing should be done for us, without us."**

**GAJU KERLENE  
ADOLESCENT ACTIVIST**





# Building Movements for Safe Technology in Gender-based Violence and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights



The session aimed at activating collective action across the digital rights movement, feminist and women's led organizations, sexual and reproductive health and rights organizations and activists to ensure safe technology, including online spaces, to protect, promote and respect women's human rights including the right to be free from violence. The objective of this concurrent session was to support participants to better understand the causes and manifestations of technology-facilitated GBV and the way in which safe and ethical technology and data practices and policies must be prioritized to ensure prevention and mitigation.

In order to support this objective, good practices in utilizing digital technologies for sexuality education will be showcased, as well as how these practices may be useful strategies to address anti-SRHR backlash. The session provided a platform to understand issues created by poorly designed technology and the ways in which collective action can address and protect data privacy, safety, security and ethics when designing and using technology.



**"But inclusive and sustainable economic growth is not possible with half the population missing from economic opportunities. It's not acceptable to say we still need a century to reach gender equality."**

**Dr. JULITTA ONABANJO DIRECTOR  
UNFPA TECHNICAL DIVISION**





## Power Her Potential: Investing in the empowerment of girls and young women

Dr. Natalia Kanem, UNFPA Executive Director, joined a side event, “Power Her Potential” organized by BRAC International at Women Deliver. The event brought together Ministers, leaders, program participants and partners to drive conversation to invest in adolescent girls and young women.

The UNFPA Executive Director highlighted that the world has 600 million adolescent girls who have endless potential to be explored and fulfilled, therefore, we must harness this potential through triple investments in education, health, and wellbeing.

“

It's not just one aspect of their life, it's the whole of her life and all the parts that matter. Girls worldwide, here's my message to you: Stay in school, pursue your dreams, finish your education.”

**Dr. NATALIA KANEM**  
**UNFPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**





# International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD30) - Celebrating Milestones and Inspiring Action



Women Deliver participants joined a special session on the 30-year review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Together with partners, UNFPA engaged and connected with diverse stakeholders, including feminist activists, policymakers, youth leaders, civil society representatives, and private sector leaders in relative discussions and strategies for the future.

The session was opened by the Hon. State Minister of Health Dr. Yvan Butera who welcomed the participants and stressed the continued support of the Government of Rwanda in ensuring the realization of the ICPD Commitments while the Hon. Minister of Gender and Family Promotion Prof. Jeannette Bayisenge closed the event, thanking the attendees for their participation and highlighted the commitment of the government of Rwanda in bridging the gender gap while appreciating the achievements already made in the country.



**"Let us find inspiration in the rhythm of collaboration for a gender equal world where every woman & girl can flourish."**

**Hon. Prof. JEANNETTE BAYISENGE**  
**MINISTER OF GENDER AND FAMILY PROMOTION**



**"The Government of Rwanda reaffirms its commitments towards the ICPD Agenda. Let us join hands to accelerate progress towards gender equality & a future where everyone fulfils their potential."**

**Hon. Dr. YVAN BUTERA**  
**STATE MINISTER OF HEALTH**







## Launch of AfriYAN Rwanda Youth Empowerment Hub

Supported by the Ministry of Youth of the Republic of Rwanda, UNFPA and KOICA, the African Youth and Adolescent Network on Population and Development (AfriYAN) launched its Youth Empowerment Hub, an incubator for young leaders and innovators from member youth-led organizations, other youth platforms and networks.

The Hub is established to create young champions and nurture their talents to become the catalysts of the development of Rwanda and Africa at large. Through the hub, youth-led organizations gain access to a range of support and resources, capacity building, technology and innovation, socio-economic empowerment and a sustainable network that enables them to create and develop their own materials related to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).



**"Rwanda aims to create an enabling environment where young people can thrive and actively participate in decision making processes. My deepest appreciation to AfriYAN, UNFPA, and all partners involved in the establishment of the Youth Empowerment Hub."**

**UTUMATWISHIMA ABDALLAH  
MINISTER OF YOUTH, RWANDA**

**"A diverse and thriving world of 8 billion people, brimming with Infinite Possibilities, depends on our collective efforts to build a resilient and inclusive future. Together we will continue to make a difference and advance the well-being of young people."**

**LYDIA ZIGOMO, UNFPA REGIONAL DIRECTOR  
EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**



# A Journey of Empowerment: Members of Parliament of the United Kingdom witnessed UNFPA's support to women in Mahama Camp



Ahead of their participation in #WomenDeliver2023, the delegation from UK Parliament visited the camp to witness the remarkable integration of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information and services, paving the path towards women's empowerment and gender equality in a humanitarian setting. During their visit, the UK Parliamentarians had the privilege of meeting with a group of First Time Young Mothers - inspiring women who are defying odds and nurturing their potential in the face of adversity.



**"These projects have given us wings to dream beyond the confines of the camp. We are grateful for the opportunities to learn and grow, making us stronger for our children and ourselves. This has given us the opportunity to self-empowerment and resilience to overcome challenges of being a mother at a young age."**

**YOUNG MOTHER  
MAHAMA CAMP**

The First Young Mothers are supported under "Healthy & Empowered Youth" project, a UNFPA supported project with funds from the aid agency of the Republic of Korea, Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), to empower adolescents and youth in Rwanda to realize their human right to equality, sexual and reproductive health, and freedom from violence.



**"The UK parliament presence here shines a spotlight on the importance of empowering women and girls in humanitarian settings. Together, through partnerships and shared commitment, we can nurture their potential, create sustainable opportunities, and build a brighter future for all."**

**Mr. BRUNO RANGIRA  
MAYOR, KIREHE DISTRICT**





## United Nations Foundation Media Field Visit to Karongi

UN Foundation (UNF) fellow journalists joined the conference to cover the Women Deliver conference along with side events. This was an opportunity for UNFPA to leverage UNF expertise to cover stories around UNFPA work to advance rights and choices for all. It is in the same perspective that from 16 to 17 July 2023, UN Foundation journalists together with UNFPA conducted a field visit in Karongi district to document success stories around the Safeguard Young People Programme, the UNFPA flagship programme on youth supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The journalists visited Rubengera Golden Standards Youth Corner to learn from service providers and beneficiaries about adolescents and youth friendly services including but not limited to family planning, HIV testing and treatment, GBV response, counseling and circumcision. They also visited Kibirizi youth space in Rubengera sector and observed a session on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and heard beneficiaries about how out of school CSE has brought changes in terms of accessing ASRH information and services.







## Musezero Health Post: A Beacon of Hope for Women's Health and Sustainable Development

The *"Thousand Health Posts in the Land of a Thousand Hills"* is a joint programme currently supported by One UN in Rwanda. Led by UNFPA together with UNDP, WHO, UNHCR, UNCDF, UNICEF and UNHABITAT in close collaboration with the Government of Rwanda and Society for Family Health (SFH), Health posts under this project are currently run through a Public Private Community Partnership (PPCP): a mechanism of engaging the private sector through a shared value approach in provision of essential healthcare services at health posts.

A delegation of Women Deliver participants visited one of the run health posts under this joint initiative - the Musezero Health Post. Delegates were inspired to witness the exemplary functionality of the health post and the high-quality health services it delivers, from maternal and reproductive health support to child immunization, the health post plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the well-being of the community, especially women and children.

“

I am thrilled to welcome the esteemed Women Deliver delegates to Musezero Health Post! Your presence here fills us with joy and reinforces the importance of our mission. My gratitude to the UN in Rwanda and the Government for the generous support they provide to us so that we can create lasting impact to the health and well-being of our community. Together, we ignite hope and pave the way for a brighter, healthier future. Thank you for being part of this transformative journey.”

**CHRISTINE SIFA**  
**MUSEZERO HEALTH POST MANAGER**

Captured here: *Sascha Faxe, MP; Niklas Borker Bjerre; & Charlotte Munch, MP* with Christine Sifa, Manager, Musezero Health Post







## Executive Director's engagements on the sidelines of Women Deliver Conference



**President Paul Kagame welcomes Dr. Natalia Kanem, UNFPA Executive Director**



**Executive Director pays tribute to the victims of 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi**

[Video](#)



### UNFPA Networking Dinner

During a remarkable networking dinner, our dedicated team from the UNFPA Rwanda Country office had the unique privilege of networking with colleagues from around the world, including the esteemed UNFPA Executive Director, Dr. Natalia Kanem. This was also an opportunity to bid farewell to Jean Pierre Musefano, a senior driver for the past 23 years with UNFPA Rwanda.



# Women Deliver: Five key outcomes from Kigali meet

At the closing of the conference, the President and CEO of Women Deliver, Maliha Khan, highlighted the need for securing bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights for women and girls. Khan stressed that despite the progress made, there is still a lot of work ahead to address existing barriers and enable women and girls to fulfill their potential. The conference aimed to strengthen solidarity and unity for ongoing efforts towards a brighter, equal future.

## KEY OUTCOMES AND COMMITMENTS

1

**Campaign to close the gender nutrition gap:** Over 40 organizations launched a campaign to address nutrition inequalities affecting women and girls globally. The Action Agenda co-created with governments outlines transformative actions to improve their nutrition and well-being.

2

**Kigali Call to Action: United for Women and Girls' Bodily Autonomy: United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** announced this initiative to accelerate investments and actions, placing women-led organizations and the feminist movement at its core. The call aims to achieve bodily autonomy, reproductive rights, and gender equality by 2030.

3

**RESPECT Women website launch:** WHO, UN Women, **UNFPA**, and UNDP came together to launch the RESPECT Women online platform, aiming to combat violence against women and girls effectively. The platform seeks to drive tangible actions and invest in evidence-based resources for violence prevention and response while promoting gender equality.

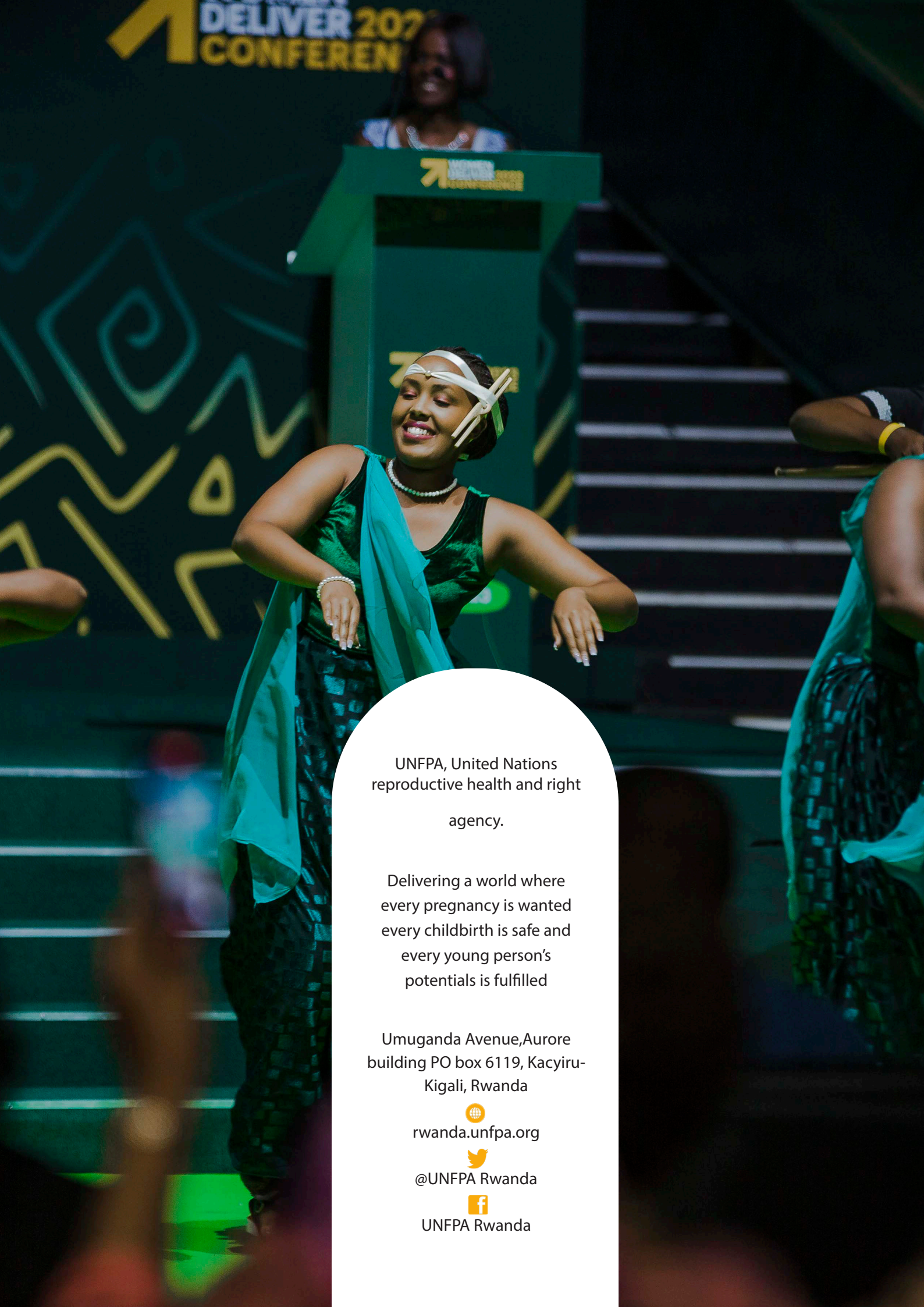
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**Women Deliver Emerging Leaders Programme:** To empower young advocates, Women Deliver launched this programme, channeling trust-based funding to youth. It seeks to provide knowledge, resources, and leadership opportunities to further gender equality and sexual health advocacy goals.

5

**New funding facility with Open Society Foundations:** To counter the anti-rights movement and address neglected sexual health and reproductive areas, a strategic partnership was forged with Open Society Foundations. The focus is on strengthening feminist movements and empowering communities at all levels to uphold fundamental freedoms for women.





UNFPA, United Nations  
reproductive health and right  
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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