



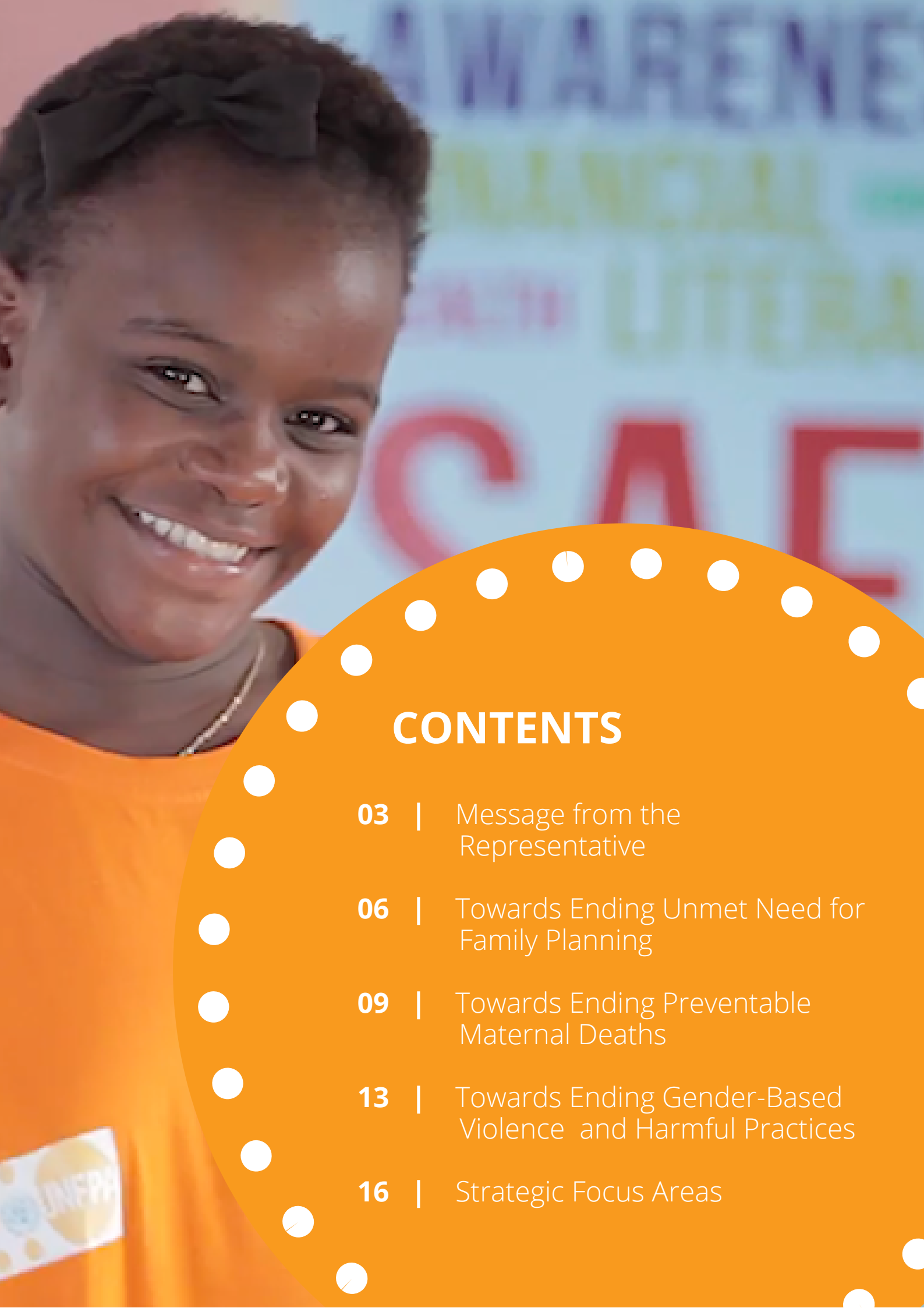
BUILDING FORWARD BETTER

Zambia Annual Report | 2021

A close-up photograph of a woman with a warm smile, looking slightly off-camera. She is holding a young child who is peacefully sleeping. The child is wrapped in a vibrant, patterned cloth featuring red, yellow, and blue floral motifs. The woman is wearing a patterned headband and a green and orange striped shirt. The background is softly blurred, showing green foliage. An orange semi-circular graphic with white dots is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text and list.

UNFPA WORKS TO END...

- 1 | Unmet Need for Family Planning
- 2 | Preventable Maternal Deaths
- 3 | Gender-Based Violence and Harmful Practices



CONTENTS

- 03** | Message from the Representative
- 06** | Towards Ending Unmet Need for Family Planning
- 09** | Towards Ending Preventable Maternal Deaths
- 13** | Towards Ending Gender-Based Violence and Harmful Practices
- 16** | Strategic Focus Areas

1 MESSAGE FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE



Strategy, perseverance and impact amid the challenge of COVID-19



In 2021, UNFPA continued to partner with the Government of the Republic of Zambia and stakeholders to deliver for women and young people, amid the greatest humanitarian crisis witnessed globally and in the country. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to trigger health, socio-economic and human rights challenges, including through the lens of UNFPA's transformative results aimed at ending preventable maternal deaths, unmet need for family planning, and gender-based violence and harmful practices.

Despite these challenges, UNFPA in Zambia continued to deliver for women and young people, especially adolescent girls.

With strategy and perseverance, and through strengthened partnerships, we invested in the continuity and expansion of integrated sexual and reproductive health services, especially in hard to reach areas. We scaled up interventions to prevent gender-based violence among women and girls. We enhanced the procurement and distribution of reproductive health commodities, personal protective equipment for frontline health care workers, as well as training in infection prevention and control amid the COVID-19 pandemic. We strengthened the integration of population dynamics in national development processes, including enhancing national capacity to generate and utilize data and evidence for policy and planning.

IN THE PICTURE: UNFPA Representative Ms. Gift Malunga welcomes a newborn baby at Kaoma General Hospital in Central Province. With funding from FCDO, hundreds of mothers and newborns have access to quality Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care Services

Our collective achievements for 2021 with the Government of the Republic of Zambia and partners are presented in this report, that UNFPA is pleased to share with you. Thank you to each and every partner working with UNFPA in Zambia, for contributing to the achievement of these results.

Most importantly, our work would not have been possible without the indispensable support of our donors, whose resources are invested in all that we do for thousands of women, girls and young people in Zambia. As we seek to build forward better towards a post-pandemic, resilient country, UNFPA will build on the lessons of COVID-19 and work towards addressing gaps and challenges accentuated by the crisis. This includes, using innovations and best practices we have adopted and adapted, to contribute to Zambia's development aspirations and achievement of the SDGs at national level.

Looking forward, in 2022 and beyond, UNFPA, as part of the broader UN family in Zambia, remains firmly committed to partnering with the Government of the Republic of Zambia in addressing national priorities outlined in the 8th National Development Plan, under the umbrella of the UN Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF) and UNFPA's Country Programme of Cooperation with the Government of Zambia. The focus will remain on the unfinished business of the ICPD Programme of Action (PoA), as we contribute towards Zambia's Vision 2030 aspiration of becoming a prosperous middle-income country.

Ms. Gift Malunga
UNFPA Representative



2

TOWARDS ENDING UNMET NEED FOR FAMILY PLANNING

In 2021, UNFPA continued to partner with the Government of the Republic of Zambia towards ending unmet need for family planning, through the procurement of more than 60% of the country's reproductive health commodities, funded through the UNFPA Supplies Partnership and bilateral donors.

Key Results

2021



2,840,349

Couple Years of Protection (i.e. 1 year of protection against unintended pregnancy) were generated through UNFPA's procurement of more than **60%** of family planning commodity needs for the public sector.



80,000

Additional users of modern contraceptives were reached, bringing the total number of women using a modern method of contraception in Zambia to 1,680,000 as at the end of 2021.



630,000

Unintended pregnancies and **158,000** unsafe abortions were averted, due to use of modern methods of contraception.



28,407,988

Male and female condoms were distributed for dual protection from HIV and unplanned pregnancies.

To further strengthen national capacity towards sustainable domestic financing for commodities, UNFPA supported the Government to develop the Family Planning Costed Implementation Plan, outlining Zambia's medium-term Family Planning aspirations and strategic interventions to achieve the set targets.



In Rural Central Province, Innovations in Family Planning Target Underserved Communities



Stories from the Field

With support from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom, and in partnership with Marie Stopes, UNFPA in Zambia has invested in the use of animated "video cards" to enhance information sharing and increase demand for family planning in underserved rural communities of Central Province.

The animated video cards were designed as an interactive, user-friendly tool for use by health workers, outreach teams and community-based distributors to facilitate stimulating conversations about family planning at the community and inter-personal level.

The cards, which are lightweight, portable units use rechargeable batteries, hence convenient for use in remote rural areas with limited access to power sources.

Jacqueline Kalunga, a community based distributor in Serenje District of Central Province, shares how the use of the animated video cards expanded her capacities to deliver family planning information and services in her village:

"The video card has boosted my confidence and motivation to reach out to more people in my village. I am able to provide quality, accurate and consistent information on sexual and reproductive health and family planning, resulting in increased demand for services. Before I began using the video cards in my village, I would reach an average of 5 clients every week. Today, this number has increased to more than 15 clients every week, owing to increased interest and engaging conversations generated through the video cards. To ensure no one is left behind, the video cards also feature sign-language subtitles for persons with disability".

As part of UNFPA's support to the Government of the Republic of Zambia, the country office continues to invest in innovative strategies to reach the furthest behind first, towards ending unmet need for family planning in Zambia. In 2021, a total of 80,000 additional users of modern contraceptives were reached with support from UNFPA and other donors and partners.

IN THE PICTURE: Jacqueline Kalunga, a community based distributor demonstrating how the family planning video card works. © UNFPA/Zambia

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark skin looking down at her newborn baby. The woman is wearing a blue patterned garment with yellow polka dots and a black top. The baby is lying in a hospital bed, wearing a yellow hat and a yellow blanket, and is wrapped in a pink blanket. The background is a blurred hospital room with white curtains.

3

TOWARDS ENDING
PREVENTABLE
MATERNAL DEATHS

In 2021, UNFPA continued to partner with the Government of the Republic of Zambia towards reducing maternal mortality to 100/100,000 live births by 2021, as outlined in the National Health Strategic Plan (2017 – 2021). Currently, maternal mortality rate stands at 252/100,000 live births (2018 DHS), which remains high.

Specific strategic interventions included support towards the continuity of essential maternal and newborn health services amid the COVID-19 pandemic; provision of basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care (EmONC); midwifery training and mentorship; prevention and treatment of obstetric fistula; maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response (MPDSR); and other essential sexual and reproductive health services to ensure “no woman dies giving life”.

Key Results

2021



1,000

Maternal deaths were averted through basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care (EmONC), family planning and continuity of essential SRHR services amid the COVID-19 pandemic.



464

Health care providers in the supported provinces increased their capacity to manage the most frequent causes of maternal morbidity and mortality, as well as capacity to provide comprehensive abortion care services, thus increasing access to safe abortion in supported provinces.



105

Women with obstetric fistula underwent successful surgical repair, thus restoring their health and dignity.



69

Midwives were mobilized and temporarily deployed to primary healthcare facilities in 3 target provinces, to reduce gaps in availability of health workers and ensure continuity of essential SRHR service delivery amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Zambia, Midwifery Schools Set the Stage for Improved Maternal and Newborn Health Outcomes



Stories from the Field

"Growing up in a remote village, I witnessed my grandmother, a traditional birth attendant, assist women and girls to deliver babies. She would perform these deliveries at home, using local herbs to try and address complications. Many mothers and their newborns lost their lives during pregnancy and delivery. This made me sad" - said Michelle Simukayi, a third year student pursuing a Diploma in Nursing and Midwifery at Lewanika College of Nursing and Midwifery in Western Province.

"After completing high school, I began researching the topic of maternal deaths and came across the book, Sellers' Midwifery by Pauline McCall Sellers. It changed the course of my life, and I was determined to become a midwife to save the lives of women and girls in remote rural areas," - said Michelle.

While studying full time, Michelle also provides information and services to women, young people, and newborn babies at Lewanika General Hospital.

At the hospital, her experience has made her aware of the diverse challenges faced by nurses and midwives in the call of duty, especially in remote rural health facilities. She remains optimistic about her chosen career and looks forward to completing her studies so that she can begin saving lives in earnest.

Enhancing the standards of nursing and midwifery

Opened in 1970, Lewanika College of Nursing and Midwifery offered the Enrolled Nursing/Midwifery Programme, which was upgraded in 2016 to the Registered Nursing/Midwifery Programme, with support from UNFPA. The aim was to enhance knowledge and skills in the management of maternal and neonatal health. In 2018, the college introduced the Direct Entry Midwifery Programme, to increase the number of trained midwives across the country.



With financial support from the Maternal Health Trust Fund (MHTF), UNFPA procured and delivered training models for use in the skills lab, as well as textbooks and other ICT equipment for use by students at the school. UNFPA is also providing scholarships for in-service student midwives.

Since 2018, more than 215 midwives supported by UNFPA have graduated from the school, and are currently serving in Western Province, including in hard-to-reach communities.

"Our learning at Lewanika College of Nursing and Midwifery has been fascinating from the start," says Gift Chimovu, a fellow third year student. "We have qualified tutors who guide us through the theoretical aspects of nursing and midwifery, while our clinical instructors equip us with practical clinical experience in a well-equipped and conducive skills lab. I am able to diagnose a complication and make a decision on time, to save a life."

Looking forward to graduating this year, he makes a call to action for decision makers: *"We need to train more pre-service midwives to increase the number of births assisted by a skilled provider, especially in remote health facilities. Of equal importance is to ensure adequate availability of equipment and medical supplies in all health facilities, coupled with continuous mentorship of midwives, so that they are able to diagnose a complication and make a decision."*

IN THE PICTURE: Gift Chimovu, a third year nursing and midwifery student at Lewanika College of Nursing and Midwifery, displays and explains the various family planning methods he offers to clients who visit Lewanika General Hospital © UNFPA Zambia



4

TOWARDS ENDING
GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL
PRACTICES

In 2021, UNFPA continued to integrate gender sensitive interventions across all programmes, taking into account how gender norms and roles can obstruct or advance progress towards sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

Through the Government of the Republic of Zambia and the United Nations joint programme on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), UNFPA contributed to the operationalization of the Anti-Gender Based Violence (GBV) Act No. 1 of 2011, which provides for the prevention and management of the GBV. UNFPA also continued to contribute to the protection of survivors of GBV, as well as addressing harmful cultural practices such as child marriage and adolescent pregnancy.

Key Results

2021



11,851

Adolescents affected and at risk of child marriage were reached through life-skills mentorship programmes in target districts.



15,287

Survivors of gender-based violence accessed an integrated package of services.



120

Traditional and community leaders were engaged as champions in progressive gender transformative norms in target districts.



UNFPA also continued to integrate gender-based violence prevention and response within humanitarian responses, including in COVID-19 prevention strategies and recovery plans.



Stories from the Field

Young Zambian women taking the lead: Tendai's story



Today, girls and young women are defining leadership for themselves. For many of them, the most important leadership qualities are striving for social and gender justice, and leading in a way that empowers and helps others.

Twenty-eight-year-old Tendai Nyathi is among thousands of young Zambian women who aspire to create more equal societies and end discrimination based on gender. This is her ideal future.

Through ongoing women's empowerment programmes implemented by the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA) with support from UNFPA and other partners, Tendai often volunteers to work with young women and girls, providing peer counselling on GBV, HIV and mental health. She also volunteers in various community outreach activities to empower and inspire adolescent girls to overcome emerging health, social and economic challenges presented by the COVID19 pandemic, which have disproportionately affected women and girls.

"My goal during these counselling sessions is to empower young women and girls with knowledge about the importance of caring for their mental wellbeing, and skills to manage stress, anxiety and depression especially at present when COVID-19 has amplified existing inequalities that have disproportionately affected women, such as gender-based violence, child marriage and teenage pregnancy"; says Tendai.

"In Zambia, there are many young women and girls striving to make a difference in various areas of our society, and are working with passion to impact many lives. We need all the support we can get. We need platforms to share our views and ideas. We need mentorship from those who are and have been where we would like to be in future. We need support to help us actualize all that we seek to achieve and contribute to the development of our country", she says.

IN THE PICTURE: Twenty-eight-year-old Tendai Nyathi, a young SRHR advocate who aspires to create more equal societies and end discrimination based on gender.

5

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS



Humanitarian Action

To ensure continuity of sexual and reproductive health services amid the COVID-19 pandemic as well as in humanitarian settings, UNFPA, as part of the UN Zambia joint support to the Government of the Republic of Zambia, continued to leverage partnerships with line Ministries and implementing partners to facilitate access to health and protection services for vulnerable populations and frontline workers.

Key Results

2021



5,405

Vulnerable women and girls received relief supplies (dignity and mama kits), as part of UNFPA support to humanitarian emergencies occasioned by COVID-19, severe drought and floods.



155

Health care providers and multi-disciplinary teams in 4 districts had their capacity strengthened in Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for sexual and reproductive health in crisis situations.



6,000,000

Estimated population was reached with radio and television risk reduction communication messages on COVID-19 and its linkages to sexual and reproductive health. The messages aimed at sustaining demand for services amid the pandemic.



UNFPA scaled up support towards the procurement and distribution of essential maternal health medicines and supplies, which facilitated the continuity of services in the context of COVID-19.

Amid COVID-19, midwives contribute to averting maternal and newborn deaths



Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the role of skilled midwives towards averting maternal and newborn deaths remains key. However, in most underserved communities with high maternal and neonatal deaths, significant gaps in availability of well-trained health care workers remained a challenge, which was further constrained by the pandemic.

Charmaine Sipatonyana is a midwife temporarily deployed to Kaoma District Hospital in Western Zambia, through UNFPA support and with funding from the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Her deployment was aimed at addressing gaps in availability of skilled midwives to provide quality maternal and newborn health services, particularly at the peak of COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

"Since my deployment to the hospital, we have not recorded any maternal deaths. I am actively facilitating engagements with the community, to continuously sensitize expectant mothers on the importance of continuing antenatal visits and close monitoring during pregnancy and postpartum period, especially amid the pandemic." says Charmaine.

Charmaine further shares how the UNFPA supported training in Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for sexual and reproductive health in crisis situations has improved her skills and confidence to facilitate safe deliveries and save lives.



Stories from the Field

Through the Government of the Republic of Zambia/FCDO/UN Joint Programme on Health Systems Strengthening, a total of 69 midwives were mobilized and temporarily deployed to primary healthcare facilities in Western, Luapula and Central Provinces between November 2020 and August 2021. This initiative was aimed at reducing key gaps in availability of healthcare workers and ensure continuity of essential SRHR service delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The role of a midwife goes beyond facilitating safe deliveries. When they are adequately skilled, midwives also play a critical role in delivering all other sexual, reproductive, maternal, and newborn health services, including providing family planning and counselling services. This is very important as health systems continue to be constrained by the pandemic", says Charmaine.

IN THE PICTURE: Charmaine Sipatonyana, a nurse midwife at Kaoma District Hospital in Western Province, attending to a family planning client at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

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Taking Bold Initiatives to Reach Young People

To ensure young peoples' potential is fulfilled, as they transition from childhood to adulthood, UNFPA works with the Government, young people, civil society organizations and partners with other UN agencies to deliver comprehensive policies and programmes that protect the health, rights and well-being of young people.

UNFPA targets young people through five strategic prongs:

- Enabling evidence-based advocacy for policy development, investment and implementation;
- Promoting comprehensive sexuality education for in and out of school young people;
- Building national capacity for the delivery of adolescent friendly service delivery;
- Targeting marginalized adolescent girls, especially those at risk and affected by child marriage and teenage pregnancy;
- Promoting youth leadership and participation.

Key Results

2021

71,124



Adolescents accessed a comprehensive package of sexual and reproductive health information and services in target districts.

70%



Of public health facilities are providing an integrated, adolescent-friendly package of sexual and reproductive health information and services for adolescents. This is an increase from 65% in 2020.

110,000



Learners were reached with age appropriate comprehensive sexuality education in the 148 supported schools in target districts.



Linking comprehensive sexuality education with youth-friendly health services



Stories from the Field

Adolescents, especially girls, face significant sexual and reproductive health challenges. In Western Province, like many provinces across the country, persistent barriers in access to adolescent-friendly health services continue to translate into high adolescent pregnancy rates at 42% (the second highest adolescent pregnancy rate in Zambia); as well as high HIV prevalence rate (affecting mainly young people) at 15.4%.

Over the last 7 years, the integration of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) into the national education curriculum for grades 5 to 12 has played a key role towards improving sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) outcomes among adolescents in Zambia. In 2021, the Government of the Republic of Zambia made a renewed commitment to implement the East and Southern Africa (ESA) Ministerial commitment on CSE and sexual reproductive health and rights.

Sefula Community in Mongu district of Western Province is among many target communities that have established effective linkages between CSE taught in school and access to adolescent-friendly SRHR services.

IN THE PICTURE: Learners at Sefula secondary school CSE topic on teenage pregnancy © UNFPA

Taught under subjects of biology, civic education, home economics, integrated science and religious education, CSE trained teachers at Sefula secondary school are able to use interactive and participatory methods to guide learners through discussions, including providing information about various services available at the health facility.

Further, at health facility and community level, traditional leaders and health workers often organize dialogues that aim to address social norms and misconceptions that impede effective implementation of the CSE programme, as well as provision and access to adolescent sexual and reproductive health services in the community.

"At home, many of us don't get the chance to learn about the important topics of menstruation, pregnancy, love and relationships. Through CSE lessons at our school, we are able to discuss with our teachers many issues that concern us, such as puberty, sexual and gender-based violence, values, human rights, health and well-being, and sexual and reproductive health, to mention a few"; highlights a learner at Sefula Secondary School.

The CSE-ASRH services linkage at Sefula secondary school has over the last 2 years contributed to a reduction in incidences of teenage pregnancies, from a headcount of nineteen (19) in 2019 to four (4) in 2021.

Harnessing Data for Development

In 2021, UNFPA Zambia continued to provide both technical and financial support to the Government of the Republic of Zambia, through the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, the Zambia Statistics Agency and the Ministry of Health, to scale up national capacity to generate and utilize statistical data and evidence, in order to inform national policy and planning. Specific milestones for the year included the following:

Key Results

2021



5

National assessments and studies were supported by UNFPA to inform national programming processes including the 8th National Development Plan; as well as to contribute to the body of knowledge around COVID-19. These included (1) a pilot study on the status of legal identity in Zambia; (2) the Population Situation Analysis Report; (3) COVID-19 Impact Assessment on Persons with Disabilities; (4) an Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and the Health System; and (5) a COVID-19 Recovery Needs Assessment.



With UNFPA support, the Ministry of Finance and National Planning disseminated the National Population Policy and implementation plan, which was officially launched in 2020. The policy provides national guidance for integrating population and development in national planning processes.



With technical support from UNFPA, the Zambia Statistics Agency commenced the verification of Census enumeration areas, as well as preparatory work on the enumeration and post-enumeration survey.

UNFPA Zambia extends appreciation to the donors listed below, who contributed or who are contributing to the overall resource envelope for UNFPA's 8th Country Programme with the Government of the Republic of Zambia (2016-2022).



SWEDEN



AREAS OF COLLABORATION WITH UNFPA

- Midwifery
- Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Sexual and Reproductive Health, Gender Based Violence and HIV Linkages

IRELAND



AREAS OF COLLABORATION WITH UNFPA

- Ending Gender Based Violence

UNITED KINGDOM



AREAS OF COLLABORATION WITH UNFPA

- Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child, Adolescent Health and Nutrition
- Scaling-up Family Planning
- Ending Child Marriage



THE MATERNAL HEALTH THEMATIC FUND

- Supported by Governments of Sweden, Germany and Luxembourg

CANADA



AREAS OF COLLABORATION WITH UNFPA

- Maternal and Neonatal Health
- Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Ending Child Marriage



REPRODUCTIVE, MATERNAL, NEONATAL AND CHILD HEALTH (RMNCH) TRUST FUND

- Supported by Governments of Norway and United Kingdom

EUROPEAN UNION



AREAS OF COLLABORATION WITH UNFPA

- Scaling-up Family Planning
- Emergency Obstetric & Neonatal Care
- Maternal Death Surveillance & Response
- Sexual and Reproductive Health, Gender Based Violence and HIV Linkages
- Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health



UNFPA SUPPLIES

- Supported by Governments of the United Kingdom, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, European Union, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

SWITZERLAND



AREAS OF COLLABORATION WITH UNFPA

- Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Ending Child Marriage



UNIFIED BUDGET, RESULTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK (UBRAF)

- Co-sponsored by UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO, World Bank



United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
UN House, Alick Nkhata Road,
PO Box 31966, Lusaka, Zambia
Tel: +260 (211) 256383
Web: <http://zambia.unfpa.org>

 @UNFPAZambia

 UNFPA Zambia