

HUMANITARIAN ACTION

2022 Overview



Table of contents

Foreword from the Executive Director	3
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IMPACT

Snapshot of Achieved Results	6
2021 Humanitarian Funding	10
UNFPA Humanitarian Revenue in 2021	15

APPEAL FOR 2022

2022 Planned Results	18
2022 Required Funding	19
2022 Top 10 Country Requirements	21

GLOBAL SUPPORT

2021 Snapshot	24
Looking Ahead with the New Strategic Plan for 2022–2025	25
· Establishing more integrated and effective rapid response mechanisms	27
· Developing quality standardized humanitarian programming and interventions	28

Foreword from the Executive Director



UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem holds a newborn baby at a maternity ward in Blue Nile State where UNFPA is providing life-saving reproductive health care amidst the COVID-19 pandemic © UNFPA/Sudan

Sarah, a 15-year-old refugee, lives in a small tent with her family. She wakes up early every morning to walk miles to collect firewood and drinking water. She stays under the shade of the tent for the rest of the day. She doesn't dare move alone, fearing harassment and violence after her friend was raped. Sarah did not have the chance to continue her education, and she will marry her cousin next year as her father promised him. This is the daily struggle of millions of girls around the globe.

Our world has reached a turning point: Inequality and shifts in climate and technology are reshaping our lives. Intensifying natural disasters, environmental degradation, conflict and public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic are causing humanitarian catastrophes and rising displacement worldwide. More than 50 per cent of all maternal deaths and up to 70 per cent of gender-based violence occur in humanitarian and fragile settings.

Humanitarian crises threaten gains made towards achieving the International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. They disrupt the provision and use of sexual and reproductive health information and services, and leave women and girls vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. In Afghanistan, Ethiopia and other humanitarian settings, we see just how quickly hard-won gains for women and girls can be unwound in the face of crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed huge fault lines and a shadow pandemic of gender-based violence, with the most vulnerable groups in our societies suffering disproportionately.

Our aim is zero

UNFPA works towards three transformative results, which we call our three zeros. We want zero unmet need for family planning, zero preventable maternal deaths and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices by 2030.

A key strategic shift in the UNFPA Strategic Plan for 2022–2025 is to expand the full spectrum of our humanitarian action to better safeguard the health and lives of women and adolescents. We have mainstreamed resilience, prevention and preparedness, and emphasized the complementarity between humanitarian, development and peace-responsive efforts. We are strengthening emergency preparedness, anticipatory action and response systems so that they are more flexible and adaptable. When we anticipate crises, we can work to defuse them before they wreak mass havoc. This is part of our accountability to the people we serve.

UNFPA in humanitarian action 2021

Despite the extraordinary challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, UNFPA and its partners delivered humanitarian aid to millions of women and young people in more than 60 countries in 2021. More than 29 million women of reproductive age received sexual and reproductive health services, including contraceptives, supplies for safe deliveries and personal protective equipment. Approximately 2 million survivors of gender-based violence accessed services through 12,000 safe spaces supported by UNFPA. Innovation and new ways of working during the pandemic helped us reach over 75 million people, both remotely and in person, with information about sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence.

UNFPA works with communities and national and local organizations before, during and after a crisis to prepare for and mitigate the impact of disasters, provide emergency aid, and support recovery efforts after the crisis has passed. We prioritize investment in women-led organizations, as they understand their communities' needs and are the ones providing front-line support to women and girls.

In 2021, we also continued our critical work on protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH). In my role as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Champion on PSEAH, my priorities were to strengthen leadership, coordination and accountability across the humanitarian system and to place the rights and dignity of victims at the centre of these efforts.

Through strengthened partnerships in 2021, we mobilized increasing numbers of champions against sexual exploitation and abuse in 35 priority countries. I travelled to Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Yemen, where I met with PSEAH focal points, United Nations country teams, and with women and girls affected by crises who offered their insights on ways to protect their safety and prevent abuse. UNFPA immediately shared the women's recommendations with all parties concerned and swift action was taken.

Women are the experts. They have an intimate understanding of the lives of the women and girls in their communities and the risks they face. That's why the voices and leadership of women remain at the heart of all we do. We have a lot to learn from their insights and experiences.

Thanks to our donors, partners and humanitarian workers

Nearly 100 Member States fund UNFPA every year. In doing so, they send a message of hope to women and girls around the world. We are grateful for their support.

We are inspired by the humanitarian workers who, day in and day out, overcome unprecedented hurdles to aid people affected by crises, even in the face of COVID-19.

In 2022, UNFPA is appealing for an estimated US\$835 million to provide life-saving services and protection to 54.5 million women, girls and young people in 61 countries.

Scaling up our humanitarian interventions is critical to achieving our three zeros by 2030.

With joined-up efforts and with your support, I believe we will get there.



Dr. Natalia Kanem
UNFPA Executive Director

Impact



Snapshot of Achieved Results

Extraordinary cooperation and resourcefulness with partners allowed UNFPA to assist millions of women, girls and young people with a range of services, supplies and information in 2021*

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

29 million

Women of reproductive age (15–49) reached with SRH services and supplies in 42 countries

4.3 million

Adolescents and young people (10–24) reached with tailored SRH services in 33 countries

1.5 million

UNFPA-assisted safe deliveries in 29 countries

6 million

People reached specifically with family planning services in 39 countries

2,200

Mobile clinics supported by UNFPA in 29 countries

2 million

People, including health workers, reached with personal protective equipment in 29 countries

2,400

Health facilities that provide Emergency Obstetric Care in 35 countries

44,000

Health facility personnel and youth peers trained in SRH, including the Minimum Initial Service Package, in 34 countries

3 million

Older persons (65+) reached with SRH services, in 23 countries

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

2.4 million

People reached with GBV services (prevention, risk mitigation and response services) in 39 countries

12,000

Safe spaces for women and young people supported by UNFPA in 38 countries

500,000

Dignity kits distributed in 41 countries

1,000

Health facilities that provide specialized GBV services (including clinical management of rape) supported in 38 countries

35,000

Health personnel and youth facilitators trained in GBV, in areas such as clinical management of rape, in 35 countries

480,000

People reached with mental health and psychosocial support services (prevention of worsening distress, promotion of resilience, mental health & psychosocial risk management, or treatment) in 35 countries

Notes

* Results are estimated as of October 2021 and do not include every country in which UNFPA has delivered humanitarian services. Results will be updated on the [UNFPA humanitarian page](#) as new data becomes available.

“I realized that information is power and I started looking for opportunities to develop myself, as well as for ways to contribute to the collective betterment of my community. Through my efforts to help other women and girls in the camps, I have gained the respect of my community, family members and husband. At first, no one listened to me. However, gradually, they started to embrace me as they understood that information gives them choices and opportunities.”

- Hamida, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh



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