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FOR PEOPLE,  
PLANET &  
PROSPERITY

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## **UNFPA**

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

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## Foreword

The importance of women's empowerment has been ingrained in me since childhood. I remember as a boy asking about a tradition I observed: women going into labour would leave their shoes in the doorways of their homes and then look back in fear.

“They are wondering if they will ever step into those shoes again,” my mother explained.

More than sixty years later, the memory continues to haunt me. In far too many parts of the world today, women and adolescents still risk death in the process of giving life. Maternal death is one of many preventable perils. All too often, young girls are subjected to genital mutilation. Girls are attacked on their way to school. Women's bodies are used as battlefields in wars.

We can only address these problems by empowering women and girls and protecting their health, wellbeing and rights, including their reproductive rights.

The success of the new Sustainable Development Goals depends on whether we succeed at ensuring all women and girls are healthy, are able to exercise their human rights, enjoy equal opportunities and hold the key to their own futures so they thrive and help transform the world.

This annual report shows how UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, helped millions of women and girls gain the power to realize their full potential and transform their lives.

—United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

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“Maternal death is one of many preventable perils.”

© UN Photo/Rick Bajornas



## From the Executive Director

The Millennium Development Goals made history—and made poverty and poor health history for millions of people. The new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 associated targets, presents an opportunity to finish the job and leave no one behind, for the sake of people, the planet and prosperity for all.

Governments participating in the consultations leading up to the General Assembly's endorsement of Agenda 2030 in September 2015 pushed hard to weave the rights, health, education and empowerment of women and young people into the fabric of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The UNFPA mandate, set by the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, ICPD, has never been more relevant: not only is the ICPD's focus on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights central to sustainable development, but it is also critical to realizing a demographic dividend, which has the potential to lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty.

The 2030 Agenda's endorsement of the power of the demographic dividend opens a unique opportunity for UNFPA to accelerate action on fulfilling core aspirations of the ICPD: the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms and expanding young people's access to health services, including family planning and contraceptive services.



© UN Photo/Paulo Filgueiras

Family planning is one of the best investments we can make. When individuals have the information, power and means to choose whether and when to have children, human rights are advanced, communities are healthier, nations are stronger and economies more sustainable.

“UNFPA Supplies” is the largest global fund dedicated to family planning, and the largest public-sector supplier of contraceptives, accounting for more than 40 per cent of global procurement of these goods. Between 2008 and 2015, contraceptives provided by the UNFPA Supplies programme have saved an estimated 1 million lives and \$2.6 billion in direct health-care spending in countries with the highest maternal death and highest unmet need for family planning.

Equally important has been our work in improving maternal health and forging ahead

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“Let us seize the opportunities offered by the new development agenda to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.”

with the unfinished business of Millennium Development Goal 5, to save mothers’ lives. Through the Maternal Health Thematic Fund, UNFPA in 2015 supported critical maternal health interventions in 39 countries with the highest levels of maternal death and illness. Interventions included strengthening midwifery and emergency obstetric and newborn care.

Also in 2015, UNFPA continued responding to humanitarian crises with a focus on ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health services, preventing and responding to gender-based violence, empowering women and young people, and generating data for effective humanitarian action.

We know that women and girls are disproportionately disadvantaged in emergencies, as they face increased risks of gender-based violence. We also know that women, girls and young people are drivers of change and first responders who work hard for the resilience and recovery of their families and communities.

Our humanitarian work in 2015 spanned emergency preparedness, disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response and recovery. From Syria, to Yemen, to South Sudan, Nepal, the Central African Republic and other countries affected by crises, we worked to ensure safe birth and safety from fear and sexual violence.

Financing is the linchpin for the success of UNFPA programmes and our contribution to the success of Agenda 2030. Yet, the funding landscape remains challenging, for both Member States and UNFPA.

The new development agenda and evolving funding dynamic call for new thinking, new partnerships and new ways of doing business. While our current financial situation, at least for now, may not allow us to do more, we can endeavour to do better—and we will.

In 2015, we sought ways to secure more predictable and stable funding while continuing efforts towards innovation, both in our operations and programme delivery, as a means of achieving greater efficiency, greater results and greater impact.

UNFPA will continue to place people, their human rights, well-being and dignity, at the centre of our sustainable development efforts.

Let us seize the opportunities offered by the new development agenda to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, and every young person’s potential is fulfilled.

# UNFPA and the path to sustainability





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**A new global development agenda** received the backing of the 193-member United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015, setting the stage for economic, social and environmental progress for the coming 15 years. The General Assembly called the 2030 Agenda “a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity.”

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes 17 new Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, which have been hailed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as a universal, integrated and transformative vision for a better world.

The General Assembly envisages “a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity,...of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and contributing to shared prosperity,...a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed.”

The General Assembly also affirmed that realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls can make a crucial contribution to progress across all Goals and targets: “The achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if one half of humanity continues to be denied its full human rights and opportunities. Women and girls must enjoy equal access to quality education, economic resources and political participation....”

Many of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets overlap with the strategic objectives of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, as well as the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, which guides UNFPA programmes aimed at delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled

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