



# Demographic Dividend in West and Central Africa: 2017 Progress Report

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**Photographs**

Unless otherwise indicated, photos are from  
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# Demographic Dividend in West and Central Africa: 2017 Progress Report

In 2017, UNFPA WCARO had one clear objective - to put our agenda of harnessing the demographic dividend in our region to work.

We teamed up with the African Union and its 55 member states as well as with other United Nations agencies, partners, civil society organizations and youth groups to ensure that we all focussed on the year's theme: investment in our youth.

Our work included advocacy from government leaders to grassroot levels, reaching out to leaders from different faiths and traditions as well as the private sector, organizing workshops and meetings across the region.

We made particular efforts to reach young people and engage them in this agenda. We worked to strengthen youth organizations such as AfriYAN and promote the #PutYoungPeopleFirst campaign and we also worked on our own internal communications to ensure we reach our hardest-to-reach beneficiaries across the region.

We continued our collaboration with the Research Centre for Applied Economics and Finance in Thies, Senegal (CREFAT) to build capacity in the region. This helped countries draw up their own demographic dividend profiles and identify the challenges to achieving them.

Our partnership with the World Bank and the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD) initiative continued to go from strength to strength, suggesting a need to scale it up across all ten countries in the region.

The only sadness in the year was the unexpected loss of UNFPA's Executive Director Professor Babatunde Osotimehin who died suddenly in June.

He was succeeded by former Deputy Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem and we have full confidence that she will continue to safeguard his legacy and consolidate our agenda

*In 2017, UNFPA WCARO had one clear objective - to put our agenda of harnessing the demographic dividend in our region to work.*

# 2017 Priorities

## Operationalization of the demographic dividend agenda in West and Central Africa

UNFPA WCARO and our country offices drove the demographic dividend agenda forward in 2017 by engaging our partners across the region to put theory into practice.

We led the development of a theory of change in response to challenges faced by the Sahel countries. This provided a brief analysis of the multidimensional causes of the Sahel crisis and proposed a change model using a multi-sectoral and stratified response to bring about both a medium and a long-term impact.

We also led the regional UNDG working group to develop an operational guide to mainstreaming youth and demographic dividend in UN country teams programming for UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). It identifies key areas for joining programmes to prioritise the needs of young people.

Nine countries prepared new country programmes with integrated priority areas relevant to the demographic dividend. Most of these countries have a high population growth and need key strategic interventions.

## Private sector adds momentum to the demographic dividend agenda

The year also saw UNFPA WCARO increase its engagement with the private sector on the demographic dividend agenda.

Two major events included hosting a side event on the margins of the UNGA New York in which multinationals called for more local private sector involvement with governments; and taking part in the fourth edition of the Rebranding Africa Forum (RAF) in Brussels, which emphasized the importance of innovation and human capital investment.

## A transformational partnership with faith-based organizations

We continued to work with faith-based leaders to spread understanding of the need to harness the demographic dividend and enhance family wellbeing.

In July, more than 1,200 Muslim leaders attended an international symposium in Chad, financially and technically supported by UNFPA WCARO and the World Bank. It looked at how Islamic leaders can partner with us to share knowledge with their followers and improve acceptance of family planning.

## African First Ladies champion the demographic dividend agenda

This year saw Africa's First Ladies hold a number of events dedicated to their support of the demographic dividend. The first was a two-day session in July on the margins of the 29th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, at which they pledged to champion adolescent girls' and women's empowerment.

They agreed to use their unique platform as some of the most visible women in the region to encourage young women to delay marriage and childbirth and to continue their education.

## Social and behaviour change communication to empower women and girls

The strategic framework and implementation plan for the regional and national Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) campaigns were validated in Mali in April. It identified institutions and resource persons in each country to carry out grassroots rallies and awareness-raising campaigns.

*Africa's First Ladies, as some of the most powerful women in the region, have a unique platform to support the transformation of lives, especially youth, adolescents girls and women.*



↑ At the launch of the Social and Behavioural Change Communication campaign, in October 2017, in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, First Lady of Sierra Leone Sta Nyama Koroma signs a note of engagement as First Lady of Niger Dr Lalla Malika Issoufou Mahadou looks on from her right

The aim is to strengthen community-based knowledge and target adolescents and young people on the use of sexual and reproductive health and family planning services.

↓ Hosted by the First Lady of Cote d'Ivoire Mrs. Dominique Ouattara, some African African First Ladies joined to launch the social and behavior change communication campaign of the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD) Initiative



Another goal is to raise young girls' awareness about early marriage and pregnancy; to attract the support of local and national authorities; and to encourage the engagement of religious and traditional leaders in supporting young girls' rights.

A regional SBCC campaign was launched in October in Cote d'Ivoire. This was co-chaired by the First Ladies of 18 member countries who issued a joint declaration of commitment to:

- serve as models on issues related to the empowerment of women and girls;
- advocate for strong political commitment on gender issues;

- support the implementation of the SBCC at the national and regional levels;
- place the social and economic empowerment of women, adolescent girls and girls at the top of their agendas;
- promote health, education of the girl child, promote access to quality health services; and
- support the extension of the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD) initiative to other countries.

## Celebrities support the UNFPA mandate

Senegalese singer Coumba Gawlo Seck joined UNFPA WCARO in 2017 to use her musical talent as a channel to encourage social and behavioural change among people, especially young people, at drama, music and arts festivals. Coumba Gawlo will also be participating in a partnership action plan with six other artists from SWEDD countries in 2018.



↑ Coumba Gawlo, Senegalese singer songwriter and composer

## UNFPA's fight against early pregnancy continued

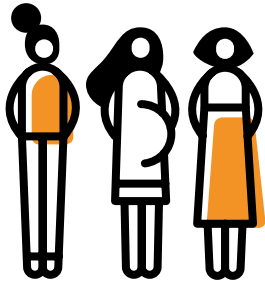
UNFPA leads on implementing a French Muskoka Fund-financed campaign against early pregnancy in eight countries in the region. In 2017, we held a joint regional workshop to take stock of current rights and SRH and to share the latest global evidence.

We also supported the production and dissemination of the awareness-raising television soap opera 'C'est La Vie' which in 2016 had reached more than 20 million viewers.

This second season consisted of 36 new 26-minute long episodes.

*36 new 26-minute long episodes of french TV series C'est La Vie, which continued to cover UNFPA's mandates including AYSRHR, FGM, child marriage and GBV*





→ Alassane Cisse, Journalist with Radiodiffusion Télévision Sénégalaise (RTS), feeds in on the role of media specialists in enhancing the demographic dividend agenda. He was subsequently elected President of the newly formed Journalists and Communication Specialists Network for Health, Population and Development in December 2017, in Côte d'Ivoire.

## Supporting youth organizations to implement the African Union roadmap on demographic dividend

UNFPA supported AfriYAN WCA in the implementation of regional and national activities of the Youth Roadmap in 2017. With the support of the Ford Foundation and other partners, an inter-generational dialogue and AfriYAN restructuring exercise was held. The restructuring workshop led to the election of a new Executive Committee.

At another youth leadership conference in Senegal in March, young leaders developed youth roadmaps at regional and national levels to compliment the AU roadmap.



## Media professionals launch network on the demographic dividend agenda

A new network of information and communication experts was launched in December in Cote d'Ivoire to mobilize more people, amplify advocates' voices, convince relevant stakeholders and gain and sustain political commitment toward implementing the AU roadmap.





## Africa Peace Award for 2017

UNFPA WCARO was honoured this year with the prestigious Africa Peace Award from the United Religions Initiative (URI) for Africa. This award is in appreciation of its outstanding work in promoting the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health, dignity and equal opportunity.

## Investing in human resources for health, wellbeing and economic development

This year, UNFPA WCARO and its partners provided support to train and mentor nursing and midwifery students in 42 training institutions across Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

In addition to basic training, UNFPA WCARO and its partners recently selected two centres of excellence that will, by the end of 2019, have contributed to training 242 teachers to get a Masters degree in nursing and midwifery.

## Family planning, a key investment for capturing the demographic dividend

We continued to invest in family planning interventions to try and meet the huge unmet needs for almost one quarter of WCA women.

Interventions included:

- Conducting numerous capacity-building initiatives. A total of 1,672 service providers were trained at the country level in providing better quality reproductive health and family planning services.
- Maintaining support efforts to national bodies responsible for emergency relief and for crisis and disaster management.
- Strengthening strategic partnerships at both regional and country levels.
- Supporting additional country resource mobilization efforts to assist with family planning programmes, including national budget contributions. After sustained advocacy, eight countries have created budget lines for contraceptive commodity procurement.
- Strengthening advocacy and policy dialogue at national and international meetings, summits and conferences.



## UNFPA responses to humanitarian crises in 2017

In 2017, WCARO provided support to all its 23 country offices to enhance capacity, emergency preparedness and address emergency responses in humanitarian situations.

Seventeen out of these 23 countries were targeted because of humanitarian crises or high vulnerability. Seven countries were in an acute situation.

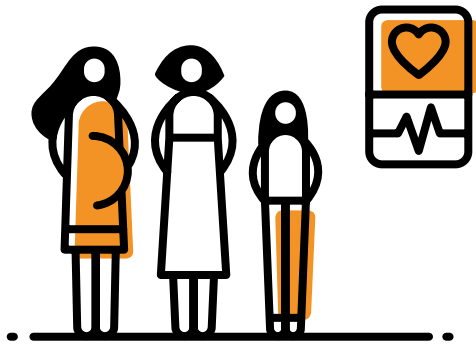
About 31.2 million people were in humanitarian need in 2017.

3.6 million women of reproductive age, 300,000 pregnant women and 4 million adolescents and youth (aged 10 to 24 years) were targeted by UNFPA WCARO.

About 1.1 million women of reproductive age, 62,000 pregnant women and 425,700 adolescents and youth were targeted for protection against GBV.

USD 14.7 million of USD 41.2 million was mobilized, of which USD 6.5 million was funded by CERF and USD 1.5 million by the UNFPA emergency fund.

## UNFPA provision in the region



# 14.7 M

Couple Year Protection

# 3.7 M

averted unintended pregnancies

# 13,800

maternal deaths averted

**113** safe spaces; the operationalization of **393** maternity health facilities, tents and homes; **260** mobile clinics; **639** functional health facilities that provide emergency obstetric care (EmOC); and **202** service delivery points (SDPs) that provide clinical management of rape (CMR) services.

Training to **717** people on MISP, **942** health personnel were trained on EmOC and **543** people on CMR. **1,842** youth facilitators, peers and volunteers were trained on SRH and GBV, **713** service providers on GBV case management and **813** personnel on psycho-social support.

# 43,400

child deaths averted

# 694,300

unsafe abortion averted

# 3,500

fistula repairs



A functional system for safe and ethical GBV incident data management such as GBV-IMS in half of the targeted countries (**9 out of 17**). This is due to UNFPA actively leading the GBV sub-cluster area of responsibility in the crisis countries (**7 out of 7**).

## Knowledge management on demographic dividend

Work continued throughout the year to help countries understand their demographic dividend profiles and how they can achieve them.

To date, 177 national experts have been trained in national transfer accounts (NTA) programming. Eighteen French and Portuguese-speaking countries from the region have their demographic dividend profile.

At the regional level, UNFPA produced the WCARO and ECOWAS NTA reports on four thematic areas:

- 1 *Report on economic dependence within ECOWAS and WCARO*
- 2 *Report on youth and work market within ECOWAS and WCARO*
- 3 *Report on the demographic dividend in ECOWAS and WCARO*
- 4 *Report on gender disparities within ECOWAS and WCARO*

Five publications on evidence-based advocacy papers were produced on demographic dynamics; the crisis of countries around Lake Chad and a theory of change; experience and lessons from the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing; indicators for advocacy and policy dialogue and the youth development index.

# UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018–2021

The adoption of the strategic plan 2018-2021 marked a turning point in UNFPA's strategic vision. It once more puts universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights at the very centre of its development agenda and is also closely aligned with Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It clearly defines the longer term vision and the interlinkages of the three strategic plans until 2030.

Three bold results must now be achieved - zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet needs for FP and zero harmful practices - while keeping the four previous outcome areas around SRH, adolescents and youth, gender and population dynamics.

Building on lessons learnt in the previous strategic plan, more flexibility is now seen in the business model, which has now introduced a component on coordination, partnerships and south-south cooperation in addition to advocacy, policy dialogue, knowledge management, capacity building and service delivery.

Innovation in strategic approaches to deliver high impact results is emphasized at all levels during the planning processes.

The new strategic plan includes:

- Working together with UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda

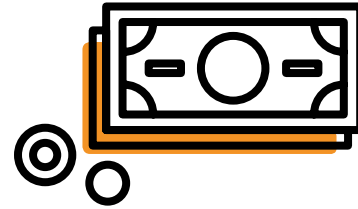
- Achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health, realize reproductive rights and reduce maternal mortality to improve the lives of women, adolescents and youth, enabled by population dynamics, human rights and gender equality.
- Aligning the UNFPA strategic plan goal with the goals and indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Regional intervention action plan for UNFPA West and Central Africa

The WCA regional intervention action plan (RIAP) is aligned to the strategic plan and its timeframe. It will be operationalized through three regional priorities:

- To engage in high-level policy dialogue
- To develop regional products, including generation and dissemination of data and research.
- To build country office capacity to implement country programmes.

# Resources for collaboration



A Resource Mobilization and Partnership plan has been agreed. The projected goal for the region for 2018 and beyond is to mobilize non-core funds of USD 75 million per year or USD 300 million for four years. Based on needs and priorities, WCARO will:

Engage traditional donors locally across the region: objective – maintain or increase the level of OECD–DAC contributions above a threshold of USD 40 million a year.

Increase contributions to programme country and regional initiatives: objective is to reach USD 15 million a year.

Develop financial partnerships with foundations and multilateral institutions: objective is to reach USD 10 million a year.

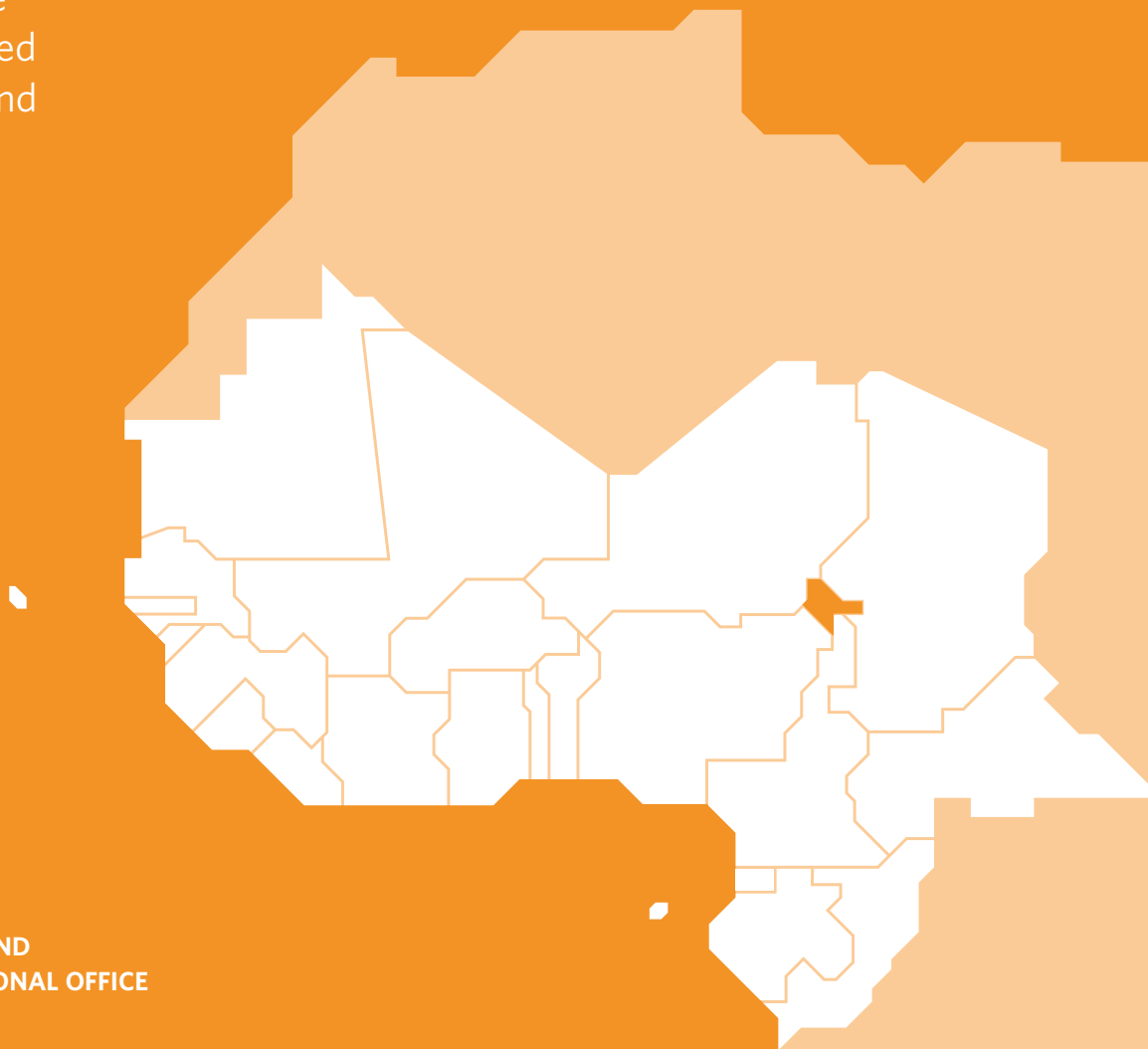
Enhance joint programmes with other UN agencies: objective to maintain or increase inter-agency transfer to about USD 10 million a year.

Build strategic partnerships; design and develop robust proposals for initiatives; develop regional capacity and reorganize human and knowledge resources; use core and non-core resources more efficiently; and strengthen media relationships.





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



**UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND  
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