



Ghana Country Office

Orange Vibes

TRIANNUAL NEWSLETTER

May 2024 - August 2024

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STATEMENT FROM THE COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE



Dr. Wilfred Ochan
UNFPA Ghana Rep

I welcome you all to read and engage with us on our second issue of the Triannual Newsletter, the Orange Vibes for the period May to August 2024.

At UNFPA Ghana, we value Partnerships and Innovations as accelerators for the achievement of the three transformative results: zero unmet needs for family planning, zero preventable maternal deaths and zero GBV and harmful practices, and for youth empowerment. In this issue, we focus on some of the emerging work on partnerships and innovations to achieve our goals.

You will read about the unique Partnership to End Fistula in Ghana (PEFIG) that promises reach, resources, alliance, and innovations to address the challenge of obstetrics fistula through collaborating with UN entities, public sector institutions, private sector, NGOs, and the academia. The partnership promises a shift from funding to funding and domestic and blended financing, with some of the partners, already providing initial funds for fistula repair such as UNFPA, World Food Programme, Fidelity Bank, and ACCESS Bank, while ACCESS Bank is also using an App (Chango) for receiving donated funds pooled from the public towards obstetrics fistula programme.

Another, Qatar Charity Organisation is working on building some holding shelters for fistula survivors, while another, the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons is looking at the assessment of fistula burden and developing a curriculum for training surgeons on fistula repair. The partnership is championed by the First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo.

Our novel idea on Transport Innovations for Maternal health Emergency Rescue, TIMER brings innovations being co-designed to address factors around the second delay for pregnant mothers to reach timely delivery care, but with backward linkage on the first delay (delay to decide due to financial limitations) and forward linkage on the third delay (delay to receiver quality care by ensuring facilities are capacitated).

At the current development/nascent stage, TIMER promises to bring partnerships and innovations to the center of our work. We will be working with an Uber-like App (Tap and Go) with Ghana Transport Union to provide an emergency transport system, a patient alert App on dates of delivery, and online savings for maternity care through the Sika Save App by MTN Ghana and a Fintech company. These are to ensure that there is emergency transport available for mothers to reach timely care and that funds are saved to avoid catastrophic healthcare expenditure when it is most needed. The innovation brings partnerships with the private sector: banks, a telecommunications company, a Fintech company, transport providers, families of expectant mothers, individual givers, queen mothers; public sector institutions, UN, etc., into a "social contract" for improved maternal health outcomes.

Our partnership model expands to working with traditional leaders who are custodians of cultural values and norms to become change agents for some of the socio-cultural norms that stand in the way of women's empowerment and militate against achieving the three zeros. Similarly, the three zeros and empowerment of youth can only be achieved in the context of peace, security, dignity, and human rights. UNFPA Ghana is working with peace institutions to drive social cohesion, especially in vulnerable communities. We are supporting work on Youth Peace and Security at the national level in partnership with Kofi Annan Institute, National Youth Authority, and other partners.

Please let us know your experiences in reading the newsletter and how we can engage more with you.

UNFPA LEVERAGES ON STRONG PARTNERSHIPS TO COMMEMORATE THE INTERNATIONAL DAY TO END FISTULA IN GHANA



UNFPA Ghana, in collaboration with the Partnership to End Obstetric Fistula in Ghana (PEFIG), commemorated the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula on May 23, 2024, at the La Palm Royal Beach Hotel in Accra. Under the theme "Breaking the Cycle: Preventing Fistula in Ghana," the event highlighted the pressing need for strengthened healthcare systems to prevent and treat obstetric fistula, a debilitating condition affecting women and girls.

The event was graced by Ghana's First Lady, alongside other dignitaries such as the Norwegian Ambassador, Members of Parliament, Chiefs, Queen Mothers, fistula survivors, and academics. Significant achievements included expanding stakeholder partnerships from 8 to 22 members and raising \$405,000 from nationwide efforts, including contributions from the Office of the First Lady.

Additionally, treating 38 women from a total of 50 cases marked a remarkable 200% increase in repairs over previous years, demonstrating significant progress in addressing this condition.



First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, Her excellency Rebecca Akuffo and some Obstetric Fistula survivors at the La Palm Royal Beach Hotel in Accra.

Building a Coalition of Actors to Advocate for Sustainable Domestic Financing for Family Planning using the SMART Advocacy Concept



Given the critical need for predictable sustainable funding for family planning (FP) in Ghana, UNFPA convened a high-level SMART Advocacy workshop, bringing together diverse stakeholders from government, civil society, the private sector, and academia. The collaborative effort focused on building a strong coalition of advocacy actors for increased domestic financing using the SMART advocacy approach.

A strategic action plan was developed, and an advocacy steering committee was formed to oversee its implementation. Three ambitious yet achievable SMART goals were set

1. \$1,050,000 budget allocation for FP commodities by December 2024.
2. Mobilizing \$1.2 million from the mining sector by mid-2025.
3. FP in private healthcare insurance schemes by June 2025.

Further plans include engaging Ghana's Parliamentary Health Committee to elevate 3 TRs as a priority in policymaking and explore opportunities to integrate FP funding into national budgeting processes.



Stakeholders from government, civil society, private sector, and academia at the SMART advocacy workshop.



Addressing the 2nd delay to Maternal Mortality through the TIMER Project.



UNFPA Ghana through a private-public partnership rolled out the implementation of the TIMER (**T**ransport **I**nnovation for **M**aternal **H**ealth **E**mergency **R**escue) project to address the 2nd delay in Maternal Mortality i.e., delay in reaching the health facility. The innovative project seeks to develop an Application (Uber-like) or adapt existing solutions that create an interface between the accredited transport providers at the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU) and potential clients and enable beneficiaries to save.



UNFPA Ghana with partners at the co-creation workshop of TIMER project to end 2nd delay in maternal mortality

Key achievements of the project include the development of the "Chango" crowdsourcing platform for fundraising, which raised an amount during initial co-creation sessions with strong community involvement, including Chiefs and Queen Mothers. Additionally, local names were given to the initiative: "**Y33boa Y3n ho**" (**We are supporting each other**) in Asante and "**Kpoyifolo pio**" (**Save Mothers Now**) in Dangme. A **USSD code (*887*110#)** was also activated for mobile donations.

TIMER district-level teams have been formed, and the GPRTU's "TAP & GO" transport system will be adapted for the project. Looking ahead, the partnership is set to expand, involving fund managers, the Ministry of Roads and Transport, National Ambulance Service, and Blood Bank to further enhance the project's impact. This innovative approach is poised to contribute to reducing maternal mortality by ensuring that pregnant women have timely access to skilled care during emergencies.



Training of Regional Officers and Traditional Council Registrars on ending GBV including child marriage and FGM

The training of Regional Officers and Traditional Council Registrars on ending Gender-Based Violence (GBV), child marriage, and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) marks a significant stride towards addressing harmful practices in Ghana. This initiative aligns with key priorities of enhancing knowledge, reducing unconscious biases, and promoting gender equality within communities.

The training aimed to deepen the understanding of GBV, with a particular focus on child marriage and FGM, as well as operationalizing the National Framework for Engaging Traditional Authorities alongside the Child Marriage Toolkit.

The goal was to equip these officials with the necessary tools and knowledge to help combat harmful practices in their respective regions.



A key partner in this initiative has been the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, whose collaboration has been instrumental in facilitating the training. The Ministry's involvement underscores the importance of engaging traditional leadership structures in combating harmful practices.



Regional Officers and Traditional Council Registrars taking part in training on ending Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and combating harmful practices



The partnership is expected to continue, with plans to deepen collaboration by incorporating local government authorities, religious leaders, and civil society organizations to ensure a holistic approach to addressing GBV, child marriage, and FGM. These collaborations are essential for sustaining long-term social change and addressing harmful cultural norms.

Through this training program, a total of 120 regional officers and registrars were successfully trained, significantly enhancing their capacity to address GBV, child marriage, and FGM within their communities. The initiative increased awareness about these harmful practices and provided tangible action steps for the officers to implement.

Furthermore, the training helped address issues of unconscious bias and gender stereotyping among the staff of the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs.



Group photograph of participants at the training session held in Dakar, Senegal



Training of partners on Essential Service Package (ESP) for women and girls subject to gender-based violence

Information and services, targets marginalized populations, aiming to strengthen the capacity of service providers. Additionally, the project supports the provision of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and GBV services, while scaling up protection and safety infrastructure.

A midyear review was conducted to assess the project's progress, offering an opportunity for implementing partners to present their achievements, share successes, highlight best practices, and discuss challenges encountered in executing their components. This review also served as a platform to ensure the continued commitment to the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), especially in the context of working with vulnerable and marginalized groups.



Partners undergoing training on Essential Service Packages (ESP) for women and girls subject to Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

GIZ serves as the main partner in driving the success of this project, providing critical resources and support to ensure the effective implementation of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services. However, the project's success has also been shaped by the contributions of several key implementing partners, including the POS Foundation and the Human Rights Advocacy Centre.

The training enhanced participants' ability to use reporting tools and manage project data effectively, improving the documentation and tracking of activities. It provided insights into project successes and challenges, particularly in delivering SRHR and GBV services to marginalized groups. Additionally, it reinforced the application of PSEA principles and strengthened collaboration between UNFPA and partners, ensuring better communication and more efficient project delivery.

TRAINING OF SECURITY AGENCIES IN NORTH-EAST, UPPER EAST AND UPPER WEST REGION



Group picture of members of security agencies and civil society groups in North East, Upper East and Upper West Regions at the training program.

With the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Regional Coordinating Councils, a comprehensive training program was organized for members of security services and civil society groups across three regions. The primary focus of this training was to adopt a human-rights approach, aiming to empower local communities to claim their rights and hold individuals and institutions accountable for respecting, protecting, and fulfilling those rights. The training was rooted in key international principles such as "do no harm," universality, indivisibility, equality, non-discrimination, participation, and accountability. It also emphasized gender and youth responsiveness in all security approaches, safeguarding women and youth from violence and abuse.

The program aimed to equip participants with the knowledge and tools to ensure security and justice were delivered through a human-rights lens. It also sought to deepen their understanding of gender-based violence (GBV), conflict analysis, and early warning systems, while promoting women and youth agency in conflict prevention and resilience-building.



This initiative was made possible through strong partnerships between UNFPA, the Regional Coordinating Councils, and local civil society groups. These collaborations were key to the training's success, as they facilitated a multisector approach to security and human rights. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, the training helped bridge gaps between security services and civil society, promoting cooperation and mutual understanding.



UNFPA Ghana Joins National AIDS Control Programme to Mark 20 Years of Antiretroviral Therapy with Youth Outreach

UNFPA Ghana, in collaboration with the National AIDS Control Program (NACP) and the Miss Malaika Pageantry Team, successfully executed the HIV-ART@20 Outreach campaign to commemorate 20 years of antiretroviral therapy in Ghana. The initiative focused on raising HIV awareness among in-school and out-of-school young adults in four regions of the country.

The outreach activities were conducted in 10 secondary schools and 2 market squares, reaching a total of 11,271 young people. Participants were engaged through interactive discussions, drama performances, and demonstrations, receiving essential information on HIV prevention. In addition to awareness-raising, the outreach also involved the distribution of HIV self-test kits and male condoms. Representatives from the Ghana Health Service, Purim African Youth Development Platform, ABBOTT International Diagnostics, and UNFPA worked alongside Miss Malaika to distribute these items to traders, head porters, and teachers.

The partnership between NACP and the Miss Malaika Pageantry not only amplified HIV awareness but also reinforced UNFPA's dedication to addressing sexual and reproductive health and rights issues affecting young people in the targeted regions.



Miss Malaika Ghana 2023, Lady Nana Yaa Nsarko educating Senior High School students on the use of contraceptives to prevent HIV.



Miss Malaika Ghana and team at Makola Market for HIV Prevention outreach



Building on the success of this outreach, UNFPA is currently collaborating with NACP to develop a Health Sector Acceleration Plan for HIV Prevention among adolescents and young people.

This comprehensive plan aims to further enhance efforts to combat HIV and promote sexual and reproductive health in this vulnerable population.

UNFPA AND WFP PARTNER TO EMPOWER YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE, SRHR AND GBV

UNFPA Ghana, in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP), successfully conducted consultations for youth involved in the agricultural businesses with a focus on Agri-Tech innovations. The initiative aimed to engage young people to explore their perspectives on the application and advancement of agriculture as means of sustainable livelihoods and food security through the adoption of technology for agricultural practices by young people.



A group of young people undergoing training organized by UNFPA and WFP for youth in SRHR and GBV



Over 515 young individuals from 11 regions in Ghana participated in the consultation, sharing their perspectives on the application of technology in different agri-businesses including land preparations, crop growing, harvesting and processing, post-harvest loss prevention and food processing. The participants also received training on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV).

The collaboration between WFP and UNFPA effectively leverages UNFPA's extensive youth networks to mobilize active youth in Agri-tech innovations around the country for consultation. Additionally, partnerships with key youth-serving organizations, including regional Agric offices, the National Youth Authority, and regional health officers, have fostered commitments towards youth support in Agric while addressing issues of gender-responsive programming and SRH awareness campaigns, emphasizing the participation of young women.

Youth champions have been mobilized in each region to advocate for support to their peers in agriculture and SRHR issues. The initiative underscores gender equality and raises awareness on safeguarding issues such as GBV and SEA. Through these combined efforts, UNFPA and WFP are not only empowering young people but also laying the groundwork for a healthier, more equitable future for all youth in Ghana.



Participants of the Training to Empower Youth in Agriculture, SRHR AND GBV



Ghana Takes Steps Towards Youth Peace and Security: Developing a National Action Plan

Ghana is making strides in fostering a more peaceful and inclusive environment for its youth. In collaboration with state agencies, the United Nations, development partners, and youth-led organizations, the government is actively developing a National Youth Peace and Security Action Plan (NAP). This important initiative aims to address the unique challenges and opportunities facing Ghanaian youth and promote their active participation in peacebuilding efforts.

The journey towards developing Ghana's YPS NAP began with a pivotal Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop held in Cameroon in October 2023. Representatives from Ghana's Peace Council, Youth Bridge Foundation, and UNFPA Ghana participated in this event, acquiring valuable knowledge and skills to support the NAP development process.



Minister for Youth and Sports, Hon. Mustapha Ussif engaging the audience and the media on efforts to develop a National Action Plan

In May 2024, a significant milestone was reached with the inauguration of the National Technical Working Group (TWG). Led by the National Youth Authority, the group comprises representatives from youth organizations, government agencies, political parties, development partners, and the UN. The TWG's formation underscores the importance of a collaborative and inclusive approach to addressing youth peace and security issues.

With the support of UNFPA and GIZ, the TWG's capacity has been built to ensure effective coordination and implementation of the NAP development process. The group is also working on developing a comprehensive framework, including a roadmap, stakeholders and partners plan, and resource mobilization plan, to guide the process. Data collection and national consultations will be conducted to gather input from diverse stakeholders, ensuring that the NAP reflects the needs and aspirations of Ghanaian youth.

Ghana's NAP development process will benefit greatly from the wealth of knowledge and experience available in other countries in the West and Central Africa region and beyond. By learning from best practices and sharing lessons learned, Ghana will develop a more effective and tailored approach to addressing youth peace and security challenges.

The development of Ghana's YPS NAP marks a significant step forward in promoting youth engagement and peacebuilding in the country. Through collaboration, capacity building, and inclusive participation, Ghana is laying the foundation for a more peaceful and prosperous future for its youth.

THE POWER OF 12 MILLION - WORLD POPULATION DAY 2024

UNFPA Ghana in partnership with NPC and in collaboration with the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS), University of Ghana, organized the launch of World Population Day at the GNAT Hall, Accra. The event brought together government agencies, academia, development partners, CSOs, NGOs, students, researchers, and the media. Key messages were shared with the chairperson of NPC, the Country Representative of UNFPA Ghana, and representatives from the Ghana Statistical Service, RIPS, and other stakeholders. RIPS leveraged on the occasion to launch the World Population Prospects Database, a global demographic information database for policy formulation and research.

This sparked media engagement and conversation on the results, their implications, and policy briefs at the national level. There was also a panel discussion with reps from CSOs, NGOs, government agencies, and youth groups, who shared their various contributions of how they are involving the youth in their various spheres, thereby contributing to Ghana's development. The last activity for the day was an open forum which gave the youth the platform to openly and honestly share their perspectives or concerns on issues either of interest to them or bothering them.



Member of Parliament for Wa Central, Abdul-Rashid Hassan Pelpuo addressing the audience at the 2024 World Population Day commemoration in Accra.

A number of youth engaged in this activity in a float, while interacting with traders and pedestrians on the importance of youth involvement, engagement and participation in national development.

Ensuring that the potential of young people is fulfilled, reflected in the celebration of this year's World Population Day. UNFPA Ghana will continue to put the youth first in creating spaces that harnesses their capabilities and gives them room to lead, participate and to be involved in decision making structures

Unveiling at UNFPA Ghana's Youth Innovation Hub, the Orange Loft.



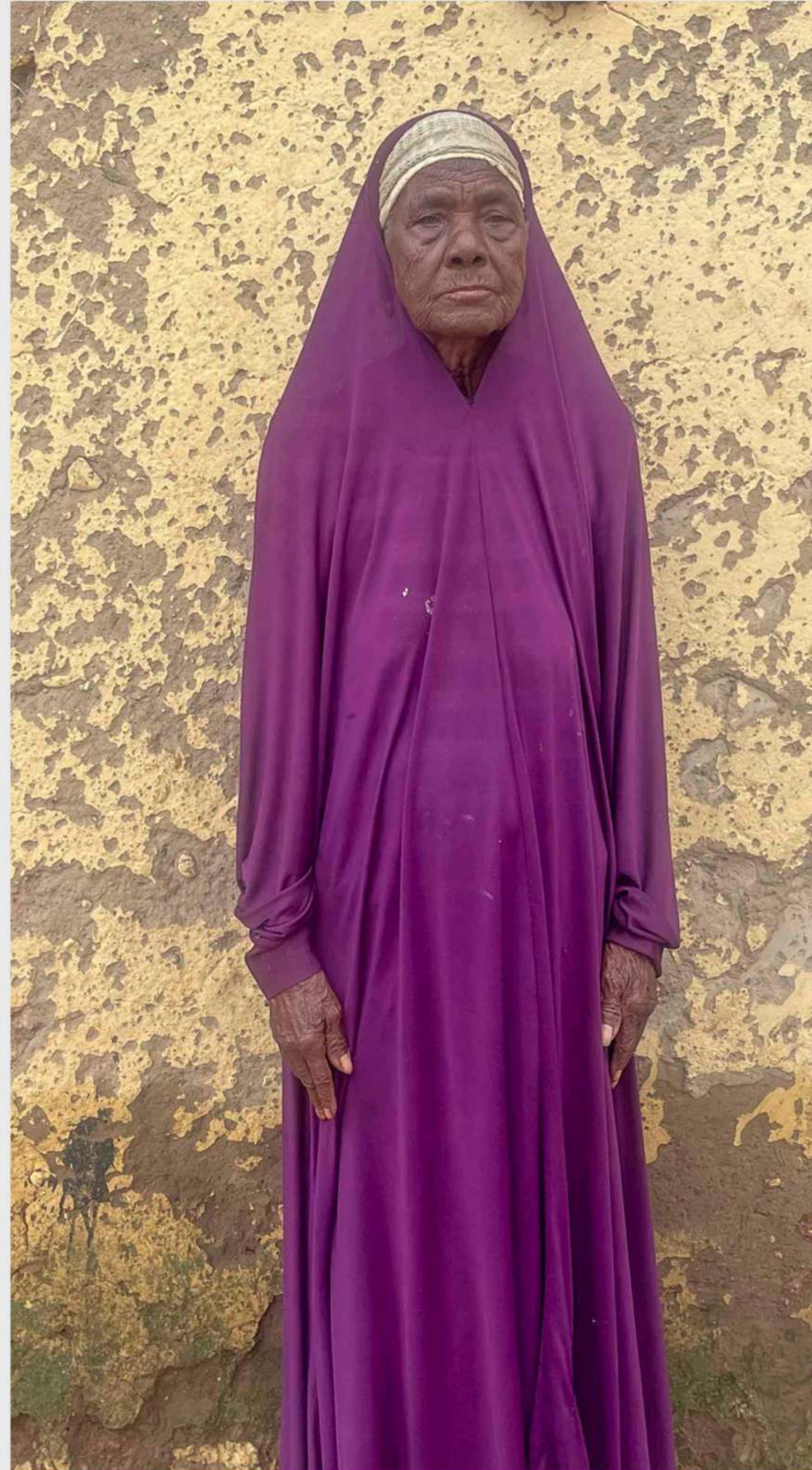
Impact Stories

In a town called Mioen located in Tamale in the Northern Region of Ghana

Zelia Mahama, a 90-year-old Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA), who has been assisting with deliveries of babies for over 70 years, participated in a maternal health engagement organized by the Northern Regional Hospital, a training sponsored by UNFPA Ghana.

Zelia expressed that, aside from assisting pregnant women, she now champions their usage of the hospital facility for safer procedures. This is because following the engagement, she realized there are modern equipment that can handle complications. She encourages pregnant women through counselling, to seek medical care at the health facility. Currently, she supports new mothers in child care such as bathing, etc.

Her work over the years has influenced her grandson, Adam to also learn the skills of assisting pregnancies. Adam Mohammed, a community health volunteer also supports the community hospital. He has been empowered through stakeholder engagement to encourage women and their husbands to seek medical care during pregnancy. He supports the facility with their day to day mobilization of hospital visits and organisation of outreaches as he is familiar with patients and their homes, where he is able to assist in following up to ensure they participate in procedures such as antenatal, immunization etc



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