

ORANGE VIBES

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Section of representatives from various actors in Ghanaian society committed to ending Obstetric Fistula in Ghana

Every year on May 23, the world comes together to observe the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula (IDEOF), a medical condition that affects women in the process of childbirth. Obstetric Fistula (OF) occurs when a hole forms between the birth canal and/or rectum, bladder or ureter, resulting in uncontrollable leaking of urine, faeces, or both.

Globally, it is estimated that about 500,000 women and girls live with fistula, with new cases being recorded every year. In Ghana, figures show that about 1,300 new cases of obstetric fistula occur every year. The condition stems from a number of factors including prolonged childbirth or as a result of a lack in skilled midwifery or high-quality maternal care.

The commemoration of this year's IDEOF was on the theme: **"20 Years On—Progress but not Enough! Act Now to End Fistula by 2030."** And as part of it, the Embassy of Norway in collaboration with UNFPA mobilized various actors from Government, the diplomatic/international development community, civil society, traditional rulership, the private sector, as well as the media for an event to bring attention to the ending Obstetric Fistula in Ghana.



Ambassador of Norway to Ghana, H.E. Ingrid Mollestad

In her remarks, the Norwegian Ambassador to Ghana, Her Excellency Ingrid Mollestad stated that, "...one of Norway's most fundamental objectives is to empower women and girls to be at the forefront in global efforts to improve their health." She added that, 'Women need access to quality medical services, including fistula repair services which are appropriate and available in a timely manner.'

In his speech, the UN Resident Coordinator to Ghana, Mr. Charles Abani expressed gratitude to the Norwegian Government for their unflinching support to empowering women and girls, and to UNFPA for highlighting OF as a serious issue. 'Obstetric fistula is an outrageous social injustice often affecting impoverished women and girls with lower levels of education; those who live far to access quality healthcare and girls who are forced into early marriages.', he added.



To give more substance to the context, a video documentary on surgical repairs for some fistula patients in Ghana was premiered at the event to form a basis for discussion with some survivors and victims sharing their personal stories of living with fistula.

One of them, Taiwo Azan, stated that when she developed obstetric fistula, the smell that came from her pushed people away. 'But my husband stayed and I am so grateful to him'. 'I also appreciate the support of UNFPA and Dr. Ayuba who performed the surgery so that I could be free of the condition.'



Taiwo Azan, a fistula survivor sharing her story at the event.

There was also a panel discussion which featured the programme manager of the Safe Motherhood Programme at Ghana Health Service, Mrs. Gladys Brew, Medical Superintendent of the Yendi Government Hospital, Dr. Ayuba Seidu Abdulai and the Senior Manager and Head of Exclusive Banking at Access Bank Ghana Plc, Matilda Asante-Asiedu. The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Kofi Issah, the Head of the Family Health Division of the Ghana Health Service.

Amongst other things, the panelists called for a national campaign which could culminate into a nationwide fundraising drive to mobilize financial resources for conducting fistula repairs for women and girls suffering from the condition and the training of surgeons to be skilled in conducting the surgeries to save lives and restore the dignity of the women.



The UNFPA Country Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan presenting a call for action for stakeholders to join the movement to eradicate Obstetric fistula in Ghana.

In his closing remarks, the UNFPA Country Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan, re-echoed the purpose of the gathering as being essentially to form a new and solid partnership with stakeholders to act towards ending Obstetric fistula by 2030 in line with the theme for the commemoration. He stated, "The call to action is one and it is clear: Join the Partnership to End Fistula in Ghana in any way that you as an individual or institution can, to make the difference in the lives of women and girls, restore their health and dignity and contribute to their improved socio-economic wellbeing and achievement of national and global development agenda." And indeed, an active partnership now exists made up of UN entities, private sector, public bodies, NGOs and civil society, which is being championed by the First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, Her Excellency, Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo.

Dr. Ochan acknowledged the pivotal role played by the Ghana Health Service towards the elimination of Obstetric fistula in Ghana, the support of the Norwegian Ambassador and all other stakeholders for their contribution.



TWG meets to develop 2024-2028 Nursing & Midwifery Strategic Plan & Services Framework

With the leadership of the Ministry of Health, a Technical Working Group (TWG) was constituted to review the 2019-2022 Nursing and Midwifery Strategic Plan.

In 2020, the WHO/ICN/ICM and other partners in collaboration with Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers launched the Global Strategic Direction for Nursing and Midwifery which serves as the framework for all Member States of WHO to align their Strategic plans.

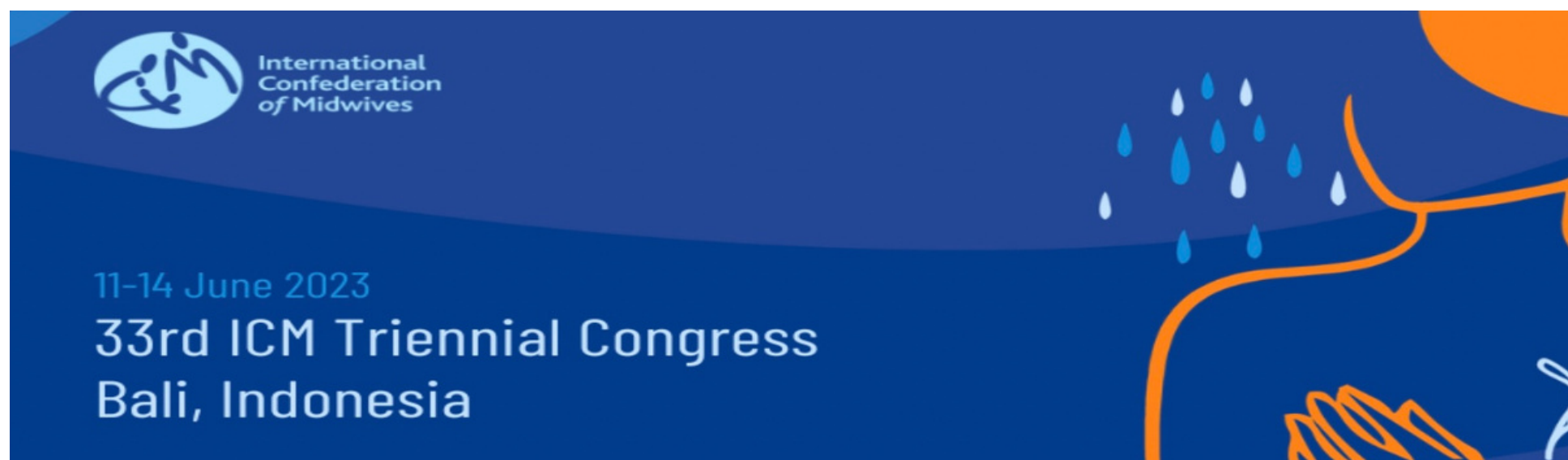
The objectives of the TWG were primarily to: (1) Share findings of the field evaluation visit and (2) Develop the new strategic directions for nursing and midwifery (2024-2028) in line with the WHO Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery and the Ministry of Health Health Sector Priorities.

The TWG came out with the draft outcome of the revised Strategic Plan for further refinement, consultation and validation before approval by the Government.



The UNFPA Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan and members of the Technical Working Group.

UNFPA Supports Ghana's Representation at the 33rd International Conference of Midwives



The 2023 ICM Congress took place in Bali, Indonesia from 11 to 14 June 2023 and had representation from over 130 countries. The congress discussed policy, education, research, regulation, and advocacy-related areas for midwifery development. The theme for the congress was: ***"Together again from evidence to reality"***. Therefore, the participation of Ghana at the congress was critical as it provided the opportunity for the delegation to understand global trends, issues, and priorities to strengthen Midwifery education, research, regulation, and practice in the country.

The purpose of sending Ghana's delegation from the Ministry of Health and midwifery associations was to drive unity of purpose among the various midwifery associations and the Ministry of Health in policy formulation and implementation for the improvement of RHMNCAH-N in Ghana. The congress also served as a means of empowering the associations to be more active and focused on advocacy activities.

Since their return, the midwifery associations have consulted with their governance bodies and resolved to unify as a strong entity, capable of defending and promoting issues of midwives in particular, and RH in general. For now, MoH and UNFPA are working on the unification agenda.



Members of the Ghanaian delegation at the 33rd ICM Congress in Bali.

NYA, Parliament of Ghana and UNFPA holds Dialogue with Youth Leaders & Stakeholders

Given the youth bulge evident in the large numbers of young people present in African states including Ghana, development practitioners and population experts have variously expounded on the need to adequately address issues affecting young people, including their participation in decision-making and in development processes and harnessing their potential for socio-economic advancement.

As part of these efforts, the National Youth Authority (NYA), the Young Parliamentarians of Ghana and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), held a dialogue to address crucial issues faced by young people in Ghana, recognizing the challenges, as well as presenting valuable recommendations.



A cross-section of participants at the dialogue.

The dialogue provided a unique opportunity for conversations around: the need for a separate ministry for youth, how to address period poverty which often affects young women in low-income settings, youth unemployment, and innovation. The dialogue had esteemed guests including the CEO of the NYA, Hon. Pius Enam Hadzide, the chair of the Young Parliamentarians of Ghana, Hon. Elvis Morris Donkoh and the Country Representative of UNFPA, Dr. Wilfred Ochan.

In his remarks, the UNFPA Representative, Dr. Ochan stated: "Currently, the population of Ghana aged less than 35 years is at 73.4 per cent. This demographic structure presents an enormous opportunity for Ghana to harness the immense potential, creativity and energy of our youth for sustainable development, if adequate investment is made in their education, empowerment and employment including productivity." Youth agency needs to be built; spaces created for their voices to be heard and their voices to be heard and their engagement in development supported in a structured and sustained basis.



UNFPA, Office of the AU Youth Envoy Promote Digital Skills for Young People

The emergence of artificial intelligence, increased interconnectivity and more complex data systems, among others, have meant that professionals will also need to acquire digital skills to be relevant in their various industries and to deliver effectively. Noting this, the Office of the African Union (AU) Youth Envoy is leading an initiative to provide digital skills for young people in Africa to make them work-ready and active stakeholders in the digital transformation of work. It is in this light that the Office of AU Youth Envoy in collaboration with Google Africa and UNFPA launched the Digital Skills campaign within the campus of the Ghana Institute of Management & Public Administration (GIMPA).

The goal of the drive is to create a platform for young African students to gain in-demand employable skills towards improving their livelihood and the achievement of AU Agenda 2063. As part of this campaign, various working sessions were held at the Orange Loft—the Youth Innovation Hub by UNFPA Ghana with the Youth Leaders (YoLe) Fellows and select youth, the Stanbic Bank Incubator for startups, the GIMPA campus and also in Koforidua, in the Eastern Region.

Speaking on behalf of the UNFPA Country Representative during the working session at the Stanbic Incubator, Emmily Naphambo, the UNFPA Deputy Representative noted that, “The collaboration between the African Union Chairperson’s Youth Envoy, Google, Stanbic Bank, and the UNFPA Ghana exemplifies the power of such partnerships. By pooling our resources, expertise, and shared vision, we can build a robust digital ecosystem that nurtures talent, drives innovation, and accelerates economic development.

“This collaborative effort ensures a comprehensive and holistic approach to addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by African youth”, she added.

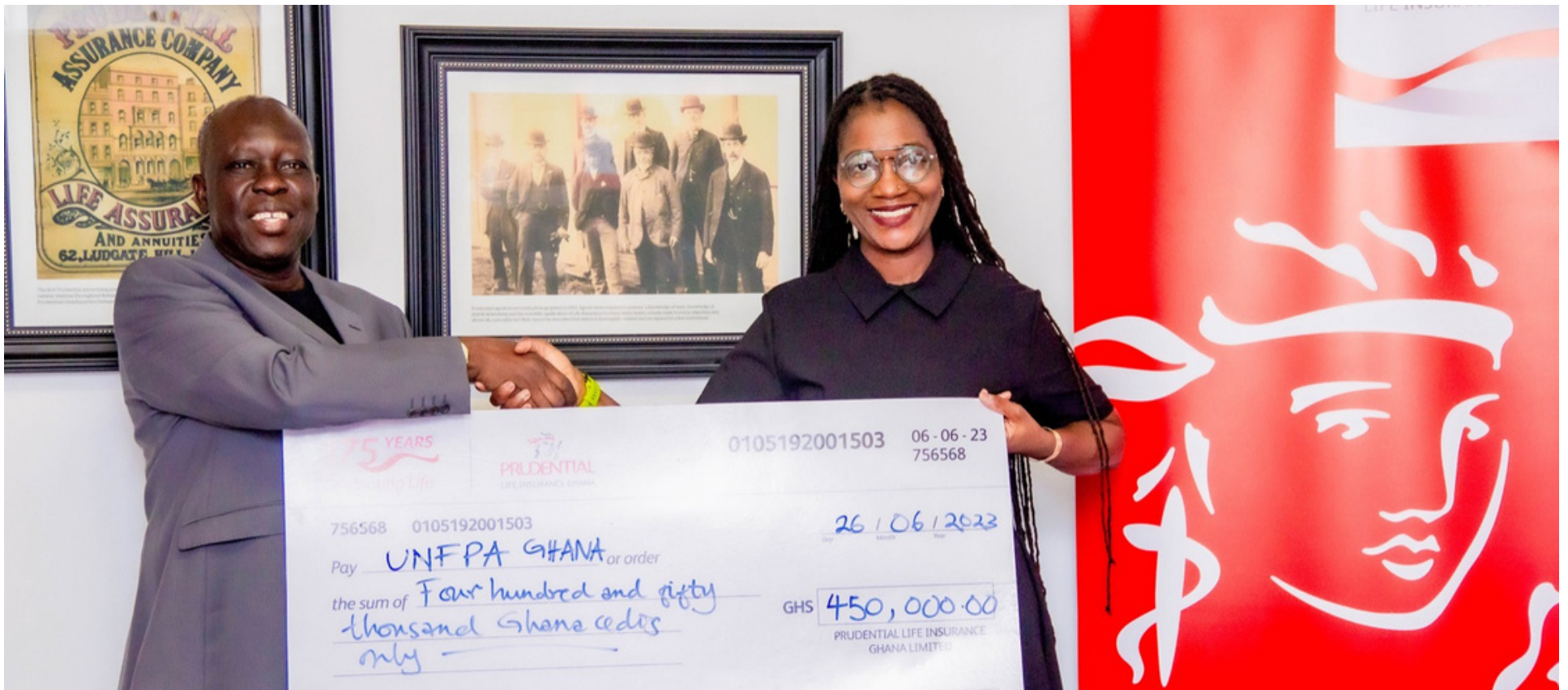


A facilitator taking participants through some modules during the youth consultations as part of the digital skills campaign.



Emmily Naphambo, Ph.D, UNFPA Deputy Rep making remarks at the session.

Prudential Life Ghana supports UNFPA Ghana to sustain Kayayei Assistance Project (KASPRO)



CEO of Prudential Life Insurance Ghana, Dr. Hazel Amuah (right) presenting the dummy cheque to the UNFPA Ghana Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan.

The kayayei are females who earn a living by carrying heavy loads on their heads in the busy markets of the country in Accra, Kumasi, etc. To stem the tide of the socio-economic and health crisis that came with the COVID-19 pandemic, rising cases of GBV & teen pregnancy especially among the Kayayei, UNFPA Ghana designed an initiative—the Kayayei Assistance Project (KASPRO), to train the kayayei with alternative livelihood skills while empowering them with knowledge about their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). This was aimed at bridging the labour gap in gender and providing them with the right information to stay free from sexual exploitation and abuse.

With KASPRO going into its fourth (4th) phase, Prudential Life Insurance Ghana (PLIG), who having supported previous cohorts of kayayei under project as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), came again to renew their partnership and support for KASPRO with a bigger amount of money to reach more vulnerable young women and to support their dreams of living a fulfilled and more dignified life. To date, KASPRO has trained over 500 young women and adolescents in bead making, bakery, soap making and other livelihood skills.

At a brief handing over ceremony at their head office in Accra, the CEO of PLIG, Dr. Hazel Amuah, presented a cheque of GHS 450,000 to UNFPA, which was received by the Country Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan.

She added, 'The goal we have for these funds are primarily to support the kayayei and improve their living conditions.' She added: 'We at Prudential value our relationship with UNFPA and intend to support initiatives like this that improve the quality of life of humans.' On his part, the UNFPA Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan expressed gratitude to PLIG saying: "UNFPA is grateful to Prudential for continuous support. The funds will be put to good use and stories of success will be well documented to inspire more support and deliver hope to the less privileged in society. We look forward to some kayayei becoming insurance agents for PLIG and others in the market.

World Population Day 2023: 'Let's empower women and girls' - NPC urges



Dr. Leticia Adelaide Appiah, making remarks at the 2023 World Population Day celebration.

In line with this year's theme for the celebration of the 2023 World Population Day, "Unleashing the power of gender equality to spur national development", the Executive Director of the National Population Council, Dr. Leticia Adelaide Appiah called for a renewed focus on the empowerment of women and girls to achieve gender equality as a catalyst to accelerate national development.

She made these remarks at a ceremony which brought together functionaries in Government, academia, the international development community, religious leaders, traditional authority, the media and the general public to pay attention to the needs of women and girls in relation to the current state of the country's population.

In her remarks, the UNFPA Deputy Representative, Emmily Naphambo stated, "When we unlock the full potential of women and girls, we unlock and galvanise half of the leadership, ideas, innovation and creativity to improve society."

Hon. Freda Prempeh, Member of Parliament (MP) and member of the Population & Development caucus within Ghana's parliament, called on guests and participants at the event 'to see women as development partners and not mere players in society', adding that, 'society was going to face numerous challenges were women to withdraw their services from the various areas of socio-economic importance.'

There was also a panel discussion which featured the Executive Director of the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana, Ms. Abena Adubea Amoah, Dr. Leticia Adelaide Appiah, Executive Director of the NPC, Dr. Aaron Kobina Christian of the Regional Institute for Population Studies and Ms. Nina Ezedi Okoroafor, a youth representative.



UNFPA Deputy Representative, Emmily Naphambo making remarks at the 2023 World Population Day commemoration.

Fashion with a Purpose: Making a Difference for Young Women



Beneficiaries of the pilot project, “Fashion Expressions: The Stories She Wears” in Adidome, Volta Region.

Goal 5 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to achieve gender equality by 2030 by empowering women and girls with the agency to boldly create their future and fulfil their potential. However, global challenges like reduced development financing, conflicts which have led to the displacement of people everywhere and pandemics that have eroded national economic gains.

In Ghana and Kenya, efforts to achieve gender equality were given a boost, when the Prada Group, a global fashion conglomerate, worked in partnership with UNFPA to pilot a project: ‘Fashion Expressions: The Stories She Wears’, to give vulnerable women and girls a viable avenue to assert themselves and boldly claim their sexual and reproductive health and rights while making a meaningful living.

The project is designed to empower women and girls in fashion. It also has at its core training to protect the beneficiaries from sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as gender-based violence. The programme aimed to leverage the socio-economic power of fashion as a vehicle to promote women’s empowerment by attaching them to fashion brands. In addition, it seeks to foster a deeper understanding of sexual and reproductive rights and reduce the vulnerability of participants. So far, 30 of them are ready to exhibit different designs to reflect stories of victimhood to becoming survivors and overcomers.

The UNFPA Ghana Deputy Representative, Ms. Emmily Naphambo, paid working visits to Poqua Poqu in Osu and Kua Designs in Labone, all suburbs within the Greater Accra Region to assess the ongoing internships the beneficiaries of the project were taking and how it was having an impact on them.



Ziddah Asiwome, a beneficiary of the project in a shot with the UNFPA Ghana Deputy Rep, Emmily Naphambo, Ph.D. during the working visit.



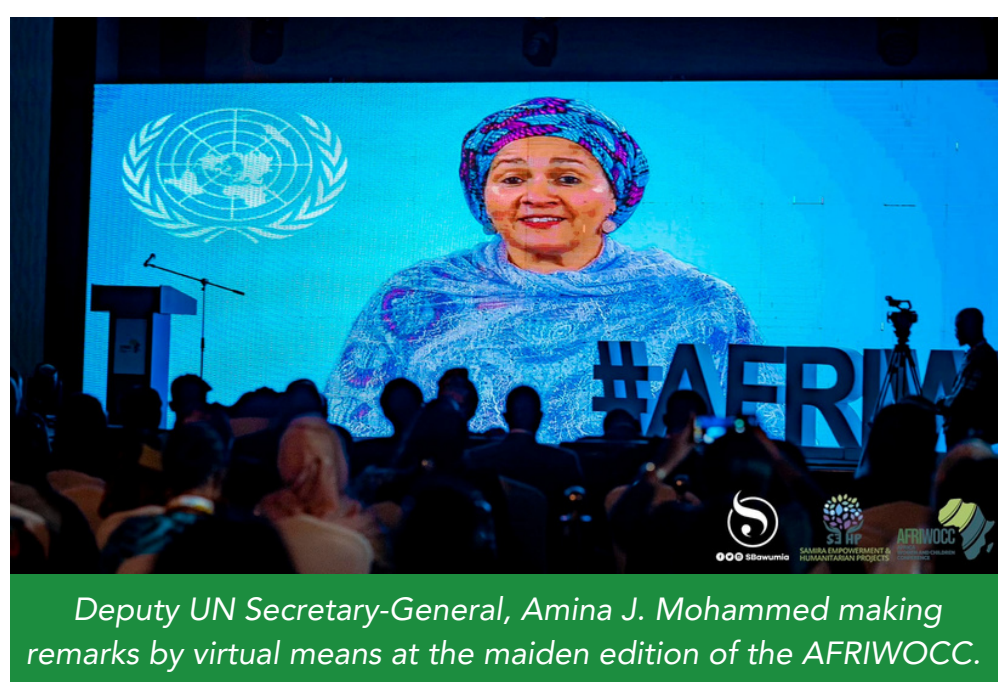
Beneficiaries of the Fashion Expressions project, Alice (right) and Shamsia (left) at the KUA Designs showroom in Labone, Accra, where they are currently on industrial attachment.

UNFPA @ AFRIWOCC 2023

His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo
President of Ghana

Across the world today, the phenomenon of climate change has taken centre stage as an issue that requires urgent action. Its perils have far-reaching consequences and for women and children, the adverse impacts may be more intense. In recognition of this and how it plays out in Africa, the second lady of the Republic of Ghana, Her Excellency Hajia Samira Bawumia took it upon herself to convene the first Africa Women and Children Climate Conference in Accra, Ghana under the theme: ***“Amplifying the voices of women and children in climate action.”***

The conference was formally opened by the President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo, who in his remarks, mentioned that: “Climate change is not a distant threat or future concern. It is here.” This, he said, to call to the attention of the minds of the participants the urgency of the climate problem.



High-Level Voices

There were also high-level voices from the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina J. Mohammed, the Director-General of the World Trade Organization, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and the former Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, who led work around the 50-year development agenda of the African Union—the AU Agenda 2063. Collectively, these leading global women voices championed the need for Governments, development agencies, civil society groups and climate advocates to work together at the micro and macro levels to inspire change to save lives, livelihoods and the future of the planet from the throes of climate change.

The 2nd Lady of the Republic of Ghana, who convened the maiden conference in her remarks, challenged participants, saying: ‘We must speak up, we must act right, we must lead and we must be the solution. Therefore, my charge is for us not to treat this as the usual talk show but rather, a commitment to seeing the vision of climate resilience and adaptation through.’ She made it clear that the objective of AFRIWOCC was to create a platform for all to discuss the impact of climate change on women and children in Africa; assess relevant adaptation policies, utilising indigenous knowledge and innovation, while coordinating a network of organisations focused on the climate change ecosystem across the continent.

For UNFPA, the conference presented another opportunity to assert the mandate of the organisation in leading the charge for women and girls, especially as it related to their reproductive health, agency, empowerment and active participation in all sectors of life. To begin with, through an implementing partner like Purim Africa Youth Development Platform (PAYDP), a cohort of marginalised girls, commonly referred to as *kayayei*—females who engaged in head portering in Ghana’s markets as a means of livelihood—were brought to participate in the maiden conference to give them an understanding of the impacts of climate change, how it affected them directly and inadvertently, what duty-bearers were doing to support them, along with an opportunity for them to contribute their voices to the discussions.

Contribution to Policy Design & Formulation



On the policy side, UNFPA offered expertise through facilitation by the UNFPA Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan, who moderated the first panel discussion on the topic: “Activating Policy in the Climate Change Economy”, which featured panellists including: Dr. Angela Lusigi, UNDP Representative in Ghana, Honourable Ansu Sekou Konneh, Chief of Staff in the Ministry of Agriculture in the Republic of Liberia, Angeline Mensah, a UNFCC Negotiator on Response Measures, Ghana and Mr. Dominic Asante Opoku Manu, a Policy Advisor, SDGs Advisory Unit in the Office of the President of Ghana.

The UNFPA Deputy Representative, Emmily Naphambo also participated as a panellist on the subject: “Realising opportunities for women as change agents in Africa’s climate economy”. The panel discussion was moderated by the Country Director of the World Food Programme, Ms. Barbara Tulu Clemens with other panellists including: Loretta Pope, Chairperson of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia, Portia Adu Mensah, Founder of Green Hunt and Hannatu Onugu of Solar Sister Nigeria.

The UNFPA Country Office is mapping out a means to contribute to the planting more trees through youth action to reforest bare lands, protect the vegetation and mitigate the impacts of global warming. Following a visit to the Fistula Centre of the Mercy Women’s Catholic Hospital in Mankessim earlier in the year, the UNFPA Representative planted the first of many trees scheduled to be planted across the country as a precautionary action on climate change.

For UNFPA, harnessing the power of the demographic dividend through Africa’s youth stands paramount and during the conference, there was a discussion which focused on “Intergenerational Equity: Young Voices for Climate Action”. As a breakout session, it mainly targeted most of the youth usually left behind in the life cycle of development programming including *kayayei*. The session elicited responses from leading actors in climate change for identifying solutions for clean cooking, good drinking water, recycling and a shift to renewable energy that posed less risk to the environment.

AFRIWOCC 2023 ended on a high note with a call to action given by the UN Resident Coordinator to Ghana, Mr. Charles Abani. In a rallying call, he appealed to all stakeholders involved in the maiden AFRIWOCC to move the convention into a coalition to protect women and girls from the adverse impacts of climate change.



UNFPA Ghana welcomes 5th Cohort of Youth Leaders Fellows



The 5th Cohort of YoLe Fellows in a group photograph with staff and personnel of the UNFPA Ghana Country Office.

Formally inaugurated in 2018 in line with the new UN Secretary-General's Strategy on Youth, the Youth Leaders (YoLe) Fellowship Program by UNFPA Ghana has been preparing young people as leaders to lead changes in all spheres of society within Ghana and the global community. The Country Office welcomed the 5th Cohort of young leaders to undergo a year of leadership development.

From an initial 16 young people, the programme has moved to having 35 young persons selected from over 1,300 applications. The 5th cohort is balanced in terms of the rural-urban backgrounds, inclusion of persons with disability and gender ratios, revealing a deeper incorporation of the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

Addressing staff and personnel of the Country Office at a brief meet-and-greet session to welcome the new youth leaders, the Country Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan, congratulated the YoLe Fellows for making it into the Fellowship, adding: 'We hope to benefit from your youthful energy and potential, as we also assist you with knowledge of the work we do to build your capacity.'

So far, since its inception, the Fellowship has brought on board a total of 124 young people for leadership development. Out of this number, there have been more females as a strategic way of empowering girls and bridging the labour and skills gap in gender.

A number of the Fellows since the end of their respective period in the program have gone on to work with other UN organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations and the private sector. Some have also gone on to pursue higher education programmes in institutions across the world.



UNFPA Joins National Youth Authority (NYA) to mark the 2023 International Youth Day (IYD)

(Photo Story)



Some of the Youth Leaders in Cohort 5 took turns to educate young people on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health using exhibition booths.

UNFPA Ghana in the news media



GFA to partner UNFPA on Sustainable Development Goals



<https://www.modernghana.com/sports/1228655/gfa-to-partner-unfpa-on-sustainable-development.html>



Expensive Hygiene: Ghana's luxury tax on period poverty



<https://www.modernghana.com/sports/1228655/gfa-to-partner-unfpa-on-sustainable-development.html>



We're grateful to UNFPA Ghana for finding us and changing our lives – Fashion Expressions beneficiaries



<https://univers.ug.edu.gh/2023/07/27/were-grateful-to-unfpa-ghana-for-finding-us-and-changing-our-lives-fashion-expressions-beneficiaries/>



Navigating towards a future free from child marriage: Uniting efforts and empowering youth for lasting change



<https://www.mcangh.org/navigating-towards-a-future-free-from-child-marriage-uniting-efforts-and-empowering-youth-for-lasting-change/>



Bringing Life into the World: The Vital Role of Midwives in Ghana's Fight Against Maternal Mortality



<https://www.mcangh.org/bringing-life-into-the-world-the-vital-role-of-midwives-in-ghanas-fight-against-maternal-mortality/>



UNFPA Ghana

Social Media

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

Top Tweet earned 7,259 impressions

 **NYA, Parliamentarians Hold Stakeholder Dialogue**

“Currently, the population of Ghana aged less than 35 years is at 73.4 per cent. This demographic structure presents an enormous opportunity for Ghana...”

- Dr. [@OchanWilfred](#), [@UNFPAGhana](#) Rep

[rb.gy/aqux1](#) [pic.twitter.com/2nVKEiAUi0](#)



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Top mention earned 351 engagements



Dr. Zanetor Agyeman-Rawlings

[@zanetorofficial](#) · Jun 16

Brilliant engagement with [@UNFPAGhana](#) Youth Leaders Fellows. “Don’t let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.”-1 Tim 4:12 [#YOUTH](#) [#rocktheboat](#) [#Togetherwebuild](#)
[pic.twitter.com/rNqLqmEYM0](#)



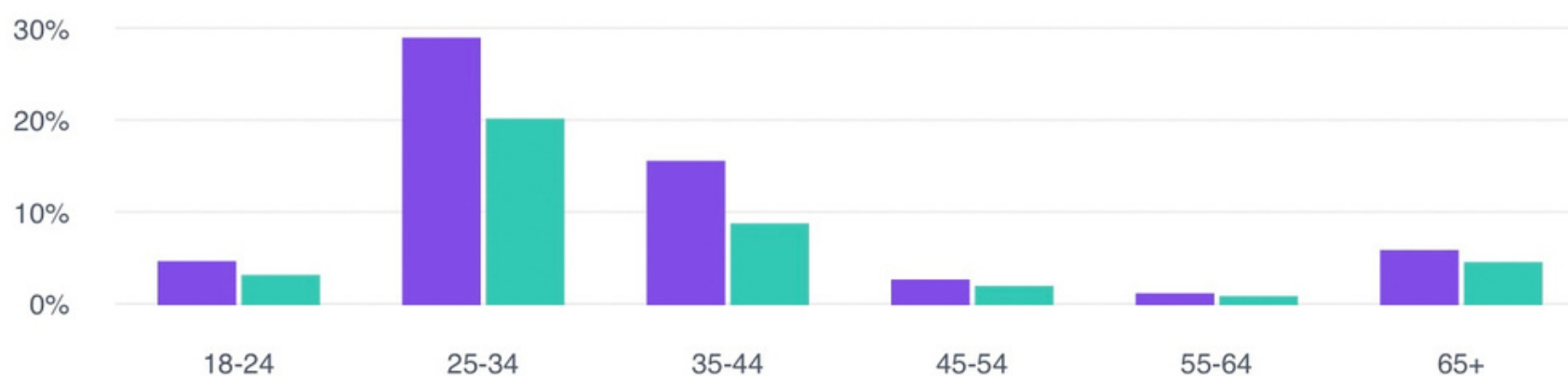
🔄 8 🔄 21 ❤️ 166

Audience

16,173 Facebook followers

Age and gender

Men 59.70%
Women 40.30%





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