



Ghana Country Office

# Orange Vibes

TRIENNIAL NEWSLETTER

September 2023 - December 2023

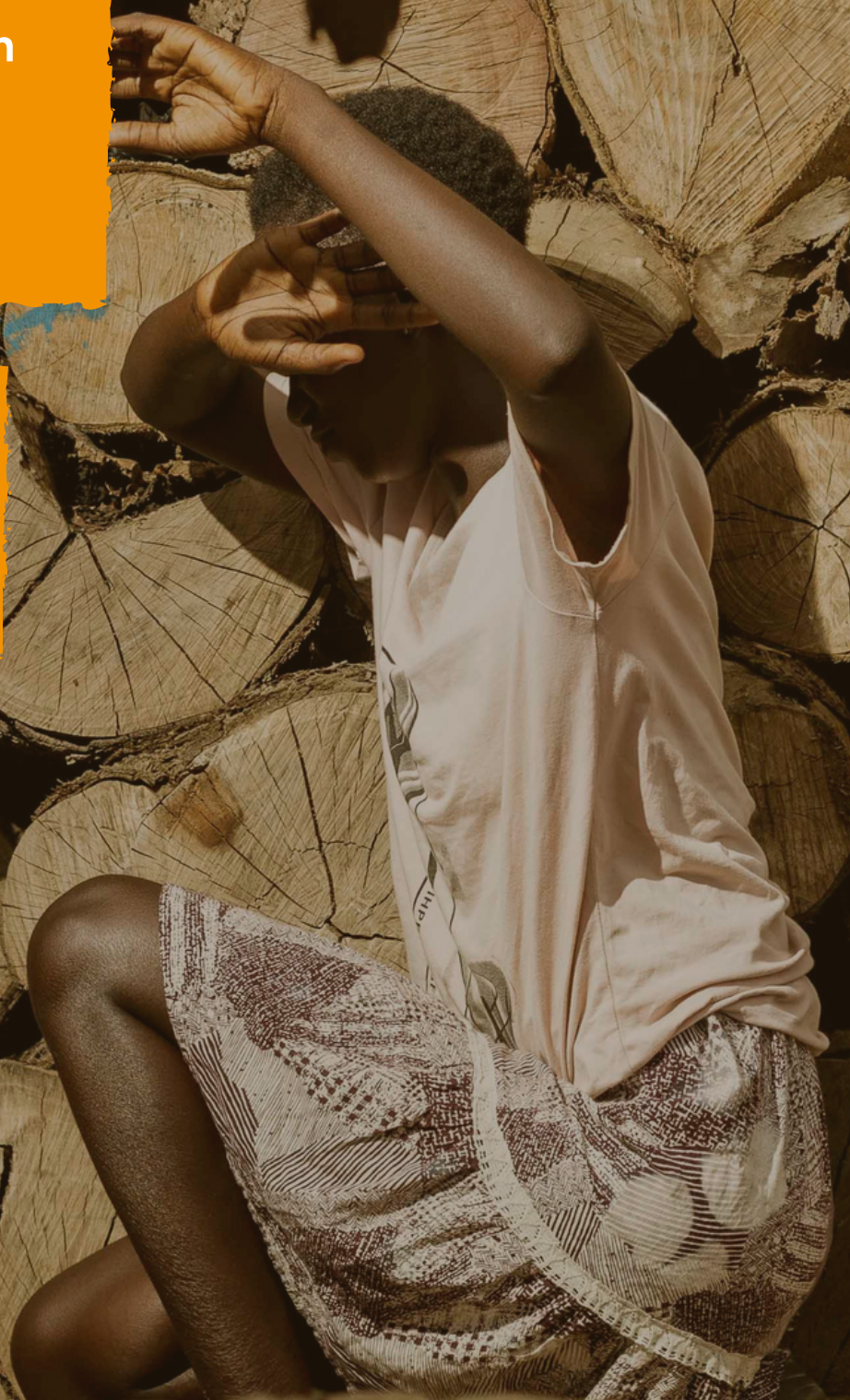
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# Restoring Dignity Among Women With Obstetric Fistula: UNFPA Partners 1st Lady of the Republic of Ghana & Stakeholders



*Group of partners at the launch of the Partnership to End Fistula in Ghana, chaired by Her Excellency, Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo, First lady of the Republic of Ghana (middle).*



*H.E Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo,  
First lady of the Republic of Ghana.*

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Ghana has formed a partnership with the First Lady of Ghana, Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo through her Rebecca Foundation, together with other stakeholders towards the elimination of the pervasive obstetric fistula among women in the country.

The collaborative effort is a 7-year campaign until 2030, that seeks to garner the public sector, the United Nations (UN), the private sector, NGOs, community actors, and individuals with the objectives of strengthening routine fistula repair in hospitals as well as organising fistula repair campaigns in selected areas to accelerate the clearing of backlog cases in communities. The partnership has mobilised resources for about 200 cases to be repaired in 2023, up from what has been annual performance of 100 cases repaired per year. The partnership will also explore socio-economic reintegration of fistula survivors into the community.

The First Lady of Ghana, Her Excellency Mrs Akufo-Addo, urged stakeholders present to actively work in reducing the gap between fistula repairs and the actual number of women suffering from the condition. She equally underscored the need to focus on the preventive aspect, emphasising that, ending child marriage and maintaining good health during pregnancy will be key to reducing the risks associated with suffering from the condition.

Speaking at the official launch of the partnership at the Korle-bu Teaching Hospital, the Country Representative of UNFPA Ghana, Dr. Wilfred Ochan, expressed delight at the commitment of the First Lady and other partners and called for the support of all relevant stakeholders in making the campaign a sustainable and successful one.

Stakeholders of the Partnership to End Fistula in Ghana (PEFIG) include the World Food Programme (WFP), Access Bank, MTN, Fidelity Bank, AT Telecommunications, and Ghana Health Service (GHS), National Population Council (NPC), and the Media and Communications Advocacy Network (MCAN).





# 16 Days of Activism Against GBV

## Sixteen Shades of Abuse Campaign

In observation of this year's 16 Days of Activism Against Sexual & Gender-Based Violence, UNFPA Ghana rolled out a campaign dubbed, 16 Shades of Abuse to address the pressing issue of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). The initiative is a photo competition for young photographers. It featured an art exhibition unveiling 16 impactful photographs, each capturing a unique aspect of SGBV, its consequences, and the imperative for change. With a strong emphasis on raising public awareness, fostering dialogue, and mobilising action.

This section features the unveiling of some of the selected photos from the open call at various locations in observation of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence.



Unveiling of one of the selected photographs in Tamale, during the national launch.



Unveiling of one of the selected photographs at the Ghana National Mosque at Kanda.



Unveiling at the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Ghana.



# 16 Days of Activism Against GBV

## Sixteen Shades of Abuse Campaign



Unveiling at the residence of the British High Commissioner to Ghana.



Unveiling at the British Council.



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



# 16 Days of Activism Against GBV

## Sixteen Shades of Abuse Campaign



Unveiling at the Swiss Embassy in Ghana.



Unveiling at the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy (CEGENSA), University of Ghana.



Unveiling at the Child Rights International Ghana Office.



# 2023 Programme Review & 2024 Planning

## UNFPA engages Implementing Partners



*UNFPA Staff and personnel in a photograph with Implementing Partners within the Government of Ghana and Civil Society Organisations.*

The Executive Board of UNFPA approved the 8th Country Programme (CP8) for the Ghana Country Office in September 2022. Ghana's CP8 covers a period of five years, from 2023 to 2027. The year 2023 thus marks the first year of the implementation of the CP8. As part of preparations towards implementing the CP8, the UNFPA Ghana CO embarked on several activities throughout 2023, including conducting a results configuration analysis for site selection, undertaking site mobilisation visits to selected regions and identifying and selecting Implementing Partners (IPs).

The UNFPA Ghana holds an annual meeting for all implementing partners, typically towards the end of the calendar year to review progress in implementation of the country programme for the index year and to develop work plans for implementation in the ensuing year. Against the foregoing, the 2023 Review and 2024 Planning meeting was held from 18th to 20th December 2023 at Lancaster Hotel, Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. The meeting brought together Chief Directors and programme and finance focal persons across all the implementing regions, as well as programme and finance focal persons from national level partners and civil society organisations.

## Government of Ghana, UNFPA Ghana & Partners Mark 2023 World Contraception Day



*Group photograph of partners and stakeholders at the launch of the 2023 National Family Planning Week.*

The 2023 Family Planning Week event was observed with a High-Level Advocacy Dialogue with the aim of identifying more options to increase domestic financing for family planning under the theme: "Family Planning: My Choice, My Freedom."

Statements were also read on behalf of Civil Society partners and members of the Inter-agency Coordinating Committee on Contraceptive Security (ICC/CS), which highlighted family planning as being essentially a matter of choice, freedom and the exercise of fundamental human rights. George Akanlu, Country Director for MSI Reproductive Choices, affirmed that availability and accessibility to voluntary family planning is critical to avoiding unwanted pregnancy.

According to the Director of the Family Health Division of GHS, Dr. Kofi Issah, "We seek to increase public awareness, acceptance of family planning, dispel myths and misconceptions and to advocate increased commitment to family planning as an essential component of national health and socio-economic development."



# UNFPA & PRADA draw curtain on maiden Fashion Expressions Programme



*Some models catwalking in the designed clothes by trainees of the Fashion Expressions Programme.*

After gruelling months of training, coupled with a period of industrial attachment with leading Ghanaian fashion brands including: Boyedoe, Dash Fashion, Fakor Garment Tailoring, GG Bespoke, Kua Designs, Mimmy Yeboah, Poqua Poqu and Sadia Sanusi Designs, UNFPA and International Needs Ghana brought a close to the maiden 'Fashion Expressions: The Stories She Wears' initiative, with a pageant for the beneficiaries.

This programme used fashion design as a model to test the integration of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Technical & Vocational Education Training initiatives. The programme leveraged the power of fashion to prepare the beneficiaries to obtain skills with which they could earn a good livelihood, along with the ability to avoid gender-based violence.

In attendance at the ceremony were Government officials, the diplomatic corps, UN officers, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Authorities (MMDAs), the Ghana Police Service, fashion houses, among other distinguished invited guests. Throughout the programme, the young women learned valuable skills in fashion and design, including pattern-making, sewing, and marketing. In addition to this, they received training in financial literacy and entrepreneurship, to enable them start out on their own with the knowledge and skills gained.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony, the UN Resident Coordinator in Ghana, Mr. Charles Abani, noted the power of fashion and design as a tool for social change. In the long run, the programme aims to seek business opportunities for the beneficiaries possibly through some affirmative action to enable them supply for instance, uniforms to the national security agencies who are able to purchase in bulk.



*A section of guests at the event, including the Swiss Ambassador to Ghana, H.E. Simone Giger (left), Italian Ambassador to Ghana, H.E. Danielle Orlandi (2nd from left), UNICEF Ghana Representative, Mr. Osama Makkawi (2nd from right in 1st photo on the left).*

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more.





# STATEMENT



By the UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem on the *2023 Int'l Day of the Girl Child*

**Every girl is born with boundless potential – to learn and thrive, to lead, inspire and change the world.**

Today, on the International Day of the Girl, we celebrate the infinite possibilities of the world's 600 million adolescent girls. They represent a generation of innovation and action, leading calls for justice and a world that works for all.

We must however act faster and more boldly so that every girl, wherever she is, grows up safe in the knowledge that her body is her own and her future is hers to chart, that she is able to go to school, access the health care she needs, and live free from violence.

**Adolescence lays the foundation for successful adulthood. Yet child marriage, adolescent pregnancy, and gender-based violence derail the lives of far too many girls. Increased, targeted investments in sexual and reproductive health services and comprehensive sexuality education equips adolescent girls with the tools to make informed decisions about their bodies and lives, and empowers them as agents of change and future leaders.**

As we approach the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals, let us redouble our efforts to ensure that every adolescent girl, in all her diversity, can exercise her rights and choices, realise her fullest potential, and build the future she envisions for herself. Let's knock down the barriers between her and that better future - and let her lead the way.



## VIDEO

### Eliminating Adolescent Pregnancies through the Anto Adolescent Club

Introducing Gladys Ajao, a midwife in Anto, Wassa East District, who is making a remarkable difference in tackling teenage pregnancy. She established the Anto Adolescent Club which empowers over 100 adolescents with sexual and reproductive health education and life skills training. Watch this powerful documentary to witness Gladys' journey, the challenges faced by the Anto Community Health & Planning Services (CHPS), and the need for improved healthcare infrastructure in Anto.



Scan to watch





# Young People Unite to End Child Marriage in West and Central Africa



*Some youth participants at the Youth Leadership & Participation Workshop to End Child Marriage.*

Child marriage violates the rights of girls and is a stumbling block to their dignity. Often, girls forced into early marriages suffer complications in pregnancy or during childbirth. As a harmful practice, UNFPA advocates for an end to it to protect the lives of women and girls. Recently, the UNFPA West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) hosted a Youth Leadership and Participation Workshop in Ghana to mobilize youth voices as advocates for ending child marriage.

This workshop formed part of the broader Global Programme to End Child Marriage (GPECM), a collaborative effort between UNFPA and UNICEF that has been in existence since 2016. The second phase of the program is nearing closure ahead of the rollout of the third phase, from 2024 to 2030. About five (5) countries took part in the meeting.

The workshop equipped participants with tools and frameworks to harness youth leadership, drive positive change in diverse programs, advocate against child marriage, and implement country-level action plans for lasting impact.

Speaking at the workshop, Mr. Stephen Asamoah Boateng, Minister for Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, on behalf of the country, applauded the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, the promotion of the rights of adolescent girls to avert marriage and pregnancy, and making efforts to enable them to achieve their aspirations through education and alternative pathways.



*Mr. Stephen Asamoah Boateng, Minister for Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs making remarks at the workshop.*

The minister explained that Ghana ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, which sets a minimum age of marriage of 18. "Ghana also ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1986, which obligates states to ensure free and full consent to marriage," he said.

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# Ending Child Marriage in Ghana

## 'One Paramountcy at a time'



*From left to right (L-R): His Majesty Osie Adza Tekpor VIII of the Avatime Traditional Area, His Majesty, Odeneho Kwafo Akoto III, Akwamumanhene of the Akwamuman Traditional Area and His Majesty Osabarima Kwesi Atta II, Oguaamanhen of the Oguaa Traditional Area.*

**Child Marriage is a human rights violation that robs girls of the agency to exercise reproductive rights. It further affects the realization of their potential and therefore, leads to underdevelopment in areas where it remains prevalent.**

To curb the harmful practice of child marriage in Ghana, UNFPA, together with the Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection, the Ministry of Religious & Chieftaincy Affairs and the Obaapa Development Foundation, held workshops for queen mothers, elders, and traditional leaders of the Avatime Traditional Area, Akwamuman Traditional Area, and Oguaa Traditional Area to bring these community leaders up-to-speed on the need to end child marriage.

The culmination of these exercises in the various traditional areas saw the paramount chiefs of the aforementioned traditional areas lead their community members in declaring an end to child marriage in the communities.

The paramount chiefs who made the declarations were: His Majesty Osie Adza Tekpor VIII of the Avatime Traditional Area on 6 December 2023, His Majesty Osabarima Kwesi Atta II, Oguaamanhen of the Oguaa Traditional Area on 22 December 2023 and His Majesty, Odeneho Kwafo Akoto III, Akwamumanhene of the Akwamuman Traditional Area on 29 December 2023.



*Chief Director of the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, Ms. Halima Yakubu, taking the Akwamuhene through the oath of loyalty to end child marriage.*

With support from UNFPA Ghana, the paramount chiefs will take concrete steps to ensure that child marriage is eliminated to afford girls the chance to make meaningful life choices which will, in turn, benefit them, their families, the community and the nation at large. Engaging traditional leaders in reviewing and disbanding harmful practices such as child marriage and FGM is one of the transformative goals of UNFPA Ghana.



## Photo Story

# Donating Dignity Kits to Victims of Akosombo Dam Spillage

Dignity kits are a critical component of the UNFPA humanitarian response. They help women and girls maintain proper hygiene after being displaced or affected adversely by a natural or man-made disaster.

Following the incident, the UNFPA Ghana visited Adidome to donate dignity kits to affected victims of the recent flood disaster caused by the spillage of water from the Akosombo Dam. According to the Deputy Director of Health Services in the Volta Region, Dr. Senanu Kwesi Dzokoto, at least 12,000 people were displaced following the spillage of the Akosombo dam.

The initial donation was made up of 100 kits, which was followed by the distribution of an extra 500 dignity kits. This was carried out in collaboration with the UN Inter-Agency Working Group on Emergencies. Of this number, 100 went to pregnant women and nursing mothers, 230 went to girls, 230 went to boys and 40 went to elderly women. As part of the exercise, UNFPA partnered with PPAG to conduct outreaches at health facilities where nurses and midwives were trained in the management and reporting of GBV.

Residents of communities in the North Tongu, South Tongu and Asuogyaman districts in the Volta and Eastern regions of Ghana were badly affected by the disaster. Below are some photos from the humanitarian response.



*Some members of the community in Adidome, Volta Region*



# MoH Hosts Conference to Strengthen Collaboration Between Nurses and Midwives

Nurses and midwives form a critical part of the health workforce everywhere in the world. The quality of their work output directly results in the quality of the health of people in the areas and communities they serve. To further improve the work of nurses and midwives in Ghana, the Ministry of Health held its 4th Annual Nursing and Midwifery Leaders and Managers' Conference and 3rd Excellence Awards under the theme: "Leading Nursing and Midwifery Health Workforce: Achieving Positive Health Outcomes for Universal Health Coverage."

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the conference, the Volta Regional Minister, Dr. Archibald Yao Letsa, who welcomed participants to the region mentioned, "[Nurses and midwives] are the backbone of our health system. We celebrate your dedication to healthcare in this country," said the Regional Minister. He added, "I look forward to innovations and collaborations that will arise from this conference."

The UNFPA Ghana Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan, participated in the opening ceremony of the conference. He called on leaders of midwifery and nursing institutions in the country to comply with education accreditation standards, to ensure the quality of the teaching staff, and to provide adequate practical training. In a futuristic piece titled "The Path I See," Dr. Ochan outlined a leadership vision for change in nursing and midwifery education, regulation, and practice, as well as better coordination and unity of the professional associations.

The communiqué issued from the conference highlighted the need to develop and implement continuous leadership and skills development programs at all levels. It also called for the implementation of a National Nursing and Midwifery Professional Mentorship Program to improve health systems. It equally called for agencies to align programs, interventions, and priorities to MoH's Nursing and Midwifery Strategic Policies, among others.



*UNFPA Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan, delivering the keynote address at the 4th Annual Nursing and Midwifery Leaders and Managers' Conference and 3rd Excellence Awards.*



*Group photograph of participants at the 4th Annual Nursing and Midwifery Leaders and Managers' Conference and 3rd Excellence Awards in Ho, Volta Region. It includes the Vice Chancellor of UHAS, Professor Lydia Aziato, Dir, CHAG, Dr. Peter Yeboah, UNFPA Representative & WHO Representative, Dr. Francis Kasolo.*

Click or scan the QR Code for more.





# Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAHN) 4th National Maternal, Child Health & Nutrition Conference



**The Deputy Minister of Health,  
Mrs Tina Naa Ayeley**

The Ghana Health Service (GHS), in collaboration with key partners, organised the 4th National Maternal, Child Health & Nutrition Conference under the theme "Strengthening Service Delivery for Quality and Accessible Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAHN) Outcomes to meet the SDGs Midpoint and beyond".

The conference brought together key players in Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAHN) to assess progress, share best practices, and chart a course for stronger health systems, accessibility, and improved outcomes.

The Deputy Minister of Health, Mrs Tina Naa Ayeley, indicated that the reduction of maternal and child mortality is a top priority for the Government of Ghana. "Maternal health is at the heart of our efforts and therefore, we recognise the fundamental right of every woman to access quality and equitable healthcare during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period," she disclosed.



**Director-General of Ghana Health  
Service, Dr Patrick Kuma-Aboagye**

The Director-General of the Ghana Health Service, Dr Patrick Kuma-Aboagye, stated that the conference would offer an opportunity to identify, discuss and promote strategies to enhance service delivery, improve the quality of care, and ensure that healthcare services reach those who need them most, regardless of their geographical location or socioeconomic status.

The conference brought together about 100 representatives from institutions including the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Ghana, Paediatric Society of Ghana, Ghana Registered Nurses and Midwives Association and Ghana Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.



*A section of the audience, including some  
Regional Health directors at the Conference.*



*UNFPA Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan moderating a panel  
discussion at the 2023 MCHN Conference in Accra, Ghana.*



# Launch of Population & Development Review Report by NDPC: UNFPA Rep Calls for Accelerated Implementation

The UNFPA Ghana Country Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan, has called on key development actors in the country to accelerate the implementation of the recommendations made in the review report on 30 years of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD30) and 10 years of the Addis Ababa Declaration of Population and Development (AADPD10).

"The Ghana National Review Report shows overall progress in advancing results of the ICPD/AADPD commitments. However, the pace of progress is slow in some cases. I am confident Ghana will focus and take accelerated actions in the areas of slow progress or stagnation such as seen in youth unemployment, maternal mortality and teenage pregnancy, unmet need for family planning, Gender-based violence, including..."

Child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation, etc. In particular, Ghana's achievement will be accelerated if it focuses on existing inequalities between and within regions and population sub-groups. He observed that COVID-19 and climate emergencies could have also affected the rate of progress on implementation of the commitments.

Dr. Ochan acknowledged the pivotal contribution the ICPD/AADPD Report plays in Ghana's sustainable development agenda. He recognized Ghana's strides in promoting dignity and equity through increased female participation in politics, child protection initiatives, and poverty alleviation programs such as free education.

"The report has indeed placed the centrality of population and development in advancing sustainable development while focusing on the pillars adopted in the AADPD; namely-dignity and equality; health, in particular, the health of young people; place and mobility; governance; data for informed decision making; and partnership and international cooperation," he added.

The Board Chairman of the NDPC, Prof. Gyan- Baffour presented a keynote address, launching Ghana's review report on the 10-year implementation of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population Development and the 30-year implementation of the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. He highlighted that, the report serves as an accountability mechanism for these declarations, focusing on demographics, socio-economic context, and progress of key pillars.



*Director General of the NDPC,  
Dr. Kodjo Esseim Mensah-Abrampa.*



*UNFPA Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan  
speaking at the launch.*

The Director General of the NDPC, Dr. Kodjo Esseim Mensah-Abrampa, recounted improvements in key areas of development. For instance, the report recorded increased access to quality education, gender parity at basic and secondary levels, increased promotion of child protection and welfare, and modest progress in women's participation in politics and public life.

The launch event was attended by leaders and technical persons in various sectors including the United Nations (UN), academia, Government institutions, civil society groups, youth organizations, religious bodies, local Government authorities as well the media.



# UNFPA Ghana holds Induction & Graduation Ceremony for the YoLe Fellows



*The 5th Cohort of UNFPA Ghana Youth Leaders (YoLe) Fellows at their induction ceremony.*

As the world races towards 2030, the global population is set to witness a surge in the number of young people across the world, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. These teeming youth will become the driving force of our shared future and thus, require investments that will safeguard their health, promote their dignity, and ensure that they are engaged in decent and meaningful work.

In Ghana, one of the ways UNFPA has chosen to harness the potential of the burgeoning youth population is through the establishment of the Youth Leaders (YoLe) Fellowship Program. The program aims to train and equip vibrant youth leaders with the necessary leadership skills and knowledge in development programming to help them better serve their communities, country, and world at large.

At a ceremony held on December 15, 2023, in Accra, the UNFPA Ghana Country Office officially inducted the 5th Cohort of 33 YoLe Fellows and held a graduation ceremony for the outgoing 4th cohort of fellows. In his remarks, the UNFPA Ghana Country Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan, commended the fellows for their transformative journey, underscoring the pivotal role of youth in championing UNFPA mandates and shaping a sustainable future.



*Some of the YoLe Fellows performing a skit at the induction ceremony.*



*Some of the graduates from YoLe Cohort 4.*



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# MoGCSP, Global Affairs Canada & UNFPA Pay Working Visit to Orange Support Centre



*A bird's eye view of the Orange Support Centre with volunteers on standby to respond to queries.*

One of UNFPA's transformative results is ZERO Gender-Based Violence & Harmful Practices (GBV/HPs). In partnership with Global Affairs Canada, UNFPA Ghana Office supported the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) to establish the Orange Support Centre (OSC) with a toll-free helpline: 0800 111 222.

The OSC offers free psychosocial counseling services while linking GBV survivors to location-specific networks of trained and supported service providers for health, protection, and/or legal services. Since 2021, over 24,000 clients have called in and been supported, the majority being women.

The Chief Director of MoGCSP, Dr. Afisah Zakaria, led a delegation made up of the Assistant Deputy Minister for Sub-Saharan Africa of Global Affairs, Canada, Cheryl Urban, the High Commissioner of Canada to Ghana, Her Excellency Martine Moreau, the Head of Development Cooperation at the High Commission of Canada in Ghana, Kathleen Flynn-Dapaah, and the UNFPA Representative, Dr. Wilfred Ochan, to assess the work being done to support victims and survivors of GBV/HPs.

The team also had the Director of the Domestic Violence (DV) Secretariat, Madam Malonin Asibi, and other officials of the Canadian High Commission & UNFPA Ghana.



*The delegation from Global Affairs Canada, the Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection & UNFPA at the OSC.*



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