ASRO MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue December 2020

ASRO
Shaping opinion

On the occasion of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign and Human Rights Day, UNFPA ASRO Regional Director, Dr. Luay Shabaneh, penned two op-eds: one in English titled 'It's not just COVID we’re up against, but a pandemic of violence against women' published on The New Arab website on 10 December, and the second was in Arabic titled "لا يقل خطورة عن كوفيد-19، العنف القائم على النوع الاجتماعي" and published by Alarabiya News network on 3 December. Dr. Shabaneh wrote a third op-ed 'From Yemen, A cry for help' published on reliefweb website on 1 December to bring the global society’s attention to the Yemen crisis specifically amid the pandemic outrage. Photo from archive. Photo from archive © UNFPA Yemen

The Regional Health Alliance: A partnership towards achieving Health For All By All

On 15 December, UNFPA ASRO Regional Director, Dr. Luay Shabaneh, along with the Regional Directors of 11 multilateral health, development and humanitarian agencies in the Eastern Mediterranean/Middle East and North African regions - members of the Global Action Plan of Healthy Lives and Well-being - have virtually launched the Regional Health Alliance: a partnership that aims to support countries to accelerate progress towards health-related SDGs and facilitate implementation of the Global Action Plan on Healthy Lives and Well-being for All. Members also agreed on key regional initiatives that were introduced earlier in 2020 and co-organized a regional webinar on the occasion of the Universal Health Care (UHC) week highlighting the crucial role of primary health care and universal access to reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH) in achieving UHC.

Watch advocacy video

Regional meeting on strengthening nursing and midwifery
On 8-9 December, UNFPA ASRO, WHO EMRO and UNICEF MENARO Regional Directors opened a virtual regional meeting to take forward the “Call for Action” for strengthening the nursing and midwifery workforce in the region. The meeting brought together nursing and midwifery representatives and experts from Member States, national regulatory bodies, nursing and midwifery associations, and UN agencies to discuss how to take the call for action forward and strengthen nursing and midwifery for more resilient health systems, lessons learned from COVID-19 and beyond. Photo © UNFPA ASRO

UNFPA ASRO appeals for US$ 333.5 million to support its 2021 humanitarian programmes

On 9 December, UNFPA ASRO launched its Regional Humanitarian Action Overview 2021 appealing for a total of 333.5 US million dollars. The virtual event highlighted the UNFPA humanitarian priorities for 2021 to support 65 million people in need for humanitarian assistance in the region. Introductory remarks were delivered by Director of the UNFPA Humanitarian Office, Ms. Shoko Araraki; UNFPA ASRO Regional Director, Dr. Luay Shabaneh; and Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria, Mr. Muhammed Hadi. UNFPA presented its key interventions during 2021 with focus on cash and voucher assistance (CVA), gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights in emergencies, youth/adolescent girl programming, and humanitarian relief supplies. UNFPA Regional Humanitarian Overview 2021 reflects the additional challenges and needs caused by the prevalence of COVID-19.

International Volunteer Day 2020: Together we can

UNFPA ASRO marked International Volunteer Day to thank volunteers and acknowledge their contributions and work. This year’s IVD highlights the difficulties and needs of volunteers during pandemics. On 3 December, UNFPA ASRO Regional Director, Dr. Luay Shabaneh, delivered a keynote statement at a regional event on the ‘Experiences of Volunteers fighting COVID-19 in the Arab States’. UN Regional Directors, UN Resident Coordinators, Ministries, Red Crescent, IFRC MENA and young volunteers joined the event. UNFPA ASRO developed the Arab Regional Strategy for Volunteerism to protect the rights of volunteers in humanitarian and civil work. The League of Arab States endorsed the strategy. Photo © UNFPA ASRO

Arab and Asian parliamentarian regional dialogue in response to COVID-19

On 17 December UNFPA ASRO organized the second Regional Dialogue for the Arab and Asian Parliamentarians. The theme of 2020 was ‘The impact of the Corona pandemic on population and development issues.’ The meeting came as part of UNFPA advocacy efforts on the important role of
parliamentarians in the response to COVID-19 and its impact on women and girls. One of the main issues raised is gender-based violence during the crisis. In his remarks, UNFPA Regional Director, Dr. Luay Shabaneh, reiterated the strategic approach in supporting vulnerable population groups, including women, girls and older people to protect their rights and meet their needs. He called on parliamentarians to take concrete actions and appeal to their governments to ensure that population perspectives are strongly manifested in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Photo © UNFPA ASRO

UN75 Dialogue in the UAE: Youth in action

On 10 December, UNFPA ASRO and the UN Resident Coordinator Office in the UAE organized, in partnership with MBC Hope, a session on Youth in action. The session was part of the UN75 Dialogue Sessions series to mark the UN 75th anniversary. Keynote speakers included the UN Resident Coordinator in the UAE, Dr. Dena Assaf; UNFPA Regional Advisor for Youth, Mr. Samir Anouti; and the Director General of the Federal Youth Authority in the UAE, HE Saeed Al Nazari. UNFPA invited four youth leaders from Morocco, Jordan, Palestine and Egypt to speak at the session’s interactive panel discussion. The session discussed the Arab adolescents and youth situation, trends and needs; innovative youth engagement and participation; the Youth Charter in the Arab region; and youth, peace and security issues and opportunities.

ASRO KNOWLEDGE HUB

UNFPA ASRO marked International Day of Persons with Disabilities by releasing a paper titled ‘Leaving no One Behind: Did the response to COVID-19 accommodate the needs of persons with disability? - Perspective from the Arab World.’ The paper sheds light on the additional barriers that persons with disabilities face due to the pandemic and calls for re-energizing advocacy efforts to advance disability inclusion in development on the
global, regional and national levels, including in humanitarian settings.

collection on and for persons with disabilities.

GCC

Joint celebration of the 16 Days of Activism campaign

UNFPA marked the 16 Days of Activism against GBV in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) of Oman and the Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries through several activities between 25 November and 10 December. The activities included a national campaign titled ﻗﺮﻮ اً ﻋﺒﻨﺎ, to encourage women to report domestic violence and be aware of protective legal frameworks in the Omani national laws. The UNFPA GCC office also organized public webinars to highlight the importance of addressing GBV. The national TV of Kuwait (KTV2) aired a statement by UNFPA Representative in GCC, Karl Kulessa, on UNFPA efforts and programmes to end GBV and ensure women’s protection. He praised the new law of Kuwait, which includes several provisions that ensure women empowerment and protection against all forms of violence.

EGYPT

Launching three medical response clinics for GBV survivors

The National Council for Women and UNFPA inaugurated three medical response clinics at the Qasr al-Ainy, Ain Shams and Mansoura University Hospitals, offering comprehensive services for women survivors of violence. The clinics’ medical staff received training on service provision to women, including the national referral mechanism to the existing medical, legal and social services.
clinics’ inauguration came as part of the 16 Days of Activism against GBV campaign. The National Council for Women officially adopted the referral pathway to establish the first national process to develop and ensure the quality and efficiency of services for women and girls survivors of violence. The referral pathway was developed under the UNFPA-coordinated joint programme on the Essential Services Package (ESP).

Using arts to promote UNFPA mandate

UNFPA partnered with the Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF) to promote and support film projects that advance women’s empowerment, gender equality and women’s positive representation in cinema. The partnership consisted of participating in a panel discussion as part of CIFF’s Cairo Industry Days, tackling the role of cinema in altering social values and structures. The panel included Filmmaker and President of Danish Film Directors Association, Christina Rosendahl; script writer and producer, Dina Negm; UNFPA Assistant Representative in Egypt, Germaine Haddad; award-winning film director, Ayten Amin; and award winning film director, Yousry Nasrallah. The partnership also entailed the UNFPA Special Award titled ‘Women’s empowerment and advancing gender equality’ presented to ‘Snow White’ for advancing gender equality.

Using board games to combat GBV

On 2 December, the National Council for Women, UNFPA and Safe Kids launched a game kit that aims at raising awareness around violence against women. The kit was introduced during a workshop targeting female religious preachers to train them to use these games with their communities. The kit includes a board and card game with messages on gender equality and gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and accepting violence.
LEBANON

16 Days of Activism campaign: Men for women

UNFPA and its partner ACTED, launched a campaign to mark the 16 Days of Activism campaign by shedding light on the important role of men in supporting women in ending gender-based violence. The campaign consisted of a short video that focuses on the engagement of men, including fathers, brothers, husbands and public advocates within their families to change negative social attitudes. Billboards were also developed and published across Beirut.

Celebrating Human Rights Day

On Human Rights Day, UNFPA launched a video that summarizes the efforts made in 2020 to ensure the protection of women and girls from GBV and increase their access to GBV and reproductive health service provision. While women and young girls constituted the main target audience, boys and men were also targeted as key agents of changes. This implementation came within the scope of a project funded by Norway and in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs and local NGOs. Photo © UNFPA Lebanon

BLAST: youth-led project in response to the Beirut port explosions

UNFPA and its partner, Rasheit Kheir NGO, launched a BLAST call through a short video inviting youth artists to enroll in an innovative initiative to support those who were directly affected by the explosion. The call included a hands-on approach where young artists (between 15 and 29) can participate at their own pace and skills in producing different items using recycled material, refurbishing of old and damaged furniture, freely painting their own pieces that help them express themselves, support and involve the seniors in the activities, and many more. Rasheit Kheir is one of 15 NGOs that joined a joint collaboration between UNESCO, UNFPA, and UNODC for promoting youth-led rehabilitation efforts to support local communities affected by the Beirut port explosion. Photo © UNFPA Lebanon
LIBYA

Leadership, management and governance training for midwives

UNFPA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, conducted a comprehensive training on leadership, management and governance (LMG) for 20 midwives from Libya in Istanbul on 16-22 December. The six-day training aimed at enhancing midwifery management skills for managers to enhance midwifery service delivery. Photo © UNFPA Libya

Enhancing clinical care of GBV survivors

On 6-19 December, UNFPA conducted a training on GBV core concepts and clinical care for GBV survivors targeting 12 healthcare providers from the Ministry of Health. The training aimed at building care providers’ capacities to respond to sexual violence against women and to learn how to understand the survivors’ experience. The second batch of the GBV and clinical management of rape (CMR) training took place in Tripoli. Photo © UNFPA Libya

Virtual career building training for young women

On 16 December, UNFPA, through its partner Life Makers Association, concluded a two-day e-learning virtual training targeting 30 young women from across Libya. The training introduced the participants to electronic learning platforms, available languages and platforms for education, higher studies preparation platforms, tips and instructions for available opportunities and scholarships, and ways to search and obtain them. On 20 December, UNFPA, launched another four-day training on debate skills for 15 young women activists. Photo © UNFPA Libya

IRAQ

New helpline for adolescents and young people

The Ministries of Health at the Federal and Kurdistan Region levels launched a helpline for adolescents and youth to provide
free confidential counselling services in Arabic and Kurdish languages. UNFPA supported this initiative with funding from Sweden. Iraqi Youth can receive reliable and age-appropriate information on mental health, reproductive health, adolescence and development, safe and healthy behaviours, nutrition, and COVID-19 prevention. When needed the callers can be referred to youth-friendly clinical services. The helpline counsellors also provide information to young couples on family planning, HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections.

Launching a Youth, Peace and Security Coalition

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the 2250 UN Security Council Resolution, Iraq launched the National Coalition for Youth, Peace, Security, under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth and Sports with support from UNFPA, the Folke Bernadotte Academy, the Swedish Government, and Peace and Freedom Organization. The Youth, Peace and Security Coalition brings together young peacebuilders, government, NGOs and the international community on common ground. It gives equal representation for men and women and acknowledges the role of young women in decision making, conflict resolution and mediation. It offers youth a joint platform where they can drive forward their priorities, advocate for their interests and needs, and promote the effective participation of young people in the decision-making process especially those related to peace and security. Photo © UNFPA Iraq

Leaving no one behind: Opening disability-friendly reproductive health facilities

The Ministry of Health of the Kurdistan Regional Government opened the first disability-friendly reproductive health facilities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The facility was opened through the
Directorate of Health in Erbil, in cooperation with UNFPA and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. The facility is part of a wider plan to establish seven facilities funded by the Swedish and Australian Governments (200,000 US Dollar). This initiative will help facilitate the access of women and girls with disabilities to quality reproductive health services. The primary health clinics are located in Soran, Khabat, Daratu, Mohammed Bajalan, Binaslawa and Koye districts in Erbil Governorate. UNFPA is also operating a disability-friendly reproductive health facility in Mosul, Nineveh Governorate. The project came as part of the UNFPA WE DECIDE project that promotes the rights of women and young people with disabilities.  

Photo © UNFPA Iraq

TUNISIA

Campaigning against gender-based violence

UNFPA and its partners organized 14 events and activities as part of the 16 Days of Activism against GBV campaign, including releasing nine videos and a short-film. UNFPA has also released a study on GBV against adolescent girls, and a quantitative study on the multi-sectoral and comprehensive care for women survivors of violence. UNFPA held several press-conferences to announce the end of the Joint Programme for the Improvement of the care for Women and Girls Survivors of Violence, the launch of the Observatory to Eliminate Violence against Women, and the rehabilitation of one of the National Union of the Tunisian Woman’s shelters for women survivors of violence.  

Photo © UNFPA Tunisia

Volunteering in times of COVID-19

UNFPA launched a video campaign as part of the global campaign #YOUTHAGAINSTCOVID19 to mark International Volunteers Day and pay tribute to young volunteers for their work and contributions during COVID-19 crisis. The campaign shared the stories of four young volunteers from different backgrounds and initiatives targeting migrants, people with disabilities and youth during COVID-19.  

Photo © UNFPA Tunisia

Improving sexual and reproductive health care to migrants

UNFPA conducted a technical support trip to national partners in the south: ATSR Tatouine,
ATSR Médenine, and ATL MST SIDA Gafsa from 14 to 17 December. The trip aimed to introduce an initial assessment tool of migrants’ needs and vulnerabilities at the service delivery points. Staff members of two service delivery centres received training on the data collection. The trip was also an opportunity to conduct a training session on major characteristics of migration in Tunisia for the service providers in these NGOs, discuss the plans for 2021, and foster coordination efforts. Photo © UNFPA Tunisia

MOROCCO

Innovation: the first ChatBot helping GBV survivors

On 10 December, UNFPA launched NajatBot in partnership with the National Union of Moroccan Women (UNFM). The launch was part of UNFPA celebrations of the 16 Days of Activism campaign and Human Rights Day. NajatBot is the first ChatBot helping women and girls survivors of violence to seek 24/7 support and access information safely and confidently via phone or computer. NajatBot provides information about essential services, including police and shelters, automatically and immediately via Facebook Messenger. The AI-powered tool is linked with ‘Kolona Maak’ platform for combating violence against women launched by the UNFM under the effective chairmanship of HRH Princess Lalla Meryem. This platform provides counselling, support and guidance, including economic empowerment for women and girls via a direct telephone line. NajatBot also refers to the mobile application of ‘Kolona Maak’ offering emergency support using geolocation.

New guide on sexual and reproductive health and rights

On 7 December, the National Council for Human Rights (CNDH) developed the first guide on sexual and reproductive health and rights in Morocco in partnership with UNFPA and with support from the Canadian Embassy. The reference guide provides an understanding of reproductive rights as human rights. It contains information about international instruments, the protection system in Morocco, mechanisms of promotion of reproductive rights and ways to improve the universal access to sexual and reproductive health and the protection from all forms of violence and discrimination. Three videos were produced in Arabic, Amazigh, French and sign languages to simplify the content of the guide for the general public, especially to young people. Photo © UNFPA Morocco
National survey on migration

On the occasion of International Migrants Day, the High Commissioner for Planning released the results of the first national survey on migration conducted in Morocco in partnership with UNFPA. The survey captured 15000 households and provided essential data and information to inform policy and decision makers. Photo © UNFPA Morocco

PALESTINE

Mobile app for youth health

On 1 December, UNFPA, Sharek Youth Forum, the Palestinian Medical Relief Society and the Italian Cooperation and Belgian Cooperation launched ‘Majd and Mustashari’ mobile application for comprehensive youth health. The virtual event was as part of the 16 Days of Activism against GBV. More than 200 representatives of international and national institutions, ministries, academia, and media joined the event. The new mobile application will help provide age-appropriate answers to youth questions related to their bodies. Photo © UNFPA Palestine

TV interview on the launch

Launching a national youth volunteer service programme

On 9 December, the Higher Council for Youth and Sports, UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA signed a Memorandum of
Understanding for the establishment of a National Volunteer Service Programme under the auspices of His Excellency Palestinian Prime Minister, Dr. Mohammed Shtayye. The initiative aims to enhance volunteering and civil service among youth. The signing came in alignment with the Prime Minister’s priorities for youth: employment; training and employability; participation and civic engagement; national identity and cultural heritage. 

Photo © UNFPA Palestine

JORDAN

Supporting national efforts to eliminate domestic violence amid COVID-19

On the occasion of 16 days Campaign, UNFPA supported the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) in leading a nationwide campaign reaching both decision makers and communities on eliminating all forms of domestic violence against women and girls. UNFPA led the interagency coordination with NGOs and UN agencies. The campaign included developing key messages, organizing more than 350 activities, holding an online technical workshop with 50 GBV practitioners on finding alternative ways for women and girls to seek help during and amid COVID-19, and conducting a drawing competition titled ‘What Does safety at home mean to you?’ UNFPA produced a radio segment that was aired on the popular radio channel ‘Al Balad’ and podcast episodes shared on different platforms to reach a wider public on a range of topics related to violence against women as honor killing, #metoo movement and services available in Jordan for survivors of domestic violence. Photo © UNFPA Jordan

Engaging young innovators to face health related challenges

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth and the Royal Health Awareness Society, UNFPA supported the 3rd National Youth Forum on Health under Epidemics. The Forum aimed to mobilize youth to find solutions for challenges related to health, including reproductive health, mental health, healthy lifestyles, chronic diseases, and health under pandemics. More than 160 young applicants with innovative ideas and solutions were submitted from which 30 were shortlisted and received comprehensive boot camp to finetune their project ideas. Three top winners were selected to receive
SOMALIA

New initiative for youth social and economic empowerment

The European Union provided 6 Million Euros to UNFPA to support the Government of Somalia to implement a new project ‘Dalbile Youth Initiative.’ The project will contribute to the stability in the country by extending state authority and services, promoting local reconciliation and peacebuilding, creating inclusive economic opportunities and protecting the most vulnerable youth socially and economically.

Photo © UNFPA Somalia

Renewing the promise: Health for all

On International Universal Health Coverage Day, 12 December, the Government of Somalia, in collaboration with UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO and partners, renewed its commitment in accelerating efforts to provide universal health coverage (UHC) for all and urged other health and development partners to do the same. Photo from archive © UNFPA Somalia

Supporting students amidst COVID-19

UNFPA supported the Y-Peer network in distributing hand sanitisers and masks and delivering awareness sessions on COVID-19 prevention to...
YEMEN

Towards quality family planning services

UNFPA conducted a refreshing training course for 20 midwives from six southern governorates in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health and Population. The six-day training introduced the participants to the newly-updated package on family planning. Graduates cascaded the training to 15 midwives from four governorates. This latest course brought the total number of trained midwives in 2020 across Yemen to 89. Photo © UNFPA Yemen

Strengthening the reproductive health supply chain

On 26 November, UNFPA, in partnership with the Algerian Red Crescent, delivered PPE and hygienic products to the Gynecology/Obstetric department in Ain Oussara - governorate of Djelfa, to support service providers and women who come for delivery at the maternity ward. Photo © UNFPA Yemen

New agreement to ensure access to health services for vulnerable population

The Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) signed an agreement with UNFPA to provide comprehensive health services for vulnerable people in health facilities across three
The project will help improve the access to high quality integrated minimum services package of health care (MSP) in 10 health centres and district hospitals and the access to advanced health care services. Photo © UNFPA Yemen

SYRIA

16 Days of activism against GBV

As part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign, UNFPA organized 41 lectures targeting 444 women. The lectures covered various topics related to gender-based violence and reproductive health for women and young girls. In addition, 70 participants including women and adolescents attended four online workshops on Photoshop, cyberbullying, and integrating technology with education.

On 6 December, football players of Tishreen Sports Club joined the 16 Days campaign by painting red lines on their faces to express their standing against any type of violence, including violence against women. Photo © UNFPA Syria

ALGERIA

Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities

On 3 December, UNFPA marked International Day of Persons with
Disabilities jointly with the Ministry of National Solidarity under the leadership of the Prime Minister. The Ministry distributed wheelchairs for the most vulnerable persons with disabilities and honored athletes and laureate students with disabilities. UNFPA in partnership with the Algerian Federation of Persons with Disabilities (FAPH) distributed hygiene kits to associations working with persons with disabilities and produced video spots in Arabic, French and Amazigh to promote breast cancer screening for women and young girls with disabilities and ensure the continuity of reproductive health services. *Photo © UNFPA Algeria*

**Video spot**

**Celebrating the first anniversary of the Nairobi Summit**

On 8 December, UNFPA and the Ministry of Health organized a workshop to release the preliminary results of the second survey on the consolidation of maternal death rate and launch the progress report of the maternal deaths audit system (2015-2019). The survey was carried out with the support of UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO. It showed that the maternal mortality rate (MMR) has dropped to 48.5 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. UNFPA seized this opportunity to reiterate its support to the implementation of the Nairobi Summit commitments. To ensure the continuity of reproductive health and family planning services during COVID-19, UNFPA provided five ultrasound machines to local health centres in five wilayas, and one video conference equipment to the Ministry of Health to maintain the supervision and follow-up of RH/FP activities impacted by COVID-19 and the coordination meetings with the 48 directorates of health and population at the national level. *Photo © UNFPA Algeria*

**Leaving no one behind during COVID-19**

On 29 December, UNFPA, in partnership with the national association Jeunesse Volontaire Citoyenne (JVC), provided hygiene kits to 50 adolescent and young girls living in SOS Village. *Photo © UNFPA Algeria*

**DJIBOUTI**

**Mobilizing men against FGM**
On 6 December, UNFPA in partnership with the National Human Rights Commission organized a consultation workshop to launch the Men's Alliance for the Abandonment of FGM. The workshop brought together 30 influential members of civil society, parliamentarians, directors, doctors, and members of the national human rights commission. Members of the alliance are committed to mobilize men against violence against women and girls, including FGM. © UNFPA Djibouti

Religious leaders declare their abandonment of FGM

The Ministry of Women and Family and the Ministry of Muslim Affairs, in partnership with UNFPA, organized a symposium for religious leaders. It was held with financial support from the European Union as part of UNFPA and its partners' efforts to end FGM and better informed all, including religious leaders on the harmful consequences of this practice on women and girls. 25 religious leaders participated in the discussions that focused on Islam's refusal to the practice and called for the protection of human health. The symposium ended with a decision to create an inter-religious exchange network, which goal is to achieve the total and definitive abandonment of FGM. The religious leaders made a regional declaration for the abandonment of FGM. Photo © UNFPA Djibouti

Empowerment of women and girls through family planning

On 30 December, As part of the efforts to facilitate access to basic services for the populations in the most underserved areas, 30 new community health initiatives were launched to facilitate the access of vulnerable women and girls to reproductive health care, including family planning. This intervention was implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and the Family through a project on the Consolidation of the Empowerment of Djiboutian Women and Girls funded by the EU. Photo © UNFPA Djibouti

SUDAN

Lighting up the Begalawya Pyramids in Orange

On 8 December, The iconic Begalawya Pyramids - part of what was once the capital city of ancient Nubian kingdom of
Kush - were lit up in orange to mark the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence. UNFPA and UN WOMEN supported the event as part of the Orange the world initiative launched under the patronage of the Minister of Labor and Social Development, H.E. Lena el-Sheikh. 

Continuous support to the Ethiopian refugees

In December, UNFPA provided more than 11,687 medical consultations to women and girls who fled from Ethiopia due to the conflict in Tigray. The services were provided by professional care providers and medical teams in mobile and static clinics at the camps and reception points in Kasala and Gadaref states. UNFPA also distributed more than 26,000 dignity kits through its implementing partners. UNFPA estimates that amongst the refugees there are more than 13,600 women of reproductive age, of which more than 1200 are pregnant, and more than 130 live births are expected in the coming month. 

Empowering midwives

On 24 December, UNFPA established the Sudanese Midwifery Association (SUMA) to lead the profession of midwifery, ensure high-quality and evidence-based care, and advocate for and represent all midwives in Sudan.