

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a woman in a hospital setting. She is wearing a patterned headscarf and a purple vest over a white long-sleeved shirt. She is looking down at a newborn baby who is wrapped in a green and gold patterned cloth. The baby is lying on a bed with a blue sheet. In the background, there are medical monitors and a window with a green frame.

# UNFPA AFGHANISTAN ADVOCACY BRIEF



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



## REACHING THOSE FURTHEST BEHIND IN AFGHANISTAN



## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

UNFPA, the United Nations sexual and reproductive health and rights agency, delivers a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. By 2030, within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UNFPA aims to:



- End maternal death
- End the unmet need for family planning
- End harmful practices and violence against women and girls



## Reproductive & Maternal Health

### Issues



A high maternal mortality ratio:

661 deaths per 100,000 live births

A low percentage of skilled birth attendance: 58.8%

(Source: 2015 UN Estimates & the Afghanistan Demographic Health Survey 2015)

### How we do it



Establishment of community-based Family Health Houses (FHHs)



Training of community midwives



Integration of FHHs into the Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) for sustainability

### Achievements



121 FHHs established; over 28,000 safe deliveries through trained community-based midwives



Government has initiated policies for the integration of FHHs into the BPHS



## Reproductive & Maternal Health

### Issues



High prevalence of obstetric fistula: 3% - 2015 DHS

Obstetric fistula is not integrated into the health care service delivery system

(Source: 2015 AFG Demographic Health Survey)

### How we do it



Advocacy and awareness raising at all levels



Capacity building of medical staff (international standards)



Data collection for decision-making



Surgical treatment and reintegration into communities

### Achievements



Fistula repair centers established in Kabul and regional hospitals (Herat and Jalalabad) and to be expanded to Kandahar



Nine medical team members trained on obstetric fistula treatment



Fistula repair surgery for 640 patients



## Family Planning

### Issues



High total fertility rate: 5.3 children per woman



Low contraceptive prevalence rate (20%) and high unmet need for family planning (25%)

(Source: 2015 AFG Demographic Health Survey)

### How we do it



Advocacy with religious leaders, community elders and the population to create demand for family planning services



Capacity building of public and private health service providers



Provision of family planning commodities (contraceptives, supplies & equipment)



Technical support to the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and implementing partners

### Achievements



Religious and community elders adopted a declaration promoting family planning



94,000 averted unintended pregnancies



146 averted maternal deaths



USD 3.1 million in direct health costs saved by the government



## Gender

### Issues



56% of ever married women have suffered from spousal abuse



46% of women suffered from physical abuse; 6% from sexual abuse and 34% from emotional abuse



53% of women have experienced physical violence since age 15

(Source: 2015 AFG Demographic Health Survey)

### How we do it



Advocacy and awareness raising; influencing policies to address GBV



Establishment of Family Protection Centers (FPCs) in health facilities



Awareness and capacity building of law enforcement agencies on GBV



Establishment of the GBV information management system (MoPH)

### Achievements



Policy to end early child marriage adopted by government



42,116 GBV survivors benefited from GBV services (including law enforcement support) through 25 Family Protection Centers



## Investing in Youth

### Issues



63.7% of Afghanistan's population is under the age 25 and 46.1% is below age 15 (Source: CSO, 2014)



Address the youth bulge to avoid long-term instability as well as harness the demographic dividend



Only 6-8% of youth have access to SRHR information and services (Source: ASYR, 2014)



80% of young people believe they are not involved in decision-making (Source: Samuel Hall 2013)

### How we do it



Advocacy and awareness raising; influencing policies on youth issues



Policy and strategy development on harnessing the demographic dividend



Establishment of Youth Health Corners and the Youth Health Line



Empowerment of young people as development drivers

### Achievements



The National Youth Policy and Strategy, including youth placement component adopted by government; policy brief on the Afghanistan Demographic Dividend developed



About 415,000 young people provided with counselling as well as information and referral services through UNFPA-supported Youth Help Lines



About 20,000 youth provided with adolescent, sexual and reproductive health services through UNFPA-supported Youth Health Corners



Championed youth issues and opportunities to influence policies and resource allocation through the annual mock youth parliaments



# Humanitarian

## Issues



An estimated 6.3 million people in need of humanitarian and protection assistance



Women make up 51% of the 6.3 million people in need



Vulnerability of women and girls at the Afghanistan borders with Iran and Pakistan

## How we do it



Ensure the needs of women in reproductive health are factored into humanitarian response, including border areas



Ensure government adopts services and policies to support sexual and reproductive health for women in humanitarian plans and responses

## Achievements



328,628 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees (82,156 of child-bearing age) provided with SRH/GBV services



458,000 people benefited from 458 emergency reproductive health kits in crisis affected areas



The MISP guideline revised and adopted for the Afghanistan humanitarian context



29,954 dignity kits were provided to women of child-bearing age for hygienic needs in crisis affected areas

# Population and Data



## Issues



Lack of up-to-date data



Limited capacity for data generation



Limited capacity for data utilization

Source: 2015 AFG Demographic Health Survey

## How we do it



Building the capacity of the National Statistics and Information authority (NSIA) for data generation, management and utilization



Integration of data and statistics at the central and provincial levels



Knowledge management of population related issues

## Achievements



Socio-Demographic and Economic Survey conducted; remote sensing completed and data made available



58 ministries and provinces have functional data corners in place



Publication of key thematic reports (fertility, nuptiality, disability, education, labour force, migration, etc.)



## CALL TO ACTION



Advocate to integrate Family Health Houses into the Basic Package of Health Services, universal health coverage schemes and the citizen charter programme



Complete impact analysis of contraceptive distribution in health facilities to meet the unmet need for family planning



Sustained investment for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation around obstetric fistula



Sustained advocacy on GBV to influence policies and on Family Protection Centers to support GBV victims in 80% of all health facilities



Invest in population projection and its implication on health, education, labour, wealth



Reinforce and expand Youth Health Lines and Youth Health Corners to at least 30 provinces



Support the government to formulate and implement a road map for harnessing the demographic dividend



Invest in emerging cross-border humanitarian sexual and reproductive health services



## KEY PARTNERS

- Government
- NGOs
- Civil society
- Communities



## DONORS

UNFPA and the Government and people of Afghanistan appreciate the valuable support of the following donors:



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World Food Programme (WFP)



**2019 marks 25 years of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and UNFPA turns 50. Join us in Nairobi from 12 to 14 November to celebrate ICPD at 25.**

UNFPA invites other donors to join us in reaching those furthest behind, ending the unmet need for family planning, ending maternal death as well as ending violence and harmful practices against women and girls in Afghanistan.





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