

Middle-Income Countries planning efficiently and improving working relationships to facilitate effective programme delivery



UNFPA Representative for South Africa and Country Director for Botswana and Eswatini, Dr. Bannet Ndyanabangi, and retreat facilitator, Mr. Victor Mensah with South Africa, Botswana & Eswatini country office staff.

In a first of its kind, the 3 Middle-Income Countries (MIC) of South Africa, Botswana, and Eswatini came together to convene their first-ever joint multi-country retreat in Sun City, South Africa on 5- 8 December 2022.

Under the leadership of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Representative for South Africa and Country Director for Botswana and Eswatini, Dr. Bannet Ndyanabangi, and facilitation by consultant Mr. Victor Mensah, the country teams took a deep dive into their 2023 priorities, while ensuring healthy office environments and working relationships are maintained, through fun and thought-provoking activities.

A key highlight of day one was the capacity building on the 2023 workplan development, led by Dr. Reginald Chima, the Regional M&E Advisor at UNFPA with support from the Regional Office MIC Hub and a vibrant session on Communicating Our Work Better. Overall, the joint multi-country retreat provided a positive and collegial environment for sharing and engaging across countries while learning the lessons to ensure effective programme planning. Exercises and games to know each other & inspire each other as team members, ensured the hosting of a successful retreat.



Former Miss South Africa appointed UNFPA Regional Champion



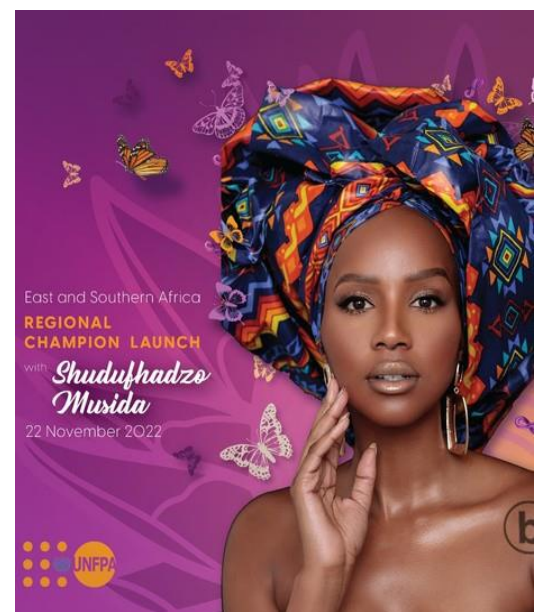
From left to right: UNFPA Representative for South Africa and Country Director for Botswana and Eswatini, Dr. Bannet Ndyabangi, UNFPA Regional Champion, Ms. Shudufhadzo Musida and UNFPA Regional Director, Ms. Lydia Zigomo

An exciting partnership was brokered between UNFPA and former Miss South Africa, Ms. Shudufhadzo Musida. As a Regional Champion, Shudu will be the regional voice and advocate for universal access to sexual and reproductive health in the region. Her work with mental health advocacy is both impactful and inspiring. Her #MentalHealthMondays Instagram campaign and children's book on mental health exhibit her dedication to this cause. She will therefore position mental health, and support efforts to uphold the rights of women and children as part of UNFPA's transformative results and the Sustainable Development Goals.

"The Middle-Income Countries I head: South Africa, Botswana, and Eswatini have a lot of prevailing inequities and therefore in this sub-region we believe that a partnership of this nature with Ms. Musida will add value in drawing attention to the interlinkages of mental health and violence against women and girls," noted Dr. Bannet Ndyabangi.

Together with our Regional Champion, we hope to intensify focus on the challenges young people face, including social media cyberbullying and strengthening the GBV/ SRHR link with mental health.

"I will serve as a regional voice, play an instrumental role in the advocacy of universal access to sexual and reproductive health as well as the mental health of women and girls in the east and southern Africa region," Musida said.





Youth Advisory Panel members with UNFPA Programme Associate, Mahlohonolo Chalitse and Communications Intern, Maliisane Ntsoane

The government of South Africa, in collaboration with the UNFPA and the United Kingdom, has been working towards supporting efforts for mainstreaming the demographic dividend (DD) in the government plans at national, provincial, and district levels.

To harness the demographic dividend, a 2-day Indaba was held on the 23rd – 25th of November in Pretoria to explore ways to use data to inform population policy and engage on how provincial and district development plans can harness the demographic dividend.

Best practices were shared to enhance knowledge at the national and sub-national levels. To this effect, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape shared their experiences on how they are mainstreaming the Demographic Dividend. It was suggested that the secret to KZN's success can be attributed to its vigorous advocacy engagements with multiple stakeholders. Eastern Cape has also made traction with mainstreaming albeit the COVID-19 setbacks.

Reflecting on past lessons, UNFPA priority provinces of Kwa Zulu Natal and the Eastern Cape, learned that availing financial resources to implement the activities and engaging multiple stakeholders such as the SALGA, COGTA, and government officials is the key to success. Equally, the involvement of the planners at subnational levels with continuous training on the Demographic Dividend is paramount to its success.



Dr Kefiloe Masiteng, National Planning Commission



Mr. Jacques van Zuydam, Department of Social Development



Ms. Busisiwe Malaza, Department of Social Development



Standing up against Gender-Based Violence during #16Days

UNFPA collaborates with Momentum during #16Days of Activism

- On 30 November UNFPA collaborated with private sector company, Momentum, on their 3rd annual GBV webinar. CEO and civil rights activist, Amanda_Nguyen, joined the panel discussion, providing useful insights into armoring up against GBV. UNFPA Gender Specialist, Sarah Reis, joined the panel to share about the impact of GBV and how women can be empowered to take a stand. Partnering with the financial services company, UNFPA and panel members unpacked all that is needed to equip participants with information to tackle and address economic abuse. A brief Q and A ensured that UNFPA and Momentum engaged on the issue of GBV/ Economic Abuse as it related to the audience questions. The conversation also alluded to how GBV and economic abuse need to be tackled early on to not evolve into more severe incidences.

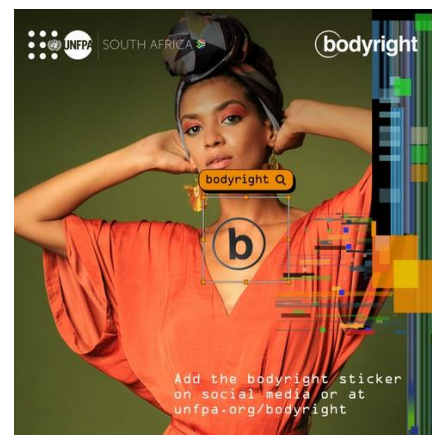
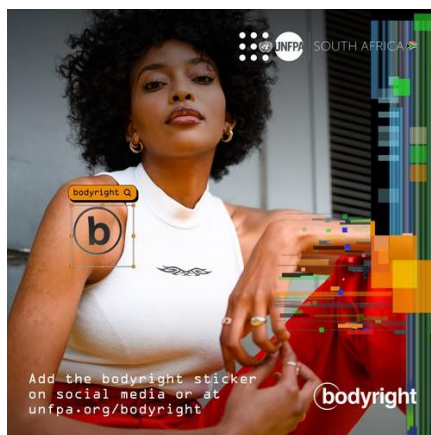
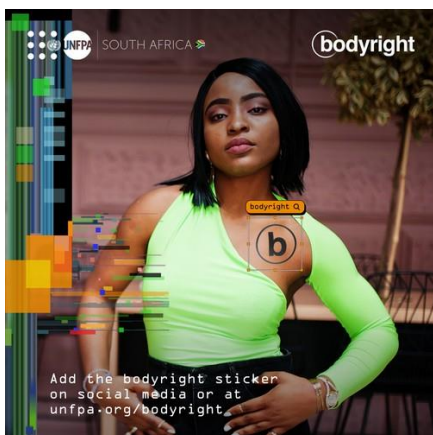


Momentum and UNFPA teams working on the webinar



Webinar panel discussion focused on Standing Up against economic abuse

#16Days of Activism Bodyright Campaign



UNFPA's bodyright campaign was launched last year during the annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The campaign is aimed at raising awareness and encouraging progress at government, private sector and individual level to combat the crisis of digital violence.



Dr. Bannet Ndyabangi, UNFPA Representative, during the media briefing at Statistics South Africa

The World at 8 Billion media briefing was held at Statistics South Africa, with the Department of Social Development and Statistics South Africa, marking this milestone by convening a media briefing, targeting all media houses. Dr. Ndyabangi stated that the World at 8 Billion is a moment when we must pause and reflect on the contribution of South Africa to the global population, identify key challenges that our population is facing, as well as, identify emerging issues to progress as a country. He further stated that “through more targeted policy actions and investments to realize a youthful population that is healthy, educated, and productive with the requisite skills for a 21st century economy, South Africa can accelerate its pace towards closing the gap in addressing its challenges.”



From left to right: Ms. Nthabiseng Makhatha (Statistics South Africa) Dr. Bannet Ndyabangi (UNFPA), with Mr. Diego Iturralde (Statistics South Africa), Ms. Poppy Nkai (Department of Social Development) at the media briefing.

A week before the world recognised the Day of 8 Billion, the United Nation’s thought and action leader on population issues, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), marked this occasion by celebrating the girl child.

In an attempt to increase the uptake of health services by this cohort, the Department of Health has established Youth Zones in public health facilities across the country to create an enabling environment for young people to openly discuss their health challenges without fear of being judged.

The Youth Zone at Qumbu Healthcare Centre, Eastern Cape, was launched with a two-day site support and youth engagement advocacy programme, held on 7 and 8 November. The celebration included reflecting on the unique district-specific dynamics and priorities in efforts to realise gains in the prevention of teenage pregnancy.

According to Nurse Nomahomba Sohuma, the dedicated time slot and safe space allow young people to access health services such as family planning, HIV screening, and treatment for various ailments and minor injuries.

“Whether rural or urban, no girl child in the world should be left behind,” said Yordanos Mehari, UNFPA Assistant Representative. “Services provided during Youth Zone include the package of care available at clinics, with a specific focus on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV-related services. This age group remains one of the priorities for UNFPA, as we work towards ensuring every young person’s potential is fulfilled,” said Mehari.

UNFPA’s partnership with the Department of Health in the Adolescent Youth Friendly Services programme includes support for promoting access to and the use of health and other services; providing information and increasing awareness about health-related issues; and education about sexual and reproductive health rights and the rights of young people.

Although some serious issues were discussed on the day, learners from several schools around Qumbu were in a celebratory mood. There was singing and dancing and some of the pupils even participated in friendly debates, where they discussed the dangers and effects of engaging in unprotected sex.

Remarkable advances in expanding sexual and reproductive rights and choices have been championed by government, civil society and international organisations for many years.

While significant progress has been made in extending access to services and information, challenges still persist and UNFPA and partners are working to close those inequalities gaps!



Schoolgirls receive sanitary pads



Cutting of the ribbon at the launch of the Youth Zone at Qumbu Healthcare Centre by Yordanos Mehari, Assistant Representative at UNFPA, a School girl from Qumbu, and Nkosi Mpumalanga Gwadiso, Chairperson of the Eastern Cape House of Traditional Leaders (ECHTL)

Swedish and Canada Donor Visit: visiting the project sites in KZN

2gether4SRH Donor Visit



On 7 November 2022 UNFPA staff, government officials and Implementing Partners spent the day visiting Injisuthi Clinic, uThukela district (KZN) one of UNFPA’s partner clinic. The programme aims to strengthen the quality of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights under the regional 2gether4SRHR program with the Swedish team.



Sweden
Sverige



Joint UNFPA/ UNICEF Programme Donor Visit



On 10 – 11 November 2022, the Government of Canada funded Joint UNFPA and UNICEF Programme visited uThukela district on a donor visit. An intergenerational community dialogue on SRH/HIV/ GBV formed part of the engagement in uThukela district (KZN) with the UNFPA Representative acknowledging that... “we should be mapping community assets to support SRH/HIV/GBV programming, and as such ensuring local solutions to local problems.”

