



Investing in women and adolescents: picking up the pace

Annual Report 2023 UNFPA-DR Congo



Annual Report 2023

Map of the Democratic Republic of Congo



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Acronyms

AADPD Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development

AIDS Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome

CAFI Central African Forest Initiative

CERF Central Emergency Response Fund

CISM Integrated multi-sector service center

CPD Country Program Development

DD Demographic dividend

ENV National Voluntary Examination
ERM Multi-sector rapid assessment

ESARO UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Office

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FP Family Planning

FP2030 Family Planning 2030

FONAREC National Victims' Reparations Fund

GBV Gender-based violence

GROUND FLOOR Democratic Republic of Congo

H6+ Grouping of United Nations Agencies working in Health

HIV Human immunodeficiency virus

IASC Interagency Standing Committee

International Conference on Population and Development

INS National Institute of Statisticsl

ISTM Institut Supérieur des Techniques Médicales

LMA Last Mile Assurance

MES/SRH Minimum Emergency Service for Sexual and Reproductive Health

MNH Maternal and neonatal health

NICTs New Information and Communication Technologies

PA-CIPD Programme of Action International Conference on Population and Development-

PMDSR Perinatal maternal death surveillance and response

PNBSES National curriculum for specific branches of special education

PROSANI Integrated health project

CISM Integrated multi-sector service center

PSEA Preventing sexual exploitation and abuse

RGPH2 Second General Census of Population and Housing

SDG Sustainable Development Goals Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Sexual harassment

SONU Emergency obstetric and neonatal care

Sexually Transmitted Infection

UG-PDSS Health System Development Program Management Unit

United Nations

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

USAID

WCBA Women of childbearing age

WFP World Food Program

WHO World Health Organization



Foreword



2023 was a pivotal year in the implementation of the cooperation program between UNFPA and the Democratic Republic of Congo (CPD 2020-2024), given its alignment with UNFPA's global strategy 2022-2025 and its evaluation, after 4 years of implementation. In August 2023, a strategic dialogue was held with the UNFPA regional office and headquarters with a view to designing a new program cycle. A note blanche for the 6th program of cooperation between the DRC and UNFPA was drawn up to define the new vision for the country program, its strategic priorities and the paths to be followed to achieve transformative results.

The country office has stepped up its humanitarian actions as part of the scaling-up to level 3 of the UN agencies' humanitarian response, following an unprecedented protracted crisis caused by the fighting between the March 23 Movement (M23) and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC), which has been raging in the eastern part of the country for several decades, compounded by epidemics and natural disasters. In addition, the last 6 months of 2023 were marked by presidential, legislative, provincial and municipal elections, as well as by MONUSCO's transition. This was a crucial period during which UNFPA, in collaboration with the government, carried out awareness-raising campaigns to encourage young people to campaign for non-violence during the electoral process.

At the level of UN system coordination, UNFPA has actively contributed to the elaboration of a Common Country Assessment and the evaluation of the current Cooperation Framework of the UN System and the DRC for the period 2020-2024

This summary gives an overview of the main progress made under the program during 2023, the main challenges, the lessons learned and the outlook for the final year of the cooperation framework and the coming years.

UNFPA noted with satisfaction the political advances that have enhanced the scope of its interventions within the framework of its mandate. These include the promulgation of the law on the creation, organization and operation of the DRC's national order of midwives, the organization of the first Mother and Newborn Week as part of the H6+ partnership, and the drafting of the annual report on the monitoring of maternal and perinatal deaths and the response to better coordinate actions to combat maternal mortality.

In addition, 2023 was marked by the strengthening of the coordination of actions to combat gender-based violence, the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, the establishment of integrated centers for the holistic care of survivors of sexual violence, and the strengthening of youth leadership through the adoption of innovative approaches, including the use of social media, all of which have helped to increase the empowerment of women and the access of adolescents and young people to quality reproductive health information and services

For all these achievements, the remarkable contribution of our donors has enabled UNFPA to intensify its interventions on behalf of the most disadvantaged populations. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Congolese Government, Japan, the Kingdom of Norway, the Kingdom of Sweden, the World Bank, France, Belgium, Canada, USAID, KOICA and OCHA. I would also like to express my gratitude to our implementing partners, i.e. government structures, national and international non-governmental organizations and the private sector, for their collaboration and added value in achieving results during 2023.

As we move towards the end of the programming cycle, it is important to capitalise on all the achievements by documenting successful experiences and drawing all the lessons from them for the next cooperation program, because despite the progress made, the challenges remain enormous.

It is therefore with great eagerness and satisfaction that we share the progress made by our office during the year 2023, which I am convinced has contributed to making a positive difference in the lives of the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo. I wish you a warm welcome.

Mme Suzanne Mandong Resident Representative a.i. UNFPA - DRC UNFPA supports initiatives for adolescent girls with disabilities, to protect them from violence, preserve their health and strengthen their schooling with a view to help them acquire the necessary practical skills....



Keys results



ZERO unmet need for family planning



2.842.545

New users of modern contraceptive methods



1.695.253

Unwanted pregnancies prevented



3.993.019

Couple years of protection (CYP) provided



ZERO preventable maternal deaths



2.640

Midwives trained at the Institut Supérieur des Techniques Médicales (ISTM)



3.056Maternal deaths avoided



1.006Cases of obstetric obestric fistula repaired

Principaux résultats



ZERO gender-based violence



209.600

Survivors of GBV received holistic care



36

Integrated multi-sector service centers offering care services established



1.4 millionPeople sensitized on GBV

Unleashing the potential of young people



2.640

Adolescents and young people educated about STI/HIV/AIDS and family planning



138.760

New users of modern contraceptive methods among young people



118,000

Young people received comprehensive sexuality education and information on and reproductive health at school

Progress achieved in 2023 The freedom to choose the number of births and

timing of one's children is a fundamental human right

16





2.842.545

New users of modern Family Planning methods



8.819.530

USD contribution from UNFPA Supply Partnership





3.993.019

Couple Years of Protection (CYP) provided



224.398

Unsafe abortions averted



1.695.253

Unwanted pregnancies averted



3.056

Maternal deaths averted



Main interventions

Family planning services

In the humanitarian context, in response to the various crises resulting from armed conflict and natural disasters, UNFPA acquired and distributed products (contraceptives, maternal and new bornhealth medicines including emergency reproductive health kits, dignity kits, tents and other medical materials and equipment) worth \$3,052,997, during the activation of level 3 of the humanitarian emergency response (Scale-Up), in Eastern DRC from June 16 to December 31, 2023.

Family planning has been integrated into resilience projects in partnership with FAO, WFP and UNICEF to benefit farmers living in rural areas. Supervisors of peasant organizations were trained in community-based contraceptive distribution n Mwenga, Kaniola, Walungu, Lemera, Ruzizi and Kalehe.

Supply chain management and Last Mile Assurance

- We supported the capacity building of health providers to create demand for and supply of family planning services to increase contraceptive prevalence in the provinces of Maniema, Kasaï, Tshopo, and Sankuru.
 - We provided family planning services in humanitarian situations to 30164 women and girls living in IDP sites in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri, through mobile clinics and community-based distribution.
 - We innovated with the use of new technologies (Africhain mobile application) software developed by AfriYAN-DRC for efficient contraceptive supply chain management and data collection.
 - We pre-positioned and distributed contraceptive products, emergency reproductive health kits, dignity kits, tents and other maternal and newborn health medicines, especially in humanitarian and hard-to-reach areas.

Mobilizing resources for modern family planning commodities and supplies

The budget for the National Reproductive Health Program (PNSR) includes a budget line for the purchase of contraceptives and other reproductive health drugs, to which the government has committed to FP2030 and UNFPA's COMPACT 2023 to allocate US\$5 million each year for the purchase of contraceptives.

Progress achieved in 2023



Prenatal consultation and skilled care during delivery can help prevent all the complications that lead to maternal and newborn deaths.



Eliminating preventable maternal deaths



2.640

Midwives trained in higher education institutions (ISTM)



3.056

Maternal deaths averted



Women received free obstetric fistula repair



Healthcare

facilities rehabilitated and equipped



Midwifery training instituted capacitated to administer the conversion of nurses to midwives program



2.640

Health care providers trained in various thematic in sexual and reproductive health care and management



Main interventions

Leadership and advocacy for maternal health

- We organized the first ever Mother and Newborn Week as part of the H6+ partnership under the patronage of the distinguished First Lady of the DRC.
- We strengthened the technical and institutional capacities of health care facilities in the supported Health Zones, contributing to deliveries assisted by skilled birth attendants.
- An EmONC network has been set up in Maniema province, with the identification priority interventions for the network's operationalization validated by all the province's stakeholders.
- We trained two (2) surgical teams from the provinces of Lomami and Haut-Katanga in obstetric fistula repair, bringing to 22 the number of provinces with at least one surgical team capable of operating on obstetric fistula in routine mode.
- We pre-positioned reproductive health kits, dignity kits, tents, life-saving drugs including contraceptives, medical equipment and materials that

- helped to provide emergency response to the needs of women and girls of childbearing age living in IDP sites.
- We advocated and obtained the enacting of the law creating, organizing operationalizing the DRC's national midwifery order promulgated by the Head of State on December 4, 2023.
- We advocated and obtained the declaration in September 2023 by the Head of State of free maternity and newborn care for the province of Kinshasa to be gradually enrolled to the rest of the 26 provinces of DRC

Waternal and perinatal death surveillance and esponse

- We contributed in efforts to raise the skilled birth attendance from 85.9% in 2018 to 90.5% in 2023.
- We supported the national PMDSR (Perinatal maternal death surveillance and response) committees elaborating the annual report of 2022 on x maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response
- We strengthened provincial PMDSR committees provinces of the DRC





Eliminating gender-based violence



36

Integrated multisectoral service centers offering quality care established



17.900

Women and girls benefited from Dignity Kits to prevent GBV in areas affected by humanitarian crises



9.200

GBV survivors supported with income-generating activities to ensure their reintegration into the community and protection against GBV



209.600

GBV survivors
received
holistic care
at treatment
centers in
line with
national and
international
norms and
standards



Online users later referred to facilities offering care via the interagency green line 495555



1,4 million

People informed about the risks of gender-based violence and how to obtain assistance



32

Safe spaces created in IDP sites and communities to protect women and girls from GBV and provide them with community-based psychosocial support



Main interventions

Leadership and Coordination

- To ensure repair for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and other victims of serious crimes and crimes against humanity, the Fonds National de Réparation des Victimes (FONAREV) was created in July 2023.
- In addition, by presidential decree in 2023, the government institutionalized integrated multisector service centers for the holistic care of survivors of GBV.
- National GBV Coordination ensured the positioning of the fight against violence in the humanitarian programming cycle and in the context of scaling up the humanitarian response in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri.
- Significant progress was recorded in the area of protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) in the implementation of humanitarian and development projects thanks to the commitment of other institutions, notably the Ministries of Health, Social and Humanitarian

GBV/SGBV prevention

- A mechanism for alerting and referring cases of gender-based violence is operational through the 49 55 55 hotline.
- 3, 464 sensitive complaints relating to gender-based violence were processed through this hotline, including 755 from schools, 2,663 from the community and 27 in humanitarian situations.
- A training module for legal actors on legal aid and the complaints management mechanism in the fight against sexual abuse and exploitation has been developed.

☐ Soutien juridique

A training module has been developed for legal actors on legal assistance and the complaints management mechanism in the fight against sexual abuse and exploitation.





Unleashing the potential of young people



138.760

New users of a modern contraceptive method



2.640

Adolescents and young people educated about STI/HIV/AIDS and family planning



2.433.804

Out-of-school girls received comprehensive sexuality education and entrepreneurial skills



118.000

Adolescents and young people received comprehensive training and information on sexuality and reproductive health at school



1.889.327

Adolescents and youth (in and out of school) were able to access and to use high-quality reproductive health services



Main interventions

With the aim of leaving no one behind, in 2023 UNFPA, with funding from Norway, supported the process of integrating comprehensive sexuality education into the National Program of Specific Branches of Special Education («NBSES» for short in French). This gave the opportunity to adolescents and young people living with disabilities to access information and receive education on sexual and reproductive health.

UNFPA has also supported the integration of comprehensive sexuality education into the national vocational training program.

the UNFPA's Women's
Leadership Academy
benefited from inspirational
coaching and experiencesharing sessions with
women leaders, including
Ambassadors, Heads of
UN agencies and corporate
business executives, to
encourage young and teenage
girls to pursue and realize their
dreams.

UNFPA supported the civil society youth organizations in the prevention against violence campaign during the 2023 elections through:

- High-level international conference on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security in 2023.
- 4 safe spaces for regular consultations, mechanisms and platforms on peace and security in communities
- Campaigns to combat fake news, hate speech, misogyny and discrimination on the Internet and in the media during the electoral process.
- Involvement and securing of formal commitment of more than 1,000 young IDPs in favor of intercultural social cohesion, on a community mechanism for conflict prevention and management in IDP camps.





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General Population and Housing Census (GPHC2)

- UNFPA provided technical support to the government in preparation for the second Population and Housing Census (2nd CPH), through the consolidation of methodological documents for census mapping, questionnaires, guidelines and IT applications.
- The National Institute of Statistics (INS for short in French) benefited from capacity building in terms of sharing of census experience and training in geo-spatial data analysis and census data visualization.

UNFPA helped strengthen the INS in developing methodological guidelines for producing vital statistics (on births, deaths, marriages, and divorces) and improving coordination and data sharing between the institute and relevant ministries.

- UNFPA contributed in the preparation of a Voluntary National Review (VNR) report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and DRC's participation in the High-Level Political Forum on the SDGs held in New York in July 2023.
- Rapid multi-sectoral assessments (RMAs) in humanitarian crisis situations were carried out on GBV risks, land and community conflicts (Kamonia, Kasaï Central and Kasaï Oriental, Rutshuru territory, Masisi, Mahagi, Nyiragongo, Kalehe).
 - The report on the ten-year review of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD@10/ (ICPD@30) was drawn up. The country participated in the AADPD@10 review meeting and also supported the development of a demographic dividend roadmap for five provinces. In collaboration with the Ministry of Gender Equality, the office is improving the national database on gender-based violence.







Response to humanitarian crises

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) activated the scaling-up of the L3 system in the DRC, following a prolonged and unprecedented crisis that has been raging in the eastern part of the DRC for several decades, compounded by epidemics and natural disasters. A fragile humanitarian situation that forced some 6.3 million displaced and disaster-stricken people into deplorable conditions.

To ensure a more effective, large-scale response, UNFPA aligned itself with this scaling-up and intensified its humanitarian interventions in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri to urgently address the scale of unmet needs.

Humanitarian Respone In the area of Reproductive Health

- 60 mobile clinics were created to support access to reproductive health information and services, including family planning and the use of mobile ultrasound.
- 7 403 women gave birth in health facilities with maternity services supported by UNFPA
- 24 632 new acceptors of a modern short-acting contraceptive method were recruited through community-based distribution;
- 5 532 new acceptors of a modern long-term contraceptive method were recruited;
- 26 722 STI cases were managed using the syndromic approach;
- 16 399 births were assisted by qualified personnel;
- 2 569 cases of childbirth-related complications were referred to general hospitals, including 1,476 caesarean sections performed and managed;
- 34 448 prenatal consultations were carried out;
- 310 600 people were educated about RH, FP, GBV, HIV, etc;
- 322 370 male and female condoms were distributed;
- 9 686 individual delivery kits were distributed.



In crisis situations, UNFPA teams make mobile health centers available to women and girls living in the most inaccessible areas, providing them with reproductive health care and protection services.

Humanitarian Response

In reproductive health



60

Mobile clinics set up to support access to reproductive health information and services, including family planning and the use of mobile ultrasound.



7.403

Women gave birth in health facilities with maternity services supported by UNFPA.



24.632

New acceptors of a modern short-acting contraceptive method were recruited through community-based distribution.



5.532

New acceptors of a modern long-term contraceptive method were recruited



26.722

STI cases were managed using the syndromic approach



16.399

Births were assisted by qualified personnel



2.569

Cases of childbirth complications referred to general hospitals, including 1,476 caesarean sections performed and managed



34.448

Prenatal consultations were carried out



9.686

Individual delivery kits distributed



Humanitarian Response

In the prevention and protection against GBV



28

Integrated multi-sector service centers (IMSC) made operational to provide multi-sectoral services for survivors of GBV and SFA



276

Medical providers and 434 psychosocial assistants acquired skills in survivor-centered quality care



7.557

Victims of sexual violence and SEA received medical treatment, including 4,581 within 72 hours.



17.166

Victims of sexual violence and SEA received psychosocial support



574

Victims of sexual violence and SEA received legal support



420.875

People sensitized about GBV / ASR



3.860

Vulnerable people including GBV/ASV victims benefited from socio-economic and educational reintegration



21.086

People benefited from dignity kits



2.001

Service providers trained on GBV

AFFECTED POPULATION STRATUM

North Kivu Province

2.300.163 Displaced populations

736.052	Teenagers and young people (aged 10-24)	
552.039	Sexually active men	
538.238	Women of childbearing age (FAP)	
112.708	Pregnant women	
101.207	Newborns	
16.906	Pregnancy complications and childbirth	
5.579	Caesarean section	
55.204	Cases of sexual violence	
10.765	STI cases	



South Kivu Province

1.356.376	Displaced populations
434.040	Teenagers and young people (aged 10-24)
325.530	Sexually active men
317.392	Women of childbearing age (FAP)
66.462	Pregnant women
59.681	Newborns
9.969	Pregnancy complications and childbirth
3.290	Caesarean section
6.348	Cases of sexual violence
32 553	STLcases





Ituri Province

1.630.535	Displaced populations
521.771	Teenagers and young people (aged 10-24)
391.328	Sexually active men
381.545	Women of childbearing age (FAP)
79.896	Pregnant women
71.744	Newborns
11.984	Pregnancy complications and childbirth
3.955	Caesarean section
7.631	Cases of sexual violence
39.133	STI cases
	Channel Control





Partnership and use of NICTs for provision of quality maternal health in DRC

This innovation aims to improve the provision of maternal and neonatal health (MNH) services in rural areas through a public-private partnership using WhatsApp to monitor pregnant women in the provinces of Sankuru and Kasaï-Central, which face major challenges in terms of the availability of equipment and specialized staff to ensure the provision of quality MNH services.

Strategies used to foster the innovation environment.

 Strengthening partnerships with the NGO PROSANI and USAID to ensure real synergy between our interventions.

Recourse to the expertise of the University of Kinshasa's Faculty

of Medicine for training providers in gynecological and obstetrical ultrasound.

The use of new communication techniques through the WhatsApp platform to improve the quality of diagnosis and management of pregnancy-related complications.



Click to watch

https://unf.pa/3wBWGED



Major events

Second Edition of the Henriette EKE Media Award

The second edition of the « **Prix Média Henriette Eke** » rewarded the 8 best journalistic productions addressing issues of sexual and gender-based violence, including cases of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in the DRC. The awards ceremony took place in December 2023 in Kinshasa.









Final evaluation of the 2020-2024 Country Program Document (CPD)

The year 2023 was marked by the kick off of the final evaluation of the cooperation program between the Democratic Republic of Congo and UNFPA for the period from 2020 to 2024. This independent evaluation began in September with external consultants. It followed the various phases required, including the start-up phase, the data collection phase and the reporting phase. The activity is being monitored by a reference group made up of representatives of state and non-state partners. The draft evaluation report is available and presents the results of the program as well as the lessons learned, which will help in the elaboration of the next CPD. The final version of the document will be available in 2024.

Designing the new cooperation program UNFPA-DRC (2025-2029)

Getting to the final year of the 5th cooperation program (2020-2024), the Congolese Government and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) embarked on the process of designing a new program that will define the main areas of UNFPA's support for the country's development for the period 2025-2029.

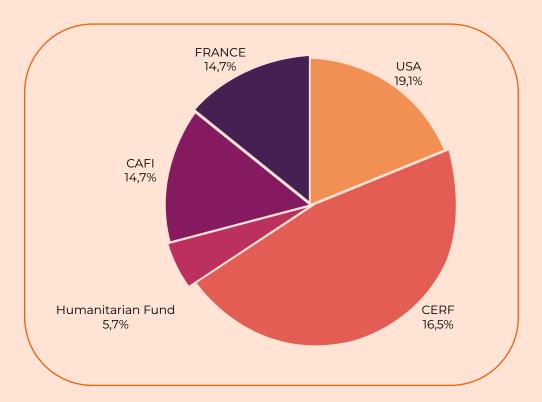
The process of developing the 6th DRC-UNFPA cooperation agreement comprises 5 main stages, from preparatory work (2023) to the production of the country program document (CPD), which will set out the program's main themes and priority activities.

Resource Mobilization and strategic partnerships

In 2023, UNFPA RDC mobilized a total

USD 11.6 millions as follows:

- **2,599,869 USD** from the United States,
- **6,336,003 USD** from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF),
- 700,000 USD from the Humanitarian Fund
- 1,998,366 USD from the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) for cost extension.
- **2,000,000 EURO** from France



Resource mobilization challenges

The challenge of mobilizing resources and establishing partnerships remains significant. In terms of outlook, UNFPA DRC intends to proactively increase funding and expand strategic partnerships. The office also plans to diversify resource mobilization and strengthen relations with the private sector.





Human resources

The UNFPA office in the DRC operated in 2023 with a staff of around 167, all contracts types combined, with a vacancy rate of 10%.

To support the intensification of the humanitarian response, the office deployed more than 20 staff with different skills in the three Eastern provinces affected by level 3 humanitarian emergency. In addition, 30 midwives were deployed to various health centers to provide RH services with a view to reducing preventable maternal and newborn deaths.

The office organized capacity-building sessions for its staff and partners on Quantum and Quantum+, project management and results-based management.

During 2023, the office used interns to support programmatic, coordination and operations activities.



A total of 7 trainees, including two males and five females, completed 6-month internships, mainly in archive reconstitution, support for the recruitment process, assistance with file processing, management of the

Representative's agenda, processing of payments and participation in all activities relating to their field of internship.

Staffing situation

Permanent/fixed-term contracts (PA/FTA)	
Temporary contract (TA)	9
Service contract (SC)	37
United Nations Volunteers (UNV)	
Individual contract (IC)	33
Trainees	5
Total	182

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

1. Communication

In 2023, the office welcomed two communication specialist colleagues from Burund and Niger. Queen Nyeniteka (Burundi) came to reinforce her skills in behavior change communication, digital communication and the production of communication content.

Souleymane Saddi Maazou, Communication and Advocacy Officer for the Niger Office, came to strengthen his skills as part of the implementation of the communication and advocacy plan to better support the promotion of evidence-based achievements, partnership and resource mobilization in Niger.

2. Support mission to the Kaduna sub-office (Nigeria)

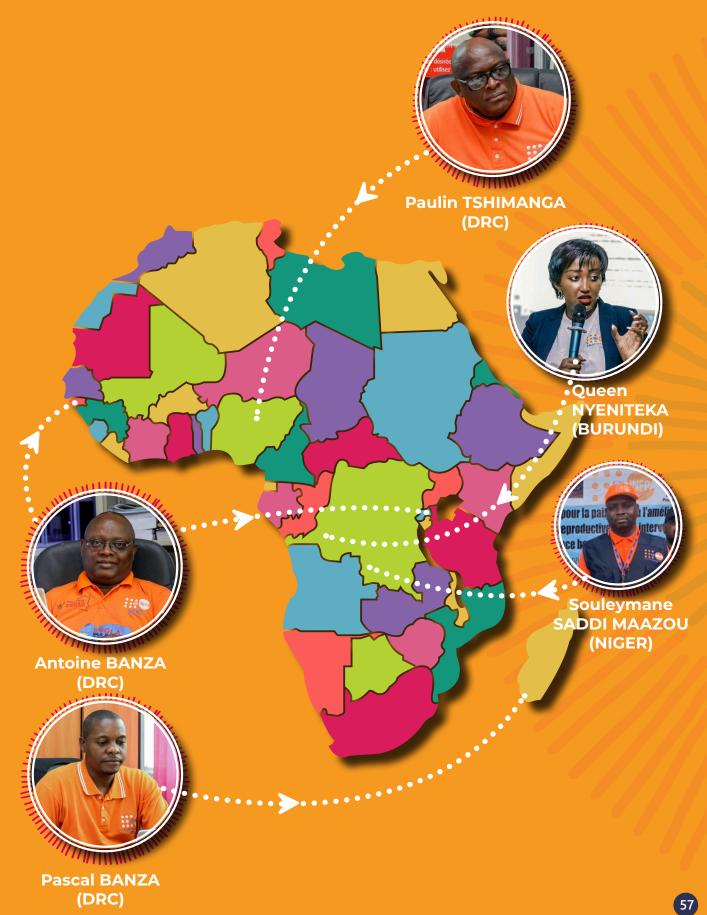
Paulin TSHIMANGA, Population Dynamics Specialist at UNFPA-RDC, carried out a detail assignment in Nigeria. The aim of the assignment was to supervise the implementation of program activities in Kaduna State, and provide leadership to the sub-office.

3. Technical support in Rwanda and Guinea BISSAU

Antoine BANZA, Population and Data for Development Programme Specialist at UNFPA-DRC, provided technical support to the UNFPA office in Rwanda to improve the country's statistical system. And to the UNFPA office in Guinea Bissau, to help improve the country office's monitoring-evaluation system.

4. Support for GBV in Madagascar

Pascal Banza Kalama, GBV Program Officer at the UNFPA-DRC office, was deployed to support the gender unit of the UNFPA Madagascar office to train and set up a national pool of trainers and share the DRC's experience in implementing innovative, holistic approaches to the care of GBV survivors.



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Vision 2030

Universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights



Ending unmet need for family planning



Putting an end to preventable maternal mortality



Putting an end to gender-based violence and harmful practices

Leave no one behind







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