



STRENGTHENING A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

UNFPA AND THE WHO REGIONAL EMERGENCY HUB — DAKAR





Dr. Thierno Baldé, the Coordinator of the WHO Regional Emergency Hub in Dakar and the UNFPA Regional Director for West and Central Africa, Dr. Sennen Hounton

A Deepened UN Inter-Agency Partnership

UNFPA's Regional Office for West and Central Africa and the WHO Regional Emergency Hub in Dakar are reinforcing their strategic inter-agency partnership to strengthen humanitarian preparedness and emergency response across the region. Anchored in a shared mandate to protect health, rights, and dignity, this collaboration places women, girls, and vulnerable populations at the heart of emergency action.

Through sustained dialogue, joint planning, and operational coordination, UNFPA and WHO are aligning their respective strengths to deliver more coherent, people-centred, and gender-responsive responses to increasingly frequent and complex humanitarian crises in West and Central Africa.

UNFPA has a strong partnership with The WHO Regional Emergency Hub in Dakar. Together, we have numerous points of collaboration and ways to leverage our assets, experiences and expertises to better serve the populations of the region.

— Dr. Sennen Hounton, UNFPA Regional Director, West and Central Africa —

A Shared Vision and Complementary Strengths

UNFPA and WHO share a common vision of resilient health systems capable of anticipating, withstanding, and responding effectively to emergencies. Their partnership is driven by shared priorities to:

- Strengthen the resilience of health systems in crisis-prone settings
- Ensure equitable access to essential and life-saving health services, including SRH and GBV services
- Enhance national emergency preparedness, surge capacity, and capacities for rapid response
- Protect the rights, dignity, and wellbeing of women and girls in humanitarian contexts

By combining technical leadership, operational reach, and data-driven innovation, the partnership aims to translate global commitments into measurable impact at regional and country levels.



UNFPA Regional Director Dr. Sennen Hounton paid a visit to the WHO Regional Emergency Hub in Dakar, accompanied by UNFPA Deputy Director Ms. Fabrizia Falcione, and technical experts from the UNFPA WCA Regional Office in Dakar.

Priority Areas of Collaboration

1. Capacity Building for Emergency Response

UNFPA and WHO will jointly strengthen humanitarian preparedness through enhanced surge capacity, including:

- **Shared technical expertise and facilitators**
- **Joint use of training facilities and logistics**
- **Coordinated simulation exercises and preparedness initiatives**

This collaboration supports the development of a skilled, ready, and rapidly deployable emergency workforce across the region.

2. Emergency Supplies and Strategic Stock Prepositioning



The WHO Regional Emergency Hub

Building on Senegal's role as a regional logistics hub, UNFPA, in partnership with the WHO Regional Emergency Hub, is strengthening regional supply readiness through shared inter-agency logistics, aligned with UNFPA's humanitarian priorities.

- **Prepositioning Inter-Agency Emergency Reproductive Health (IARH) Kits for rapid deployment from Senegal to countries affected by humanitarian emergencies;**
- **Prepositioning selected essential sexual and reproductive health supplies, including dignity kits and priority maternal and newborn health commodities, for use in emergency response;**
- **Managing the prepositioned stock at regional level to support timely release and replenishment during emergencies.**

The prepositioned stock is managed as a revolving arrangement, replenished through Country Office budgets, to ensure sustainability and faster response.

3. Data, Innovation, and Evidence for Action

By linking UNFPA's Regional Initiative on the Centrality of Population (RiCoP) with the WHO Center of Excellence on Data and Innovation in Public Health Emergencies, the partnership will:

- **Identify patterns and trends in maternal mortality using MDSR data**
- **Apply demographic data for strategic foresight and emergency modelling**
- **Assess emergency response effectiveness through census data, small-area estimations, and economic analyses, including the cost of inaction**

This evidence base will guide anticipatory action and more effective humanitarian decision-making.

4. Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE)

UNFPA and WHO will strengthen health-sector responses to GBV by:

- **Building capacities on clinical management of rape (CMR) and intimate partner violence (IPV)**
- **Integrating mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)**
- **Implementation of global standards, protocols, and guidelines for effective GBV prevention and response in emergencies**

5. Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

Within the framework of the PSEA Regional Working Group, both agencies will:

- **Conduct joint SEA risk assessments**
- **Deliver coordinated prevention and response training**
- **Strengthen country-level PSEA networks**
- **Ensure service providers meet minimum standards and are trained in survivor-centred case management**

6. Strengthening Inter-Agency Coordination

The partnership will reinforce coordination mechanisms by:

- **Supporting regional inter-agency coordination on sexual and reproductive health under the Health Sector and the regional humanitarian coordination platform (R-IASC)**
- **Strengthening country-level SRH working groups**
- **Contributing to the reactivation of key inter-agency technical working groups, including logistics coordination platforms**

7. Policy Dialogue, Advocacy, and Knowledge Generation

UNFPA and WHO will further collaborate through:

- **Joint policy dialogue and advocacy to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights**
- **Coordinated support to Regional Economic Communities and Member States**
- **Expanded collaboration in research, knowledge management, and joint publications**



Family photo of the visit

A Partnership Focused on Impact

This reinforced UN inter-agency partnership reflects a shared commitment to saving lives, protecting rights, and building resilient health systems across West and Central Africa. By combining expertise, resources, and leadership, UNFPA and WHO are advancing a collective response that ensures no one—especially women and girls—is left behind in emergencies.

We thank UNFPA for visiting the WHO Regional Emergency Hub and for the highly fruitful discussions, which will enable our two agencies to strengthen our partnership on emergencies that are becoming increasingly frequent.”

Dr. Thierno Baldé, Coordinator, WHO Regional Emergency Hub, Dakar



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