

Concept Note
UNFPA West and Central Regional Office (WCARO) Delivery Agenda

1. Summary of Socio-Economic Profile of the West and Central Africa Region

The African Development Bank's (ADB) Economic Outlook for 2018 indicates that average GDP growth in West Africa has been on the rise and is projected to be 3.9 percent in 2019. However, the performance of the countries varies greatly, and the regional average is significantly influenced by Nigeria that contributes about 70 percent of regional GDP.

Poverty remains high despite the rise in GDP. In 2013 (the most recent data from the World Bank), 43 percent of the West African population lived below the \$1.90 per day poverty line.

Despite some modest improvements, many countries in the region still face challenges in governance, peace, gender equality, security, public sector management, and public finance management.

According to the UN Population Statistics the total population of the West and Central Africa region (WCAR) stands at around 500 million¹, representing just short of 50% of the total population of sub-Saharan Africa and 7% of the world's population – yet only 1.5% of the world's GDP. A recent report from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation projected that by 2050, more than 40% of the world's extreme poor people will live in DRC and Nigeria, which are the combined home to half of the region's population².

WCAR's has the world's highest fertility rate, which also translates into the youngest population structure worldwide. Children account for 51% of the population, and the region has the largest proportion of adolescents in the world, at 23%. By 2050 WCAR's population will have doubled and one child in 10 will have been born in Nigeria.³

This very young population presents an excellent opportunity for growth. But only if governments invest in today's young people's health, education and protection.⁴ Unfortunately it also posed serious challenges as unengaged and/or employed young people in the region have been targeted by extremists to perpetuate humanitarian crisis including insurgencies. Underlining t in the wider kinship network its key importance UNFPA WCARO was able to position the Demographic Dividend high on the agenda of the African Union, Heads of States, and the UN Secretary-General, and has also successfully used it to leverage investments for young people in Africa.

Despite progress in reproductive health over the past five years, the regional indicators remain worrisome with a maternal mortality rate of 679 per 100,000 live births, 13% contraceptive prevalence rate across the region, and 24% unmet need for family planning. Access to essential reproductive health services is low. Only 12% of pregnant women who require emergency obstetric care and newborn care services receive them, and only 48% of births are attended by skilled birth attendants. An estimated 13,000 new cases of obstetric fistula occur per year, on top of a backlog of 378,000 existing cases to be repaired. The region carries approximately 18% of the global HIV burden, accounting for 21% of new HIV infections worldwide, with adolescents experiencing an increase in AIDS related deaths (WCARO RIAP, 2018-2021).

¹ 493 million inhabitants in 2015

² Goalkeepers: The story behind the data 2018.

³ Generation 2030 – Africa 2.0. UNICEF 2017

⁴ Ibid

Investments in young people also means that they should be protected from HIV, violence and exploitation. Young people's exposure to HIV could be a challenge to the demographic dividend. UNICEF estimates that nearly 700 adolescents aged between 10 and 19 are newly infected with HIV every day – or one every two minutes⁵. It also projects that 1.9 million children and adolescents will be living with HIV in 2030, mostly in Eastern and Southern Africa (1.1 million), followed by West and Central Africa (571,000), and Latin America and the Caribbean (84,000).

Urbanization is a challenge. However, it could also be turned into an opportunity in WCAR if the region learns from other parts of world where urbanisation has been used to foster innovation and green technologies, better infrastructures and higher standards of living. In WCAR more than half of the population of 10 countries already lives in cities and by 2050 60% will be living in urban areas region-wide, according to UN projections. Half of urban residents live in informal settlements lacking access to basic services, and investment strategies and urban planning are not keeping pace with population growth.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that there are about 8.4 million migrants moving around West Africa, representing 2.8% of the total population. It is the largest number in Africa and the movements are both within the region and out of the region. There is a tradition of 'people moving' following networks for social, economic or political reasons as when young people as per tradition are travels with the wider kinship network as part of their education and socialization or as a coping strategy by poor families.

The overall security situation in the region deteriorated in 2018 and some countries such as Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali were targeted by violent extremists.

This socio-economic background and the following regional profile inform UNFPA's work in west and central Africa.

2. UNFPA WCARO Profile and Rationale for a Delivery Unit

A Scan of UNFPA in West and Central Africa

The West and Central Africa region has enormous potential, yet faces many complex and interconnected health, humanitarian, demographic and economic challenges. UNFPA WCARO provides management and programme oversight to 23 countries. The Operation volume in 2019 is about \$ 177.7 million for the 23 countries including the regional office.

Despite progress in women's health in the region, it is yet to be seen if the region will be able to meet the SDG on reducing maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100 000 live births. Currently, the regional average stands at 679 per 100,000 live births according to data outline in the West and Central Africa Regional Interventions Action Plan, 2018-2021 (RIAP). The RIAP also indicates that contraceptive prevalence rate is at 13% across the region, and that only 12% of pregnant women who require emergency obstetric care and newborn care services receive them.

According to WHO (January 2018 update), between 50.000 to 100.000 women worldwide are affected by obstetric fistula every year, and that 2 million young women live with untreated obstetric fistula in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. WHO further indicates that obstetric fistula is directly linked to one of the major causes of maternal mortality: obstructed labor which accounts for 6% of all maternal deaths according to WHO.

Women and girls are still worse on many socio-economic indicators and suffer from harmful practices such as FGM/C and child marriage and shame, social stigma and health problems related to fistula.

The year 2019 marks the second year of UNFPA's new strategic plan (2018-2021) which focuses on three transformative results: end preventable maternal deaths; end unmet need for family planning; and end gender-

⁵ WOMEN: at the Heart of the HIV Response for Children. UNICEF 2018

based violence and harmful practices – while keeping the four previous outcome areas around SRH, Adolescents and Youth, Gender and Population Dynamics.

The RIAP and the Country Programmes are the operational framework to achieve the targets set in the SP. The RIAP consists of 4 outcomes that are reminded below:

1. Every woman, adolescent and youth everywhere, especially those furthest behind, has utilized integrated sexual and reproductive health services and exercised reproductive rights, free of coercion, discrimination and violence
2. Every adolescent and youth, in particular adolescent girls, is empowered to have access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, in all contexts
3. Gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls, and reproductive rights are advanced in development and humanitarian settings
4. Everyone, everywhere, is counted, and accounted for, in the pursuit of sustainable development

The strategies being used to meet the RIAP's results are: 1) engage in high-level policy dialogue; 2) develop regional products, including generation and dissemination of data and research; and 3) build and reinforce country offices' capacity to implement country programmes.

WCARO has been leveraging resources and partnership to meet the RIAP and CPD outcomes to support UNFPA's transformation agenda set in the strategic plan. Part of this leveraging could be seen in the Sahel Women Empowerment and Demography Dividend (SWEED) Initiative from which 7 governments in the region have generated close to \$300 million funds from the World Bank to finance women and youth empowerment projects.

UNFPA is part of key global partnerships on maternal, newborn and child health including the G8 Muskoka initiative, the Global strategy for women's, children's and adolescent's health, 2016 – 2030 and Every Woman Every Child, which aiming at ending all preventable maternal, newborn and child deaths by 2030. These partnerships are complemented in the continent by other strategies such as the African Union 2063 Africa Agenda: The Africa we Want, the Africa Health strategy-2016-2030, and the Maputo Plan of Action for 2016-2030.

Rationale for WCARO Delivery Unit

UNFPA WCAR's work in these past few years have attracted more funding thus giving the organization the ability to have a bigger impact on women, adolescent and young people in the region and to adopt 'new ways of working' to be more efficient and effective.

This increase in funding created a greater demand and expectation for the region to strengthen its capacity to absorb new grants and implement innovative programmes while accelerating the delivery of results of existing programmes. This cannot be achieved without innovative mechanisms for anticipating, preventing and quickly addressing the bottlenecks and risks hindering programme delivery.

In addition to strengthening its Results Based Management (RBM) culture, WCARO has also been reflecting on new ways of working that are more geared towards programme integration, better coordinated funding arrangements and resource allocation, and timely and better support to country offices. This goal cannot be achieved without managing risks and anticipating challenges that could affect operations and programme implementation.

It is against this background that UNFPA WCARO is setting up a Delivery Unit with the sole objective of helping managers deliver planned results in RIAP and country programmes to support the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 three transformative goals of: 1) end preventable maternal deaths; 2) end unmet need for family planning; and 3) end gender-based violence and harmful practices.

3. What Will the Delivery Unit Do?

The concept of Delivery Units is not new. In recent history many countries have used such an approach in key transitional moments to achieve transformational goals starting in the UK in 2001 with the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit (PMDU) and subsequently Delivery Units have been introduced in several countries in Africa such as

Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Togo, Rwanda etc. Recently, the '**Réseau African des Delivery Unit**' was launched in Dakar during the "Conference Internationale sur Emergence Africaine in January 2019".

The WCARO's Regional Director has outlined his vision of the Delivery Unit, which is all about helping managers deliver, and fostering a culture of results in the UNFPA regional office and country offices. Additionally, colleagues in WCARO and country offices have shared ideas and identified bottlenecks that are perceived to be preventing delivery. They are indicated below in original citation:

- *"Inadequate internal capacities of country and field offices where these results are delivered*
- *Teams and program officers still working in silos*
- *Absence of integration*
- *Challenges with planning and coordination*
- *Not enough of innovation, and use of old programme tools*
- *Resistance to change; some interventions have been proven ineffective but are still being used*
- *Imbalance of resources across units*
- *Not enough of resource allocation based on results and integration*
- *Poor communication of our mandates and results to external stakeholders*
- *Inability to quantify and demonstrates results*
- *UNFPA's leveraging power is not always used*
- *Managers are mostly good technicians*
- *Challenges with results report; reporting is looking more at processes"*

Some of these issues were discussed during WCARO's Planning Retreat held on 14 to 15 January and are now being addressed by WCARO management.

In addition, some country representatives also provided their expectations of the Delivery Unit during the last RMT which could be summarized as follows in their original citation:

- *"Need to scout for talents through strengthened recruitment process*
- *Need to find more the challenges country offices are facing. This could be done via a survey monkey in addition to field visits of key countries*
- *Advocacy for more funding from HQ*
- *How to move to quality delivery of programmes; e.g. some country offices said that AWP's are not always linked to the CPD Integrated Results Framework.*
- *There could be potential conflict with roles of with Planning, M&E, and DRD functions in the regional office and this this has to be ironed out".*

The main objectives the Delivery Unit are to help managers deliver the results of the RIAP, and support WCARO in its oversight functions.

The unit's work plan will start with measurable and concrete initiatives that fit into the larger ambition of WCARO's improvement initiatives. The idea of this gradual approach is to build on tangible results as proof of concept, then quickly evolve into larger transformational objectives that the regional office and country offices can implement themselves without support of the Delivery Unit.

In this context, the Delivery Unit will work with all sections of the regional office and country offices to foster the integration and delivery of UNFPA's flagship projects in the region.

The priority countries and flagship interventions are below. A special focus will be provided to countries that have 2 or more of the flagship's interventions, as well as countries where support is required.

Country	SWEDD	Muskoka	Lake Chad	FGM	Child Marriage	Spotlight
Benin						
Burkina Faso						
Cameroon						
Chad						

Country	SWEDD	Muskoka	Lake Chad	FGM	Child Marriage	Spotlight
Cote D'Ivoire						
Gambia						
Ghana						
Guinea-Bissau						
Guinea-Conakry						
Liberia						
Mali						
Mauritania						
Niger						
Nigeria						
Senegal						
Sierra Leone						
Togo						

To achieve its objectives, the Delivery Unit will focus on 6 interconnected pillars:



Pillars	What will they do?
Measurements and Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate multiple UNFPA's reporting systems and create dashboards using innovative data visualization methods. Perform analytics on key management and programme indicators and create a real time alert system for the regional office and for country offices know bottlenecks to delivery. Train WCARO and country office staff on the use of the new dashboards and visualization techniques Make the dashboard accessible to country offices so that they can use the data in the management meetings.

Pillars	What will they do?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise and support WCARO improve its governance mechanisms.
Empowerment & Accompaniment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide on the job technical assistance, and/or training using the results of the survey on technical assistance requirements in 2019. Work with HQ to establish a roster of experts that could be deployed immediately to help countries office to provide hands-on support. Help the region develop an HR and Learning Strategy.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide updates focusing primarily on successes achieved at country office level. Work with the Com's Team for social media outreach to help the region boost its outreach.
Reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share stories of high performing countries in the WCARO's newsletter and provide recognition in annual reports and other publications. Advocate for more resources for high performing countries.
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advice on talent acquisition and management and help build technical partnerships with academic and development institutions. Promote technical exchanges with UN agencies and other institutions. Foster south-south learning and partnerships in different technical areas.
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create of a platform to share tools and good practices. Promotes learning exchanges related other institutions.

4. How will the Delivery Unit Measure Success?

Below are some success factors. The list is not exhaustive and could be adjusted as the Delivery Unit's work progresses.

Success factors	Means of verification
There is improvement in WCARO's management and governance processes.	Review of WCARO's of performance on global indicators and compare with previous year (2018 being the baseline)
Flagships projects in the priority countries are progressing as planned, and results are achieved.	Review of milestones and other proxy indicators provided by the Dashboard and compare.
