



WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE

# Roadmap for Better Fit-For-Purpose for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response

2023-2025





# Foreword

I am proud to present the first UNFPA West and Central Africa Regional Office “Roadmap for Better Fit-for-Purpose for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response 2023-2025”, an essential document for advancing humanitarian work in the Region.

UNFPA’s mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person’s potential is fulfilled. This Roadmap aims at ensuring this vision can be turned into reality even amidst humanitarian crises, ensuring that no one is left behind.

The Roadmap encapsulates UNFPA’s commitment to the rights and well-being of the most vulnerable, particularly women, girls and young people, amidst the complexities of humanitarian crises. Over the past decade, political instability, conflict, terrorism, and climate events have forced thousands of people in the West and Central Africa Region to leave their homes and find refuge in temporary locations, often lacking essential services such as education and health, including sexual and reproductive health care and protection.

The document incorporates strategies such as strengthened capacities at leadership and technical level, strengthened supply chain, coordination, innovation, and partnerships. It is a call to action for all stakeholders—governments, donors, partners, and communities—to join efforts to forge a future of hope and prosperity for the region.

I am deeply grateful for the dedication and expertise of our teams across the Region, whose insights and hard work have been instrumental in shaping this Roadmap. To our donors and partners, I commend a shared commitment to making a lasting impact on the lives of millions. As we move forward, let us be guided by the strength of our convictions and the power of our collective action.

Together, we will make a difference.

**Dr. Sennen Hounton**  
UNFPA WCA Regional Director



# Acronyms

Accountability to Affected Populations	AAP	Memorandums of Understanding	MOUs
Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	AYSRHR	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support	MHPSS
Area of Responsibility	AoR	Minimum Initial Service Package	MISP
Basic/ Comprehensive emergency Obstetric and Newborn care	B/ CEmONC	Minimum Preparedness Actions	MPA
Cash and Voucher Assistance	CVA	Non-Governmental Organizations	NGOs
Civil Society Organizations	CSOs	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	OCHA
Clinical Management of Rape	CMR	Psychosocial Support	PSS
Common Operational Datasets on Population Statistics	COD-PS	Regional Director	RD
Community of Practice	CoP	Regional Emergency GBV Advisor.	REGA
Country Office	CO	Regional Humanitarian Coordinators Community of Practice	RHCCP
Danish Refugee Council	DRC	Regional Humanitarian Steering Committee	R-HSC
Division of Human Resources	DHR	Regional Office	RO
East and Southern Africa Regional Office	ESARO	Sexual and Reproductive Health	SRH
Family Planning	FP	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	SRHR
Fast Track Procedures	FTP	Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies	SRHiE
Gender-Based Violence	GBV	Situation Report	SitRep
Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies	GBViE	Standard Operating Procedures	SOP
Gender-Based Violence Information Management System	GBV IMS	Sustainable Development Goals	SDG
Global Emergency Response Team	GERT	Terms of Reference	TOR
Headquarters	HQ	Training of Trainers	ToT
Humanitarian Needs Overview	HNO	United Nations Children's Fund	UNICEF
Human Resources	HR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR
Humanitarian Response Division	HRD	United Nations Population Fund	UNFPA
Humanitarian Response Plan	HRP	United States Agency for International Development	USAID
Humanitarian-Development-Peace	HDP	West and Central Africa	WCA
GBV Information Management System	GBVIMS	West and Central Africa Regional Office	WCARO
Inter-Agency Standing Committee	IASC	Women and Girls' Safe Spaces	WGSS
Implementing Partners	IPs	Women and Girls' Safe Spaces	WGSS
International Non-Governmental Organizations	INGO		
Intimate Partner Violence	IPV		
Long-term Agreements	LTAs		

# Table of contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Background</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Situation analysis.....	6
Challenges.....	6
Opportunities .....	7
<b>Roadmap for Better Fit-For-Purpose for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response 2023-2025</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>ACTION 1 Strengthening COs' HR capacities in humanitarian preparedness and response</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Sub-Action 1.1: At Leadership Level.....	11
Sub-Action 1.2: At Technical Level .....	12
<b>ACTION 2 Regional Surge deployment mechanisms</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Sub-Action 2.1: Internal Surge .....	15
Sub-Action 2.2: External Surge .....	16
<b>ACTION 3 Strengthening Supply Chain Resilience for Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Contexts</b> ....	<b>18</b>
Sub-Action 3.1: Prepositioning of Life-Saving Commodities.....	19
Sub-Action 3.2: Strengthening Partnerships for Efficient Supply Chain Management .....	19
<b>ACTION 4 Ensuring strong humanitarian coordination mechanisms</b> .....	<b>20</b>
Sub-Action 4.1: Regional Humanitarian Steering Committee.....	21
Sub-Action 4.2: Minimum Preparedness Action Monitoring Group .....	21
Sub-Action 4.3: Regional Humanitarian Coordinators Community of Practice (RHCCP).....	21
Sub-Action 4.4: Gender Based Violence coordination at regional and country level .....	22
Sub-Action 4.5: Sexual and Reproductive Health coordination at regional and country level .....	23
<b>ACTION 5 Knowledge Management</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Sub-Action 5.1: Regional SRHiE and GBViE Communities of Practice (CoP).....	25
Sub-Action 5.2: Strengthening Visibility .....	26
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Appendix A. Results Framework for the UNFPA WCARO Humanitarian Roadmap</b> .....	<b>29</b>

# Executive Summary

The West and Central Africa region is experiencing numerous complex humanitarian crises owing to political instability, armed conflicts, increased competition over resources due to the effects of climate change, poverty, and inflation. These crises are increasing humanitarian needs and contributing to the rising number of forcibly displaced populations across the region. In response to the complex and evolving humanitarian landscape in West and Central Africa (WCA), the UNFPA WCA Regional Office, along with leaders in Country Offices (COs), have developed a Roadmap for Better Fit-For-Purpose for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response 2023-2025. The goal of the Roadmap is to enhance UNFPA's ability to effectively prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises in the WCA region.

Effective and rapid humanitarian response in the WCA region demands a multifaceted approach, requiring UNFPA Country Offices (COs) to prepare and respond within the nexus, integrating humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts. To achieve this, COs require robust support and capacity-building initiatives to navigate complex challenges effectively. Below is an overview of the 5 key actions in the Roadmap for Better Fit-For-Purpose for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response 2023-2025, guiding UNFPA WCA personnel.

## ACTION 1

### Strengthening COs' HR capacities in humanitarian preparedness and response



UNFPA WCARO Roadmap outlines strategies for CO leaders and staff to be equipped and supported with the necessary knowledge and skills to lead and engage in humanitarian response efforts, including familiarity with UNFPA policies and technical tools specific to humanitarian settings to face the many challenges in the region. Foster a strong understanding and commitment among UNFPA leadership and staff to operate effectively within humanitarian spaces. Equip CO senior management and personnel with the necessary knowledge and skills to lead and engage in humanitarian preparedness and response efforts, including familiarity with UNFPA policies and technical tools specific to humanitarian settings.

## ACTION 2

### Regional surge deployment mechanisms



One of the key components of an effective emergency preparedness and humanitarian response is the availability of appropriately qualified internal human resources ready to deploy in a timely manner. The Roadmap emphasizes the importance of investing in developing personnel response capacities, forming a pool of qualified staff ready for regional deployment and complementing UNFPA's global crisis response efforts. This involves the creation of internal and external surge rosters of qualified personnel ready for deployment during emergencies.

The internal surge roster will serve as a complementary mechanism to the global surge roster in order to support COs in the region to rapidly acquire operational expertise to perform and bolster CO capacity if a crisis occurs. The external surge roster will include expert consultants for rapid deployment and national NGOs in the region, partnering with the UN to bolster response efforts.

### ACTION 3

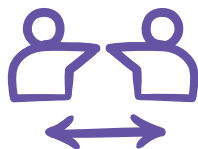
#### Strengthening Supply Chain Resilience for Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Contexts



UNFPA aims to build a resilient supply chain capable of swift responses to emergencies. This strategy involves building the internal capacity in humanitarian logistics management to lead the prepositioning of life-saving commodities and intensifying efforts to establish emergency stockpiles in strategically chosen locations across West and Central Africa. In doing so, UNFPA will be able to better prepare for and quickly respond to humanitarian crises. Developing strategic partnerships, applying innovative practices, and enhancing coordination mechanisms are core components of the WCA Prepositioning Strategy.

### ACTION 4

#### Ensuring strong humanitarian coordination mechanisms



UNFPA WCARO aims to enhance coordination and oversight of humanitarian preparedness and response in the region. To achieve this, WCARO will establish three coordination bodies, including reigniting the Regional Humanitarian Steering Committee (R-HSC), to guide regional humanitarian policies and actions. The R-HSC is modelled after the Agency's Global Humanitarian

Steering Committee (HSC), chaired by the Executive Director. The R-HSC will be chaired by the Regional Director, and TORs will be developed. The Minimum Preparedness Action Monitoring Group and the Regional Humanitarian Coordinators Community of Practice (RHCCP) will be established to strengthen preparedness efforts across the region and enhance coordination among UNFPA humanitarian coordinators. The RHCCP will focus on coordinating GBV and SRH efforts at regional and country levels to ensure a comprehensive response.

### ACTION 5

#### Knowledge Management



This action emphasizes the importance of managing and sharing knowledge and data effectively. It includes establishing Regional SRH in Emergencies and GBV in Emergencies Communities of Practice to facilitate learning and sharing best practices. Strengthening visibility through regular humanitarian situation reports, external sharing of reports, and proactively sharing information between COs and RO are key activities of the CoPs. Optimizing reporting mechanisms and advocacy tools are also critical for improving knowledge sharing and management surrounding humanitarian crises.

### Conclusion

The Roadmap for Better Fit-For-Purpose for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response 2023-2025 aligns with UNFPA's mandate and reaffirms the WCA region's dedication to effectively preparing and responding to crises across the nexus. Through enhanced capacity, coordinated efforts and strategic initiatives, the Humanitarian Roadmap outlines UNFPA WCA region's plan to strengthen CO's ability to quickly and effectively respond and make tangible and lasting impacts in the lives of those affected by humanitarian emergencies.

# Introduction

West and Central Africa is experiencing a number of complex crises that demand immediate and strategic humanitarian intervention. The convergence of protracted conflicts, impact from acute climate change events, political instability, and a burgeoning population of unemployed youth has created an environment where humanitarian needs are not just urgent but continuously evolving. UNFPA's West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) stands at the forefront of addressing these multidimensional crises, committed to delivering quality humanitarian actions that not only respond to immediate needs but also pave the way for sustainable peace and development.

This Roadmap for Better Fit-For-Purpose for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response 2023-2025 is a strategic blueprint designed to navigate the intricate landscape of humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding needs in the region. It reflects our commitment to the three transformative results: ending preventable maternal deaths, ending the unmet need for family planning, and ending gender-based violence and harmful practices. These goals are particularly poignant in a region where one in four individuals in need of humanitarian assistance is a woman or girl of reproductive age, underscoring the critical need for specific sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence (GBV) services.

Our approach is anchored in the recognition of the triple nexus, emphasising the integration of humanitarian preparedness and response, peacebuilding, and development work. Through a comprehensive situation analysis, this document outlines the unique challenges facing the region, from climate-induced disasters to the grave impacts of conflict and displacement. It also highlights the opportunities that lie within our grasp to strengthen humanitarian leadership, technical capacities, and partnerships.

As we work towards reaching the objectives of this Roadmap, we are guided by the principle of leaving no one behind, ensuring that our actions are conflict- and climate-sensitive, integrated, and peace-responsive. This document not only outlines our strategic actions and priorities for the next two years but also serves as a call to action for all stakeholders to join hands in transforming the humanitarian landscape of West and Central Africa. Together, we can build a future where every individual has the opportunity to live a life of dignity, free from the injustices of crisis and conflict.

***“ Together, we can build a future where every individual has the opportunity to live a life of dignity, free from the injustices of crisis and conflict. ”***



# Background

In 2023, 67.5 million people need humanitarian assistance and protection, of whom one in four are women and girls of reproductive age<sup>1</sup> who may need specific SRH and GBV services. By 2030, up to two thirds of the world's extreme poor could live in conflicts and fragile contexts. If we want to achieve the three transformative results, global action must address the ever challenging and complex humanitarian and fragility landscape.

**In this context**, the UNFPA Strategic Plan of 2022-2025 upholds the three transformative results, acknowledges the importance of the triple nexus and that further work is needed to increase the rate of progress. In particular, it is a call to action for “expanding the humanitarian response capacity to better safeguard the lives of women, adolescents and youth, especially adolescent girls.”

This must be done through a strengthened humanitarian, development and peacebuilding programming approach, with UNFPA leading the way in transforming the culture, leadership, human resources and operations needed to strengthen its capacities and systems to be an organization that is fit for purpose to achieve the three transformative results and the SDG agenda of leaving no one behind. Particular emphasis was placed on UNFPA's humanitarian preparedness and response capacity with a dedicated output “By 2025, strengthened capacity of critical actors and systems for the preparedness, early action and the provision of life-saving interventions related to SRH and GBV that are timely, integrated, conflict- and climate-sensitive and peace-responsive.”



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-un-general-assembly-side-event-saving-lives-reproductive-health-response-in-humanitarian-settings-20-september-2023>

## Situation analysis

The UNFPA West and Central Africa (WCA) region ranks high among those with the greatest need to integrate humanitarian preparedness and response, peacebuilding, and development work. In the past decade, the WCA region, which includes part of the Sahel belt, has undergone multiple complex humanitarian crises which are multifaceted including conflicts, natural disasters and has suffered from climate related impacts.

In the WCA region, there are 7 countries which are considered “priority humanitarian countries” as they are classified within the Global Humanitarian Needs Overview and have Humanitarian Response Plan (HNO-HRP). These countries include Burkina Faso; Cameroon; Central African Republic; Chad; Mali; Niger; and Nigeria and they experience acute and protracted crises. Additionally, the crises in the region are producing spill-over effects which creates displacement and emergencies in neighboring countries including Benin; Côte d’Ivoire; Ghana; Togo. The WCA region is among the most exposed to the negative consequences of climate change; violent climate events with humanitarian consequences are increasingly frequent.<sup>2</sup>

Considering the above, all countries in the region can be considered at risk of experiencing the direct or indirect consequences of events leading to a humanitarian crisis. Hence the need for a strong humanitarian preparedness.

---

<sup>2</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 2023. Climate Change and Security in West Africa: Regional Perspectives on Addressing Climate-related Security. Stockholm, Sweden. <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2023/partner-publications/climate-change-and-security-west-africa-regional-perspectives-addressing-climate-related-security>

## Challenges

The WCA region grapples with challenges that greatly hinder its peace and development. These include the severe impacts of climate change, resulting in devastating droughts, floods, and subsequent food insecurity. The region also has a long history of various forms of conflict and violence, from armed insurgencies like Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin and AQIM in Mali, to political turmoil leading to coup d’états in nations such as Guinea, Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso, Niger, and more recently, Gabon. Such unrest inevitably results in forced displacement both within and from other regions into WCA, as seen with the Sudanese refugee crisis. Public health emergencies, notably the Ebola and COVID-19 outbreaks, further strain the region’s resilience. Wider socio-political changes, such as the Ukraine war, have also had repercussions in the region, contributing to security challenges, macroeconomic instability, increases in the price of food and oil and trade disruptions. Collectively, these events underscore WCA’s vulnerability.

Given the multifaceted context, it is evident that humanitarian crises in this region are increasingly complex and long-standing. Moreover, these crises have a ripple effect, often impacting multiple countries simultaneously. The demographics of the region present unique challenges, as it boasts the fastest growing global population, with adolescents and young individuals representing the largest sub-set.

Other programmatic and operational challenges include:

- Weak data collection, analysis and use in fragile settings and during humanitarian crises
- Weak supply chain management across the entire spectrum including regional and national prepositioning of supplies impacting on timely delivery of sufficient commodities in humanitarian settings

- From the nexus perspective, linkages between UNFPA's mandate and peacebuilding efforts are still weak
- Diversion of funds against increased various humanitarian needs results in reduced funding for SRH and GBV humanitarian programs. They are often deprioritized or unaddressed for the benefit of other sectors (e.g., Food Security, WASH, Shelter)
- The WCA Region does not have sufficient and appropriately qualified human resource capacity that can quickly deploy and support Country Office needs in times of emergency.
- There are a growing number of countries who have found themselves operating in a humanitarian context, with teams, including Country Office leadership teams unfamiliar with humanitarian work
- Funding modalities of most donors do not allow to secure multi-year and flexible funding to support interventions, including preparedness and resilience building. This unpredictable short-term funding in emergencies also creates challenges to adequately plan, forecast, quantify, and procure for needs. Additionally, some donors perceive UNFPA to be a primarily development actor and are unconvinced of our ability to effectively implement humanitarian funds.

## Opportunities

- UNFPA works in the most complex humanitarian and fragile situations and is on the ground before, during and after crises in all WCA countries. In addition, UNFPA in the WCA region has developed expertise in responding to crises, sudden onset emergencies as well as protracted crises. This allows for the adaptation of a Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus programming approach.
- UNFPA COs have a wide and strong work relationship with local partners and grassroots organizations which can play a critical role in

the immediate humanitarian response if their capacity is built.

- UNFPA has adopted simplified procedures to adapt to riskier environments through more flexible operational policies during emergencies (i.e., Fast Track Procedures /FTPs)
- New members of WCARO leadership have a strong humanitarian background, both in terms of knowledge and experience, which allows a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities and a capacity to provide adequate guidance and support.
- There are similarities between some of the emergency contexts within the WCA region which allows knowledge sharing between COs through the documentation of best practices and lessons learned and, when needed, the provision of TOPS among COs and with WCARO.
- Considering the sub-regional aspect of some crises in WCA countries, there is a room for joint programming and joint resource mobilization involving multiple COs.





# Roadmap for Better Fit-For-Purpose for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response 2023-2025

Responding effectively requires varied approaches to address the humanitarian needs related to UNFPA's mandate. UNFPA COs in WCA need support to be able to respond to these challenges to operate consistently in the nexus space with ongoing peacebuilding work. To do this effectively, UNFPA leadership and staff need to have a strong understanding and commitment to work in humanitarian spaces. Country Office senior management need to be able to direct and coach staff on the UNFPA policies that support humanitarian response including the UNFPA Emergency Procedures, Standard Operating Procedures in humanitarian settings and the Fast Track Procedures (FTP). UNFPA COs also need to be able to work with humanitarian specific technical tools in addition to those for development and peacebuilding. For example, in humanitarian crises, all UNFPA programme staff should be versed in, among others, the Humanitarian Program Cycle, the Minimum Initial Service Package for SRH in Emergencies (MISP), the Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, and the SPHERE Standards. In

humanitarian, as in development and peacebuilding settings, UNFPA staff should incorporate and apply Human Rights-Based and Gender-Transformative Approaches.

This paper outlines how the WCA Regional Office will invest in structural and technical support to enable all COs to lead in work across the nexus, including humanitarian response, not just within their own teams, but in UN coordinated country approaches and within regional collaborations, and for this leadership to be recognised regionally, continentally and at global level. A structured way forward to systematically approach strengthening systems and capacities to be better fit to respond to humanitarian crises is required. The Roadmap also meets immediate critical needs, sets a foundation for sustainability, and promotes collective responsibility both within the region and with key internal and external partners.

## CAPACITY BUILDING



### ACTION 1

# Strengthening COs' HR capacities in humanitarian preparedness and response



Human resources are the most valuable assets of any organization, and this applies to UNFPA and

its partners. It is vital to have the right people in the right place at the right time in a crisis situation. To facilitate this, UNFPA will ensure a risk-informed approach to prepare for and respond to emergencies, including through MISIP, GBViE coordination and implementation, SRH in Emergencies (SRHiE) implementation and coordination, SRHR / GBV integration, humanitarian data, disability inclusion, Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), Humanitarian Logistics Management, Mental Health and Psycho-social Support (MHPSS), and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP). Acknowledging our leadership and all staff's unique expertise, knowledge and understanding of the local context/s and integrating that into learning interventions is fundamental to prepare for and be able to respond to humanitarian crises.

At the same time, we recognise that humanitarian HR capacity strengthening is not a discrete set of tasks to be completed once, but a continual cycle of learning, application, and integration of skills and knowledge in real time. It is important to also observe the impact and identify other gaps that need to be addressed to ensure relevant capacity strengthening at various levels and amongst different cohorts of staff. Humanitarian response requires a specialized skill set, therefore UNFPA WCARO aims to build in-house capacity, as well as surge capacity, to improve the ability to respond effectively and rapidly. Staff capacity building in humanitarian settings is led by specific staff profiles and the context which is linked to the needs on the ground. Building on UNFPA's Humanitarian Response Division (HRD) and HQ experience of training and strengthening humanitarian capacities at all levels (management/leadership

and technical) in COs and based on the WCAR "UNFPA's Humanitarian Response Fit for Purpose" approach and actions, the Regional Office will undertake the below actions to strengthen humanitarian capacity.

### **Sub-Action 1.1: At Leadership Level**

UNFPA's DHR People Strategy recognizes that in order to build resilient leadership, "we must provide training and support for people managers so they can make participatory decisions, find solutions to resource needs and staffing issues, empower their teams for self-management, manage quality outcomes, performance, and value and develop the expertise of our people." These needs are exacerbated in emergency contexts when leaders are also dealing with evolving risk, uncertainty and safety and security concerns.

Therefore, the first focus of the Roadmap will be building critical humanitarian capacity at the leadership level of CO in WCA, namely: Representatives; Deputy Representatives; Assistant Representatives; International Operations Managers and Humanitarian Coordinators. All COs will undertake humanitarian leadership training adapted to the WCA regional context. This training will be informed by a rapid capacity assessment for participants, ensuring that it is tailored to address the real capacity gaps prevalent in the region. It will incorporate the role of senior management in supporting UNFPA's mandated responsibility for the GBV AoR/subclusters as well as in UNFPA's own programming. The training will ensure that leaders are equipped with the necessary skills and experience to support most types of humanitarian contexts while operating at UNFPA. Those leaders who have already taken part in previous humanitarian leadership training administered by HRD will be invited to support the facilitation and can act as peer mentors and coaches.

Three key mappings will be undertaken to ensure a fit for purpose approach to the training:

- A mapping of the CO leaders who have already participated in the humanitarian leadership training, and how they are able to support the WCA humanitarian leadership training.
- A rapid capacity gap assessment for the participants in advance of the humanitarian leadership training to inform the design of the training, ensuring that it is tailored to the region.
- A mapping of the other humanitarian / humanitarian-applicable skills available in the region to support the delivery of the leadership and technical level training.

Respecting the UNFPA People Strategy and strategic actions which supports the coaching and learning opportunities for our teams, several cohorts of humanitarian leadership training will take place starting from the last quarter of 2023 and continuing until the end of the current Strategic Plan.

### **Sub-Action 1.2: At Technical Level**

Following leadership engagement, the WCARO Humanitarian Unit will engage at technical level with Humanitarian Coordinators, GBV Coordinators, SRH coordinators and SRHiE, and GBViE Specialists, Adolescents and Youth specialists, GBV Information Managers, Monitoring and Evaluations officers, Logisticians, MHPSS Specialists and Communication Specialists where these roles exist, and with designated focal points and development-oriented SRH and GBV staff where they do not. Combined with support from senior management who are able to demonstrate leadership in humanitarian action, this training will enable the technical teams to engage in high quality, timely humanitarian preparedness and response. In particular, the team will strengthen their skills and scale up to:

- Mobilize humanitarian funds through mechanisms such as CERF, ECHO, BHA/ USAID, Norway, and other humanitarian donors as well as to use the internal UNFPA funding mechanisms (Emergency Fund);
- Support UNFPA's mandated role to support the GBV Area of Responsibility (AoR) and its field presences (GBV subclusters/sectors), and to advocate for GBV and SRH needs within other clusters or other working group such as the Cash Working Group;
- Expand SRHiE coordination role systematizing SRH sub working groups in IASC countries in alignment with the function of the Global Task Team of the Global Health Cluster
- Continue the implementation of the MISP Readiness Assessment and support COs that have completed the assessment with the implementation of their National MISP Action Plans
- Increase technical capacity to work with implementing partners to ensure quality programming for the MISP, CMR and other SRHiE and GBViE activities, including clinical, psychosocial and project management skills;
- Create and use ethical and effective humanitarian data for advocacy, resource mobilization and programme monitoring, including the GBVIMS and its advanced versions (GBVIMS+/Primero);
- Improve the leadership's skills to communicate effectively on UNFPA's mandate and achievements and document relevant human-interest stories, best practices and lessons learned, disseminating across relevant platforms for greatest reach.
- Improve the capacity of designated regional and Country Office staff in humanitarian logistics management so that they can plan and implement complex supply chain operations that are needed during emergency response. Improved capacity is also required to build supply chain resilience to prepare, respond and recover from different disruptions;



- Gain a deep understanding of the content and application of international standards and guidelines used in humanitarian response including the Minimum Standards for GBV in Emergencies and MISP for SRH in crisis situations;
- Improve knowledge and technical capacities on preparedness action and disaster risk management, including on anticipatory action.

The Coordinators and Specialists will then be able to lead implementation and coordination of high-quality preparedness, response and recovery programmes and support colleagues and implementing partners in the country to understand and deliver humanitarian architecture/ action. The WCARO humanitarian team will supplement this with coaching and desk and in-person missions to ensure that the skills and knowledge gained are put into practice and kept up to date. In particular, the Specialists and Coordinators in each CO need to be able to effectively:

- Work with governments to ensure that SRH and GBV are integrated into national, sub national and local preparedness and response policies;
- Work within the humanitarian cluster system to both support UNFPA's mandated GBV AoR/ subcluster leadership and as the co-lead of the Global SRH Task Team; and to advocate effectively for SRH sub-working groups in areas where UNFPA is responding to crises as well as in other clusters for the integration of GBV mitigation strategies and referral to GBV and SRH services;
- Support staff and IPs to transition from development to humanitarian contexts through strengthening their humanitarian preparedness and the implementation of the MISP, and subsequently from the MISP to comprehensive reproductive health services;
- Provide leadership and training on key aspects of the MISP including B/CEmONC, Clinical

Management of Rape and Intimate Partner Violence (including LIVES), family planning and post abortion care to both SRH and GBV partners;

- Support the deployment and coordination of qualified midwives who are trained on MISP-RH and other modules to deploy and work in humanitarian emergencies to deliver priority SRH and GBV services;
- Commence or scale up a GBViE approach that includes case management, referral mapping, MHPSS and women and girls' safe spaces (WGSS), as well as GBV mainstreaming outside of specialist services;
- Build the capacity of internal logisticians in humanitarian logistics management to develop and implement strategies to prepare and respond to humanitarian crises, such as establishing local long-term agreements (LTAs), prepositioning the life-saving and essential supplies including interagency reproductive health kits, dignity kits and other essential supplies in the preparation phase and development of distribution plans during the response phase.

The technical knowledge and skills training needs to be accompanied by coaching, facilitation, and training skills to ensure that the knowledge can be shared with colleagues and implementing partners.

### **Delivery of Essential Services**

Humanitarian crises cause considerable disturbance to health and protection systems with lack of women's access to SRH and GBV services and very often a supply chain disruption that limits the availability of commodities and supplies.

In order to support the affected country in a timely manner, it is critical to ensure the availability of "ready to deploy" humanitarian teams and supplies through 1) a surge deployment mechanism and 2) a prepositioned stock of relevant life-saving supplies and commodities.



## ACTION 2

# Regional surge deployment mechanisms

*"The emergency human resources mechanisms must increase in speed/timeliness..."<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>3</sup> From UNFPA's Corporate Humanitarian Leadership – Fit for Purpose (internal document - July 2022)



As a new mechanism for emergent sudden and large-scale emergencies, HRD has created a Global Emergency Response Team (GERT) to complement the Global Surge roster. While the GERT modality offers an important line of human resource support, as detailed above, the WCA region is characterized by protracted crises and spillover crises. These crises, characteristic of the WCA region, will not always meet the parameters of the GERT given that they are protracted rather than acute. Therefore, strengthened regional surge capacity is required for improved rapid response as outlined below to support the corresponding humanitarian needs present in the region. With growing needs placed on the Global Surge roster (receiving close to 250 requests per year across the agency) it is important for regional offices to simultaneously invest in building their respective response capacities so that they have access to a pool of appropriately qualified staff that can deploy when necessary to further compliment global efforts.

Surge rosters are fluid by nature and need ongoing and regular investment, including a period assessment of needs, to ensure that critical and emerging profile needs are met. UN agencies who perform well in surge deployments keep abreast of their local and regional changes, talent needs and ensure that it is followed with appropriate investment in roster strengthening processes that support regional and local needs. UNFPA's People Strategy also confirms that "Accelerating the delivery of the transformative results requires a shift from doing business as usual. We need to become a more agile organization and adapt our structures and ways of working to the rapidly evolving business needs in the increasingly complex environments in which we operate. Things need to happen faster but also more sustainably, and more needs to be accomplished by scaling up what works well,

while at the same time co-creating locally adapted solutions." This vision further calls for a need to reconsider the way human resources are organized at distinct levels and ensure investment in robust, yet locally adapted support mechanisms.

Furthermore, evidence has shown that agencies such as UNICEF, UNHCR that invest in building local Country Offices and regional response rosters through multi-faceted surge response (local, regional, global) provide a robust means of support to their regions. Notably, persons on regional rosters understand the local context, often speak the respective local languages, can deploy quicker than globally supported mechanisms, and can typically hit the ground running faster than teams deployed from outside the region.

### **Sub-Action 2.1: Internal Surge**

One of the key components of an effective emergency preparedness and humanitarian response is the availability of appropriately qualified internal human resources ready to deploy in a timely manner. The global UNFPA Surge Roster was developed to create a pool of expertise to be easily deployed within the organization to ensure UNFPA rapid response, with the right profiles and visibility during a crisis. Since its inception, the surge mechanism has helped on average 30 Country Offices per year facing critical emergency challenges to scale-up their response and fill in the gap of competent human resources. However, the WCA region continues to struggle to receive surge support in a timely manner. The issue of visas often hinders the speed of deployments. Finally, it is important to note that, in the WCA region, besides French, Portuguese, Spanish, English and Arabic are official languages, and it can be challenging to find non-anglophone surge deployees who are experienced and understand UNFPA's programmes.

- The proposed internal regional surge roster for WCA will act as a complementary mechanism to the global surge roster in order to support COs in the region to rapidly acquire operational expertise to be able to perform different humanitarian and preparedness functions in the event of a crisis.
- Appropriate expertise in the various surge profiles required will be identified within the Country Offices in the region and trained for the purpose of deployments.
- Use of standard operating procedures in place for the agency and managed by the Global surge team can be used such as the preparation of terms of references, request processes, tracking of deployments, etc.
- Regional roster members, similar to all internal surge roster members, are to attend the standard scenario-based surge assessment workshop which both prepares and assesses their readiness for assignment.
- Support all regional roster members with ongoing development opportunities, including options for peer support and coaching, upskilling where needed, means for engagement and communities of practice.

Appropriate expertise in the various surge profiles required will be identified within the Country Offices in the region and trained for the purpose of deployments.

## Sub-Action 2.2: External Surge

The regional humanitarian surge roster will comprise two distinct streams of external registered support:

- A. Local WCA External Stream:** These are individuals not employed by UNFPA but are either operating within or are residents of the WCA region. This category includes individual consultants who are experts in their respective fields and can be rapidly deployed, as well as national NGOs in the region partnering with the UN. To bolster this stream, capacity

development initiatives will be organized for humanitarian partners in the WCA region, aiming to establish a robust roster of qualified personnel.

- B. Global External Stream:** UNFPA's Global surge mechanism integrates an important external stream of support with legally endorsed MOUs with six standby partner agencies including CANADEM, and NORCAP. These are professionals who have been assessed and are often trained and placed on the respective standby partner rosters yet are categorized as third-party affiliates and often not affiliated with UNFPA and do not reside in the WCA region. Standby Partners provide a key line of staffing for the region, but more work can be done in collaboration with the Global Surge team in HRD. Here, the region will work to share emerging and critical needs and trends and so that HRD can communicate this to those standby partners ahead of time, particularly those who have vested strategic interests in supporting the region.

Supplementing these external streams are the External Standby Partners such as Canadem (supported by Canada), NORCAP (supported by Norway) and iMMAP (an international nonprofit organization that provides information management services to humanitarian and development organizations). They alleviate the financial strain on Country Offices (COs) by shouldering the deployment costs. However, in scenarios where these Standby Partners are unable to finance a position, the associated expenses, encompassing DSA and flights, fall upon the COs. To further boost this support framework, endeavors are underway by WCAO to foster new regional partnerships, aiming to onboard more external Standby Partners

### Aim of the Surge Roster in WCAO

The goal of a regional surge roster is to develop capable humanitarian expertise with a good grasp of

knowledge of the regional humanitarian contexts. It will focus only on technical profiles and should not include the Senior Emergency Coordinator profile. This approach will require building new skills and competencies to fit the high expectations of the COs in the region.

### What is the benefit of this regional mechanism?

The added value of the WCARO Surge Roster includes:

- Complement the global surge roster in terms of increasing the number of qualified Francophone, Portuguese, Spanish, Arabic and Anglophone internal resources available for deployment;
- Increase the number of qualified staff from the region who have expertise in this context and can rapidly deploy at the onset of an emergency, supporting the UNFPA surge SOPs which supports internal staff as the first line of support;
- Investing in strengthened regional response capacity fosters a vision where emergencies are acknowledged as an institutional priority in the region. Here, an emergency in one country within the region is viewed as every Country Office's responsibility. The result in promoting such a vision is that UNFPA WCAR can move quickly together, to meet immediate, priority needs. Such an approach encourages collective responsibility to respond to crises and will ultimately lead to more sharing of surge resources between countries in the region when releasing COs understand that other COs will reciprocate if in a similar situation;
- Offer specific regional expertise not currently available in the global roster such as Humanitarian Data Analysts;
- Improve flexibility modalities in the deployment to respect the 72-hour turnaround timeframe as suggested by the IASC;
- Implement follow-up mechanisms for trained and deployed staff based on their cleared profile;
- Use surge as a career planning tool that may include implementing a reward modality and

career trajectories for the deployed workforce, particularly for national staff who may not have had access to such opportunities;

## Ensuring complementary of surge with headquarters

### Link with HQ Global Surge Roster

- The WCARO Surge Roster will follow and apply the same standards as the HQ-led Surge Roster. Staff approved for the WCARO roster could also be available for international deployment if they wish, with a mechanism to link WCARO surge staff to the UNFPA global surge roster, therefore adding value and enhanced responsiveness to the Global Surge Roster as well.
- All Representatives and Deputy Representatives (or Assistant Representatives), and International Operations Managers will participate in a dedicated training for managers in the region which will equip them with the skills and knowledge to support surge deployments both from and to their Country Offices.

### Funding

- Each Country Office will cover the costs of staff participation for the surge training based on priority countries that are facing crises in the region.
- Each Country Office covers the costs of all other staff after selection based on needs in countries and the region. The preference will be put on merit so that staff may find the Regional Surge as an incentive for better performance and continued career opportunities and a reward of their dedication and efforts.

### Frequency

- Several cohorts will be trained each year for the two years to rapidly increase a critical mass of people in the different technical areas (SRH, GBV, MHPSS, Communication, Operations, etc.) and languages.



### ACTION 3

## Strengthening Supply Chain Resilience for Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Contexts



In the challenging landscape of West and Central Africa, characterized by frequent humanitarian crises, ensuring the availability and accessibility of reproductive health commodities is paramount. This action is dedicated to enhancing the supply chain mechanisms to reliably deliver life-saving reproductive health supplies amidst logistical and infrastructural challenges. By prioritizing the prepositioning of critical commodities and fostering strategic partnerships, UNFPA aims to build a resilient supply chain that swiftly responds to emergencies, safeguarding the health and well-being of women and girls in crisis situations.

### **Sub-Action 3.1: Prepositioning of Life-Saving Commodities**

This strategy emphasizes a comprehensive and adaptive approach to prepositioning life-saving commodities, intensifying efforts to establish emergency stockpiles in strategically chosen locations across West and Central Africa. By adopting a dual-phase methodology, UNFPA aims not only to anticipate and prepare for potential disasters through strategic prepositioning but also to respond effectively and efficiently in the aftermath of a crisis. The strategy leverages interstate corridors and in-country distribution, guided by the MISP and UNFPA's standards for GBV in emergencies, to mitigate risks and ensure efficient inventory management.

Moreover, this initiative explores innovative practices such as on-site packaging of kits, with a special focus on dignity kits that are sensitively tailored to the socio-cultural contexts of the communities served. This not only underscores UNFPA's dedication to addressing the nuanced needs of individuals in crisis situations but also highlights its commitment to fostering social, economic, and environmental sustainability. The alignment with the UNFPA Green Procurement Strategy further illustrates this commitment, integrating

environmental stewardship into the operational framework of the supply chain to ensure that the humanitarian response is not only effective but also sustainable.

### **Sub-Action 3.2: Strengthening Partnerships for Efficient Supply Chain Management**

UNFPA is committed to deepening its collaboration across a wide range of stakeholders, from local to international levels, to streamline the supply chain for reproductive health commodities. This includes forging innovative alliances with governmental bodies, NGOs, other UN agencies, and the private sector, aiming to create a more agile and responsive supply chain infrastructure.

By leveraging the collective expertise, resources, and networks of diverse partners, UNFPA seeks to address and overcome the logistical, infrastructural, and regulatory challenges that frequently hinder rapid humanitarian responses. The initiative is built on a foundation of transparency, accountability, and mutual respect among partners, promoting an ecosystem where knowledge exchange and capacity enhancement are paramount. Together, UNFPA and its partners are dedicated to achieving a shared vision: delivering humanitarian assistance that is not only timely and effective but also respectful of the dignity and rights of affected communities. This concerted effort aims to build resilient supply chain systems, capable of navigating the complexities of emergencies, ensuring that every response is meticulously aligned with the needs of communities in crisis while adhering to sustainability principles and a people-centered approach.

For further details please refer to the draft Regional Prepositioning Strategy: [UNFPA Regional Strategy for prepositioning of life.docx](#)



## ACTION 4

# Ensuring strong humanitarian coordination mechanisms





In addition to the existing UNFPA Emergency SoPs<sup>3</sup> there is a need for greater coordination and oversight of humanitarian preparedness and response within the region. WCARO will establish and maintain the following standing groups to provide guidance before, during and after crises:

### **Sub-Action 4.1: Regional Humanitarian Steering Committee**

The Regional Humanitarian Steering Committee (R-HSC) stands as a key component within the UNFPA WCARO Humanitarian Roadmap, bringing together senior humanitarian personnel across West and Central Africa. Convened quarterly, the R-HSC addresses the region's deep-rooted humanitarian and security challenges by leveraging the collective expertise of its members, thereby elevating UNFPA's humanitarian response.

Tasked with guiding regional humanitarian policies and actions, the R-HSC ensures prompt and effective decision-making in crisis situations. It operates through a framework that includes both scheduled quarterly gatherings and additional meetings as needed, aiming to deliver a coordinated regional response that integrates humanitarian agendas across diverse sectors. This approach is crucial for enhancing early warning systems, preparedness, and response capabilities. Additionally, it places a strong emphasis on evidence-based decision-making, resource mobilization, and the development of strategic partnerships.

Sub-Action 4.1 enhances the Regional Office's ability to offer expert advice on emergency preparedness and response, aligning with UNFPA's strategic objectives for 2022-2025. It provides a targeted strategy to address the distinct challenges faced by West and Central Africa.

The Regional Humanitarian Steering Committee is modeled after the organization Humanitarian Steering Committee (HSC) chaired by the ED; it will be chaired by the Regional Director and TORs will be adapted from the TORs of UNFPA's global HSC.

### **Sub-Action 4.2: Minimum Preparedness Action Monitoring Group**

The MPA monitoring group is chaired by the WCARO Humanitarian Adviser with a membership of Humanitarian Coordinators and Operations Managers. It focuses on monitoring countries' MPAs as well as tracking the sixteen indicators (when applicable) that assess the progress of UNFPA humanitarian and resilience-building work. Mainstreaming resilience, prevention, preparedness, and early action, and emphasising the complementarity between humanitarian, development and peace-responsive interventions is highlighted as a key shift within the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022-2025. Ensuring that COs have the structures, plans and capacity in place to effectively respond to a humanitarian crisis is essential.

### **Sub-Action 4.3: Regional Humanitarian Coordinators Community of Practice (RHCCP)**

The RHCCP is designed to enhance humanitarian coordination across priority countries within the region. By establishing a structured platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange, the RHCCP aims to standardize and expedite humanitarian responses. This initiative promotes a formalized network for the sharing of best practices and experiences, fostering a cohesive approach to managing humanitarian crises. Chaired by the Humanitarian Adviser, the RHCCP convenes monthly, enabling the sharing of regional humanitarian updates and facilitating the analysis

<sup>4</sup> <https://knowledge.myunfpa.org/display/PPM/Humanitarian>

of common challenges to identify effective solutions. This collaborative environment supports the development of regional standards, enhances rapid response capabilities, and encourages ongoing learning and advocacy for humanitarian excellence. The RHCCP's strength lies in its ability to foster a collaborative ethos among humanitarian coordinators, emphasizing the importance of collective action, capacity building, and the seamless integration of humanitarian, development, and peace-responsive interventions, in alignment with the vision and strategic objectives of the WCARO Humanitarian Roadmap.

### **Sub-Action 4.4: Gender Based Violence coordination at regional and country level**

Since 2019, the UNFPA WCA regional office, through the REGA has been managing the working group on gender-based violence. This working group is part of the humanitarian architecture in the region and brings together UN organizations, international NGOs, and donors. The regional GBV working group, as the main point of contact in the region, ensures that GBV is considered in inter-agency advocacy notes at regional level, and that GBV issues identified in countries are discussed in regional coordination



forums: Regional inter sectors group, regional protection working group, etc. Through the GBV regional group, UNFPA supports the project to monitor protection incidents in Central Sahel (Project P21, for which UNHCR and DRC are lead agencies) and the GRANIT initiative for multi-hazard analysis in coastal countries (Ghana, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, and Benin). UNFPA continues to play a leading role in coordinating GBV in humanitarian situations in the region.

The GBV sub-clusters are active in seven countries in the region, which draw up annual HNO/HRPs in line with the humanitarian programming cycle. The REGA team provides ongoing technical support to GBV coordination teams in the countries to help them perform key coordination functions in line with standards.

The REGA team is funded by NORCAP, and a two-year period has been agreed with UNFPA to take on this responsibility. The REGA team will work with the regional GBV specialist to ensure a smooth transition, and targeted training based on identified skills gaps will be organized with each country's GBV coordination team.

### **Sub-Action 4.5: Sexual and Reproductive Health coordination at regional and country level**

UNFPA plays a crucial role in coordinating SRH efforts in humanitarian contexts. UNFPA WCA COs should continue to expand and strengthen UNFPA's role in SRH coordination, systematizing SRH sub-working groups in countries impacted by crises. This role aligns with the function of the Global SRH Task Team which UNFPA is co-leading under the Global Health Cluster and is the first objective of the MISP. UNFPA must continue to advocate with all actors engaged in humanitarian preparedness and response to ensure that SRH is prioritized and integrated into humanitarian efforts. The importance of timely and comprehensive SRH services, especially in crisis situations where access to such services may be compromised must be emphasized. By coordinating with various stakeholders and capitalizing its expertise in SRH, UNFPA aims to strengthen SRH coordination at both regional and country levels, contributing to the overall effectiveness and impact of humanitarian responses.

## KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT



### ACTION 5

# Knowledge Management



To ensure that the experience already present in WCA and that which will be gained and strengthened through the capacity building approaches set out above, it is essential that knowledge and data are professionally managed and shared. The WCARO Humanitarian Unit will establish and enhance ethical humanitarian data systems (data generation, analysis, utilization) in the regional office and support country offices to implement the regional and global humanitarian knowledge management systems, as well as document and promote best practices and lessons learned.

### **Sub-Action 5.1: Regional SRHiE and GBViE Communities of Practice (CoP)**

The CoPs will provide a platform for learning and sharing good practices surrounding the humanitarian, development and peace nexus and strategies for building resilience. As detailed below, WCARO will maintain regional CoPs in SRHiE and GBViE. However, the expertise and experience of County Offices in West and Central Africa should also be an integral part of Global CoPs. This will highlight the skills and work of WCA and enable colleagues from other countries to learn from them.

- The UNFPA Global SRHiE Community of practice is led by the SRH Specialist at HRD and is currently attended by regional-level SRHiE staff and Humanitarian Advisors. Staff from COs are not regular participants, although at times COs are invited to present. In WCARO SRH and Humanitarian colleagues have been invited to attend and provide monthly updates on SRH events, planned activities, lessons learned, and support required in the Region. The calls take place in English.
- UNFPA WCARO has a new Regional CVA focal point and will be working to build capacity and expand CVA approaches across the region. To date, CVA projects in humanitarian settings

have been implemented by COs in Cameroon, Burkina Faso, and Mali. There is a [WCARO and ESARO CoP on Cash and Voucher Assistance \(CVA\)](#). Hosted on Google Drive, it contains guidance, case studies and webinar recordings from UNFPA's work in all regions. It is regularly updated when new resources become available. Many resources are also translated into French.

- There is not currently a global level GBViE Community of Practice at UNFPA. The GBV Area of Responsibility (hosted by UNFPA) leads a GBViE CoP for humanitarian GBV actors from any organisation with IMC/USAID funds. This includes organizing webinars on specific topics identified by the members and an active mailing list. While French and other language postings are accepted on the mailing list, the majority of the mailing list is in English, and the large majority of webinars are held in English. UN agencies, INGO, and NGO staff use the call and mailing list to ask for support and share key resources, but also share vacancies and other opportunities. Many UNFPA colleagues are already members, but the details can be circulated to encourage participation. Other knowledge-sharing from the region is available during the monthly call of the Global GBV AoR, held in English, as well as during the monthly call of the regional GBV Working Group, held in French. There could be potential during the monthly calls for a CO to present a case study.

In addition to increasing the opportunities for WCA COs to participate in the global CoPs, WCARO will offer that the global CoPs themselves learn from the COs. In particular WCA's unique position in the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus offers an opportunity for the global level to learn how to incorporate this experience into other regions and COs, to improve the way that the humanitarian communities within UNFPA operate.



Previously WCARO had two humanitarian-related Communities of Practice, on SRHiE and GBViE, however with staffing gaps they were dormant for one year. To feed into the global CoPs and strengthen the regional technical capacity, WCARO will also revitalize WCA communities of practice in 2023 and continue to strengthen them in 2024 and beyond. The purpose of the WCARO CoPs is to improve the overall capacity of every CO in the region to work on SRH and GBV in humanitarian contexts, while coordinating opportunities for the countries already engaged in these activities to lead on coaching and support for their colleagues.

Through the REGAs, WCARO also hosts the Regional Interagency GBV Working Group. Although this is not a UNFPA-specific group, 47 out of 60 members of the group are from UNFPA country offices in WCARO, including Humanitarian and GBV Coordinators, GBVIMS, and programme staff.

Language diversity will be an important part of the regional approach to CoPs. Global CoPs are predominantly in English. This presents a significant

barrier to participation for many COs in WCA, who are Francophone, Lusophone and Hispanophone as well as Anglophone. The West Africa Regional interagency GBV Working Group is predominantly in French, offering more opportunity for francophone participation. The revised WCARO CoPs in GBViE and SRHiE are bilingual in French and English, with simultaneous translation were possible to enhance participation in the groups. Integrating Francophone CoPs will enable WCARO to develop French-language expertise and experts, which has been a challenge in the region, as well as other French-speaking parts of the world.

### **Sub-Action 5.2: Strengthening Visibility**

Recognizing the magnitude of humanitarian crises in West and Central Africa and the imperative for timely, coordinated, and expansive response, there is an urgent need to bolster the visibility and advocacy of UNFPA's contributions in the region. This not only ensures that stakeholders are consistently informed, but also facilitates the garnering of support, both in terms of resources and engagement.

- **Regular Humanitarian Situation reports:** The Monthly Regional Humanitarian Situation Report offers an opportunity to directly engage and update UNFPA senior management on the region's needs. Through the SitRep, WCARO can champion more robust support and strategic guidance tailored to the evolving situation on the ground.
- **External sharing of quarterly humanitarian situation report:** Ensure that the global community, donors, and partners remain informed of the evolving humanitarian situation. A *quarterly protracted crises update* will also be indispensable to maintain high-level attention, especially in situations where crises have become prolonged and may risk losing the focus of the global community.
- **Proactivity in GBV Information Sharing:** The GBV Areas of Responsibility/sub-clusters in the region will be at the forefront of disseminating information. Collaborating with OCHA, the GBV IM in the field will manage and update the GBV AoR/sub-cluster pages on Relief Web. Furthermore, it is essential to regularly update regional content on the GBV AoR global website. At the Dakar level, maintaining an updated regional the GBV AoR dashboards<sup>5</sup>.
- **Integrating SRH in Health Cluster:** Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) is a core component of UNFPA's mandate. Integration of SRH in the Health Cluster Relief web page is required. In addition to this, publishing regular SRHiE updates will ensure that the significance of SRH in emergency response is continuously highlighted. Local capacity and existing national health and protection systems and structures should be integrated within humanitarian programmes.
- **Optimizing Current Reporting Mechanisms:** While the monthly SitReps, the Regional Humanitarian Dashboard, and the Humanitarian

Finance Overview are instrumental in relaying information, they must be effectively utilized. There is an opportunity for these tools to become more dynamic, comprehensive, and user-friendly. Engaging COs to update the live dashboard regularly ensures real-time information is relayed. Also, promoting the download feature can facilitate quick access to pivotal data on COs' humanitarian conditions, interventions, and funding needs.

- **A dedicated UNFPA WCA humanitarian Community of Practice portal or webpage:** To maximize visibility and advocacy. This portal will host real-time data, stories from the field, multimedia resources, and donor opportunities, thereby providing a one-stop platform for all stakeholders interested in UNFPA's humanitarian action in WCA. Collaborative partnerships with media, influencers, and other advocacy agents will further amplify the impact and reach of our communication efforts.
- **Advocacy for stronger national preparedness work.** To strengthen humanitarian action RO and COs should undertake advocacy for development programmes that take into consideration risk reduction interventions and preparedness and prioritize SRH and GBV prevention and response particularly in disasters when priorities shift quickly, and the range of services and products narrows. Integration of SRH (MISP) and GBV (GBViE) into national and subnational disaster risk reduction strategies as well as in preparedness, response, and contingency plans within various strategic documents.
- **Advocacy for sustainable action.** Advocate for sustained, multi-year and flexible financing across the HDP nexus with a focus on preparedness and transition phases, and promote domestic funding and finance bridging mechanisms, such as "transitional funds."

<sup>5</sup> [https://lookerstudio.google.com/u/0/reporting/feec942e-448b-49a5-ac19-bce342474c94/page/p\\_i1u26u866c](https://lookerstudio.google.com/u/0/reporting/feec942e-448b-49a5-ac19-bce342474c94/page/p_i1u26u866c)

# Conclusion

UNFPA is committed to leading and supporting efforts that address the complex humanitarian situation within the West and Central Africa region and aims to improve the lives of the most vulnerable, particularly women, adolescents, and youth. We understand the immense challenges and opportunities in the region and acknowledge that together we need to mitigate immediate crises and continue to lay the groundwork for long-term resilience and development.

This Roadmap is a call to action for UNFPA staff and all its stakeholders including donors and local partners, to unite in a concerted effort to transform

the humanitarian landscape of West and Central Africa. Our collective commitment, resources, and innovative approaches are critical to turning the challenges into opportunities for sustainable development and peace.

Let us move forward with a shared vision and determination, knowing that our efforts today will shape the future of millions in the region. The UNFPA WCA Regional Office and Country Offices, together with its partners, stands ready to lead this transformative journey, inspired by a profound belief in the power of humanity to overcome its greatest challenges.

# Acknowledgements

We extend our deepest gratitude to Dr. Sennen Hounton, the WCA Regional Director, and Fabrizia Falcione, the Deputy Regional Director, for their visionary leadership. Special thanks go to the Country Representatives in humanitarian countries, the dedicated Humanitarian Coordinators, and the committed staff of the WCARO Humanitarian and Fragile Context Unit, and other colleagues in WCARO business units, who have provided

their inputs. Their invaluable contributions have been instrumental in shaping the UNFPA WCARO's Roadmap for Better Fit-For-Purpose for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response 2023-2025. This Roadmap is a testament to their collective expertise, dedication, and unwavering commitment to advancing UNFPA's mission in the region.



# Appendix A. Results Framework for the UNFPA WCARO Humanitarian Roadmap

**Outcome by 2025:** Strengthened capacity of critical actors and systems in preparedness, early action, and the provision of life-saving interventions that are timely, integrated, conflict- and climate-sensitive, gender-transformative, and peace-responsive.

## Outputs and Indicators:

### Strengthened Capacity for Humanitarian Preparedness and Response

**Output 1.1: Development and implementation of Minimum Preparedness Actions (MPA) in all Country Offices (COs).**

**Indicator 1.1:** Number of country offices supported by the regional office to develop and implement emergency minimum preparedness actions.

Baseline: 2023: 18  
Target: 2024: 20; 2025: 20

**Output 1.2 Strengthen and enhance technical capacity and programme interventions to deliver timely, quality, accessible integrated SRHiE/GBViE services including AYSRHR and Family Planning.**

**Indicator 1.2.1:** Number of countries that have received comprehensive technical, operational, and programmatic support to implement the minimum initial service package in humanitarian settings

Baseline: 2023: 18  
Target: 2024: 20; 2025: 20

**Indicator 1.2.2:** Number of women, adolescents and youth benefited from life-saving interventions in humanitarian settings

Baseline 2023: 2,400,000  
Target: 2024:2,500,000; 2025: 2,600,000

**Indicator 1.2.3:** Number of countries supported to implement cash and voucher assistance (CVA) programs as part of emergency responses

Baseline: 2023: 1  
Target: 2024: 2; 2025: 3

**Indicator 1.2.4:** Number of countries supported to build their humanitarian logistics management capacity to prepare and respond to emergencies

Baseline: 2023: 0  
Target: 2024: 7; 2025: 10

### Strengthened Regional Surge Deployment Mechanisms

**Output 2.1: Establishment and reinforcement of internal humanitarian surge roster and bolstering of external humanitarian surge roster.**

**Indicator 2.1:** Number of additional qualified staff registered in the external and internal WCA humanitarian surge roster

Baseline: 2023: 0  
Target: 2024: 35; 2025: 40

## Improved Supply Chain Resilience for Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Contexts

**Output 3.1: Strategic partnerships are established for improved preparedness and response.**

**Indicator 3.1:** Number of partnerships established to prepare and timely respond to humanitarian crises through stock repositioning

Baseline 2023: 0  
Target 2024: 1 2025: 2

## Strengthened Humanitarian Coordination Mechanism

**Output 4: Provided ongoing technical support to GBV coordination teams in the region to help them perform key coordination functions in line with standards.**

**Indicator 4.1** Number of countries affected by humanitarian crises supported by the regional office that have a functioning inter-agency coordination mechanism or platform to address gender-based violence

Baseline 2023: 7  
Target 2024: 10 Target 2025: 14

## Improved Data Management and Knowledge Sharing

**Output 5.1:**

Indicator 5.1: Number of preparedness and operational response countries that have Common Operational Datasets on Population Statistics (COD-PS) available online

Baseline: 11  
Target 2024: 15  
2025: 18







Kalambari Camp, UNFPA Chad



## Ensuring rights and choices for all

United Nations Population Fund  
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158  
1-212-297-5000 • [www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org) • @UNFPA

 UNFPAWCARO

 unfpawcaro

 UNFPA West and Central Africa

 UNFPA\_WCARO