



United Nations Population Fund

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Friday, October 21, 2016

Investing in 10-year-old girls is the key to sustainable development, Launch of UNFPA's State of the World Population Report 2016

The annual flagship State of the World Population (SWOP) Report of the United Nations Population Fund for 2016 focuses on investing in the 10-year-old girl. The SWOP Report is launched every year to raise awareness on important population and development issues. Ten is a pivotal age for girls everywhere, as puberty approaches. In some parts of the world, a girl at this age enjoys limitless possibilities and begins making choices that will influence her education and, later, her work life. But in other parts, a girl who goes through puberty is suddenly seen as a commodity that may be bought, sold or traded. "Impeding a girl's safe, healthy path through adolescence to a productive and autonomous adulthood is a violation of her rights," UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin says.

The new agenda for sustainable development aims for equitable development that leaves no one behind. Removing the barriers that hold 10-year-old girls back today will increase the chances that the agenda will be a success. UNFPA will launch the SWOP Report in Jamaica on November 11, 2016 in collaboration with key national partners including the Planning Institution of Jamaica, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information and the University of the West Indies. Planned activities include a National Girls' Conference, Panel Discussion and Media Outreach to highlight the issues facing 10 year-old-girls.

Governments have more policy options today including supporting initiatives to keep girls in school longer and providing life-skills training and age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education to those approaching puberty. The challenge now, UNFPA's State of World Population report says, is to scale up these interventions to reach more girls, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, by age 10. "How we invest in and support 10-year-old girls today will determine what our world will look like in 2030," Dr. Osotimehin says. "With support from family, community and nation, and the full realization of her rights, a 10-year-old girl can thrive and help bring about the future we all want."

END.

Contact: Denise Blackstock (Policy/Programme Analyst)

Telephone: 906-8591/2; Ext: 30412

E-mail: blackstock@unfpa.org