



# MOVING TOWARDS THE THREE ZEROS!

UNFPA SUB-REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE CARIBBEAN  
ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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# FOREWORD

In 2023, UNFPA in the English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean persisted in pursuing our three zeros: zero preventable maternal deaths; zero unmet family planning needs; and zero gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful practices, such as child marriage. Our unwavering commitment to partnering with governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), and diverse stakeholders remained central. We implemented strategies to combat GBV, enhance access to modern contraceptives, and deliver comprehensive services to survivors. Additionally, we supported initiatives aimed at empowering women, girls, and vulnerable communities, extending resources to prevent adolescent pregnancies in high-risk regions. UNFPA also championed the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment across the sub-region.

Recognizing the vital role of informed policy decisions, we emphasized the imperative for governments to prioritize data collection, monitoring, and analysis of demographic trends. UNFPA continued to provide

support to governments in these endeavors, facilitating census launches and capacity-building initiatives.

Hosting the Caribbean Forum on Population and Development in Antigua and Barbuda in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) underscored the significance of ICPD 30, marking the 30th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development in 2024. This reaffirmed our dedication to advancing reproductive health and rights globally.

We extend heartfelt appreciation to our donors and partners for their resilience in overcoming challenges and collaborating with us to create a world where every pregnancy is desired, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled. Upholding collaboration remains essential as we advocate for sustained support, ensuring inclusivity and leaving no one behind.



**Elizabeth Talbert**

Director and Representative, UNFPA  
Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean

# ABOUT UNFPA

As the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, UNFPA strives to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled. Across the Caribbean sub-region, we provide support to enable safe deliveries, to prevent unintended pregnancies, and address violence against women and girls – in both development and humanitarian contexts.

We do this by focusing on the three zeros of UNFPA's global strategic plan: zero maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning, and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices by 2030.

The UNFPA Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean (SROC) serves 22 countries and overseas territories in the English and Dutch-Speaking Caribbean. The countries and territories of the Caribbean served are Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Sint Maarten, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

## OUR THREE TRANSFORMATIVE RESULTS

**The three zeros by 2030:**



**Ending unmet need for family planning**



**Ending preventable maternal death**



**Ending gender-based violence and harmful practices**

# SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM



**Elizabeth Talbert**  
Director & Representative



**Jenny Karlsen**  
Deputy Director



**Rasheed Amusa**  
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**Batula Abdi**  
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Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

# 2023 RESULTS AT A GLANCE

## SRH Laws, Policies and Plans

- Programme of Action for Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Adolescent and Child Health developed in Trinidad and Tobago to complement the existing SRHR Policy.
- Five additional countries advancing on Minimum Initial Service Package for sexual and Reproductive Health (MISP) integration into national health sector emergency plans
- Health and family life curriculum (HFLE) revised in Belize and Jamaica in alignment with international standards
- Out-of-School CSE training sessions held in Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Guyana and Jamaica

## Reproductive Health Commodity Security

- Capacity of government representatives in 10 countries across the region strengthened in supply chain management using the SEPREMI model business intelligence tool

- Model regional RHCS strategy disseminated among 10 countries to promote evidence-informed RHCS programming and garner improvements.

## Maternal health

- Midwifery programming strengthened through the collaboration of UNFPA and the Caribbean Regional Midwives Association with focus on education, regulation and association
- Midwifery profiles completed for Grenada and Dominica which allowed for the provision of information on distribution, qualifications and years of service of midwives

## Population, Data and Evidence

- Several countries were supported to complete the execution of the 2020 round of population and housing censuses during the year
- Draft Disabilities Bill developed by the Government of Belize
- The governments of Belize, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana and Antigua & Barbuda

produced their Voluntary National Reports on the Implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population & Development

- Convening of key stakeholders from across the Caribbean to advance the Montevideo Consensus+10 through the Caribbean Forum on Population and Development in Antigua and Barbuda

## Social norms

- The Caribbean Model for Cultural and Behavior Change finalized in collaboration with the University of the West Indies
- National Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) Strategy developed and launched in Belize to fortify the National Gender Policy and National GBV Action Plan.
- Social and Behavior Change Communication Campaign in Belize reached over 9,000 individuals, increasing awareness of violence prevention against women and girls. Another 27,000 people engaged through targeted social media aimed

at shifting harmful social norms via videos and posters translated in several languages.

- Seven evidence-based knowledge products launched in collaboration with the Caribbean Observatory on Sexual and Reproductive Health to drive policy change and awareness in the sub-region

### GBV Services

- Comprehensive Essential Service Package (ESP) knowledge products and tools launched aiding Caribbean countries in integrating and ensuring quality assurance in ESP roll-outs
- Improved access to quality essential services for GBV services, with specific progress in the countries supported by UNFPA through the EU funded Spotlight Initiative (Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Belize and Guyana)



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# SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

Optimal sexual and reproductive health encompasses complete physical, mental, and social well-being. It involves the ability to enjoy a satisfying and safe sex life, the capacity for reproduction, and the autonomy to decide if, when, and how often to conceive. Upholding one's sexual and reproductive health requires access to accurate information and the right contraception, which should be safe, effective, affordable, and tailored to individual preferences. Individuals must be educated and empowered to protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections. For those choosing parenthood, women should have access to skilled healthcare providers and services ensuring a safe childbirth and a healthy baby. Upholding the right to make personal choices in sexual and reproductive health is fundamental. UNFPA, in supporting governments and collaborating with diverse partners, strives for universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including family planning.



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Family planning services provided to beneficiary from the Hinterland Region, Guyana

### **In 2023, through our support to end maternal deaths:**

The Caribbean Regional Midwives Association (CRMA) strengthened midwifery programming, focusing on education, regulation, and association including through the launch of the State

of the World's Midwifery (SoWMy) report to strengthen midwifery as a unique profession in the region. CRMA members received educational sessions to enhance midwives' knowledge and skills on key areas such as perinatal outcomes of cancer in pregnancy, respectful maternity



care postpartum haemorrhage, and disaster preparedness. A total of 350 participants from approximately 16 countries benefitted from the intervention.

Five countries received support to develop their midwifery profiles (Dominica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, St Lucia, and Suriname). These country profiles provide information on how midwives are distributed in a country, their qualifications, and years of service. This is essential evidence for planning human resources for health in terms of distribution, deployment, and training.

**In 2023, through our support to end unmet need for family planning:**

Ten countries strengthened the capacity of their ministries of health in supply chain management in the region through a collaboration with the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (RHSC) ForoLAC. Government representatives in charge of commodity management in 10 countries from the region as well as the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) were trained on the SEPREMI model, a business intelligence tool. This tool empowers decision-makers and procurers with evidence-based choices. OECS pooled procurement unit has

adopted the tool and is currently utilising it for procurement planning.

The SALMI- Logistic Management Information System (LMIS) has been implemented in 30 out of the total 36 pharmacies in Trinidad and Tobago. The implementation of this logistic management information system has improved the efficiency of the procurement and distribution process in health facilities, resulting in reduced instances of stock shortages.

**In 2023, through our support to strengthen SRH laws, policies and plans:**

The Programme of Action for Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Adolescent and Child Health in Trinidad and Tobago was developed to complement the existing SRHR Policy. The development of SRHR policies in Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, Grenada and Montserrat were initiated.

The development of adolescent friendly standards based on international models was initiated in Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia, and St.Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Legislative Analysis of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the English and Dutch- speaking Caribbean

was launched with a review of key SRH legislation across 20 countries in the English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean.

The report examined gaps and proposed recommendations for the amendment or enactment of appropriate legislation for legislative reform crucial to the fulfillment of SRH of key groups. The SRH Legislative Review Report paved the way for dialogue and action in respective countries/ territories and for governments to move closer to aligning national legislation with international public health and human rights standards and guidelines on SRHR.



Members of UNFPA's Youth Advisory Group in Belize



## UNFPA ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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### Panel discussion underway at UNFPA-Observatory Joint Launch and High-Level Meeting in Trinidad and Tobago

The Caribbean Observatory on SRHR was strengthened, galvanizing movements to improve the situation for beneficiary populations to improve access to, and uptake of both SRHR and GBV services and promote comprehensive and integrated SRHR/ GBV in the region in ensuring that no one is left behind.

Seven evidence-based advocacy knowledge products were developed by the Caribbean Observatory on SRHR and launched on December 5, 2023 during a UNFPA/IPPF/Observatory Joint Launch & High-Level Meeting with accompanying Capacity-strengthening workshop with 135 people of whom over 30 were civil society

actors and youth advocates working to help them utilise the evidence-based materials to continue the dialogue in their respective countries/territories. The evidence-based advocacy knowledge products comprise five (5) thematic policy briefs, a report and its accompanying policy brief.

The SRH Situational Monitoring Report launched, entitled Sexual and Reproductive Health Landscape in the Caribbean: Situational Monitoring was the first annual report of the Caribbean Observatory on SRHR, paved the way for subsequent annual reports. Overall, the report is a useful tool comprising evidence-based information to guide the region towards a more effective

and efficient response to lead state actors to act to fill the gaps.

Both the policy briefs and Situational Monitoring report served as a launching pad to initiate dialogue with key decision makers in government and civil society as part of the mandate of the Caribbean Observatory. The recommendations from the Observatory's policy briefs in particular were used to underpin the first capacity strengthening engagement with CSOs. This will ensure greater accountability towards improving the enabling environment for vulnerable populations.

The areas covered in the thematic policy briefs are:



## HUMANITARIAN PREPAREDNESS



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Krista Barrow (left) & Tisa Grant (right) from UNFPA Liaison Office in Belize, assemble dignity kits to help provide protection of women and girls in emergencies

to maintain reasonable levels of SRH services during emergencies.

In 2023, UNFPA efforts resulted in five additional countries advancing on MISP integration into national health sector emergency plans, namely Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, St Lucia, St Vincent and Grenadines and Grenada.

In Belize, Guyana, and Suriname, efforts were underway to support MISP readiness. For example, in Suriname 150 participants including health care providers, staff from the National Coordination Center for Disaster Management and the District Commissioners Offices benefitted from MISP training facilitated by UNFPA Suriname staff and members of the UNFPA Suriname Youth Advisory Group as part of the Gender-responsive Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management led by UNDP and funded by the EU.

### Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP)

During emergencies, protection and security mechanisms are affected, and women and girls face an even greater risk of experiencing gender-based violence, including sexual violence. Depending on the context of the emergency, health services could be interrupted, collapse, run out of supplies or be destroyed, and sexual and reproductive health services take a backseat and are not prioritised against other urgent health or non-health needs, such as

food and shelter, even when the need for SRH services continue.

Strengthening national and local capacities and enhancing coordination among the various actors involved in SRH, GBV and emergency management is therefore urgent in the context of the Caribbean, as already disproportionately vulnerable women and girls are in danger of falling further behind should a sudden onset emergency strike. For UNFPA, it is therefore critical to support countries in ensuring the integration of MISP in emergency preparedness plans and improving health system readiness

MISP, which stands for Minimum Initial Service Package, is a set of priority and coordinated activities aimed at saving lives, which are implemented from the beginning of an emergency or major crisis. The MISP promotes the exercise of the fundamental right to health in contexts of emergencies, disasters and social crises; and is aimed at improving and strengthening access to priority sexual and reproductive health services and supplies, under a rights, gender and cultural relevance approach, mainly for the most vulnerable women and girls affected by emergencies.

## EQUAL SRH IN GUYANA AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



In 2023, through our support via the Enhancing Quality, Access and Logistics of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (EQUAL SRHR) project, funded by the Government of Canada:

- Activities were implemented in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago to provide improved protection for

women and girls through enhanced access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, inclusive of GBV services. Venezuelan migrants and host communities were targeted with information on increasing the exercise of their rights to bodily integrity and SRH.

- Capacities of health care providers were strengthened in the deliver of Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) services as well as the subsequent cascading of such trainings delivered across hinterland regions of Guyana [Administrative Regions 1, 7, 8, and 9]; strengthening the capacity of the health care system to delivery CMR services.
- Health facility assessments were conducted in Guyana for the delivery of Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) services resulting in the identification of areas for additional support to the health care system to strengthen the delivery of CMR services.
- Capacities of civil society partners and government partners were strengthened in Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) for out of school settings.
- Support was enabled for the rollout of life-saving sexual and reproductive health services, with integrated GBV prevention and response services.

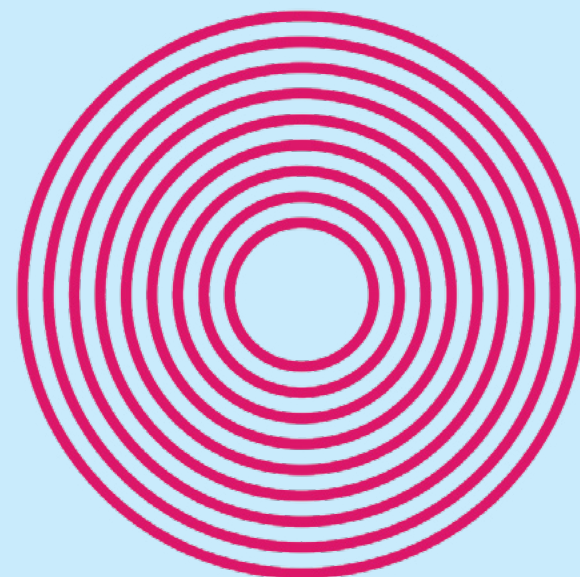
Migrants from Venezuela and Guyana were reached as well as the needs of local host communities were addressed. This included people from indigenous communities and those in hard to reach hinterland communities in Guyana, who are deemed to be the most underserved segment of the population..

**HUMAN INTEREST STORY:**

In Trinidad and Tobago, an antenatal and postnatal care programme was implemented, entitled ‘Improved protection for vulnerable populations in Trinidad and Tobago through enhanced access to sexual, reproductive, maternal, neonatal and child services’, and led by UNFPA’s implementing partner, Trinidad and Tobago Association of Midwives (TTAM).

Funded by the Global Affairs Canada EQUAL SRHR Project, it is expected that the programme will improve the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of vulnerable women and girls, particularly refugees and migrants, through increased access to comprehensive

antenatal and postnatal SRH services. TTAM also focuses on increasing GBV awareness amongst its clientele through outreach programmes coupled with the dissemination of knowledge products on family and intimate partner violence. One of the women attending TTAM’s services is Angelica, a 21 year-old Venezuelan refugee. Pregnant with her second child, she has become one of TTAM’s fiercest advocates, after receiving life-saving information on how to care for her 3 month-old daughter. With the implementation of TTAMs antenatal and postnatal programme, Angelica affirms that pregnant Venezuelan refugees and migrants now have a safe space to access care. “When I get to the clinic I can’t tell you how safe I feel when she [the midwife] speaks in Spanish. The fact that she is taking the time to try to speak to me in a way that I understand makes me feel cared for,” she said. To ensure quality of impact, TTAM has focused on training their midwives to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable refugees and migrants through a participatory approach to learning.



## BUILD BACK EQUAL IN FOUR EASTERN CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES



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Launch of the SRHR materials for young people with visual impairment under the Build Back Equal Project in Dominica

Caribbean - was launched in Dominica in the context of a National Steering Committee meeting of the project and in the presence of First Secretary of Global Affairs Canada David-Eric Simard. Through this support, Dominicans with visual impairments can ensure their bodily autonomy.

- The St. Lucia Planned Parenthood Association, hosted a two-day workshop with 25 individuals who were trained to deliver CSE to out-of-school youths. Amongst those trained were representatives from different communities including LGBTQI+, people living with HIV, youth and people with disabilities. A similar activity was implemented by the Grenada Planned Parenthood Association (GPPA).
- The Ministries of Health and other stakeholders in the four countries were supported to develop SRH policies and standards for quality health care services for adolescents and technical assistance provided to ensure sexual and reproductive health commodity security.

In 2023, through our support via the joint UN Women - UNFPA project Build Back Equal (BBE), funded by the Government of Canada:

- Activities were implemented in partnership between UNFPA and UN Women to improve the economic and social equality for women and girls by taking a comprehensive approach to addressing the barriers women face

to economic empowerment in four countries, namely the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Saint Lucia, taking into account efforts required to increase governments' capacities to strengthen SRHR and GBV legislation and provision of related services.

- A sexual and reproductive health curriculum in Braille – the very first in the

# GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES

Gender-based violence (GBV) erodes the well-being, dignity, security, and autonomy of survivors and it is very often concealed by a culture of silence.

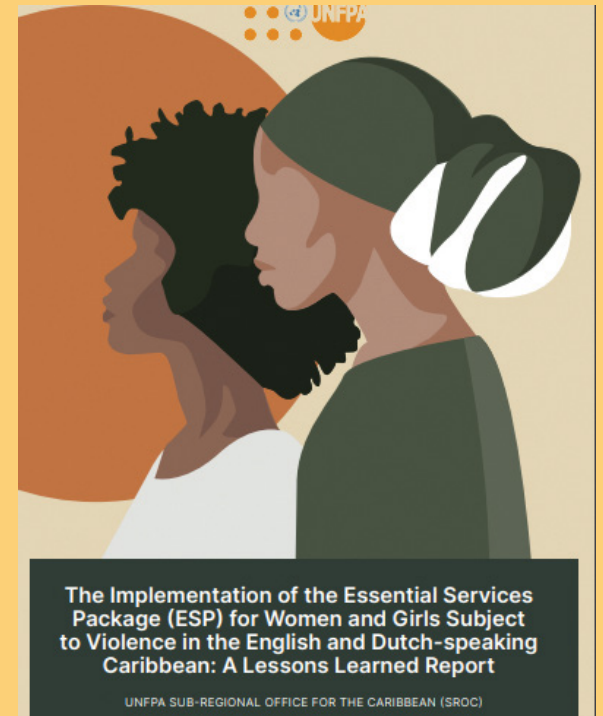
UNFPA, as one of the key UN agencies championing gender equality and women's empowerment, partners with governments, civil society organizations, private sector and regional institutions in the Caribbean, to strengthen prevention mechanisms and response services for survivors of violence, including in development and humanitarian contexts.

Several acceleration efforts were supported jointly with sister UN agencies in 2023 to end GBV thanks to the funding made available through the EU supported Spotlight Initiative to end GBV and harmful practices both at the sub-regional and national level in Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Guyana and Belize. The SDG Joint Fund also enabled progress in Suriname.

**In 2023, through our sub-regional support, principally via the EU-funded Spotlight Initiative:**

*National stakeholders gained knowledge on the Essential Service Package (ESP)*

UNFPA worked closely with CARICOM to strengthen the sub-regional Community of Practice on ESP including by developing a comprehensive ESP Resource Package which integrated a practical guide and sector-specific costing tool tailored for the sub-region to facilitate the implementation of the ESP in each country, regardless of the stage in which they are. The resource package and study has in turn enabled sustainable support for the operationalisation of the ESP via the Caribbean ESP Community of Practice (CoP), where CARICOM plays a key role in providing technical support to National Gender Machineries (NGMs) in their respective processes of coordinating the implementation of the ESP.



The ESP Package can be found at <https://caribbean.unfpa.org/en/publications/implementation-essential-services-package-esp-women-and-girls-subject-violence-english>



*Eight private sector companies made commitments to end GBV in their workplace.*

By working in close partnership with the Caribbean Employers' Confederation, companies from across CARICOM member states were sensitized on GBV and subsequently eight companies made formal commitments to eliminate GBV in their respective workplaces.

*The Caribbean Model for Cultural and Behavior Change was finalized in collaboration with the University of the West Indies*

The Caribbean Model for Cultural and Behavior Change presents concrete tools and resources to address social and cultural norms change to address family violence in the Caribbean sub-regional context.

*A self-paced online course to address GBV was launched*

UNFPA collaborated with the Pan-American Health Organisation (PAHO) to develop an interactive virtual self-paced course which was launched in 2023. The



Titian-Rose Whittle (centre) and Mariana Sontoya Bahamón (right) from UNFPA sub-regional office conduct capacity-strengthening training in GBV

aim of the course was to strengthen the capacity of the regional health sector to respond to violence in the Caribbean. It included technical content, videos, graphics, infographics, case studies, and other learning tools. This course was the first of its kind, specifically targeting healthcare policymakers and managers at the regional, sub-regional, and national levels. Entitled “Strengthening

the Regional, Sub-Regional, and National Health Sector Capacity to Prevent and Respond to Violence Against Women in the Caribbean”, the course focused on identifying opportunities for leadership in the health sector to enable a coordinated and robust multi-sectoral response to violence against women across the Caribbean.

### **In 2023, through our country level support, principally via the EU-funded Spotlight Initiative:**

#### **In Belize:**

Belize implements the essential service package for survivors of GBV, in line with international standards. This includes the development of a multisectoral response protocol which includes of standard operating procedures and protocols in the health, social, and justice sectors for the provision of quality services to women subjected to intimate partner violence or sexual violence. The Protocols also includes provisions for children and vulnerable groups.

A National Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) Strategy to end violence against women and girls in Belize was developed to support the new gender policy and a new Gender-Based Violence Action Plan, and fortify national prevention and response efforts.

By bringing together actors in a comprehensive training session, contributions were made to

strengthening the work of safe houses for survivors of gender-based violence in Belize, in line with the operationalization of the Guidelines for the Management of Safe Shelters for Survivors of Gender Based Violence in the English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, launched by UNFPA in 2021. These efforts have also resulted in an increased interest by different sectors of work, to ensure gender-based violence considerations are mainstreamed in their work.

#### **In Guyana:**

Capacity has been strengthened on a range of GBV prevention and response services available to individuals in Guyana. This included the development and formal launch of the National GBV Referral Pathways for all ten (10) Administrative Regions of Guyana. This intervention significantly strengthens the national GBV case management systems.

Support was provided for shelters and safe spaces in Guyana.

Training of more than 2000 members of the Guyana Police Force in Gender-

Based Violence (GBV) was provided. It strengthened efforts to ensure that monitoring and accountability systems are established within the Guyana Police Force and the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security to enhance the response of members of the Guyana Police Force to instances of GBV.

Catalytic support for the development of the GBV One Stop Centre services delivery model for Guyana was provided.

Through accelerated support for GBV prevention and response, the Board of Industrial Training (BIT), within the Ministry of Labour in Guyana, successfully strengthened the integration of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) education into the non-formal vocational training programs offered by the BIT.

This has contributed to the increased exercise of reproductive rights and gender equality in technical/ vocational institutions, and linkage to strengthened access to high-quality, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care and services.



This photo belongs to UNFPA

Elizabeth Talbert, Director and Representative of UNFPA SROC, issues certificate at the completion of the Domestic Violence Training of Trainers course with the Jamaica Constabulary Force

implementation plan for the Sexual Assault Protocol of the Ministry of Health was finalized and the delivery of a comprehensive healthcare worker training (inclusive of interpersonal, inter-partner, GBV, sexual assault and trafficking) were implemented.

Capacities were strengthened for staff of Teen Hubs and Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) clinics to better serve adolescents. The Teen Hubs provide safe spaces for young people seeking support services and the ASRH clinics are essential for addressing issues such as GBV, sexual and reproductive health, and mental health. This collaboration between personnel from Teen Hubs and ASRH provided further strengthened connections and fostered a comprehensive approach to meeting adolescents' diverse needs by facilitating bi-directional referrals and cross-linkages.

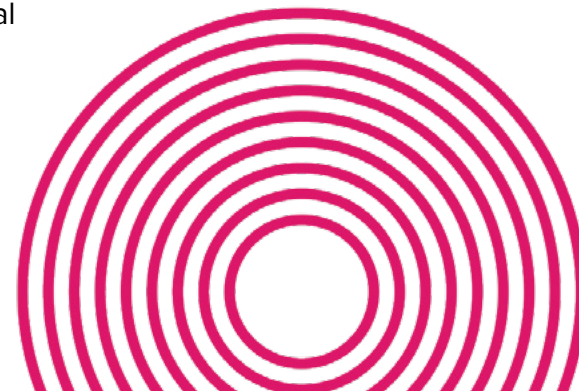
### In Trinidad and Tobago:

Capacities were further strengthened for the full roll out of the Essential Service Package in Trinidad and Tobago, including to the development of the Central registry on GBV in Trinidad and Tobago, enhancing data collection and

response mechanisms and through piloting of the Standard Operating Procedures (previously developed in 2022) within the health and social sectors in Trinidad and Tobago.

### In Jamaica:

The costing of the multi-year





Panel discussion being held at the inaugural staging of the Caribbean Youth Summit in Jamaica

UNFPA Suriname. For the past 5 years she has been working with people in schools, institutions and communities to promote reproductive health and rights. She also facilitated the Minimum Initial Service Package for SRH in the aftermath of the District Disaster Preparedness team in Suriname



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# YOUNG PEOPLE

## Empowering youth voices through strategic partnerships

A multi-agency partnership, convened by UNFPA, supported the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in the staging of its inaugural Caribbean Youth Summit November 22-25, 2023 in Jamaica. The summit provided a platform for 80 young people to brainstorm strategies to secure the involvement of other community youth leaders in promoting prevention of gender-based violence (GBV). Among other things, it:

1. Increased knowledge and skills of young women and men to address GBV, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and mental health challenges;
2. Enhanced the commitment of youth to share and further empower other youth within their community to mitigate and or prevent GBV and community violence and to

3. increase their resilience to rise above challenges associated with GBV and mental health issues.

Funded by the EU Spotlight Initiative to end GBV and harmful practices, the Caribbean Youth Summit had participation from across the region, namely, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Cayman Islands, Grenada, Dominica, Guyana, Martinique, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Suriname St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Turks and Caicos Islands. Participants shared their experiences, ideas and best practices on peace, security, safety and sustainable development in the Caribbean.

Arising from the summit will be an integrated roadmap that identifies the strategies and actions to address regional and national issues associated with peace, security, and safety for youth and generate positive social and gender norm changes to prevent violence.

## Reaching the most vulnerable adolescents and youth in Guyana

In Guyana, UNFPA supported the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security in the provision of technical support as well as financial support for the procurement of items that enable the establishment of ten (10) additional Adolescent/Youth Friendly Spaces; in Administrative Region 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10. This helped to strengthen efforts to address the health and well-being, inclusive of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, of adolescents and youth at community levels. The Adolescent/Youth Friendly Space is a physical 'space' in a building where adolescents and young people can visit freely as a safe space to relax with their peers while at the same time benefiting from information, education and services that support their health and well-being and the realization of their full potential!

## Strengthening life skills for adolescents and youth

UNFPA continued to provide technical assistance on comprehensive sexuality

education (CSE) in alignment with international standards both at sub-regional and national level.

Out-of-School CSE training sessions were held in Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Guyana and Jamaica working in collaboration with faith-based leaders, civil society organisations, government representatives, teachers, health educators, academia, advocates and young people. Sensitisation sessions were also held with a total of 49 members from faith-based organisations in Trinidad and Tobago.

UNFPA supported the revision of the Health and Family Life Curriculum (HFLE) in Belize and Jamaica.

In Jamaica, training in sexuality sensitization and awareness for HFLE teachers took place in 2023 with the support of UBRAF funding. This was aimed at strengthening life skills for adolescents and youth both in- and out-of-school. This is against the background of an evaluation of implementation of the HFLE curriculum that indicated that some teachers were uncomfortable in teaching

the sex and sexuality aspects of the curriculum.

Working with the Ministry of Education, UNFPA provided technical support to develop a Resource Guide for Jamaican instructors who teach the Sexuality and Sexual Health Component of the Health and Family Life Education Curriculum. The Resource Guide was developed in 2022 and training took place in 2023 with anticipated wide scale rollout to HFLE teachers across the country.

This resulted in a standardized training programme for teachers of sexuality education with clear guidelines and strategies for addressing sensitive issues in the classroom; reduction in the discomfort of teachers to teach sexuality education in HFLE; a cadre of Master Trainers in sexuality education to provide support to other institutions; and trained HFLE teachers and guidance counsellors in sexuality education at the secondary level.

# POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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UNFPA Executive Director, Dr. Natalia Kanem, convened with key stakeholders at the Caribbean Forum on Population and Development in Antigua and Barbuda

Accurate population data are pivotal for development and addressing global emergencies. In the English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries and territories, each with unique population structures, characteristics resembling those in the intermediate stage of the demographic transition are evident. Most of these nations currently face

a high median population age. Up-to-date population data are essential to accurately position countries on the demographic transition continuum. In this context, it has become increasingly important for UNFPA to support countries to make evidence-based policy decisions that capitalize on these shifting demographics by ensuring

gender equality and the rights of women and girls are at the core of population policies.

## In 2023, through our support:

Countries were supported to complete the execution of the 2020 round of population and housing censuses during the year. In joint-collaboration with regional and international donor partners, financial support and technical assistance contributed to capacities for The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis and Sint Maarten to complete their census data collection exercises in 2023.

Efforts are taken forward to continue supporting other English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries, including with the Government of Suriname, to complete their censuses and also produce population projections and life tables working in close collaboration with partners such as CARICOM, ECLAC and IADB.

In Belize, the Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB) was able to implement its first Post-Enumeration Survey (PES) in 2023 through financial and technical support from UNFPA. Through the process, three (3) persons have increased capacity to implement a PES and data enumerators have increased capacity to carry out PES. SIB now has available a PES Questionnaire template, Sample Design Manual, Matching Manual, Estimation and Tabulation Guide and the Guide for the Data Dictionary to SIB as resources for future PES.

As the lead implementation agency in the two-year joint UNFPA-UN Women UN SDG Fund Programme (2022-2024) to Accelerate Population Data and Policy in Barbados and Montserrat, several activities were kick-started in 2023 to support national counterparts in Barbados and Montserrat to strengthen capacities for implementation of rights-based population policies and programmes that integrate evidence on population dynamics, sexual and reproductive health and gender equality and their links to sustainable development. This included UNFPA

technical support on data modeling to strengthen Barbados' census results and capacity in areas such as GIS and small-area estimation. Tools were developed to foster population data appreciation for evidence-based planning and development by the University of West Indies.

The Population Data Appreciation tool to assess data demand, supply, and enabling environment was finalized and validated and finalized.

The Caribbean Forum on Population and Development, held in St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda, reviewed the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development in the Caribbean from 2018 to 2023. The forum, supported by UNFPA, in partnership with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and hosted by the Ministry of Health, Wellness, Social Transformation and the Environment of Antigua and Barbuda, aimed to identify actions to accelerate the Consensus' implementation.

The forum was informed by national reports from Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago prepared with the support of UNFPA. Representatives from member states, regional and international organizations, and non-governmental organizations discussed the progress of the Montevideo Consensus' implementation at the Forum.

The Forum convened key stakeholders at an important time enabling sharing of cutting-edge knowledge, evidence and solutions linked to ICPD issues such as high external migration, ageing, climate change, adolescent pregnancy rates, youth unemployment, crime, violence, and gender-based violence.

The analysis presented at the Forum spoke to the current and emerging realities in the Caribbean including:

- Population decline in the region has received little attention, but it has potential benefits.
- The availability of reliable data is improving, but it is still insufficient for planning for sustainable development.



## CARIBBEAN FORUM ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT



This photo belongs to UNFPA

The Caribbean Forum on Population and Development convened over 100 stakeholders from across the sub-region and resulted in an outcome document in support of the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development

protecting children from violence and neglect.

- Mental health is a life course issue, and the COVID-19 pandemic has prompted greater attention.

The Forum resulted in an outcome document which will guide joint actions to address mental health, gender-based violence, universal access to sexual and reproductive health, and ensuring no one is left behind in alignment with the ICPD Agenda.



- Climate change is a reality in the region, and urban and rural planning must integrate environmental protection, climate mitigation strategies, resilience building, and disaster risk management.
- Adolescent pregnancy is a significant issue, affecting young girls' psychosocial development, health outcomes, educational opportunities, and perpetuating intergenerational cycles of poor health and poverty.
- Young people's voices are essential for guiding inclusive solutions and

# LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

To accelerate the ICPD promise and achieve the SDGs, we must reach those furthest left behind. Targeted inclusion efforts are needed to overcome the exclusion of those left behind, especially for groups such as people with disabilities and of diverse sexual orientation.



UNFPA staff member on the ground to reach vulnerable populations in the hinterland of Guyana

In the hinterland districts of Brokopondo, Marowijne, and Sipaliwini in Suriname, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITP) communities experience alarmingly high adolescent birth rates, with figures of 129, 140, and 210 births per 1,000 girls aged 15-19, respectively, compared to the national average of 60.2. To address this issue, the UNFPA spearheaded initiatives to reduce teenage pregnancies in select ITP communities as part of the joint SDG Project, “Leaving No One Behind: Building Resilience and Improving Livelihoods of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Suriname”.

The initiatives focus on enhancing the availability and accessibility of quality sexual and reproductive health information and services for adolescents, while also empowering them to take proactive steps in preventing adolescent pregnancies.

The program has yielded significant achievements in adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH), highlighting the power of collaboration and community involvement. A diverse

group of ITP youth has played a crucial role in shaping the National Strategy on Adolescent Health for 2023-2030, ensuring their voices are integral to identify ways to address ASRH issues and in policy discussions and decision-making processes. A robust support network comprising five institutions dedicated to ASRH has been established, leveraging their unique strengths to adapt existing Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) modules and develop materials tailored for ITP youth.

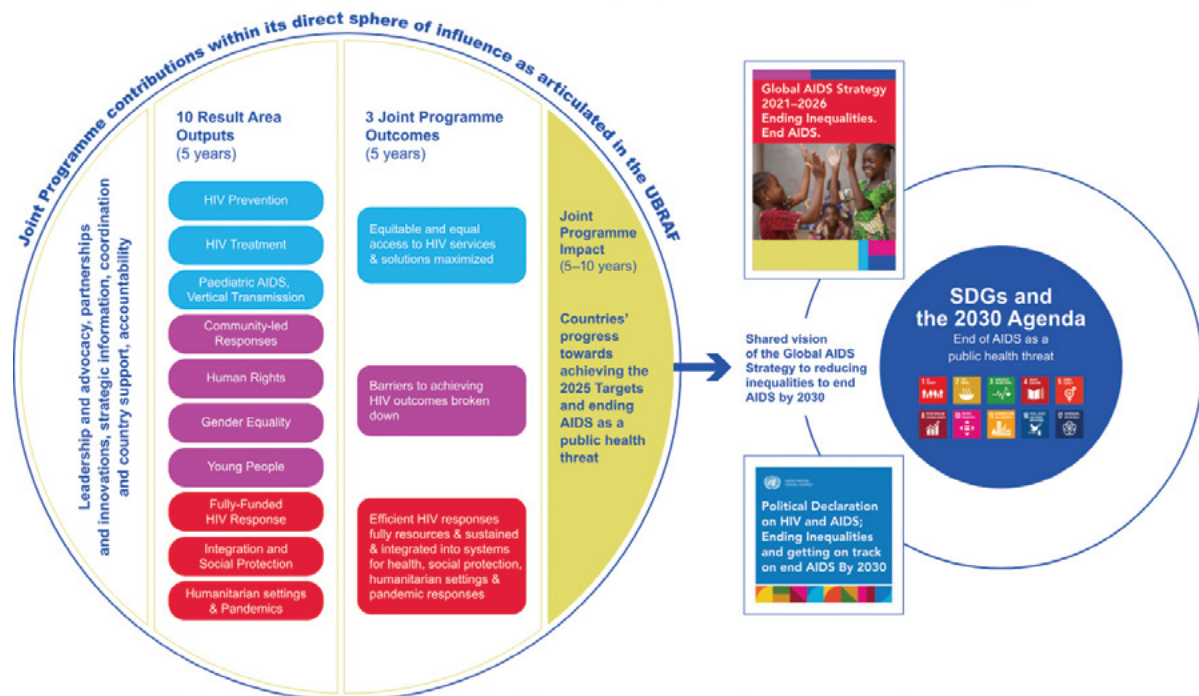
Additionally, the capacity of over 20 dedicated staff members from the Medical Mission has been enhanced to deliver out-of-school CSE in ITP communities. Structured CSE sessions have been conducted within selected ITP communities, featuring targeted discussions for men and boys, workshops for adolescent mothers, and dialogues with traditional leaders and other key community officials. To ensure evidence-based policymaking and effective monitoring and evaluation

of the ASRH interventions, a focus on strengthening data literacy skills has been initiated for relevant public sector and healthcare providers serving ITP communities.

**In Guyana,** HIV combination prevention interventions at the behavioural, bio-medical, and structural levels have been implemented with a focus on key populations at a higher risk of contracting HIV. These include vulnerable groups, particularly sex workers, gay men, men who have sex with men, transgender people; and youth. UNFPA supported interventions have contributed to increased access to SRH information and services, STI & HIV counseling, and testing STI treatment as well as HIV combination prevention services for key populations and youth.

**In Jamaica,** TransWave made significant strides in implementing the Advocacy Plan of the Transgender Health Strategy. Through the support of UNFPA, TransWave successfully launched a dedicated website, a central hub for information dissemination. This online platform enhances accessibility and serves as a vital tool for sharing advance equitable health care.

**Joint Programme Results Framework fully aligned with the Global AIDS Strategy**



Complementing this, an impactful social media campaign featuring advocacy videos was developed to drive increased traffic to the website, expanding the reach and impact of transgender health awareness. Furthering their reach, TransWave conducted empowerment sessions in both urban and rural areas of Jamaica. This strategic approach acknowledges the diverse needs of the transgender community in different settings. Through these sessions, community members were not only educated about the Trans Health Strategy but were also empowered to actively participate in advocacy efforts. Together, these achievements underscore TransWave’s commitment to fostering a supportive environment for the transgender community and advancing equitable healthcare in Jamaica.

## HUMAN INTEREST STORY: BRINGING HOPE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

In 1990, when Charlene was just twenty years old, tragedy struck mere minutes away from her home. She was severely injured when the car she was traveling in burst into flames after a head on collision. “Earthly angels” - as Charlene now calls them - braved the fire to pull her and the driver out to safety. Her body covered in third degree burns, lacerations and fractures, she was considered on the brink of death when she arrived at the local hospital. “It was a traumatic and extremely life altering experience and I had to learn to do things differently,” Charlene recalls.

As she was being rushed to the operating theatre, Charlene slipped into a coma. Miraculously, or perhaps as a testament of her faith, she woke up six days later just before she was about to be taken off life-support. In the use of her legs. She spent eight months undergoing operations

and rehabilitative treatment. In December 1991, after 18 months of hospitalization both at home and abroad, Charlene returned to Trinidad using a wheelchair. Her parents and neighbours raised funds to take her to Venezuela for orthopaedic surgery to help recover the use of her legs. She spent eight months undergoing operations and rehabilitative treatment.

Charlene is unable to participate in certain activities, organisations and events because disability-friendly services and facilities, including restrooms, are often unavailable. “Not even the medical facilities have proper access in examination rooms and entering buildings,” Charlene laments. “This includes limited access to dental and eye care, hospital and health centres.”

Having a fused leg makes it challenging to acquire the right type of wheelchair to aid her mobility. She has not been able to get a wheelchair that both holds her right leg in place and withstands the wear and tear of the outdoors.

Like Charlene, persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Trinidad and Tobago face inequality, a general lack of access to services and poor socio-economic outcomes. This is largely due to weak legislation and enforcement, lack of public awareness of the capabilities of PWDs, limited sensitization of



UNFPA's Michele Dunn, Coordinator of the UNPRPD Project issues a certificate to Charlene Ford for her participation in a capacity-strengthening workshop

PWDs on their rights, limited knowledge and competencies among organisations providing key services to this population, and limited access to rehabilitation services, health services, education and the employment at the community level.

UNFPA and Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), through the Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Project (UNPRPD), provided technical support and facilitated multi-stakeholder partnerships with PWDs and Organisations for People with Disabilities (OPDS) to address these challenges. Charlene, now President and founder of the Trinidad and Tobago Association for Differently Abled Persons (TNTADAP), has participated in the UNPRPD project’s capacity-building workshops. “Knowledge is power,” Charlene says emphatically. “It is scandalously deplorable that there are so many flaws in the laws that pertain specifically to the way in which the words ‘person with a disability’ or ‘differently-abled persons’ are referred to in legal documents. These sessions were not only eye-opening, but they helped empower the participants to better understand the way forward.”



Participants from the Organisation of Persons with Disabilities pose with their certificates having completed the capacity-strengthening workshop of the UNPRPD Project

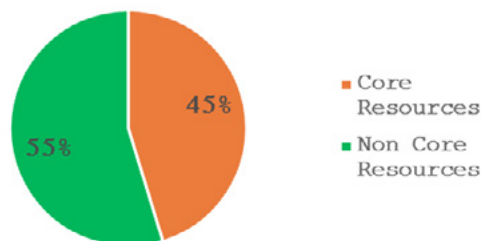
The UNPRPD project focused on strengthening and improving disability data collection; reviewing laws and policies; increasing public awareness and understanding of disability including linked to inclusive sexual and reproductive health services; investing in specific programmes and services for PWDs; improving the governance and coordination of OPDs, and strengthening disability inclusion within the UN.

The project brought greater awareness of the need for NGOs to collaborate to

advocate for the appropriate laws to be in place for PWDs. “It is my desire that this collaboration begins NOW,” Charlene says, “I want to encourage groups to execute a strong advocacy plan and to lobby for legislation to be put in place specifically for persons with disabilities. With new medical advancements now available, Charlene hopes to find a physician with the expertise to analyse her case and help her regain her mobility. “As the singer Michael Bolton says, ‘I’ll be back on my feet again, I’ll walk proud down the street again, and they’ll all look at me and then, they’ll see that I am strong.’”

# MANAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

## 2023 RESOURCE DELIVERY



2023 Resources	2023 Budget	2023 Utilization
Core Resources	4,327,311.50	4,151,409.11
Non-Core Resources	6,988,823.70	5,021,297.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,316,135.20</b>	<b>9,172,706.82</b>

UNFPA Programme	Total delivery 2023	Core Resources	Other Resources
SRH Laws, Policies and Plans	472,635.05	253,612.20	219,022.85
Sexual Reproductive Health Commodity Security	396,988.71	244,235.43	152,753.28
Data and Evidence	1,112,014.27	838,555.09	273,459.18
Maternal Health Services	223,305.67	190,314.47	32,991.20
Social Norms Change	1,374,892.43	358,492.50	1,016,399.93
GBV Services	3,680,084.43	799,098.16	2,880,986.27
Humanitarian/nexus	435,711.00	2,000.00	433,711.00
Programme Coordination and support	1,477,075.26	1,465,101.26	11,974.00
	<b>9,172,706.82</b>	<b>4,151,409.11</b>	<b>5,021,297.71</b>

\*The financial achievements outlined in this table reflect the contributions from the European Union, Global Affairs Canada, UBRAF and SDG Joint Funds whose support has been instrumental in advancing our programme objectives for the year.

## GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

 Anguilla	 Cayman Islands	 Saint Lucia
 Antigua and Barbuda	 Curaçao	 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
 Aruba	 Dominica	 Saint Maarten
 Bahamas	 Grenada	 Suriname
 Barbados	 Guyana	 Trinidad and Tobago
 Belize	 Jamaica	 Turks and Caicos Islands
 Bermuda	 Montserrat	
 British Virgin Islands	 Saint Kitts and Nevis	

## KEY IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



### BARBADOS / OECS

- St. Lucia Planned Parenthood Association
- Dominica Planned Parenthood Association
- St. Vincent Planned Parenthood
- Grenada Planned Parenthood



### BELIZE

- Ministry of Human Development, Families and Indigenous People's Affairs
- National Women's Commission
- Statistical Institute of Belize
- Belize Family Life Association
- Child Development Foundation
- Network of NGOs (2022)
- Spouses of CARICOM Leaders Action Network



### GUYANA

- Ministry of Human Services and Social Security
- Help and Shelter
- Guyana Response Parenthood Association
- Blossom Inc
- St. Francis Community Developers
- Guyana Women Miners' Organisation



### JAMAICA

- Planning Institute of Jamaica
- Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation (2022)
- Bureau of Gender Affairs
- Jamaica Constabulary Force
- University of the West Indies Jamaica
- Transwave
- Jamaicans for Justice (2022)
- WMW Jamaica
- The Institute of Law and Economics (2022)
- Jamaica Community of Positive Women





## SURINAME

- Medical Mission Primary Health Care
- KAMPOS
- Lobi Health Center Foundation



## TRINIDAD

- Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago
- University of the West Indies, Centre for Health Economics
- Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Ida Marie Guerra Indigenous Creative Arts Network (2022)
- Trinidad and Tobago Association of Midwives
- Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, University of the West Indies



## REGIONAL

- CARICOM
- Caribbean Family Planning Affiliation
- Caribbean Employers' Confederation
- Ida Marie Guerra Indigenous Creative Arts Network
- Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies
- International Planned Parenthood Federation Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office

In 2023, UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem visited Barbados and Jamaica, alongside the Regional Director for the UNFPA Subregional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. The purpose of the visits was to engage with government representatives, donors, civil society organizations, and other key stakeholders to strengthen partnerships in the region. Dr. Kanem's discussions emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts in advancing reproductive health, gender equality, and the empowerment of women and youth. These engagements highlight UNFPA's commitment to working alongside partners to support national priorities and achieve sustainable development goals. For a closer look at these important engagements, please see the photo collage capturing key moments from the visit.







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