

Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health

Thank you, Chair.

UNFPA welcomes the [report by the Director-General](#).

UNFPA **recognizes the urgent need to address inequalities in the health of women, children, and adolescents.** As our Executive Director, Dr. Natalia Kanem, emphasized, maternal mortality is an unacceptable injustice. Childbirth should be empowering, not deadly.

To prioritize action, we must:

First, **commit to increased, aligned funding in support of country priorities and policies that protect sexual and reproductive, maternal, and newborn health.** This includes integrating **services into Universal Health Coverage.**

Second, strengthen health systems by investing in midwives and quality of care. Midwives offer a cost-effective and high-impact solution, ensuring timely interventions, managing complications, and providing life-saving services. We must also ensure access to quality assured essential maternal health medicines and devices.

Third, empower women and girls through community engagement and support their rights to make informed decisions about their bodies. This includes promoting the right to bodily autonomy.

To accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, we need robust support from the Secretariat:

- **Globally:** we need continued, together with our sister agencies WHO and UNICEF, **joint leadership from WHO to co-chair with UNFPA and UNICEF Every Woman Every Newborn Everywhere** initiative to ensure development and implementation of harmonized sexual and reproductive, maternal and newborn health standards and indicators across the global health ecosystem.
- **Regionally:** we need technical support and resources tailored to regional needs, such as implementation of and accountability for region-specific strategies and normative frameworks.
- **Nationally:** we need to ensure coordinated UN support to countries under Country-led National Acceleration Plans, strengthening health systems, and improving sustainable financing. **It will be critical to support countries to prioritize high impact practices.** We also need to enhance planning, implementation and monitoring capacity for both coverage, quality and equity of comprehensive services.

Our new strategy, "**Start with Her**," is at the heart of UNFPA's approach, championing women's rights and choices while ensuring well-being, which signals a shift from a disease-focused approach. **This strategy targets countries with the highest maternal mortality rates to ensure every woman and newborn not only survives but thrives.**

We stand ready to support all Member States and partners in this critical endeavor.

Thank you.