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KENYA REPORTS GAINS, ONE YEAR AFTER THE NAIROBI SUMMIT ICPD25

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A new report released by the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) takes stock of progress made by the country in funding and implementing programmes in support of advancing universal education, gender equity, and other commitments made by the Government of Kenya during the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 held in November 2019.

Kenya was among the United Nations member states who committed to advance the goals of the ICPD Plan of Action aimed at ending all preventable maternal deaths, unmet need for family planning and gender-based violence and harmful practices against women and girls by 2030. President Uhuru Kenyatta presented Kenya's seventeen commitments to the International community that included pledges on access to sexual and reproductive health services, universal education, promoting gender equity, harnessing the demographic dividend, and financing for population programmes.

The report by NCPD shows that despite challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, efforts towards eliminating preventable maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality continued over the last year with the training of over 17,000 health care workers on Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC), provision of family planning services, obstetric fistula care, among other maternal and neonatal health issues. Over the course of the year, Kshs 4 billion was allocated to the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) for the Linda Mama program which provides health insurance for maternal and child healthcare services.

In addressing social and economic challenges faced by the youth, a key milestone recorded over the last year was the establishment of a multi-agency task force to end teenage pregnancies in the country. The youth also received support in the development of job skills through programmes such as the Kenya Youth Employment Opportunity Project (KYEOP) and the National Youth Service (NYS). Over 50,000 young people received apprenticeship and industrial skills training as well as coaching on entrepreneurship in both the formal and informal sectors. Over Kshs 473.3 million in credit was disbursed to youth and youth enterprises, benefitting about 94,680 youth from various parts of the country.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting economic challenges and restrictions in movement have worsened existing gender inequalities in the country. This has been evidenced by a spike in the number of women and girls experiencing gender-based violence during this period. Providing support to women and girls affected by gender based violence and other harmful practices such as FGM and child marriages has been a key focus, with efforts to increase access to quality and comprehensive response and support services to survivors of gender based violence.

Amongst the 17 commitments made by the government of Kenya at the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 was the elimination of female genital mutilation (FGM) in Kenya by 2022, ahead of the global target of 2030. With the support of partners including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the government through a multi-stakeholder approach has made progress on this commitment, including the training of over 4,000 law enforcement officers and community leaders on FGM prevention.

Drawing from lessons learnt over the past year, the report recommends the integration of emergency response and risk mitigation plans in the design of programs for adolescents and youth, whose wellbeing has been significantly impacted during the Covid-19 pandemic.

ABOUT THE NAIROBI SUMMIT ON ICPD25

In 1994, world leaders gathered at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo, where they declared reproductive and sexual health as a fundamental right and affirmed the need to empower women and girls for a just, safe, and equitable world. In November 2019, 8,277 delegates from 186 countries gathered in Nairobi to recommit to the goals set forth at the ICPD, at the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25. The delegates representing governments, academia, civil society, corporate partners and others – made some 1,300 commitments in support of sexual and reproductive health.

Kenya was among the United Nations member states who committed to advance the goals of the ICPD Program of Action (PoA). President Uhuru Kenyatta presented Kenya's seventeen (17) points commitment to the international community gathered at the Summit in Nairobi. The commitments were in the broad areas of; sexual and reproductive health, demographic diversity, universal education, gender equity, integration of population issues in policies and plans, data for decision making, financing for population programmes, and tracking implementation of the country commitments.

Kenya Commitments from the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25

1. Employ innovation and technology to ensure adolescents and youth attain the highest possible standard of health. Efforts will be made to eliminate teenage pregnancies, new adolescent and youth HIV infections and harmful practices such as child marriages, while at the same time ensuring universal access to friendly quality reproductive health services and information to the youth and adolescents by 2030.
2. Eliminate preventable maternal and newborn mortality, mother to child transmission of HIV and severe morbidity such as obstetric fistula among women by 2030.
3. Progressively increase health sector financing to 15 percent of total budget, as per the Abuja declaration by 2030. This will enable the country to cover the cost of implementing Universal Health Coverage and gradually increase financing of family planning commodities from domestic resources.
4. Improve support to older persons, persons with disabilities, orphans, and vulnerable children by increasing the core social protection investment from 0.8 percent of Gross Domestic Product to at least two percent over the next 10 years.
5. Enhance integration of population, health and development programmes and projects into Medium Term Plans (MTPs) and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) to ensure budgetary allocations and efficient implementation of programmes and projects by 2030.
6. Enhance the capacity of relevant Government institutions to increase availability and accessibility to high-quality, timely and reliable population and related data at national,

county, and sub-county levels, disaggregated by income, gender, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location by 2030.

7. Integrate population issues into the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes relating to sustainable development at national, county and sub-county levels by 2030.
8. Harness the demographic dividend through investments in health and citizens wellbeing; education and skills training; employment creation and entrepreneurship; and rights, governance and empowerment of young people by 2022 as outlined in the Kenya's Demographic Dividend Roadmap. This includes the establishment of a National Coordination Mechanism for Demographic Dividend by 2020.
9. Eliminate legal, policy and programmatic barriers that impede youth participation in decision making, planning and implementation of development activities at all levels by 2030.
10. Attain universal basic education by ensuring 100 percent transition of pupils, including those with special needs and disabilities, from early learning to secondary education by 2022. Also raise the completion rate for basic education to 100 percent by 2030
11. Improve the employability and life-skills of youths by enhancing the quality and relevance of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in partnership with industries and private sector by 2030.
12. Fully implement the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) so that learners are equipped with relevant competencies and skills from an early stage for sustainable development by 2030.
13. End Female Genital Mutilation by strengthening coordination in the area of legislation and policy framework, communication and advocacy, evidence generation and support cross border collaboration on elimination of FGM by 2022.
14. Eliminate, by 2030, all forms of gender based violence, including child and forced marriages, by addressing social and cultural norms that propagate the practice while providing support to women and girls who have been affected.
15. End gender and other forms of discrimination by 2030 through enforcing the anti-discrimination laws and providing adequate budgetary allocations to institutions mandated to promote gender equality, equity and empowerment of women and girls.
16. Ensure universal access to quality reproductive health services, including prevention and management of GBV, in humanitarian and fragile contexts by 2030.
17. Track and monitor the implementation of the ICPD25 Nairobi Summit commitments through the National Council for Population and Development in the State Department of Planning.