

## Press Release

### **The Government of Japan and UNFPA Sudan sign US\$793,233 contribution agreement for life-saving maternal care**

**Port Sudan, 14 February 2024** – The Government of Japan and the United Nations Population Fund signed a US\$793,233 contribution agreement to improve access to life-saving maternal health care for over 15,000 of the most vulnerable women and girls affected by conflict, displacement, and floods in the Sudanese states of River Nile, White Nile, Northern and Aj Jazirah.

The 'Safe Birth Project for the most vulnerable women in crisis affected states in Sudan' will help strengthen maternal health care services by training health workers and midwives and installing solar-power electric systems as clean energy solutions to operate blood transfusion services and Caesarean sections in areas with limited access to power supply. Temporary clinics and mobile clinics will also be deployed to provide essential maternal care services in remote areas, while emergency community-based referral systems will be set-up.

The generous contribution from the Government of Japan comes at a very critical time in Sudan. Since mid-April 2023, armed clashes in multiple cities across the country have negatively affected the provision of lifesaving reproductive health interventions as communication lines, electricity, water supplies and social services were disrupted. 60% of health facilities across the country are non-functional, and continued attacks on health care facilities and health workers deprive women and girls of life-saving health care, with pregnant women hardest hit.

As the conflict continues, Sudan has now become the largest internal displacement crisis globally, hosting an estimated 9.05 million internally displaced persons – over half of whom are women and girls. Nearly 25% of all the displaced persons in Sudan are currently in the states of River Nile, White Nile, Northern and Aj Jazirah.

In 2024, these multiple factors will continue to hinder access to essential maternal health care services, increase unmet needs for maternal health care, deteriorate health facilities and interrupt referral systems and supply chains at a time when over one million women and girls are in need of life-saving reproductive health services.

“The contribution of Japan in 2023 was essential to support our response to the high reproductive health needs due to the war in Sudan. We are fully committed to mobilise the new contribution to enhance the quality of health services provided and to reach more girls and women with life-saving services in the targeted states.” Mr. Mohamed Lemine, UNFPA Representative in Sudan.

“I express my sincere condolences for the countless number of Sudanese people suffering from the war to which vulnerable women and children inevitably fall victim in the most serious way. Japan cannot be blind to the tragedy, and we hope our contribution to UNFPA will ease the devastating situation by providing the most needed health services.”, says Kentaro Mizuuchi, Chargé d'affaires of Japan to Sudan.

The Government of Japan and UNFPA will work together to leave no woman or girl behind and to promote maternal and newborn health as a means to further social stability and conflict prevention in the Sudanese states of River Nile, White Nile, Northern and Aj Jazirah.

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