



For instance:

- < Girls have reached parity with boys in primary school enrolment, and now exceed boys in post-secondary enrolment.
- < Average life expectancy increased from 65 years in 1994 to more than 73 years today. We now live in a period of healthy longevity!
- < Between 2000 and 2020, maternal mortality declined by fully one-third.
- < Family planning is accessible to millions more women and couples; more pregnancies are planned and wanted than ever before.
- < More good news. Women made steady progress in government representation. Not a single parliament or congress today is male-only.

These facts and figures tell an inspiring story. What truly motivates me and I was present in Egypt for the historic ICPD as a young foundation official is seeing the difference our collective investments and resolve are making in making life better for the millions of women and girls UNFPA serves on the ground in some 130 countries.

I've talked to girls like Tocosana from Mozambique. She was able to escape early marriage and early childbearing and now mentors other girls in her community. Her dream? To become a doctor.

There's Ngoma, who comes from the Democratic Republic of Congo. She rallies

Worrisomely, annual reductions in maternal deaths have flatlined since 2016. Covid only made things worse as health systems faltered. In some countries, maternal death rates have increased.

Unfinished business: The disparity between women's and men's formal employment is the same today as it was back in 1994 meaning that millions of women today lack the economic empowerment that the economy has provided.





Thirty years after Cairo, why must women wait a day longer to control their own fertility? To not die during pregnancy and childbirth? To escape gender-based violence and online harm? Why must young people continue to wait until it's too late to understand their own biology and safeguard their reproductive health?

The high level of representation here at CPD (57%) is