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## INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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### **The Infrastructure of Survival: African Union and UNFPA Unite to End Preventable Maternal Deaths through Health Security, Sovereignty and Innovation**



On the sidelines of the Fifty-ninth Session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD59), the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), with support from several African governments, convened a high-level meeting on the “Infrastructure of Survival” to address

maternal mortality. Despite a 40% decline since 2000, Africa still carries a heavy burden, with the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) projected at 350 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2030, five times the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target. Leaders stressed that most deaths, often from postpartum haemorrhage and sepsis, are due to weak systems, not lack of medical knowledge, leaving families facing both loss and financial hardship.

To respond, the partnership is advancing the African Union’s New Public Health Order, shifting from donor-driven systems to stronger, self-sufficient health systems. This includes African-led market shaping, local manufacturing, pooled procurement, and harmonised regulation through the African Medicines Agency (AMA), with support from the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), to improve access to life-saving care across the continent.

H.E. Ambassador Amma A. Twum-Amoah, AU Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development, emphasised that “Innovation alone is not enough. It must be matched with political commitment and domestic financing.” The Commissioner called on Member States to increase domestic investment in maternal health, leverage matched financing mechanisms, and align behind a unified act, One plan, One Budget, One Approach. “This means achieving the objectives of the ALM Declaration Investment in Health, which includes the health of the mother and child” Amb. Twum-Amoah added.

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A centrepiece of the discussion was the role of technology in strengthening supply chains. UNFPA highlighted its digital inventory tracking system, which has drastically improved commodity security. In 2025, this technology successfully reduced expiry losses by 57% and slashed stock-outs to just 9.5%.

H.E. Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, CEO, AUDA-NEPAD, in her statement, "Africa is no longer waiting for change; we are driving it. Through catalytic initiatives such as the African Demographic Dividend & Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme (A2DSRH), our 24 Priority Medical Products for local manufacturing and the Programme for Investing and Financing Africa's Health (PIFAH), we are proving that African-led innovation and investment in health systems are not just aspirations, they are realities shaping our continent today. The time has come to turn intention into scaled implementation and dependency into true health sovereignty. As we advance Agenda 2063, we ensure that maternal and child health becomes a core pillar of 'The Africa We Want.'"

Ms. Diene Keita, UN Under-Secretary-General and UNFPA Executive Director, stated that "From the use of artificial intelligence to the deployment of drones, we are harnessing innovation to strengthen health systems, sharpen data-driven decision-making, and reach underserved communities. She said, "With renewed commitment and the domestic investments to match it, we can break down the barriers in front of us and ensure access to high-quality, affordable healthcare for Africa's women, no matter where they live."

The high-level event concluded with a clear action plan: translating political commitments into domestic budgetary allocations and deliverables through national compacts. The African Union and UNFPA called on Member States to elevate maternal survival as a core pillar of the African Union Agenda 2063, Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan (STYIP), aiming for an African Union 2028/2029 theme of the year on "Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality".

As the world looks toward 2030, the message from New York is clear: the global challenge to end maternal mortality will be won or lost in Africa. By investing in the infrastructure of maternal survival today, the continent is securing the political, economic, and social future of generations to come.

**Note to Editors:**

For further information, visit: [www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org), [www.au.int](http://www.au.int), or the CARMMA Plus Roadmap: [www.carmmaplus.org](http://www.carmmaplus.org).

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