

***SPECIAL EVENT ON THE GOVERNMENT'S SOCIAL PROGRAM (GOVSP) INNOVATIVE
ACCELERATOR FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SDGs***

NEW YORK, JULY 15, 2022

Side Event the High-Level Political Forum on the SDGs, Conference room 8

1- Context and justification

Côte d'Ivoire, like all countries in the world, is committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in September 2015 to eradicate poverty and ensure global prosperity by 2030. As the Voluntary National Report (VNR) is a pre-eminent tool to assess a country's progress and achievement of the SDGs, the UNS is fully supportive of Côte d'Ivoire presenting its second VNR this year as part of the 2022 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) whose theme is "Building back better after the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." Côte d'Ivoire has been resilient in the face of the COVID-19 crisis with a real GDP growth rate of 2.0% in 2020 supported mainly by the primary and tertiary sectors, while global growth has been set at -3.4% for the year 2020 (World Bank, 2022). In terms of growth, in just one year, the Ivorian economy has returned to its pre-COVID-19 level with growth of 6.57% in 2021 compared to 6.2% in 2019 and a projection of around 7% in 2022.

These encouraging economic results help to support the actions taken by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in implementing the 2012-2015 and 2016-2020 National Development Plans (NDPs), which are focused on achieving the SDGs. It is in this favorable economic context that the country is presenting its second report (VNR) this year, which focuses on the state of achievement of the SDGs in Côte d'Ivoire and the commitment "to leave no one behind" with a particular emphasis on (i) (SDG 4): Ensure equitable access to quality education for all and promote lifelong learning opportunities (ii) (SDG5): Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; (iii) (SDG 14): Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; (iv) (SDG 15): Conserve and restore terrestrial ecosystems, ensuring their sustainable use, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss; and (iv) (SDG17): Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development and strengthen the means for this partnership.

In order to intensify its social action by making it more inclusive, more effective and more perceptible by the populations, H.E. Alassane OUATTARA, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire requested the Government, in August 2018, to develop a Social Program (PSGouv) with the principles of Human Rights in order to accelerate the pace of implementation of the major projects of the NDP 2016-2020 and the Sustainable Development Goals. The first PSGouv was developed for 2 years 2019-2020 for CFAF 1,046.6 billion, and allowed achieving tangible results in all of targeted areas. The impact of the PSGouv 1 is clearly perceptible on the ground, particularly in terms of the program for access to and retention in school for children between the ages of 6 and 16, in particular girls; the distribution of delivery kits, caesarean kits to reduce maternal mortality. The

achievements of the PSGouv also include access to electricity, water and the Universal Health Coverage program.

Considering the social progress realized in the program, the government developed the second Government Social Program (Psgouv 2) for 2022-2024, with a total budget of CFAF 3,182.4 billion with the aim to consolidate the results of the previous phase and accelerate the pace of poverty and social inequality reduction. More concretely, PSGOUV 2 aims to provide sustainable solutions to the problem of fragility in the northern border areas, access to employment and the empowerment of youth and women. From this point of view, the PSGouv appears to be a good practice and a gas pedal for achieving the SDGs.

Despite the progress made and the encouraging results obtained, Côte d'Ivoire faces many social challenges for which the country has made national and international commitments, particularly the Nairobi 2019 engagement to accelerate the achievement of the ICPD goals by 2030. Indeed, a gender inequality index of 0.638 in 2019, and the country is ranked 153rd out of 188 Countries. In 2021, the unmet need for family planning is 23.3%. Regarding gender-based violence, 36.7% of women aged 15-49 have undergone at least one form of female genital mutilation. In addition, 10% of girls aged 0-14 have been cut, and rates remain high with significant regional disparities. 32.1% of girls are married before age 18 and 30% give birth before 18. This situation can be explained in part by the prevalence of social and cultural norms that are not conducive to the development and empowerment of girls and women to fully contribute to the country's development.

The 2022 session of the FPHN will take place against the backdrop of the persistent socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and persistent disparities in access to vaccines, economic turbulence and the risks of stagflation. The crises of sovereign debt, decrease of official development assistance, and budget cuts, growing of inequality, rapid technological change and innovation, and the impacts of climate change and ongoing conflicts, as well as the war in Ukraine, are profound changes.

While challenging, this global environment also offers opportunities to reflect on the situation of those left behind as this environment continues to reveal the fragility of health protection systems and gender-based violence, the importance of universal health coverage. This also leads us to consider the need to promote transformative, human rights-based, cross-sectoral approaches to sustainable development, eliminating gender-based violence and harmful practices, leaving no one behind. Thus, this is a unique opportunity to have an integrated approach to the SDGs and their linkages. With SDG 5 under consideration, this HLPF provides a crucial opportunity to position ICPD commitments as a major instrument in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

In view of all the above, taking into account the empowerment of women is an imperative in Côte d'Ivoire in view of the socio-cultural barriers to be removed and the various challenges to be addressed in terms of improving women's access to basic social services (health, education, justice, etc.), to economic and natural resources, and to their participation in the various decision-making spheres. Despite socio-cultural changes, there are still harmful practices that are quite restrictive for women and girls (child and/or forced marriage of young girls, female genital mutilation, lack of access of women to land as landowners, inadequate

education of young girls, exclusion of women from family inheritance, levirate, etc.). Faced with this situation, the Ivorian government has banned the practice of female genital mutilation since 1998, and committed itself in Nairobi in 2019 to reduce the rates of female genital mutilation and child marriage to 15% by 2030.

2- Rationale

Based on the above, the Ministry of Planning and Development of Côte d'Ivoire, in partnership with the Ministry of Family, Women and Children, is organizing a side event on the margins of the 2022 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) with the support of the United Nations System, technical and financial partners.

This event is a joint recommendation of the meeting between the Ministry of Planning and Development and Minister of Family and the Heads of Agencies of the United Nations System in Côte d'Ivoire to take stock of the 2022 national voluntary report WITH the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) to promote the Government Social Program (GSP) to donors and other development partners as a good practice that takes into account human rights and as innovative accelerator of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, with an emphasis on people who are likely to be left behind.

3- General objective

To contribute to a better positioning of girls' and women's empowerment in human capital development policies and programs to harness demographic dividend.

Specific objectives

- 1- Strengthen advocacy, policy dialogue and build strategic partnerships for structuring and high impact interventions to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs in Côte d'Ivoire by 2030 to leave no one behind;
- 2- Highlight good practices and lessons learned from the Government Social Program, an instrument for accelerating the implementation of projects and programs for the achievement of the SDGs in Côte d'Ivoire;
- 3- Discuss effective policies and strategic partnerships aimed at empowering youth and women as a key lever of resilience to address the root causes of inequality, maternal and child mortality, gender-based violence, instability and poverty.

4- Expected outcomes

- 1- Good practices and lessons learned Government Social Program to promote human capital, support inclusive economic growth in the context of COVID-19 towards the achievement of SDGs are known;
- 2- Promising experiences of structuring investments in favor of social measures and strengthening the resilience of vulnerable people are identified and capitalized;
- 3- Effective strategic partnerships for youth and women empowerment to reduce inequalities and root causes of poverty and development challenges are identified;

- 4- Government authorities and partners are better able to effectively integrate women's empowerment issues into efforts to harness the demographic dividend.

5- Format and speakers for the high-level event

The meeting will be organized as a one and a half (1:30) Conference room 8-hour plenary session in three parts:

Address by senior leaders on the issue of access to basic social services and human capital development, empowerment of girls and women as a pillar of harnessing the demographic dividend for the social and economic development of countries

Exposes

- o Presentation by the Minister of Planning and Development of Cote d'Ivoire on the PSGouv and its contribution to the acceleration of interventions in favor of the empowerment of girls and women
- o Presentation by UNFPA on the expected economic gains from investments in the 3 transformative outcomes for achieving the SDGs

Strategic dialogue to build support for collective action by governments and key stakeholders to accelerate the international development agendas including the ICPD and SDG agenda in Africa by 2030. The session will also be streamed live via a Zoom link.

Run of show (1.30 hours)

12:30pm– 1:00pm	Welcoming and installation of guests + introduction words from the moderator
1:00pm –1h30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming words from His Excellency the Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of Côte d'Ivoire (5 min) • Word of the Resident Coordinator of the UNS in Côte d'Ivoire (5 min) • Word from the Vice President Africa and/or Vice President for Human Development of the World Bank (5 min); • Word from the Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA (5 min); • Word from the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (5 min);
1:30pm – 1:40 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by the General Director of Planning on the PSGouv and its impact on accelerating the process of women's empowerment for SD capture and the achievement of the SDGs (10 min)
1:40pm – 1:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by UNFPA (Technical Division) on modeling, expected economic gains from investments in the 3Rs and the achievement of the SDGs (5 min) • Presentation by ONP on the Integrated Framework on SD in Côte d'Ivoire (5 min)
1 :50pm - 1h55pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the UNFPA Regional Director for West and Central Africa on the sub-regional dynamics, to initiate exchanges on the Partners' Strategic Perspectives
1:55pm – 2:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion and closing remarks, Moderator (5 min) • - The Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA (5 min) • - Minister of Women, Family and Children (5 min) • Minister of Planning and Development (5 min)

The conversation will be moderated by a high-level, fluently bilingual communicator with a good knowledge of issues related to the demographic dividend and Africa's development. His role will be to facilitate the conversation and give voice to development partners, donors, targeted foundations and civil society actors, religious leaders, etc.

Proposed list of speakers from the audience (60 minutes)

- Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA
- Minister of Planning and Development
- Minister of Family, Women and Children
- Executive Secretary of UNECA;
- Permanent Observer of the AU to the UN;
- Special Advisor on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa;
- UN Agencies (ILO, UNESCO, WHO, UNICEF);
- World Bank, AfD, European Union, Canadian Cooperation, Japanese Cooperation, KOICA
- Representative of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation;
- Private sector CEOs;
- Others.

Guests

Approximately 100 guests will be invited, including Ministers from countries in other regions; Permanent Representatives (PRs) from African missions and some PRs from other regions; heads of H6 (formerly H4+) partnerships, UN agencies and international financial institutions; institutional partners, international NGOs and foundations active in Africa; and representatives from civil society, academia and the private sector.