



... because everyone counts

**SPEECH BY MR. NIYI OJUOLAPE, UNFPA REPRESENTATIVE, GHANA
AT THE REVIEW AND CLIMAX OF DOVVSU @ 20 ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION**

DATE: 29TH NOVEMBER, 2019

VENUE: LA PALM BEACH HOTEL, ACCRA

- *Honourable Minister of Interior*
- *Inspector General of Police*
- *Distinguished Members of the Police Management Board*
- *Personnel of the Police Service/ DOVVSU*
- *Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps, the UN, Civil Societies and Private Sector*
- *Distinguished Executives and Representatives of the NGO/FBO Community*
- *Friends from the Media*
- *Ladies and Gentlemen*
- *All other Protocols duly observed*

I am deeply honored to be part of this review and commemorative event to climax the 20th anniversary celebrations of DOVVSU and I bring you warm felicitations from UNFPA.

I am even happier to note that this event will also be used to review and analyze critical issues on the provision of services to survivors of SGBV which forms the core mandate of DOVVSU's work in order to map out strategies for improvement.

Like her counterparts in other countries all over the world, UNFPA Ghana works to improve sexual and reproductive health (SRHR), maternal health (MH) as well as the prevention and response to sexual and gender based violence.

UNFPA has stressed many times that violence against women and girls constitutes one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world. It knows no social, economic or national boundaries. It undermines the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims, yet it remains shrouded in a culture of silence. Victims of violence often suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences, including forced and unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, traumatic fistula, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and even death.

It is for this reason that we commend DOVVSU's achievements over the past 20 years towards improving security and responding to all forms of abuse in domestic settings, and providing support for victims and survivors in diverse ways.

Earlier this month, UNFPA and her partners met in Nairobi to also climax the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The Nairobi Summit assessed and updated the ICPD Agenda, and all countries including Ghana have renewed their commitments in promoting the rights of women and girls; including ending SGBV.

Thus for us at UNFPA, prevention and response to SGBV is at the core of what we do and that is why we have partnered with DOVVSU, (since the Unit's inception as the Women and Juvenile Unit -WAJU) to provide various forms of support at both the national and decentralized levels including:

- Continuous training for various categories of DOVVSU and non DOVVSU officers for enhanced capacity in case management/handling, counselling, etc.
- Establishment of a DOVVSU Data Management System (DODMAS) to facilitate the churning out of credible SGBV data

- Development of standardized guidelines such as the SGBV Training Manual and SGBV Protocol and Codified Handbook
- Refurbishment of the Crises Response Centre at the Police Hospital to enhance integrated services for survivors just to mention but a few.

We have also partnered with the Office of the Second Lady to establish the Coalition of People against SGBV and Harmful Practices (CoPASH) to coordinate support to DOVVSU, especially for the provision of coordinated services to survivors. And we will like to commend the Police Management and Government of Ghana for the resumption of work on the DOVVSU One-Stop- Centre which will go a long way to enhance such coordinated services as envisaged. We are hopeful, that the Unit will soon be raised to the status of a Division as was indicated during the recent UNFPA facilitated engagement session with the Police Management Board in Sogakofe to improve and streamline its operations.

We at UNFPA, renew our commitment to continue to work with DOVVSU at all levels to address SGBV in order to end the horrible abuses and the impunity that allow these human rights violations to continue and to also enhance the provision of integrated services for survivors.

We congratulate DOVVSU and the Ghana Police Service for their work towards eradicating violence against women and girls in Ghana and for the collective achievements thus far, and particularly for today's commemoration.

In conclusion, I will like to urge all of us to continue to work to prevent and respond to all forms of violence as our concerted efforts will not only benefit vulnerable women and girls but the entire population, because addressing gender inequalities helps to foster sustainable development that will inure to the good of Ghana.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.