

Lavenir

NEWSLETTER

Vol:24 July 2024





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EDITORIAL

The theme for this year's World Population Day, "Advancing Gender Equality for a More Just, Resilient, and Sustainable World," redirects us to one of the most dire yet often unheeded facets of sustainable development: gender equality.

This theme presses and heightens that gender equality pronounces a world where every individual can live in unprejudiced, resilient, and sustainable for the present and future generations.

It calls for 365 days as opportunities to ensure gender equality and equity in our communities, equally strengthen voices of both women and men, boys and girls, and safeguard that all Seychellois have equivalent opportunities to contribute towards the sustainability of our country

Although in Seychelles we do not have pockets of gender inequality and do not suffer a large gap when compared with other countries, we are a nation that although leans on matriarchal tendencies transmits the imprints and remnants of the patriarchal era. A cultural heritage conferred from when we were under the colonial empires, and men held the authority to make decisions.

For such, we grieve more the ailment of gender disparity than that of gender inequality. Without a doubt, all Seychellois enjoy their Constitutional rights as equal opportunities exist for both women and men. However, it remains more for women to seize the opportunities that exist, and to brave frontiers and positions that have predominantly been men's prerogatives for decades in our country. It is also a task for the male gender to encourage and assist our girls and women to climb to that status, where we can pride in zero gender disparity. And, of course, as in every goal and determination, education is the key.

In this note, the editorial team welcomes you to the 24th edition of the Lavenir Newsletter in anticipation that you appreciate the pages put together for you.

It does not go amiss that we are unable to page all the activities and events that have been from the

365 days from World Population Day 2023 to this year's. Our pages cover some features of the National overview concentrated on population, some internationally observed days pressed by our Ministry, and some events organized by the Family Department.

We cannot close the editorial without thanking our contributors for their valuable support and wish you a happy reading!

The Population Unit Team

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MESSAGE OF THE MINISTER

On the occasion of World Population Day,
11th July 2024

In recent years, and so this year, the world has faced critical challenges that put the world population's existence and essence at risk - risks such as climate change, conflict, economic crisis, and gender inequalities. Seychelles joins the global community in reflecting on the population issues. Updated demographic data and statistics showing the current situation of our population call us to change our mindset and the traditional way of doing things. It is, indeed, the 30th consecutive year that Seychelles is celebrating World Population Day since 1994, and each year the Seychelles' population dynamics oblige us to set our goals and priorities for the population and sustainable development.



The theme chosen by the United Nations for this year's activities is "Advancing Gender Equality for a more Just, Resilient, and Sustainable World." This theme reminds us of the importance of women and men, girls and boys in safeguarding our existence, and in ensuring sustainable development.

Seychelles as a nation, is facing some existential challenges such as climate change, the skyrocketing of non-communicable diseases that put immense pressure on our health sector and economic sector, and some of the global issues that are directly or indirectly impacting on our population.

In addition, the current demographic data tell us that we cannot stand aloof watching issues that are affecting both children and youth as well as other age groups. We want our population to be the determiner of the sustainable development. We are called to strive for a new Seychelles with less teenage pregnancy, fewer or no cases of domestic or gender-based violence, and without young people who are not in education or employment.

We cannot afford to sustain our population if we allow the social upheavals to continually threaten the core of our development, and that is the Seychellois Families.

We should all join our hands and hearts, through the spirit of our national theme ' Mon Fanmir, Mon Leker, to address the root causes of substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, child abuse, and the increasing number of young people who are in prison. If we cherish and value our families, our entire population will flourish.

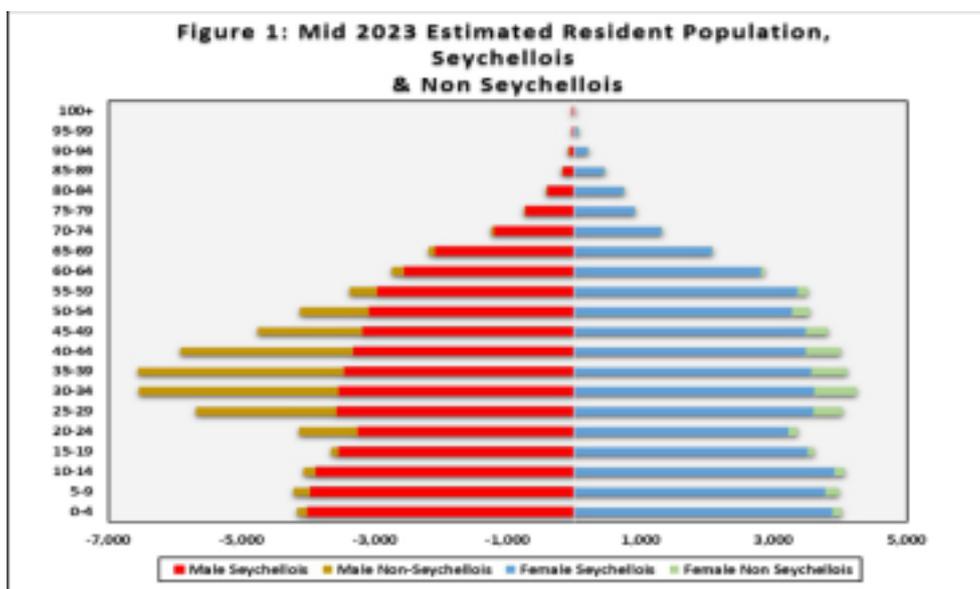
I commend all agencies, organizations, families and individuals who are unceasingly working hard for the betterment of our population. Let us collaborate towards building the 'Seychelles that we want.'

I wish the entire population in Seychelles and all Seychellois, a happy World Population's Day.

NAVIGATING SEYCHELLES' TRANSITION TO AN AGEING POPULATION

Contributed by the National Bureau of Statistics

As Seychelles joins the global community in observing World Population Day, it stands at a significant demographic crossroads. The nation is undergoing a profound demographic transition marked by an increase in its elderly population. This shift is reflected in the country's evolving population pyramid, which now exhibits characteristics of a "constrictive" or "stationary" structure (Figure 1). The base of the pyramid is relatively narrow compared to the middle, indicating lower birth rates. This trend is evident in the crude birth rate, which has dropped from 26.2 per thousand in 1986 to 13.0 per thousand in 2023, showcasing a decreasing trend in births per thousand mid-year population. Furthermore, the fertility rate in Seychelles has declined from 4.5 births per woman in the 1970s to 2.0 in 2023, highlighting a shift towards smaller family sizes.



In parallel with declining birth rates, Seychelles has seen a notable increase in life expectancy. In 1980, life expectancy at birth was 65.5 years for males and 73.9 years for females, with an overall average of 69.5 years for both sexes combined. By 2023, these figures had risen to 71.3 years for males, 78.8 years for females, and 74.7 years for both sexes, reflecting significant improvements in social and economic conditions. This demographic transition poses several challenges for Seychelles, including the need to ensure adequate healthcare services for the elderly, sustain the pension system amidst a shrinking working-age population, and address social isolation among older adults. The elderly dependency ratio, which compares the elderly population (65+) to the working-age population (15-64), has increased from 106 in 1990 to 126 in 2023. This increase suggests a higher pressure on the working-age population to support the elderly, underscoring the challenges posed by an ageing population.

In conclusion, Seychelles is at a pivotal point in its demographic evolution. The transition to an ageing population brings both challenges and opportunities. By embracing comprehensive and forward-thinking policies, Seychelles can transform these challenges into opportunities for growth and development, ensuring a high quality of life for all citizens and fostering a resilient and inclusive society.

FERTILITY TRENDS IN SEYCHELLES: THE DECLINING TRENDS.

The main source on fertility and mortality in the country is the vital registration system. A declining trend in fertility has been observed since the 1960s, although with some fluctuations, especially in the late 1990s. The Crude Birth Rate (CBR), the annual number of births per 1,000 population, presented in 5-year intervals in Table 2 (except for the last 2 years), declined markedly from around 41 in 1960 to around 29 in 1980. By the late 1990s, CBR had declined to below 20 births per 1,000 population, and the lowest level (13.1) was recorded in 2022.

The declining trend in fertility is further illustrated in Figure 1, where the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) drastically dropped from 7 children per woman in 1966 to around 2.3 in 1996 and 2.1 in 1997 – first time fertility hit replacement level. Total Fertility Rate(TFR) then flattened at and below (2.0) replacement level into the early millennium, when it slightly went up until 2021, ranging between 2.2 and 2.5. This result is attributed to the conventional factors for fertility decline. The Total Fertility Trend(TFR) in 2023 was 2.0 that is consistent with the rate observed in 2022.

line such as family planning programme and the social and economic transformation since the late 1970s (economic improvement, free education and health and increase in female labour force participation).

Number and Rates of Births, Deaths and Natural Increase and Mid-Year Population, 1960 – 2022)

Year	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase (NI)	Mid-Year Population			
	Number	Crude Birth Rate (per 1,000)	Number	Crude Death Rate (per 1,000)	Number	Rate of NI (per 1,000)	
1960	1714	41.1	450	10.8	1264	30.3	41662
1965	1772	37.4	563	11.9	1209	25.5	47424
1970	1660	31.1	437	8.2	1223	22.9	53291
1975	1806	30.5	433	7.3	1373	23.2	59292
1980	1830	28.9	444	7.0	1386	21.9	63261
1985	1729	26.5	468	7.2	1261	19.3	65244
1990	1617	23.3	543	7.8	1074	15.5	69507
1995	1582	21.0	525	7.0	1057	14.0	75304
2000	1512	18.6	553	6.8	959	11.8	81131
2005	1536	18.5	673	8.1	863	10.4	82858
2010	1504	16.8	664	7.4	840	9.4	89770
2015	1592	17.0	703	7.5	889	9.5	93419
2020	1554	15.8	668	6.8	886	9.0	98462
2021	1665	16.8	925	9.3	740	7.5	99258
2022	1569	13.1	941	7.8	628	5.2	119878

Interestingly, but also worryingly, the number of girls under 15 who gave birth in 2023 was 15 which is five times of what 3 cases recorded in 2022. In the same way, 179 teenagers between age 15-19 gave birth in 2023 compared to 162 in 2022. The recorded teenage pregnancy indicated a challenge as well as the dilemma that exist when comes to the family planning on the one hand and the sexual and reproductive health on the other hand. The dilemma is that most of young people are not accessing the contraceptive system that is in place and at the same time the existing system will not provide contraceptive to children under 15 years of age. Hence, other intervention as well as prevention mechanisms will be needed to ensure that teenage pregnancy is being curbed. This will include, but not limited to, the stable families and strong parenthood, comprehensive Sexual Education in all schools (including primary schools), pragmatic youth work and youth support system in the districts and in schools and lastly the establishment of youth friendly services for the sexual and reproductive health and right.

TIPS

ON HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN WHILE THEY ARE ONLINE.

Protecting your children while they are online is crucial in today's digital age. Here are some tips to help ensure their online safety:

Talk to your children about the potential dangers online and the importance of responsible internet use.

SET RULES AND BOUNDARIES:

Establish clear guidelines for internet usage, including screen time limits and appropriate websites or apps. Create a family internet usage policy that everyone agrees to follow.

Use parental controls and filtering software to restrict access to age-inappropriate content. Ensure that the content your children are exposed to is suitable for their age and maturity level.

AGE-APPROPRIATE CONTENT:



EDUCATE THEM ABOUT PRIVACY:

Teach your children the importance of safeguarding personal information such as their name, address, phone number, and school. Encourage them not to share personal information with strangers online.

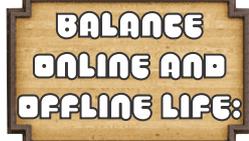
ENCOURAGE SAFE SOCIAL MEDIA USE:

Discuss responsible social media use, including the potential consequences of sharing personal information or inappropriate content. Help them set their profiles to private and approve friend requests.



Encourage a healthy balance between online and offline activities, ensuring that your children have time for physical exercise, face-to-face social interactions, and other non-digital pursuits.

Remember that online safety is an ongoing conversation and process. By combining these tips with a trusting and open relationship with your children, you can help them navigate the digital world safely and responsibly.



MONITOR ONLINE ACTIVITY:

Keep an eye on your children's online activity, both by checking their browsing history and using parental control tools.

Be aware of the platforms and social media your children are using and understand their privacy settings.

OPEN COMMUNICATIONS:

If your child plays online games, ensure they only interact with friends they know in real life. Remind them to be cautious when using in-game chat or messaging features.



RECOGNIZE AND AVOID SCAMS:



Teach your children how to recognize online scams, phishing attempts, and the importance of not clicking on suspicious links or downloading unknown files.

BE A ROLE MODEL:



Model responsible online behavior by adhering to the same rules and principles you set for your children. Show them how to use the internet safely and respectfully.

STAY INFORMED:

Keep up with the latest trends and online risks by staying informed about the platforms and technologies your children use. Be ready to adapt your safety measures as the online landscape evolves.



Contributed by the National Council For Children



Nothing about us, without us

By The elderly disabled Division (EDD)

Nothing about us, without us parables and braves the challenges for inclusivity and pursues to intensify awareness, mindfulness, and responsiveness in the integration of persons with disabilities and the elderly in all aspects of political, societal, economic and cultural life of our country.

The aim of the campaign is clear; make decisions with the ones who knows best the challenges involved. The campaign follows a series of activities throughout the year.

RAMP UP, RISE UP- A voice for persons with Disabilities.

In March 2024 at the Les-Mamelles community Centre, the Elderly and Disabled Division of the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Family teamed up with Rise Up and Ramp Up Association for the **RAMP UP, RISE UP CAMPAIGN**.

The aim of the campaign was to allow space and voice for persons of Disabilities about their challenges when using the available facilities and infrastructures. The space also provided opportunities for persons with disabilities to place forward requirements to the Seychelles Planning Authority as well as architects and Engineers who work in the designs of Seychelles infrastructures.

The discussions highlighted the easily overlooked need for disabled parking, beach access, buses incorporated with that includes ramps and facilities and aids for the visually impaired, and the autism. It was brought forward that new housing projects should also consider access for persons with disabilities.



Considering access for the disabled in designing a plan



The EDD and other partners during the workshop

Let us go on Air!

The Elderly and Disabled Division, in collaboration with the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation, has also started a monthly series of 15 minutes mini documentaries since March 2024. The first broadcast was on 3 April 2024. The mini-docs are broadcast on the 4 Degré Sid platform every third Wednesday of the month in the evenings.

The first episode featured the daily challenges and struggles of persons with disabilities and brought to light the lack of facilities around Victoria, as well as beach access.

The series will span out until December 2024 and will focus on the challenges our disabled person faces in society such as stigmatization, abuse, barriers preventing them from obtaining employment also reinforcing familial bonds in regards to our older person in the elderly homes.

Let us break the barriers! Accessibility, employment, well-being and rights for all!

In 2022, the Elderly and Disabled Division set up an inter-sectoral committee. The first meeting was held Wednesday 13th of March 2024, at the Seychelles National Youth Council meeting room.

The aim of the committee is to bring together relevant stakeholders of the government, the private sector and civil society to discuss and address the various existing barriers affecting the lives of elderly persons and persons



Filming of the documentary airing on SBC

The discussions focused on four thematic: accessibility, employment, well-being (welfare) and rights. The recommendations, which will be forwarded to the cabinet of Ministers' attention and action include disabled parking, access/opportunity for employment, access to infrastructure and government buildings, awareness raising and the drafting legal frameworks for disabled and elderly persons among others.



FAMILY DEPARTMENT HOSTS CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP ON IMPROVING NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION

by
Research and Policy Planning Division

Representatives from different government agencies were able to attend a capacity-building workshop on the importance of the collection and management of National Data in a training session hosted by the Family Department during the week of the 11th and 12th of April.

The two-day workshop facilitated by the Research and Policy Planning Division of the Department, (RPPD) in collaboration with the Tsuha Foundation took place at the Seychelles National Museum.

The Director General for the Research and Policy Planning Division, (RPPD), Mrs. Larue, said that The Tsuha Foundation financed the workshop through Ms. Venessa Mehlhorn's project entitled 'Tracking the Sustainable Development Goals: Improving the National Data Collection System through the Tracking of Sustainable Development Goals in Seychelles.'

Ms. Mehlhorn is one of the eight Fellows, selected to follow the programme funded by the Tsuha Global Fellowship Program, which seeks to support common commitments in progressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The fellowship is being led by the University of Western Australia and Curtin University, both based in Perth, Western Australia.

"We would like to extend our appreciation to Ms. Mehlhorn and her mentor, Professor Petra Tschakert, as well as the Tsuha Foundation for the support and commitment to facilitating the workshop", said Mrs. Larue.

Mrs. Larue added that the division facilitated the same workshop at the beginning of the year to equip the staff within the three divisions of the Department, Quality of Life Division, the Disabled and the Elderly Disabled Division, the RPPD, as well as the Programme Unit.

"And as we work in collaboration with other entities for reliable reporting, it was necessary to extend the training to our partners," pressed Mrs. Larue.

During the two-day programme, Dr. Gerard Adonis, consultant, and researcher presented a discussion on the relevance of National Data Collection and the reporting of accurate data. He emphasized that data collection and use of data is a culture, which needs to be more appreciated and further developed in Seychelles.

The participants were also able to place their challenges and were equipped with a comprehensive template and mapping process during the training, therefore leaving the workshop with an insight into how all stakeholders can use one template to collate information that can be accessible to all.

Dr. Adonis further explained "Sometimes straightforward information is either not available or difficult to get access to. This is both for the public and for international reporting. This therefore permits gaps in many of the reports submitted to international organizations, a situation that has been there for a while now."

"Our country needs to recognize that collating relevant data places evidence to corroborate claims for change where it is necessary. Data tells you unerringly what is there, what needs to be amended and a database of accurate data allows you to capture quality evidence for insights, policy, and decision-making," he added.

Emminielle Elizabeth, a statistician at the National Bureau of Statistics who attended the training said that she found the workshop as beneficial as it emphasized the importance of National Data collection and the challenges in collecting data.

"I especially appreciated the template, a good tool for collaboration," said Ms. Elizabeth.

Ms. Elizabeth also said that she is hopeful of a better-looking future for data collection, "with information, education pressed, the stakeholders and the general public will become sensitized on the importance of information and the relevance of data collection."

Maria Evenson, an economist at the National Planning Department said that this was a much-needed workshop.

"It was very good to have the different stakeholders involved in the workshop as we were able to get the different perspectives on how the data is used and the constraints that the different Ministries, Departments, and Agencies face," said Ms. Evenson.



TO READ IS TO VOYAGE THROUGH TIME

CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL BOOK PARADE

Contributed by the National Council For Children

The famous Carl Sagan remark, "To read is to voyage through time," perfectly captured the spirit of the Children's Book Parade, which the National Council for Children organized as part of the Children's Festival.

The Children's Book Parade, which took place on June 1st this year, was a celebration of International Book Day and our National Children's Day.

It was a day when the streets of Victoria came alive with vibrant colors and joyful, happy children, embodying the magic of imagination. Dressed up in their costumes of their favorite characters from their favorite books, the children displayed

that through reading, and books, they can explore different worlds and different times. This magnificent event featured almost 400 youngsters from across Mahe Island marching in the parade. The colorful spectacle

was a true inspiration, bringing famous literature to life and was a massive success.

For those who attended, it was a testament to a day filled with fun and imagination. And for

those who missed this truly amazing event, there is always next year to look forward to!

Such events play crucial roles in fostering a love for reading and creativity among young minds.

Here is to more exciting and imaginative parades in the future!



FATHER'S DAY



LEKOL TAKAMAKA I ANTREPRANN AKTIVITE PAPA E ZANFAN POU SELEBRE LAZOURNEN LAFET PAPA

Par Research and Policy Planning Division

Sa lannen bokou lekol in pran an sarz pou donn relevans lafet papa e lenportans rol papa dan lavi zot zanfan. Plizyer lekol atraver bann distrik in fer bann aktivite pou fer sa lazournen e sa aktivite en triyonf.

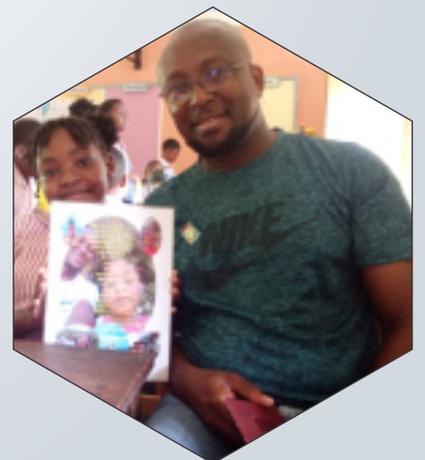


Lekol primer Takamaka pa ti en lekspeksyon. Zot aktivite ti ganny organize vandredi le 14 Zen kot Zanfan e papa ti desann kot a kot avek bann gran sourir pou en lazournen byen sarze.

Tou ti demar aparti 8:30 bomaten avek en lasanble kot bann ki ti prezan ti partisip dan en refleksyon spirityel e ganny sans apresye performans par lakoral lekol.

Aprè sa bann papa ti ekout en kozri donnen par Paster Joel lo lenportans bann papa dan lavi zot zanfan. Bann papa ti answit ganny loportinite pou vizit laklas zot zanfan. Sa ti en lokazyon enportan pour zot enterakte avek bann ansennyan e vwar travay zot zanfan. Lekol ti organiz lavant manze ek lafresisman avek bi pour elev en fon pour aste televizyon pour bann laklas. Bann manm lasosyasyon paran sa lekol osi ti partisipe avek en lavant zi lokal ek snak.

Lazournen ti konklir avek sportif e konpetitiv ant bann tim papa ek zot bann zanfan. En lazournen memoriab dan en latmosfer egeyan e markan. Sirman enn ki bann zanfan e zot papa pa pou zanmen obliye! Bravo tou tim papa e zanfan! Bravo tou bann papa ki' demontre sa devouman pou fer zot prezans konte sa zour, e byensir zot prezans dan lavi zot zanfan!



A DUMMIES' GUIDE

for Teenage Boys in

How to Respect Girls

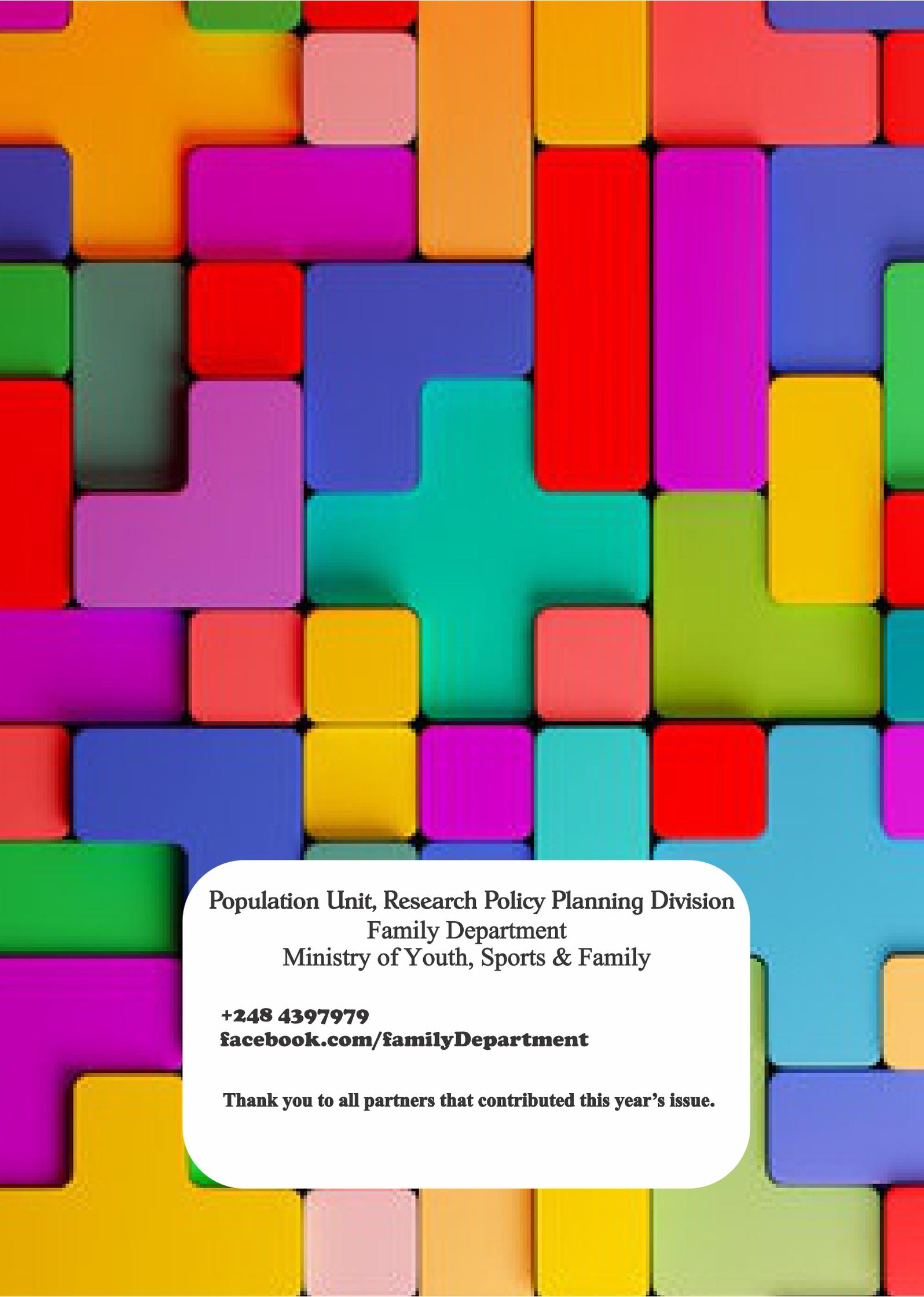
- 1.** Treat girls as human because that is what they are. They breathe and they have feelings. Your words and actions can cause lasting damage. Think before you speak and act.
- 2.** No slut-shaming*. Girls have the right to wear whatever they like without fear of being sexually assaulted. What they are wearing or the fact that they enjoy sex is not an invitation for you to make unwanted sexual advances or speak about or to a girl in slut-shaming terms.
- 3.** When a girl says 'NO' to anything she means 'NO!' She does not mean 'maybe' or 'I'm not sure'. Girls can say 'NO' at any time during sexual contact. This means you STOP immediately.
- 4.** Girls are equal to you in brain power. In fact, many will exceed you. This may be news to you but they can also be physically stronger than you. They can also be better at sport.
- 5.** Many girls love to have fun and party. This does not mean you can come onto them (make sexual advances) when they are drunk or high. In fact, this is a good time to look out for them as you would any human in a similar situation.
- 6.** Girls are not here on this earth for your pleasure. They are not sexual objects. It may be news to you but they do not like cat-calling*, gossiping with others about their bodies or appearance, being stared at while going about their daily routines.
- 7.** Pornography is not real. It is not what a loving respectful relationship looks like. What you may have seen are two or more actors. Even though the woman appears to enjoy sex that objectifies and degrades her, in real-life this most likely is not the case. A loving relationship is where two people enjoy time together and both enjoy sex that is mutually respectful.
- 8.** Do not tell a girl you love/like her, get her to take a naked selfie and then post it on the internet so you look impressive to your friends. I repeat, DO NOT do this despicable and illegal act.
- 9.** Do not take pictures of girls without their permission. Do not post such pictures on the internet. I repeat, DO NOT do this despicable and illegal act.
- 10.** Lastly, be a kind, good human being to all other human beings this includes girls.

Educators/carers please unpack each point with teenagers. Ask, 'What does this mean?'

slut-shaming : also known as slut-bashing, is the idea of shaming and/or attacking a woman or a girl for being sexual, having one or more sexual partners, acknowledging sexual feelings, and/or acting on sexual feelings

cat-calling: a loud whistle or a comment of a sexual nature made by a man to a passing woman





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Thank you to all partners that contributed this year's issue.