EVENT OVERVIEW

From UK to Global:

Advancing Data, Evidence, and Equity in Black Maternal Health

A Virtual Learning Exchange Webinar of the Global Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Afro-Descendent Women and Girls

Wednesday, October 29, 2025

1pm EDT | 6pm UK Time

UNFPA · LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY · COLLECTIVE ENCOUNTERS · SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective · THE MOTHERHOOD GROUP

EVENT OVERVIEW

Global Coalition for the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of Afrodescendent Women and Girls

A Virtual Learning Exchange

Background

At the heart of UNFPA's work is the commitment to ensure that every woman and girl can enjoy her health and rights, make decisions about her body and future, and live free from discrimination. Yet for Afrodescendent women and adolescents, inequities in maternal health remain urgent - reflecting broader patterns of social exclusion and systemic racism.

In July 2025, UNFPA, in coordination with the Government of Costa Rica and in partnership with PAHO and the Universal Access Project, convened the Global Symposium on Bridging the Gap in Sexual and Reproductive Health of Afrodescendent Women and Adolescents in San José, Costa Rica. The Symposium helped shape the priorities of the Global Coalition for the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Afrodescendent Women and Girls, launched in September 2024, which mobilizes collective action across four strategic pillars, including Pillar 1: Strengthening Data and Evidence.

October, celebrated as Black History Month in the UK, provides an opportunity to honor the heritage and contributions of Black communities and spotlight the latest evidence on maternal health inequities. The *MBRRACE-UK Saving Lives, Improving Mothers' Care 2025 Report* highlighted that Black women remain more than twice as likely to die during pregnancy, birth or in the postnatal period when compared to White women, with mental health conditions highlighted as the leading cause of late maternal deaths (between six weeks and one year after pregnancy), particularly among Black women. The Five X More Black Maternity Experience Report 2025 and The Motherhood Group Black Maternal Mental Health Report UK 2025 further highlight discrimination, poor communication, and psychosocial stress as critical risk factors. Complementing these studies, the Black Maternal Health Project (2024) - led by Liverpool John Moores University, Collective Encounters, and the International Slavery Museum - connected historical injustices to current maternal health experiences through creative community research.

Together, these initiatives underscore the need for robust, disaggregated data and community-driven advocacy. The UK's experience offers valuable lessons for the Coalition's global efforts to ensure no Afrodescendent woman or girl is left behind.

Organized by UNFPA in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University, Collective Encounters, and The Motherhood Group, this Learning Exchange will spotlight the UK experience to explore inequities, mental health, systemic racism, and data accountability - translating insights into actionable recommendations for global advocacy.

Objectives

- **Highlight UK Evidence and Advocacy:** Share findings from the MBRRACE-UK 2025, Five X More, The Motherhood Group, and LJMU projects as models for data-driven, people-centered action.
- **Advance UNFPA's Mandate:** Frame maternal health inequities as violations of bodily autonomy and human rights, aligning with UNFPA's mission and the goals of the Global Coalition for the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Afrodescendent Women and Girls.
- **Strengthen Data and Evidence:** Inform strategies for disaggregated data systems, statistical pacts, and recognition of community-generated knowledge.
- **Foster Cross-Regional Solidarity:** Connect UK lessons to shared challenges across the USA, Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean.
- **Promote Policy and SDG Alignment:** Reinforce advocacy supporting SDGs 3, 5, and 10, ensuring equity is central to maternal health policy and practice.

Expected Outcome

- Elevated visibility of UK research and community evidence on Black maternal health.
- Actionable recommendations to advance Pillar 1 – Strengthening Data and Evidence of the Global Coalition for the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Afrodescendent Women and Girls.
- Stronger integration of mental health and psychosocial indicators in sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) frameworks.
- Reinforced cross-regional collaboration and alignment with SDG 3 (Health), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).
- Consolidated post-event Knowledge Brief summarizing lessons, partnerships, and next steps.

Targeted Audience

Coalition members, policymakers, researchers, health professionals, midwives, civil society advocates, and UN partners working to advance SRHR and maternal health equity for Afrodescendent women and girls globally.

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