Context matters, particularly in countries where humanitarian crises are recurrent, socioeconomic and health indicators are daunting, governance at the national level is variable, armed conflict abounds, people are fleeing violence both inside and outside the borders, and the donor community faces all too many pleas for assistance and support. In this book of ideas and inspiration, the UNFPA DRC team courageously shares their innovative, silo-breaking strategies, tactics, results and reflections on what they have done differently in positioning the agenda of rights and choice in the 2017 to 2020 period towards the three transformative results: zero unmet need for contraception; zero preventable maternal deaths; and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation in the face of unprecedented crisis.

This book is about amazing success stories in the DRC, a very complex and challenging environment. The story behind these successes can be summarized in few words: Leadership, Innovation & Agility, Partnership. Dr. Sennen Hounton and his colleagues in UNFPA DRC are sharing here very useful tips on how they have reached these good results. The positive changes described are jointly forged and owned by all players on the ground namely, government institutions, the UN family, international partners, civil society and the communities... not as a lip service... but for fact, with skills, courage and patience. Very useful reading...

Cheikh Tidiane CISSE
Former UNFPA Country Representative

...a clear bold vision and daring to offer something different that will certainly contribute in a significant way to our joint efforts as the UN Development System and the UN Mission, supporting DRC’s transition to peace, stability and prosperity.

Dominic SAM
UNDP Resident Representative, DRC

In a context of instability in the macroeconomic framework since 2017 and an accelerated deterioration in the living conditions in DRC, standard development cooperation would not be able to help the country develop. UNFPA’s approach is innovative in that it takes into account a better approach to development cooperation. The method used by UNFPA team in DRC brings added value in that it creates a solid platform for balancing various modes of engagement which operationalization depends on a common foundation of strong leadership and good governance.

Prof. Augustin MATATA PONYO MAPON
Senator, DRC Parliament; Former Prime Minister, Former Minister of Finance, DRC

Lead editor and author Sennen HOUNTON, MD, PhD served as UNFPA Representative in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 2017 through 2020. He is a business unit manager and an international development and humanitarian preparedness and response expert. With studies in Medicine and psychology (Benin), epidemiology (USA), and health economics (UK), he is passionate about women’s empowerment, human capital and the Sustainable Development Goals. He is presently the UNFPA Representative in Chad.