

UNFPA Input
Report of the Secretary - General on Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027) on the theme “Accelerating global actions for a world without poverty”

UNFPA has been requested to outline the progress made, gaps, as well as challenges faced in the eradication of poverty, in particular in developing countries and comprehensive action-oriented recommendations to accelerate progress towards eradication of poverty. Specifically the request entails:

- “In accordance with your mandate, provide inputs on the progress made in implementing the inter-agency, system-wide plan of action for poverty eradication, focusing on key activities, assessment of results as well as proposed measures, programmes and policies to end poverty”
- “Highlight efforts made to foster greater inter-agency convergence and collaboration in sharing knowledge, promoting policy dialogue, facilitating synergies, mobilising funds and providing technical assistance in the key areas of policy focus contained in the system-wide plan of action.”

Thirty years after the adoption of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), countries have made remarkable progress in building capacity and integrating the core principles of the Programme of Action into national development strategies. The ICPD Programme of Action states that “persistent widespread poverty as well as serious social and gender inequities have significant influences on, and are in turn influenced by, demographic parameters such as population growth, structure and distribution.” (PoA, para 3.1) Integrated development solutions, firmly based in human rights and evidence-based analysis and, the integration of human rights, the status of women and girls, population dynamics, as well as sexual and reproductive health (SRH) all of UNFPAs work.

The ICPD PoA and its provisions are as relevant today, if not more so, as they were then. The promise of Cairo rested on a vision of achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, as the cornerstone of a people-centred sustainable development model. Much has been achieved in these past 30 years, but with multifaceted crises threatening to erode hard-won gains on the ICPD agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, we are at a critical inflection point. The unfinished business and the vision for humanity expressed by the ICPD is urgent and cannot be postponed any longer. The world is undergoing unprecedented changes: economically, socially, geo-politically, demographically. Changes that affect the entire humanity. How we deal with these challenges will define our common future; in fact, our collective future depends on it.

The costs of inaction are simply too great. We risk perpetuating existing inequalities and failing to achieve sustainable development goals. The economic, social, and environmental costs of not prioritising people-centred development are staggering, and will be disproportionately borne by the poorest and most marginalised communities.

Key areas priority areas for UNFPA interventions

Thematic Area 1: Strengthen capacity at global and national levels for implementing the 2030 Agenda through accelerated implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, with specific focus on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality as a pathway for reducing poverty

- Under current trends, 575 million people will still be living in extreme poverty in 2030, and only about one third of countries will meet the target to halve national poverty levels. Shockingly, the world is back at hunger levels not seen since 2005, and food prices remain higher in more countries than in the period 2015–2019. The way things are going, it will take 286 years to close gender gaps in legal protection and remove discriminatory laws. And in education, the impacts of years of underinvestment and learning losses are such that, by 2030, some 84 million children will be out of school and 300 million children or

young people attending school will leave unable to read and write.¹ People living in fragile and conflict-affected contexts are the furthest behind in the world in realising sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Before, during and after conflict, reproductive rights are violated; women and girls in conflict situations experience high rates of gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful practices, preventable maternal deaths, and unplanned pregnancies. Essential SRHR services are often inadequate and the barriers to accessing those available are high, further exacerbating exclusion and vulnerability.

- By preventing unintended pregnancies, family planning initiatives are empowering women to pursue educational and economic opportunities, thereby reducing poverty and promoting gender equality. The UNFPA Supplies Partnership, UNFPA's flagship initiative for family planning, is providing dedicated support to 54 of the lowest-income countries and reaching over 20 million women and adolescent girls each year with quality-assured contraceptives and supporting the introduction of new, and scale-up of lesser-used, contraceptives in more countries thus enhancing the quality and range of reproductive health services available to women. However, significant challenges remain with 220 million women in developing countries who want to prevent or delay pregnancy are not using a modern method of contraception, and over 800 women still dying each day during pregnancy and childbirth, most of which are preventable with adequate treatment and care. Barriers to accessing reproductive health services include resource constraints, sociocultural norms and beliefs, gender inequality, geographical and economic challenges, limited educational opportunities for women and girls, restrictive laws and policies, and lack of community support, particularly in low-income and conflict-affected regions. There is also a need for more robust data collection and monitoring to effectively track progress and address gaps.
- UNFPA engaged in Inter-agency partnership and collaboration in sharing knowledge in various normative processes, including the 68th session of the Commission on Status of Women (CSW). UNFPA participated in the Expert Group Meeting, provided technical papers, inputs and supported UN-Women in the 68th session of CSW under the theme: "Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective". The agreed conclusions of the CSW68 outline key actions for the UN system, Member States and other stakeholders to address the root causes of poverty among women.
- UNFPA collaborated closely with DESA, the Regional Economic Commissions and took a multistakeholder approach to inform the reports to the 57th session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the ICPD. The outcome of the CPD, a Political Declaration in which, Member States pledged to "Renew our determination to advance the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Programme of Action, to address its unfinished business with a sense of urgency, duty and responsibility, in the spirit of international cooperation, global partnership and solidarity, and to reinforce the interlinkages between population and development in relevant multilateral processes, deeply convinced that the Programme of Action remains as relevant as it was 30 years ago;"
- Under UNFPA's leadership, guidance on measurement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 5.6.1 on women's decision-making on SRHR was provided to all countries, and the first data on SDG 5.6.2 on laws and regulations that guarantee women's access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) care, information and education were collected from 107 countries. Based on the quality and scale of data collection, SDG 5.6.2 was upgraded from tier III to tier II indicator by the Inter-Agency Expert Group for SDGs.
- Addressing poverty, inequality, discrimination and social inclusion are critical to foster just and equitable societies. UNFPA strengthens the availability of data disaggregated by gender/race/ethnicity and other important factors to inform targeted and evidence-based policies and programmes that leave no one behind and accelerate efforts to end poverty. For example, UNFPA partnered with the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics to include the Quilombola people in the 2022 National Demographic Census to address service delivery gaps, creating greater social inclusion and cohesion. UNFPA's People of African descent initiative also works on social, racial and gender justice. In 2023, UNFPA published [Maternal Health Analysis of Women and Girls of African Descent in the Americas](#), and [In our words: Voices of Women of African Descent for Reproductive and Climate Justice](#).
- UNFPA has committed in its Strategic Plan (2022-2025) to continue to prioritise populations in fragile and conflict-affected settings and those that are furthest behind by

¹ [The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023](#)

strengthening the complementarity of its efforts across the Humanitarian, Development, Peace (HDP) nexus to address the causes of chronic vulnerability. This entails working more deliberately to have a positive influence on conflict and peace drivers within the scope of UNFPA's mandate and across all areas of UNFPA's work, with a special focus on women and youth as agents of change, in line with the Women Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas. For example, in 2022 UNFPA established 642 women and youth-friendly safe spaces in 32 countries, those spaces provide a broad range of services complementary to SRH information and services including psychological support, legal services, recreation, vocational training and community outreach.

Recommendations:

- *Renewing the political commitment to fully realise the goals of the ICPD should include collective efforts by Governments, civil society and other stakeholders to implement evidence-based population and development policies. Multilateral cooperation will be needed even more than before to tackle development issues in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. In this regard, UN agencies should support Member States in accelerating the unfinished business of fully implementing the ICPD, address the root causes of poverty among women and girls, who remain the most vulnerable segment of the population. UN entities should continue to support Member States by translating the outcomes of these global normative processes into actionable initiatives at the regional and national levels.*
- *Equality and human dignity are integral to human rights and fundamental for efforts to fight poverty and ensure equality and social justice for all. UN entities should support countries in mainstreaming rights-based approaches, strengthening governance systems, investing in multi-stakeholder partnerships, and adopting inclusive approaches to policy making processes in these areas in order to ensure more equal and just societies that are equipped to address unequal wealth distribution.*
- *It is not possible to have a balanced and integrated approach to development without increased international financing for the accelerated implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, to complement and catalyse domestic financing. The international community should consider ways to address the issues of financing supportive measures and interventions that promote gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment.*
- *Quality, disaggregated data remains a critical accelerator for delivering on the SDGs. Targeted investments in gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data are critical, as SDG 5 has one of the largest data deficits, with only 48% of the data needed to monitor targets. The differentiated impacts of the pandemic, including in relation to gender, ethnicity, and other status, must be emphasised in our data collection, reporting, and response. Indeed, there is a need for enhanced and aligned data collection and monitoring systems to track progress and inform policy decisions.*

Thematic Area 2: Address feminisation of poverty through structural transformation, productive employment and decent work

- The combined repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, cost-of-living, food, fuel and debt crises, environmental and climate emergencies, and escalating conflicts have a disproportionate impact on women and girls, rendering them increasingly vulnerable to poverty, exclusion and violence. The unpaid care burden is a significant source of inequality and poverty for women. Globally, women continue to face an unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work, providing more than twice the unpaid care work of men. In total, 178 countries maintain legal barriers that prevent women's full economic participation, and 95 countries do not guarantee equal pay for equal work.²
- Feminisation of poverty persists, including because the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, does not sufficiently take into account women's economic empowerment as imperative for sustainable development. Ameliorating women's poverty and ensuring their right to an adequate standard of living depended on targeting persistent inequalities in access to social protection, public services and sustainable infrastructure, must be treated as an investment in future economic growth as well as working towards a more equal society. Women and girls who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination are particularly subject to exclusion and poverty.

² [Report of the Secretary-General: Implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and its contributions to advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development \(E/CN.9/2024/3\)](#)

- Establishing gender responsive policies that help recognise, reduce, and redistribute women’s disproportionate reproductive labour or unpaid care work burden, through financial support for families, quality and affordable childcare and care arrangements for older persons, flexible work arrangements, more equal parental leave provisions for both parents, and measures that promote equitable gender norms including men’s participation in care work are needed to address the feminization of poverty.
- The empowerment of women is a transformative process, requiring mutually reinforcing changes across behavioural norms, institutional structures, legal rights and protections, and political representation. In education, women have made extraordinary gains in the past 30 years, with girls now at parity with boys in primary school enrolments and females surpassing males in post-secondary education.³ Global educational enrolment rates have increased, with notable improvements in gender parity in primary and secondary education. Initiatives to enhance vocational training and digital skills are helping to prepare youths for the labour market.

Recommendations:

- *Renewed, robust investments, as well as, development efforts are needed to strengthen social protection, public services and sustainable infrastructure to ensure the economic and social security, resilience and well-being of women and girls.*
- *It is imperative to protect and advance hard won gains in educational attainment and political representation of women and girls. Removing structural barriers in accessing health care and adequate nutrition; obtaining formal employment and social protection, will help alleviate the burden of unpaid work, contribute to women’s economic empowerment and freedom from fear and violence.*
- *Measures should be taken to reallocate harmful subsidies and tax incentives to pro-poor, gender-transformative policies and programmes.*
- *Increasing women’s representation, leadership and participation in economic institutions to address institutional gender biases and promote gender responsive, pro-poor economic policy action are key actions to fight the feminisation of poverty.*

Thematic Area 3: Reducing inequalities through addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

- Global awareness and action against GBV have increased, supported by campaigns and legislation aimed at protecting women from violence and supporting survivors. Programs like the UN’s [HeForShe](#) initiative and various national hotlines and support services have been significant. However, women continue to be disproportionately subjected to GBV, including sexual, physical, psychological and economic violence and femicide, most of which is perpetuated by current or former husbands or intimate partners. An estimated 736 million women, almost one in three, have been subjected to intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both, in their lifetimes.
- Conflict settings also have a greater prevalence of, and risk factors for, all forms of GBV, including intimate partner violence, sex trafficking and sexual exploitation, and child early and forced marriage. GBV, and the social and gender norms that underpin it, play a role in perpetuating conflict and armed mobilisation. Although context dependent, often GBV plays an important part in the collective grievances that fuel cycles of revenge and retaliation and in the motivation to join armed groups, including for protection. High levels of GBV during conflict impact patterns of violence for years to come, persisting after conflict formally ends, if left unaddressed. This has long-lasting repercussions for economic recovery, social cohesion, safety and security, and for sustainable peace.
- Policies to end GBV should draw on proven interventions, including the promotion of gender equality training and positive masculinities for men and boys, and the legal, institutional and health systems to guarantee women and girls immediate protection and care, and long-term support. The growing threat of technology-facilitated GBV calls for urgent efforts to strengthen global networking and public awareness of risks and to define protective regulatory structures.
- Addressing gender-related biases in technology can contribute to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, and, in particular, the feminization of poverty, and a gender-responsive approach should therefore be taken in the

design, development, deployment and use of policies related to digital technologies with full respect for human rights.⁴

- UNFPA continues to implement a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to programming. The [Guidance Note on HRBA](#) is a response to the United Nations Secretary-General's 2020 “Call to Action for HR” noting that “people – and their rights – must be front and centre” to the work of all the UN system. The guidance therefore provides UNFPA and other UN entities, government and stakeholders, with clear and comprehensive direction for its human rights-based work, based UNFPAs unique mandate. Its three components for action are: i) Equality & Non-discrimination, ii) Quality and iii) Accountability

Recommendations:

- *Policies to end GBV should draw on proven interventions, including the promotion of gender equality training and positive masculinities for men and boys, and the legal, institutional and health systems to guarantee women and girls immediate protection and care, and long -term support.*
- *The growing threat of technology-facilitated GBV calls for urgent efforts to strengthen global networking and public awareness of risks and to define protective regulatory structures.*

Thematic Area 4: Health and harmful practices

- UNFPA and UNICEF have jointly led the largest global programme to accelerate the elimination of [female genital mutilation](#) (FGM) since 2008. In close collaboration with governments, grassroots community organisations and other key stakeholders, the Joint Programme harnesses the complementary expertise of both UNFPA and UNICEF, as well as the latest social science research, to prevent FGM across the 17 countries where the programme operates.
- While the proportion of young women married before their eighteenth birthday has declined from 25 to 19 per cent since 1999, (with rapid decline in some countries including Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Maldives and Rwanda), population growth has resulted in the absolute number of child brides globally projected to increase from 1.48 to 1.82 million by 2030. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates of child marriage, with little progress observed, and levels since 2002 have remained unchanged in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- UNFPA, together with UNICEF and UN-Women launched its [factsheet](#) on Indigenous women's maternal health, as the first document to bring together all the available data on this issue, with concrete recommendations for how to address the disparities among Indigenous and non-indigenous women's maternal health. UNFPA served as the Co-Chair for the inter-agency group on Indigenous Peoples for 2021 and 2022. A [UN Wide Call to Action: Building an Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Future with Indigenous Peoples](#), was developed through the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues and approved by the High-level Committee on Programmes in November 2020. The Call to Action aims to: ensure more systematic participation of Indigenous Peoples in UN processes and initiatives that affect them; strengthen targeted actions at the country level to support the rights of Indigenous Peoples and learning from good practices; ensure greater accountability and visibility for the action plan; and, strengthen the disaggregation of data on Indigenous Peoples to ensure greater visibility of Indigenous Peoples and their situation.
- UNFPA engaged in a multi stakeholder collaboration with five other UN entities (WHO, UNICEF, UN-Women, UNAIDS and the World Bank) through the Health 6 (H6) partnership and initiatives such as Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality and the Every Newborn Action Plan (EPMM/ENAP), the Human Reproduction Programme, the Alliance to Improve Midwifery Education and the Partnership for Maternal and Newborn Child Health (PMNCH).
- Through the Maternal and Newborn Health Thematic Fund (MHTF), significant progress was made towards achieving the UNFPA transformative result of ending preventable maternal deaths and the 2030 Agenda. In 2022, the MHTF continued to provide tailored and catalytic support with the overall goal of ensuring that every woman, adolescent girl and newborn has equitable and accountable access to quality sexual, reproductive, maternal and newborn health and rights. It did so by strengthening health systems in 32 countries with high maternal morbidity and mortality spanning five regions: the Arab States; Asia and the Pacific; East and Southern Africa; Latin America and the Caribbean; and West and

Central Africa. Still, recent data show that maternal deaths have either increased or plateaued across nearly all global regions since 2015.⁵ This means that every day almost 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. In this context, the MHTF is needed more than ever and the MHTF continues to deliver results on the ground.

- While half a million women are estimated to be living with obstetric fistula, the UN General Assembly (A/RES/73/147) called upon States and/or the relevant funds and programmes, organs and the specialised agencies of the UN system to end obstetric fistula within a decade, and the UNFPA-led [global Campaign to End Fistula](#) strengthens national capacities to address traumatic childbirth injury and supports prevention, treatment, social reintegration, advocacy and fistula repair surgeries. The Campaign to End Fistula aims to prevent and treat obstetric fistula while promoting women's wider health. Obstetric fistula occurs disproportionately among impoverished, often uneducated vulnerable girls and women as a consequence of the inadequate numbers of well-trained and strategically located health-care providers - it is an indication of gender inequality and poverty.

Recommendations:

- *Scale-up evidence based interventions targeting child and early marriage and FGM, including through addressing social and behavioural norms at the community level, advancing legal rights and ensuring social protection, are likely to reduce the number of girls at risk and contribute to eradication of poverty.*
- *Using updated methods, investments should be made towards strengthening national statistical systems, including to track GBV trends and gender statistics. This will also help reduce inequalities.*
- *There is an urgent need for Governments with the support of the UN system as appropriate to enhance prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, ending harmful social practices, including child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) and FGM.*
- *As agreed by Member States in the ICPD, everyone has the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, which includes, comprehensive reproductive health care, SRH services, safe pregnancy and childbirth services, access to modern contraception, prevention, treatment of sexually transmitted infections and psychosocial stress treatment.*
- *Universal health coverage is an essential component of ensuring good health at all ages and should be part and parcel of primary health care, complemented by dedicated efforts to expand the health workforce world-wide.*
- *Ensure investments to strengthen governance structures at all levels of the health system and enhance fundamental obstetric services; strengthen reproductive and maternal and newborn healthcare systems, skilled medical personnel, infrastructure and supplies; ensure functioning accountability, quality assurance and monitoring mechanisms; and implement strategies to ensure timely access to safe and high-quality surgical repair;*
- *Implementing and monitoring human rights-based, gender-transformative and multisectoral national strategies, policies, action plans and budgets is imperative if we are to eliminate obstetric fistula by 2030.*

Thematic Area 5: Universal Health Coverage

- Promote universal health coverage (UHC) that comprises universal and equitable access to quality health services and ensures affordable and quality service delivery, especially through primary health care (PHC) is imperative. Steps towards UHC have been made, with several countries expanding access to health services through national health insurance schemes and strengthening primary healthcare systems. Advancing and enhancing access to SRH care, will positively impact women's economic empowerment and contribute to addressing the feminisation of poverty. To this end, inclusion of SRHR must be seen as an essential part of UHC. Countries moving towards UHC must consider how the SRHR needs of their population are met throughout the life course, from infancy and childhood through adolescence and into adulthood and old age.
- To better support countries in achieving the health-related SDGs, the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-Being for All was launched before the UN General Assembly in 2019 and is implemented by 67 countries. The plan includes four main commitments: engage, accelerate, align, and account, along with seven accelerator themes: primary health-

⁵ World Health Organization (2023). Trends in Maternal Mortality 2000 to 2020: Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and UNDESA/Population Division. World Health Organization: Geneva.

care, sustainable financing, community engagement, health determinants, innovative programming, research and development, and data and digital health.⁶

Recommendations:

- *Health-care systems should be further strengthened to provide equitable and universal access to quality, integrated and comprehensive SRH care services, while protecting, respecting and fulfilling the human rights of all persons, including their reproductive rights. This will continue to be relevant to those with unmet needs for family planning and will be increasingly relevant to those who have fewer children than they desire.*
- *Actions are needed to ensure access to UHC, through relevant partnerships and with support from development partners.*

Thematic Area 6: Social protection systems, investments in women and International Financial Architecture

- UNFPA has supported practical changes to the national transfer account tool to incorporate gender into what is now referenced as NTTA – national time transfer accounts. These are increasingly (although not exclusively) being used and integrate a gender module. The purpose of integrating ‘time’ in a gendered manner is that this new methodology includes counting unpaid caregiving time for children and elderly relatives, tasks which predominantly fall to women, and how this is being shared across generations. It was born out of a project under Berkeley University called [Counting Women’s Work](#). UNFPA is currently developing guidance for offices to support the implementation of NTTAs.⁷
- Well-designed social protection systems prevent people from sliding into poverty when they are out of work and help people to re-engage in work through special support measures. Benefits range from support for children and families, maternity, unemployment, employment injury, sickness, old age, disability, survivors and health protection, funded through a combination of contributory schemes like social insurance and non-contributory tax-financed benefits. Ensuring inclusive social protection systems requires adaptation to demographic shifts, changes in the world of work and migration patterns, among others, to assure they are responsive to diverse and dynamic social needs.
- Expansion of social protection programs has provided a safety net for millions globally, helping to reduce poverty and inequality, yet coverage remains extremely low in countries with the highest poverty rates.
- Examples of social protection interventions targeting specific population groups are numerous and include the Kazi Mtaani initiative in Kenya, which was implemented by the Government to address youth unemployment in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Mongolia, UNFPA participated in a joint programme that introduced social protection to herder families to promote social and health insurance. In Colombia, the temporary protection statute (Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos) is an example of social protection that provides a 10-year window for regularisation that grants access to formal employment, education, health care and financial services for almost two million migrants and refugees
- UNFPA pays particular attention to the importance of supporting those most in need, in supporting countries to accelerate their efforts to eradicate poverty and to promote the empowerment of the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including women, children and youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons.
- Reform of the international financial architecture, as well as international financial institution (IFI) and multilateral development bank (MDB) reform as a key for large-scale SDG-related investments in order to better address global challenges. UNFPA worked closely with UN-Women and other partners during the CSW68, providing evidence based information emphasising the critical need for a robust international financial architecture that supports the financing needs of developing countries, particularly for gender equality initiatives. The CSW68 highlighted that the current system often fails to address the needs of women and girls, particularly those in poverty, effectively. The financial architecture should therefore evolve to provide equitable, sustainable financing solutions that support gender-responsive development policies.

⁶ What worked? What didn’t? What’s next? 2023 progress report on the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2023,

⁷ Report commissioned by the Evaluation Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2023, entitled [“UNFPA support to population dynamics and data”](#)

- Gender-responsive budgeting is essential for ensuring that gender equality commitments translate into impactful actions. UNFPA continues to support this work, and worked with the Government of Namibia on a Joint Programme, that outlines the budget allocations of the Namibian Government for gender equality and SRHR. The Joint Programme aims to create the right conditions and build capacities for the alignment of public and private capital with the SDGs, and to improve the quality and scale of financing.⁸
- Gender-responsive budgeting involves revising budgetary frameworks and financial policies to allocate resources effectively to gender equality programs. This strategy ensures that financial resources are used to promote gender equality systematically across all sectors of governance, enhancing the overall effectiveness of public spending and ensuring that women and girls benefit equitably from development initiatives. It aims to address longer-term structural issues, including structural constraints faced by women as economic agents, and to remove any barriers that prevent women from being full participants in the economy, by, inter alia, undertaking legislation and administrative reforms, as appropriate, to give women equal rights with men in socio political and economic decision-making.

Recommendations:

- *Well designed social protection systems and policies should be instituted or strengthened to promote the full involvement of men and boys in all aspects of family life, to rebalance gender roles and to redistribute unpaid care work more equally between women and men. Policies aimed at balancing work and family responsibilities include creating family-friendly and gender-sensitive work environments and providing flexible working arrangements, affordable care and support for young children and other dependents, and access to maternity, paternity, parental, family and other forms of leave. Priority should be given to policies that remove barriers to women's full participation in the labour force and that recognize and value unpaid care and household work.*
- *Education, opportunities for decent work and social protection should be expanded. Urgent efforts are needed to address the current and projected shortfall of trained teachers, to promote modern pedagogy and to assure the requisite infrastructure to meet the educational needs of growing populations, including the need for rights based and age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). Universal access to high-quality upper secondary education should become a global priority, coupled with stronger systems of life-long learning to improve access to changing labour markets for older persons, the under-employed, persons who missed early schooling, migrants, persons with disabilities and the millions of people unable to have access to the skills needed for gainful employment. Education systems should facilitate smooth school-to-work transitions for graduates, actively engage prospective employers in curriculum design and improve the operational infrastructure for entrepreneurship and job creation. Social protection coverage should be expanded to assure that basic needs are met during periods of economic instability and at older ages and to facilitate the integration of people into the labour force.*
- *Resources to address women's and girls' poverty should be significantly increased through the mobilisation of financial resources from all sources, including public, private, domestic and international, including the scaling up of development finance through the reform of the multilateral development banks;*
- *Non-discriminatory laws, social infrastructure and policies for sustainable development, and enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy and their equal access to decision-making processes and leadership should be promoted and enforces;⁹*
- *Transparency and equal participation in the budgeting process and gender-responsive budgeting should be promoted.*

Thematic Area 7: Data, Demographic Trends and Societies for All Ages

- Population trends and dynamics can have an enormous effect on prospects for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Where population growth far outpaces economic development, countries will have a difficult time providing access to services to those most in need and investing in the human capital needed to harness the demographic dividend and secure the well-being of its people and to stimulate further economic growth. This issue is especially acute for the least developed countries, many of which will be facing a doubling, or even a tripling of their populations over the next half century. Almost 9 in 10

⁸ [UNFPA Namibia](#) Gender-Responsive Budget Analytical (GRBA) Report.

⁹ E/CN.6/2024/3

of the world's poor live in pre- or early-dividend countries, i.e. countries at an earlier stage of their demographic transitions.

- As countries embark in their demographic transitions, the concentration of the population in young and productive ages opens up a window of opportunity to achieve a demographic dividend and raise living standards for the poor. However, this can only be achieved if the right investments are made to address some of the bottlenecks for human capital development, such as the low uptake of modern contraception, high school dropout often associated with adolescent pregnancies and child marriage, and low women's participation in economic activity.
- UNFPA works to ensure that international migration is recognized as an important factor in development. An active member of the Global Migration Group, UNFPA works to leverage the human, social and economic development potential of migration, advocating for better migration data to inform policies and promoting the incorporation of migration into national development plans. Addressing the root causes of migration, notably poverty, and advocating for providing adequate protection and assistance to internally displaced persons, especially vulnerable groups like women, children and the elderly is necessary to promote safe, regular and orderly migration. Stronger efforts are therefore needed to expand the humane reception of migrants and refugees, especially in the light of the growing numbers of people displaced over the past decade, owing to conflict, poverty and climate and environmental events, and the likelihood that the climate crises will uproot a growing number of people in the decades ahead.
- Older people are often exposed to a heightened risk of poverty. Ageing populations and demographic shifts have prompted policy reforms in several countries, focusing on extending work lives, enhancing pension systems, and integrating older adults into active economic roles. To expand learning and employment opportunities for older people in Chile, the age limit for national training and employment service programmes was abolished. The Republic of Korea introduced a senior employment programme in 2004, aiming to provide supplemental income, alleviate poverty, enhance social engagement and preserve health among people aged 60 and above. As of 2021, 6.4 per cent of the 60 and older age group had participated in the programme. Policies are increasingly designed to support ageing populations, including older women, through improved healthcare, pension reforms, and anti-discrimination measures.
- Population data provide the backbone of the SDG framework, being required for monitoring more than 100 SDG indicators. In low and middle income countries, population and housing censuses allow for the measurement of multi-dimensional poverty and deprivation at small area level and provide the sampling frame for household surveys to estimate monetary poverty indicators. Improvements in data collection and monitoring systems have enhanced the ability to track poverty and assess program effectiveness. In particular, the expanded availability of satellite imagery and machine learning algorithms has also facilitated the estimation of population distributions at fine spatial scales, including in hard-to-reach areas, and enabled the development of new applications to map and identify climate-vulnerable populations.
- Efforts have been enhanced to improve the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data, crucial for informed policy-making and resource allocation. Yet, shortfalls in data persist, including on trends in maternal mortality and GBV and disaggregated data to understand inequalities, including standardised gender statistics to understand the obstacles to women's empowerment in different societies.
- Megatrends are exposing new population data needs, including: for a better understanding of human-environmental interactions and population vulnerabilities to climate change; the scale and drivers of human migration; changes in behavioural and social norms, including changing fertility aspirations; emerging trends in health and well-being and new pandemic risks; the costs and benefits of new modes for health care delivery; and the impact of technology on fear, misogyny and violence, among others.

Recommendations:

- *All countries are encouraged to invest in their youth. It is young people who will power productive economies, address the climate crisis throughout their lives and harness the tech revolution. While the benefits of investment in young people are universal, they are especially urgent for countries with large numbers of adolescents and youth and those losing young people to out-migration.*
- *Governments should work to expand opportunities for lifelong learning and gainful employment at older ages for those who can and wish to work, while also promoting digital*

literacy and facilitating access to new information and communications technologies among older persons.

- *Societies must prepare for an older society and support healthy ageing. Governments should eradicate practices that disadvantage older persons in the labour market, and should adapt infrastructure and social protection systems, including pensions, to assure the security, well-being and contributions of older persons. Policies and terms of employment are needed to reform the care economy so that care of older persons is protected and adequately compensated.*
- *As the demographic transition progresses, countries should formulate and implement policies aimed at addressing population ageing by reforming health and social protection systems and by developing sustainable systems for long term care. Efforts to strengthen social protection systems should be complemented with relevant labour market reforms, including the gradual phasing-in of higher statutory retirement ages, the expansion of flexible or part-time employment options and the promotion of age-friendly work environments, multigenerational workforces and programmes to support healthy ageing.*
- *All governments are encouraged to sign the UN 2018 Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration, with the aim of leveraging the opportunities posed by international migration in a comprehensive and cooperative manner. Political leaders in recipient countries should consider shifting from restrictive immigration stances to policies that secure safe, orderly and regular migration, which have potential to significantly contribute to global poverty eradication efforts.*
- *Initiatives to strengthen national statistical capacities are crucial for informed policymaking. All of the above recommendations are more effectively designed, implemented and monitored with foresight into future demographic trends. The systematic consideration of demographic data and projections is critical for countries to understand the changing characteristics and needs of the population. Robust registry-based national data systems, including gender statistics and disaggregated data to track inequalities, identifying those furthest behind and hardest to reach, should be strengthened to ensure evidence - based, sustainable and people-centred development.*