



Leaving no one behind: Counting all people, because all of them count

Demographic data are fundamental to developing and assessing social and economic policies, including those focused on poverty reduction, and they provide an essential evidence base for national and local policymakers. The need for high-quality, timely, reliable and relevant demographic data has gained prominence in light of the recent adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in which population-related issues underpin many of the goals and targets.

It is therefore quite timely that the theme of the Commission on Population and Development in 2016 is “Strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda”.

The upcoming session of the Commission will consider this topic from 11 to 15 April at UN Headquarters in New York. It is expected that the discussions will focus on the critical importance of demographic data and analysis for achieving sustainable development and for ensuring that no one is left behind, and on how the demographic evidence base can be strengthened to help achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

Discussions and negotiations on the annual theme, informed by two recent reports of the Secretary-General, will capture the attention of members of the Commission and of a wide range of stakeholders, including many from civil society. In addition, there will be keynote presentations and panel discussions, as well as a variety of side-events, which will enhance and enrich the discussions.

Birth registration establishes legal identity for all persons

Administrative data systems, including civil registration and population registers, are a key source of statistics on fertility, mortality and migration. Birth registration is also important as a means of establishing legal identity for all persons.

However, administrative data are often lacking in developing countries. Strengthening the human capacity for building and maintaining such data systems will require increased political will and commitment from the countries themselves, as well as enhanced support from donors and the international community.



Collecting demographic data via censuses and household surveys

Other techniques for the collection of demographic data include censuses and household surveys. Governments should ensure that all countries participate in the 2020 round of population censuses, so that the entire population is enumerated and its basic characteristics are recorded at least once per decade.

By leveraging advances in information and communication technologies, it is possible to improve the efficiency of data collection and processing. Likewise, Governments should strengthen nationwide household survey programmes by reinforcing the capacity of national statistical offices to collect such data.

Data disaggregation essential for social inclusion

For all methods of data collection, data disaggregation is essential in order to respond effectively to the imperative for social inclusion emphasized in the 2030 Agenda.

Ideally, demographic data and estimates should be disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

In addition, the geographic coordinates associated with each observation should be recorded and included in publicly accessible data sets, where possible, to allow disaggregation by location. Geo-referenced micro-data offer considerable flexibility in the specification of the geographic units that are used for a particular analysis and greatly enhance the opportunities for examining a given topic from the perspective of the most-affected groups.

Strengthening the demographic evidence base at the global level

Both big data and open-data initiatives provide important opportunities for making use of non-traditional data sources. However, it is essential for producers and

Governments to develop rigorous protocols for protecting the privacy of individuals and safeguarding the confidentiality of the information.

Finally, the United Nations has an important role to play in strengthening the demographic evidence base at the global level. It is expected that the various departments, agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system will continue to collaborate in harmonizing estimates, improving estimation methods, and reporting on progress at the regional and global levels, while at the same time working to enhance national capacities for the production and use of high-quality demographic data.

Follow the discussion on Twitter using the hashtags #CPD49 and #UNPopulation. The plenary session will also be broadcast live via UN Web TV.

For more information:

49th session of the Commission on Population and Development

HIGHLIGHTS

Turning pledges into reality to finance sustainable development



“Let’s demonstrate our commitment to realizing the sustainable development goals through financing for development,” said Oh Joon, President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), ahead of the inaugural ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum, which will be held in New York on 18-20 April under the theme “Financing for sustainable development: follow-up to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.”

The Forum is the first event to follow up on last year’s Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the promises made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which was adopted by the international community in the Ethiopian capital on 16 July 2015.

“It provides a strong foundation for our efforts to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by the year 2030,” Mr. Joon said, describing the comprehensive framework outlined in the Addis Agenda, which mobilizes all sources of finance and covers cooperation on a range of issues including technology, science, innovation, trade and capacity building. He also called for strong commitments and high-level participation at the upcoming event.

High-level officials to take the stage

During its opening segment on Monday 18 April, the Forum will feature the Special high-level meeting of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Heads of major institutions and their intergovernmental bodies are expected to take the stage, followed by ministers and other high-level officials. An interactive dialogue will be held between UN Ambassadors and Executive Directors of the World Bank and IMF.

The two remaining days of the Forum will comprise of its general segment which will include a series of interactive multi-stakeholder round tables with more focused, expert-level discussions, and a briefing for civil society and business sector.

Task Force releases inaugural report ahead of event

The deliberations by Member States and other stakeholders at the Forum will be informed by the report of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development (IATF), convened by the Secretary-General in late 2015.

The IATF inaugural report “Addis Ababa Action Agenda: Monitoring commitments and actions” has been published on the website of UN DESA’s Financing for Development Office, only a few weeks before the opening of the Forum. With over 50 agencies contributing, the report maps out the commitments and action items contained in the Addis Agenda and lays out how the Task Force will monitor their implementation in future years.

Unlocking potential to expand access to finance

Led by the two co-facilitators, Jean-François Regis Zinsou, Permanent Representative of Benin to the UN and Vladimir Drobnjak, Permanent Representative of Croatia to the UN, the Forum will result in inter-governmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations, which will be fed into the work of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development taking place in July this year.

As the first major follow up event to last year’s Financing for Development conference, the Forum will bring together Member States and institutional stakeholders to reaffirm their pledges on more than 100 concrete measures outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, exchange experiences and provide recommendations for future actions.

It will also provide an opportunity for unprecedented cooperation between various stakeholders, offering a chance to expand access to finance and ensure that financing flows are aligned with economic, social and environmental policy priorities.

For more information:

[ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum](#)

Transforming public institutions and moving towards inclusive policies for the SDGs

Good governance and a well-functioning public administration are cornerstones of sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda also recognizes the importance of inclusive and integrated policy formulation and effective, responsive, transparent and accountable public institutions for the sustainable development goals (SDGs). In response to the new agenda, Governments around the world are to undertake transformative actions for implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.



On 18-22 April, the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) will meet in New York for its 15th annual session. It will debate how public institutions can transform themselves to spur coordinated and integrated actions to implement and monitor the SDGs and their targets.

“From ending hunger and poverty, to ensuring quality education, healthy lives, gender equality, and access to water, energy, sanitation, employment, infrastructure, and to reducing inequality, emissions, unsustainable consumption, and to protecting oceans and our ecosystems – none of these goals and their related targets could be achieved without efficient, effective, inclusive, accountable and robust public institution”, said UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Mr. Wu Hongbo, as he addressed last year’s session.

Addressing a number of sub-themes

CEPA will address five sub-themes: a) Ensuring decision-making that is fair, responsive, inclusive, participatory and accountable; b) Improving engagement and communication between Governments and stakeholders (including through access to information, open government and electronic and mobile solutions); c) Ensuring effective and innovative implementation, monitoring and impact evaluation of the policies in support of the Sustainable Development Goals; d) Strengthening the confidence of citizens in public administration through efforts to prevent, expose and deal with corruption; and e) Developing transformative leadership and enhancing relevant competencies of public servants.

Leaving no one behind

“There is a need for governments to have a dialogue with their citizens more effectively to better understand citizen expectations: to keep as close as possible to citizens in designing, developing and implementing policies and programs that affect them. This will be particularly important in attempts to achieve progress on the SDGs”, said Ms. Meredith Edwards, CEPA Member, during the 14th Session of CEPA.

The Committee will also reflect on how public administrations can respond to the principle of leaving no one behind. This will be a contribution to the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

Members of CEPA will present papers on various issues to support the Committee's discussions. In addition, insights will be provided by the report of the expert group meeting which met in New York in preparation for the session.

CEPA will adopt a report for the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with conclusions and recommendations on transforming public institutions for implementation of the SDGs.

For more information:

Committee of Experts on Public Administration

GET INVOLVED



Join online discussions on science, technology and innovation

On 6-7 June, the first annual Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum) will take place at UN Headquarters in New York.

As an integral part of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism mandated by the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the STI Forum is expected to provide a venue for facilitating interaction, matchmaking and the establishment of networks between relevant stakeholders and multi-stakeholder partnerships, within and beyond the United Nations.

Online discussions are currently being organized prior to the STI Forum to ensure inclusiveness, transparency and multi-stakeholder engagement. Syntheses of the online discussion, which will run from 8 April – 10 May, will inform the Forum in June.

Join the discussion online and share your views on the following questions:

- Why are science, technology and innovation essential for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals? Please provide one or more concrete examples that, in your experience, best exemplify this.
- What are the main opportunities and challenges – at policy, organisational and individual levels – for maximizing the contribution of science, technology and innovation to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals?
- What are the key elements that countries and international organizations may need to take into account in formulating action plans and/or roadmaps for science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals?

- How can we deploy existing knowledge and new, innovative solutions and technologies and make them more readily available to those who need them?
- What would be success criteria for the STI Forum in the coming years? What questions should the STI Forum focus on?

Join the online discussion [here](#).

For more information:

First annual Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum)

EXPERT VOICES



Forests essential to combat climate change

Ahead of the historic moment when world leaders will sign the Paris Agreement on climate change at UN Headquarters on 22 April, Mr. Manoel Sobral Filho, Director of UN Forum on Forests Secretariat in UN DESA, explains how forests are essential to combat climate change.

Why is it not possible to combat climate change and global warming without conserving, enhancing and sustaining healthy forests?

“As the UN Secretary-General highlighted in his message on the International Day of Forests on 21 March, “forests provide one of the most cost-effective and efficient natural carbon capture and storage systems”. Reducing deforestation and forest degradation lowers greenhouse gas emissions and increases carbon sequestration. Conserving and enhancing healthy forests also helps adapt to climate change and strengthens climate resilience of communities.”

To what extent are deforestation and forest degradation linked to global warming?

“Forests play an important role in the global carbon cycle, both by absorbing carbon dioxide during photosynthesis, and storing carbon in their biomass, soils and forest products.

According to estimates by FAO, the total carbon emissions from forests decreased by more than 25 percent between 2001 and 2015, mainly due to a slowdown in global deforestation rates. Forest-based climate change mitigation actions are widely recognised as one of the most cost-effective ways of stabilizing the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gas emissions.”

What are the different sources to finance forests management and protection?

“The forest financing “landscape” is highly complex, and there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach because each country has its own specific financing context. In general, public financing for forests usually comes from government revenue and revenue from state-owned forests. At the international level, public financing sources include bilateral aid agencies and multilateral financing institutions.

Private sources for forest financing are diversified, ranging from institutional and individual investors and the forest industry to NGOs. In 2015, the UN Forum on Forests established the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) to assist countries in mobilizing and supporting new and additional financial resources for sustainable forest management. The GFFFN assists countries to access existing and emerging forest financing mechanisms, including for example, the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund.”

Does the Paris Agreement, which will be signed on 22 April, specifically integrate forests management aspects and forest-related climate change mitigation and adaptation measures?

“Article 5 of the Paris Agreement specifically integrates forest-based climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in the operational scheme of the Agreement. Article 5.1 states that Parties should take action to ‘conserve’ and ‘enhance’ sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases including forests. Article 5.2 encourages ‘implementation’ and ‘support’, among others, of REDD+, and alternative policy approaches such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for integral and sustainable management of forests.”

What must States do and what measures need to be taken to support forest protection, sustainable management and restoration?

“While significant progress has been made in sustainably managing the world’s forests –significant challenges remain that need further action, by Member States and all other forest stakeholders. These include:

- We need to further reduce deforestation, ideally stopping illegal deforestation altogether;
- We need to reduce reliance on unsustainably harvested firewood;
- We need to prevent and control forest fires. As a result of climate change and drought conditions, this a growing challenge in both developed and developing countries;
- We need to increase forest plantation areas, to meet the growing need for wood products and carbon sequestration, as well as jobs and income.
- We need to ensure fair and remunerative prices for sustainably produced forest products and support for payments for their environmental services (such as carbon sequestration);
- We need to illicit trade in wildlife and forest products.

For more information:

UN Forum on Forests

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)



Statistical Commission agrees on global SDGs indicator framework

As the final piece of the architecture for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the proposed global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was agreed by the United Nations Statistical Commission which completed its 47th Session on 11 March.

“Completing the indicator framework is of course not the end of the story – on the contrary, it is the beginning,” highlighted UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo in remarks delivered by UN Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development Lenni Montiel during the session.

Agreed as a practical good starting point, the set of 230 global indicators proposed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDGs) is a robust framework intended for follow-up and review of progress at the global level towards achieving the 17 SDGs, according to the report of the Statistical Commission.

Acknowledging that the development of a high-quality indicator framework is a technical process that will need to continue over time, “refinements and improvements will be needed over the years, as knowledge improves and new tools and data sources become available,” emphasized Mr. Wu.

Global indicators are intended for the global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and are not necessarily applicable to all national contexts. It is expected that additional indicators for regional, national and subnational monitoring will be developed at the regional and national levels.

Capacity building will be particularly important for all countries, including small island developing states (SIDs), least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and other countries in special circumstances.

The Statistical Commission will submit the initial global indicator framework to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly for adoption. Starting in July this year, the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development will oversee national and thematic reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Forum is expected to provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations on the Agenda’s implementation and follow-up, addressing new and emerging issues.

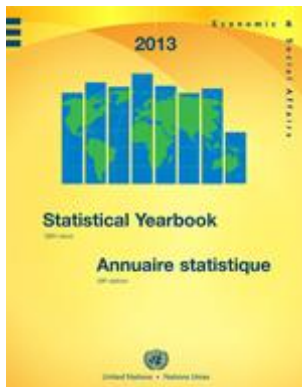
For more information:

[The 47th Session of the Statistical Commission](#)

[The Sustainable Development Goal Indicators website](#)

[The High-Level Political Forum 2016](#)

[UN Web TV coverage of the Statistical Commission](#)



Statistical Yearbook, 58th issue

The United Nations Statistical Yearbook 2013 is an annual compilation of the most essential components of comparable statistical information which can give a broad picture of social, economic and environmental processes covering over 200 countries and territories in the world.

Most of the statistics presented in the Yearbook are extracted from more detailed, specialized databases prepared by UN DESA's Statistics Division and by many other international statistical services.

For more information:
Statistical Yearbook, 58th issue

Development cooperation for the 2030 Agenda



The Government of the Kingdom of Belgium and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs are co-organizing the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) High-level Symposium on “Rethinking development cooperation for the SDGs: country-level perspectives and lessons”, from 6 to 8 April in Brussels, Belgium.

A key question following the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development is how development cooperation actors will gear their operations towards the sustainable development goals. The event will have to demonstrate how development

cooperation actors embrace the new reality of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) on financing sustainable development.

Around 120 participants from governments, international organizations, civil society and academia, private sector, parliaments and local and regional governments will attend the meeting to share their experiences and learn from each other.

The Symposium will focus on two specific themes: 1) Making development cooperation a better fit for implementing the 2030 Agenda in LDCs and vulnerable contexts and 2) Adapting development cooperation institutions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Participants will also discuss key issues such as the transformative power of the digital for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Official Development Assistance (ODA) for domestic resource mobilization and development cooperation's role in addressing climate change.

The Symposium will produce concrete policy guidance on development cooperation in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while promoting knowledge sharing and mutual learning. The deliberations will feed the preparations for the 2016 high-level meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum (21-22 July 2016, New York) and other functions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which has a major role in the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda and AAAA at global level.

For more information:

[DCF High-level Symposium](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

6 - 8 April, Brussels	Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) High-level Symposium
11 - 15 April, New York	49th Session of the Commission on Population and Development
18 - 22 April, New York	15th session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration
18 - 20 April, New York	ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development
20 - 22 April, Addis Ababa	Fourth High Level Forum on UN Global Geospatial Information Management

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