

Resolution 2016/1

Strengthening the demographic evidence base for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹

The Commission on Population and Development,

Recalling the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development² and the key actions for its further implementation,³ and previous resolutions of the Commission on Population and Development,

Recalling also the outcomes of relevant United Nations high-level meetings, conferences and summits, including the 2005 World Summit Outcome⁴ and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action⁵,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which the Assembly adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, committed to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, recognized that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, and committed to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also General Assembly resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change⁶,

Recalling also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁷ and the obligations of States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on

¹ For the discussion, see chap. II.

² Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5 -13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

³ General Assembly resolution S-21/2, annex.

⁴ General Assembly resolution 60/1.

⁵ Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

⁶ See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

⁷ General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁸, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women⁹, the Convention on the Rights of the Child¹⁰, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities¹¹, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination¹² and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families¹³,

Recognizing that the 2030 Agenda is guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including full respect for international law, and is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, the United Nations Millennium Declaration¹⁴ and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and that it is informed by other instruments, such as the Declaration on the Right to Development¹⁵,

Taking into consideration the report of the Secretary-General on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level¹⁶, and recognizing that the availability of, and access to, high-quality disaggregated data is essential for measuring progress towards and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,

Reaffirming that the promotion and protection of and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, should be mainstreamed into all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty and should achieve sustainable development,

Reaffirming also that sustainable development is a central goal in itself, and that sustainable development, in its economic, social and environmental aspects, constitutes a key element of the overarching framework of the United Nations,

Reaffirming further that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,

Reaffirming the commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda, stressing that the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if women and girls continue to be denied the full realization of their human rights and opportunities, and stressing also that population and sustainable development policies and the collection and utilization of data therein should respect human rights and the empowerment of women and girls, without distinction of any kind,

⁸ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

⁹ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

¹⁰ Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.

¹¹ Ibid., vol. 2515, No. 44910.

¹² Ibid., vol. 660, No. 9464.

¹³ Ibid., vol. 2220, No. 39481.

¹⁴ General Assembly resolution 55/2.

¹⁵ General Assembly resolution 41/128, annex.

¹⁶ A/70/684.

Stressing the importance of protecting the achievements of the International Conference on Population and Development and of responding to progress, gaps, recurrent challenges and evolving issues relevant to population and development and to the changing development environment, acknowledging that the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation have laid a foundation for sustainable development and that the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Programme of Action will contribute significantly to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda that will leave no one behind,

Acknowledging the largest generation of adolescents and youth in history, cognizant that different demographic trends and age structures have a direct impact on their lives and have various impacts on development, depending upon circumstances in each country and upon the size of investments required to ensure the health and development of current and future generations, and recognizing the evolving capacities, needs and contributions of and challenges for adolescents and youth, and that classifications and definitions of age groups vary in accordance with each country's national legislation,

Emphasizing that population issues are interlinked with sustainable development at the subnational, national, regional and global levels, which requires a multi-stakeholder and international approach, and acknowledging the need to integrate population dynamics and the use of population data into development planning, including its implications for human rights, dignity, quality of life and poverty eradication, at all levels, in order to achieve sustainable development, with a particular focus on the needs of the poorest and those in vulnerable situations,

Noting that additional funding is required to meet current costs and emerging needs in the area of AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support, as well as reproductive cancer screening and treatment,

Recognizing that ill-health and deaths related to malaria, Zika virus disease and other vector-borne diseases throughout the world, particularly among women, children, adolescents and youth, can be substantially reduced with political commitment and commensurate resources if the public is educated and sensitized and appropriate health services are made available, particularly in countries where these diseases are endemic,

Recognizing also that health is a precondition for economic and social development, and aware that sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights are central to the realization of social justice and to the achievement of global, regional and national commitments for sustainable development,

Recalling the specific challenges faced by women and girls in humanitarian settings, including an increased risk of physical and sexual violence, reduced access to essential health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health, education and other social services, and recognizing the importance of high-quality data collection in humanitarian settings, with respect for confidentiality,

Acknowledging the important link between migration and development, and recognizing that migration brings both opportunities and challenges to countries of origin, transit and destination, to migrants and to the global community, and recognizing also the responsibility of States to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants effectively, regardless of their migration status, especially those of women and children,

Aware that migration has increased in volume, scope, complexity and impact since the adoption of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and that migration is an intrinsic feature of a globalizing world in which economic, social, cultural, demographic, political and environmental factors all play an important role,

Stressing that reliable, timely, high-quality, accessible and disaggregated demographic data need to be a central focus of any effort to strengthen statistical systems for the review of and follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development and for reviewing progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, and stressing also the importance of the collection, analysis and dissemination of population data and statistics disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts for policy formulation by all countries,

Noting the importance of non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors in advancing the implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation, including through current mechanisms and the exploration of new data sources and technologies for data collection,

Noting also that countries will be implementing the 2030 Agenda from different starting points with regard to levels of fertility, mortality and urbanization and the number of persons entering the older age range and eventually needing support of various kinds, and that national strategies should take account of these demographic realities in order to determine the resources required to achieve the 2030 Agenda,

Stressing that population and housing censuses are designed to generate valuable disaggregated statistics and indicators for assessing the situation of women and men and various population groups, such as boys and girls, adolescents and youth, older persons, local communities, indigenous peoples and populations of African descent, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless persons, and changes therein,

Acknowledging that household surveys have served as a major source of data for development planning and policy decisions, and that the demand for data from household surveys will increase in order to assess the progress, gaps and challenges in achieving the 2030 Agenda,

Noting that further progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action, the key actions for its further implementation and other sustainable development goals, and responses to challenges relevant to population and development at the regional, national and local levels, will require special efforts to strengthen civil registration and vital statistics, and health information systems, as well as censuses, household surveys, population registers and other relevant

administrative data sources, and to develop the capacity of relevant national institutions and mechanisms to generate, analyse and disseminate high-quality, qualitative and quantitative, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated demographic data from all available sources, with respect to confidentiality, as needed, to monitor progress and ensure accountability,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda¹⁷ and the report of the Secretary-General on programmes and innovations to strengthen the demographic evidence base for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹⁸,

1. Reaffirms the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions for its further implementation, as well as the outcomes of its reviews, takes note of the outcome documents of the regional review conferences on population and development, and stresses that the outcome documents of the regional review conferences provide region-specific guidance on population and development beyond 2014 for each region that adopted the particular outcome document;

2. Also reaffirms the sovereign right of each country to implement the recommendations of the Programme of Action or other proposals in the present resolution, consistent with national laws and development priorities, with full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of its people, and in conformity with universally recognized international human rights;

3. Stresses that the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation, as well as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, is integrally linked to global efforts to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, promote, protect and respect human rights, and achieve sustainable development, and also stresses that population dynamics are all important for development, including for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹⁹ and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development²⁰;

4. Recognizes the need to address persistent inequalities and discrimination on any grounds, which hamper the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation, especially for people in vulnerable situations;

5. Reiterates that the availability of high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated demographic data is essential for planning and implementing policies and programmes to achieve the Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda, and for the measurement of progress, gaps and recurrent challenges in implementation, in order to ensure that no one is left behind;

¹⁷ E/CN.9/2016/3.

¹⁸ E/CN.9/2016/4.

¹⁹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

²⁰ General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

6. Urges Governments to monitor their progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action, the key actions for its further implementation and the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional, national and local levels, and in this regard to make special efforts to strengthen their civil registration, vital statistics and health information systems, and to develop the capacity of relevant national institutions and mechanisms to generate, analyse and disseminate high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated population data from all available official data sources, including population censuses, civil registration, household surveys, population registers and other relevant administrative records, with respect for confidentiality, for the formulation and implementation of sustainable and inclusive population and development policies that respect, promote and protect human rights and aim at the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;

7. Stresses that of all administrative data, health-related data are among the most critical to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and to the achievement of universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and urges Member States and relevant stakeholders to strengthen health management information systems;

8. Encourages Governments, international organizations, including of the United Nations system, international financial institutions and other relevant stakeholders to assist developing countries in addressing gaps and challenges relevant to population and development and the changing development environment through technical assistance and capacity-building in order to accelerate the implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation;

9. Stresses that population and housing censuses for a country as a whole and for each administrative area therein are one of the primary sources of data needed for formulating, implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of policies and programmes aimed at, inter alia, inclusive sustainable development, poverty eradication, and gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;

10. Emphasizes the importance of the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme²¹ for the planning and evaluation of development programmes, especially in the context of the 2030 Agenda, and calls for full-fledged support for the Programme by Member States and the international community;

11. Urges Governments to strengthen systems for the universal, reliable and timely registration of births, marriages, divorces and deaths, among other vital events, for linking the registration of vital events with the production of vital statistics and for assessing and improving over time the coverage, timeliness and accuracy of data generated by such systems, and to promote the use of civil registration for collecting information on causes of death, in accordance with the International Classification of Diseases established by the World Health Organization;

²¹ See Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/10.

12. Urges all States parties to intensify their efforts to comply with their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child¹⁴ to preserve the child's identity, including nationality, name and family relations, as recognized by law, reminding States of their obligation to register the birth of all children without discrimination of any kind, including late birth registration, and to ensure that registration procedures are universal, accessible, simple, expeditious and effective and provided at minimal or no cost, in accordance with target 16.9 of the Sustainable Development Goals, of providing legal identity for all;

13. Stresses the importance of collecting and disseminating data disaggregated by sex and statistics on the minimum set of gender indicators, such as unpaid care and domestic work, labour force participation and other indicators of social and economic status, and participation and leadership in political and economic life and the core set of indicators on violence against women and girls adopted by the Statistical Commission in 2013, including on harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and encourages the Commission to continue to support the implementation of a robust, transformative, inclusive, transparent and ambitious indicator framework for monitoring progress towards sustainable development;

14. Stresses the importance of and encourages data collection, analysis and dissemination on adolescents to fill critical data gaps and inform effective policy development, including by fully utilizing disaggregated data and statistics;

15. Encourages Governments to collect, analyse and disseminate data on women over 49 years of age and girls between 10 and 14 years of age, with due consideration to the confidentiality principle and professional ethics, to fill critical data gaps and inform effective policy development;

16. Emphasizes the importance of accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated qualitative data, research and analyses to complement quantitative population data, based primarily on official data sources, that are essential for evidence-based policy development, monitoring, review and follow-up;

17. Stresses that Governments should strengthen national capacities to conduct household surveys, and encourages all data producers to implement existing standards and practices of data management, in particular legal and ethical standards and safeguards for the protection of confidentiality and privacy rights, including with respect to documentation, dissemination and archiving;

18. Urges Governments, where relevant, to promote the development of populations of African descent, local communities and indigenous peoples, including by implementing public policies, establishing standards and creating institutions to guide and implement policies, plans and programmes at the sectoral level, and stresses the importance of disaggregated data collection and analysis for the implementation of these policies;

19. Calls upon the United Nations system and invites other relevant international organizations and multilateral institutions, as appropriate, to enhance their capacity and cooperation in the development of methodologies for the collection and processing of statistical

data on international migration and refugee flows and on the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, in particular women and girls, in countries of origin, transit and destination, and to assist Member States in their capacity-building efforts in this regard;

20. Calls upon Governments, the United Nations system and other organizations to strengthen the collection and dissemination of data on ageing and older persons, in order to adopt a life cycle approach, and on persons living with disabilities;

21. Urges national authorities to leverage new data sources, including big data, and technology to improve the efficiency of data collection, processing and dissemination, to institute geo-referencing as a standard practice in all forms of demographic data collection, and to make the corresponding spatial datasets publicly available in digital form, with respect for confidentiality;

22. Encourages Governments to adopt open-data policies allowing the dissemination of public-use, geo-referenced and anonymized microdata from censuses, household surveys, civil registration, population registers, health information systems and other relevant administrative records, with respect for confidentiality;

23. Reiterates that demographic data are a public good and that the collection of such data is underfunded, especially in developing countries, reaffirms the commitment in the 2030 Agenda to support developing countries in strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices, other relevant government institutions and data systems to ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data, encourages developed countries, the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations and multilateral institutions to provide technical and financial support, upon request, and encourages North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, to strengthen national capacities to implement best practices of data management, including identifying needs related to population statistics, to help to develop sustained systems of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis in order to ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data;

24. Urges Governments to strengthen health systems, in particular health information systems, to promote physical and mental health and well-being and extend life expectancy for all, and achieve universal health coverage and access to quality health care to ensure that no one is left behind, to accelerate the progress made to date in reducing newborn, child and maternal mortality by ending all such preventable deaths before 2030, to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, to accelerate the pace of progress made in fighting malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, hepatitis, Ebola virus disease, Zika virus disease and other communicable diseases and epidemics, including by addressing growing antimicrobial resistance and the problem of neglected diseases affecting developing countries, and to prevent and treat non-communicable diseases, including behavioural, developmental and neurological disorders, which constitute a major challenge for sustainable development;

25. Encourages Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations system, international financial institutions, civil society, the private sector, academia and other

relevant stakeholders to assist developing countries in strengthening their capacities to monitor progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action, the key actions for its further implementation and the 2030 Agenda at the global, regional, national and subnational levels by improving the collection, dissemination and utilization of data and statistics disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, keeping in mind the need to apply a gender perspective from population censuses, civil registration, household surveys, population registers and other relevant administrative records;

26. Emphasizes the importance of building and sustaining partnerships with regard to the collection, dissemination and use of demographic data and capacity building among Governments, relevant civil society stakeholders and private sector actors, in particular academia and small and medium-sized enterprises, including for the successful, participatory and transparent review of progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action, the key actions for its further implementation and the 2030 Agenda, and invites all Governments, the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations, as well as the private sector and non-governmental organizations, to support these activities;

27. Stresses the importance of taking into account population trends and projections in national rural and urban development strategies and policies, as well as the strengthening of capacity for data collection at the local and subnational levels, and in this context looks forward to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in Quito in October 2016;

28. Acknowledges the role played by civil society organizations, including women and youth groups, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation, and encourages their active participation and contribution in the review of progress of the implementation of the Programme of Action and in the follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda;

29. Encourages the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States and in partnership with other stakeholders, to develop initiatives aimed at improving the demographic evidence base at the national level, including through regional and South-South cooperation and triangular and North-South cooperation, in order to assist Member States in mainstreaming the consideration of population issues in national development strategies and in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

30. Calls upon Governments and United Nations agencies, as appropriate, to actively support increased capacity and participation of young people in the use of population data, taking into account gender equality and representation of youth of various backgrounds, to contribute to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of, as appropriate, international, regional, national and local development strategies and policies that affect young people;

31. Calls upon the United Nations Population Fund to continue to play a crucial role, within its mandate, in assisting countries to strengthen the demographic evidence base, on the basis of

their needs and in consultation with them, to enable countries to achieve the full and effective implementation of the goals and objectives contained in the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation beyond 2014, and in the 2030 Agenda;

32. Requests the Secretary-General to continue his substantive work on population and development, including on the interactions between population dynamics, inequalities and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, to pursue further improvements in the accessibility and timeliness of disaggregated population data for use by Member States, the United Nations system, civil society and academia, and, in collaboration with the United Nations system and relevant organizations outside the United Nations, civil society and academia, to continue to assess and report on progress towards the full implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for its further implementation and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.