

49<sup>th</sup> Session  
Commission of Population and Development

INDIA STATEMENT

Agenda Item 4  
National Experience in Population Matters  
Strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post- 2015 Development agenda  
11 April 2016

Thank you Chair,

India associates itself with the statement made by the Republic of Thailand on behalf of the Group of 77.

The 2030 Agenda and SDGs adopted by all us last September represent a very broad and comprehensive template of development. In their scope and detail the SDGs require a very ambitious set of policy interventions. With the integration of three dimensions, and the perceived indivisibility, the 2030 Agenda also presents an unprecedented challenge for monitoring and review.

**With a people-centered approach, the objectives of the ICPD Plan of Action and the historic Agenda 2030 envision inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development.**

Collection, collation and analysis of demographic evidence is critical to identify the scale of challenges ahead all of us, as also utilise the demographic dividend through appropriate policy measures. Timely, reliable and disaggregated demographic evidence is, however, not so easily available and entails considerable expertise, cost and human resources. The situation is especially difficult in case of a large number of developing countries, where such evidence is most needed to shape policy interventions. It is, therefore, important to see the issue of strengthening demographic evidence base as both the central policy imperative and as a significant challenge. The SDG Goal 17 Target 18 recognizes this two way relationship by framing the issue of data in the terms of capacity building.

2030 Agenda can succeed only if the international community comes together to collectively invest in strengthening national capacities of those who require them most.

Mr. Chair,

Sabka Saath Sabka vikas, 'Together with All Development for All', is the guiding principle of the government of India. The SDGs are already mirrored in our development programmes. Eradication of poverty, gender equality and empowerment, access to health and education,

basic services, rapid and inclusive growth and protection of environment are the cornerstones of India's development policies.

India represents one sixth of humanity. While the country is making remarkable strides across development indicators, significant challenges of considerable scale remain. India has had a long tradition of demographic data collection in the form of a cost effective and robust decennial census that incorporates dynamic inputs and informs and shapes its policies across sectors.

In line with Prime Minister Modi's vision to utilise advanced technology both digital and biometrics, to strengthen our demographic evidence base, India has recently crossed the 1 billion mark in the building the largest online digital identity platform in the world. This covers 93% of adult population (above the age of 18 years), 67% of children in the 5-18 years of age group and 20% of those below the age of 5 years. This has been achieved over a course of five years and is now backed by a historic legislation. Every day more than 500,000 persons are being enrolled in the scheme. This rapidly growing online digital identity platform is providing very useful data for the government in defining its development policies. It is also being integrated with the direct delivery of various welfare schemes. No one will be left behind.

India has completed the amalgamation of GIS maps and census data across the country in terms of health facilities. A web based Maternal & Child Tracking System (MCTS) captures details of every pregnant woman and child upto 5 years of age.

India has been broadening steadily the scope of the National Family Planning programme for economic development, growth, equality and sustainable development. India has also moved to a new approach of the Reproductive Maternal New Born Child and Adolescent health (RMNCH+A), bringing focus on all the life stages notably the adolescents with a focus on Family Planning and aim towards population stabilization. Through the support of specialised institutions like Jansankhya Sthirtha Kosh, the government is providing family planning services and commodities absolutely free to every client, including 237 million couples in the reproductive age group across the country. India achieved a 65% reduction in maternal mortality during 1990-2011-13. Youth programmes in health, education and skill development sectors are also being pursued.

Mr. Chair,

The role of South-South Cooperation (SSC) is important to tackle the unfinished ICPD agenda and the new and emerging issues in Reproductive Health (RH), population and development. India is committed to continue working with all partners on national capacity building for population and development, including on building demographic evidence.

Thank you.

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