



**Informal briefing**  
**27 October 2022, 1.15-2.30 pm**  
**Conference room 6**  
*(Draft concept note, 27 October 2022)*

## **Introduction**

The fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) will be held from 10 to 14 April 2023. The special theme of the fifty-sixth session,<sup>1</sup> which is Population, education and sustainable development, is closely related to Chapter XI of the Programme of Action adopted by the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. The Commission last considered the issue of education at its thirty-sixth session in 2003.<sup>2</sup> The briefing will be held in person.

## **Objective**

The objective of the briefing is to encourage an exchange of views amongst Member States, the Secretariat and other stakeholders about the substantive preparation of the Commission's fifty-sixth session. During the first part of the briefing, experts will summarize key substantive issues discussed during an expert group meeting on the theme of the session, which was organized by the Population Division of UN-DESA (6-7 September 2022),<sup>3</sup> and during the Transforming Education Summit (16, 17 & 19 September 2022)<sup>4</sup>, while also discussing national programmes. During the second part of the briefing, Member States and other stakeholders will be invited to address questions to the panelists and to highlight issues of interest related to the special theme of the session.

## **Background**

Since the founding of the United Nations, education has been recognized as an essential underpinning of human development and societal progress. The right to education and to participation in cultural life are proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). The aim of the Transforming Education Summit, convened in September 2022, was to mobilize greater political ambition, commitment and action to reimagine education and accelerate progress on education-related SDGs for the remainder of the Decade of Action. The ICPD Programme of Action calls for achieving universal access to primary education and eliminating the gender gap in primary and secondary education. It also calls upon Governments to provide formal and informal education on population and health issues, including sexual and reproductive health issues, in order to promote the well-being of adolescents.

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<sup>1</sup> For details, please refer to <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/CPD56>

<sup>2</sup> For details, please refer to <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/CPD36>

<sup>3</sup> For details, please refer to <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/cpd56-egm>

<sup>4</sup> For details, please refer to <https://www.un.org/en/transforming-education-summit>

Ensuring access to education for girls and women continues to be a powerful means to reduce early and unplanned childbearing, increase the adoption of family planning and improve the health of children.

The 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development commits to providing inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels – early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary, technical and vocational training. Evidence presented at the expert group meeting in September 2022 suggests that there are many children living in extreme poverty who lack access to primary education, stark gender inequalities, and shortfalls among young people living in humanitarian or conflict conditions. The long-term impact on learning outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted schooling for millions of children worldwide, remains unclear. But the pandemic did reveal wide disparities in the quality of education between and within countries, exposing deficiencies in infrastructure, teacher training and learning materials, while reminding us that schools play a vital role in assuring the health and well-being of learners, including through nutrition. Health education plays a vital role in promoting the health and well-being of young people and improves sexual and reproductive health outcomes, including by preventing unintended pregnancies. The World Bank has estimated that in sub-Saharan Africa the current school infrastructure can accommodate only 40 per cent of the children in the region, whose numbers are still increasing. Globally, as the average age of populations increases, lifelong learning is recognized as an important opportunity to improve the productivity and social inclusion of older persons.

## **Provisional programme**

### ***13.15 – 13.25 Opening remarks***

- *Mr. John Wilmoth, Director, Population Division, UN/DESA (moderator)*
- *H.E. Mr. Gheorghe Leucă, (Republic of Moldova), Chair of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Population and Development*

### ***13.25 – 14.05 Presentations (max. 5 minutes each)***

Key findings from the expert group meeting on “Population, education and sustainable development”

- *Ms. Cheryl Sawyer, Senior Population Affairs Officer, Population Division, UN/DESA*

Key findings from the Transforming Education Summit

- *Mr. Alex Howells, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning*
- *Ms. Joanna Herat, Senior Programme Specialist, Health and Education, UNESCO*
- *Dr. Venkatraman Chandramouli, Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research, WHO*

National programmes on population, education and sustainable development

- *Mr. Sandile Simelane, Technical Specialist, Technical Division, United Nations Population Fund*

Country presentations

- *Mr. Gonzalo Baroni Boces, National Director of Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, Uruguay*
- *Mr. Julius Natangwe Nghifikwa, Deputy-Director, HIV & AIDS Management Unit, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Namibia*

### ***14.05 – 14.30 Interventions from the floor and closing***

## **Results**

The briefing will inform the substantive preparation of the Commission’s fifty-sixth session. Member States are encouraged to share relevant aspects of their national experience in this area.