



Expert panel on the reports of the Secretary-General

Monday, 10 April 2023, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. EDT

Concept Note

(draft)

Introduction

The Commission on Population and Development, at its fifty-sixth session, will consider the special theme of “Population, education and sustainable development”.^a

On the afternoon of Monday 10 April, the Commission will organize an expert panel to discuss the three reports of the Secretary-General prepared for the general debate (item 3 of the agenda).^b The panel will include experts from the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other UN entities. The panel will be moderated by a Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the fifty-sixth session.

Background

The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) called for providing universal access to primary education and closing the gender gap in primary and secondary education and requested Governments to expand policies and programmes to support youth and adult education and lifelong learning. It also called upon Governments to provide formal and informal education about population and health issues, including sexual and reproductive health issues, in order to promote the well-being of adolescents and enhance gender equality and equity. The Programme of Action also recognized the need to address the barriers to education in developing countries with assistance of the international community.

The Commission’s review of the linkages between population, education and sustainable development will highlight the ways in which the full, accelerated and effective implementation of the Programme of Action can contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4, which called for ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. The

^a For further information on the annual session, including the reports of the Secretary-General, please refer to <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/CPD56>.

^b (a) Population, education and sustainable development (E/CN.9/2023/2), (b) Programmes and interventions for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in the context of population, education and sustainable development (E/CN.9/2022/3), and (c) Flow of financial resources for assisting in the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (E/CN.9/2023/4). In response to General Assembly 72/305, the Bureau of the Commission has substituted the traditional presentation of the three reports of the Secretary-General prepared for the general debate, with an expert panel to be followed by an interactive debate.

review will also consider the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education access and equity and build on the outcomes of the 2022 Transforming Education Summit.

Format

The moderator will make brief opening remarks, followed by questions posed to representatives from UN DESA and UNFPA about the key messages of the three reports of the Secretary-General. The moderator will then address guiding questions to the panelists. After each round of questions, Member States and other stakeholders will be invited to make brief comments on the reports, to pose questions to the panelists, or to address questions posed by the moderator. Reading from prepared statements is discouraged. The panelists will be invited to respond to the interventions from delegations, which will be followed by concluding remarks from the moderator.

Indicative questions for panelists

- What are key trends in the school-age population, access to education and learning outcomes? What are key actions to drive recovery from learning losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular for those furthest behind?
- What are the most important linkages between population, education and sustainable development and their policy implications?
- Through what mechanisms will further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action contribute to the achievement of SDG4 on inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities?
- How should Governments address barriers to girls' schooling and interrelationships between education, early marriage and childbearing?
- What policies, programmes and interventions can contribute to both the further implementation of the Programme of Action and accelerated progress toward SDG 4?
- What financial resources are needed for the further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and achievement of SDG 4, and how well are these needs met by current aid allocations?

Outcome

The discussion will be summarized in the report of the Commission on its fifty-sixth session, which will be submitted to the Economic and Social Council shortly after the session. It will also inform the Commission's contribution to the 2023 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

