



**United Nations**

Department of  
Economic and  
Social Affairs

POPULATION, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH  
IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT

New York, 16 December 2025

**Briefing by the Chair of the Commission on Population and Development (Burundi)  
on the substantive preparations for the Commission's 59<sup>th</sup> session**

**Tuesday, 16 December 2025, 11:00-12:15 pm  
CR-11**

**CONCEPT NOTE**

**Introduction**

The 59<sup>th</sup> session<sup>1</sup> of the Commission on Population and Development will be held from 13 to 17 April 2026. The special theme of the session, “Population, technology and research in the context of sustainable development”, is closely related to Chapter XII “Technology, research and development” of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which covered basic data collection, analysis and dissemination, reproductive health research and social and economic research. The upcoming session marks the first time that the Commission has dedicated its annual session to the topic of technology in its follow-up to the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. The theme is well connected with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those related to health (Goal 3), education (Goal 4) and gender equality (Goal 5). Selecting this theme also provides the Commission with an opportunity to link its work to the Global Digital Compact, UN2.0, and other workstreams of the UN system that focus on technology and research.

**Objective**

The aim of the informal briefing is to give Member States an opportunity to share views on the substantive preparations for the 59<sup>th</sup> session. During the first part of the briefing, the Secretariat will summarize key substantive issues discussed during a series of expert consultations on the theme convened by the Population Division of UN DESA during October 2025 (four sessions from 21 – 30 October 2025)<sup>2</sup>; there will also be presentations by representatives of UNFPA and the EOSG. During the second part, Member States will be invited to address questions to the panelists and to highlight issues of interest related to the theme of the session.

**Background**

Profound changes in the technological landscape have taken place since the Cairo conference in 1994. The ICPD took place in the early days of the commercial use of the internet and the world wide web. Since then, the world has seen widespread adoption of mobile communication, new forms of communication such as social media, massive increases in digital data systems, advances in biotechnology and health science, in renewable energy, and most recently in artificial intelligence.

<sup>1</sup> For details, please refer to <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/CPD59>

<sup>2</sup> For details, please refer to <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/expert-consultation-CPD59>;



**DESA**

Population Division

Chapter XII of the ICPD Programme of Action on “Technology, research and development” covers basic data collection, analysis and dissemination, reproductive health research and social and economic research. Yet technological developments impact the commitments and policy recommendations of every chapter.

Technological advancements have boosted ICPD implementation by expanding access to reproductive health services, improving data collection and monitoring, empowering individuals through digital education, and enhancing collaboration, coordination and advocacy through online platforms.

Technological change has in some cases exacerbated inequalities and created new divides and challenges, including unequal access across countries, and within countries for women, the poor, older persons and other marginalized groups. Additional challenges include data security and privacy, cyber-bullying, and the rapid spread of misinformation and unvetted information.

The Programme of Action continues to provide the crucial normative foundation for policies in population and sustainable development, highlighting the importance of harnessing technological innovation while protecting human rights and ensuring that no one is left behind.

## **Programme**

### **11.00 – 11.10 Welcome and introductory remarks**

- *Mr. Zéphyrin Maniratanga (Burundi), Chair of the 59<sup>th</sup> session of the CPD*

### **11.10 – 11.40 Presentations**

Key findings from the expert consultations on “Population, technology and research in the context of sustainable development”

- *Ms. Cheryl Sawyer, Chief, Population Trends and Analysis Branch, Population Division, UN DESA*

Contributions by UNFPA to preparations for the 59<sup>th</sup> session

- *Ms. Julia Bunting, Director, Programme Division, UNFPA*

CPD59 in the context of UN processes on technology and research

- *Mr. Kersten Jauer, Senior Programme Management Officer, Strategic Planning and Monitoring Unit, EOSG*

### **11.40 – 12.10 Interactive discussion**

- *Ms. Bjørg Sandkjær, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination, UN DESA (moderator)*

### **12.10 – 12.15 Closing remarks**

- *Mr. Zéphyrin Maniratanga (Burundi), Chair of the 59<sup>th</sup> session of the CPD*