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Changing population age structures and sustainable development

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IPPF Oral Statement

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We thank you for giving the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) a chance to address the Commission.

As a leading advocate of sexual and reproductive health and rights and a global service provider, we work to empower the most vulnerable women, men and young people to access life-saving services and programmes, and to live with dignity.

Demographic shifts are heavily influenced by fertility rate, birth rate, and maternal and infant mortality. To understand and benefit from changing age structures, it is important for countries to recognise the link with sexual and reproductive health and rights, and provide a wide range of services. This will ensure the rights of individuals to control their bodies in a healthy fashion and make informed choices about their family size, as well as give the State the ability to better mitigate the impact of any changes in the demographic structure.

To further benefit from positive changes resulting from shifts in population structure, all people must receive comprehensive sexuality education. It is important because it provides young people with scientifically accurate information about human development, anatomy and reproductive health, as well as information about contraception, childbirth and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, gender equality and human rights. It makes people healthier, better able to access education and employment, and contribute to the life of the community and country. It also helps the State better plan the public services that are required by the changing population and benefit from the demographic dividend.



Finally, a key element of responding to and benefitting from changing age structures is ensuring the investment is in place to reap the rewards of the demographic dividend. Changes in the population structure alone will not lead to economic growth. Specific policies and investments must be made, including in education, health, sexual and reproductive health, and employment, in order to realize economic growth.

When these links are recognized and supportive policies and programmes are developed, countries will be able to maximize the positive impact of changing age structures, minimize any negative impacts, and truly achieve sustainable development.

Thank you