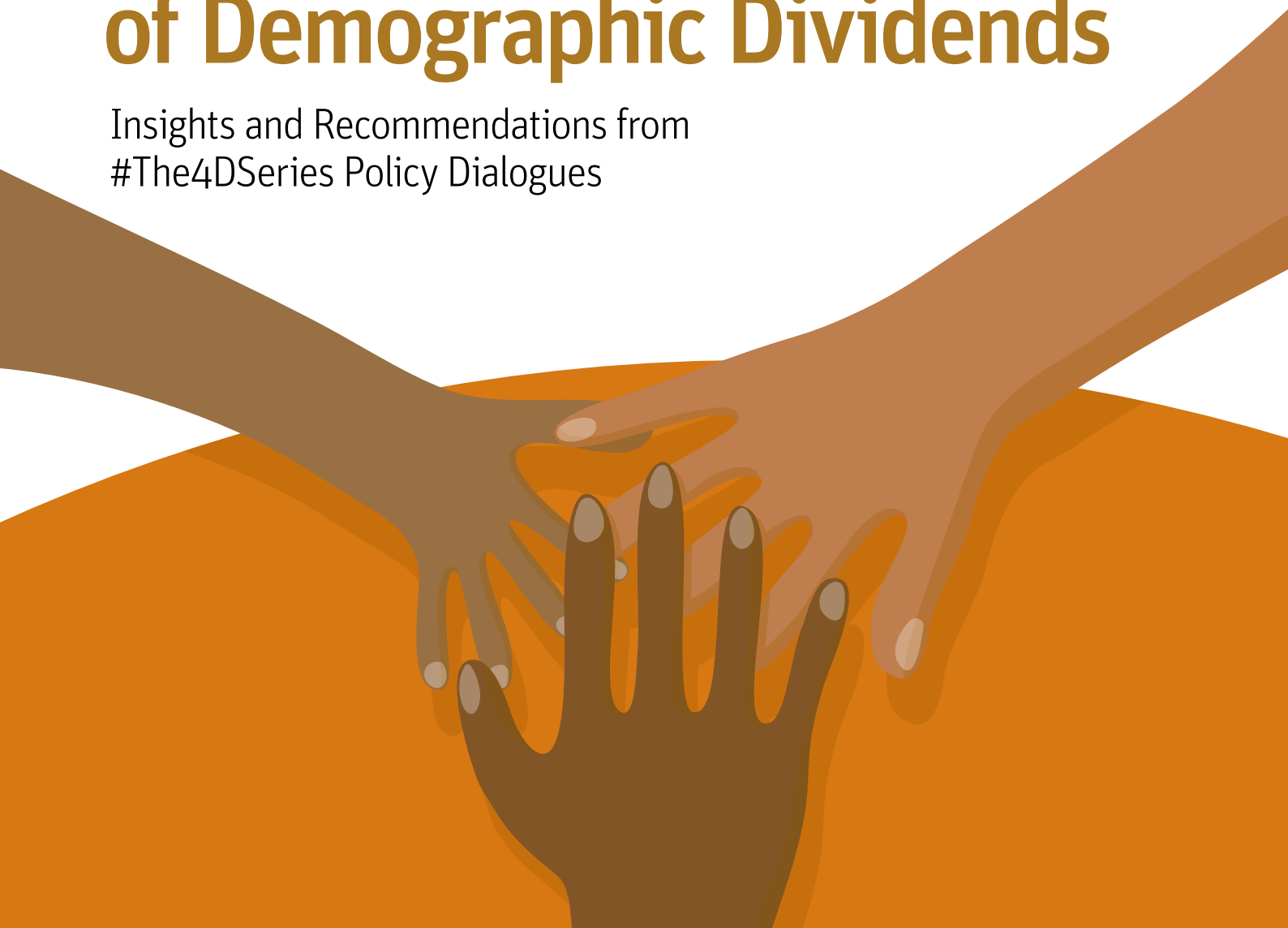


in cooperation with



Unlocking the Power of Demographic Dividends

Insights and Recommendations from
#The4DSeries Policy Dialogues



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#The4DSeries Policy Dialogues

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About the Berlin Institute

The Berlin Institute for Population and Development is an independent think tank working on issues related to regional and global demographic change. The Institute was established in 2000 as a non-profit foundation. We raise awareness for demographic changes, promote sustainable development, introduce new ideas into political debates and develop evidence-based solutions to meet diverse demographic challenges in Germany and around the globe. Our studies and policy papers are freely available on our website for anyone with an interest in current demographic challenges and solutions. You can find more information at www.berlin-institut.org.

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FOREWORD

In November 2022, humanity welcomed the 8 billionth person on Planet Earth. This milestone is a success for humankind: Today, more children survive than ever before, and people live longer and healthier lives! Progress in health, education and other sectors have been the driving forces behind this development — and also especially increasing gender equality.

The demographic trends that underlie this milestone of 8 billion people create new challenges, but also immense opportunities. And although the world is demographically more diverse than ever before, one thing is true for countries across the globe: Tapping human potential and planning well for demographic change is critical to seize these opportunities.

In the face of this demographic diversity and potential, the African Union, UNFPA and Germany joined forces in 2020 and initiated a new series of Government-Government Policy Dialogues: #The4DSeries — Demographic Diversity & Dividends Dialogues. The series was set up to continue discussions on the close interlinkages of demographic change and sustainable development, which started on the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Nairobi in November 2019.

From Nairobi onwards and throughout the pandemic, the virtual 4D series provided a platform for exchange and mutual learning on how to best foster human potential for demographic dividends. Since its inception in 2020, the dialogues brought together more than 600 participants from governments, international organizations, academia, civil society and youth organizations from across the globe. For its diverse participants, #The4DSeries offered a space to discuss the challenges posed by evolving population dynamics and to share policy successes, best practices as well as recommendations on how to take action to harness demographic dividends.

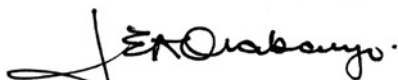
The wide range of topics covered in the dialogues — including data, food security and nutrition, education, adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights, urbanisation and climate resilience — bear testimony to the multiple areas where effective policies need to be developed and implemented. These themes need to be taken into account simultaneously to successfully achieve demographic dividends and foster sustainable development. The window of opportunity to reach this goal is small, and new policies have to be swift and timely, with mechanisms in place and resources made available to translate commitments into actions. The present report provides examples on what such policies could look like and summarises the key takeaways of the dialogues of #The4DSeries up to now. It is therefore — as is the series overall — an important tool to inform policy planning and implementation, and to guide governments in finding country-specific solutions to move population and development issues forward.

In the course of the dialogue series, some points have repeatedly emerged as key issues: Ensuring the empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity and enabling young people to unfold their potential and to become agents of change must be at the center of all efforts. Disaggregated, timely data and evidence should guide the investment decisions, with a longer term objective to harness demographic and other dividends. For the AU, UNFPA and Germany, gender equality and youth empowerment are not only important to fulfill fundamental human rights. Both are necessary foundations for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.

At the heart of #The4DSeries partnership formed by the African Union, UNFPA and the Government of Germany is the belief that convening and engaging in intergovernmental dialogue, bridging theory-to-action gap and talking openly about what works and what does not, is key to ensuring that we are

able to provide the grounds from which to grow opportunities for all people, without discrimination by age, gender, ethnicity or religion, and ensure that entire countries and regions, and their economies, can prosper.

Berlin, July 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Onabanjo'.

Dr. Julitta Onabanjo

*Director, Technical Division
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Pickel'.

Birgit Pickel

*Director-General for Africa
German Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ch Buck'.

Ambassador Dr. Christian Buck

*Director-General for Political Affairs
(Africa, Latin America, Near and Middle East)
German Federal Foreign Office*

INTRODUCTION



In many low- and lower middle-income countries, particularly in Africa, populations are growing rapidly. In the early stages of the demographic transition, they must meet an increasing number of people's essential needs, such as health care, education and food. Countries that are already experiencing shifts in their population age structure and where the share of the working-age population is rising often struggle to provide their young populations with decent jobs. How can these countries increase their chances of capitalizing on this demographic change to

promote human potential? Interventions in key sectors such as health, education and employment are needed to accelerate socioeconomic progress to harness the potential of a demographic dividend. Recognising the potential for carefully targeted population policies to deliver **demographic dividends**, UNFPA, the African Union Commission and the Government of Germany launched **#The4DSeries** policy dialogue on demographic dividends and diversity in 2020. Six dialogues were convened through 2023, creating a platform for exchange, where participants can learn from one another, develop key points for action to inform policy planning and guide governments in finding country specific solutions to move population and development issues forward.

Focusing on the adoption of innovative solutions and best practice examples, **#The4DSeries** seeks to address pressing issues such as gender equality, health system improvements, access to education at all levels and the urgent need for job creation. By exploring successful initiatives — such as health care provision in remote Ethiopian regions, contraceptive supply chain advancements in Senegal, digital education programmes in Kenya and agricultural value chain expansion in Ghana — these dialogues aim to inspire the widespread implementation of such approaches.

Through fostering effective collaboration and embracing coherent population policies contextualised within their respective nations' demographic developments, **#The4DSeries** envisions a future where Africa collectively benefits from demographically induced development surges — reaping the rewards of a true demographic dividend.

BACKGROUND

Within the next 30 years, the world population will grow to almost ten billion people while countries' age structures are transforming in very different ways.¹

In the face of this demographic diversity, the African Union, UNFPA and the German Government launched **#The4DSeries: Global conversations on fostering human potential for demographic dividends**.

Launched in October 2020, these theme-based dialogues brought together technical and policy experts from governments with civil society partners, researchers and youth representatives for practical discussions on policy successes and challenges in taking account of their countries' population dynamics.

#The4DSeries concept

#The4DSeries examines the concept of a demographic dividend, explains why and under what circumstances it develops, and identifies what needs to happen for a country to achieve it. Each of **#The4DSeries** dialogues took place as a three-hour virtual conference, starting with inspiring panel discussions, followed by breakout groups and ending with plenary discussions of key takeaways from the breakout sessions and concluding remarks. While they were not public — to encourage frank dialogue — their highlights, practice examples and recommendations for action were shared in dialogue reports with the interested public following the events.

At the virtual kick-off in October 2020, nearly 500 people followed the panel discussion live as government representatives and experts from Asia, Africa, the Arab region and Eastern Europe shared their

experiences with demographic challenges and opportunities. The event demonstrated that countries from different corners of the world all face challenges in adapting to demographic change.²

#The4DSeries topics

The first dialogue in the series focused on the importance of **quality demographic data**, welcoming more than 130 participants from 51 countries to a virtual event in November 2020.³ In March 2021, over 100 participants from 42 countries participated in the second dialogue on **food security and nutrition**.⁴ Over 120 participants from 51 countries participated in the third dialogue, **education and skills development**, in June 2021.⁵ In October 2021, more than 140 participants from 47 countries convened virtually in the fourth dialogue in the series on the topic of **accelerating adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR)**.⁶ In March 2022, more than 160 participants from 60 countries convened in the fifth dialogue on **urbanisation**.⁷ In September 2022, more than 120 participants attended the sixth dialogue on **climate resilience**.⁸

#The4DSeries also convened a hybrid panel discussion on the margins of the 56th session of the Commission on Population and Development under the theme **advancing education for demographic dividend(s) and sustainable development**. The first in-person dialogue in the series is taking place at the Women Deliver Conference in Kigali, Rwanda, in July 2023. The topic, **gender equality**, is one that has been interwoven throughout all of **#The4DSeries** events and as such this dialogue touches on various issues that have already arisen in previous dialogues.

In Africa, around 40 percent of the population is under the age of 15 and the share of working-age adults is rising.⁹ Europe's demographics look different: Only 16 percent of the population is under 15 and its population is rapidly ageing.¹⁰ Although the world is more demographically diverse than ever before, one thing is true for countries across the globe: To harness demographic dividends, governments must plan well, take demographic developments into account and foster the human potential of their population.

Acknowledgement

The **#The4DSeries** was jointly organised by the German Federal Foreign Office and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, together with the United Nations Population Fund and the African Union, to raise awareness of the relevance of demographic change. The Berlin Institute for Population and Development provides technical and scientific advice for the policy dialogues on demographic diversity and dividends. It contributed expertise for the topics of each dialogue and drafted input papers for discussion.

This report is based on the Event Reports and Food for Thought papers published online for each dialogue in the **#The4DSeries**. These reports and papers can be found here: www.berlin-institut.org/en/what-we-do/projects/the4dseries. Additional sources are listed under "Sources" at the end of this report.

PART 1 | THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND, EXPLAINED

Put simply, the demographic dividend is the potential for an economic boost that can result from shifts in a population's age structure — when the share of the working-age population (15–64) is considerably larger than the non-working-age population of young and elderly dependents (14 and younger, and 65 and older). This shift frees up resources for investment in social and economic development.

As a rule, when there is a ratio of at least 1.7 people of working age to every dependent — young or elderly people — within a population, a window of opportunity, also known as the demographic bonus, opens. To translate this demographic bonus into a demographic dividend, countries need to invest in its greatest resource: in what economists call human capital. Young people need to be healthy, receive a good education and skills training, and have employment opportunities.

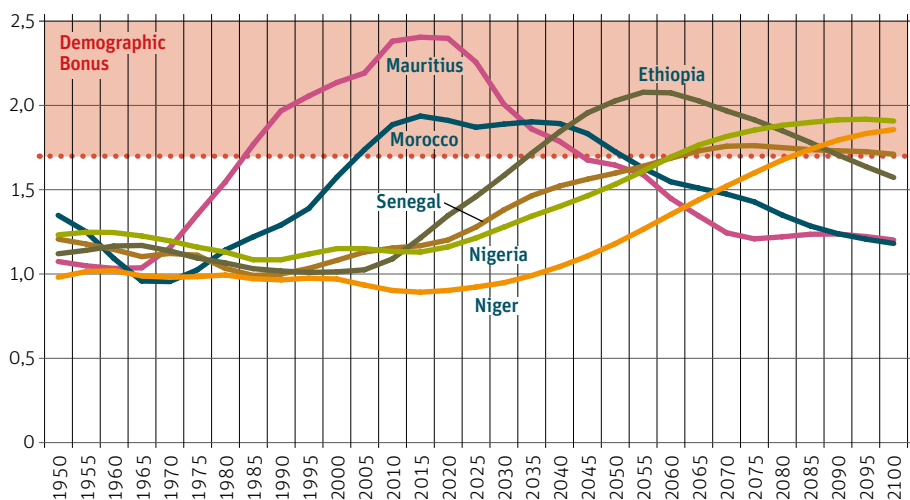
The concept of the demographic dividend has gained significant attention in recent years, as it offers the potential for accelerated economic growth in countries experiencing a shift in their population age structure. For example, in Eastern Africa, around 41 percent of the population is under the age of 15 and the share of working-age adults is rising; by 2050 only 31 percent of East Africa's population will be under the age of 15.¹¹ In other regions this shift in age structure has already occurred. For instance, in Southern Asia, the share of the population younger than 15 decreased from 36 percent in 2000 to 24 percent in 2023 — a trend that is projected to continue.¹² Better access to health services and a rising level of education

lead to declining fertility rates. When a country's mortality and fertility rates drop, what results is a larger proportion of the population being within the working-age group — for a window of time of up to several decades.

Nonetheless, transforming a demographic bonus into a demographic dividend is not guaranteed! It requires several preconditions. Besides fertility rate reduction and age structure changes, people's living conditions must improve significantly. High-quality education and employment opportunities should be provided for the working-age population. In the absence of this, a high proportion of young people without adequate jobs, income and prospects could trigger social tensions, leading to a potential demographic disaster.

The window of opportunity opens at a different time for every country

A demographic bonus emerges when there are more people of working age than there are young and old people to be provided for. Thanks to a rapid decline in fertility in the 1960s and 1970s, Mauritius was already able to benefit from an economically favourable age structure in the 1980s. Whereas the island state has already been able to convert this into a dividend — a demographically determined boost to development — the demographic bonus is still a long way off for other African countries. Niger, for example, can hope for a bonus around 2080 at the earliest.¹³



Ratio of the working age population aged between 15 and 64 to dependents (people aged 0 to 14 and over 64), 1950 to 2100

(Data source: United Nations¹⁴)

Recognising demographic trailblazers on the African continent

The Asian Tiger States (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan) are often cited as models of demographic dividends, demonstrating how a youthful population can drive economic growth. This model, however, may not accurately reflect the complex realities faced by many African nations, where priorities such as peacebuilding and addressing urgent crises like food shortages may take precedence.

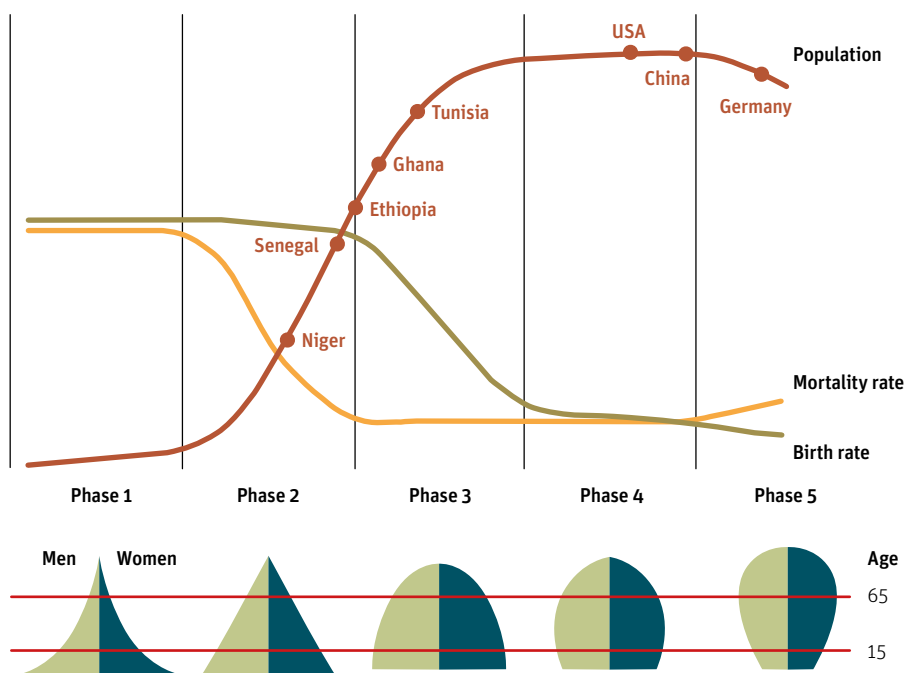
Still, Africa, with its large youth population and rapid urbanisation, is at a turning point in its socioeconomic development. Many countries in Asia that once faced significant demographic challenges were able to benefit from the demographic dividend and rise to become emerging economies and industrialised countries. Some African countries — so-called demographic trailblazers — have now started embarking on this path, too. It is worth examining the political, social and economic framework conditions for this development more closely, for much can be learned from these countries.

The demographic dividend remains not only relevant but necessary. The disparities between African countries make it necessary to adopt a context-specific perspective — recognising each country's unique challenges and priorities — when addressing significant socioeconomic issues.

Thus far, only a few countries in Africa have reached the window of opportunity that results in a demographic bonus. They include South Africa and Botswana in Southern Africa, and Morocco and Tunisia in Northern Africa.¹⁵ Africa's best chance for a longer-lasting economic upswing that benefits broad segments of the population is for families

The path through the demographic transition

Schematic diagram of the development of fertility and mortality rates and total population in the absence of migration¹⁷



(Own representation)

to become smaller. Using a context-specific perspective, how can the decline in fertility rates in Africa, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, be accelerated with a rights-based approach instead of coercive measures? Moreover, once the demographic bonus is reached, what is needed to transform it into economic growth and socioeconomic progress?

Several African countries, including Botswana, Ghana and Senegal, have demonstrated that targeted demographic policy can successfully accelerate the demographic transition towards the window of opportunity and a demographic dividend. In a study of these countries, the Berlin Institute highlighted which interventions can contribute to couples choosing smaller family sizes and what other African countries can learn from the experiences of these pioneering countries.¹⁶

PART 2 | REVIEW OF DIALOGUES

Each dialogue in the **#The4DSeries** focuses on a different topic that shapes population trends and influences demographic dividends:

■ Data: Disaggregated socio-demographic data to provide an evidence base for sustainable policy planning

In order to benefit from a demographic dividend, investments in the empowerment, health, education and employment of (young) people are key. This requires careful planning and decision-making based on sound knowledge about how many people are living in a country or region, where they live, how old they are, and what needs they have. Therefore, having access to reliable, timely, disaggregated and internationally comparable data is important for planners, governments and national as well as international organisations. The question is: How can we obtain and package demographic data in a timely way that encourages uptake by policymakers who prioritize targeted investments?¹⁸

■ Food security and nutrition: Sufficient food and nutrition to meet the needs of a growing number of people as well as to create employment opportunities in agriculture

Food security and lifelong nutrition underpin development of human capital and are essential for achieving demographic dividends. Countries face an urgent collective

Africa is a centre of growth

The United Nations projects that by 2050 the world population will reach 9.7 billion. While population numbers in high income countries are stagnating or declining slightly, growth is increasingly concentrated in low- and lower-middle-income countries that are lagging in the demographic transition — above all Pakistan, India and the Philippines in Asia, and Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo in Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa, birth rates are on average twice as high as the global average.²¹

challenge: How to shift to sustainable agriculture, promote healthy diets and ensure food security and adequate nutrition to enable all persons to fulfil their potential and contribute to lasting socioeconomic development?¹⁹

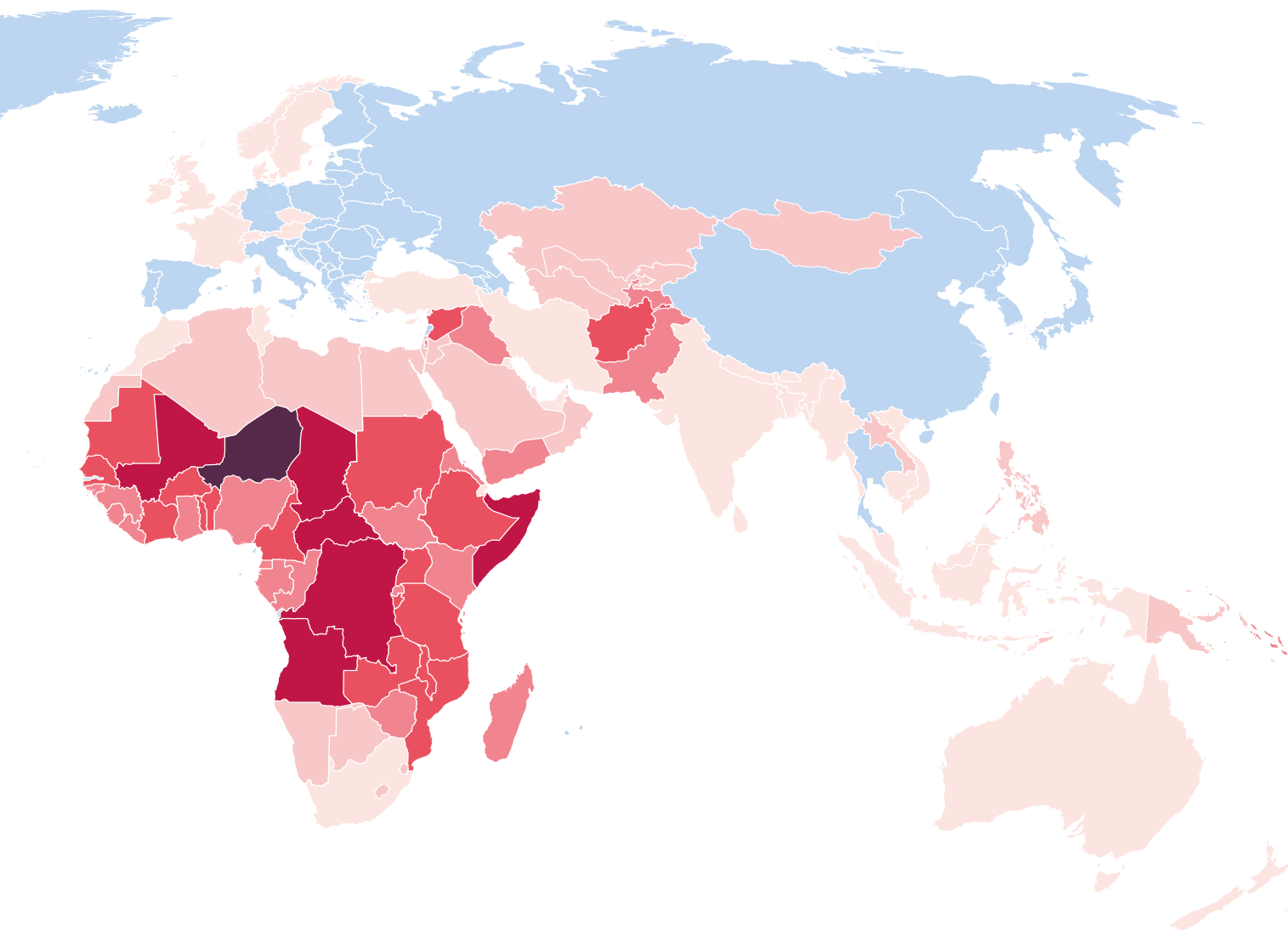
■ Education and skills development: Equal educational opportunities for girls and boys and the provision of lifelong learning opportunities

Universal access to a quality education is a prerequisite to harnessing demographic dividends. Modern economies require modern skills, as well as full participation, free from discrimination, of all working-age members of society. This translates to equitable access to quality education starting from primary level to lifelong learning opportunities.²⁰

Estimated population growth worldwide, in percent, 2020 to 2050



(Data basis: UN DESA²²)



■ **Accelerating adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR): Gender equality and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) information and services, including family planning and comprehensive sexuality education**

At 1.29 billion, adolescents (aged 10 to 19 years) constitute about 16 percent of the world's population, with a higher proportion in middle- and low-income countries.²³ To harness demographic dividends, it is crucial for countries to secure the health and well-being of this large group. Adolescence is characterised by a high need for sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, a specific

vulnerability to SRH violations and a need for accurate SRHR information. Accelerating ASRHR is key to reducing rates of unintended pregnancies and to diminishing social and health risks for young people of all genders.²⁴

■ **Urbanisation: Universal access to health services and family planning in cities, urban planning for sustainable economic development and resilience in the face of climate change, and connecting urban and rural development**

More than two-thirds of the world population is projected to live in cities in 2050, a more than 10 percent increase from today.²⁵ On the African continent, almost 80 percent of the population growth by 2050 will occur in cities.²⁶ As engines for innovation and progress, cities constitute an immense potential to social and economic development and for young people and women to contribute to the demographic dividend. Uncontrolled and unsustainable urbanisation dynamics can, however, exacerbate poverty, and the consolidation of slums and precarious living conditions. Countries need to work toward creating liveable cities for all that are resilient and safe spaces and enable their residents to reach their full potential.²⁷

■ **Climate resilience: Better socio-demographic data, robust SRHR education and services, youth empowerment and leadership, technical and financial assistance for climate migrants, and multisectoral partnerships**

The climate crisis is one of the most pressing and far-reaching challenges of our time, posing a threat to harnessing demographic dividends and sustainable development. The consequences of the climate crisis are universal; however, low- and middle-income countries are often disproportionately affected and have limited resources for adequate responses. Moreover, we see

that climate change is not gender-neutral and can exacerbate existing inequalities. These factors threaten the socioeconomic progress that is needed to improve people's well-being, strengthen resilience to crises, and foster the demographic transition. Nevertheless, there are ways to mitigate the impact, and even create opportunities in the process of adaptation and transformation in the context of climate change.²⁸

■ **Gender equality: Advancing policies, laws and interventions that address the gendered power dynamics, social norms, values and practices that shape the unequal relationships between men and women in households, communities and societies**

Gender equality is a precondition to unlocking the potential of a demographic dividend, which in turn requires that first mortality and then fertility rates decline, resulting in smaller family sizes. Family sizes only become smaller when women are empowered within society. This translates in practice to girls staying in school longer and marrying later, women advocating for themselves within their relationships and communities and women participating fully in the workforce and politics. Coupled with the availability of family planning resources, this results in smaller families and the demographic dividend can come within reach.²⁹

The following sections examine each of these dialogues at greater length.

2.1 Data for Demographic Dividend(s)

Demographics are shifting globally. How can countries increase their chances of capitalising on this demographic change to promote human potential and the possibility of a demographic dividend? Parts of the world are still very young with high population growth rates, while other regions are rapidly ageing and still others are experiencing population decline. The population in Sub-Saharan Africa is set to double by 2050, and in most of Sub-Saharan Africa, the working-age population is growing faster than any other group.³⁰ This diversity in demographic realities presents both challenges and opportunities at the centre of #The4DSeries.

Harnessing a demographic dividend holds great potential for a country's socioeconomic development and progress towards reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. To benefit from a demographic dividend, however, requires careful planning and decision-making based on sound knowledge about how many people are living in a country or region, where they live, how old they are and what needs they have. Therefore, having access to reliable, timely, disaggregated and internationally comparable data is crucial for planners, governments and national as well as international organisations.

Despite great efforts to improve the availability and use of necessary data, many challenges remain. In many countries the collection of demographic data as well as data on health, education or employment is mostly conducted by external agencies

(and/or with support of international organisations) at sometimes large or irregular intervals. Since many surveys often do not cover the whole population, the collected data may provide an insufficient basis for mapping the needs of the entire population. Moreover, data is often not processed and analysed sufficiently and due to lack of interpretation skills not utilised for planning processes. Thus, there is a need to ensure national ownership and to strengthen the capacities of the public and private sector with regard to the collection and analysis of demographic data.

KEY POINTS

#The4DSeries demographic data dialogue welcomed more than 130 participants from 51 countries to a virtual event on 19 November 2020. Here are some of the key points of action raised in the dialogue:

- Plan for a first and second demographic dividend. The first occurs when the labour force is larger than those who depend on it, and the second occurs when longevity allows older people to accrue and invest assets.
- Strengthen capacity to collect, analyse and use demographic data by investing in professional training, employment, communication and dissemination of results.
- Coordinate efforts across ministries, agencies, donors and sectors.
- Disaggregate data to uncover patterns, trends and other important information hidden by broader data.
- Standardise data to enable comparisons and facilitate efforts to build harmonised databases.
- Ensure data quality, timeliness, privacy, ethics and protection.

- To make the most of the data, combine surveys and large data set sources such as telecommunications, banking or satellite data.
- Facilitate donor coordination and identify gaps to mobilise adequate funding for data collection, analysis and communication.
- Enhance understanding of the limits of demographic data, simplify messages and make data accessible and understandable.
- Enhance partnerships among countries for more efficient collection of quality data.
- Recognise the Nairobi Summit commitments to SRHR and the empowerment of women and girls as key levers to accelerating economic growth and sustainable development.

Realising the Demographic Dividend: Next Steps for Obtaining Quality Demographic Data

Strengthen data collection

To ensure no one is left behind, high-quality, disaggregated data is vital at all levels. Boosting national statistics systems, utilising innovative methods and improving institutional framework conditions and technical infrastructure are essential.

Democratise data and safeguard rights

Effective national development policies rely on accessible population and household data, while maintaining privacy and confidentiality for respondents.

Further improve data analysis, use and communication

Efforts should focus on using population data as a basis for policymaking. Enhancing capacities in national statistical offices leads to better prepared data for various purposes.

Tools to monitor progress towards the demographic dividend

Numerous tools exist to evaluate outcomes in different sectors. It is crucial to raise awareness of these tools and demonstrate their use.

Ensure financing and availability of needed resources

Mobilising financial means and resources is necessary for improvements in data collection, processing, and usage. Active collaboration among governments, international organisations and private partners is needed to establish stable financing flows and mechanisms.

Having access to reliable, timely, disaggregated and internationally comparable data is crucial for planners, governments and national as well as international organisations.

To ensure no one is left behind, high-quality, disaggregated data is vital at all levels. Boosting national statistics systems, utilising innovative methods and improving institutional framework conditions and technical infrastructure are essential.

A pragmatic approach to census-taking

INDONESIA

In Indonesia, a mixed method approach was used to conduct a census in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, combining Computer Aided Web Interviewing (CAWI) and Pencil and Paper Interviewing (PAPI). Administrative data, telecommunication data with permission of users, data from the police force as well as geospatial data were used in combination. These were synchronised with all relevant institutions. The result: more than 50 million people responded.³¹

BURKINA FASO

A digital innovation

In Burkina Faso the Burkina-French enterprise *iCivil Africa* has been testing a digital bracelet after birth since 2018. A QR code, similar to a personal reference number, is generated for every newborn child. This is mounted on a bracelet and provides information on the child's name, parents and date of birth. This information is also transmitted to the nearest registry office via encrypted text message. Using the bracelet, the child can then be registered, and receive an official birth certificate. Thus, newborns are equipped with an individual proof of identity, with which they can later identify themselves to various institutions and exercise their rights. The bracelet remains in the family, providing family members with permanent proof of the birth and identity of the child.³²

What remains invisible is going to be neglected and unnoticed. Therefore, if data is not collected, certain problems remain invisible and for invisible problems there will be no policies. This creates a vicious cycle.

Alexandre Kalache, President of the International Longevity Centre–Brazil and Global Ambassador for HelpAge International

We need to humanise data on young people, to see the lives of young people whose potential has been cut short. We need to see beyond the statistics.

Evalín Karijo, Project Director, Y-ACT, Youth in Action, Amref Health Africa

2.2 Food Security and Nutrition for Demographic Dividend(s)

Food security and lifelong nutrition underpin development of human capital and are essential for achieving demographic dividends. Better policies and practices are key for sustainability. As leaders around the world plan for demographic change from youth bulges to population ageing, food is foundational. Countries face an urgent collective challenge: How can we shift to sustainable agriculture, promote healthy diets and ensure food security and adequate nutrition to enable all persons to fulfil their potential and contribute to lasting development?

Food security has important implications for health and education and is therefore central to the empowerment youth need to realise their full potential. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, particularly Goal 2, to “end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” varies considerably by region.³³

Following more than a decade of continuous decline in the number of individuals worldwide affected by hunger, the number has been slowly rising again since 2014. In 2021, almost 770 million people, or nearly ten percent of the global population, were undernourished.³⁴ Africa has the highest prevalence of malnutrition, with one in five individuals affected.³⁵ Due to its population size, Asia still hosts the largest number of

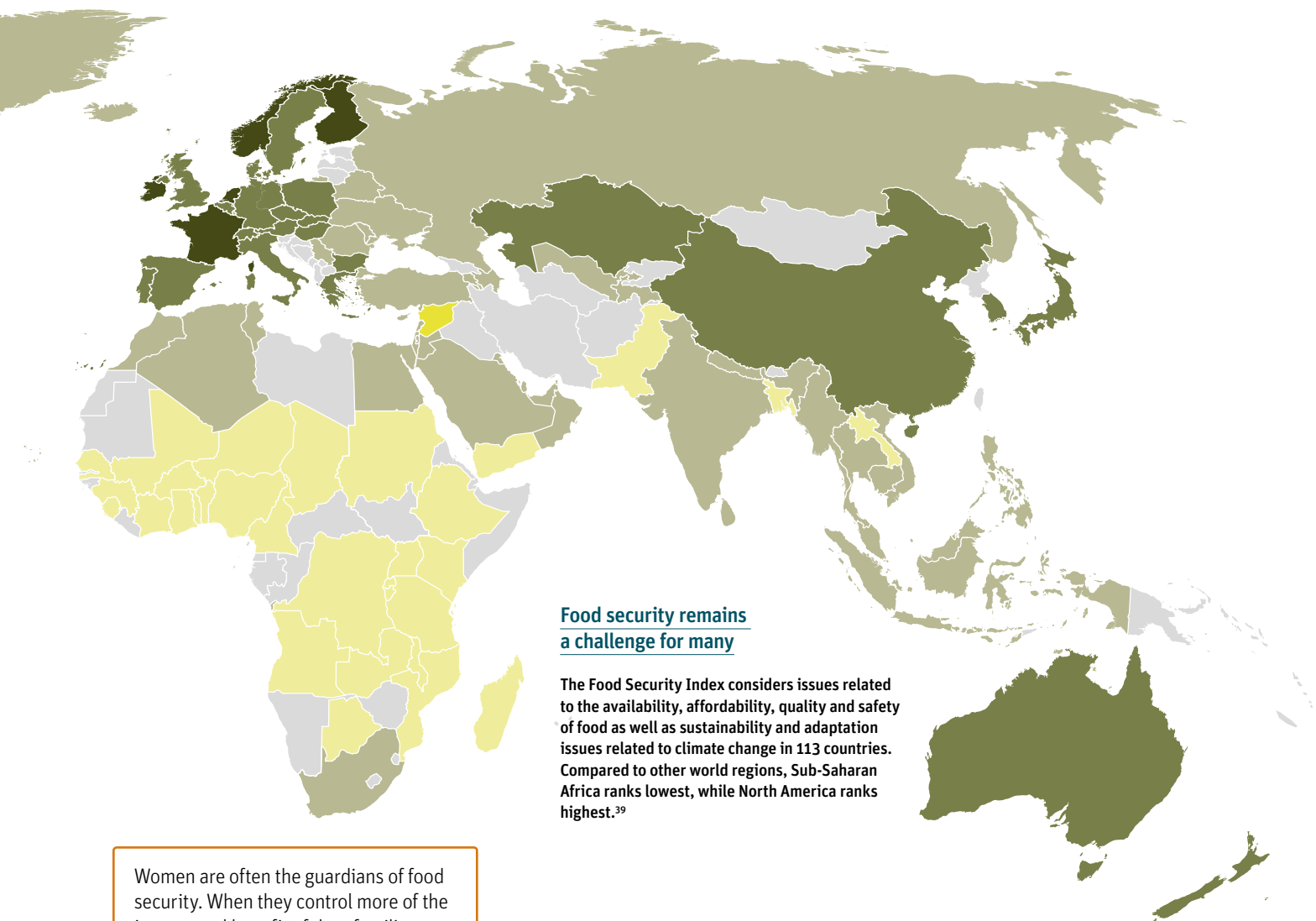
Food Security Index, 2022

- very weak
- weak
- moderate
- good
- very good
- no data

(Data basis: Global Food Security Index³⁷)

undernourished people, yet there has been a considerable drop in prevalence over the last 15 years.³⁶

Food poverty is most prevalent in areas with some of the highest population growth rates in the world. Strong population growth coupled with other factors such as climate change and civil conflict can increase the pressure on natural resources and land for



Food security remains a challenge for many

The Food Security Index considers issues related to the availability, affordability, quality and safety of food as well as sustainability and adaptation issues related to climate change in 113 countries. Compared to other world regions, Sub-Saharan Africa ranks lowest, while North America ranks highest.³⁹

Women are often the guardians of food security. When they control more of the income and benefit of that, families can gain.

Rachel Snow, former Branch Chief of Population and Development, Technical Division, UNFPA

agricultural production. But not only will food demand increase due to population growth: changing age structures and urbanisation will increase the pressure on the agricultural workforce to produce food in sufficient quality and quantities.

Food security increases the likelihood of achieving a demographic dividend. At the same time, successfully harnessing a demographic dividend can contribute to food security because it holds great potential for a country's socioeconomic development. It is time to act now to reaffirm that concrete measures should be taken to strengthen food security at all levels to realise demographic dividends.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines food security as a state in which all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.³⁸

KEY POINTS

#The4DSeries dialogue on food security and nutrition for demographic dividends hosted 100 participants from 42 countries on 11 March 2021. The following list, though not exhaustive, captures key action points raised in this second dialogue:

- Behavioural changes are required in both consumption and production to create a sustainable future for agriculture.
- The empowerment of women and girls, gender equality, and SRHR are crucial to realising the potential of women and young people for building sustainable food systems and harnessing demographic dividends.
- Intensification of agricultural production is essential to match growing and changing demand for food resulting from population growth and changing demographics, while taking climate change impacts into account.
- Climate change poses an increasing challenge to food systems and food security. Building resilient and greener food systems requires policies and incentives to shift away from unsustainable practices.
- Engaging youth as producers and consumers of healthy foods is pivotal to the future of effective food systems.
- Laws and policies may be used by governments to address nutrition-related health issues such as obesity, for example with restrictions on sodium in processed food or taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Food safety laws for consumer protection require capacity and resources for monitoring and enforcement over time.

- Making connections between different fields — e.g., between agriculture and the social sciences of demographics and economics — is necessary to attain food security.
- Programmes providing meals at school have the potential to support local food systems and ensure more balanced nutrition for children.
- Women's access to land and capital, especially in rural areas, is key to ensuring food security. The agricultural sector can provide employment for women and youth today and transform economies towards greater sustainability tomorrow.

Realising the Demographic Dividend: Next Steps for Food Security and Nutrition

Investment in maternal and newborn nutrition

Young women are particularly vulnerable to malnutrition; for example, around half of pregnant women in low- and middle-income countries have an iron deficiency. Unaddressed micronutrient deficiencies can lead to significant health complications for both mother and child. Health campaigns should therefore integrate nutrition education and assistance into SHRH counselling and support services to reduce the gender-based dimension of “hidden hunger”. Providing information on healthy nutrition and subsidised food products to families supports a healthier, more productive workforce.

Free school meal provision

Policies that have provided nutritious school meals have been shown to have positive health effects. Learning outcomes improve as children are better able to concentrate on their education and are incentivised to attend school. The benefits for health and educational outcomes are largest for girls, who are at the greatest risk of staying away from school to help in the household.

RURAL ETHIOPIA

A programme provides a safety net

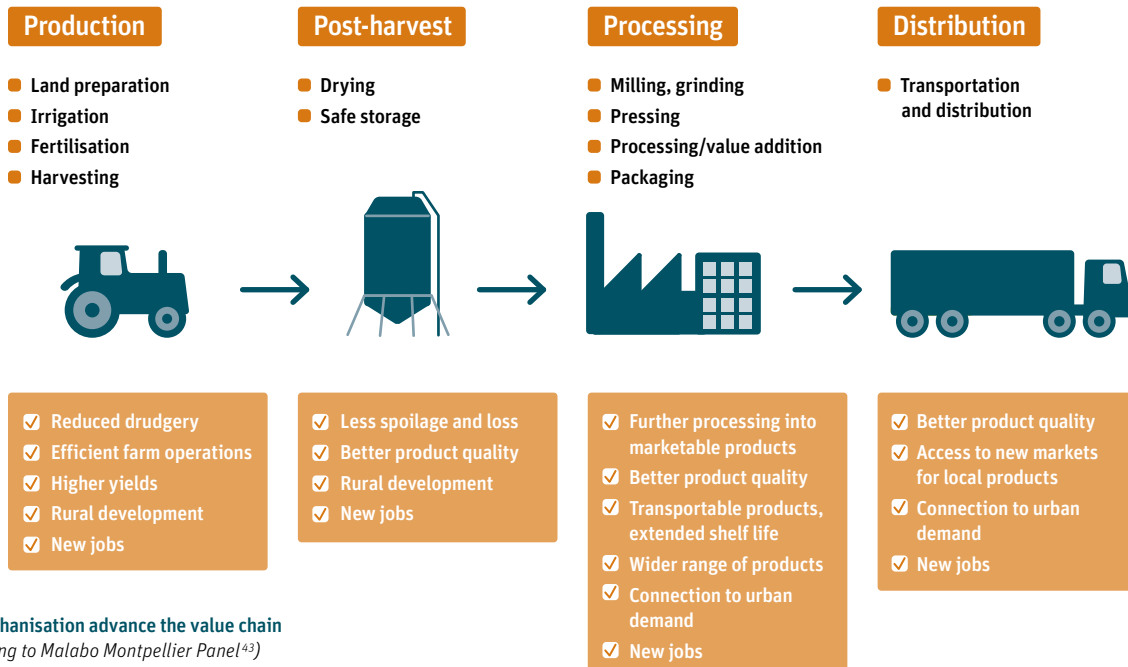
In Ethiopia, the *Productive Safety Net Program* (PSNP) was launched in 2005 in response to food insecurity. The latest extension of the programme was in 2015, aiming to increase resilience to external shocks and enhance food security while improving environmental management. The PSNP helps meet the needs of chronically food-insecure households in identified vulnerable areas in rural Ethiopia. It supplies food, cash or a combination of both to households most affected. Such payments are made to households that can contribute to labour-intensive public work, such as road infrastructure. When work is limited or impossible, unconditional support is provided. This helps households to smooth their consumption, avoid asset depletion and plan with greater certainty. Since the introduction of the safeguard programme — the largest on the African continent — the mortality rate of children under five has been reduced by more than half.⁴⁰

A skilled agricultural workforce to feed a growing population

Rural youth can particularly benefit from investment in agricultural technical vocational education and training (ATVET). Around two-thirds of the workforce in Sub-Saharan Africa works in agriculture; most are small-holders with low incomes. With ATVET training, a fast-growing youth population is more likely to find employment on productive farms or to set up their own innovative agri-businesses using new technologies and sustainable practices. As a result, rural incomes will rise.⁴¹

How infrastructure and mechanisation advance the value chain

Whether driven by muscle power, animals or motors, whether in production or along the entire supply chain, suitable equipment combined with training and qualification contribute to a sustainable increase in yields and create rural jobs.⁴²



How infrastructure and mechanisation advance the value chain
(Own representation according to Malabo Montpellier Panel⁴³)

Adapting agriculture to climate breakdown through Leapfrogging

To feed a growing population, agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa must become more productive. Leapfrogging — avoiding environmentally damaging agricultural practices while adopting new technologies — can support sustainable forms of intensification. For example, providing advisory services in climate-smart agriculture while spreading weather information quickly and cheaply via mobile phone reduces farmers' environmental vulnerability. Women in particular can benefit from the greater decision-making power granted by better access to new technologies.

A programme to overcome gendered division of agricultural labour

The programme *Women in the Driving Seat* dismantles traditional gender norms by providing women in Ghana with vocational training in mechanised agriculture. As part of the continental project *Women in ATVET*, spanning six African countries, the training programme is organised by the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD and the German Agency for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ), together with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. In Ghana, women lack access to

employment in high-value activities and must instead work in labour-intensive processing. *Women in the Driving Seat* aims to overcome the gendered division of labour with courses on tractor operation and maintenance. As they are empowered and benefit from productive employment opportunities, women are able to increase their incomes and thus their decision-making power at the household level, make better choices for themselves and their children and produce more food for healthier families.⁴⁴

GHANA

There is a key requirement that agricultural intensification leap forward to a sustainable state, and not continue unsustainable systems leading to climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss. Greening our agriculture is hugely important. This involves intensification based on agroecological principles to farm in harmony with nature, that creates decent employment opportunities in rural spaces.

Fergus Sinclair, World Agroforestry, Kenya

2.3 Education and Skills Development for Demographic Dividend(s)

Universal access to a quality education is a prerequisite for countries to harness demographic dividends. Modern economies require modern skills, as well as full participation, free from discrimination, of all working-age members of society. This implies ensuring equitable access to quality education starting from primary level to lifelong learning opportunities. Digitalisation can enable new economic growth and facilitate education and communication. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed glaring disparities in education that are not only technological but also human, with teachers and students at the heart of systems straining to support online and offline options.

Lifelong education opportunities are key to unlocking a country's potential for a demographic dividend. They are important drivers of economic growth and women's empowerment. Well-educated youth can contribute to strengthening a country's economy as they enter the labour market. This results in growing productivity and tax revenues, providing countries with the means to invest in their educational systems.

Education has the greatest impact on demographic development when girls receive the same opportunities to attend school as boys. Every further year of secondary education reduces the girls' likelihood of

being married before the age of 18 and increases their potential lifetime income.⁴⁵ Better-educated women tend to marry later in life and have smaller families. This leads to changes in the population age structure and increases the potential for a demographic dividend.

Despite progress, many low- and middle-income countries still face hurdles in meeting the needs of their school-age populations at all educational levels. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, about 258 million children and youth were out of school worldwide.⁴⁶ The reasons for that are manifold, ranging from financial means to insufficient educational infrastructure or shortages of well-trained teachers, which affects the quality of teaching. When it comes to access and level of education, more girls are left behind than boys. Although gender gaps in primary school enrolment have mostly disappeared globally in recent decades, including in Sub-Saharan Africa, this gap becomes wider at the secondary school level. Still, even at the primary school level about 1 in 4 girls in Sub-Saharan Africa are out of school, compared to 1 in 5 boys.⁴⁷

Even those who do graduate often do not receive training in technical or social skills, leaving them with fewer chances to make a decent living later in life. These numbers show the challenges ahead in harnessing a demographic dividend through education. Closing these gaps requires large investment.

Gender equality must be addressed. Excluding women from the education systems costs the global economy billions of dollars. Empowered women are key to economic and social welfare. *Rose Wachuka Macharia, Advocate of the High Court of Kenya*

KEY POINTS

Over 120 participants from 51 countries reflected on education and skills development for demographic dividends during **#The4DSeries** virtual event held on 29 June 2021. Several key action points were identified:

- Convince decision-makers that investments in education are essential for any prospects of a demographic dividend, and that a large working-age population is only an asset if it has acquired the skills required to contribute to the economy.
- Use education to foster social and economic equity by empowering disadvantaged and marginalised populations — especially girls, women and people with disabilities — to develop their full potential. It is crucial that learners pursue their education until they can be integrated into the active economy with decent work opportunities.
- Encourage learners' return to school after an interruption such as pregnancy, e.g., providing on-site day care.
- Reinforce learners' motivation to stay in school by improving school-to-work transitions, including through partnerships with the private sector.
- Enhance quality and equity of education, e.g., by providing more equal access to digital tools and standardised educational opportunities.
- Strengthen capacities to measure and monitor educational quality in order to guide targeting of support where most needed.
- Widely share the knowledge and experience on digital media for communication and education gleaned from the response to COVID-19.

- Address the multiple divides within the digital divide — from access to electricity, internet and devices, to girls' freedom of access to information and communications technology.
- Reinforce and celebrate the crucial role of teachers as the mainstay of education.

Realising the Demographic Dividend: Next Steps for Education and Skills Development

Better-qualified teachers

Quality education necessitates a sufficient quantity of skilled teachers, training them to meet set standards and employing staff based on qualifications and dedication. Countries must also monitor teacher performance and offer incentives, such as promotion and career development opportunities.

Address barriers to equal education

Achieving a demographic dividend through education is possible by ensuring equal access for girls and boys, creating a learning environment that is responsive to students' gender as well as social and cultural backgrounds. This includes training teachers, creating gender-sensitive textbooks and materials and a school infrastructure that meets safety and hygiene needs of girls and young women.

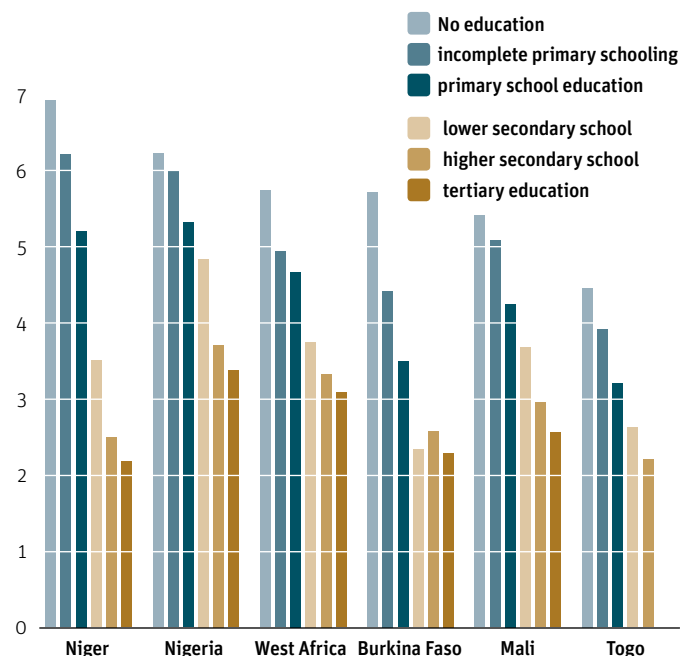
Strengthen SRHR, for girls in particular

Young people — particularly girls — should receive early and comprehensive education on how to make informed decisions about their bodies. Access to youth-friendly information and services concerning puberty and sexuality, contraception and the transmission of sexual diseases such as HIV/AIDS is key. Learning how to prevent unintended pregnancies, especially in teenage years, can help lessen disruptions and exclusion for girls at secondary school level.

Education slows down population growth

As a rule, women with better access to education tend to have fewer children, including in West Africa, where average fertility rates remain relatively high.

Average number of children per woman by educational level and country, 2020–2025
(Data basis: Wittgenstein Centre⁴⁸)



Make use of digital tools and improve learning outcomes

Technologies can facilitate access to education for the growing number of school-age children, improve the quality of teaching and facilitate interactive learning approaches. Where there is a lack of trained teachers, children should be supported with self-guided programmes. Teachers should be equipped with adaptive learning software that tracks children's progress and modifies teaching plans based on individual needs. At the same time, young people's socialisation needs and widening digital divides should also be considered.

SOUTH AFRICA

Free access to online tutorials

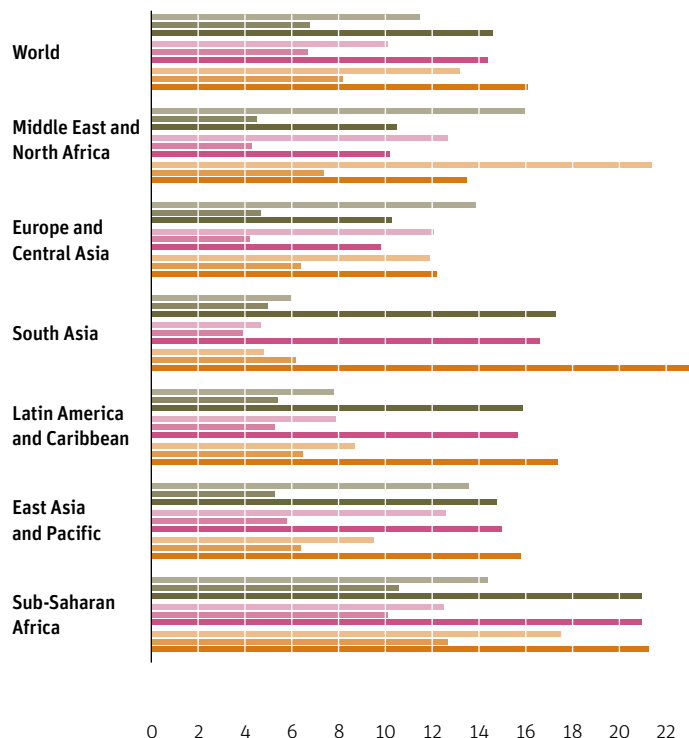
Siyavula is a free online-learning programme for math and natural sciences for higher secondary education that started in South Africa. Students use it to learn and teachers to improve their teaching. Siyavula uses an algorithm that increases the level of difficulty according to the student's level of knowledge. The software can thereby assess where students' gaps are and what they still have to learn to reach a certain teaching goal. In turn, Siyavula tells teachers where they can intervene and with which tasks children need support.⁴⁹

Education pays off

Increased investment in education benefits both the overall economy and individual incomes, especially for women.



Average increase in life income per additional completed school year by world region and gender, in percent, 2014
(Data basis: Montenegro and Patrinos⁵⁰)



INDIA

Transitions from school to work

The *Education to Employability* (E2E) project tackles the issue of graduate unemployment in West Bengal, India. By providing students in their final year in school with training in communicative English, soft skills, information technology and career awareness, the project aims to enhance their life and employability skills. This includes career counselling to support students to set their career expectations as well as job training programmes that help participants identify their preferred career paths. The project was conceptualised in 2008 by the Vikramshila Education Resource Society and started off with 10 schools in Kolkata. It gradually evolved and covers more than 200 schools across all 21 districts of West Bengal. By 2016, more than 200 students were placed in entry-level jobs.⁵¹

Prepare students for working life

Applied teaching should be encouraged early on at the primary and secondary school level. Supported by internships or other hands-on experiences it should make the benefits of education clear to children and inform them of their future career prospects. Governments can support schools by identifying gaps in applied teaching and by providing schools with a list of high-demand occupations. Getting a growing and increasingly well-educated young workforce into jobs also requires a greater focus on technical and vocational training. This brings young people in contact with relevant fields as well as employers with the skilled workers they seek.

Measure progress and results

To identify problems within the education sector and to learn from the past shortfalls, it is necessary to regularly evaluate the effects of education. Many countries already have national and, in some cases, regional comparative tests.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, about 258 million children and youth were out of school worldwide. Almost 100 million of them lived in Sub-Saharan Africa, 93 million in Southern Asia, 17 million in Northern Africa and Western Asia.⁵²

Child marriages and early pregnancies are a major reason why many girls drop out of school. Conversely, every further year of secondary education reduces girls' likelihood of being married before the age of 18.

Across much of the Global South there is a large and growing youth population that exceeds the dependent population. This cohort of youth offers tremendous productive potential, but only if they are offered the requisite education, skills and decent work opportunities so they can chart successful trajectories. Without these, we squander the demographic advantage that these youth offer.

Sabina Dewan, President and Executive Director, JustJobs Network, New Delhi, India

2.4 Accelerating Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for Demographic Dividend(s)

At 1.29 billion, adolescents (aged 10 to 19 years) constitute about 16 percent of the world's population, with a higher proportion in middle- and low-income countries.⁵³ To harness demographic dividends, it is crucial for countries to secure the health and well-being of this large group. Adolescence is characterised by a high need for sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, a specific vulnerability to SRH violations and a need for accurate SRHR information for adolescents. Accelerating adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR) is key to reducing rates of unintended pregnancies and to diminishing social and health risks for young people of all genders.

Young people represent enormous potential for their countries to realise a demographic dividend. Ensuring adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR), particularly for girls and young women, is a prerequisite. This means empowering young people to freely decide whether, when and with whom to have sex. It means teaching them how to avoid, delay or

space pregnancies and how to seek out professional reproductive health care. Adolescents who are able to stay healthy are generally more likely to go further and do better in school and acquire the skills to live a productive and fulfilling life. Girls and young women who choose to delay pregnancy, have fewer children and earn a living have a greater chance of reaching their full potential. When countries' fertility rates fall, a demographically induced economic upswing occurs.

Despite some progress, basic SRHR information, services and goods remain out of reach for many adolescents around the world. Even before COVID-19, there were 14 million young women aged between 15 and 19 in low- and middle-income countries who wanted to avoid pregnancy but were not using a modern form of contraception. This contributes to approximately 10 million unintended pregnancies among this age group each year in these countries. More than half (5.7 million) of these unintended pregnancies result in abortions, the majority of which occur in unsafe conditions.⁵⁴ Additionally, complications during pregnancy and childbirth remain a leading cause of death for teenage girls aged 15-19 globally, and in Sub-Saharan Africa alone over 200,000 women die each year as a result of pregnancy and childbirth complications.⁵⁵ Other negative impacts include disruptions in education or dropping out entirely, followed by limited economic opportunities later.

Girls also face a greater risk of child, early and forced marriage. Each year, 12 million girls are married under the age of 18.⁵⁶ The pandemic aggravated the situation further, with girls in particular exposed to domestic or gender-based violence (GBV) and a greater risk of unintended pregnancies.

KEY POINTS

On 20 October 2021, more than 140 participants, experts and speakers from 47 countries convened virtually for **#The4DSeries** ASRHR dialogue. Here are a few of the key action points suggested by participants:

- Collect disaggregated and reliable data on ASRHR to identify adolescents' needs, including those of marginalised adolescents who are typically in danger of being left behind.
- Ensure a continuous collection, analysis and use of data and improve the quality of data sets to recognise gaps in health service coverage and introduce integrated, tailored and youth-friendly services.
- Include adolescents in the data collection process to gain an understanding of their diverse experiences and vulnerabilities.
- Train SRH service staff to be sensitive to the needs of adolescents, their diversity and their need for privacy.
- Develop formal evaluation and documentation methods to learn how to best engage adolescents.
- Enforce existing laws and policies against GBV, such as the Maputo Protocol, at national levels.
- Include boys and young men in the programmes as allies in the fight against GBV and for gender equality.
- Develop standards and guidelines for ethical and meaningful engagement, participation and leadership of young people.
- Foster ASRHR through investments in different sectors and emphasise its importance.

- Mobilise public sector resources for ASRHR, for example by raising awareness for short- and long-term impacts of under-investing.
- Invest in the education and legislative literacy of young people so that they can hold their governments accountable.
- Reinforce and strengthen initiatives to ensure the implementation and promotion of sustainable and impactful advocacy on ASRHR.
- Create public awareness on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) by supplying the right information and countering misinformation; establish common ground with relevant communities.
- Communicate information in a way that appeals to young people and invest in the right digital tools to reach them.

ASRHR means empowering young people to freely decide whether, when and with whom to have sex. It means teaching them how to avoid, delay or space pregnancies and how to seek out professional health care.

Girls and young women who choose to delay pregnancy, have fewer children and earn a living have a greater chance of reaching their full potential. When countries' fertility rates fall, a demographically induced economic upswing occurs.

Realising the Demographic Dividend: Next Steps for ASRHR

Address evidence gaps in ASRHR

Implementing policies and programmes that target ASRHR requires timely, regular and high-quality data on this age group. Collection and analysis of demographic and health data should prioritise underrepresented groups, such as very young adolescents aged 10-14, members of LGBTQ communities, and those living in humanitarian and conflict situations.

Make SRH services adolescent-friendly and accessible in all settings

Countries should tailor policies, laws, and interventions to encourage accessible, adolescent-friendly SRH services, prioritising vulnerable adolescents' needs. This includes the provision of SRH information and services regardless of age or marital status and the promotion of an enabling environment that ensures patients' privacy and makes them feel safe when visiting a health facility. They should also counter misconceptions and local taboos to speak openly about sex and reproduction.

Engage communities to tackle root causes of harmful traditional practices

Eliminating traditional practices such as child, early and forced marriages or female genital mutilation requires breaking down deeply rooted social norms. Tackling these root causes does not only require changes in laws and policies but also community-level support. Beyond enforcing laws against harmful traditional practices, countries should engage with religious and traditional leaders, boys and young men to challenge harmful social and gender norms, traditions or beliefs.

Use digital solutions

Digital tools, such as text messages or apps, can enhance adolescent engagement with SRH information. Through text messages or smartphone apps, SRH information can be made accessible in a simple, attractive and cost-effective way. These tools have great potential to break down barriers of physical SRH service delivery, such as absence of privacy, stigma, provider bias or long distances to health facilities. Governments should invest in digital infrastructure and enforce data protection measures.

Strengthen availability of essential SRH commodities

Governments should collaborate with manufacturers and sales organisations to ensure wide availability of affordable, high-quality SRH commodities while maintaining supply chain resilience. This allows youth to reliably prevent pregnancies and avoid or treat diseases, thus enabling healthy and pleasurable sexual relationships. Currently, the unmet need for modern family planning is highest in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Comprehensive sexuality education, particularly girls

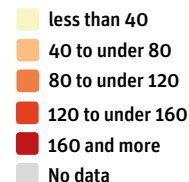
To acquire critical knowledge on how to prevent, delay or space pregnancies and how to seek SRH services, young people need to be educated comprehensively about sexuality. Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is crucial in empowering adolescents to make informed decisions; governments should implement policies aligned with international standards and adapt content to different contexts. CSE should be offered in all settings and to all adolescents, including those living with disabilities or in humanitarian settings.

Mobilise sufficient and sustainable funding, especially for ASRHR

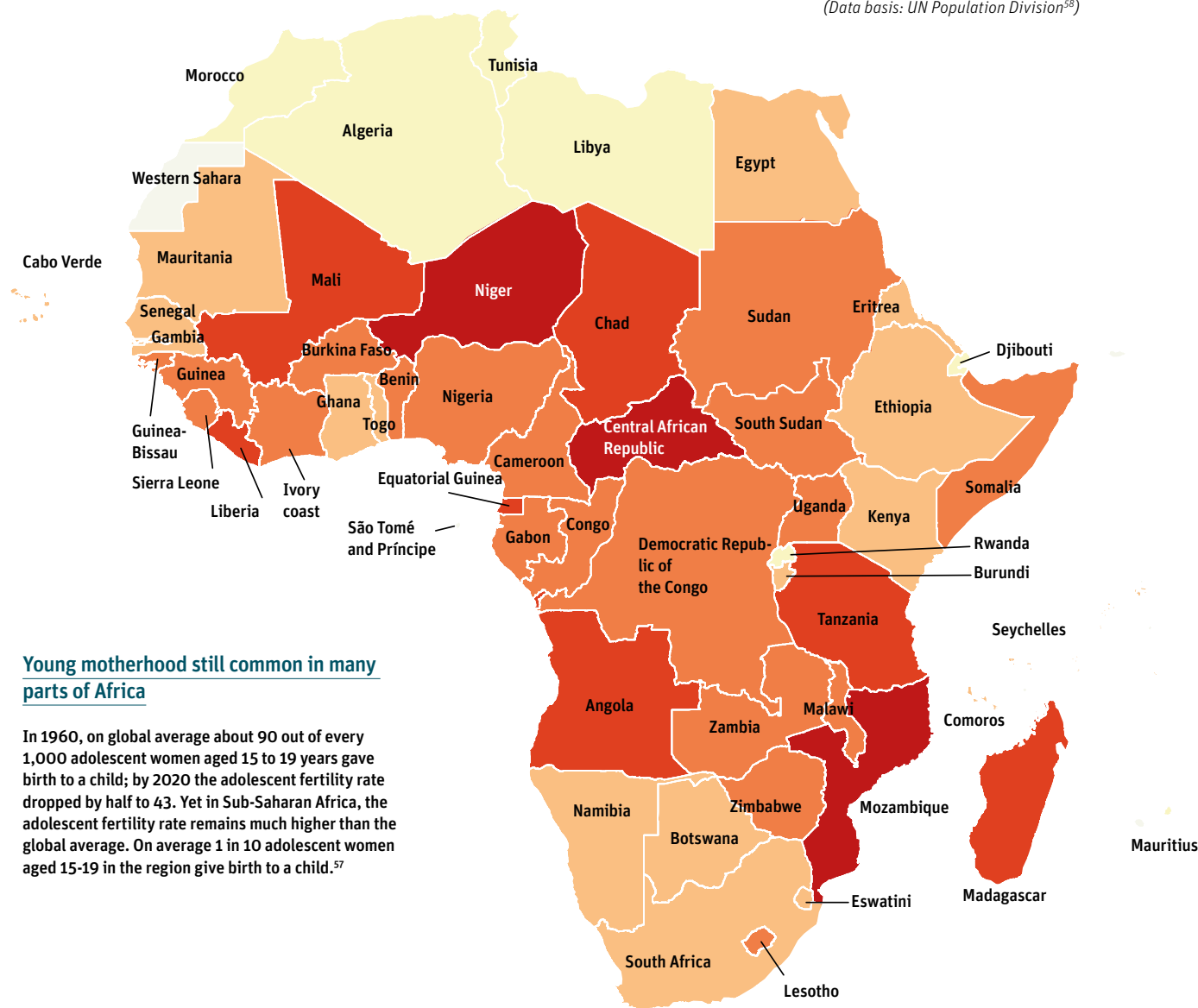
Governments and development partners should show strong commitment and bold leadership in developing sustainable funding strategies for advancing adolescents' SRH rights, fighting gender-based discrimination,

and mitigating COVID-19 impacts. The concept of the demographic dividend should be promoted to draw attention to the economic benefits of adolescent SRHR.

Number of births per 1,000 adolescent women aged 15 to 19 years, 2020



(Data basis: UN Population Division⁵⁸)



Young motherhood still common in many parts of Africa

In 1960, on global average about 90 out of every 1,000 adolescent women aged 15 to 19 years gave birth to a child; by 2020 the adolescent fertility rate dropped by half to 43. Yet in Sub-Saharan Africa, the adolescent fertility rate remains much higher than the global average. On average 1 in 10 adolescent women aged 15-19 in the region give birth to a child.⁵⁷

The costs of inaction towards investing in youth capabilities and access to information especially among adolescent girls and young women are significant. Not only do these costs impact girls' lives and well-being, but they also undermine the prospects for poverty reduction, growth of communities and resilience of families.
Gloria M. Nalule, Programme Analyst, SRHR/HIV Linkages and HIV Prevention, UNFPA

The cultural practices that affect men or boys, they are easy for community members to let go. But the ones that affect women remain a huge problem. It also sticks to the fact that gender is still a very big problem. Patriarchy is still a very big problem. Men's and boys' issues are everybody's issues. But girls' and women's issues are women's issues.
Abimbola Aladejare, African Union Saleema Youth Victorious Ambassador for West Africa Public Health, Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Preventable deaths due to pregnancy complications remain disproportionately high in Sub-Saharan Africa

Despite some progress, the risk of women dying from complications of pregnancy is still significantly higher in the world's lower-income countries than in high-income countries. A woman's lifetime risk of maternal death is the probability that a 15-year-old woman will eventually die from a maternal cause. In high income countries, this is 1 in 5300, compared to 1 in 49 in low-income countries.⁵⁹

A Regional Initiative to Foster SRHR

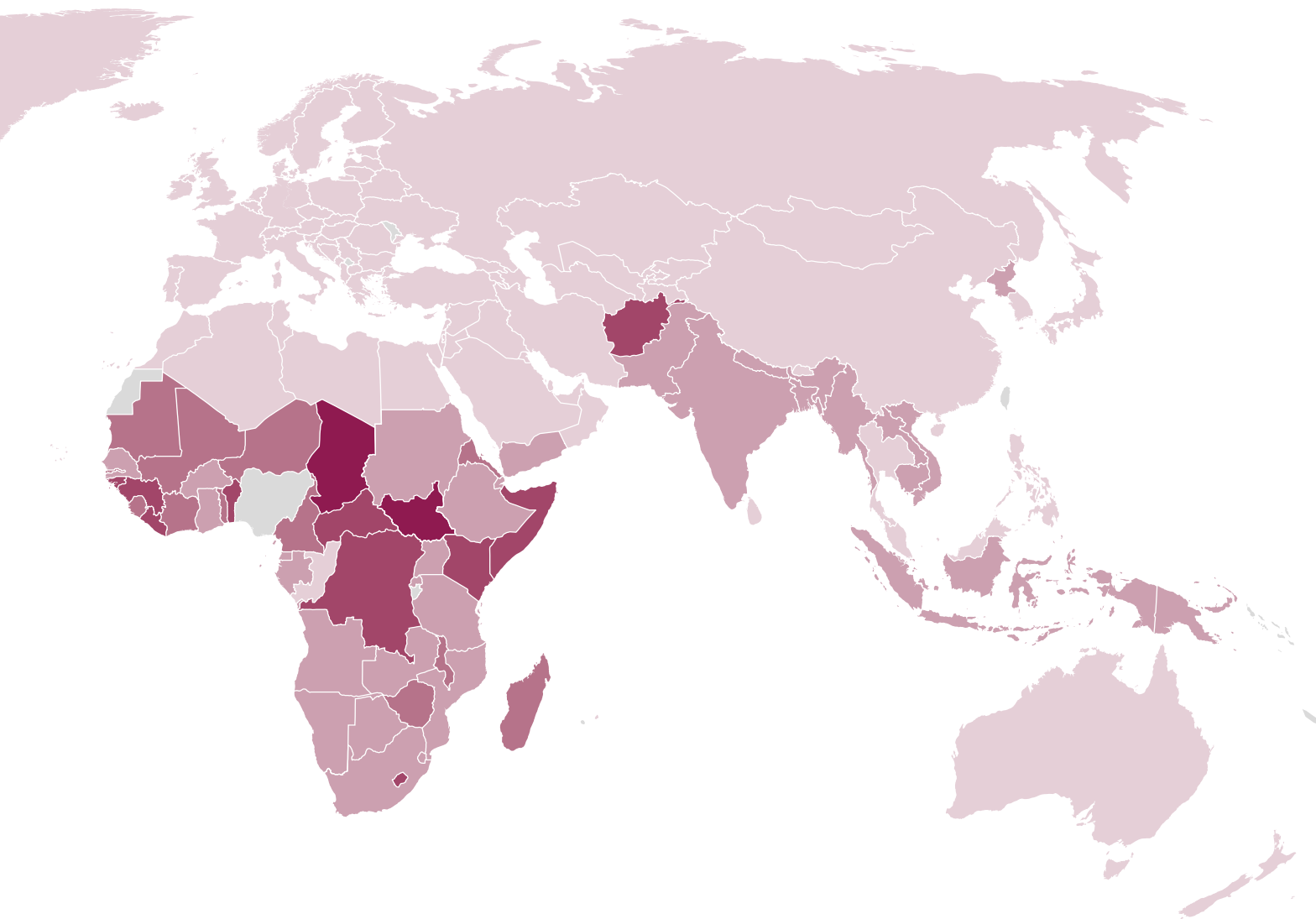
Founded in 2015, the *Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD)* regional initiative covers the six Sahel countries Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, with Benin joining as a seventh country in 2018.⁶¹ The initiative fosters SRHR at various levels: it addresses social norms, works with religious leaders, fosters economic empowerment of women, invests in reproductive health commodities and includes boys and men in female empowerment. The initiative has contributed to highly promising trends, with a school retention rate of adolescent girls enrolled in secondary schools increasing from 70 to 93 percent, the modern contraceptive prevalence rate increasing from 9 to 17.5 percent, and the average maternal mortality rate decreasing from 606 to 558 deaths per 100,000 live births.⁶² Due to its success, two more countries joined the initiative in 2020 for SWEDD II: Cameroon and Guinea.⁶³

SAHEL

Maternal mortality ratio (maternal deaths per 100,000 live births), 2020

- less than 100
- 100 to under 300
- 300 to under 500
- 500 to under 1,000
- 1,000 and more
- no data

(Data basis: World Health Organisation⁶⁰)



Drawing on the Authority of Grandmothers

The *Grandmother Project* uses the authority of grandmothers in rural and urban communities in Senegal to overcome child marriage and other harmful traditional practices. Grandmothers are widely respected in the community due to their experience and wisdom gathered

throughout their lives. The project's "change through culture" approach empowers these elders to support girls' rights and wellbeing. They are educated about the negative consequences of child marriage and benefits of sending girls to school instead. In open dialogues and discussions grandmothers pass on that knowledge to parents and convince them to

abandon the practice. In 2019 alone, the Grandmother Project convinced more than 60 grandmothers and more than 3,000 community members to advocate for better educational opportunities for girls. In total, 1,636 grandmothers have been trained in the project, with 77 villages and two urban communities participating so far.⁶⁴

SENEGAL

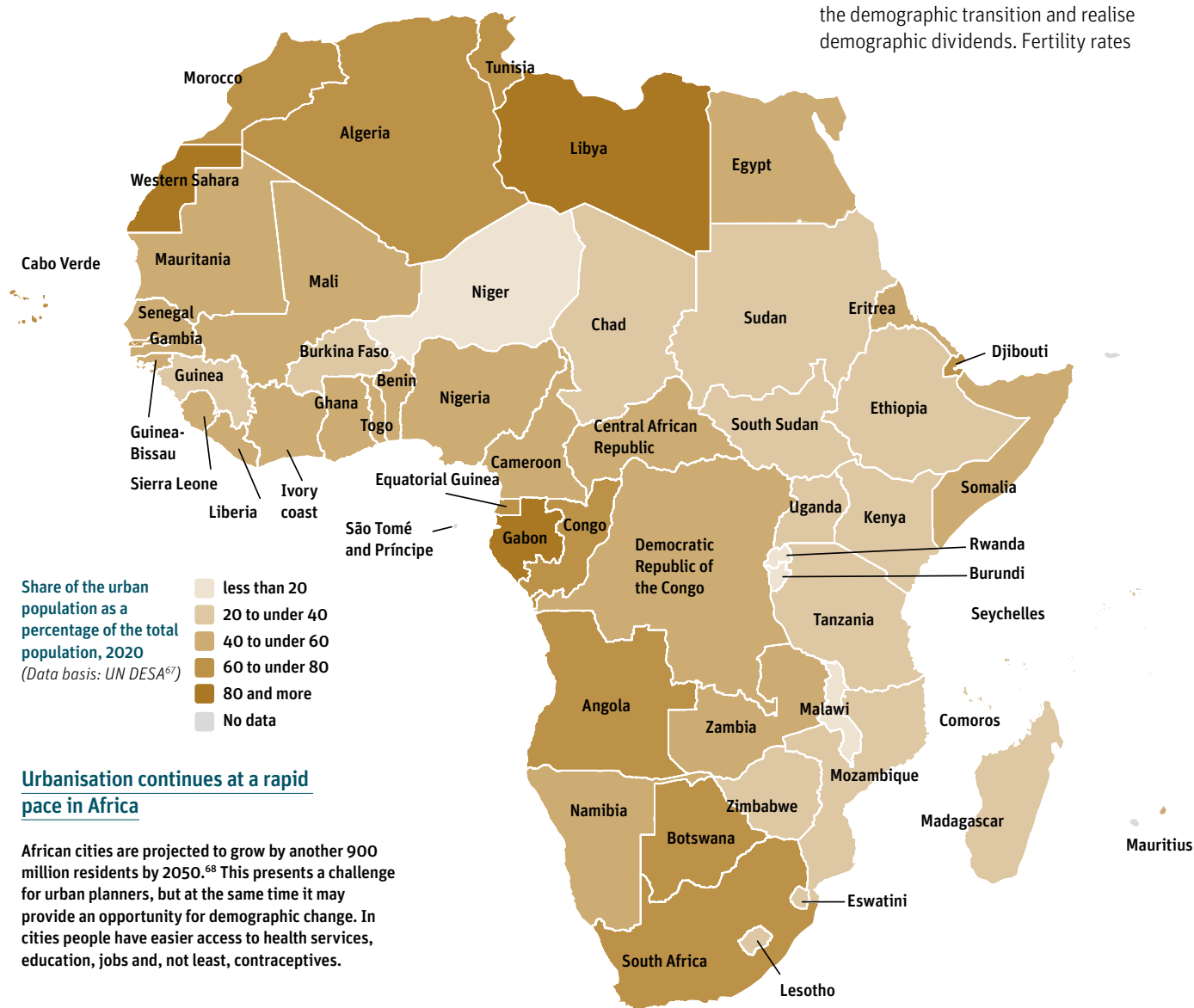
2.5 Urbanisation and Demographic Dividend(s)

In rapidly urbanising countries, social and economic development relies on cities. It is therefore imperative that governments focus on sustainable urbanisation, as only

then will urban dwellers, and especially urban youth, be able to reach their full potential. Sustainable urban development touches on all areas of daily life and requires policymakers to consider various topics covering universal access to health and family planning in cities; sustainable economic development, climate change and urban resilience; and urban planning and urban-rural development. Governments that succeed in combining

these elements into urban policies, planning and governance structures can benefit from demographic change and harness demographic dividends.

The global urban population is projected to increase from 4.4 billion today to 6.7 billion in 2050.⁶⁵ Urbanisation is fastest in Africa, where the number of city residents is expected to triple in the next 30 years.⁶⁶ If well-managed, urbanisation has enormous potential to help countries accelerate the demographic transition and realise demographic dividends. Fertility rates



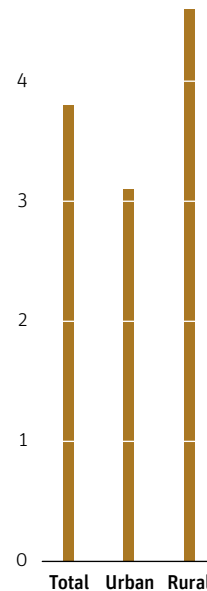
tend to be considerably lower in urban areas — for example, women in urban areas in Sub-Saharan Africa give birth to about 1.5 fewer children on average than those in the rural areas.⁶⁹ In Ghana, the average number of children per woman in the cities is 3.1, versus 4.6 in rural areas.⁷⁰ Policies for inclusive urbanisation can provide families with essential services, contributing to increased well-being and quality of life and enabling fertility declines. For example, children often live close to schools and are more likely to complete their education. Cities are hubs of social change towards greater gender equality in which women have better employment opportunities and are empowered to make independent decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

Yet rapid urban population growth often goes unmanaged, and many households are excluded from the opportunities that cities provide. As a result, countries are unable to harness the potential of urbanisation for demographic and socio-economic development. Globally, one in four urban residents live in slums or informal settlements — without access to basic services. In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is one in two urban residents.⁷¹ Women are typically overrepresented in slums and are often affected by poor sanitation and lack access to sexual and reproductive health care. They face harassment and discrimination in public spaces and are restricted in their mobility, meaning that they have trouble reaching essential health services. In many slums, few children attend school regularly. Instead, they work in the informal economy, selling goods or carrying out cheap services. They then tend to marry earlier, have worse job opportunities and go on to have many children. Sustainable urban planning should therefore focus on inclusive services for all — particularly to the most vulnerable households — and accelerate the demographic transition.

KEY POINTS

On 17 March 2022, more than 160 participants, experts, and speakers from 60 countries convened virtually for the fifth conversation in **#The4DSeries**. The following section summarises many of the key action points suggested by the participants:

- Provide urban health service providers with the necessary training and resources to deliver services, counselling and access to information without bias or discrimination to all demographic groups.
- Rather than replicating innovative projects on a small scale, programme managers should aim to integrate them into ongoing programmes and consider establishing public-private partnerships as a funding means to take projects to scale.
- Create youth-friendly spaces that offer comprehensive counselling and information, addressing misconceptions and disinformation on health-related topics.
- Foster regional integrated and interconnected urban development to harness the potential of secondary cities and rural areas.
- Promote green economies in cities to increase climate resilience and create sustainable employment opportunities.
- Ensure that business environments and policy regulations promote formal employment opportunities and capacity-building for urban youth.
- Realise meaningful and active participation of urban communities — especially indigenous and informal communities — to ensure their knowledge and experiences inform the development of climate resilience strategies.
- Employ young people in cities in the advancement of green technologies, provide them with spaces to develop and incubate solutions and support them in taking successful ideas and pilots to scale.



Smaller families in cities

Almost 60 percent of Ghana's population lives in cities, compared with an African average of 44 percent.⁷² The comparatively high rate of urbanisation in Ghana has had an impact on the overall fertility rate. In the cities, new family models tend to become the norm more quickly and women have far fewer children than in rural areas.⁷³

Children per woman in Ghana, 2019
(Data basis: DHS⁷⁴)

- Collect reliable and high-quality data on urban populations in order to design inclusive urban policies.
- Harness the potential of slum-free cities as the reference point of urban planning, acknowledging the importance of adequate living conditions for economic development.

Cities are hubs of social change towards greater gender equality in which women have better employment opportunities and are empowered to make independent decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

The global urban population is projected to increase from 4.4 billion today to 6.7 billion in 2050. Urbanisation is fastest in Africa, where the number of city residents is expected to triple in the next 30 years.⁷⁵

Realising the Demographic Dividend: Next Steps for Urbanisation

Collect disaggregated data on urban residents

Gather detailed data on urban dwellers to improve services and infrastructure; focus on large, informal settlements and disaggregate data by demographics for targeted planning and policy evaluation.

Create inclusive public spaces for all

Create inclusive public spaces, fostering community interaction and expression for all, regardless of background; invest in safe, accessible spaces while challenging social norms and violence that hinder participation, particularly for women and girls.

Generate urban employment opportunities for youth

Boost urban youth employment through investment in training and entrepreneurship programmes; support industry growth for well-paying formal sector jobs to reduce unemployment risk among young urban dwellers.

Guarantee land rights for women

Ensure equal land rights for women to tackle urban gender inequality and poverty; promote legal recognition of women's right to own and inherit property, countering patriarchal norms barring women from property ownership.

Provide health care to all urban residents

Offer equitable health care access in rapidly expanding cities, focusing on quality services, clean water, sanitation, sexual and reproductive health services; address the specific needs of slum populations living in unsanitary conditions with limited financial resources.

Foster climate resilience of vulnerable groups

Climate change adaptation and mitigation policies should consider the differentiated vulnerabilities of diverse groups to ensure that no one is left behind. Develop climate change policies considering the unique vulnerabilities of various groups (e.g., women, migrants, elderly and poor households); invest in accessible flood shelters and safe housing while engaging residents in planning processes for climate resilience.

Integrate urban and rural development

Promote integration of urban and rural development through efficient supply chains and infrastructure; support smooth flow of goods, remittances, and people between cities and countryside for balanced national development.

Women and girls' mobility in cities — even when we talk about cities being dense, and the advantages of cities offering closer proximity to health services — is severely limited in an insecure environment. Overcoming urban planning challenges in terms of safety and security is essential for women's and girls' health, which is critical in terms of unlocking the potential demographic dividend.
Ronak Patel, Director, Urbanisation and Resilience Program, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative

The engagement process for young people often comes too late. Experts sit around the table and decide what is to be done and then take this to the community. Training and capacity building before any project is on the table is important, so that when young people participate, they have the tools and capabilities to engage — from conceptualisation to implementation.
Meremiya Hussein, Kenyan-based architect and urbanist

NIGERIA

Youth Empowerment

The non-governmental organisation *Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative* (YEDI) offers a range of programmes for adolescents in cities across Nigeria, including Lagos and Abuja. It organises workshops in which they can discuss issues concerning SRHR in a youth-friendly way. The organisation uses sport to engage young people, combining football with awareness-raising on issues such as HIV/AIDS, contraception and GBV. It also trains young people as agents of change in their communities and provides access to support services. YEDI has operated different programmes for over 10 years and reached over 250,000 young people.⁷⁶

ECUADOR

Building a Resilient City

Quito lies in the Andes and is vulnerable to numerous climate hazards, such as more frequent wildfires or landslides. In 2017 the city released a Resilience Strategy and joined the *100 Resilient Cities Network*, a worldwide alliance in which mayors exchange experiences and develop strategies to respond to climate change. As part of the initiative, Quito has introduced a range of programmes that reduce emissions, increase resilience and improve the lives of the city's population, particularly of vulnerable groups. That includes using "green infrastructure" — plants and ponds that improve air quality, protect poor and vulnerable neighbourhoods from storms or heat stress and provide space for recreational activities.⁷⁷

2.6 Climate Resilience for Demographic Dividend(s)

It is no longer a question of whether climate change will occur, but rather what its effects will be, and how well we are prepared to adapt and cope with them. To that end, governments must take swift and decisive action to slow down climate change and to ensure adequate preparation and protection as well as sustainable development. Investments in key areas for socioeconomic development such as inclusive employment, education, health and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) can help bolster climate resilience. Improving the quality of data available on vulnerable populations can provide better insights into their specific needs. It is essential to recognise that climate change is not gender-neutral. Successful mitigation efforts must put women and youth at the centre and enable them to act as agents of change.

The climate crisis is among one of the most significant challenges of our time, hampering sustainable development and the potential to make use of demographic dividends. Extreme weather events such as heat waves, heavy rainfalls, hurricanes, droughts and natural disasters threaten global populations, impacting access to clean water, sanitation, health, education and increasing food insecurity — crucial areas for demographic change. Low- and middle-income nations, with their fast-growing populations and limited resources, feel the adverse impacts of

climate change disproportionately. Globally, experts estimate that at least 32 million to 132 million people will fall into extreme poverty as a result of climate change by 2030.⁷⁸ Demographic factors influence the extent to which climate change effects on vulnerable populations like women, youth and migrants.

Infrastructure damage due to climate-related disasters obstructs education and health care access for many youths, particularly girls and women, contributing to higher maternal and child mortality rates, gender inequalities, and HIV infections. The Malala Fund estimates that climate-related events in low- and middle-income countries hinder four million girls from completing their education each year.⁷⁹ Climate change affects population distribution, as migration from rural to urban areas often occurs in disaster-impacted communities.

Populations become less vulnerable to the effects of climate change if they understand what harms the environment they live in, how they can protect it and can sustainably adapt their behaviour to cushion the effects of future climate threats.

It is essential to recognise that climate change is not gender-neutral. Successful mitigation efforts must put women and youth at the centre and enable them to act as agents of change.

More than half of the 61 million people who experienced internal displacement in 2022 migrated due to natural disasters.⁸⁰ To facilitate demographic transition, investments must be focused on the health, education and nutrition of key populations such as women, youth and migrants — building their resilience against climate risks. Simultaneously, policymakers must include populations in climate resilience measures and understand the relationship between population and environment.

If people have access to education and the skills for a prosperous life, as well as to services to improve SRHR, they usually decide to have smaller families. That ultimately leads to a decrease in fertility. At the same time, populations become less vulnerable to the effects of climate change if they understand what harms the environment they live in, how they can protect it, and sustainably adapt their behaviour to cushion the effects of future climate threats. Policymakers must include populations in climate resilience and adaptation measures and strengthen the understanding of the reciprocal relationship between population and environment.

KEY POINTS

On 8 September 2022, more than 120 participants, experts and speakers attended the sixth edition of **#The4DSeries** to discuss climate resilience. The following section summarises key action points suggested by the dialogue participants:

- Develop holistic strategies instead of silo-based approaches that address interlinkages between different fields impacted by climate change, such as food security, access to education and health care, including SRHR, water, sanitation and hygiene and economic empowerment.

The climate crisis has a disproportionate impact on people in the Global South

Countries in the Global South are bearing the brunt of the effects of global warming, including more frequent cyclones, coastal flooding, prolonged drought and torrential rains.

- Integrate SRHR in national climate adaptation and resilience strategies while making sure that adaptation measures safeguard the bodily autonomy of women and girls.
- Not only ensure that women's and girls' needs are addressed but give them a platform to become leaders of change.
- Include women in disaster management and build capacities to become resilient beyond immediate crisis response for long-term sustainable development.
- Strengthen youth engagement in business and climate change and give young people more space to participate in political decision-making.
- Match innovative sustainable business ideas with access to finance and managerial know-how to bolster the establishment of a green economy.
- Fill data gaps on climate change impacts, particularly on vulnerable groups such as women and girls, people with disabilities, migrants, and indigenous communities.
- Improve funding for and strengthen the capacity of local research institutes, enabling a critical mass of researchers to emerge.
- Improve the coherence of climate and migration policies.
- Expand legal and safe migration pathways to enable migration as an option for climate change adaptation.

Annual number of people affected by disasters per 100,000, 2020 (decadal average)

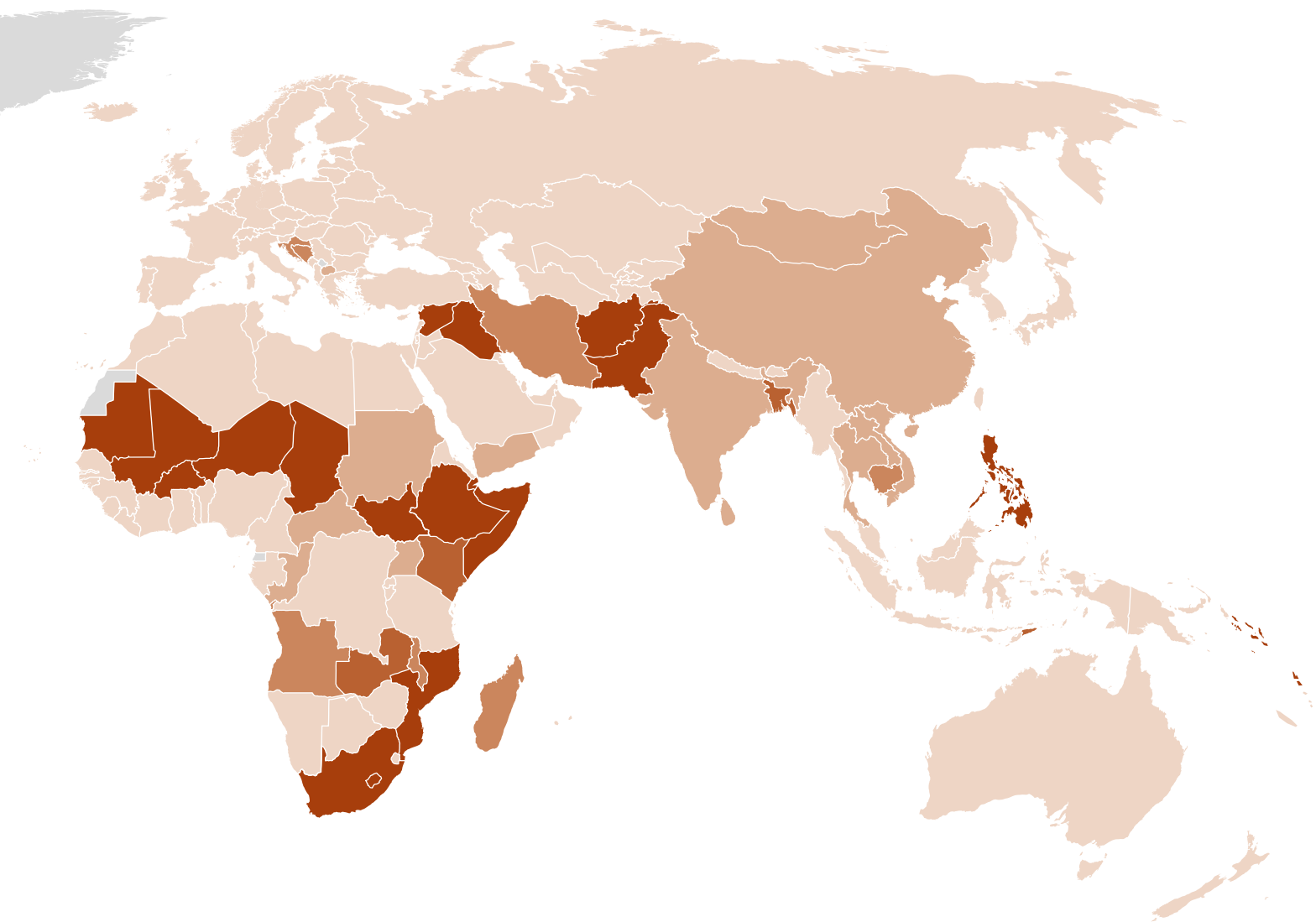
- no data
- 0–496.78
- 496.79–1,449.93
- 1,449.94–2,717.51
- 2,717.52–4,143.36
- > 4,143.36

(Data basis: EM-DAT, UN DESA⁸¹)

Realising the Demographic Dividend: Next Steps for Climate Resilience

Improve data on vulnerable groups

Insufficient disaggregated data on vulnerable groups affected by climate change hinders understanding and predictive modelling for targeted policies. Strengthening national statistical systems and local institutional capacity improves informed climate policy-making.



Strengthen sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for climate resilience

Investing in women's and girls' SRHR empowers them, advancing gender equality and enabling participation in climate-resilient solution development.

Empower youth as agents of change for climate resilience

Incorporating youth in climate action requires skill-building, dialogue facilitation, policy involvement and financial support to promote local adaptation responses for long-term resilience.

Foster responses for climate migrants and displaced people

Support climate migrants with technical/ financial assistance, housing, health care and employment opportunities. This includes building climate-resilient, migrant-friendly cities, the provision of housing, health, including family planning and SRHR, and employment opportunities in climate migrants' new locations.

Support multisectoral partnerships for climate resilience

Multisectoral collaboration ensures adequate investment in climate adaptation programmes for vulnerable women and young people, requiring greater cooperation between humanitarian, climate, health, and women's rights organisations.

Climate change has a more severe impact on women and girls. [...] Secondary impacts are less obvious, but damages of roads or health facilities often result in women and girls not being able to access health care. Climate change also negatively impacts maternal health and can create conditions that result in increasing gender-based violence and harmful practices such as child marriage. However, most national climate strategies are silent on how climate change impacts women and girls. We need to build leadership, agency and economic empowerment for women and girls as part of climate change adaptation.

Edirin Aderemi, Regional Advocacy Specialist, Nigeria, Pathfinder

What young people need now is youth empowerment. Young people need to be aware of climate change. That means environmental education or climate education. Besides that, we need climate finance. Young people are trying to innovate, come up with different solutions, and are founding start-ups. But the problem is financing their projects and ideas. We should create platforms where we can share financing opportunities for young people.

Delphin Kaze, Founder and CEO of Kaze Green Economy (KAGE) and Burundian Climate Activist

Youth engagement on local climate adaptation

With *Future Yetu*, the Kenyan community-based organisation *Hope Raisers Youth Initiative* engages residents of Nairobi's fourth-biggest informal settlement Korogocho in climate adaptation efforts. By using digital storytelling, the youth-led project gives local community members a voice to share their own experiences around climate-related issues and the impacts on their daily lives. The stories are shared with a team of community members, urban planners and government officials for consideration in local climate adaptation interventions. Between 2020 and 2021, the *Future Yetu* project engaged over 100 community residents to identify local climate change-related problems. The digital stories were shared with over 300 members of the local community and government officials. The results informed the creation of the Korogocho Climate Adaptation Manifesto, with concrete guidelines and recommendations for local climate action presented at the City of Nairobi to inform its climate adaptation plan.⁸²

KENYA

MADAGASCAR

Protection of SRHR and aquaculture

Blue Ventures is a UK-based, science-led social enterprise that develops transformative approaches for locally owned marine conservation across the globe. It uses a holistic approach in Madagascar that recognizes the linkages between people, their health and the environment by incorporating SRH and family planning services into sustainable coastal livelihood and resource management initiatives. Women in remote locations along Madagascar's coasts are trained as community health workers. They offer contraceptives to improve girls' and women's limited access to basic health care services and take on responsibility concerning sustainable aquaculture resource management. Instead of damaging the coral reefs through overfishing, the women are trained to harvest seaweed in a sustainable manner. The approach is supported by education strategies on essential livelihood activities to improve their food security and to increase their economic autonomy. This enables them to lead self-determined lives, make choices about the number of children they wish to have and to better provide for their families. Since *Blue Ventures* began in 2007, it is estimated that more than 4,500 unintended pregnancies have been averted and more than 45,000 people have been reached.⁸³

2.7 Gender Equality for Demographic Dividend(s)

Women and girls constitute half of the world's population, representing an equal share of global potential as men and boys. But women and girls do not yet have an equal share of global opportunities. As gender inequality persists globally, achieving full social and economic development in every society remains a challenge. For example, gender-based violence affects women and girls in all countries, with one in three experiencing intimate partner violence and/or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.⁸⁴

Gender equality is a human right, ensuring equal resources, rights, opportunities and protections for people of all genders. Gender equality is also a precondition for unlocking a demographic dividend. As a rule, when girls' and women's education and socio-economic empowerment increases, they delay marriage and childbearing, and choose to have smaller families.

Progress in advancing gender equality is still insufficient as disparities remain in women's health, education beyond primary level, and participation in socioeconomic activities. Globally, approximately 800 women die daily from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.⁸⁵ Meanwhile, 218 million women of reproductive age in low- and middle-income countries want to avoid a pregnancy and have an unmet need for modern contraception.⁸⁶ Educational gender gaps have lessened but persist, with

many girls leaving secondary education due to factors like child marriage or early pregnancy.⁸⁷ Illiteracy disproportionately affects women, hindering their access to formal labour markets.⁸⁸ Vulnerable work is also disproportionately carried out by women in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and East Asia and the Pacific, with COVID-19 exacerbating the situation for many.⁸⁹

To harness a demographic dividend, countries must advance gender equality in every area of life. This requires policies, laws and interventions that address the gendered power dynamics, social norms, values and practices that shape the unequal relationships between men and women in households, communities and societies. Priorities for public policies should vary according to the stage of demographic transition in each country. However, all public and private interventions in sectors from education and health to public infrastructure, energy and climate adaptation must be grounded in a commitment to gender equality and include women in decision-making and leadership structures. Only then can demographic dividends and sustainable development become a reality.

Realising the Demographic Dividend: Next Steps for Gender Equality

Improve data on girls and women

Insufficient disaggregated data on girls' and women's needs — including those of women and girls who experience multiple forms of marginalisation due to, e.g., race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or disability — prevents a complete understanding of the challenges they face, which impedes targeted policies for gender equality. National statistical systems must be reinforced, and local research institutions' capacity increased to collect and analyse gender disaggregated data, ensuring public policy addresses their needs.

Transform social norms and strengthen sexual and reproductive health and rights for gender equality

Investing in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) education and services is vital for a healthy, educated and empowered population. Universal SRHR enables individuals to make informed decisions about their bodies, health and futures. For women and girls, SRHR are crucial for bodily autonomy, allowing them to determine if, when, and how many children to have. Changing social norms that reinforce gender inequality is essential. This must include engaging men and boys, and religious and traditional leaders in efforts to end harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation — improving well-being and advancing gender equality.

Support skills development and training for girls and women

Gender equality necessitates quality primary and secondary education for girls and women, enabling skill development for secure, well-paid jobs with healthy and dignified conditions. Schools should encourage young women to explore opportunities from vocational training to university education, including traditionally male-dominated fields like science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Integrating financial literacy, entrepreneurship and vital digital skills into curricula can foster greater workforce equality as digitalisation advances.

Implement gender-sensitive laws and policies

Gender-sensitive policies are crucial for reducing entrenched inequalities. To ensure equal opportunities in the workforce, labour policies should create safe work environments for women, mandate equal pay, and establish quotas for women in

leadership roles. In education, governments should address barriers preventing girls from attending school, such as child marriage or prohibitive costs of supplies. Additionally, effective implementation of national laws addressing violence against women is vital for their full participation in society. Lastly, countries must establish accountability mechanisms for effective implementation of gender equality laws and policies.

Invest in adequate and gender-responsive infrastructure and services

Inadequate, gender-blind infrastructure often results in girls leaving school early and women unable to find work, perpetuating gender inequality. Education facilities must offer gender-sensitive amenities, such as toilets with running water for menstrual health, and efficient transport so girls and young women can get to school safely. Governments must create conditions supporting women’s employability and provide social protection to lift them out of poverty.

Schools for Husbands

Between 2015 and 2020, over 24,000 men joined Husband Schools or Future Husbands’ Clubs created and implemented by the *Sahel Women’s Empowerment and Demographic Dividend* (SWEDD) initiative, in which they took classes promoting household task-sharing, healthy sexual behaviours and the eradication of violence against women. These clubs are designed to create spaces for peer-led discussions to instil a sense of community responsibility among men. A further goal is to involve men in decision-making concerning sexual health and gender equality. Currently, 1,640 clubs are being established with an expected reach of 49,200 participants.⁹²

More investments needed to satisfy women’s family planning needs

Unmet need for modern contraception remains disproportionately high in Africa. Fifty-eight million African women aged 15 to 49 want to avoid a pregnancy but — due to a range of reasons — are not using a modern method of contraception (such as the pill or condoms) or are using a less reliable traditional method. As a result, each year 43 percent of pregnancies in Africa are unintended.⁹⁰

Empowering girls through high-tech training

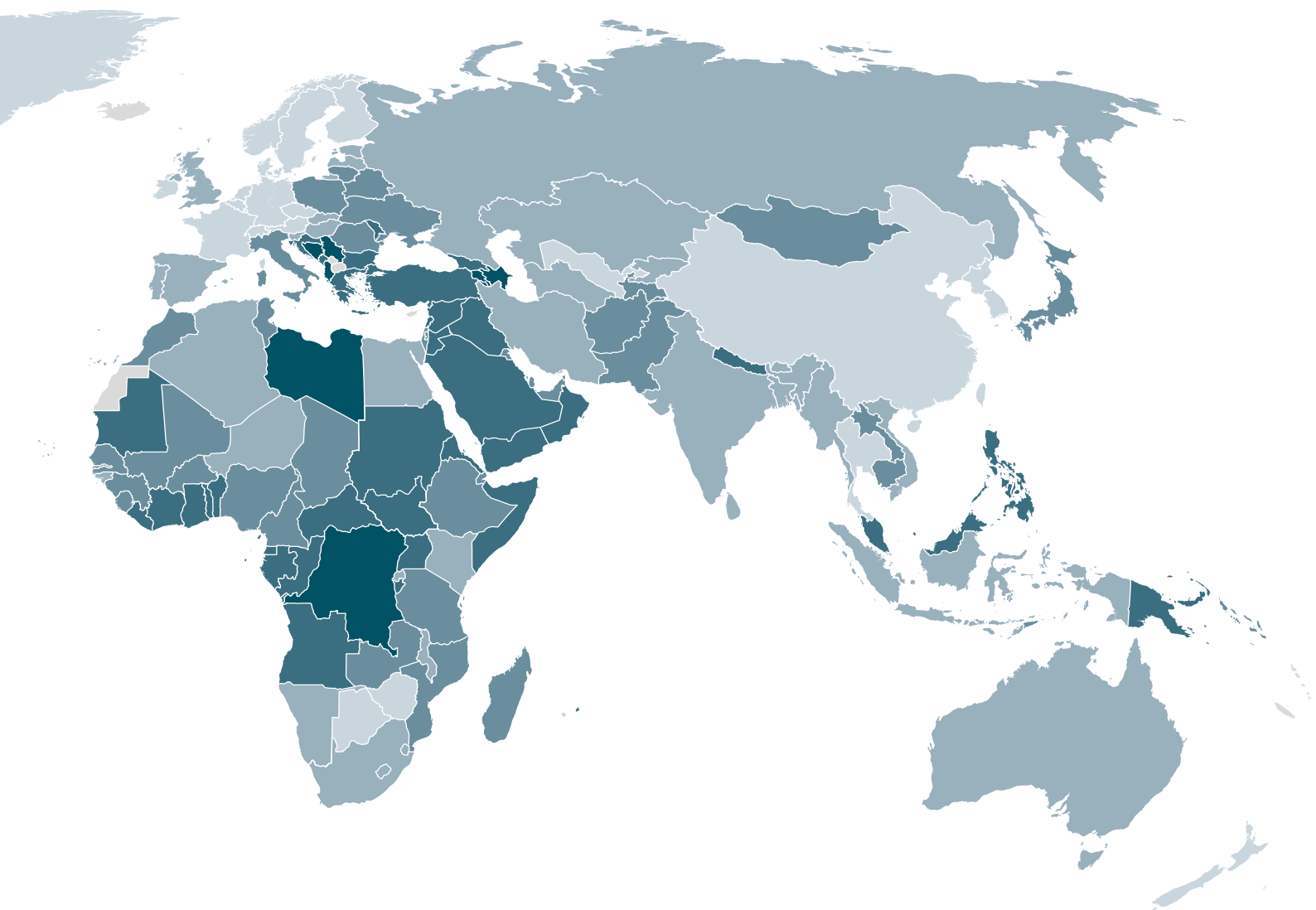
The *African Girls Can Code Initiative* (AGCCI), commissioned by UN Women and the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union, was launched in 2018. AGCCI aims to train and empower a minimum of 2,000 young girls aged 17 to 25 across Africa to become computer programmers, creators, and designers, placing them on track to take up studies and careers in the information, communication and technology, education and coding sectors. So far, 600 girls have been trained through the AGCCI coding camps nationally and regionally. The regional coding camps took place in Pretoria, South Africa in 2019 and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2018. Additionally, national coding camps were hosted in Ethiopia with participants from the regions of Addis Ababa, Hawassa and Adama.⁹³

AFRICA

Percentage of women (married or in a union) aged 15-49 with an unmet need for a modern method of family planning, 2022

- less than 13.5
- 13.5 to 20.1
- 20.1 to 27.6
- 27.6 to 37.4
- 37.4 to 55.3

(Data basis: UN DESA⁹¹)



Social norms that contribute to exclusion based on disability (ableism) or gender must be challenged. Disability policies and research are needed to kickstart changes towards inclusive learning environments with barrier-free schools, ramps for wheelchairs and inclusive curricula, including adapting SRHR contents to students with special needs. Approaches

aiming to remove disparities among boys and girls include gender-sensitive teacher training, empowering girls to pick the same subjects as boys, including CSE in the curriculum and providing girls with care during and opportunities after pregnancy to support them in returning to school.

Report from Dialogue 3 in #The4DSeries⁹⁴

All public and private interventions in sectors from education and health to public infrastructure, energy and climate adaptation must be grounded in a commitment to gender equality and include women in decision-making and leadership structures. Only then can demographic dividends and sustainable development become a reality.

PART 3 | LESSONS LEARNED

Cross-cutting issues require cross-cutting solutions

Advancing gender equality is critical to tackling demographic challenges

Each dialogue in the **#The4DSeries** focused on one specific topic shaping population trends — from data and food security to education, ASRHR and climate change — but none of these issues exist in isolation. Different demographic challenges (and opportunities) impact each other in various ways. As a result, the intersections of these individual issues come up in each dialogue.

For example, the importance of safeguarding and advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) was discussed in relation to education, urbanisation and climate resilience, in addition to being the focal topic of the dialogue on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR).

Similarly, climate change affects every area of life worldwide, though populations in the Global South bear a disproportionate impact of its consequences. Therefore, **#The4DSeries** dedicated one dialogue to climate resilience (Dialogue 6). But climate adaptation was also discussed in Dialogues 2 and 5 as a critical component of solutions addressing challenges related to food security and urbanisation.

One issue recurring in every single dialogue is gender equality. No matter how much progress is made in individual sectors — demographic dividends will remain out of reach as long as gender inequality persists.

Each dialogue underscored that advancing gender equality must be woven into solutions to demographic challenges across the board. In Dialogue 1 on Data, contributors emphasised the need for more and better disaggregated demographic data on women

and girls so that their specific needs can be met. Dialogue 2 on Food Security and Nutrition highlighted that young women are particularly vulnerable to malnutrition and therefore, investments in maternal and newborn nutrition should be a priority. Dialogue 3 on education and skills development stressed persistent gender gaps in education, whereas education through to secondary level and beyond has enormous benefits for girls and women, communities and even national economies.

Meanwhile, in Dialogue 4 on ASRHR, participants discussed the importance of eliminating harmful practices that disproportionately impact girls, such as child marriage and female genital mutilation. Discussions in Dialogue 5 on urbanisation addressed the fact that securing equal land and property rights for women is necessary to tackle urban gender inequality and poverty. Finally, recommendations coming out of Dialogue 6 urge the inclusion of women in disaster management to ensure that the specific needs of women and girls are met in wake of climate disasters.

Multisectoral approaches are key

Many of the best practices and recommendations from **#The4DSeries** dialogues demonstrated that multisectoral cooperation between organisations or ministries focused on different issues such as health, climate and humanitarian disaster management is critical. Recognising this, some countries (including Kenya) have started to establish multisectoral coordination mechanisms that jointly consider population, health and environment (PHE) issues.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLITICAL DECISIONMAKERS AND POLICYMAKERS

- Collect and improve disaggregated data on the needs of marginalised groups, including people living with disabilities, LGBTQI communities, displaced people, migrants, residents of informal settlements, etc.
- Secure universal SRHR for all, especially for young women and girls.
- Increase education and training opportunities for young people to meet the demands of modern workplaces.
- Create more employment opportunities for young people, especially in urban areas.
- Include young people and women in all decision-making and leadership structures.
- Establish multisectoral cooperation to foster climate resilience among vulnerable populations.
- Adopt and utilise feminist development cooperation principles as a guiding tool.

Virtual dialogues for greater inclusion

Kicking off in the fall of 2020, amidst an unprecedented global pandemic and uncertainty around when in-person gatherings would be able to safely resume, **#The4DSeries** took on an entirely virtual format from the very beginning.

It quickly became clear that the virtual format of these South-South policy dialogues had many benefits. Chief among them was that meeting online enabled technical and policy experts from governments, civil society and academia to join from every corner of the world — with geographic distance and the logistical hurdles associated with international travel no longer a barrier. As a result, a diverse group of dialogue contributors and participants could engage in the policy conversations, exchange best practices and ideas, and develop new ideas and solutions.

Long-term investment for demographic dividends

Although the world is more demographically diverse than ever before, one thing is true for countries across the globe: To harness demographic dividends, governments must plan well, take population dynamics into account and foster the human capital of their population.

More than ever, it is clear that demographic dividends result from long-term investments in people's health, education and ability to lead self-determined lives. Investments in the well-being and economic security of populations are investments in the well-being, development and success of countries and economies.

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GLOSSARY

Asian Tiger States

A group of four countries in East Asia (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan) that experienced rapid economic growth and development during the second half of the 20th century.

Adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR)

See sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) below

Climate Resilience

The ability of individuals, communities, systems, and ecosystems to anticipate, withstand, recover from and adapt to the impacts of climate change. A climate-resilient approach involves developing strategies, policies and practices that enhance the capacity to cope with and recover from climate-related hazards, reduce vulnerabilities and promote sustainable development.

Demographic Bonus

A period of accelerated economic growth and development that can occur when a country's working-age population (typically between 15 and 64 years) is larger than the dependent population (those younger than 14 and older than 65). See also: Demographic Dividend

Demographic Dividend

The economic growth potential resulting from favourable age distribution in a population due to a decrease in dependent populations and an increase in the working-age population.

Demographic Transition

The shift from high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates in a country's population over time.

Disaggregated Data

Information or data that has been categorised and separated into distinct groups or subcategories based on specific characteristics or variables. Rather than presenting data in a generalised or aggregated form, disaggregated data allows for a more detailed and nuanced analysis by examining specific subsets of the population or variables of interest.

Economic Growth

An increase in the production and consumption of goods and services over time.

Fertility Rate

The average number of children born to women during their reproductive years.

Food Security

Availability, accessibility, utilisation and stability of food sources to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets dietary needs and preferences.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Any form of violence or abuse inflicted on individuals, specifically due to their gender or perceived gender roles and expectations. It encompasses acts of violence that disproportionately affect women, girls and individuals who do not conform to traditional gender norms.

Gender equality

The principle of equal rights, opportunities and treatment for people of all genders, without discrimination or bias based on gender identity or expression. Gender equality recognizes that individuals should have equal access to resources, benefits, responsibilities and decision-making power, regardless of their gender. Achieving gender equality requires promoting equal access to education, health care, employment and economic opportunities, as well as eliminating gender-based violence, ensuring reproductive rights and sexual autonomy and enabling equal representation and participation in decision-making processes at all levels.

Genders, People of All

A phrase that recognizes and encompasses individuals of diverse gender identities beyond the binary concept of male and female; it emphasises the inclusion of individuals irrespective of their gender identity and acknowledges the complexity and diversity of gender expressions and experiences.

Human Capital

The knowledge, skills, and abilities of individuals that contribute to their employability and productivity in the workforce.

Leapfrogging

The process of jumping to technological and social practices and innovations that improve people's lives while bypassing inefficient, environmentally harmful and expensive traditional stages of development.

Migration

The movement of people from one location to another, which can impact population demographics.

Mortality Rate

The number of deaths per 1,000 people in a year.

Population Growth Rate

The increase or decrease in a region's population over time, expressed as a percentage.

Reproductive Age

The years when women are capable of having children, typically between ages 15 and 49.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

A state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to all aspects of sexuality and reproduction, not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. It means that people of all ages can make decisions governing their bodies and to access services that support that right. SRHR also recognises the necessity of pleasurable sexual relationships, trust and communication in promoting self-esteem and overall well-being. Achieving sexual and reproductive health relies on realising sexual and reproductive rights.

Urbanisation

The process by which a growing percentage of a region's population becomes concentrated in urban areas.

Window of Opportunity, Demographic


A period when the working-age population is significantly larger than the dependent population, providing an opportunity for accelerated economic growth.

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