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UNFPA – Evaluation**United Nations Population Fund****Formative evaluation of the UNFPA support to population dynamics and data¹***Summary*

The Evaluation Office conducted a formative evaluation on population dynamics and data as part of the UNFPA quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2022-2025. The evaluation, covering 2014-2022, assessed the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the UNFPA support to population data, population dynamics, and population and development, with a specific focus on: (a) the demographic dividend; and (b) population ageing and low fertility.

The first thematic evaluation on population dynamics, the evaluation generated important findings and recommendations to further enhance and sharpen the organization's value proposition, relevance and positioning to effectively respond to demographic shifts and demographic diversity in pursuit of achieving the three transformative results.

¹ This paper is a summary of the full evaluation report available at: <https://www.unfpa.org/evaluation/news>

I. Background

1. The world population is estimated to have reached 8 billion in November 2022. This is a moment of reflection on the impact of population dynamics and demographic shifts on the development of nations. A key facet of current demographic trends is the sheer diversity of changing age structures across countries. While the world population has grown significantly in recent decades, changes in population growth rates, size and age structure, as well as distribution, are highly variable across the globe. While some regions are experiencing high fertility rates and population growth, others experience low fertility rates and population ageing. However, broad diversities of demographic transition across and within regions also exist. In addition, megatrends such as climate change, humanitarian crisis, migration and urbanization, among others, further shape and frame population dynamics. Trends in population dynamics are also impacted by poverty, access to education, gender equality and access to family planning and sexual and reproductive health services.
2. Population dynamics present both opportunities and challenges for sustainable development and for mitigating humanitarian crises. Countries experiencing high fertility rates and population growth have an opportunity to harness the demographic dividend – the economic potential that can result from a shift in the population age structure in favour of the working age population – however, they must also contend with the challenge of ensuring economic opportunity and social security for their growing populations.
3. Conversely, countries with low fertility rates – in which the sustained total fertility rate is below the replacement level threshold of 2.1 children per woman – and rapid population ageing – where persons aged 60 or over become a proportionately larger share of the total population – must contend with the health and economic needs of a large older population. They must also address the economic pressure that this places on the younger workforce, notwithstanding the positive indicator of increased life expectancy that ageing populations represent.
4. In policy terms, the ability to document, measure, analyse and forecast shifts in population dynamics – from global to local levels – is key to attaining and monitoring progress towards many Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets. It requires an understanding of historical, present and likely future trends in population dynamics.

II. The purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation

5. The primary purpose of the evaluation was to inform UNFPA future support and programming on population data, population dynamics as well as population and development within the framework of the current Strategic Plan, 2022-2025, and beyond.
6. The two specific objectives of the evaluation were to: (a) assess the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the UNFPA support to population data, population dynamics as well as population and development; and (b) identify lessons learned that could be used to inform the midterm review of the Strategic Plan, 2022-2025, and the design of evidence-based population policies, programmes and strategies, as well as the next strategic plan (for 2026-2029).
7. The evaluation specifically covered UNFPA support to:
 - (a) Strengthening national population data systems, including data collection, analysis, dissemination and utilization in both development and humanitarian contexts;
 - (b) Promoting rights-based and evidence-based public policies integrating population dynamics, including in common country analyses, United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks and country programme documents;
 - (c) Analysing population and development trends, utilizing and mainstreaming population data or demographic intelligence to improve development policies and leverage the demographic dividend and address ageing and low fertility.

III. Evaluation methodology

8. In line with the evaluation's adoption of an approach based on theory-based contribution analysis, the data collection and analysis methods focused on both quantitative and qualitative data. The mixed-methods approach was designed to capture good practices and lessons learned as well as common challenges with UNFPA support to population dynamics and data across different contexts. Data collection consisted of document review, semi-structured key informant interviews, and a survey.

9. The evaluation was framed around a nested approach of seven primary dataset components: three deep-dive regional case studies [Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (APRO); Arab States Regional Office (ASRO); and Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (EECARO)]; three country case studies (Mexico, Nigeria and Uganda); and one dataset of evidence collected at the global and regional levels (outside of the three regional case studies). Both the regions and countries were strategically selected to provide an illustrative sample.

10. The evaluation collected information and evidence from 331 individuals and over 500 documents.

IV. Conclusions

Conclusion 1. Overall, UNFPA has provided relevant and timely support to population data, population dynamics, and population and development. This is despite a view that UNFPA reframed the centrality of population dynamics after 2014. There is a clear consensus that population data and dynamics is gaining increasing prominence within UNFPA, ensuring its alignment with and relevance to the current global issues related to demographic shifts.

11. UNFPA remains a strong and relevant player in population data. Support to census in particular has remained a relevant strength and focus of UNFPA across the time period of this evaluation (2014-2022). Beyond the support to censuses and civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) as well as other data collection exercises such as demographic health surveys, UNFPA has increased investment in data systems, particularly the population data portal, which has been relevant to needs across a range of internal and external stakeholders.

12. This has continued as the organization articulated a focus on the three transformative results, all grounded in data and evidence. Some respondents feel that the introduction of the 'bullseye'² with the earlier strategic plan, 2014-2017, was a critical moment in downplaying population and development, as it put sexual reproductive health, reproductive rights and reducing maternal mortality to accelerate progress on the ICPD agenda front and centre with population dynamics as one of the 'three supporting concentric areas' within the strategic plan. However, there was never a substantive move away from the foundational population data work of UNFPA (particularly census). In terms of population and development, it was more of a rebranding exercise, which has resulted, for many external stakeholders, in UNFPA being seen more as the 'sexual and reproductive health' agency than the 'population data' agency.

13. In reality, population data and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) are not delinked; increasingly, all overarching demographic shifts – high fertility; demographic dividend potential; and low fertility as a contributory factor in ageing societies – link to SRHR. A recent increase in focus on demographic shifts (by the Secretary-General, recognizing this as a key megatrend of the 21st century, with the world most recently reaching a population of 8 billion) has opened up the opportunity for UNFPA to enhance further its population data work. This not only shifts the focus back towards population dynamics and data, but also links it firmly to SRHR and gender equality, highlighting that it is not necessarily an 'either/or' issue. There is also an increasing understanding that the need for broad population data, dynamics and development work (across all areas, and in its own right, rather than just as support for SRHR) also, ultimately, supports SRH and ICPD Programme of Action goals. This has been articulated well in the current Strategic Plan, 2022-2025, where data and evidence are accelerators

² The 'bull's eye', first introduced during the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2008-2013 (DP/FPA/2011/11) and reaffirmed in the strategic plan, 2014-2017, resulted in a significant refocusing of UNFPA, with SRH and reproductive rights placed squarely at the centre of UNFPA work.

towards the three transformative results. However, this is not yet supported by population and development capacity, as elaborated in conclusion 8 below.

Conclusion 2. UNFPA has shown strong effectiveness for strengthening national and subnational data systems, particularly capacity-building support to national statistics offices for conducting a census and, to a lesser extent, CRVS. Capacity building on population dynamics and demographic intelligence has a relatively shorter history within UNFPA but is an increasing focus.

14. Regardless of any consideration of UNFPA being seen more as the ‘sexual and reproductive health’ agency rather than the ‘population data’ agency, the continued support to population data, population dynamics, and population and development is considered effective and valuable by external stakeholders. There is a clear evolution of increased support throughout the ‘data chain’ from data to dynamics to development, without any loss of concrete support to foundational data (census, CRVS and other population datasets) where it is still required. This has evolved naturally as more countries move into a middle-income category and require less financial and direct support in collecting data and more sophisticated technical assistance on interpreting and using population data to inform policymaking. It has also evolved despite the setback caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which delayed censuses around the world and slowed down the planned maturation from data to demographic intelligence in some contexts.

15. However, related to this is whether the decreasing support to national statistics offices for census in contexts where such support is no longer required to that degree anymore, potentially decreases the legitimacy of UNFPA for engaging in other issues, and in particular the inclusion agenda, or leaving no one behind, which is viewed by many as a core added value of UNFPA.

16. UNFPA does not currently have a data value chain that conceptually links population data (work on census and, increasingly, on CRVS), population dynamics (analytics such as national transfer accounts) and population and development (using overarching umbrella frameworks such as Demographic Resilience to ensure that population data and dynamics are incorporated into development policies through a clear rights-based, gendered and inclusive lens).

17. The increasingly visible focus on demographic shifts and the understood impact that these shifts will progressively have on all people, everywhere, throughout the coming decades, currently provides a background against which a clear conceptualization and future-casting of UNFPA population and development thought leadership in the world is required. One issue highlighted at all levels within UNFPA is ‘population situation analysis, which used to be a cornerstone of UNFPA programming but is now considered to be in decline as it is an optional exercise for countries rather than a core function.

Conclusion 3. UNFPA has integrated people-centred, cross-cutting issues consistently and strongly in all population and development activities, from design to implementation. With regard to other megatrends, such as migration and climate change, the approach or pattern of response is less coherent.

18. UNFPA has been successful in capitalizing on the rights-based and inclusive added-value that UNFPA brings to development issues, including within the framing of population and development. UNFPA is well respected for its human rights-based, inclusive and gendered approach to population and development. There is a clear and visible rights and gender lens in many aspects of UNFPA population and development work, including on ageing and low fertility issues and the demographic dividend; and there is a clearly emerging focus on other aspects, such as CRVS and national transfer accounts. More recent approaches, such as demographic resilience, have been entirely conceptualized based on rights-based arguments. Internal and external stakeholders perceive this to be a strong and significant added value of UNFPA. Nonetheless, for UNFPA to fully exploit the expertise and credibility it has in this area, there is more scope for the organization to meaningfully participate in conversations on issues of exclusion relating to migration and displacement, which are increasingly as much climate-driven as they are conflict-driven, in matters of population data, dynamics and development.

19. UNFPA has started to shift, in different areas and at different levels, the focus from funding to financing, merging the rights-based argument with the economic argument. This has strong potential for UNFPA to ensure that its effective policy and advocacy support is firmly grounded upon the notion that this is both the ‘right’ thing to do and the ‘smart’ thing to do.

20. Despite some recent enhancements, UNFPA currently faces the challenge of staffing capacity, notably having enough economists and related social scientists within the organization to both make and communicate these economic and rights arguments at different levels. The demographic resilience approach is a clear move in this direction, as it is focused on how to ensure UNFPA can support governments to address demographic shifts in a rights-based manner. The life-cycle approach is similar in substance, but it is more from an individual rights perspective rather than an overarching societal economic resilience frame of reference. Understanding the two approaches as mirror images of each other, from either an individual or a societal perspective, would be helpful for strengthening both approaches and ensuring that demographic resilience continues to evolve into a more global corporate UNFPA approach.

Conclusion 4. UNFPA has been relatively successful at strategically positioning and mainstreaming dialogue on population dynamics at different levels. At the global and regional level, UNFPA has been adding value by advancing the ‘demographic dividend’ concept and, more recently, within certain regions, contributing significantly to the ageing and low fertility conversation. Concepts such as ‘demographic resilience’ are being increasingly used to bring together different demographic shifts anchored in a rights-based and inclusive frame of reference.

21. UNFPA has been forward-looking and effective with regard to positioning the organization as a global leader in understanding and responding to demographic shifts. This has been achieved thoughtfully and is likely to reap positive and significant returns in the future.

22. On the demographic dividend, UNFPA is well-positioned and has a solid history of working in this area. There are obvious and intuitive linkages between the work on the demographic dividend and other mandate areas, including SRH, gender and, in particular, adolescents and youth. The success of the value proposition notwithstanding, there is a clear understanding that the pool of countries for which demographic dividend potential is relevant is decreasing with every year.

23. With regard to ageing and low fertility, UNFPA contributions to this demographic shift are not as visibly long-standing as the demographic dividend³ work, although there has long since been an understanding of the need to address demographic diversity, including the concept of the ‘double dividend.’ Although ageing and low fertility issues have become increasingly incorporated into the UNFPA remit, there is a gap within the organization’s theory of change on how ageing and low fertility link to the three transformative results. Notwithstanding this, UNFPA is currently undertaking a variety of initiatives that help, in practice, to bridge the gap by partially aligning the agendas on ageing and low fertility to the three transformative results, even if the initiatives are not necessarily part of a strategically deliberate and coherent approach and some possibilities have remained unexplored.

24. For UNFPA, there is a clear linkage of population dynamics to low fertility, particularly around supporting rights-based approaches to policies that address low fertility rather than policies that restrict access to family planning and promote/encourage women to have more children than is practical given the social and economic barriers that women face; that will, ultimately, jeopardize the full achievement of the three transformative results. There is also a clear linkage between low fertility and the second transformative result (on family planning), underpinning the shift from a focus on ending unmet need for family planning (applicable to high fertility settings) to a focus on reproductive choices for all, which is applicable across all contexts, including low fertility contexts. This leads toward an expanded definition of an ‘unmet need for family planning’ in countries where women and men have fewer rather than more children than they want to have. This is not a new idea for UNFPA. The State of World Population 2018 report highlights that if all people, in all locations, in all income categories are not having the number of children they ideally want, then reproductive rights have been compromised and “commitments to universality remain unfulfilled”. This is not yet a clear and well-understood and consistent message at all levels across all UNFPA offices.

³ In a demographic transition, fertility rates decline – and as a result, the size of the working-age population (aged 15-64 years) increases compared to the size of the younger and old-age population groups. This change in population structure contributes to a first demographic dividend. As a result of this “first” demographic transition, age structures of populations tend to become older. Provided that appropriate policies are in place, the ageing of a population might lead to a second type of demographic dividend, which can be more sustained and larger than the first. The degree to which a country realizes the second demographic dividend depends on the how it anticipates and organizes the support of its elderly population.

25. While low fertility is more naturally connected to the transformative results, the growing relevance of ageing, though aligned with the ICPD agenda, is not connected to the ‘bull’s eye’ strategic vision. On the one hand, this reveals the importance of the nuanced relevance of each issue – ageing versus low fertility – indeed, this can be missed when both issues are referenced together and as interdependent of each other. On the other hand, this highlights the need for greater clarity on the role of UNFPA in relation to ageing under the current strategic framework and corporate priorities. Overall, while becoming more significant, the diverse efforts to implement the ageing agenda have not reflected a coherent and consistent underlying logic, including what UNFPA should be doing in this area (i.e. supporting the data and the dynamics through knowledge management solutions) and what is outside the scope of UNFPA in this area (i.e. practical programming solutions for supporting older people, pensions, among others).

26. While UNFPA is certainly embracing the ageing and low fertility agenda, the weak inclusion of ageing in the common country analysis – the main joint planning tool of the United Nations development system at the country level – shows that mainstreaming ageing is not fully institutionalized. This implies an opportunity for UNFPA to strengthen its contribution by connecting its approaches and responses to a larger strategic vision that retains a flexible responsiveness to the demographic shifts, while at the same time addressing the current, explicit and implicit, age biases in the formulation, theoretical assumption and implementation of the three transformative results.

Conclusion 5. There are solid and concrete examples of close and thoughtful linkages of population and development to SRHR and gender at different levels within UNFPA (global, regional and country levels), particularly with regard to population data. However, these collaborations are not as systematized as they could be and tend to be ad hoc and project-based, resulting in inconsistency across levels.

27. Across the three UNFPA strategic plans that have driven the organization’s interventions since 2014, there has consistently been a strong understanding within UNFPA, across global, regional and country levels, of how essential population data and dynamics is for the implementation of the ICPD Plan of Action and the achievement of the three transformative results and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But the conceptual linkages in strategic frameworks do not always automatically mean sustained and consistent linkages in practice. This is easier in some areas (such as demographic dividend, and adolescents and youth) than it is in other areas (such as ageing and low fertility). Overall, this confirms that, internally, the will to collaborate between population and development and other branches is strong, as is the understanding of the benefit of such collaboration. However, there are barriers at different levels for consistent and systematic collaboration that go beyond specific projects or programmes. Differing perceptions about the degree of the existing integration between each mandate area and population and development highlight the absence of a shared understanding of what ‘integration’ implies and what should be expected.

Conclusion 6. UNFPA provides significant contribution to population data in humanitarian settings through the Common Operational Datasets-Population Statistics (COD-PS), which is viewed as a development contribution to humanitarian preparedness and response, managed by the Technical Division. However, there is not a consistent understanding across UNFPA with regard to population data in humanitarian settings and on humanitarian data.

28. UNFPA has provided a solid service to humanitarian actors through the leadership of managing the population statistics component of the Common Operational Datasets, and the population data inputs for the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP). There is a clear understanding among humanitarian actors that the UNFPA contribution specifically to COD-PS is effective and impactful for planning for a humanitarian response. However, there is an inconsistent understanding across UNFPA as to the structure and differentiation between population data in humanitarian settings and humanitarian programming data⁴, which continues to cause some degree of confusion.

⁴ Population data is data disaggregated by characteristics of a population, such as demographic, socio-economic, geographical location, among others, has a clear sampling frame and is representative. In contrast, humanitarian data includes people in need (not necessarily all people counted in population data at the country level); people in acute need; people targeted – overall; people targeted for specific interventions, such as pregnant and lactating women, women of reproductive age (at risk of gender-based violence), gender-based violence prevalence data, among others.

29. The reformation of the UNFPA Humanitarian Office into the Humanitarian Response Division (HRD) is helpful, or at least will be, once there is clarity across the organization of the purpose and focus of this division, which there is not at the moment. The new name highlights clearly that the role of the division is in humanitarian response and that humanitarian data within this (i.e., to track programming and impact) is different from population data for preparedness and response in humanitarian contexts. Once this division of 'data' is more widely and consistently understood in UNFPA, there is the potential to craft a clear strategy on UNFPA positioning when it comes to data across the humanitarian, development and peace dimensions, expanding UNFPA work to include not only COD-PS, but also how it applies to the demographic dividend, ageing and low fertility, migration and climate change, as well as how national transfer accounts can be adapted and utilized in protracted crises. The evaluation found that it is now much clearer for most UNFPA staff that this component does not sit under the Humanitarian Response Division, although, of course, clear linkages and collaboration channels should be kept with the Humanitarian Response Division.

Conclusion 7. UNFPA has leveraged partnerships at different levels to further the effective use of population data and dynamics for development purposes. There is an understanding that a range of partnerships across population data, dynamics, and development areas – both traditional and more innovative – are critical to achieve development objectives, such as the SDGs.

30. The multisectoral nature of population data, population dynamics and development means that partnerships are crucial, and this is well-recognized by UNFPA at all levels. This is specifically true for working on the demographic dividend and on ageing and low fertility, where the multidimensional nature of these issues requires strategic and innovative partnerships. UNFPA has developed a strong network of partners and is beginning to explore important opportunities for additional innovative partnerships, including with the private sector. However, opportunities with the private sector have not been fully explored and unpacked, although some encouraging examples exist such as the ongoing partnership with the software company Esri⁵. Enhanced clarity on the specific role and focus of UNFPA in relation to emerging demographic shifts, such as ageing in connection with the three transformative results, will most likely better inform coordination, enhance strategic value and guide future partnerships.

Conclusion 8. UNFPA has relatively small staff body stretched across a varied, complex and demanding mandate. Within this context, UNFPA staffing capacity in population and development is considered to be inadequate, with a need for mapping of the skillsets required and a capacity planning framework for the future thought leadership of UNFPA in this area.

31. The financial resourcing of population and development provides a more complex picture: while population and development is always less well-resourced than other thematic areas, there are clear differences in resource requirements across different mandate areas of UNFPA. Apart from capacity-building support to census (which is highly resource-intensive), other areas of capacity-building and upstream knowledge management and advocacy work are less resource-intensive than service delivery and capacity-building interventions for SRHR, gender equality, and adolescents and youth.

32. The current structure and capacity of population and development is not adequate for ensuring a strong positioning of UNFPA as the 'population data' agency. While there are some offices that have a relatively well-resourced population and development function, this is the exception rather than the norm. There is clear evidence from this evaluation that stakeholders feel that UNFPA have somewhat lost its leadership capabilities in population data. This is not permanently lost and UNFPA has retained a significant expertise but for UNFPA to take advantage of current foci on demographic shifts and bring back the population and development to the front and centre of its work, investment will be required. Moreover, UNFPA does not have an overarching data quality assurance capacity. The organization's current leadership on demographic shifts requires both a mapping and a strategic resourcing plan to ensure that the right skillsets are available in the right quantity at different levels. Nevertheless, there are examples of good practice and innovative thinking around utilizing existing expertise in creative ways within UNFPA.

⁵Esri, the world's leading supplier of geographic information system (GIS) software, provides a statistics modernization programme, which includes access to and use of the Esri ArcGIS technology to national statistics offices.

V. Recommendations

33. The following recommendations follow from the eight conclusions above, taking into account discussions with the evaluation reference group and benefitting from engagement with the senior management.

Recommendation 1. Develop a bold population and development strategy reconceptualized around the data, dynamics and development continuum, including the demographic dividend, resilience and policy.

34. UNFPA should develop a bold population and development strategy for the next decade that builds upon the current strengths and provides an umbrella strategic framework. This should include working across the humanitarian, development and peace continuum, and across the dimensions of population data, dynamics and development that is 'fit for purpose' to achieve the three transformative results within the context of climate change and migration as increasing mega-trends. Such a population and development strategy should include:

- (a) A data value chain between population data, dynamics and development, at global, regional and country levels and through different modes of engagement;
- (b) A clear statement of the UNFPA added value on a human rights-based approach, inclusion and a gender-scale monitoring framework, for all aspects of population and development across negative, blind, neutral, responsive and transformative results;
- (c) Linking of all demographic concepts to UNFPA mandate areas, including the demographic dividend linked to adolescents and youth (already strong); healthy ageing linked to adolescents and youth (also already strong through the life cycle approach); but also linking ageing to gender-based violence and SRH needs for older women; and low fertility to the second transformative result through a more comprehensive understanding of family planning around reproductive choices;
- (d) A cross-cutting proposal for how UNFPA offices and divisions can expand work on population data, dynamics, and development from COD-PS to census work, CRVS, national transfer accounts, demographic dividend, demographic resilience, among others, in chronic and protracted humanitarian situations.

Recommendation 2. Enhance programming priorities and linkages for internal clarity and external positioning.

35. UNFPA should develop an internal capacity-building and learning priority workplan to increase the common understanding of the demographic dividend, resilience and policy, the role of UNFPA, and how they all link to the three transformative results. This internal clarification should then be used to ensure a common and consistent messaging from all UNFPA headquarters and regional and country offices, with a view to coherently positioning UNFPA at the forefront of demographic shifts and demographic diversity. This workplan should aim at:

- (a) Implementing a strategy to boost the global appropriation and implementation of the demographic dividend, resilience and policy framework to accelerate a common vision, taking into account contextual particularities and adaptation needs. The strategy should include contextualization, adaptation and operationalization guidelines to address different realities;
- (b) Developing and disseminating information papers and associated learning webinars on the demographic dividends, resilience and policy, explaining what it is, what it means, how it mirrors the life cycle approach, bringing in an economic societal argument to strengthen the rights-based, individual perspective of the life cycle approach, including good practices and impactful interventions;
- (c) Developing and disseminating information papers and associated learning webinars specifically on ageing and low fertility, explaining the UNFPA role and its niche area in connection with the three transformative results.
- (d) Developing and implementing a common advocacy messaging platform on demographic diversity and the role of UNFPA, under the mandate of the ICPD Programme of Action, as a thought leader in this area.

Recommendation 3. Continue corporate investment in signature data products.

36. For UNFPA to maintain its leadership position and credibility with regard to population data, population dynamics and development, the organization should ensure continued investment in signature data products that have been invested in to date. This should include, at this point:

- (a) Continued corporate financial support for the continued administration, maintenance and updating of the population data portal;
- (b) Continued support to UNFPA products (including the population data portal) that showcase specifically UNFPA expertise and its added value in data and visibility for ‘leaving no one behind’ factors.

Recommendation 4. Improve data and analytics across UNFPA.

37. UNFPA should use the United Nations Secretary General’s data strategy as a basis for developing a UNFPA-specific understanding of what being ‘data literate’ means for UNFPA. This should include:

- (a) Developing a UNFPA data strategy, together with the roll-out of a dissemination plan. Within this data strategy, UNFPA should ensure defining what ‘data literacy’ means for UNFPA and how to measure it. This should be done both in general and specifically for SRHR and gender equality, including for adolescents and youth;
- (b) Designing and conducting an internal survey to estimate the current percentage of ‘data literate’ staff, as per the defined UNFPA definition, and creating a plan to fill the gap through internal training (design of online courses, communities of practice, among others) and by revising job profiles for new recruitment to ensure that the UNFPA definition of ‘data literate’ is included in all relevant job profiles.
- (c) Investing in a data quality assurance capacity that oversees not only population data but also all published UNFPA data.

Recommendation 5. Enhance human and technical resourcing of population and development.

38. UNFPA should re-assess the current human and technical capacity of population and development at different levels, vis-à-vis the increasingly visible leadership statements of UNFPA regarding demographic shifts as a mega-trend. This should include:

- (a) Mapping of all current skillsets within UNFPA and cross-referencing that mapping with data, dynamics and development dimensions at different levels, including new skillsets around digitalization and geospatial technologies, economic future-casting and population registers, and communicating arguments equally grounded in both economic and rights perspectives with its various partnerships, including with ministries of finance or planning as well as the private sector;
- (b) Development of a three-to-five-year resourcing and recruitment plan to address the skillset gaps as have been identified above, both through internal training and capacity development and through external recruitment, including by enhancing and leveraging the skills of young professionals.