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Commission on Population and Development

Background Guide 2021

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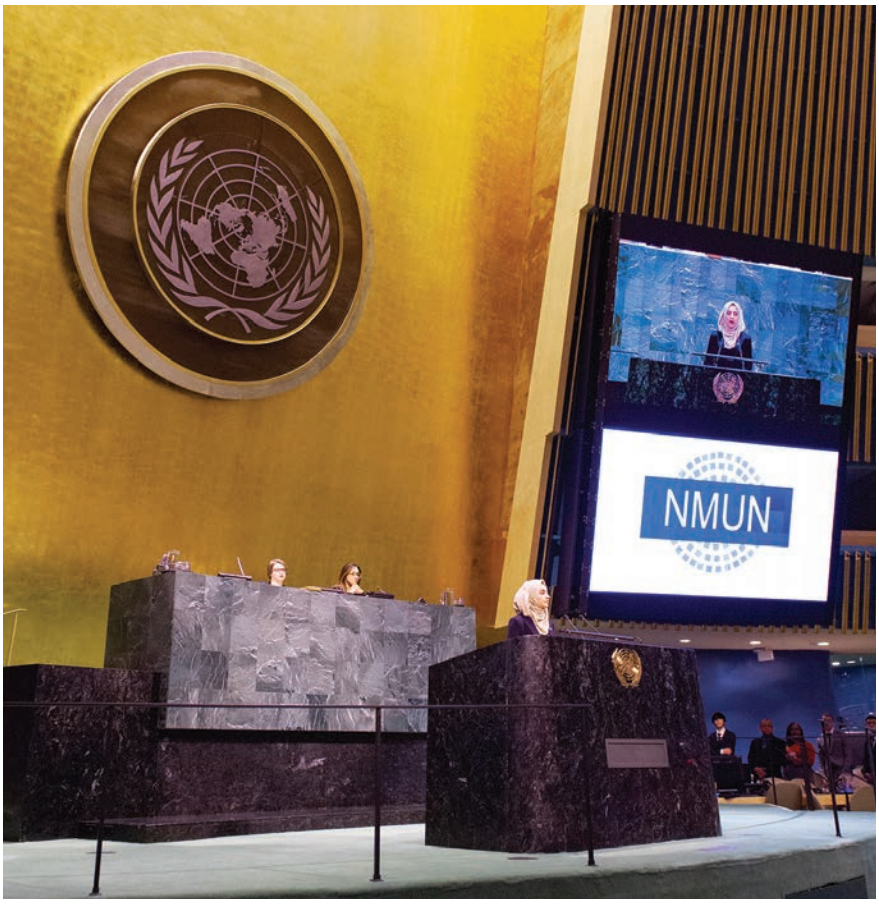
Grace Li and Xin Guan, Assistant Directors



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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2021 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Commission on Population and Development (CPD). This year's staff is: Directors Allison Uhrick (Conference A) and Laila Fouad (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Grace Li (Conference A) and Xin Guan (Conference B). Allison holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and International Affairs from Stockton University. She plans to pursue a Master of Science in Public Policy next spring. Laila has recently completed her Masters in Economic Policy from Columbia University. She has a B.A. in Economics from the American University in Cairo, and has previously worked in consulting and financial and tax services. Grace is completing her Bachelor's Degree in Honors Political Science and History from the University of Alberta. Xin holds a M.A. in Translation and Interpreting from Northwestern Polytechinical University in Xi'an, China. She currently works with the UN System Staff College on designing and developing evaluation learning programmes.

The topics under discussion for Commission on Population and Development are:

I. Improving Accessibility and the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Urban Areas
II. Supporting a Growing Population of Older Persons in Rural Areas
III. Population, Food Security, Nutrition, and Sustainable Development

CPD is an important organization within the United Nations (UN) system, and it plays a critical role in assessing and reviewing the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development's (1994) Programme of Action. CPD offers a forum for the international community to discuss a wide range of topics related to population issues and international development. In order to accurately simulate the committee, it will be critical for delegates to understand its role as an advisory body undertaking normative, not operational or programmatic, work.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 March 2021 in accordance with the guidelines in the Position Paper Guide and the NMUN•NY Position Papers website.
Two resources, available to download from the NMUN website, that serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions are the:

1. NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. NMUN Rules of Procedure - include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory NMUN Conduct Expectations on the NMUN website. They include the Conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the ECOSOC Department, Aiskell Roman (Conference A) and Chase Mitchell (Conference B), at usg.ecosoc@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Sincerely,

Conference A
Allison Uhrick, *Director*
Grace Li, *Assistant Director*

Conference B
Laila Fouad, *Director*
Xin Guan, *Assistant Director*

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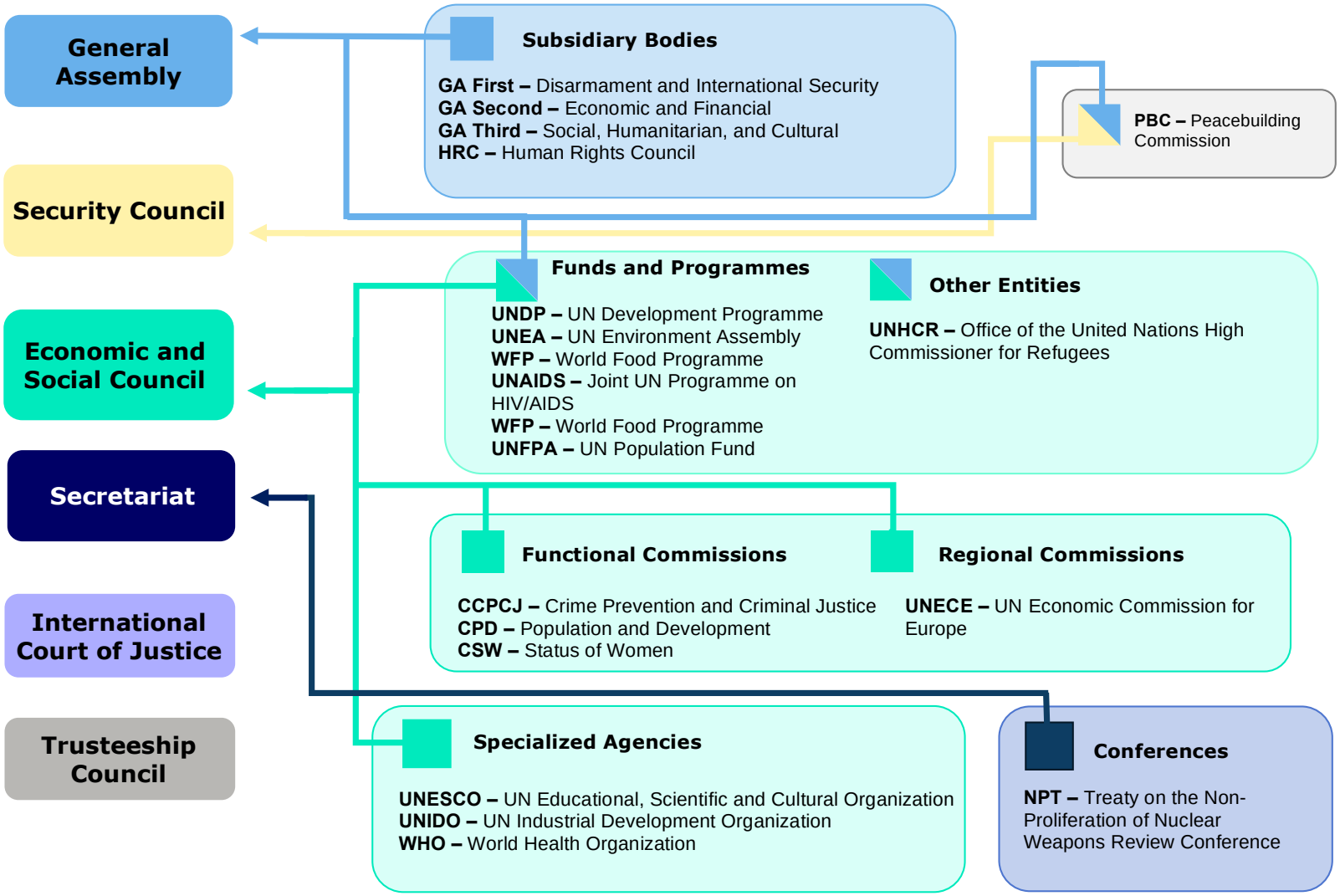
United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY and demonstrates the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.



Committee Overview

Introduction

The world's population is projected to reach almost 10 billion by the year 2050, an increase of 26% of the current population.[1] Due to this unprecedented rapid population growth, it is essential for the international community to identify and monitor population growth, population ageing, migration, and urbanization.[2] The *Programme of Action* (PoA), adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994, identifies the links between a myriad of population and development issues, including accessibility for older populations and persons with disabilities, migrants, sexual and reproductive health, human rights, sustainable development, and places the focus of its development policy on individuals.[3] Since its adoption, tremendous progress has been made on population and development issues.[4] At the same time, increased ageing and youth populations in different parts of the world have posed severe socioeconomic challenges, which hinder the process of accomplishing the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda).[5] An increasing number of Member States have experienced growth in the size and proportion of their ageing populations, requiring increased public services.[6] Reliability, timeliness, and accessibility of demographic data has supported progress towards achieving sustainable development.[7] International efforts have been able to improve the quality of life of many, as poverty has reached an all-time low of 8.6%, child mortality rates have been halved, access to drinking water has increased from 61% to 71%, and nearly 9 out 10 people now has access to electricity.[8]

The **United Nations Commission on Population and Development** (CPD) is a functional commission, reporting to the Economic and Social Council.

The Commission on Population and Development (CPD), the United Nations (UN) body tasked with monitoring the implementation of the PoA, has closely followed these issues, targeting its current priorities at sustainable cities, international migration, human mobility, changing population age structures, and sustainable development.[9] CPD will continue to lead debates about population trends and serve as a critical body that conducts research on these issues and provides suggestions to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).[10]

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[1] UN DESA, Population Division, *World Population Prospects 2019: Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/423)*, 2019.
[2] Ibid.
[3] UNFPA, *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population Development 20th Anniversary Edition*, 2014.
[4] Ibid., pp. viii-xiii.
[5] UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; UNFPA, *Programme of Action of at the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994*, 2004, p. 251; UN DESA, *Commission on Population and Development: Changing Population Age Structures*, 2017.
[6] UN DGC, *Ageing*, 2019; UN ECOSOC Commission on Population and Development, *Report on the Forty-ninth Session (E/2016/25-E/CN.9/2016/9)*, 2016, p. 8; UN DESA, *World Population Ageing 2017 Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/39)*, 2017, p. 5.
[7] UN CPD, *Review and Appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its Contribution to the Follow-up and Review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/CN.9/2019/2)*.
[8] UN DESA Statistics Division, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*, 2019, pp. 22-36.
[9] UN CPD, *Sustainable Cities, Human Mobility and International Migration: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2018/2)*, 2018; UN CPD, *Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development: Monitoring of Population Programmes, Focusing on Sustainable Cities, Human Mobility and International Migration, Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2018/3)*, 2018; UN CPD, *Changing Population Age Structures and Sustainable Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2017/2)*, 2017; UN CPD, *Monitoring of Population Programmes, Focusing on Changing Population Age Structures and Sustainable Development, in the Context of the Full Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2017/3)*, 2017.
[10] UN DESA, Population Division, *United Nations Conferences on Population*.

The roots of CPD are found in the Population Commission, established by ECOSOC in 1946, aiming to offer a platform for Member States, civil society, and other key stakeholders to discuss international issues on human development and population-related social challenges.[11] As one of the ten functional commissions of ECOSOC, the Population Commission was mandated to follow-up on the 1994 ICPD PoA.[12] The body was renamed that year to CPD to highlight its comprehensive approach to addressing issues related to the challenges of population and development, as outlined in the *Programme of Action*.[13] The PoA emphasizes the link between human rights, including sexual and reproductive health rights, and development.[14] It identifies development as improving individual lives and reducing inequalities.[15] Although the PoA received some criticism over its lack of a central focus, it has contributed significantly to women's empowerment; one third of the recommendations specifically mentioning women or girls.[16]

Governance, Structure, and Membership

CPD, an advisory body, provides policy recommendations on population and development for both ECOSOC and the UN system as a whole.[17] The Commission comprises 47 members elected to serve four-year terms following a specific geographic distribution, with 12 seats for African states, 11 Asian-Pacific states, 5 Eastern European states, 9 Latin American and Caribbean states, and 10 Western European and Other states.[18] All representatives possess expert knowledge in population and development issues.[19] The Commission meets annually in New York City, while the Bureau of CPD holds inter-sessional meetings to prepare for the annual meetings.[20] As of CPD's 53rd session in 2020, Christian Braun of Luxembourg serves as the current Chair of the Bureau.[21]

The general administration of CPD is funded by the UN, but the Commission has also welcomed Member States and government agencies to provide support to its work.[22] General Assembly resolution 50/124 of 23 February 1996 on "Implementation of the PoA of the International Conference on Population and Development" encouraged voluntary donations from Member States, particularly developed states, to ensure that the goals in the follow-up of ICPD could be met.[23] Both CPD and the United Nations

[11] UN DESA, Population Division, *Commission on Population and Development*, 2018; UN ECOSOC, *Resolution 3 (III) Population Commission (E/RES/3 (III))*, 1946, p. 1.
[12] UN General Assembly, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/49/128)*, 1994; UN DESA, Population Division, *Commission on Population and Development*, 2018.
[13] UNFPA, *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population Development 20th Anniversary Edition*, 2014, pp. viii-xiii.
[14] Ibid.; UN General Assembly, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/49/128)*, 1994.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Mirkin, *Evolution of National Population Policies Since the United Nations 1954 World Population Conference*, 2005, p. 305.
[17] UN General Assembly, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/49/128)*, 1994.
[18] UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/50/124)*, 1996; UN DESA Population Division, *Commission on Population and Development*, 2018; New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2017-18,* 2017.
[19] UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/50/124)*, 1996, p. 3.
[20] UN CPD, *Member States of the United Nations Note Verbale (18-037 – PC (51))*, 2018.
[21] UN DESA, *Commission on Population and Development fifty-third session*, 2020.
[22] UN CPD, *Assessment of the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (Resolution 2014/1)*, 2014.
[23] UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/50/124)*, 1996, p. 4.

Population Fund (UNFPA) were tasked with following up on ICPD.[24] CPD was designed to fully support ECOSOC and play the primary role in the follow-up process with its three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism, which includes monitoring, reviewing and assessing the implementation of the ICPD PoA.[25] On the other hand, UNFPA, as a subsidiary organ of the UN General Assembly, was mandated to take the lead in helping countries carry out the PoA by providing technical support and guidance with a focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights.[26] As detailed in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, UNFPA will continue to accelerate the implementation process of the PoA at the operational level.[27] In contrast, CPD monitors and assesses the progress made from a policy perspective.[28] CPD also focuses on acknowledging major achievements towards this goal and drawing attention to areas that need improvement.[29]

The Population Division within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) serves as the substantive secretariat for the Commission.[30] It is also tasked with conducting research about population and development issues and the progress of the PoA and its implementation.[31] The Population Division has actively facilitated the intergovernmental dialogue on population and development through organizing important UN conferences on the same topics and planning annual sessions of CPD.[32] Further, UN DESA facilitates development by providing Member States with a wealth of information through multiple publications and databases such as the World Population Prospects.[33] The Statistics Division of UN DESA has also worked with the CPD to combine data on various population metrics and additional topics creating the Demographic Yearbook System.[34]

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

The mandate of CPD is to provide "advice and assistance on matters affecting or affected by population changes," with the specific mandate to "[play] the primary role in the follow-up to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and (…) monitor, review and assess the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels and advise [ECOSOC] thereon."[35]

The primary functions of CPD are:

1. To conduct studies on population and development themes
2. To monitor, review, and assess the ICPD *Programme of Action*
3. To give recommendations to ECOSOC on these themes.[36]

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[24] UN General Assembly, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/49/128)*, 1994; UNFPA, *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population Development 20th Anniversary Edition*, 2014; UNFPA, *Frequently Asked Questions: What is the UNFPA Mandate*, 2018.
[25] UN General Assembly, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/49/128)*, 1994, p. 5.
[26] UNFPA, *How We Work*, 2019; UNFPA, *International Conference on Population and Development Principle of the ICPD*, 2018.
[27] UNFPA, *UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021*, 2018, p. 23.
[28] UN General Assembly, *Recurrent Themes and Key Elements Identified during the Sessions of the Commission on Population and Development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/122)*, 2014, p. 20.
[29] Ibid., p. 20.
[30] New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *United Nations Handbook 2017-18,* 2017, p. 148.
[31] UN DESA Population Division, *Compendium of Recommendations on Population and Development: Commission on Population and Development, 1994-2014 (Volume I)*, 2014, p. 5.
[32] UN DESA Population Division, *About United Nations Population Division: Overview*, 2019.
[33] Ibid.
[34] UN DESA Statistics Division, *2017 Demographic Yearbook*, 2018.
[35] UN General Assembly, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/49/128)*, 1994.
[36] UN DESA Population Division, *Commission on Population and Development*, 2019.

The Commission holds an annual session in New York City and serves as a forum for Member States to discuss population issues and set international norms and standards.[37] The resolutions of these sessions set priorities for the international community on topics of changing demographics and sustainable development challenges.[38] CPD raises awareness of population changes and their implications by highlighting the connections among changing age structures and an ageing population.[39]

As part of its mandate to conduct studies and provide research, CPD can request the Population Division to conduct or continue research on specific topics, such as ageing population growth.[40] Moreover, CPD can request UNFPA or the Secretary-General to increase research on the aforementioned topics.[41] CPD also has the capability to encourage Member States to collect population data to understand the current situation of population and development in rural and urban areas within a Member State.[42] Finally, CPD has the ability to request further research to assess the situation in areas such as food security and sustainable development, issues pertaining to population and development that have persisted over decades.[43]

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

The Commission's 53rd session was to be held from March 30th to April 3rd, 2020 to address the special theme of "Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development." [44] However, due to the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission was unable to hold their formal meetings in person and instead conducted informal sessions and consultations virtually.[45], , In accordance with ECOSOC decisions 2020/205, 2020/206, and 2020/219, which determined ECOSOC's decision-making procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission's 53rd session adopted several outcome documents through silence procedure, in which a draft resolution is circulated virtually among Member States for final changes within a pre-determined deadline.[46] Five Secretary-General reports, under the themes of food security, nutrition, and sustainable development, were prepared six weeks prior to the start of the formal session.[47] As these reports were published prior to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impacts of the virus on the global population are absent.[48] In response, the Secretariat prepared a website, "Selected documentation related to population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development in the context of COVID-19," providing access to information regarding the themes of the 53rd session in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.[49] The website includes reports from the FAO on maintaining healthy

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[37] UN CPD, *Member States of the United Nations Note Verbale (18-037 – PC (51))*, 2018; UN General Assembly, *Recurrent Themes and Key Elements Identified during the Sessions of the Commission on Population and Development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/122)*, 2014, p. 5.

[38] UN General Assembly, *Recurrent Themes and Key Elements Identified during the Sessions of the Commission on Population and Development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/122)*, 2014, p. 4.

[39] Ibid., p. 4.

[40] UN DESA Population Division, *Compendium of Recommendations on Population and Development: Commission on Population and Development, 1994-2014 (Volume I)*, 2014, p. 5.

[41] Ibid., p. 59.

[42] UNFPA, *UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021*, 2018, p. 9; UN General Assembly, *Recurrent Themes and Key Elements Identified During the Sessions of the Commission on Population and Development: Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/122)*, 2014, p. 6.

[43] UN DESA Population Division, *Compendium of Recommendations on Population and Development: Commission on Population and Development, 1994-2014 (Volume I)*, 2014, p. 5.

[44] UN DESA Population Division, *Commission on Population and Development fifty-third session*, 2020; UN CPD, *Commission on Population and Development: Report on the fifty-third session (5 April 2019 and 2020)* (*E/2020/25*), 2020, p. 1.

[45] Ibid., p. 1.

[46] *UN Bodies Formalize Silence Procedure for Decision-making During Pandemic,* IISD, 2020; UN DESA Population Division, *Commission on Population and Development fifty-third session*, 2020; UN CPD, *Commission on Population and Development: Report on the fifty-third session (5 April 2019 and 2020)* (*E/2020/25*), 2020, p. 1.

[47] Ibid., p. 1.

[48] Ibid., p. 1; UN DESA, *Commission on Population and Development fifty-third session*, 2020.

[49] Ibid.

diets and the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on food supply chains and agriculture systems, as well as reports from UNFPA on family planning during the COVID-19 pandemic.[50]

During the virtual meetings, the Chair of CPD's 53rd session drafted a brief declaration on population, food security, nutrition, and sustainable development in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the challenges for achieving the IPoA and the 2030 Agenda caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.[51] These challenges undermined and reversed the progress made towards SDG 2, "Zero Hunger," and improvement efforts toward nutrition and achieving food security by 2030.[52] Member States also expressed concern in reallocating health resources as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic would negatively impact the need for family planning and potentially increase violence against women and girls.[53] Member States voiced additional concerns that measures to contain the virus would create major consequences for global trade and supply chains, which include the import and export of food and food-related items[54]

In response, Member States stressed the importance of strengthening humanitarian assistance, improving health systems across the globe, and providing more access to sufficient, nutritious food for a healthy and balanced diet.[55] The Commission approved postponing the theme of the 53rd session until 2021.[56]The special theme, which would have been considered for the 54th session, "Population and sustainable development, in particular sustained and inclusive economic growth," will now be considered at the 55th session, held in 2022.[57] The Committee additionally approved revising the provisional agenda for the 54th session in 2021 to include an agenda item on the future role and organization of CPD.[58]

Conclusion

CPD, an advisory UN body, reports to ECOSOC and makes recommendations on the international and national level about population and development themes.[59] Some of the most important themes are ageing population, inclusion of persons of disabilities, food security, and sustainable development.[60] Due

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[50] UN DESA, *Selected documentation related to population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development in the context of COVID-19*, 2020; FAO, *Maintaining a healthy diet during the COVID-19 pandemic*, 2020; FAO, *COVID-19 and the risk to food supply chains: How to respond?*, 2020; UNFPA, *Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Planning and Ending Gender-based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage: Pandemic threatens achievement of the Transformative Results committed to by UNFPA*, 2020.

[51] UN CPD, *Commission on Population and Development: Report on the fifty-third session (5 April 2019 and 2020)* (*E/2020/25*), 2020, p. 5.

[52] Ibid., p. 5.

[53] UNFPA, *Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Planning and Ending Gender-based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage: Pandemic threatens achievement of the Transformative Results committed to by UNFPA*, 2020.

[54] FAO, *26 Latin American and Caribbean countries coordinate to support the regular functioning of the food system during the COVID-19 crisis*, 2020.

[55]UN CPD, *Commission on Population and Development: Report on the fifty-third session (5 April 2019 and 2020)* (*E/2020/25*), 2020, p. 5; African Union & FAO, *Social protection: ensuring effective response and inclusive recovery in the context of COVID-19 in Africa*, 2020; UN General Assembly, *International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19* (*A/RES/74/274*), 2020; FAO, *Maintaining a healthy diet during the COVID-19 pandemic*, 2020.

[56] UN CPD, *Commission on Population and Development: Report on the fifty-third session (5 April 2019 and 2020)* (*E/2020/25*), 2020, p. 6.

[57] Ibid., p. 6; UN CPD, *Special theme for the Commission on Population and Development in 2021* (*E/CN.9/2019/L.5*), 2020.

[58] Ibid., p. 6.

[59] UN DESA, Population Division, *Commission on Population and Development*; UN ECOSOC, *Resolution 3 (III) Population Commission (E/RES/3 (III))*, 1946, p. 1; UN DESA, Population Division, *Commission on Population and Development*, 2018; UN, General Assembly, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/49/128)*, 1994.

[60] UN CPD, *Sustainable Cities, Human Mobility and International Migration Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2018/2)*, 2018; UN CPD, *Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action of the*

to emerging demographic trends, health care for youth and elderly populations are also gaining greater attention.[61] To better understand population development, CPD publishes world population trends studies and makes recommendations to help Member States utilize population growth trends, gain greater understanding of population dynamics, and keep up to date with changes in population structure. [62] The CPD has also worked towards increasing inclusivity of persons of disabilities in urban areas such setting a disability development agenda towards 2015 and beyond.[63] Despite setbacks achieving zero hunger, improving nutrition, and providing secure food systems, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CPD remains committed to addressing the needs of the global population in terms of food security, nutrition, and sustainable development and remains determined to assist the most vulnerable populations through the goals outlined in the ICPD PoA.[64]

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. (2020). *Commission on Population and Development: Report on the fifty-third session (5 April 2019 and 2020) (E/2020/25)*. Retrieved 23 August 2020 from: https://undocs.org/en/E/2020/25

This report provides a summary of CPD's fifty-third session, which could not formally meet due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and conducted their work through virtual and informal meetings. While addressing the session's special theme of "Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development," Member States acknowledged the challenges faced in achieving the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda due in part by the pandemic, and reaffirmed their commitments to the PoA ICPD. Delegates will find this report useful for research on the Commission's recent work and actions, as well as an insight into how UN bodies have adapted to holding sessions during the pandemic.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. (2018). *Commission on Population and Development* Retrieved 5 July 2020 from: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/index.shtml

This webpage provides a clear overview of the Commission's mandate, main functions, and membership. It can also direct delegates to other relevant sources such as previous CPD sessions, resolutions, and decisions. Delegates will find this page useful because it provides a short and comprehensive introduction of CPD. It can serve as the beginning point to start their research about the Commission.

United Nations, General Assembly, Forty-ninth session. (1994). *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/49/128)*. Adopted on the report of the Second Committee (A/49/733). Retrieved 11 August 2020 from: http://undocs.org/a/res/49/128

The resolution documents the updated mandate and new name of CPD. The adoption of the ICPD led to the expansion of CPD's mandate to monitor, review, and assess the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. This resolution assists delegates to gain a clear understanding of CPD's mandate and the history of the Commission.

International Conference on Population and Development: Monitoring of Population Programmes, Focusing on Sustainable Cities, Human Mobility and International Migration Report of the Secretary-General(E/CN.9/2018/3), 2018; UN CPD, *Changing Population Age Structures and Sustainable Development Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2017/2)*, 2017; UN CPD, *Monitoring of Population Programmes, Focusing on Changing Population Age Structures and Sustainable Development, in the Context of the Full Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2017/3)*, 2017.

[61] UN General Assembly, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development (A/RES/49/128)*, 1994; UNFPA, *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population Development 20th Anniversary Edition*, 2014.

[62] UN DESA, Population Division. *World Population Ageing 2017 (ST/ESA/SER.A/408)*, 2017.

[63] UN CPD, *Report on the forty-seventh session (E/CN.9/2014/7)*, 2014.

[64] UN CPD, *Commission on Population and Development: Report on the fifty-third session (5 April 2019 and 2020)* (*E/2020/25*), 2020, p. 6.

Moreover, this document also discusses the role of Member States in supporting the implementation of Programme of Action at a national level.

United Nations, General Assembly, Seventieth session. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/L.1).* Retrieved 22 July 2020 from https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/2030_Agenda_en.pdf

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by the General Assembly in 2015 and acts as a plan of action for strengthening universal peace, freedom, and prosperity on the planet. The CPD works towards achieving the 2030 Agenda by focusing on the population related aspects such as goals 5 and 10. The 2030 Agenda works in guiding the work of the Commission on Population and Development by providing a summary of the progress completed so far and identifies future projections of the current trends. Delegates will need to familiarize themselves on how the SDGs should be adapted to according to current population trends and challenges.

United Nations Population Fund. (2014). *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population Development 20th Anniversary Edition*. Retrieved 20 September 2020 from: https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/programme_of_action_Web%20ENGLISH.pdf

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) produced the Programme of Action of ICPD, which is the steering document for the United Nations Population Fund. The document also defines the mandate of CPD to monitor and access its implementation process. At the ICPD, Member States reached four qualitative and quantitative goals: universal education, reduction of infant and child mortality, reduction of maternal mortality, and access to reproductive and sexual health services. This Programme of Action helps delegates understand the history and mandate of CPD.

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I. Improving Accessibility and the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Urban Areas

"Together, we can remove barriers and raise awareness so that people with disabilities can play a full part in every sphere of society, around the world."[65]

Introduction

The United Nations (UN) Population Division estimated that, in 2019, 55.7% of the world's population resided in urban areas.[66] This is expected to rise to 68%, or approximately 6.25 billion people by 2050.[67] At the same time, it is estimated that between 110 million and 190 million people experience severe disabilities.[68] According to statistics from the World Health Organization (WHO), 2 billion people live with some form of physical or mental impairment, with a majority not being born with them but having retained a disability later on in life.[69] According to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), 80% of these people live in developing countries.[70]

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) defines persons with disabilities as "those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."[71] The international community has identified accessibility and inclusion as two key factors for individuals with disabilities to participate fully in society.[72] CRPD defines accessibility as the quality of ensuring that "on an equal basis with others," persons with disabilities in both urban and rural areas have access to all public facilities and services, including the physical environment, transportation, and information and communication technologies and systems.[73] Ensuring accessibility refers to enabling persons with disabilities to acquire independence and full participation in all aspects of life.[74] In an effort to work towards the meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities, the UN Department of General Assembly and Conference Management developed the *United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy*, which defines disability inclusion as "the meaningful participation of persons with disability in all their diversity, the promotion of their rights, and the consideration of disability-related perspectives in compliance with [the CRPD]."[75]

Rapid urbanization processes globally have narrowly focused on economic benefit, and more often than not, paid little attention to "civil, economic, political, cultural and social rights" of persons with disability.[76] Lack of accessibility and inclusion in urban settings can contribute to persons with disabilities being disadvantaged and vulnerable.[77] These situations can arise from a combination of physical, environmental, technical, and social barriers prompting inadequate education, poorer health outcomes, or lower levels of employment, all of which lead to disproportionately higher rates of poverty, deprivation, and exclusion amongst persons with disabilities.[78] Furthermore, persons with disabilities have been

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[65] UN Secretary-General, *Remarks to the 11th session of the Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2018.
[66] World Bank, *Urban Population (% of Total Population), United Nations Population Division - World Urbanization Prospects, The 2018 Revision*, 2019.
[67] UN DESA, *World Urbanization Prospects, The 2018 Revision*, 2018, p. xix.
[68] World Bank, *Social Sustainability and Inclusion – Disability Inclusion*, 2020.
[69] WHO, *World Report on Disability*, 2011; WHO, *Disability and Health*, 2018.
[70] Ibid.
[71] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.
[72] World Bank Group, *Accessibility and Inclusion: Two Key Factors for Individuals with Disabilities*, 2018.
[73] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.
[74] Ibid.
[75] UN DESA, *United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy*, 2019, p. 26.
[76] OHCHR, *Urbanization and Human Rights.*
[77] UN DESA, *Disability, Accessibility and Sustainable Urban Development*.
[78] Ibid.; World Bank Group, *Disability Inclusion*, 2019.

adversely affected by many large-scale emergencies, including the recent COVID-19 pandemic, in the areas of health, education, and transportation.[79]

Persons with disabilities are both agents and beneficiaries of promoting economic and social progress towards a peaceful and prosperous world for all.[80] UN Secretary-General António Guterres indicated that only with the full participation of all stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, can the international community achieve the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[81] States that promote disability inclusion enable persons with disabilities to actively participate in the economy, which contributes to the advancement of these countries in the areas of economic and social development.[82]

International and Regional Framework

At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), 179 countries adopted a Programme of Action (PoA) that serves "as a comprehensive guide to people-centered development progress" and affirmed the rights of persons with disabilities.[83] Chapter V of the PoA calls for governments to provide assistance and socio-economic support to persons with disabilities and families caring for family members with disabilities.[84] Chapter VI recognizes that "persons with disabilities constitute a significant proportion of the population" and calls for governments at all levels to make efforts in meeting needs, realizing rights, and promoting social and economic integration of persons with disabilities.[85] The PoA also calls for the participation of persons with disabilities in health policy planning and appeals to governments to raise public awareness around discrimination and combat stigma against persons with disabilities.[86] Chapter XV also recognizes the contribution of organizations led by persons with disabilities to enhancing programs for this group.[87]

The CRPD was adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 61/106 (2006), which promotes and protects the equal enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities.[88] The Convention is a landmark instrument to ensure the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society and provides a comprehensive framework for national policies and legislation for building inclusive societies.[89] Article 4 emphasizes the general obligation of State parties in designing, developing, and accessing support services and facilities as well as new technologies for persons with disabilities.[90] The CPRD also addresses the importance of accessibility for persons with disabilities in Article 9, especially in the areas of transportation and communication.[91] It outlines the role of State parties in setting guidelines for making public and private facilities accessible in both rural and urban areas, as well as incorporating accessibility measures in the development of information technology at an early-stage.[92]

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[79] World Bank, *Social Sustainability and Inclusion – Disability Inclusion*, 2020.
[80] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] UNFPA, *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population Development, 20th Anniversary Edition*, 2014; UNFPA, *Report of the Secretary-General: Framework of Actions for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014*, 2014, p. 9.
[84] UNFPA, *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population Development, 20th Anniversary Edition*, 2014, pp. 41-43.
[85] Ibid., pp. 56-57.
[86] Ibid., pp. 81, 111, & 126.
[87] Ibid., p. 166.
[88] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006.
[89] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018.
[90] UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*, 2006, p. 5.
[91] Ibid., p. 5.
[92] Ibid., p. 9.

General Assembly resolution 74/144 (2019) addresses the accessibility aspect in the implementation of the CPRD.[93] It encourages the involvement of all stakeholders in developing organizations and civil society to support persons with disabilities in taking leadership roles in public decision-making bodies.[94] It also stresses the importance of overcoming barriers to health and education persons with disabilities may face, such as the physical, social, economic, and cultural environment, as well as prejudice and discrimination.[95] Furthermore, promoting access to equal education and employment, such as through promoting inclusive education systems, skills development, volunteering opportunities, and vocational and entrepreneurial training is integral for enabling persons with disabilities to establish their independence.[96]

In September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda that aims to "end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change."[97] The agenda sets 17 SDGs for the international community towards a peaceful, prosperous, and disability-inclusive world pledging to "leave no one behind."[98] The CRPD has also called for Member States to establish national disability strategies and action plans with specific milestones for the implementation of the CRPD that also contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.[99]

The SDGs particularly highlight disability and persons with disabilities eleven times.[100] For instance, SDG 4 (quality education) emphasizes equal and accessible education by building inclusive learning environments and providing any necessary assistance for persons with disabilities.[101] SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) promotes inclusivity and full and productive employment for persons with disabilities to fully access the job market.[102] SDG 10 (reduced inequalities) emphasizes the social, economic, and political inclusion of persons with disabilities.[103] SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) emphasizes the creation of sustainable cities for all, including transport systems, and universal access to safe, inclusive, accessible, and green public spaces.[104]

The *New Urban Agenda,* adopted at the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development (Habitat III) in 2016, underlined the connection between the urban development agenda and the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDG 11.[105] The *New Urban Agenda* provides guidance for a wide range of actors that can contribute to more accessible and inclusive urban development for persons with disabilities.[106]

Role of the International System

At the 45th session of CPD in 2012, CPD adopted a resolution urging Member States to promote equal opportunities for all, including young persons with disabilities.[107] At its 47th session in 2014, CPD adopted a resolution stressing that full implementation of the ICPD PoA was integral to global efforts to eradicate

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[93] UN General Assembly, *Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: accessibility (A/RES/74/144)*, 2019.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] UN DESA, *The Sustainable Development Agenda*.
[98] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[99] UN DESA, *Disability Strategies and Action Plans by Country/Area*.
[100] UN DESA, *#Envision2030: 17 Goals to Transform the World for Persons with Disabilities*.
[101] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, p. 29.
[106] CBM, *Habitat III and the Inclusion Imperative: Achieving "Cities for All"*, 2016.
[107] UN CPD, *Report on the Forty-fifth Session (E/CN.9/2012/8)*, 2012, p. 7.

poverty and achieve sustainable development, including addressing the needs of persons with disabilities in both urban and rural areas.[108] Further, a resolution adopted at the 49th session of CPD also stresses the importance of the collection, analysis, dissemination, and utilization of population data and statistics that can be disaggregated by various dimensions, including disability.[109] This analytical ability is essential to identify and address the specific needs of different populations and "leave no one behind."[110] The 52nd session of CPD highlighted disability as one of the key components when collecting and analyzing population data.[111]

The Secretariat for CRPD falls within the Division for Inclusive Social Development of UN DESA.[112] Since 2013, the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of UN DESA has hosted the DESA/DSPD Forum on Disability and Development.[113] The 2015 report on DESA/DSPD listed recommendations on accessible and inclusive urban development for persons with disabilities.[114] In 2016, the forum continued to address disability and urban development in response to the zero draft of the *New Urban Agenda*.[115] The 2016 DESA/DSPD Forum, "Towards a Disability Inclusive and Accessible New Urban Agenda," informed the Habitat III processes.[116]

UN DESA also promotes effective implementation of international normative frameworks on disabilities and development.[117] In 2016, UN DESA collected and published a set of resource materials entitled *Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development: Making Urban Environment Inclusive and Fully Accessible to All*.[118] This document includes 24 cases on improving accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities in urban areas, demonstrating examples on policy-making, city planning, universal design, and inclusive management to make urban development accessible and inclusive for all.[119] During the 28th International Day of Persons with Disabilities that took place on 3 December 2018, UN DESA launched the first *UN Flagship Report on Disability and Development: Realization of Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*.[120] The report promotes the realization of the SDGs for persons with disabilities making recommendations based on reviewed data, policies, and programs.[121] The report also notes that persons with disabilities are still facing challenges and barriers to their full inclusion and participation in all spheres of society, including in urban areas.[122] UN DESA has also collaborated with UN-Women, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission for Social Development, and the Conference of States Parties on the CRPD to develop intergovernmental processes that advance the rights of women and girls with disabilities.[123]

In 2016, DSPD developed a Toolkit on Disability for Africa, providing practical tools to all those with an interest in the inclusion of persons with disabilities in social development.[124] The toolkit also offers examples of good practices from the African region.[125] The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia

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[108] UN CPD, *Report on the Forty-seventh Session (E/CN.9/2014/7)*, 2014, p. 12.
[109] UN CPD, *Report on the Forty-ninth Session (E/CN.9/2016/9)*, 2016, p. 27.
[110] Ibid., p. 27.
[111] UN CPD, *Contribution by the 52nd Session of the Commission on Population and Development to the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*, 2019, p. 4.
[112] UN DESA, *About us: Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.*
[113] UN DESA, *DESA DSPD Forum on Disability and Development*.
[114] UN DESA, *Report on UN DESA Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development*, 2015, p. 7.
[115] UN DESA, *Forum on Ways Forward Towards a Disability Inclusive and Accessible New Urban Agenda*, 2016.
[116] Ibid.
[117] UN DESA, *The United Nations and Disability: 70 Years of the Work Towards a More Inclusive World*, 2018, p. 25.
[118] UN DESA, *Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development: Making Urban Environments Inclusive and Fully Accessible to All*, 2016.
[119] Ibid.
[120] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] UN DESA, *Toolkit on Disability for Africa*, 2016.
[125] Ibid.

and the Pacific published the *Report on Building Disability-Inclusive Societies in Asia and the Pacific: Assessing Progress of the Incheon Strategy* in 2018.[126] This report proposes recommendations to advance disability-inclusive implementation on both international and national levels and to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities across all sectors of society, as well as to enhance disability data collection and analysis and statistics.[127] The multi-stakeholder network, Global Network on Disability Inclusive and Accessible Urban Development published *The Inclusion Imperative: Toward Disability-inclusive and Accessible Urban Development* in 2016.[128] The publication offered recommendations and practical steps to ensure that the *New Urban Agenda* and the Habitat III process incorporated the perspectives of persons with disabilities.[129]

Needs for Housing, Mobility, and Public Spaces and Services for Persons with Disabilities

Adequate, Safe, and Affordable Housing

The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, which was adopted as UN General Assembly resolution 43/181, considers adequate housing as access to affordable and adequate privacy, space, security, lighting, ventilation, basic infrastructure, and location with regard to work and basic facilities.[130] UN-Habitat estimates that 1.6 billion people are living in inadequate housing globally, of which 1 billion are living in slums and informal settlements.[131] The rate of new home construction lags far behind the rate of urban population growth – approximately 1.84% per year.[132] With an estimated 240 million persons with disabilities living in inadequate housing, UN-Habitat reports have noted that solving the issue of adequate housing for persons with disabilities is a first step to also supporting their realization of other rights.[133] Persons with disabilities are more likely to encounter additional challenges such as vulnerability to homelessness, lack of financial means for adequate housing, lack of indoor sanitation in available housing, and insufficient and insecure accommodation.[134] The CRPD has significantly contributed to the understanding of the right to adequate housing for persons with disabilities in all spheres of society.[135] However, the UNDESA's *Disability and Development Report* indicates that there are still barriers to adequate housing for persons with disabilities, including lower economic status, inadequate accesses to facilities and services, and a lack of policies and monitoring mechanisms.[136] According to the report, to make cities and communities inclusive and sustainable for persons with disabilities, Member States need to implement inclusive policies and laws to raise awareness on disability, to share knowledge and good practices, and to build capacity for monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation.[137]

Urban Mobility, Public Spaces, and Services

Data collected in the *Disability and Development Report* also indicates that in some countries more than 30% of persons with disabilities find that transportation, public spaces, and services are not accessible.[138]

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[126] UN ESCAP, *Building Disability-Inclusive Societies in Asia and the Pacific: Assessing Progress of the Incheon Strategy*, 2018.
[127] Ibid., pp. 58-59.
[128] UN-Habitat III, *Launch of a new Publication: "The Inclusion Imperative: towards Disability-inclusive and Accessible Urban Development"*, 2016.
[129] DIAUD, *The Inclusion Imperative: towards Disability-inclusive and Accessible Urban Development*, 2016.
[130] UN General Assembly, *Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 (A/RES/43/181)*, 1988.
[131] UN-Habitat, *World Cities Report*, 2016.
[132] UN CPD, *Review and Appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its Contribution to the Follow-up and Review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/CN.9/2019/2)*, 2019, p. 14; WHO, *Urban Population Growth*.
[133] UN-Habitat, *The Right to Adequate Housing for Persons with Disabilities Living in Cities – Towards Inclusive Cities*, 2015, p. xii.
[134] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, pp. 221-224.
[135] UN Habitat, *The Right to Adequate Housing for Persons with Disabilities Living in Cities – Towards Inclusive Cities*, 2015, p. viii.
[136] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, pp. 221-224.
[137] Ibid., p. 37.
[138] Ibid., p. 14.

Lack of efficient transportation and public services leads to lower educational opportunities, reduced access to health care, and limited ability to participate in communal life; all of which hinder inclusive and sustainable development.[139] Lack of access to businesses and public venues such as banks, shops, and post offices can also be a challenge for persons with disabilities.[140] Enabling accessibility through mobile phones, the Internet, televisions, computers, electronic kiosks, and other online applications and services can advance the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society.[141] However, exclusion from information and communication technologies implies being left out from rapid access to information, in addition to accessing essential public services and the opportunity to lead an independent life.[142]

In addition to these challenges, article 25(a) of the CRPD further emphasizes equal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services and reproductive rights, in accordance with SDG target 3.7 on universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services and SDG target 5.6 of ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.[143] The PoA and the outcome documents of its review conference also highlight the importance of access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.[144] Reproductive health-care services may be unavailable or inaccessible to persons with disabilities due to income disparities, lack of skilled health workers, and negative attitudes by health workers towards mothers with disabilities, among other factors.[145]

Widespread closures of transportation systems due to the COVID-19 pandemic has also reduced the availability of accessible forms of travel, and has hindered access to essential needs such as basic necessities or services such as healthcare for persons with disabilities.[146] Persons with disabilities also face challenges to accessing equal healthcare, an issue which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.[147] They are also more susceptible to COVID-19, since they may have underlying health needs that increase their vulnerability to the disease.[148] Some persons with disabilities may also have a higher risk of contracting the disease since information about COVID-19 is not available in accessible formats, such as in Braille, sign language interpretation, captions, audio provision, and graphics.[149]

Ensuring Economic Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Urban Areas

The *Disability and Development Report* describes how urban sprawl directly impacts persons with disabilities who face long commutes to work.[150] This impact may directly hinder persons with disabilities from entering the job market.[151] Both in developed and developing countries, working-age persons with disabilities experience significantly lower employment rates and much higher unemployment rates than persons without disabilities.[152] Statistics show that 80% to 90% of persons with disabilities of working age are unemployed in developing countries, with 50% to 70% unemployed in industrialized countries.[153]

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[139] Frye, *Disabled and Older Persons and Sustainable Urban Mobility: Thematic Study Prepared for Global Report on Human Settlements 2013*, 2013, p. 16.
[140] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, p. 228.
[141] ITU et al., *The ICT Opportunity for a Disability-inclusive Development Framework*, 2013, p. vi.
[142] Ibid., p. vi.
[143] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, p. 88; UN DESA, *SDG Indicators*.
[144] Ibid.
[145] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, p. 89.
[146] World Bank, *Disability and Inclusion*, 2020.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.
[150] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, p. 225.
[151] Ibid., p. 225.
[152] WHO, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 235.
[153] UN DESA, *Disability and Employment*.

Unemployment is often a result of persons with disabilities not being considered by employers due to bias and prejudice.[154] Focusing on skills, the International Labour Organization Global Business and Disability Network published the first edition of the *Disability in the Workplace: Employers' Organizations and Business Networks* report in 2016, sharing employment opportunity examples from 14 organizations that address disability inclusion in the workforce.[155] The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) published a non-exhaustive reference list of non-governmental organizations and UN agencies assisting persons with disabilities.[156] The document listed organizations promoting employment opportunities, providing direct services, training for self-employment, as well as offering vocational employment for persons with disabilities.[157]

Despite international efforts and emphasis on addressing the rights of persons with disabilities to access employment and decent work, obstacles remain.[158] There is a lack of regulation and supervision mechanisms to address the lack of accessible workplaces and reasonable accommodation, lack of assistive technology, and prevailing stigma and discrimination.[159] Persons with disabilities face further barriers to full social and economic inclusion due to inaccessible physical environments and transportation and gaps in service delivery.[160] When persons with disabilities are employed, they tend to earn lower wages than employees without disabilities.[161] Additionally, persons with disabilities are also more likely to be self-employed or employed in the informal sector, which often lacks the oversight and employee protections that labor laws and regulations may provide.[162]

Persons with disabilities face further challenges to accessing equal opportunities and establishing their livelihoods due to the COVID-19 pandemic.[163] Schools and educational institutions provide access to essential services such as: meal programs; assistive technologies; access to resource personnel; recreation programs and extracurricular activities; and water, sanitation, and hygiene programs.[164] As a result of mandatory school closures, children with disabilities have decreased access to these services and a gap in education will affect their economic opportunities disproportionately.[165]

Conclusion

Persons with disabilities make up 15% of the world population and are, in essence, the world's largest minority.[166] Improving accessibility for and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in urban areas is a challenge linked to urbanization, sustainable development, and the implementation of all 17 SDGs.[167] Since the 1994 ICPD, human rights of persons with disabilities have been better promoted and emphasized.[168] Bearing in mind the principle of "leaving no one behind," the ICPD PoA guides global thinking on population and development and focuses on reaching specific demographic targets and

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[154] Ibid.
[155] ILO Global Business and Disability Network, *Disability in the Workplace: Employers' Organizations and Business Networks*, 2016.
[156] UNHCR, *NGOs and UN Agencies Assisting Persons with Disabilities*, 2008.
[157] Ibid.
[158] ILO, *The Right to Decent Work of Persons with Disabilities*, 2003.
[159] Ibid.; WHO, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, pp. 239-240.
[160] World Bank, *Disability and Inclusion*, 2020.
[161] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, p. 10.
[162] Ibid., p. 155.
[163] World Bank, *Disability and Inclusion*, 2020.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid.
[166] WHO, *World Report on Disability*, 2011.
[167] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, p. 2.
[168] UNFPA, *Report of the Secretary-General: Framework of Actions for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014*, 2014, p. 58.

individual needs, aspirations, and rights.[169] Only by meeting their needs and protecting their rights with increased accessibility and a higher degree of inclusion can persons with disabilities actively participate as agents of change in urban society and sustainable development.[170]

Further Research

Delegates should consider the following questions as they continue research on this topic: What actions can CPD take to improve the accessibility of physical environments and social rights of persons with disabilities in urban areas? What measures can developed and less developed countries take in their urban areas to improve accessibility for and the inclusion of persons with disabilities? How does civil society impact persons with disabilities during urban development and how can they work with CPD? What role do persons with disabilities play in urbanization and economic development planning? How can the international system work in a more integrated way to achieve the SDGs and include persons with disabilities as one of the driving factors? How can the international community work with local governments or partners to identify and address the needs of persons with disabilities?

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United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development: Making Urban Environments Inclusive and Fully Accessible to All*. Retrieved 8 November 2020 from: https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/desa/good_practices_in_accessible_urban_development_october2016.pdf

> *This DESA publication highlights key experiences and lessons learned from 24 case studies, contributing to the ongoing discourse around accessible urban development in light of Habitat III and the New Urban Agenda. It also provides specific recommendations to advance inclusive urban development for all. It illustrates and encourages more initiatives and concrete actions from both developing and developed countries to advance urban development to be accessible and inclusive to all, including persons with disabilities and other special needs. This document will provide delegates with cases addressing this topic in both developed and less developed countries.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2018). *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities.* Retrieved 8 November 2020 from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2018/12/UN-Flagship-Report-Disability.pdf

> *During the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December 2018, UN DESA launched the first UN Flagship Report on Disability and Development. The report demonstrates how disability-based discrimination has severe effects on transport, cultural life, and access to public places and services, and thus, the report leads with a push to change urban environments to make them more accessible. Delegates may find this report very useful when considering the connections between SDGs and this topic.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2019). *United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy*. Retrieved 8 November 2020 from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2019/03/UNDIS_20-March-2019_for-HLCM.P.pdf

> *The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy represents a comprehensive strategy to ensure that the UN system is fit for purpose in relation to disability inclusion. It provides a foundation for sustainable and transformative progress on disability inclusion throughout all pillars of the UN's work. The strategy includes an accountability framework for*

[169] UNFPA, *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population Development, 20th Anniversary Edition*, 2014.

[170] UN DESA, *Realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with Persons with Disabilities*, 2018, p. 30.

monitoring progress and addressing challenges, and focuses on critical areas including leadership, strategic planning, accessibility, participation, programming, and procurement. It also calls for the UN to recruit more persons with disabilities, and to support them better. Delegates may find this strategy very helpful to understand how the UN system addresses issues of persons with disabilities.

United Nations, General Assembly. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/61/106)*. Retrieved 8 November 2020 from: https://undocs.org/A/RES/61/106

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was envisaged from the very beginning as the instrument for inclusive development and for the realization of the universal human rights of persons with disabilities. It adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It explicitly makes provisions on accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities. This Convention is essential for delegates to understand the definition of key sections of this topic.

United Nations, Human Settlements Programme. (2015). *The Right to Adequate Housing for Persons with Disabilities Living in Cities – Towards Inclusive Cites.* Retrieved 8 November 2020 from: https://unhabitat.org/books/the-right-to-adequate-housing-for-persons-with-disabilities-living-in-cities/

This technical report outlines major barriers that persons with disabilities face when searching for housing, and identifies trends in relation to policy and legal framework and national and sub-national solutions to the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities. The report takes a human rights-based approach to development of human settlements that offer equal opportunities to persons with disabilities. Delegates may find it helpful that the report offers three case studies that highlight some good practices and topics worthy of further inquiry.

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II. Supporting a Growing Population of Older Persons in Rural Areas

"Population ageing can no longer be ignored (…) the social and economic implications of this phenomenon are profound, extending far beyond the individual older person and the immediate family, touching broader society and the global community in unprecedented ways."[171]

Introduction

Between 1990 and 2019 the number of persons in the world aged 65 or older more than doubled, increasing from 325 million to 703 million.[172] This trend is projected to continue, with that population estimated to reach 1.5 billion by 2050, equivalent to approximately 16% of the estimated world population.[173] Persons aged 80 or above are projected to increase at an even faster rate, tripling from 143 million in 2019 to 426 million in 2050.[174] The concept of "older persons" is multidimensional, as it can be discussed chronologically (birthdate), biologically (human body ability), psychologically (psycho-emotional functioning), and socially (social role such as grandparents).[175] The United Nations (UN) typically defines "old persons" as those aged over 60 or 65.[176] Declining birth rates relative to the population results in an increase in the proportion of the population aged 60 or above and thereby increases societal desire to "age in place," which refers to the ability of older persons to continue living comfortably in their current residence without relocating.[177] The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) describes "rural areas" as having three common dimensions: sparse settlement, land cover and use, and remoteness from urban areas.[178] Older persons generally want to age in place but this can be difficult in rural areas due to the lack of social services, poor physical infrastructure, and inadequate healthcare available to support the needs of an ageing population.[179]

Older persons have to deal with numerous ageing-related health issues such as hypertension, dementia, depression, social isolation, and physical impairments, which can further compound the problems of ageing in place in rural areas.[180] Rural areas also have lower employment opportunities than urban areas and rural retirees find that they may not be able to access socio-economic programs, like pensions or social safety nets, which result in inadequate funds to cover basic cost-of-living expenses.[181] Women are particularly impacted by ageing in rural places as they, on average, have a longer average lifespan than men and are subject to ageing-related issues for a longer period of time.[182] As a result of unequal employment opportunities, uncompensated or underpaid care work, and social restrictions on women's freedoms, older women in rural areas face ageing challenges related to healthcare costs and access to services.[183] The COVID-19 pandemic aggravated existing problems that older adults living in rural areas already faced, causing increased isolation and new impediments to accessing the care they need.[184]

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[171] UNFPA, *Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and A Challenge*, 2012, p. 9.
[172] World Bank, *Data: Population ages 65 and above, total*, 2019; UN DESA, *World Population Ageing* 2019, 2020, p. 2.
[173] Ibid., p. 2.
[174] UN DESA, *World Population Ageing* 2019, 2020 p. 2.
[175] UNDP, *Ageing, Older Persons and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2017, p. 21.
[176] UN DESA, *World Population Ageing* 2019, 2020. p. 2.
[177] WHO, *World Report on Ageing and Health*, 2015, p. 36; UN DESA, *World Population Ageing*, 2017, p. 4.
[178] UN FAO, *Guidelines on Defining Rural Areas and Compiling Indicators for Development Policy*, 2018, p. 11.
[179] Anderson et al., *Should I Stay or Go: Rural Ageing, a Time for Reflection*, 2018, p. 1.
[180] WHO, *World Report on Ageing and Health*, 2015, pp. 55-65.
[181] UN DESA, *Promoting Social Inclusion through Social Protection: Report on the World Situation 2018*, 2018, pp. 50-56.
[182] UN DESA, *World Population Ageing*, 2017, p. 18.
[183] UN DESA, *Promoting Social Inclusion through Social Protection: Report on the World Situation 2018*, 2018, pp. 18-19; UN DESA, *Economic Inequalities in Old Age*, 2016, p. 7.
[184] Henning-Smith, *The Unique Impact of COVID-19 on Older Adults in Rural Areas*, *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, 2020, 32:4-5, p. 396.

Given these challenges, the UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD) aims to review the increasing challenges faced by a growing population of older persons in rural areas.[185]

International and Regional Framework

In 1982, the UN World Assembly on Ageing (WAA) adopted the *Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing,* which outlines 62 strategies to address the needs of older persons.[186] Recommendations 19 through 22 encourage governments to facilitate the development of housing that supports older persons with their special needs as well as to create more older person-friendly outdoor spaces, especially for those coming from disadvantaged populations including older persons living in isolated, rural areas.[187] Recommendations 35 to 40 recognize the need for older persons to have adequate access to pensions or social security networks, and to appropriate employment opportunities that allow them to afford cost-of-living expenses.[188]

In 1991, the UN General Assembly adopted the *United Nations Principles for Older Persons*, which include 18 living standards for all older persons, such as age-appropriate housing, work opportunities, and healthcare infrastructure to address their distinct health issues.[189] In 1992, the UN General Assembly adopted the *Proclamation on Ageing*, which identifies the need to account for older women's undervalued work in local economies around the world and calls for Member States to ensure that their citizens are involved in society and cared for at all stages in life.[190] In 2002, the WAA met for its second meeting in Madrid and adopted the *Political Declaration and Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing* (MIPAA), which specifically calls for the economic empowerment of older persons in rural areas, including through improving finance for older farmers; leveraging microloans to support economic development; protecting older women's economic rights; and by calling for the provision of basic entitlements, programs, and services for older persons.[191]

In 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 70/1, "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," which established 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to ensure equitable, environmentally-friendly goals for all persons.[192] Four of these goals: SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), and SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) address the needs of older persons in rural areas as they pertain to the issues of inadequate healthcare, gender inequity, underemployment, and age-exclusive communities that afflict older persons in rural communities.[193]

In 2016, the World Health Organization's (WHO) sixty-ninth meeting of its World Health Assembly (WHA) adopted the *Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Ageing and Health*, which identifies five central strategies Member States should prioritize during a five-year period from 2016-2020 for addressing gaps in meeting the needs of the world's ageing population.[194] Strategy 2 calls upon Member States to create "age-friendly environments" which relates to the lack of services and infrastructure in rural areas for ageing rural populations.[195] Strategy 5 emphasizes the lack of consistent data collection and reporting among members of the international community and encourages Member States to use longitudinal

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[185] UN DESA, *Speech by Director of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division at the 50th Session of the Commission on Population and Development on 3 April, 2017, in New York*, 2017.
[186] UN World Assembly on Ageing, *Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing*, 1982.
[187] Ibid., pp. 67-68.
[188] Ibid., pp. 71-73.
[189] UN General Assembly, *United Nations Principles for Older Persons (A/RES/46/91)*, 1991.
[190] UN General Assembly, *Proclamation on Ageing (A/RES/47/5)*, 1992.
[191] UN World Assembly on Ageing, *Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing*, 2002, pp. 13-14.
[192] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[193] Ibid., pp. 16-22.
[194] WHO, World Health Assembly, *Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Ageing and Health (A69/17)*, 2016.
[195] Ibid., pp. 12-15.

research methods to enhance the monitoring of ageing populations, especially women and other disadvantaged groups.[196]

Regionally, the Organization of American States (OAS) in 2015 adopted the *Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons* which lists a number of rights OAS Member States agreed on to improve the standard of living for their ageing populations, with particular focus on ensuring the equality of access to work, education, and health care opportunities and services in both urban and rural populations.[197] That same year, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted the *Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN*, which "recommends actions to promote healthy, active, and productive ageing, seeking to strengthen older persons and their families" in both urban and rural areas of the region.[198] Finally, the African Union adopted the *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa* to protect the rights of older persons in all settings.[199]

Role of the International System

At its 50th meeting in 2017, CPD called on the international community to deflect the imminent impacts of ageing societies by reforming pension programs to ensure access and long-term viability, creating new work opportunities specifically for ageing populations, and paying women who provide uncompensated care for older family members, challenges that are faced by ageing populations in rural areas.[200]

The 2015, 2017, and 2019 World Population Ageing reports published by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) found that even though ageing is accelerating faster in urban areas, older persons in rural areas are faring worse as a result of lower pension coverage, inadequate education for older persons, and social isolation.[201] The 2015 report recommends that governments should use technology to help bridge the social services accessibility gap for older persons in rural areas.[202] In 2018, UN DESA published *Promoting Inclusion through Social Protection*, a report which examines the urban-rural disparities among social security and pension accessibility and effectiveness for older persons.[203] The 2019 UN DESA Expert Group Meeting on Older Persons in Emergency Crises addressed the topic of rights of health, inclusion standards, knowledge and experience sharing of elder persons in rural areas.[204] The 11th session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.[205] While its working document, which was crafted by UN DESA in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), highlighted older persons, especially women in rural or remote areas need specific normative inclusion on physical accessibility, right of receiving education, and social protection.[206]

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[196] Ibid., pp. 20-24.
[197] Organization of American States, *Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons*, 2015, pp. 5, 16, 18; WHO, *Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons*, 2015.
[198] UNESCAP, *Concept Note of Expert Group Meeting on the Proposed Regional Action Plan to Implement the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN*, 2019, p. 2.
[199] African Union, *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa*, 2016.
[200] UN DESA, *Commission on Population and Development: Report on the Fiftieth Session (15 April 2016 and 3-7 April 2017)*, 2017, pp. 4-5.
[201] UN DESA, *World Population Ageing*, 2015, p. 70.
[202] Ibid., p. 101.
[203] UN DESA, *Promoting Social Inclusion through Social Protection: Report on the World Situation 2018*, 2018, pp. 18-22.
[204] UN DESA, *EGM on Older Persons in Emergency Crises,* 2019.
[205] UN DESA, *Open-ended Working Group on Ageing for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons, eleventh session*, 2020.
[206] UN DESA, Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, *Substantive Inputs in the form of Normative Content for the Development of a Possible International Standard on the Focus Areas "Education, Training, Lifelong learning and Capacity Building" and "Social Protection and Social Securing (including social protections floors)" (A/AC.278/2020/CRP.2)*, 2020.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) held its Fourth Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean in June 2017, which adopted a report on the "Challenges to the Autonomy and Interdependent Rights of Older Persons" identifying key rural-urban disparities in ageing.[207] The same year, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) published "Addressing the Challenges of Population Ageing in Asia and the Pacific, a regional follow-up report on MIPAA for ESCAP's Member States."[208] The report notes that rural areas among ESCAP's Member States have high levels of poverty due to low employment opportunities and low levels of social program enrollment.[209] The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) published a policy brief in March 2017 providing global case studies of rural communities that had taken actions in response to healthcare inaccessibility, isolationism, and ageing in place for their ageing populations.[210]

Safe and Dignified Ageing for Rural Women

The informal economy refers to products or services, such as street vending and subsistence agriculture, which are produced by low-skilled, low-income, or unpaid wage workers or small groups of workers who are not officially registered as businesses or companies.[211] It is estimated that 77% of the world's workforce over the age of 65 is informally employed and 98% of women over the age of 65 in developing countries are informal workers.[212] International Labour Organization (ILO) studies have found that 80% of the world's rural workforce is informally employed.[213] Women are more likely than men to be informally employed due to lower rates of education, gendered domestic duties, and socio-legal restrictions on women's ability to own property or land.[214] As a result of women's higher rates of informal employment, they are less likely to participate in social security, unemployment savings, and insurance schemes which means they have less savings in old age.[215] Even when formally employed, women are over-represented in careers that are typically paid less, such as social work or education, than industries traditionally dominated by men, such as engineering or research, which impacts women's ability to save for retirement.[216] Women also generally have longer lifespans, which means that they accumulate more expenses in old age compared to men.[217] Further, women's provision of unpaid or undercompensated care work is generally performed throughout their lives into old age.[218] For rural women, local economic challenges place further strains on existing shortages in lifelong savings, resulting from lower employment opportunities in rural areas.[219]

Health issues, such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, skin cancer, or alcohol dependency, are reported to be higher among older rural women than older women who live in cities.[220] Each of these can be the consequence of risks or stress from informal occupations, smaller selections of nutritious food, social

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[207] UN ECLAC, *Challenges to the Autonomy and Interdependent Rights of Older Persons*, 2017.
[208] UN ESCAP, *Addressing the Challenges of Population Ageing in Asia and the Pacific, Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing*, 2017.
[209] Ibid., p. v.
[210] UNECE, *Policy Brief: Older Persons in Rural and Remote Areas*, 2017.
[211] Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, *Informal Workers and the Work They Do*, 2019; ILO, *Rural Women at Work: Bridging the Gaps*, 2018, p. 1.
[212] Ibid., p. 2.
[213] ILO, *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture*, 2018, p. 26.
[214] ILO, *Rural Women at Work: Bridging the Gaps*, 2018, p. 1; UN-Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights*, 2015, pp. 97-98.
[215] UN DESA, *Promoting Social Inclusion through Social Protection: Report on the World Situation 2018*, 2018, pp. 18-19.
[216] UN-Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights*, 2015, p. 98.
[217] UN DESA, *Economic Inequalities in Old Age*, 2016, p. 5.
[218] Overseas Development Institute, *Older Women's Economic Empowerment*, 2018, pp. 13-15.
[219] Ibid., pp. 13-15.
[220] Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health, *Health in Rural and Remote Areas of Australia*, p. 2, 5; National Rural Health Association, *Rural Women's Health*, 2013, pp. 2, 4-5.

isolation, and fewer opportunities for women-specific health screenings.[221] There are also fewer choices of health clinics, services, and healthcare practitioners available and older rural women pay more for medical services compared to older women in urban areas.[222] Older women in rural areas are also at higher risk of abuse either from their age, their gender, or both, and may find it difficult to protect themselves due to limited access to social services, legal services, transportation networks, isolation, or dependence on other family members.[223] The remote distance and rural areas don't do any better to the fact that older women often provide care for older relatives increasing their risk to infection, as detailed in the Policy Brief on the Impact of COVID-19 on Women.[224] The COVID-19 pandemic threatens not only the lives and safety of older persons, especially older women in rural areas, but also their social network, their access to health services, their jobs, and their pensions.[225]

In rural northern British Columbia in Canada, the provincial government allocated CAD 3 million to purchase more transportation vehicles to increase transportation accessibility, reduce reported safety risks to local women, and to fund bus operator training programs for underemployed indigenous local residents, which helped address limited mobility and employment among older rural women.[226] In rural Virginia in the United States, researchers helped facilitate community workshops to develop action plans and resources for older women in rural communities experiencing intimate partner violence, including the writing of staff training manuals to brief social workers on older women's needs, redesigning women's shelters to be age-inclusive, and implementing telephone hotlines where older women can call in to request help and ask about emergency programs.[227] In India, a labor union representing 1.5 million female informal employees provides microinsurance to ensure that informal workers are able to protect themselves against health risks and provides cash payments to any relative who is hospitalized to absorb the costs of the unpaid care work its members perform for their families.[228]

Age-Inclusive Infrastructure, Programs, Services and Economic Development

The lack of age-inclusive infrastructure and programs in rural areas results in an increase in health issues for older persons, such as obesity and malnutrition, since the places where older persons live are often distant from commercial, community, and medical centers with few transportation links.[229] Additionally, the lack of paved pedestrian pathways combined with the presence of challenging terrain in rural areas raises the risks that older persons living in these areas may experience accidents, which may lead to a disability or even death.[230] Specifically, there is an estimated 15-fold risk that older persons experience and die from an accident as a pedestrian than through any other mode of mobility.[231] An example of action taken comes from Denmark and Lithuania, which have utilized technology to allow healthcare workers to perform home visits to older persons in rural settlements while remotely accessing virtual records of the patients' medical history or using remote monitoring equipment to examine patients.[232] Member States may reduce transportation risks by planning and implementing transportation infrastructure that is safe

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[221] Ibid., p. 2, 5; Ibid., pp. 2, 4-5.
[222] Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health, *Health in Rural and Remote Areas of Australia*, p. 4.
[223] Ibid., p. 7.
[224] UN, *Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women*. p. 10.
[225] UN, *Policy Brief: The impact of COVID-19 on Older Persons*. p. 3.
[226] *Highway of Tears gets $3M for transportation safety plan*, CBC, 2015.
[227] Roberto et al., *Violence Against Rural Older Women: Promoting Community Awareness and Action*, 2013, p. 11.
[228] World Bank, *Mainstreaming Gender and Targeting Women in Inclusive Insurance: Perspectives and Emerging Lessons A Compendium of Technical Notes and Case Studies: VimoSEWA—An Insurance Cooperative for, with and by Women*, 2017, pp. 1-10.
[229] Durazo et al., *The Health Status and Unique Health Challenges of Rural Older Adults in California*, 2011, pp. 2-3; Morken, & Warner, *Planning for the Ageing Population: Rural Responses to the Challenge*, 2012, pp. 2-3; WHO, *World Report on Ageing and Health*, 2015, p. 91.
[230] Durazo et al., *The Health Status and Unique Health Challenges of Rural Older Adults in California*, 2011, pp. 2-3; Rosenbloom, *Meeting Transportation Needs in an Ageing-Friendly Community*, 2009, p. 36; WHO, *Falls*, 2019.
[231] Rosenbloom, *Meeting Transportation Needs in an Ageing-Friendly Community*, 2009, p. 36.
[232] UNECE, *Policy Brief Older Persons in Rural and Remote Areas*, 2017, p. 8.

and accessible for all ages.[233] In 2013, Thailand amended its Empowerment of Persons with it Disabilities Act such that it entitled people older than 60 years to legal assistance, personal assistants, reduced fees for public transportation and house modifications.[234]

Older persons who do not qualify for state-provided healthcare or long-term care programs and who have not been able to accumulate sufficient retirement savings must either continue working or rely upon their social security or pensions to cover high medical costs.[235] Additionally, palliative care services, which help older persons manage pain and terminal conditions, are generally unavailable or difficult to access in rural areas.[236] WHO recommends that healthcare systems move from treatment-centric approaches towards palliative care for older persons.[237] UN DESA recommends that healthcare be made affordable for all older persons to increase access.[238]

Rural employment opportunities are less consistent and long-term than those found in urbanized areas, and, as a result, older persons living in rural areas have neither reliable income to cover basic cost-of-living expenses nor opportunity to participate in social insurance schemes, like pensions and unemployment savings accounts.[239] The most popular funding models for pension systems around the world include tax-financed pensions, mandatory employee contributory pensions, and voluntary pensions.[240] A tax-financed pension is the only model that does not require employment in order to receive benefits, though some are only distributed to older persons meeting certain poverty income thresholds.[241] Older persons who do not classify within the state-defined thresholds find they are ineligible for benefits and must continue working beyond retirement age to support themselves.[242] Several countries including Lesotho have converted from employee contributory pension models to universal, tax-financed models with marked declines in poverty and increases approaching 100% pension coverage among older persons, including those in rural areas.[243] An ILO analysis in 2014 finds that countries that fund a greater portion of their older population's income with public transfers experience lower rates of poverty among their older persons.[244]

Conclusion

As global ageing is expected to accelerate into the mid-21st century, CPD is positioned to study and recommend population policies for Member States that can assist their rural ageing population.[245] The lack and inadequacy of existing social protection schemes and pensions and the lack of age inclusive transportation infrastructure in rural communities remains a problem, as does gender-based economic inequality and disparities in healthcare accessibility.[246] Using the precedents and standards established by international and regional agreements, such as the WAA's MIPAA, the WHO's *Global Strategy and*

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[233] UN DSDG, *Mobilizing Sustainable Development for Transportation*, 2016, p. 40.
[234] UNESCAP, *Addressing the Challenges of Population Ageing in Asia and the Pacific, Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing*, 2017, p. 70.
[235] Ibid., p. 67.
[236] WHO, *Integrated Care for Older People*, 2018, p. 4; Pesut et al., *Feasibility of a Rural Palliative Supportive Service*, 2015, p. 1.
[237] WHO, *Integrated Care for Older People*, 2018, p. 10.
[238] UN DESA, *Health Inequalities in Old Age*, 2018, p. 6.
[239] UN DESA, *Promoting Social Inclusion through Social Protection: Report on the World Situation 2018*, 2018, p. 21; UN DESA, *Economic Inequalities in Old Age*, 2016, p. 6.
[240] UN DESA, *Promoting Social Inclusion through Social Protection, Report on the World Situation 2018*, 2018, p. 51.
[241] Ibid., p. 51.
[242] Ibid., p. 52.
[243] Ibid., p. 57.
[244] UNDP, *Ageing, Older Persons, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2017, p. 18.
[245] UN DESA, *World Population Ageing*, 2017, p. 2.
[246] UN DESA, *Promoting Social Inclusion through Social Protection: Report on the World Situation 2018*, 2018, p. 51; Rosenbloom, *Meeting Transportation Needs in an Ageing-Friendly Community*, 2009, p. 40.

Plan of Action on Ageing and Health, and OAS' *Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons*, CPD will continue to address these issues in 2021.[247]

Further Research

To advance their understanding of the topic, delegates should consider the following questions: How can the UN and the international system build upon the already existing work and agreements to reduce inequality between working-age and retired older persons in rural areas? What specific actions can CPD recommend to improve monitoring and reporting procedures of the living conditions of older persons in rural areas? How can the UN better coordinate with civil society organizations to better fulfill the needs of older persons in rural areas? How do existing rural-urban divides exacerbate the problems faced by older persons? What specific or niche challenges do women and other subpopulations of the older persons living in rural areas encounter? What can Member States do to complete the Five-Year Plan of Action period for the WHO's Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Ageing and Health? Furthermore, to which specific actions should the Member States of the UN commit and prioritize to ensure the success of the Decade of Healthy Ageing from 2020 to 2030, especially in times of crises?

Annotated Bibliography

Overseas Development Institute. (2018). *Older Women's Economic Empowerment***.** Retrieved 23 August 2020 from: https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/12510.pdf

This literature review prepared by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), a global think tank, examines ageing issues affecting older women around the world relating to economic inequality. The primary focus of the review is on the paid versus the unpaid work women are expected to perform for their families. Section 5 presents case studies that delegates will find useful in understanding what kinds of policies they can propose to address economic inequality among rural ageing women.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Economic Inequalities in Old Age*. Retrieved 22 August 2020 from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2016/08/Briefing-Paper_Economic-Inequalities_Final.pdf

This policy brief prepared UN DESA looks at the impacts of economic inequalities on older persons around the world. The brief focuses on pensions, accessibility to employment, and financial services and then outlines some policy recommendations to address these deficiencies. The section pertaining to pensions and employment discusses how the rural-urban divide results in lower employment opportunities and pension accessibility than experienced by urban-dwelling older persons. Delegates will find this brief useful for understanding the role the urban-rural divide plays in income inequality for older persons.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2018). *Promoting Social Inclusion through Social Protection: Report on the World Situation 2018.* Retrieved 20 July 2020 from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/07/1-1.pdf

This report prepared by UN DESA aims to examine the ways to include vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the SDGs. Section IV of the report examines the disparities and equality gaps that older persons in rural areas encounter such as pension inadequacy, gender-based pension coverage disparities, and the effectiveness of different pension models. Delegates who want to understand the role that tax-financed pension schemes play in rural ageing should consult this document.

[247] UN World Assembly on Ageing, *Report of the World Assembly on Ageing*, 2002; WHO World Health Assembly, *Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Ageing and Health (A69/17)*, 2016; OAS, *Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons*, 2015.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Europe. (2017). *Policy Brief: Older Persons in Rural and Remote Areas*. Retrieved 15 July 2020 from: https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Policy_briefs/ECE-WG1-25.pdf

This policy brief published by the Economic Commission for Europe contains case studies of Member States around the world where rural communities have taken action to address ageing related issues. Examples of such case studies include transportation and mobility for rural older persons, age-inclusive community centers, and information communication technologies to fill the healthcare accessibility gap. This will be useful for delegates' understanding of how to address rural ageing at the regional level.

World Health Assembly. (2016). *Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Ageing and Health: Report by the Secretariat (A69/17)*. Retrieved 15 July 2020 from: http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA69/A69_17-en.pdf?ua=1

This is a summary document that outlines the five main principles of the Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health. The summary document provides key definitions to help readers understand the terminology of the Strategy and Action Plan. Each of the five principles of the Plan has a bulleted list of key actions Member States can implement to address each of the principles. The principle of gender equality and non-discrimination relates to the aspect of dignified ageing for rural women.

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III. Population, Food Security, Nutrition, and Sustainable Development

Introduction

The work of the international community to fight hunger and malnutrition and support the sustainable development of global food systems has contributed to a consistent decline in the number of hungry people worldwide throughout the past decades.[248] However, in the *State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020* report, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) found that the number of people suffering from hunger, classified as "the prevalence of undernourishment," is once again on the rise by nearly 60 million since 2014.[249] Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 820 million people were identified as chronically food insecure, over two billion people worldwide faced moderate to severe food insecurity, and 135 million were at crisis level or worse on the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification scale.[250] As the pandemic continues to pose serious threats to food security, preliminary assessments by the United Nations (UN) in April 2020 suggest the number of people who face severe food insecurity could double to 265 million.[251]

The international system's definition of food security has evolved alongside the global understanding of food insecurity since the 1940s.[252] The 1996 *World Food Summit Plan of Action* adopted the following definition: "Food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."[253] The 2009 *Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security* reaffirmed this definition and added the word "social" to include dimensions of access to food that may be affected by an individual's socio-cultural situation.[254] The UN Secretary-General's High-Level Task Force on Global Food and Nutrition Security concluded in 2015 that food security depends on the viability of and access to sustainable food systems, which encompass "all the elements (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructure, institutions, markets and trade) and activities that relate to the production, processing, distribution and marketing, preparation and consumption of food and the outputs of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental outcomes."[255]

Nutrition security is an additional term that has been used in discussions of food security that involve population dynamics.[256] The 2010 World Bank framework, *Scaling-Up Nutrition: A Framework for Action* declares nutrition security as being "achieved when secure access to an appropriately nutritious diet is coupled with a sanitary environment, adequate health services and care, and to ensure a healthy and active life for all household members."[257] Nutrition is linked to population development as key population indicators, such as fertility and mortality rates, factor into a population's ability to nourish itself.[258] Many studies have shown that good nutrition reduces maternal, neonatal, and child mortality and particular attention to nutrition in a child's first 1000 days (three years of life) has shown to alleviate stunted growth

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[248] FAO et al., *The State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World: Safeguarding Against Economic Slowdowns and Downturns*, 2019.
[249] FAO et al., *The State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World: Transforming Food Systems for Affordable Healthy Diets*, 2020.
[250] Ibid.; UN SG & UN SDG, *Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition*, 2020.
[251] Welsh, *COVID-19 and Food Security: What You Need to Know*, 2020.
[252] FAO, *An Introduction to the Basic Concepts of Food Security*, 2008; Simon, *Food Security: Definition, Four Dimensions, History*, 2012.
[253] FAO, *World Food Summit Plan of Action*, 1996.
[254] FAO, Committee on World Food Security, *Coming to Terms with Terminology (CFS 2012/39/4)*, 2012; FAO, *World Summit on Food Security*, 2009.
[255] Huang, *Population Growth and Food Insecurity*, 2015; UN Secretary-General's High-Level Task Force on Global Food and Nutrition Security, *Compendium – Final Report of Zero Hunger Challenge Working Groups: All Food Systems are Sustainable*, 2015.
[256] FAO, *An Introduction to the Basic Concepts of Food Security*, 2008.
[257] World Bank, *Scaling Up Nutrition: A Framework for Action*, 2010.
[258] Figueroa & Rodriguez-Garcia, *Nutrition and Population*, 2002; UN DESA Population Division, *World Population Prospects 2019: Highlights*, 2019.

and other health problems that affect large segments of populations that are affected by food insecurity.[259]

Population growth is often seen to be a driver of food insecurity.[260] The regions of the world with the highest fertility rates and rates of population growth often have the highest rates of food insecurity as well, increasing the challenge of meeting the nutritional needs of all.[261] Food insecurity can be exacerbated by other population dynamics such as the stress of rapid urbanization and inadequate infrastructure, population aging and impacts on the agri-workforce, and other vulnerabilities caused by climate change, conflict, economic downturns, migration and internal displacement, and widespread health issues.[262]

International and Regional Framework

International discourse on the concept of food security originated at the Hot Springs Conference of 1943, which discussed the future of food and agriculture amidst the food shortages and starvation occurring as a result of World War II.[263] The first priority to attain the universal goal of "freedom from want" was decided to be "freedom from hunger," and thus, the conference resulted in the creation of the predecessor of FAO.[264] Over the past 75 years, the global understanding of food security has evolved from a conceptual phenomenon into a universal necessity for sustainable development.[265] The UN system has produced a series of documents, treaties, and agreements that together make up a human rights framework considering food security, in its many dimensions, as an essential component of life for the entire global population.[266] The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) recognizes the right to food as part of the right to an adequate standard of living.[267] Article 11 of the legally binding *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) (1966) enshrines food security as a human right in the context that all human beings "have the right to adequate food and the right to be free from hunger."[268] States parties to the ICESCR must take any measures needed "to improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition ... [and] ... ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need."[269] The international food crisis of the early 1970s challenged the international system to implement policies to realize the human right to adequate food and nutrition.[270] At the 1974 World Food Conference, the international community for the first time recognized that food security was a common concern for all nations.[271] *The Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition*, first adopted at this conference and later endorsed by the 29th session of the UN General Assembly, further incorporated the importance of nutrition within discussions of food security and human rights for global human development.[272]

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994 linked the role of population dynamics and sustainable development, reflecting the growing awareness that

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[259] Figueroa & Rodriguez-Garcia, *Nutrition and Population*, 2002.
[260] FAO, *The Future of Food and Agriculture: Alternative Pathways to 2050*, 2018.
[261] Population Action International, *Why Population Matters to Food Security*, 2011; UN ECOSOC, *World Demographic Trends: Report of the Secretary-General*, 2018.
[262] FAO, *The State of Food Security in the World: The Multiple Dimensions of Food Insecurity*, 2013.
[263] Simon, *Food Security: Definition, Four Dimensions, History*, 2012.
[264] Ibid.
[265] UN OHCHR, *Fact Sheet No. 34: The Right to Adequate Food*, 2010; Bindraban et al., *Food Security at Different Scales: Demographic, Biophysical and Socioeconomic Considerations*, 1998.
[266] UN OHCHR, *Fact Sheet No. 34: The Right to Adequate Food*, 2010.
[267] UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.
[268] UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966.
[269] Ibid.
[270] UN ECLAC, *Key Conference Outcomes on Food*, 2003
[271] Ibid.; Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *Food Security and Nutrition: A Global Issue*, 2019.
[272] Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *Food Security and Nutrition: A Global Issue*, 2019; World Food Conference, *Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition*, 1974.

"population, poverty, patterns of production and consumption and the environment are so closely interconnected that none… can be considered in isolation."[273] Rather than focusing on reaching specific demographic targets, the conference's outcome document, the *ICPD Program of Action*, promotes human development by holistically integrating human rights and considerations for quality of life into population and development strategies.[274] The right to adequate food is included as a component of the second guiding principle of the *ICPD Program of Action*.[275] The *ICPD Program of Action* acknowledges that investment in food systems can be difficult for economies that are facing rapidly growing populations, but nonetheless recommends that governments should take measures to improve food, nutrition, and agricultural policies that create and strengthen food security.[276] Further, the *ICPD Program of Action* also calls for research to expand global understanding of methods to develop and improve sustainable food production, crop, and livestock systems.[277]

The 1996 World Food Summit provided a high-level forum for debate on eradicating world hunger.[278] The World Food Summit's new definition of food security outlined four dimensions of food security: availability, access, stability, and utilization, recognizing both food and care-related aspects of nutrition (such as nutrition while breastfeeding) in food system policies.[279] Over 170 Heads of State and high-level representatives adopted the *Rome Declaration on World Food Security* and the *World Food Summit Plan of Action*, which calls upon Member States to adopt a national implementation strategy that is tailored to their specific economic situations and cultural contexts to achieve food security goals.[280]

In 1999, the UN General Assembly convened the 21st Special Session to discuss progress toward the implementation of the *ICPD Programme of Action*.[281] The Special Session's *Key Actions for Further Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action* informed part of the Millennium Development Goals of 2000 and the UN Secretary-General's Zero Hunger Challenge, launched at the 2012 Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development.[282] There, the FAO Committee on World Food Security sought to build consensus on common terms to use across international organizations when discussing food security and nutrition.[283] The final document defined nutrition security as existing when "all people at all times consume food of sufficient quantity and quality in terms of variety, diversity, nutrient content and safety to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life, coupled with a sanitary environment, adequate health, education and care."[284] This multi-faceted definition impacted the international community's approach to nutrition, taking a holistic approach to this topic by factoring in the importance of environment, health, education, and care.[285] The global community continues this work by focusing on the wide-reaching Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda) (2015).[286] SDG 2 (zero hunger), aims to "end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture" by the year 2030.[287] SDG 2 brings an

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[273] UN DGC, *ICPD '94: Summary of the Programme of Action*, 1995.
[274] UNFPA, *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population Development: 20th Anniversary Edition*, 2014.
[275] Ibid.; UN DESA, *Commission on Population and Development*, 2019.
[276] Ibid.
[277] UN DGC, *ICPD '94: Summary of the Programme of Action*, 1995.
[278] FAO, *World Food Summit*.
[279] FAO, *Rome Declaration on World Food Security*, 1996; FAO Committee on World Food Security, *Coming to Terms with Terminology (CFS 2012/39/4)*, 2012.
[280] FAO Committee on World Food Security, *Coming to Terms with Terminology (CFS 2012/39/4)*, 2012; UN CESCR, *General Comment No. 12: The Right to Adequate Food*, 1999.
[281] UNFPA, *ICPD+5 Review*, 1999.
[282] Ibid.; FAO et al., *The Zero Hunger Challenge: United for a Sustainable World*, 2015.
[283] FAO Committee on World Food Security, *Coming to Terms with Terminology (CFS 2012/39/4)*, 2012.
[284] Ibid.
[285] Ibid.
[286] UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.
[287] UN DESA, *Goal 2: Zero Hunger*, 2015.

integrated awareness of population, economic considerations, environment, and other dynamics into actions on food insecurity and poverty reduction.[288]

Role of the International System

In its 43rd session in 2010, the Commission adopted a resolution on "Health, Morbidity, Mortality and Development" reaffirming the importance of nutrition in sustainable development plans and declaring an additional need for nutritional support for women and children to prevent morbidity and malnutrition later in life.[289] The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) convened an expert group meeting in preparation for the Commission's 53rd session on "Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development."[290] The expert group examined new evidence explaining the link between population and topics such as consumption and sustainability, economy and employment as a driver of population growth, urban-rural communities and food security, and biosphere impacts (biodiversity, greenhouse emissions, and climate change) on food systems.[291] Based on these findings, the UN Secretary-General published a series of reports concerning world demographic trends and financial flows for programmatic support as part of furthering the main theme of the Commission's 53rd session.[292] For instance, the report titled "Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development" highlights that the world was not on track to eliminate hunger by 2030, that the current global food system is environmentally unsustainable, and looks at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global food systems.[293] The Commission urges the international community to scale up efforts to eradicate global hunger and achieve nutrition goals by transforming food and agricultural systems, encouraging research and development into useful technologies, and instituting national policies to provide country-specific solutions.[294]

FAO is a Specialized UN Agency that leads research, policy development, and system capacity building for the international understanding of and action on food, agriculture, and natural resources.[295] The World Food Programme additionally provides both on-the-ground humanitarian aid in times of crisis and immediate post-conflict, and longer-term capacity building programming to support sustained community nutrition and resilience.[296] The World Health Organization is the primary UN entity to produce scientific and evidence-based guidance on global health and nutrition.[297] Successful partnerships between CPD and these UN bodies on nutrition and food security have been based on knowledge sharing and policy coordination, with recent efforts surrounding the implementation of prompt programmatic support of the SDGs, as highlighted in the 2020 report of the UN Secretary-General, "Programme Implementation and Progress of Work in the Field of Population 2019," prepared for the 53rd session.[298] The *Midterm Review of the United Nations Decade of Action Nutrition 2016-2025*, which took place in March 2020, outlined

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[288] UN DESA, *Goal 2: Zero Hunger*, 2015.
[289] UN CPD, *Health, Morbidity, Mortality, and Development (E/2010/25)*, 2010.
[290] UN DESA, UN Expert Group Meeting on Population, Food Security, Nutrition and Sustainable Development, *Concept Note*, 2019.
[291] Ibid.
[292] UN CPD, *Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2020/2)*, 2020.
[293] UN CPD, *Programmes and interventions for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in the context of population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2020/3)*, 2020; UN CPD, *Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2020/2)*, 2020.
[294] UN CPD, *Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2020/2)*, 2020.
[295] FAO, *About FAO*, 2019.
[296] WFP, *Overview: World Food Programme*, 2019.
[297] WHO NHD, *About Nutrition*, 2019.
[298] UN CPD, *Programme Implementation and Progress of Work in the Field of Population in 2019: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Report of the Secretary-General* (E/CN.9/2020/6), 2020.

progress and opportunities for action in the areas of health, education, and responsible governance.[299] The review acknowledged an increased awareness for food loss and waste and momentum for the creation of healthy food environments while continuing to encourage the integration of national nutrition education plans and strengthening nutrition action networks at all levels.[300]

The UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) serves as a space for UN agencies to bring together positions and establish cooperative global approaches on nutrition issues.[301] It brings together FAO, WHO, and other UN agencies by facilitating open dialogue and knowledge sharing among UN system actors working in or adjacent to nutrition and food security dynamics.[302] CPD is represented on the UNSCN through UN DESA.[303] The UNSCN also serves as a coordinating mechanism for the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, 2016-2026.[304] Guided by the research agenda of FAO and WHO, the decade aims to increase sustainability of global nutrition gains by developing a program of work to achieve the global nutrition targets set in SDG 2 of the 2030 Agenda.[305]

On a regional level, the African Union Commission and African Development Bank recently launched the Africa Food Security Leadership Dialogue with a high-level meeting in August 2019.[306] Leaders at this meeting agreed to prioritize building population resilience for climate-related food insecurity to meet the nutritional needs of all by the time the continent's population reaches 2 billion in 2050.[307] Member States formally committed to joint regional coordination to implement the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program, part of the African Union's Agenda 2063 long-term development trajectory for the continent, which includes priorities such as strengthening linkages between regional economic communities and transforming investment in rural areas to help rural populations reach their potential for human development.[308]

Feeding 9 Billion+ by 2050

The *2019 UN Population Prospects* estimate the world population will grow to 9.7 billion people by 2050, with over 2 billion people on the African continent.[309] Many countries in Africa and throughout the developing world have not seen sustained growth in their economies to support the nutritional needs of their current population and may struggle to meet the needs of a potentially larger and denser population in the future.[310] Global demand for food is expected to rise as middle classes grow and emerging economies eventually become wealthier and expectant of richer diets including more meat and dairy.[311] Food security is expected to remain a challenge at local, household, and individual levels, particularly in countries facing great wealth disparity and declining agricultural production due to climate change.[312] The report of the UN Secretary-General on "Integrating population issues into sustainable development,

[299] FAO & WHO, *Mid-term Review Foresight paper*.
[300] Ibid.
[301] UNSCN, *What We Do: The Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025*, 2019.
[302] UNSCN, *Strategic Plan 2016-2020*, 2016.
[303] UNSCN, *Who We Are*, 2019.
[304] UNSCN, *What We Do: The Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025*, 2019.
[305] WHO & FAO, *Driving Commitment for Nutrition within the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition*, 2018; WHO, *UN Decade of Action on Nutrition*, 2016.
[306] AU Commission et al., *About the Africa Food Security Leadership Dialogue Initiative*, 2019; UN DGC, *Help African Farmers Cope with Climate Change Threats, UN Food Agency Urges*, 2019.
[307] UN DGC, *Help African Farmers Cope with Climate Change Threats, UN Food Agency Urges*, 2019.
[308] AU Commission et al., *About the Africa Food Security Leadership Dialogue Initiative*, 2019; AU, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*, 2013.
[309] UN DESA, Population Division, *World Population Prospects 2019: Highlights*, 2019.
[310] FAO et al., *State of Food Insecurity in the World 2019*, 2019.
[311] UN CPD, *Integrating population issues into sustainable development, including in the post-2015 development agenda: Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2015/3)*, 2015.
[312] Ibid.

including in the post-2015 development agenda" found that substantial improvement to food production and distribution systems will be needed over the next 15 years to meet the nutritional needs of all.[313]

To assess potential global options for feeding the growing world population, FAO convened in 2009 the High-Level Expert Forum on How to Feed the World in 2050.[314] The forum discussed topics such as food system challenges in the Sub-Saharan African region including natural resource management and reforms needed to strengthen state institutions for agriculture, continued care and nutrition for populations with HIV/AIDS and other diseases, barriers to global market entry and dependency on imports, gaps in technology adoption and availability, and environmental vulnerability among populations in a variety of climates.[315] The *2020 Global Nutrition Report* states that national programs to combat rising obesity and highlights the importance of implementing coordination efforts at the sub-national level to direct resources and programs towards the most affected communities by food insecurity.[316]

Further, future measures will have to adapt to present-day obstacles, such as those posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which are affecting global food supply chains.[317] For instance, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, border restrictions are slowing harvests, affecting the livelihoods of seasonal workers, and constraining the transport of food to markets, causing basic food prices to rise.[318] In addition, several meat-processing plants have been forced to close due to serious COVID-19 outbreaks amongst workers, farmers are struggling to bring their produce to markets, and as a result, people in urban centers, in particular, are struggling to access produce and animal by-products.[319] A policy brief by the UN Secretary-General and the UN Sustainable Development Group titled "The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition, June 2020" calls on governments and the international community to respond to the crisis by focusing resources on the world's most vulnerable populations, strengthening social protection systems, and investing in a sustainable future.[320] In particular, food security "hotspots" require attention, which includes fragile, conflict-affected states, areas affected by extreme weather events and pests, poor and vulnerable communities, and states with significant currency depreciation.[321]

Aging, Labor, and the Future of Food Production

The world currently produces enough food to feed the entire global population, though disparities in consumption and barriers to access continue to uphold moderate to severe levels of food insecurity for over 820 million people worldwide.[322] With a growing population, the demand for food and food production will increase, especially if current patterns of overconsumption continue in developed countries.[323] Additionally, the world has seen a large outflow of migration from rural to urban areas over the past several decades, impacting the agriculture workforce and food production capacity of several rural areas.[324] In 1990, approximately 43% of the world population lived in cities and urban areas, while today urban inhabitants include over 55% of the world population.[325] This number is expected to rise to 66% by

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313 Ibid.
314 FAO, *About the High Level Expert Forum*, 2009.
315 FAO High Level Expert Forum on How to Feed the World in 2050*, Issue Brief: The Special Challenge for Sub-Saharan Africa*, 2009.
316 Development Initiatives Poverty Research Ltd., *Global Nutrition Report 2020*, 2020.
317 UN SG & UN SDG, *Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition*, 2020.
318 Ibid.
319 Ibid.
320 Ibid.
321 World Bank, *Food Security and COVID-19*, 2020.
322 FAO et al., *State of Food Insecurity in the World 2019*, 2019; UNEP, *The Critical Role of Global Food Consumption Patterns in Achieving Sustainable Food Systems and Food for All*, 2012.
323 IPCC, *Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*, 2019.
324 UN DESA Population Division, *World Urbanization Prospects*, 2014; FAO et al., *The Linkages between Migration, Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development*, 2018.
325 UN DESA Population Division, *World Urbanization Prospects: 2018 Revision*, 2019.

2050, which will disrupt rural farming communities and increase the need for urban farming and access to agricultural products for city dwellers.[326]

Due to migration to urban areas, an increase in rural economic opportunities outside of agriculture, and more environmental challenges than ever before, young people in many communities around the world are less likely to continue family and regional traditions of rural farming.[327] Climate change-related challenges such as gradual weather pattern changes, an increase in drastic climate events, desertification, and other environmental phenomena are leading to lower yields in many regions and are causing great discontent among rural farmers.[328] Traditional farming relies heavily on a young workforce, but rural youth today face particular constraints, such as access to land, access to finance, gender norms, and capacities and skills to adapt to the digital era.[329] Trends in population aging may add further disruptions to farming in parts of the world where farmers are growing older and young people are few or likely to migrate to urban areas.[330] Since the COVID-19 pandemic is known to have a higher rate of impact on older populations, preventative and protective measures are essential for their farming areas.[331] These agricultural systems could be in jeopardy without a sustained entry of people into the agri-workforce.[332]

The international system is attempting to support rural farmers and agriculture workers in a variety of ways.[333] FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) recently launched the *United Nations Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028: Global Action Plan*, which outlines a set of collective actions the international community must take to support future generations of farmers and agriculture workers, such as promoting gender equality and empowering women as leaders in rural agriculture, creating social innovations for sustainable food systems to combat rural poverty, and strengthening organizations of family farmers to ensure knowledge sharing and civil society representation.[334] Although institutions in rural areas frequently cannot provide farmers access to services readily available in urban areas, progress of SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals) and SDG target 17.19 (capacity building) are encouraging partnerships and support to strengthen these institutions, improve rural infrastructure, and implement national-level social protection systems.[335] As a result of these and other capacity-building initiatives, rural populations could see increased access to public services, the lack of which can be a driver of out-migration.[336]

Conclusion

As the global population will likely surpass 9 billion by 2050, it will be crucial for policymakers and the international community to take into consideration demographic mega-trends of population growth, global migration, urbanization, and population aging when looking at sustainable development and food

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[326] UN DESA Population Division, *World Urbanization Prospects*, 2014; Beeler, *UN Compact Recognizes Climate Change as Driver of Migration for First Time*, 2018.
[327] Hosnedlova, *Farming's Ageing and Negativity Problem*, 2018; UN DESA Population Division, *World Urbanization Prospects*, 2014; FAO et al., *The Linkages between Migration, Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development*, 2018.
[328] Ekekwe, *How Digital Technology is Changing Farming in Africa*, 2017; IFPRI, *Food Security*, 2019.
[329] IFAD, *Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth: 2019 Rural Development Report*, 2019; Hosnedlova, *Farming's Ageing and Negativity Problem*, 2018.
[330] Hosnedlova, *Farming's Ageing and Negativity Problem*, 2018.
[331] Successful Farming, *Six Possible Impacts of COVID-19 on Farming: What About Agriculture?*, 2020.
[332] HelpAge International, *The Ageing of Rural Populations: Evidence on Older Farmers in Low- and Middle-Income Countries*, 2014; Hosnedlova, *Farming's Ageing and Negativity Problem*, 2018.
[333] FAO et al., *The Linkages between Migration, Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development*, 2018.
[334] FAO & IFAD, */: Global Action Plan*, 2019.
[335] UN DESA, *Capacity-Building*; FAO et al., *The Linkages between Migration, Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development*, 2018.
[336] Ibid.

security.[337] Empowered by its mandate to follow up and ensure implementation of the *ICPD Programme of Action*, CPD is in a unique position to contribute to the global discourse and action on food security.[338] With the agenda item of "Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development" confirmed to be discussed once again for its 54th session in 2021, CPD will build upon previous work on population dynamics of global health and nutrition to further contribute to the goal of attaining SDG 2 (zero hunger) for a sustainable future of the global population, in the current COVID-19 pandemic reality, and future challenges to come.[339]

Further Research

Moving forward, delegates may want to consider questions such as: How can the implementation of the ICPD Program of Action work in collaboration or in parallel with efforts to reach the SDGs? In what ways could CPD's population-centered data analysis and statistical development support research for global food security needs? What policies should Member States establish to create sustainable food systems for the growing world population? How can the international community support farmers in both urban and rural environments, especially as they age? What measures can be taken by international organizations and NGOs to support populations vulnerable to food insecurity due to environmental conditions? How can we tailor our existing and future programs to food and nutritional barriers that stem from the COVID-19 pandemic?

Annotated Bibliography

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Committee on World Food Security. (2012). *Coming to Terms with Terminology (CFS 2012/39/4*). Retrieved 31 October 2020 from: http://www.fao.org/3/MD776E/MD776E.pdf

This report discusses the history of global food security and the history of linguistic semantics referencing these issues. It provides an opportunity for delegates to learn about the evolution of thought and understanding around food security as we know it today. While it sheds light on past work on food issues and problems, the document provides essential context for delegates to understand current issues surrounding food insecurity, including considering population growth as a driver of this phenomenon. Delegates will find this source useful as they familiarize themselves with the main concepts, ideas, and trends related to food security and nutrition issues.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations et al. (2020). *The State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World: Transforming Food Systems for Affordable Healthy Diets*. Retrieved 19 July 2020 from: http://www.fao.org/3/ca9692en/CA9692EN.pdf

Every year, this report is published through the cooperation of major policy-making, research, and implementing bodies that work on issues pertaining to food systems and security in the international system. The report synthesizes the latest trends and news on food security broadly, including any major progress or failures over the past year. Delegates will find this document helpful to their research as it provides up-to-date high-level overviews of key areas such as worldwide malnutrition statistics and recent progress towards an integrated understanding of food security and nutrition in relation to health and well-being. This edition in particular recognizes the monetary, health, and environmental costs of our existing food systems, and recommends transformative change as a means of providing populations with healthy diets.

[337] UN DESA, UN Expert Group Meeting on Population, Food Security, Nutrition and Sustainable Development, *Concept Note*, 2019.
[338] Ibid.
[339] UN ECOSOC, *Provisional Agenda for the Fifty-Third Session of the Commission on Population and Development*, 2019; CPD, *Commission on Population and Development Fifty-Third Session*, 2019.

United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. (2019). *Commission on Population and Development Fifty-Third Session*. Retrieved 2 September 2020 from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/events/CPD53

This webpage provides an overview of the 53rd session of the Commission on Population and Development. Delegates will find it useful to view the written statements by Commission Members and ECOSOC-accredited NGOs, as well as documentation compiled by the Commission related to population, food security, nutrition, and sustainable development in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, delegates can find the special report on the 53rd session, and a provisional agenda for the 54th session of the CPD, which has been named a thematic continuation of the 53rd session and will direct delegates towards the future direction of the Commission.

United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld Library. (2019). *Food Security and Nutrition: A Global Issue.* Retrieved 31 October 2020 from: http://research.un.org/en/foodsecurity

This research guide is one of many published by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, the leading research and information services provider for delegates of Permanent Missions and UN Secretariat staff at UN Headquarters in New York. The guide provides a broad and extensive overview of the history of food security within the UN system. It provides access to the most relevant foundational documents that have shaped the way the international system discusses food, food security, and population aspects of food security. Delegates will find particularly useful the links to relevant UN resolutions, the outline of actors, and the summarized history of food security, which will leave them with an interdisciplinary and global understanding of this topic.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2020). *World Demographic Trends*. Retrieved 2 September 2020 from: https://undocs.org/en/E/CN.9/2020/5

This annual report includes the most updated, internationally recognized synthesis of population and world demographic trends, led by CPD. While it does not often expressly discuss food security, delegates will find this useful to further understand the linkages between population trends, sustainability, and food security, with reference to many major recent developments in areas such as changing population age structures, urbanization, and international migration. By understanding these intersections, delegates can develop a stronger grasp of the link between population trends and achieving the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

United Nations Secretary-General & United Nations Sustainable Development Group. (2020). *Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition*. Retrieved 19 July 2020 from: https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_policy_brief_on_covid_impact_on_food_security.pdf

This brief provides an executive summary of the observed impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security and nutrition thus far, possible future threats to the state of global food security and nutrition, and also poses several action items for the international community to assist in global mitigation and recovery. Delegates will find that this document provides a clear and informative basis for delegates to learn how the COVID-19 pandemic intersects with population, food security, and nutrition and will serve as a useful basis for further research. Delegates should have a strong understanding of how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected food systems and global nutrition.

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