



Nairobi Commitments: Accelerating the promise of ICPD

Preamble

Twenty-five years ago, in 1994, 179 countries adopted a landmark Programme of Action during the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in Cairo, Egypt. It has been regarded as one of the most significant global conferences ever held in that it transformed the way in which countries started to address population, poverty reduction and sustainable development issues – putting the needs and aspirations of individual human beings at the center of sustainable development. In 2015, the international community reaffirmed this commitment of putting “people, planet and prosperity” at the center of sustainable development, when it adopted the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights is one of the cornerstones of population and development programmes the world over, and is a key target of the SDGs. It rests on the premise that all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so.

Over the past 25 years, the progress in some of the key indicators has been remarkable:

- ❖ Preventable maternal deaths have declined by 40% globally.
- ❖ Adolescent birth rates have decreased by 32% globally.
- ❖ Contraceptive prevalence has increased globally by 25% since 1994.
- ❖ Primary school is accessible to most children in the world and percentage of females who progress to secondary education grew from 83% in 1994 to 91% today.
- ❖ More women are members of Parliament: Proportion of seats in parliament held by females was 11.7% in 1997 vs. 24% today.
- ❖ Within 24 countries, female genital mutilation has declined by more than a third.

But, despite this remarkable progress, the dream of ICPD has at the same time remained a distant dream for millions of women and girls the world over. They are still waiting for the promise of Cairo to be fulfilled:

- ❖ An estimated 830 women die in childbirth, every day; many of them girls between the ages of 15-19 years old!
- ❖ Some 33,000 girls marry before they reach the age of 18, every day!
- ❖ More than 200 million women are not having access to modern contraceptive methods!

- ❖ More than 3 million girls undergo FGM, every year!
- ❖ More than 2 million 10 to 19-year-olds are living with HIV; about one in seven of all new HIV infections occur during adolescence!
- ❖ And an estimated 1/3 of all women have reported being victims of SGBV in their lifetime!
- ❖ An estimated 132 million girls worldwide are still out of school; this includes 34.3 million girls of primary school age, 30 million girls of lower secondary school age, and 67.4 million girls of upper secondary school age.

Never before have there been so many young people....1.8 billion strong! Never again is there likely to be such potential for economic and social progress. How we meet the needs and aspirations of young people will define our common future. Young people are about to inherit an enormous responsibility for resolving many long-standing complex problems, ranging from poverty to climate change, yet they have mostly been excluded from participating in the decisions that will determine what the future looks like. Young people must therefore have a say now in shaping the policies that will have a lasting impact on humanity and the health of the planet.

On 25 September 2015, the 193 member states of the United Nations (UN) unanimously adopted Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a set of 17 goals aiming to transform the world over the next 15 years. The SDGs are ambitious, and they require enormous efforts across countries, continents, industries and disciplines – but they are achievable. The ICPD Programme of Action both informed and in many ways underpins the entire Agenda 2030 and the SDGs of the UN. In fact, implementing the ICPD Programme of Action is about delivering on Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. Hence, we have come to the understanding that unless we can finish the unfinished business of the ICPD agenda, reaching the ambitious SDGs by 2030 will be hard. On 1 April 2019, the member states of the UN adopted a Declaration during the 52nd session of the Commission on Population and Development that reaffirmed the importance of the ICPD Programme of Action for guiding population and development policies and programmes, within the context of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, and whereby member states of the UN pledged to undertake further actions to ensure its “full and accelerated implementation”.

Our Vision

We acknowledge that our world, in many ways, has profoundly changed in the last 25 years, and many new issues have come to the fore in the population and development field, that weren't addressed or inadequately addressed in Cairo.

We recognize that a new global consensus or understanding of the urgency of addressing the pressing population and development issues of our time is vital for advancing the ICPD promise of universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights for all, of women's empowerment and gender equality, in order to leave no one behind! The Nairobi Summit on ICPD25, and the process leading up to it, forged a new global understanding of the urgency to deliver on the dream of a world where gender equality is a reality, where the full potential of young people is unleashed, where women dying in childbirth is a thing of the past, where every unmet need for family planning and modern contraceptives is met, where gender-based violence and traditional harmful practices are no more, where older people, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples feel included and valued in their

communities, where stigmatization and discrimination have no place in our societies, and where sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights are promoted, respected and protected.

Our Commitments

We, Heads of State/Government, Ministers, parliamentarians, representatives of civil society, youth-led organizations, grassroots organizations, faith-based organizations, ethnic and indigenous peoples, academia, multilateral agencies and international financial institutions, and regional political bodies, gathering in Nairobi, Kenya, on 12 November 2019, endorsed a set of 17 global commitments, contained in the “**Nairobi Commitments: Accelerating the Promise of ICPD**”, that will, we believe, and if adhered to, transform the lives of people and fulfil the promise of Cairo, by no later than the year 2030. These commitments directly speak to the fulfilment of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs:

1. ***Overall, we commit to intensify our efforts for the full, effective and accelerated implementation and funding of the ICPD Programme of Action and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.***

Imagine a world...where no woman or adolescent girl dies from preventable complications in pregnancy or childbirth, where no woman has to give birth without the help of a midwife, nurse or doctor, including in humanitarian crises!

2. ***Therefore, we commit to strive for zero preventable maternal deaths¹.***
3. ***We commit to integrate a comprehensive package of SRHR interventions into national UHC strategies, policies and programmes.***

Imagine a world...where every individual and couple, *everywhere*, can decide freely when to have children, and have the information, education and means to do so!

4. ***Therefore, we commit to ensure zero unmet need for family planning information and services and universal availability of quality, affordable and safe modern contraceptives, including during humanitarian crisis².***
5. ***Therefore, we commit to the notion of bodily integrity and autonomy, allowing all individuals to make decisions governing their bodies for themselves and to access the essential services in support of that notion.***
6. ***Therefore, we commit that young people have access to age-appropriate information and services required to adequately protect themselves from unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.***

¹ Achieving zero maternal deaths is an important indicator of having achieved universal access to sexual and reproductive health, as contained in SDG target 3.7 and SDG target 5.6.

² Achieving zero unmet need for family planning information and services is an important indicator of having achieved universal access to sexual and reproductive health, as contained in SDG target 3.7 and SDG target 5.6.

Imagine a world...where no one is subjected to violence because of their gender, where no girl is forced to marry, where no girl or woman is subjected to female genital mutilation or other harmful practices!

- 7. Therefore, we recommit to end child marriages³.***
- 8. Therefore, we recommit to end female genital mutilation⁴.***
- 9. Therefore, we recommit to end sexual and gender-based violence⁵.***
- 10. Therefore, we recommit to end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls⁶.***

Fulfilling these commitments, that will transform the lives of women and girls, men and boys, and getting to zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning information and services and zero sexual- and gender-based violence and harmful practices against women and girls, will require substantive additional financial investments, both public and private.

- 11. Therefore, we commit to set up or explore new financing instruments and structures to mobilize the required resources for the financing of the full ICPD agenda, and in particular of the “three zeros”.***
- 12. Therefore, we commit using national budget processes, as well as all available (innovative) financing instruments and schemes, to do what is in our power to increase domestic financing for sexual and reproductive health programmes to fill the financing gap.***
- 13. Therefore, we commit to do what is in our power to increase the percentage of ODA specifically earmarked for sexual and reproductive health and rights to complement domestic financing of sexual and reproductive health programmes.***

Our world is complex and diverse. Understanding the demographic and economic diversity of the world we live in is a necessary pre-condition for sustainable development. By preparing for their demographic future, societies can reap large benefits, as they will be better able to maximize the opportunities that demographic changes give for equal, shared and inclusive prosperity.

- 14. Therefore, we commit to harness the demographic dividend by investing in family planning information and services, and investing in the health, education and employment opportunities of young people.***
- 15. Therefore, we commit to the notion that nothing about young people’s health and well-being can be discussed and decided upon without their direct and full involvement and equal participation (“nothing about us, without us”).***
- 16. Therefore, we commit to build inclusive societies, where the old and the young, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples, feel valued and able to contribute to their societies.***
- 17. Therefore, we commit to make the provision of data and the improvement of our data systems a priority for achieving sustainable development.***

³ SDG target 5.3.

⁴ SDG target 5.3.

⁵ SDG target 5.2.

⁶ SDG target 5.1.

Our Summit

Our Summit on ICPD25 is about renewing and reinvigorating the global commitment to the “full and accelerated” implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, within the overall context of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, to ensure that no one is left behind. The Summit is the culmination of an elaborate process of consultations, within and among different constituencies, reaching deep into the grassroots levels to capture the views of the most marginalized, the most forgotten, aimed at advancing the ICPD agenda in order to finish the unfinished business.

We have organized ourselves around five specific themes, pertaining to the unfinished business of ICPD:

1. Universal SRHR in the context of UHC;
2. Creating financing momentum;
3. Demographic diversity and sustainable development;
4. GBV and harmful practices against women and girls;
5. SRHR in humanitarian and fragile contexts.

And five accelerators:

These are cross-cutting issues that are essential to galvanize actions within each theme, emphasizing the urgency of action, policies and programmes to deliver upon the promise of the ICPD:

1. Women’s empowerment and gender equality;
2. Youth leadership and engagement;
3. Political and community leadership;
4. Innovation and data;
5. Strategic partnerships and South-South collaboration.

The commitments (global, national, local) we have agreed to prior and during the Summit speak to each of the five themes and five accelerators.

Our follow-up

The commitments we have agreed to all fall within the scope of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. As such, the stock taking and the follow-up of these commitments will be channeled through the existing monitoring mechanism that have been established for Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, most notably the High Level Political Forum (HLPF). Commitments that are specific to UN entities will be taken up in the context of their respective governing bodies. The country-specific commitments and actions will be reported back by the countries as part of the HLPF. Hence, the reporting mechanism for the Nairobi Summit commitments and actions will be fully integrated within the existing reporting ecosystem for Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.