



2022 World Population Day

Theme: End GBV, New HIV Infection and Pregnancy among Adolescents for a Resilient Future



Let's take a moment to reflect on our population policies

MESSAGE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY, THE NATIONAL TREASURY AND PLANNING, HON. AMB. UKUR YATANI, EGH

The World Population Day is a global event observed on July 11 annually in line with the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 45/216 of December 1990. The commemoration is an awareness campaign on the prevailing population and development issues affecting the world.

The celebrations started in 1987 when the world's population crossed five billion. This year's commemoration has great significance, as the world population is projected to be eight billion in November.

In Kenya, the day is being marked amidst three critical challenges affecting majorly our young population. Hence the theme: "End GBV, New HIV Infection and Pregnancy among Adolescents for a Resilient Future". I am glad that Kenya, through the National Council for Population and Development, will join the rest of the world in marking this important day. Our national celebration will be held in Kajiado County.

Kenya continues to make remarkable progress on population and development indicators. In 2019, Kenya had a population of 47.6 million. This represented more than a fourfold increase of the country's population of about 10.6 million in 1969. Notably, Ken-



ya's population age structure has undergone a remarkable change over the same period, with the proportion of children in the population decreasing while that of working age adults and older persons increasing.

The country's population is projected to continue increasing in the coming decades. By 2063 when Kenya will be marking 100 years of independence, the population will have grown to about 82.5 million people. This will have implications on the socio-economic development of our country.

For Kenya to be prosperous, we need to harness the opportunities that are available to us for the improvement of the population's quality of life, with the aim of addressing the changing needs of the various population segments, namely children, youths, working age adults and older persons, as well as the unique needs of our girls and women.

Though much progress has been made in protecting and empowering women and girls in the country, they still face numerous challenges, including adolescent and unintended pregnancies, gender based violence, and HIV infections. As a country, we have the opportunity to address these concerns through the implementation of the Medium Term Plan IV, the ICPD25 Kenya Country Commitments, the Kenya Population Policy for Sustainable Development, the African Union Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, among others.

As we commemorate the World Population Day 2022, I call upon all stakeholders to reflect on the successes and challenges of our population programme. A world of eight billion people is an opportunity for us to re-dedicate ourselves to the implementation of these development frameworks.

I wish you all a happy and reflective World Population Day 2022.

Numbers matter, but we must count carefully

STATEMENT BY UNFPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dr. Natalia Kanem, UNFPA Executive Director



Anders Thomsen, UNFPA Representative, Kenya

The World Population Day offers a moment to celebrate human progress. Our world, despite its challenges, is one where higher shares of people are educated and live healthier lives than at any previous point in history. Societies that invest in their people, in their rights and choices, have proven time and again that this is the road to the prosperity and peace that everyone wants, and deserves.

Let's keep this fact in mind when, in the next few months, the total number of people in the world tops eight billion. This milestone will attract much attention and debate, and likely scaremongering over "too many" people. That would be a mistake.

Focusing only on population numbers and growth rates often leads to coercive and counterproductive measures and the erosion of human rights, for example, to women being pressured to have children or prevented from doing so. It can deepen already acute inequalities, such as through policies shutting down reproductive health care or denying adequate pensions for the elderly, further marginalising the most disenfranchised.

The population story is far richer and more nuanced than a single number can capture. There may be more people in the world today, but equally important is the unprecedented demographic diversity we see within the global population. A growing number of countries face population ageing, and roughly two-thirds of the world's population now live in a country or area with below-replacement fertility, or fewer than 2.1 births per woman. Others have youthful and growing populations. And more people are on the move, either by choice or driven by crises ranging from conflict to climate change. Understanding these shifts is critical to harnessing opportunities and mitigating potential downsides.

People are the solution, not the problem. At UNFPA, we advocate for measuring and anticipating demographic changes. Each country should have the information it requires to meet the needs of diverse population groups and ensure that individuals can realise their full potential. When people have the power to make informed choices about whether and when to have children, when they can exercise their rights and responsibilities, they can navigate risks and become the foundation of more inclusive, adaptable and sustainable societies.

Achieving this demographic resilience starts with a commitment to counting not just numbers of people but also opportunities for progress and barriers that stand in the way. This calls for transforming discriminatory norms that hold individuals and societies back. It leads us to economies that work for all people instead of just a few, and to a fair use of resources so that we can mitigate risks and meet the needs of current and future generations.

We are each much more than a number, as is the human family. Numbers matter, but let's count carefully. A resilient world of eight billion, a world that upholds individual rights and choices, offers infinite possibilities for people, societies and our shared planet to thrive and prosper.

MESSAGE OF THE PS STATE DEPARTMENT FOR PLANNING MR. SAITOTI TOROME, CBS

As we mark this year's World Population Day, we wish to recognise and appreciate the progress that we have made as a nation on various population indicators, with the support of various stakeholders.

Remarkably, Kenya's life expectancy is improving. As at 2019, our life expectancy at birth was 61 and 67 years for males and females, respectively. This is an improvement from 2009 when the life expectancy at birth was 58 for males and 61 for females. Further, there has been reduction in preventable deaths and marginal reduction in dependency ratio.

Despite the progress made, the unacceptable level of incidents of gender based violence, new HIV infections, and pregnancy among adolescents, continue to draw us back. We must collectively address these challenges that dim the prospects of a promising future for our girls and women countrywide. Elimination of these challenges will put the country in a better position to harness its demographic potential and accelerate the achievement of the goals of Kenya Vision 2030, Agenda 2063 on the Africa we want, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable



Development.

In May 2022, the Kenya Population Policy for Sustainable Development was approved by the Cabinet. This progressive policy will now be presented to Parliament for adoption as a Sessional Paper. The goal of the policy is to attain a society in which all the people are secure, healthy, broadly educated and empowered for improved quality of life for current and future generations. No doubt, this new policy will add to the impetus of development programmes and policies in addressing the pressing needs of the country's population, including the elimination of incidents of gender-based violence, new HIV infections, and pregnancy among adolescents.

MESSAGE BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR POPULATION DEVELOPMENT, DR. MOHAMED A. SHEIKH

The 2022 World Population Day comes at a time when the entire globe is recovering from the effects of the Covid19 Pandemic and many other challenges affecting the wellbeing of humanity. We also mark this day when our Global Population is expected to hit eight billion in November 2022, up from the seven billion in 2011.

Looking at the past population trends across the world, we have made remarkable progress, and still there is work ahead. In Kenya, we are faced with the challenge of Triple Threat, which we are addressing in a multi-sectoral approach to save our future generation. Teen pregnancy continues to have a significant impact on society, teen parents themselves, and the children born.

As a council, we continue to work closely with all stakeholders on population issues and in developing solutions to address especially the issue of teenage pregnancy. I am glad the efforts to address teenage pregnancy through a coordinated formation of committees at various levels, starting with Principal Secretaries at the national level and County Commissioners at the county level, are bearing fruit. We have further coordinated the formation of Parents and Teachers Association Networks in the counties, and cascading these networks to the lower levels of society to discuss how to engage adolescents.

NCPD remains committed to closely working with all stakeholders, both at the national and county levels, to address cross-cutting population issues for the wellbeing of the Kenyan people.

