

AT A GLANCE

Demographic Futures Thematic Fund

The Demographic Futures Thematic Fund (formerly the Population Data Thematic Fund) supports countries to anticipate, adapt to and harness demographic change, enabling them to build more resilient, inclusive and sustainable societies. This work depends on robust population data, forward-looking analysis, and policies grounded in human rights and informed choices.

Eighty per cent of the Fund's resources are invested in strengthening national capacities to respond to demographic changes—whether that means managing population growth or decline, a youth surge or ageing, fertility or mortality changes, or shifting migration patterns. These efforts also account for megatrends like technological progress, urbanization and climate change—building resilience while advancing the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and accelerating progress towards the SDGs.



The challenge

Demographic change has far-reaching implications for poverty reduction, inequalities, social protection systems, healthcare, education, decent work, sustained economic growth, the transition to green economies and inclusive societies, and the financing of development. But every country's situation is unique. Some struggle to educate and employ a growing youth population, while others face ageing populations, shrinking workforces, and rising pressure on pensions and healthcare systems. Recognized by the UN Secretary-General as a megatrend shaping sustainable development, demographic change is now central to global policy and planning—but countries need better evidence, tools and support to act.

Key issues

- **Globally, 30% of the population** was not counted during the 2020 census round, and in Africa, nearly half (45%) of the population was missed.
- **Only 65% of countries have implemented national statistical plans**, and just 35% of low or lower-middle income countries have sufficient funding.
- **Only 68% of SDG indicators have good data coverage**, and a third of all indicators lack recent data, undermining real-time decision-making.
- A growing number of countries are concerned about fertility and ageing trends, while many least developed countries still face rapid population growth and high mortality.

The solution

As the United Nations' lead agency on population dynamics, UNFPA is meeting increasing demand from countries for targeted support. Through its Thematic Fund, UNFPA will apply innovative approaches and build strategic partnerships across three key areas: generating robust evidence, strengthening science-policy linkages, and enhancing national capacities. The Demographic Dividend and Demographic Resilience Programme will offer countries customised, rights-based solutions to navigate and harness demographic trends.

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Results

The Fund aims to ensure every country:



Can collect and analyze population data through censuses, surveys and civil registration.



Understands how demographic trends affect the needs of people, from pension systems, healthcare, education, housing and labour markets.



Use demographic insights to inform national development strategies across social, economic and environmental sectors.



WHY INVEST?

Despite its importance, funding for population data is declining, threatening our ability to plan for demographic change. An estimated \$75 million per year is needed through 2030 to modernise censuses, advance Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems, and cultivate a new generation of population data experts. UNFPA is the UN's lead agency on population dynamics, with over 50 years of experience; operations in 150 countries; and a proven track record of working with governments and partners on demographic challenges.

Investing in demographic foresight is preventive action—helping countries avoid future fiscal strain, social instability and underutilized human potential. It enables governments to plan smarter, spend better and grow inclusively. UNFPA provides technical expertise, strong country presence, and a vision for people-centred, data-driven development.



www.unfpa.org/unfpa-population-data-thematic-fund