

# INTRODUCTION

Unlike the outcome documents of the earlier World Population Conferences, the Programme of Action (PoA) of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which was endorsed by 179 countries in Cairo in 1994, redefined demographic and population issues from the perspective of people's empowerment and development based on human rights. It differed from the preceding conferences in two aspects:

## ***Linking population determinants with development outcomes***

Demographic concerns such as population growth, fertility, mortality, migration and urbanization were expanded to include interrelations between population and the environment, education, gender inequality and the well-being of vulnerable groups including adolescents and youth, elderly people and persons with disabilities. Special emphasis was placed on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights beyond the classical span of family planning. This wider scope required an integrated approach that considered population issues in a broader social, economic and cultural framework of development with the purpose of empowering people and enabling them to lead a dignified life.

## ***Redefining the population policy paradigm***

The ICPD was a critical milestone in redefining population policies. Traditionally the focus on population policies was at the macro level, and governments intervened through special policies and programmes, including incentives and disincentives, to determine demographic targets and trends such as reducing fertility and mortality. The new paradigm shifted this approach towards investing in the development of people, in particular women and vulnerable groups, to enable them to make decisions and take choices that would improve their well-being. This approach was primarily based on upholding, protecting and promoting the reproductive health and rights of every human being.

The new population agenda was embodied in a 20-year PoA whose recommendations were to be implemented based on international cooperation and solidarity. The PoA included 15 principles on fundamental human rights, equal opportunities

and inclusion for all citizens. It also contained 13 chapters on population and development issues; each chapter describing the relevant basis for action, objectives and recommended action.

Three five-year reviews of PoA implementation have already taken place. They described the progress countries had made in addressing the provisions of the PoA, identified the remaining challenges and made it possible for governments to renew their commitment to the ICPD PoA.

In 2010, the General Assembly (GA) of the United Nations decided to initiate a thorough review of the PoA implementation 20 years after its adoption. GA resolution 65/234 established the road map for achieving the vision of the ICPD PoA beyond 2014 ('ICPD Beyond 2014'). It acknowledged that the premise of human rights, equality and sustainable development were timeless principles that made the PoA valid beyond 2014. It requested the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in consultation with Member States and in cooperation with the regional commissions and other relevant organizations, to lead the review process.

The ICPD Beyond 2014 review project was designed to inform the global report of the UN Secretary-General to the GA on the ICPD PoA in 2014. The 'Global ICPD Beyond 2014 Report' is to be founded on reports prepared by the regional commissions including UNECE.

The global and regional reports are based on two sets of pre-assembled data. The first set is the country implementation profiles (CIPs) that comprise country-level indicators, compiled from officially recognized international sources across the various themes of the ICPD PoA. The other dataset represents the information collected through a global survey based on a unified questionnaire and conducted in all Member States worldwide, irrespective of countries' level of development. The survey collected information about policies, programmes and strategies along with legislation devised and implemented in the countries to address the issues included in the different thematic domains of the ICPD PoA.

This UNECE report was prepared in the context of the ICPD Beyond 2014 project. The report's main purpose is to ascertain the progress made in

implementing the ICPD PoA in the UNECE region. More specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

- To what extent have UNECE countries implemented the provisions of the ICPD PoA in their policy frameworks? To what extent have individuals and the principles of human rights and dignity been at the centre of such policies?
- To what extent has there been progress on the different aspects of the ICPD PoA? Have all issues on population and development raised in the PoA been harmoniously addressed within policy actions or are there some that are lagging behind?
- What are the persistent issues that are still prevalent and may remain beyond 2014? And what are the emerging issues that need to be considered beyond 2014?

Along with protecting fundamental human rights and freedoms, the ICPD PoA emphasizes improving quality of life (Principle 5) and the opportunity for individuals to make the most of their potential (Principle 3). People cannot reach their full potential when they confront insurmountable barriers such as poverty, disability or coercive practices. Policies devised to reduce the effect of such barriers offer individuals opportunities to make choices about their lives. Contemporary societies are evolving, and individuals need to be well informed to make their own decisions. The redefined paradigm of policies is to enable informed choices, by going beyond protecting fundamental human rights to assuring a decent quality of life for all in a prosperous society.

The report is structured in three chapters. Chapter 1 briefly describes the recent trends related to the ICPD PoA based on the indicators in the CIPs and other available data in the region. In particular, it draws greatly on the analytical work and projections for the UNECE countries available in IIASA (2013)<sup>1</sup> as well as in the UNECE Statistical Database. Chapter 2 is the major part of the report. It discusses the results

of the ICPD Beyond 2014 survey in the region. It is based on the information collected in the country questionnaires. Chapter 3 provides a synthesis of the two preceding chapters, highlighting persistent and emerging issues that need to be addressed beyond 2014.

An added advantage of the ICPD review is that it takes place at a time when discussions are going on worldwide to frame the post-2015 development agenda. It is, therefore, important to examine the findings of the ICPD review with an eye on the future and assess how they can potentially inform priorities for a new development framework that fully integrates population dynamics, gender equality and reproductive health and rights issues.

The analysis in the report refers to all countries in the UNECE region in its Chapter 1 and Chapter 3, while Chapter 2 refers mainly to the 45 countries that submitted responses to the global survey questionnaire (marked in italics below are countries for which no reply to the questionnaire was received). Reference is also made to subregions used in this report, which are defined as follows: Central Asia (CA: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, *Uzbekistan*); new EU Member States (EU13: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, *Estonia*, *Hungary*, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia); old EU Member States (EU15: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, *Greece*, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, *United Kingdom*); Eastern Europe and Caucasus (EEC: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine); South-Eastern Europe (SEE: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Montenegro*, Serbia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey); and non-EU countries with advanced economies (Non-EU): *Andorra*, *Canada*, *Iceland*, Israel, *Liechtenstein*, *Monaco*, Norway, *San Marino*, Switzerland, and the United States of America).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jana Vobecká, William Butz and Gerald Reyes, 'Population Trends and Policy Responses in the UNECE Region: Outcomes, Policies and Possibilities' (Vienna, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), 2013). Analysis prepared at the request of UNFPA for the UNECE regional conference 'Enabling Choices: Population Priorities for the 21st Century', 1–2 July 2013, Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> The UNFPA office in Kosovo also supplied a completed questionnaire. It is used in the analysis to broaden the scope of Europe's population. This questionnaire is included in the subregion of South-Eastern Europe