

Fact Sheet: Generation 2030 Africa Report - 12 August 2014

The demographics of Africa's children are experiencing a shift on a scale perhaps unprecedented in human history.

- On current trends, almost 2 billion babies will be born in Africa in the next 35 years due to high fertility rates and increasing number of women of reproductive age.
- Over the same period Africa's under-18 population will increase by two thirds, reaching almost 1 billion by mid-century
- Close to half of the world population of children will be African by the end of the 21st century.

Among the most surprising findings is the massive shift in the world's child population towards Africa in recent decades.

- Global population projections indicate that by mid-century the continent will be home to around 41 per cent of the world's births, 40 per cent of all global under-fives, and 37 per cent of all children (under-18s).

Four in 10 of the world's people will be African by the end of this century

- Africa's current population is five times its size in 1950. And the continent's rapid population expansion is set to continue, with its inhabitants doubling from 1.2 billion to 2.4 billion between 2015 and 2050.
- On current trends, within 35 years, 4 in 10 people will be African by the end of the century.

Africa has the highest child dependency ratio in the world

- More than any other region, Africa's children lie at the heart of its demographic and social transition. Today, almost 47 per cent of Africans are children under 18. In 15 African countries, more than half of the total population are children under 18.
- Africa has the highest child dependency ratio — 73 children under age 15 per 100 persons of working age in 2015, close to double the global average.

Child survival has improved in Africa, but the continent still accounts for half of all child deaths, and this figure is set to rise to around 70 per cent by mid-century

- There has been considerable progress on child survival in Africa since 1990 and particularly since the year 2000. But faster progress in other regions has left Africa with the highest concentration of global under-five and under-18 deaths.
- In Africa, one in every 11 children born still dies before their fifth birthday, a rate 14 times greater than the average in high-income countries. The continent currently accounts for more than half of the world's child deaths.

Today three in 10 of Africa's children are living in fragile and conflict-affected contexts

- Conflict and fragility continue to undermine human rights, social and economic progress in a number of African countries. Of the 34 countries classified by the World Bank in 2014 as having fragile and conflict-affected contexts, 20 are African.
- Around one fourth of the continent's population resides in these 20 countries, which also account for almost three in 10 African children under 18, totaling 143 million. Almost 3 in every 10 births in Africa, and one third of all under-five deaths in Africa, occur in countries with fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

Special attention is required for Nigeria, which is the country with the largest increase in absolute numbers of both births and child population

- At the country level, the greatest number of births in Africa takes place in Nigeria; by 2015 about one fifth of the continent's births will take place in that country alone, accounting for 5 per cent of all global births.
- From 2015 to 2030, 136 million births will take place in Nigeria - 19 per cent of all African babies and 6 per cent of the global total. By 2050, Nigeria alone will account for almost one tenth of all births in the world.

Investing in children will be paramount for Africa to realize the rights of its burgeoning child population and reap a potential demographic dividend

- Almost 1 billion children, nearly 40 per cent of the world's total will live in Africa by mid-century.
- If investments are made in expanded and improved health care, education and protection and participation mechanisms, these 1 billion children and their predecessors, the children of today and tomorrow, have the potential to transform the continent, breaking centuries old cycles of poverty and inequity.

End text.