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**The Role of ECA in the Implementation
Process of the DND and ICPD.PA**

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Briefing Paper Series is intended to provide information about recent and planned ECA activities and policy initiatives in population, environment and agriculture (called the nexus) and science and technology matters. The Briefing Papers may serve as a guide to policy-makers, development planners and stakeholders on the African continent and elsewhere in their efforts to accelerate socioeconomic development in Africa. They also share ideas on policies related to the nexus with a wider audience engaged in development activities, including international organizations, inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector and civil society.

The Briefing Paper Series is a bi-annual publication of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division (FSSDD) of the ECA whose broad objectives include:

- Enhancing locally based analytical capabilities for national policy making in the interrelated areas of agriculture, population and environment towards attaining food security and sustainable development;
- Facilitating the adoption and implementation of appropriate measures to promote socially acceptable, economically viable and environmentally sustainable development; and
- Assisting Member States in building indigenous scientific and technological capability to address Africa's development, particularly as it relates to the nexus.

The theme of the Briefing Paper changes in every Series number. The theme of the current Series No. 4 is devoted to *ECA's role in the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration (DND) and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD.PA)*, in recognition of the ICPD +5 review in 1999.

II. THE CHALLENGE

According to the UNDP Human Development Index, more than 75 percent of the countries categorized as having "low human development" are in Africa. More than 50 per cent of the African people are estimated to live in absolute poverty characterized by very high underemployment, illiteracy, malnutrition, poor health, low status of women, and deteriorating environmental conditions which are usually accompanied by high levels of fertility, mortality and morbidity.

Household food insecurity and malnutrition are common features of many African families. Women and children, particularly in rural households, suffer from low food production and malnutrition. This in turn leads to lower productivity and poor health conditions.

The pervasive poverty is exacerbated by the problems arising from rapid population growth (see Table 1 below on population growth rates). In urban areas, poverty accompanied by continued population growth and rapid urbanization, has

forced millions of people to live in over-crowded and unhygienic conditions where lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation are highly prevalent.

The population of Africa is very young. This age structure has brought with it an increasing demand for education, food, health services and jobs. Approximately half of the children cannot get a place in school and therefore they will eventually swell the ranks of illiterate adults. Moreover, the education systems operating in most countries seem incapable of attaining the objectives of universal education.

African women occupy a subordinate position in society, which leads to inequity in the distribution of the benefits of economic growth among men and women. Women also suffer from lack of access to, or unavailability of, contraceptives and other reproductive health (RH) services. Maternal mortality rates are higher than in any other world region. This is due, among others, to early marriage and under-age births, unsafe induced abor-

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tions, maternal malnutrition, lack of prenatal care, births unattended by trained health personnel and poor hygiene conditions during child birth.

HIV/AIDS is also widely spread in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the 47.3 million persons newly affected with HIV in the world in 1999, 34.0 millions (72%) were in sub-Saharan Africa. The reasons for the wide spread are many and include: the high prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases and malnutrition; the large scale of migration and population movements; under-employment and unemployment; inadequate medical ser-

vices and socio-cultural factors influencing sexual protection, techniques as well as the context of sexual encounters.

Environmental degradation in Africa has created the mass exodus of refugees and displaced persons. Natural and man made disasters such as armed conflicts, drought and famine are common features in several African countries with their concomitant impact on education, health (including reproductive health), safe water and sanitation as well as access to nutritious food.

Table 1. Some Demographic Indicators for Regional and Sub-regional Africa: 1995 - 2000

	Popula- tion size (000s), 2000	Popula- tion growth rate (%)	Total fertility rate (children per woman)	Contra- ceptive preva- lence rate (%)	Life expec- tancy at birth (years)	Urban growth rate (%)	Infant mortality rate (0/00)	Child mortality rate (0/00)
Eastern Africa countries	234,809	2.6	5.8	18	45	5.2	101	161
Middle Africa countries	90,816	2.7	6.2	10	50	4.1	95	148
Northern Africa countries	166,676	2.0	3.6	41	65	3.2	52	70
Southern Africa countries	45,601	1.6	3.4	48	54	2.9	62	92
Western Africa countries	211,024	2.5	5.5	8	50	4.8	90	158
Africa	748,927	2.4	5.1	---	51	4.2	87	140

Sources: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. World Population Prospects, The 1998 Revision; World Urbanization Prospects, The 1996 Revision; World Contraceptive Use 1998, Wall Chart.

Agriculture and food production have actually declined thus failing to keep pace with natural population growth and urbanization. This has led to increased food imports at a time when export commodity prices have fallen disastrously and most African countries are struggling under a crushing debt burden.

III. RELEVANCE OF DND AND ICPD.PA TO THE WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA

The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD.PA) was adopted in Cairo in 1994. Earlier, the Dakar/Ngor Declaration (DND) on Population, Family and Sustainable Development had been adopted by the Third African Population Conference (APC3) held in Senegal in December 1992. The APC3 constitutes the regional preparatory conference while the DND constitutes the African Common Position, which was submitted to the ICPD. The Declaration and the Programme of Action (PA) are very relevant to the well being of the people of Africa because they both address issues of population and development with a view to achieving sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development. They also fully recognize the important interrelationships between population, resources (including food security), the environment and development.

The explicit aim of the DND and the PA is to help harmonize population, economic and social development trends. Population policies and programmes are conceived as constituent elements of socio-economic development policies whose aim is to affect among others, population growth, morbidity and mortality, reproduction and family formation, population distribution and internal migration, international migration, and consequently, demographic structures.

Within such a broad scope, the DND reaffirms that interrelationships between population and development cannot be comprehended outside the context of families and their evolution. It notes therefore that, as the basic unit of society, the family should be protected by appropriate legislation and policy. The DND also recognizes that a peaceful and stable socio-political environment is necessary for the success of any population policy. It emphasizes the need for African countries to integrate population policies and programmes in their development strategies and to strengthen the social sectors in order to influence the decline of the population growth rate.

Furthermore, the DND urges African Governments to pay special attention to issues of environment, food security and the problem of the family, as well as to combat AIDS and to promote the integration of women and youth in the development process. Moreover, the DND recognizes the need for an increased role of the public and private sectors, as well as NGOs in integrated population and development programmes.

Specific issues addressed by the DND include: the persistent high population growth and the associated high fertility levels; high infant, child and maternal mortality levels; high morbidity; the incidence of AIDS; significant imbalances in the geographic distribution of the population; inadequate policies for the improvement of the legal status of women in the family and their integration into the development process; ineffective programmes for children and young people; problems of refugees and displaced persons; inadequate information systems and low levels of data utilization in Africa.

The Declaration recommends a set of demographic quantitative targets to be reached by African countries between the years 2000 to 2010. These include reduction in population growth, infant, child and maternal mortality rates and an increase in the use of contraceptives as well as life expectancy at birth. These quantitative targets are shown in Table 2 below. A set of qualitative targets was also proposed to support these quantitative targets.

Like the DND, the PA urges Governments to adopt an integrated approach to population and development, both in national policies and at the international level. It emphasizes that the basis for an effective solution to population problems involves, above all, socio-economic transformation. Consequently, it makes a number of recommendations dealing with socio-economic policies (e.g. development assistance, economic growth, food and agriculture, education, health, and employment) with the understanding

that such socio-economic transformation will create new conditions to help modify existing demographic variables.

The PA recognizes that food and agriculture play an important role in improving standards of living and recommends that Governments give high priority to improving methods of food production, the investigation and development of new sources of food and more effective utilization of existing sources in response to the needs of the rapidly growing population.

The PA also emphasizes the important place of education in achieving social and economic development. It recognizes that population factors are sometimes powerful inhibitors of sustainable development and recommends several actions to facilitate a better integration of population and environment concerns into the process of social and economic development. The Programme urges the promotion of women's status as an end in itself and emphasizes the close relationships between the condition of women and other demographic phenomena.

The PA details a number of activities that will help implement these recommendations. These activities include data collection and analysis, research, provision of services, managerial operations of programmes, creation of awareness, information, education and communication activities and evaluation of actions. Furthermore, it defines the different actors that are responsible for activities in each area (Governments, the international community, NGOs, the private sector, scholars, and the media, among others).

The PA recommends a set of interdependent quantitative goals and objectives. These include: universal access to primary education, with special attention to closing the gender gap in primary and secondary education, wherever it exists; universal access to primary health care; universal access to a full range of comprehensive RH care services, including family planning; reductions in infant, child and maternal morbidity and mortality; and increased life expectancy at birth.

In order to achieve these quantitative goals and objectives the PA also proposes a set of mutually supportive qualitative goals. Guiding criteria for the implementation of these goals are outlined. For example, in addition to providing the precise definition of RH care, the PA includes goals for all countries to make RH care services available to all individuals through existing primary health systems and to remove all barriers to access. Governments are also urged to: institute a system of monitoring and evaluating RH services to detect, prevent and control abuses by managers and providers; give NGOs an active role in monitoring public sector programmes; encourage a broader spectrum of NGOs and political and community leaders to become involved in the promotion of better reproductive and sexual health; involve the private sector in RH-care services and ensure cost effective strategies. The PA also specifies measures that Governments might implement to improve the quality of care in sexual and RH programmes.

The PA emphasizes the need for the integration of population distribution policies with eco-

Table 2. Demographic Quantitative Goals set by the DND and ICPD PA

	Natural increase of population (%)		Life expectancy at birth (years)			Use of Contraceptives (%)		Infant mortality rate (0/100)		Under five mortality rate (0/100)		Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000)	
	2000	2010	2000	2005	2015	2000	2010	2000	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015
DND Goals	2.5	2.0	55	-	-	20	40	50	-	70	-	50	-
ICPD PA Goals	-	-	-	70	75	-	-	50	35	70	45	50	75

Sources: Economic Commission for Africa, *Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development*, Addis Ababa, 1994.
United Nations, *Programme of Action of the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development*, Cairo, 1994.

conomic and social policies, and urges Governments to promote more equitable regional development,

develop a network of small and medium sized cities and improve economic and social conditions in rural areas.

IV. RECENT ECA ACTIVITIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF DND AND ICPD-PA

The ECA has undertaken a number of activities designed to contribute to the implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PA. These include four assessments made on the implementation of DND and ICPD-PA undertaken under the auspices of the Joint ECA/OAU/ADB Secretariat, in collaboration with ECA. The **first assessment** was made at the *Experts and NGOs Workshop on the Implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PA* in Abidjan in 1995. The Abidjan workshop highlighted the fact that while some of the set targets in Dakar and in Cairo might be achieved for the region as a whole or by some individual Member States by the set dates, achievement of most of the targets by the set dates might be difficult owing, among others, to uncertainties about future socio-economic conditions in most ECA Member States. The workshop also came out with guidelines and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PA.

The **second assessment** was made at the *Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Population and Information Scientists* in Addis Ababa, in 1996. That assessment focussed on the progress of efforts that have been made towards implementing the DND and the ICPD-PA at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. It was observed that attitudes of some African countries towards the adoption of population policies were undergoing rapid changes and that many countries had developed more comprehensive country-wide national population policies. For instance, the case for providing better family planning services to the target population was increasingly based on welfare and health arguments; reference to gender issues were frequent; and policy documents tended to link population to gender issues.

The **third assessment** was made at the *Second Meeting of the Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PA* in Addis Ababa in 1997. It identified factors facilitating or constraining national efforts at implementing the DND and the ICPD-PA, based on the analysis of 31 completed country questionnaires on the formulation, content and implementation of national population policies. Among the favourable factors identified that facilitated national efforts to implement the DND and ICPD-PA were the emergence of democracy in Member States; a positive shift in perceptions and attitudes towards population issues; the persistence of relatively high level of fertility; and the topicality of gender equality. On the other hand, the poor commitment of policy-makers was identified as the main obstacle to the implementation of population policies and programmes. As a way forward, the Second Meeting of the Follow-up Committee adopted a framework that called for intensified efforts from Member States with a view to speeding up the implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PA and of ensuring the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process.

The **fourth assessment** was at the *Third Meeting of the Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PA* in Addis Ababa in September 1998. This fourth assessment of African experiences in the implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PA was based on the responses to a country questionnaire administered by the ECA and completed and returned by 41 countries. It also drew on several regional and sub-regional reports provided by UNFPA Country Support Teams based in Addis Ababa, Dakar and Harare and reports of two ECA-sponsored field missions in 12 African

countries. These reports focused on the implementation of policies, programmes and laws related to RH and RR in Africa and on constraints and best practices in the implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PA.

The Third Meeting of the Follow-up Committee meeting not only reviewed and appraised the Ngor and Cairo, but also consolidated the African experiences in the implementation of these two population and development frameworks into a comprehensive report. It also identified specific activities that could accelerate the implementation of Ngor and Cairo. To this end, the Meeting systematically examined the various constraints that had been identified in earlier assessments and proposed recommendations that could effectively address them.

ECA also organized expert group meetings and seminars to review the progress made in the implementation of the DND and ICPD-PA. *The First Meeting of the ECA Committee on Sustainable Development held in Addis Ababa from 25 to 29 January 1999* reviewed the report of the Third Meeting of the Follow up Committee. This forum gave African Governments the opportunity to renew their commitments to effective population policies and programmes as an integral part of the principle and practice of sustainable development in Africa. The report of the First Meeting of the ECA Committee on Sustainable Development was presented as the African input to the Hague Forum. It was also presented to the Third General Assembly of the African Population Commission (APC) in 1999 in Abuja, Nigeria, which was organized by the joint ECA/OAU/ADB Secretariat. The report of the APC meeting was in turn submitted to the OAU Conference of Ministers in June 1999 through the OAU/ECOSOC for endorsement as the African Statement. The African Statement was then made available to the participants at the Special Session of the General Assembly held in June-July 1999.

The ECA also participated and contributed to The Hague Forum (February 1999) which is part of the ICPD+5 series of review activities organized by UNFPA. Moreover,

ECA participated at the 32nd Session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development (CPD) (June-July 1999) which acted as the preparatory committee for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly.

To foster its advocacy role, **ECA/FSSDD has developed the Population (P)-Environment (E)-Development (D)-Agriculture (A) [PEDA] model** which is a computer simulation model intended to demonstrate, in a holistic framework, the inter-linkages between population, environment, socio-economic development, and agriculture. The model can also be used for demonstrating the impact of different policy options in relation to the goal of ensuring food security and, by implication, poverty alleviation and sustainable development in the ECA region. **ECA organized two seminars (4-6 Dec. 1998 and Nov. 1999) in Addis Ababa** to undertake an in-depth study of major issues on sustainable development with a special focus on the inter-relationships between population, agriculture and environment which are the underlying issues in the DND and ICPD-PA. The target groups at these fora were policy makers, planners and researchers from ECA Member States, representatives of the five ECA's Sub-Regional Development Centers (SRDCs), and IGOs in the areas of population, environment and agriculture.

Moreover, **ECA organized a workshop on Research Agenda for Women's Reproductive Health and Household Food Security in Rural Africa** in Addis Ababa in October 1999 to review major issues in the area of RH and reproductive rights. The recommendations from this workshop will facilitate the monitoring and evaluating process of the implementation of DND and ICPD-PA, particularly, in the area of RH and reproductive rights.

In addition, the ECA has produced several policy reports relating to the implementation of the DND and ICPD-PA. The reports include: *Report on the Implementation of Policies, Programmes and Laws Related to Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights in Selected African Countries (April-June 1998)*; *Report on Constraints, Best Practices and Institutional Changes, Including Partnership with the Civil Society in the Implementation of the DND and*

ICPD.PA (April-June 1998); Report on African Experience in the Implementation of DND and ICPD.PA (June-August 1998); and Proceedings of the Third Meeting of the Follow-up Committee (October-November 1998).

Among the objectives of these reports were the need to highlight the main achievements in the goals of the DND and ICPD.PA as well as constraints which have hindered progress in implementing key programme areas, including: RH and reproductive rights; gender equality, empowerment of women and male involvement; family, youth and adolescents; advocacy and IEC strategies; population and development strategies; participation of NGOs, civil society and private sector; and institutional mechanisms for coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of population programmes. Additional objectives were monitoring and disseminating of information on population trends, policies, national and sub-regional activities and research findings.

The policy reports were targeted at planners, policy makers, researchers, decision-makers, experts, NGOs, IGOs and leaders in the private sector in the fields of population, agriculture and environment. The perceived impact of these policy reports was improved population, environment and food security policies and strategies as well as better implementation of the DND and ICPD.PA.

The ECA has also established channels for disseminating population information within and outside the region. In partnership with Global POPIN, it has recently created its own Population Information Network Africa web site. It has also created a web site on the follow-up activities of DND and ICPD.PA. Furthermore, the ECA produced the first two issues of Africa Population and Development Bulletin in 1999. The objective of the Bulletin is to encourage the exchange and sharing among African countries of their experiences in the implementation of the DND and ICPD.PA.

The ECA undertakes collaboration, coordination and liaison with United Nations agencies and organizations, regional and sub-regional intergovernmental organizations, Regional Training Institutes, as well as with IGOs in respect of data and information exchange as well as the organization of and participation in meetings and workshops related to DND and ICPD.PA. The partners in this context, include OAU, ADB, UNFPA, RIPS, IFORD, and the Commission of Sustainable Development (CSD). The ECA also continues to provide, in cooperation with the UNFPA Technical Support Teams, advisory services and technical assistance on census taking, demographic data processing and analysis to Member States.

LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DND AND ICPD.PA

Reviews of progress made since Ngor and Cairo in key programme areas show that a number of African countries have made some achievements. In the programme area of *creating an enabling environment*, countries have taken initiatives to increasingly place emphasis on sustainability in the new population policy environment. In this regard, most African countries have reformulated their national population and development policies and programmes to take into account the recommendations of the DND and ICPD.PA. Several countries have, as much as is practicable, involved concerned

individuals and groups in the formulation and implementation of population policies which focus on the relationships between population, social and health dimensions and well being. Countries have also created national databases. In addition, regional training institutions such as the RIPS and IFORD have revised their curricula to accommodate ICPD.PA concepts.

In spite of these achievements, there are still many constraints in creating an enabling environment. These include: inadequate financial resources and

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insufficient numbers of trained personnel; ineffective advocacy strategies; insufficient consultations with all stakeholders; lack of clearly defined implementation strategies; inadequate emphasis on decentralized structures needed for integration of population factors in the development planning process; insufficient cooperation among sector ministries; and political instability and the consequences of structural adjustment programmes with their concomitant effects on long term perspective planning; which is a key prerequisite for the integrated population and development planning process.

With respect to the programme area of *gender equality, equity, empowerment of women and male involvement*, the identified achievements include: ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination and Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); improved access to development resources; enactment of laws to abolish gender discrimination; establishment of institutional mechanisms to address gender issues; increased participation of women in decision-making; recognition of the economic contribution of women's work; establishment of programmes to improve girls' education; formation of organized women's groups; introduction of quotas for women in parliament; establishment of gender development centers; development of comprehensive policies and action plans on gender and women empowerment; establishment of Gender Focal Points; provision of credit and technical advice to female entrepreneurs; promotion of female participation in the labor force; and increased recognition that men's participation is crucial for the attainment of gender equality.

Most African countries, however, continue to face, among other constraints: traditional and cultural stereotypes to justify gender division of labor; under-financing of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality; lack of guidelines for mainstreaming gender into population policies and programmes; inadequate staff in Departments and Ministries dealing with women's concerns; and lack of gender analysis skills.

In the sphere of the *family*, the assessments indicate that although population programme

activities in most of African countries had not paid specific attention to the family, the measures taken for the improvement of the quality of life for various components of the population had positively impacted on the family. Additionally, many countries reported that they had adopted a Family Code.

Nevertheless, the vicious cycle of poverty and high fertility is identified as a major constraint in achieving acceptable standards of living. Civil and political unrest and other forms of social disorganization were also identified as additional family problems. Increased family instability, violence and sexual exploitation have been observed due to the breakdown of traditional family support networks.

Achievements and best practices identified in the area of *youth and adolescents* include the institution of sectoral programmes in virtually all Member States. Measures have been taken to promote legal protection of the girl child and equal opportunities in access to education and the provision of IEC and RH/SH services to in- and out-of-school adolescents.

Constraints include: persistence of taboos in some cultures that restrict or prevent explicit recognition and discussion of the sexuality of young adults; lack of research on the needs of youth and adolescents; inadequate knowledge of the magnitude and extent of harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and their effects in some Member States; persistence of traditional attitudes which are conducive to high fertility, gender discrimination and sexual exploitation of girls and women; and existence of diverse barriers to the formulation and implementation of comprehensive adolescent RH strategies. Moreover the assessments indicate, in general, that the youth in most Member States have not been actively involved in the formulation of programmes that concern them. In some cases neither their parents nor other authorities have been fully sensitized to the goals and methods of such programmes.

In the area of *reproductive health and reproductive rights*, a number of countries have been able to formulate RH policies and standards

as well as service delivery protocols. These countries have also started to provide integrated services. The delivery of family planning services through community-based distribution channels has increased in a number of countries. A number of countries have made efforts to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, especially Uganda. RH information and services have also been expanded to meet the needs of adolescents, and internally displaced people. Furthermore, laws have been enacted in some countries to eliminate FGM and other harmful practices against women and the girl-child. Legal measures have been taken in a number of countries to increase the age of consent for sexual intercourse and the minimum age of marriage.

Despite the progress made since Ngor and Cairo, African countries reported a number of constraints. They include: the compartmentalization of RH services in many countries; inadequacy and sometimes non-existence of referral systems; the non-involvement of males in RH activities; financial and human resources constraints as well as cultural inhibitions to the provision of services to specific population groups; the concentration of services in urban areas contributing to rising unmet needs of services in rural areas, especially for adolescents and the disabled. Moreover, in most African countries, the number of those afflicted by HIV/AIDS is increasing. The pandemic draws its largest toll in sub-Saharan Africa.

With regard to *Advocacy and IEC strategies*, most African countries have recognized the need to formulate and implement advocacy strategies. While some of them have developed IEC and advocacy strategies as one package, others have developed strategies of both. Those that have not developed any strategy are, nonetheless, implementing advocacy strategies within sectoral programmes, partly through the creation of multi-

sectoral coalitions, networks, alliances, and consortia. Some countries have also set up institutional structures for the design, implementation and co-ordination of advocacy and IEC programmes.

Among the constraints identified in this key programme area are: the non-participation of some stakeholders such as beneficiaries and the private sector in advocacy activities; the lack of well coordinated institutional mechanisms; the prohibitive costs of media production; inadequate dissemination of materials to target populations; and absence of socio-cultural research-based information.

So far, the reviews and assessments show that many African Governments have recognized the importance of the involvement of NGOs, civil society and the private sector in the implementation of population and development programmes. As a result, these entities are increasingly being involved in discussions and decision-making related to population and other development issues. Governments are also increasingly willing to take actions related to concerns expressed by these entities.

However, certain constraints have minimized the contribution of these actors to the implementation of the DND and the ICPD-PA. These include: lack of clarity in management structures; small-scale intervention of African NGOs; lack of professional skills in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; limited expansion of the roles and activities of the private sector due to uncertain and complex legal, fiscal and regulatory frameworks; diversity and complexity of civil society; absence of coordination of efforts by the different components of the civil society, NGOs and the private sector in their endeavor towards poverty reduction, women's empowerment, and protection of human rights.

VI. The way forward

Based on these assessments, the Third Follow-up Committee meeting and the ECA's First Committee on Sustainable Development have adopted recommendations for the further implementation of the above mentioned key programme areas of the DND and ICPD.PA. Similarly, the Twenty-first Special Session of the General Assembly adopted key actions for the further implementation of the PA related to population and development concerns, gender equality, equity and empowerment of women, reproductive rights and RH, as well as partnerships and collaboration.

ECA's work in the area of population is governed by the objectives of its own sub-programme on Food Security and Sustainable Development as well as by the recommendations adopted at the regional and international conferences and meetings. Within this context, the ECA endeavors to stimulate African Governments' early actions on population determinants and to ensure that population issues are given high political support through fostering political-level dialogues. The ECA will also include population as a key factor in its own microanalysis and will propose more complete, mutually supporting and effective approaches for donor assistance in this area.

The ECA's policy framework and priorities in the implementation of the DND and ICPD.PA, thus, include:

- (i) Continuous monitoring and evaluation of country implementation efforts of the DND and ICPD.PA;

- (ii) Assessment of the demographic transition in Africa and its determinants, in order to identify best practices and draw lessons for the further implementation of the DND and ICPD.PA;
- (iii) Promotion of research activities aimed at improving the understanding of factors through which women's RH and household food security are inter-linked;
- (iv) Further development of the PEDA software and improving the capacity and capability of ECA, sub-regional institutions and Member States to apply the Model; and
- (v) Creation of an integrated population information programme strategy for Africa.

These policy priorities are intended to be achieved through, among other activities: the servicing of inter-governmental and Expert Group meetings; preparation of recurrent and non-recurrent publications; international cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison; advocacy, awareness raising and networking, including training on the use of the PEDA model; technical cooperation including advisory services to Member States and organization of seminars and training workshops as well as demonstration of nexus tools particularly the PEDA Model; launching research projects in RH and food security in rural Africa; and creation of an integrated population information programme including the production and dissemination web sites, bulletins, wall charts, CD-ROMs, and a computerized simulation model.