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**Parallel sessions: (b) the demographic dividend in Africa:  
an entry point to implementing and monitoring the  
Addis Abeba Declaration on Population and Development**

### **Demographic dividend in Africa: an entry point to implementing and monitoring the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development**

#### **I. Background**

1. After 20 years of implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, a regional review in Africa was commissioned as part of the Conference's global survey. The findings of the survey and the regional ministerial review conferences and their outcomes constitute the core basis for the report of the Secretary-General on the framework of actions for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014 (A/69/62).

2. The need to refocus the International Conference on Population and Development and respond to "new challenges relevant to population and development and to the changing development environment" was noted. Some of the new developments noted were that the world had grown more unequal in both earnings and wealth; demographic trends were far more diverse; migration and rapid urbanization were unfolding in many countries; there had been an explosion in access to information; and the threat of climate change had grown, with the potential to undermine development.

3. The inspiration for the Programme of Action was reiterated in the report of the Secretary-General through an emphasis on the need to invest in the dignity and human rights and capabilities of all persons. This includes ensuring the equal rights of women and girls, guided by a comprehensive definition of sexual and reproductive health and rights, which are preconditions for building resilient societies with the capacity for long-term economic growth, sustainability and well-being in the face of social and environmental change.

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4. Ministers at the 2013 African Regional Conference on Population and Development adopted the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development, which was endorsed by the African Heads of State and Government at the Assembly of the African Union. In the Declaration, the region's commitment to the Programme of Action was reaffirmed as the framework for dealing with issues of population and development, as was the need to connect it to current global development agendas, including the post-2015 development agenda (i.e., the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development), as endorsed by world leaders.

5. That regional engagement was captured in 88 commitments covering the following broad thematic areas: dignity and equality; health; place and mobility; governance; data and statistics; and international cooperation and partnerships. These areas mirror the analytical framing and five thematic pillar structures (dignity and human rights, health, place and mobility, governance and accountability and sustainability) contained in the report of the Secretary-General.

6. In the report of the Secretary-General, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and other international and regional instruments relating to human rights and international law were reaffirmed. These include the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the African Charter on the Rights and the Welfare of the Child.

7. The implementation of the Addis Ababa Declaration through a number of channels was emphasized in the report, such as mainstreaming it into the workplans of the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa and the 2030 Agenda.

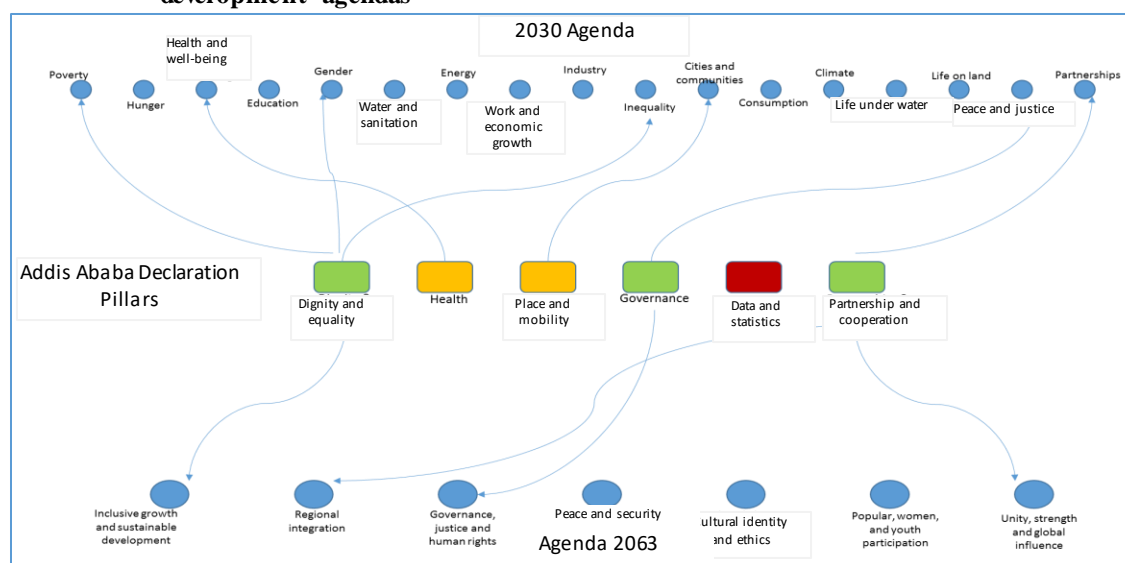
8. The Addis Ababa Declaration represents the most significant intergovernmental agreement signed in the region relating to population and development and has become a key component of the process of reviewing the Programme of Action.

9. Given the importance, breadth and diversity of these commitments, the realization of which contributes to sustainable development (and the concurrent pursuit of sustainable development under the aegis of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063), this is an opportune moment to design a specific monitoring tool, one that draws on the synergies and interlinkages in these Agendas and supports Governments by providing a clear pathway to fulfilling the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Declaration through the identification of relevant goals, targets and indicators of progress. Such a framework will serve to track the variety of regional commitments in the area of population and development that collectively contribute to harnessing a demographic dividend. Ultimately, this will achieve sustainable development at a time when Africa has the demographic potential to harness such a dividend.

## **II. Interlinkages with the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development and other development agendas**

10. The linkages with the Addis Ababa Declaration, Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda are clearly shown in figure I.

Figure I  
**Overlap between the Addis Ababa Declaration pillars and other major development agendas**



11. There is much overlap between the Addis Ababa Declaration commitments and those contained in the 2030 Agenda, with approximately 80 per cent of the former's commitments connected to specific Sustainable Development Goals. This underscores a need for coordination and collaboration in the implementation of the commitments, goals and targets contained in the Declaration, the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The overlap is found not only in the detailed individual commitments but also with regard to general themes.

12. The overlap between the Addis Ababa Declaration and both Agendas are summarized in figure I at the level of general themes and pillars. Of the Declaration's six pillars, three (dignity and equality, governance and partnerships and cooperation) overlap with identified pillars in the two Agendas. An additional two pillars (health and place and mobility) overlap with only the 2030 Agenda at the pillar level. Only one of the six pillars (data and statistics) do not strongly overlap with a major pillar in any of the two Agendas. Nevertheless, even in these cases, themes contained in the pillars of both Agendas are relevant to the Declaration. For example, targets 17.18 and 17.19 of the Sustainable Development Goals specifically speak to the need for strengthening capacities for generating good-quality disaggregated data to monitor the 2030 Agenda. This is also a major point made in Agenda 2063. In conclusion, there is substantial overlap between these three initiatives in the region, which implies synergy in their implementation and impact and the value of integrating their monitoring and evaluation efforts.

13. Although the Addis Ababa Declaration overlaps with concurrent agendas, it occupies a relatively unique niche in its strong focus on demographic outcomes relating to mobility and health, issues that are of major consequence to Africa's development.

### III. Context

14. The context under which the Addis Ababa Declaration is implemented and monitored is significant. Several considerations are important, but two of the most crucial features are urgency and opportunity.

15. There is urgency in dealing with Africa's rising population of young people (demographic dividend). Countries must meet the employment and service needs of their young people. More broadly, they must also meet the

legitimate aspirations for the fulfilment of human rights, for improved well-being and for equality of opportunity. All such gains must be achieved at a time when global policymakers increasingly recognize the limits to growth and the need to tackle concerns about inequality, the environment, human rights and capabilities.

16. African countries also have a historic opportunity to boost economic growth in Africa by taking advantage of the demographic dividend. In the coming half-century, the projection for the region's age-dependency ratios is that it will decline in ways that could boost savings and investment. The possibility of such a dividend has mobilized policymakers in the region, who wish to understand the magnitude and scope of this dividend and the policies required to harness it. Whether a dividend is harnessed will depend in large part on policy investment in sexual and reproductive health, in gender equality and in addressing the needs of and investing in the capabilities of young people. There is therefore a clear rationale for linking the Addis Ababa Declaration to the region's efforts to capture the dividend. At the same time, the dividend and its economic rationale should not reduce the attention given to human and reproductive rights.

#### **IV. Building the monitoring framework: basic principles**

17. The vital importance of monitoring is well established in policy circles and seen as a hallmark of accountability and efficiency. Planners cannot reasonably assess progress without systematically benchmarking and tracking outcomes on the basis of reliable metrics, nor can they gauge and improve efficiency in the use of public resources. Even if monitoring exercises do have their sceptics, the criticism is usually less about principle than it is about execution. Critics may question the quality and reliability of data, the extent of stakeholder participation, the costs or the ultimate use of monitoring results to redirect policy.

18. The operational guide of the Addis Ababa Declaration was developed with six organizing principles to be taken into consideration.

##### **A. Principle 1: integrity**

19. The Addis Ababa Declaration contains 88 commitments organized around six main pillars. Although the number is large, one must avoid reducing its ambition, water down its scope or tamper with its principles. Rather, one should maintain the spirit of and commitments contained in the Declaration.

##### **B. Principle 2: integration**

20. Throughout the region, the Addis Ababa Declaration is one of the initiatives considered alongside other global and regional ones, such as the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Consideration must be given to the overlap and synergies between them. It is specifically recommended in the Declaration, that it be, anchored to the demographic dividend (see section V).

##### **C. Principle 3: combination**

21. While keeping the Addis Ababa Declaration and all 88 of its commitments intact, one might nevertheless arrive at a compact agenda by finding a logical system to group them. Such grouping can use several criteria,

each of which has strengths and shortcomings.<sup>1</sup> The approach used was a mixture of several methods.

#### **D. Principle 4: disaggregation**

22. The idea was to determine how resolutions and measures are implemented among various subpopulations, including those recognized in the Addis Ababa Declaration (e.g., children, adolescents, girls, young people, women and older persons). Concentrating on various demographic groups was consistent with the demographic dividend's focus on demographic composition as a central influence.

#### **E. Principle 5: prioritization**

23. Although all 88 commitments contained in the Addis Ababa Declaration are important, they may not all have the same urgency or priority. Formally setting priorities among these various commitments can facilitate policy decision-making in an environment of scarcity. It can also help when development goals appear to be mutually contradictory. Priorities can be set on the basis of several factors, for example, the strategic importance of the target group, whether because of its size or special vulnerability.

#### **F. Principle 6: flexibility**

24. Flexibility is to recognize, as was done in the Addis Ababa Declaration, that various countries have different socioeconomic, political, and cultural and legal dynamics. They also have different development priorities or are at various stages of their demographic transition and in their development trajectories. All these factors have implications for the fulfilment of the Programme of Action agenda and the operationalization of the Declaration at the national level.

### **V. Outline of a monitoring framework**

25. The goal of the monitoring framework is to group, prioritize and operationalize the many commitments contained in the Addis Ababa Declaration in a way that is comprehensive but also compact and integrative. The demographic dividend is used as an entry point to capture the commitments and their interconnections to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. It is important to note that all three initiatives have sustainable development as the end goal and place significant emphasis on the demographic dividend, in particular for Africa.

#### **1. Demographic dividend as an entry point**

26. The demographic dividend (i.e., the boost to socioeconomic development expected when countries enter a phase of low age-dependency during their fertility transition) is now embraced as a sensible rationale for linking

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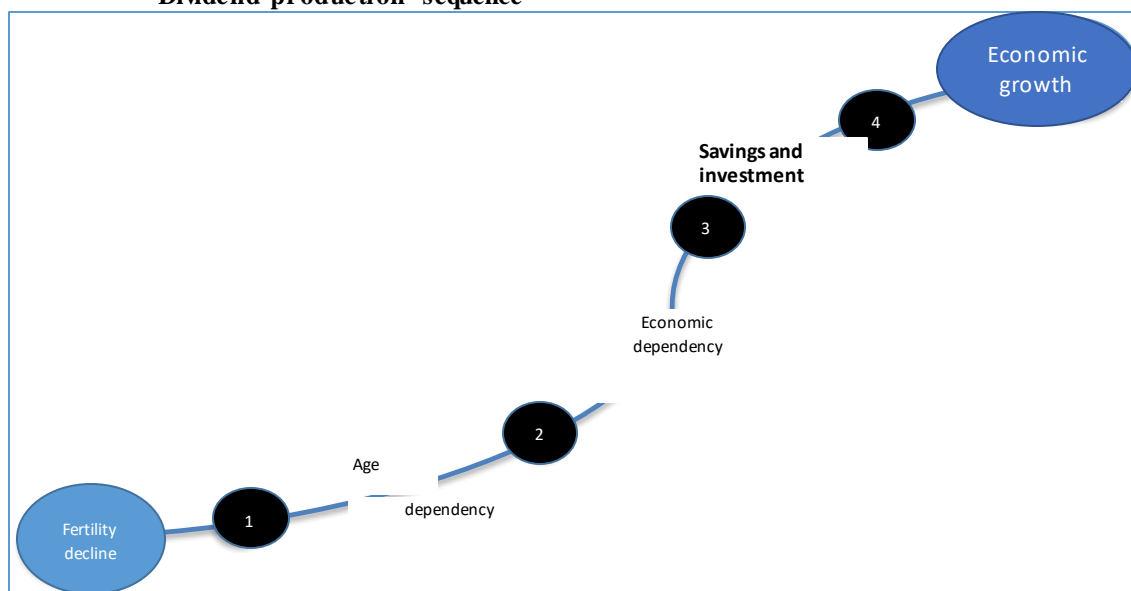
<sup>1</sup>The most basic method is to list all the commitments but group them under subpillars. One could thus reduce the 88 commitments to 10 subpillars (2 under each of the pillars identified in the Addis Ababa Declaration). A second approach is to combine multiple indicators into a composite index. This reduces the number of factors considered and results in a substantial loss in detail. A third and final approach, based on the principles of the Guttman scaling, is to build on implicit hierarchies between indicators so that information relating to the most conservative commitment contributes to the achievement of lower-level goals.

population to socioeconomic development. It is conceptually appealing for the following reasons:

- (a) It downplays the Malthusian emphasis on population growth as the critical factor;
- (b) It intuitively builds on the common-sense expectation that most socioeconomic outcomes vary systematically by age;
- (c) It is easily testable because it clearly specifies a time frame and a sequence of steps by which fertility change leads to economic growth;
- (d) Its explicit sequence of steps makes it possible to examine in detail how various policies can support the steps in the achievement of a dividend. This last feature is quite relevant when seeking to integrate the Addis Ababa Declaration into the demographic dividend;
- (e) It helps to draw attention to the different roles of various age and demographic groups, as is also mandated in the Programme of Action agenda.

27. Figure II presents a simplified description of the dividend-production sequence. The process begins with a sustained decline in total fertility that transforms the age structure of the national population, specifically reducing the relative share of children in this population (step 1). Insofar as the adults are effective economic providers, this lower age dependency translates into lower economic dependency (step 2) that favours savings and investment (step 3) and, in turn, economic growth (step 4). The process can be cyclical and self-reinforcing, with economic improvements looping back to further reduce fertility (step 0).

Figure II  
Dividend-production sequence

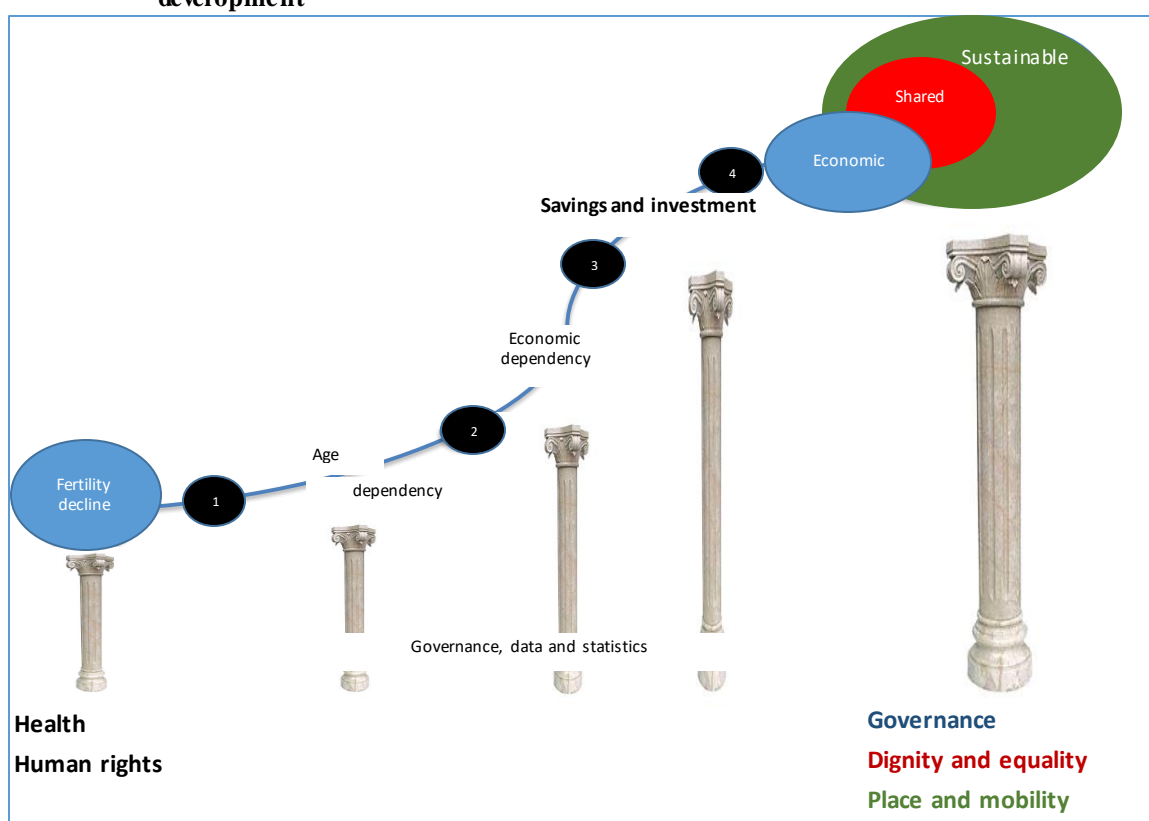


28. This sequence has two implications. First, the completion of each step may depend on a different set of factors or policies. Factors shaping whether lower fertility translates into lower age dependency might differ from those shaping whether families facing a lower dependency burden will save or squander their extra resources. As a second implication, at any given point, various African countries may be at different stages in the process. The most relevant and urgent policies are therefore also likely to vary. Countries in middle stages of their transitions, for example, would be more worried about policies to convert their early fertility decline into savings and growth, rather

than policies to initiate the demographic dividend. The demographic dividend-production process therefore makes it possible to consider the individual situations of various countries. Given that the demographic dividend framework can help to tailor policy to a national context, it is a sensible platform for organizing the commitments made under the Addis Ababa Declaration.

29. Figure III shows how one can expand the above demographic dividend framework (see figure II) to include the broader goals of shared and sustained development pursued through the Addis Ababa Declaration, the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and how the goals contained in the former can serve as pillars for the entire process.

Figure III  
**Relationship between the demographic dividend and sustainable development**



## 2. Addis Ababa Declaration pillars and the demographic dividend

30. Looking at figure III, the Addis Ababa Declaration commitments can support both the production of a demographic dividend (through their roles in steps 1, 2 and 3 in the demographic dividend-production process) and the region's broader agenda of sustainable development (through their role in step 4). As shown in the figure, different Addis Ababa Declaration pillars are more relevant for various stages of the demographic dividend-production process. The three main stages in producing a demographic dividend are initiating and sustaining the demographic transition (step 1), converting the transition into economic growth (steps 2 to 4) and sharing the growth and making it sustainable.

31. Unfortunately, there is not an exact one-to-one match between the various stages in the demographic dividend production and the individual pillars of the Addis Ababa Declaration. The wealth of commitments contained in the Declaration means that items in the same pillar may be relevant at various stages. Nevertheless, allowing for considerable overlaps and interlinkages, by

focusing on the general objective under each pillar the following a rough assigning of the pillars can be proposed:

- (a) **Initiating and sustaining the transition;**
    - (i) Health pillar;
    - (ii) Human rights and dignity pillar;
  - (b) **Converting the transition into growth;**
    - (Governance pillar;
  - (c) **Achieving shared and sustainable growth;**
    - (i) Dignity and equality pillar;
    - (ii) Place and mobility pillar;
    - (iii) Sustainability pillar.
- 3. Illustrative examples**

32. The primary grouping of commitments is based on stages in the demographic dividend-production process, that is, Addis Ababa Declaration commitments that contribute to initiating the demographic transition, commitments that contribute to converting the transition into economic growth and commitments that contribute to shared and sustainable growth.

33. Under each of these primary groupings, the second grouping is based on the broad pillars in the Addis Ababa Declaration document. The relevant commitments are listed under each pillar. Under each commitment, the operational guide will list, in sequence:

- (a) Text of the commitment;
- (b) Its general objective, including from a human rights perspective of achieving a demographic dividend;
- (c) Specific objectives;
- (d) Lines of action and goals;
- (e) Targets;
- (f) Indicators of achievement and impact on the production of a demographic dividend and the achievement of sustainable development as illustrated by the goals and lines of action;
- (g) Process indicators;
- (h) Time frame;
- (i) Relevant and binding agreements and resolutions.

## **VI. Conclusion and a summary of points of discussion**

34. The Addis Ababa Declaration operational guide lays out the broad principles and methods to track the implementation and impact of the Declaration. It is designed to support two complementary components of the monitoring and evaluation process: a macroevaluation of the Declaration as a whole and a micromonitoring of each of its 88 commitments. Both processes begin with a detailed content analysis of the commitments, mostly in terms of “what” (the resource inputs needed), “why” (the intended outcome) and “how” (the process leading from the input to the outcome).

35. Using the results of this content analysis, the macroevaluation focuses on the Addis Ababa Declaration as a whole. In other words, it tallies the aggregate results of the content analysis of all 88 commitments. In this realm, it explores how much the implementation of the Declaration depends on financial



investment versus institutional building or policy commitment and how it advances the goal of sustainable development. It further examines whether the Declaration helps to harness the demographic dividend, advance human rights, complement other agendas and cover the most vulnerable populations. The results suggest the following:

- (a) The Declaration agenda is eminently feasible. In a majority of cases (80 per cent), the resource inputs needed concern legislation, conventions, regulations, planning, integration, partnerships and generic improvements in the research environment, rather than new programmes or budget requirements. The nature of these requirements makes it possible to implement the agenda throughout a wide range of economic situations;
- (b) The impact of this agenda is also likely to be long-lasting and have spillover effects. By strengthening service systems, it will have secondary impacts that benefit policymaking and programme implementation in many sectors of the economy;
- (c) In addition to making a wide spectrum of contributions to sustainable development, the Declaration greatly overlaps with other major development agendas. For example, five of its six pillars connect directly to pillars in the 2030 Agenda and three of its pillars connect with Agenda 2063. Even if the Declaration's "data and statistics" pillar does not have a clear parallel at the broadest level of either Agenda, specific targets in these Agendas tackle the need to strengthen capacity for generating good-quality data;
- (d) In its contributions to sustainable development, the Declaration works through three main pathways: direct (new specific programmes), indirect (through the demographic dividend) and interactive (through improvements in the institutional and policy environment). This mix of pathways is a fundamentally interesting feature that makes it possible for it to have an impact on the short, medium and long terms, in addition to covering multiple objectives;
- (e) The indirect effects of the Declaration (through the demographic dividend) can operate by advancing healthy fertility transitions or enabling the conversion of the favourable age dependency ratios that result from fertility transition into socioeconomic advances.

36. The full Addis Ababa Declaration can be seen as a sum of its direct, indirect and interactive effects, with each of the three constitutive effects seen as a low bound for the total effect. Current research efforts to measure the demographic dividend in Africa can assist in the estimation of the aggregate effect.

37. Many (45 per cent) of the commitments extend to the entire population, and the ones targeting specific groups often focus widely on women and girls (15 per cent), migrants (11 per cent), young people and children (9 per cent) and families (5 per cent). This focus on the population of young people is relevant in the light of their demographic importance and strategic role in shaping future demographic and economic outcomes. The focus on women is likewise warranted from a human rights and socioeconomic perspective, in the context that dividends will depend on changes in women's productive and reproductive roles.

38. It follows and strongly supports a human rights agenda, with great emphasis placed on civic rights (43 commitments), followed by economic (16) and reproductive (15) rights.

39. The operational guide's micromonitoring component reviews specific indicators used to track each commitment and the extent to which these

indicators are validated elsewhere, notably in current efforts to monitor the 2030 Agenda or Agenda 2063. The results indicate that many of the indicators required to monitor the Addis Ababa Declaration are already considered in the 2030 Agenda and Africa 2063 frameworks. Some synergy is therefore possible as countries pursue the Declaration alongside their other commitments to sustainable development.

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