

## **PL 1**

### **DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITIONS, SOCIAL EQUITY, AND POPULATION DIVERSITY**

## | BACKGROUND

The Plenary Session for Sub-theme 1 aims to discuss the complex realities of global demographic transitions and the imperative for an equity-centered approach. Converging demographic and societal transitions - such as the simultaneous rise in youth and older-age cohorts, evolving family and care arrangements, spatial population shifts - are manifesting at varying intensities across countries. These are placing increasing pressures on health and social protection systems as well as posing challenges for how to develop and sustain supportive social, economic, and physical environments.

At the same time, these transitions present important opportunities to harness the demographic dividend by investing in young people's education, skills, and employment prospects, and to unlock the potential of the silver economy by supporting older adults' participation in society and the economy. Realizing these opportunities sustainably and for societies as a whole, also requires understanding and addressing the differentiated impacts of demographic transitions on vulnerable and at-risk groups, such as people with disabilities, migrants, indigenous populations, gender minorities, and informal workers.

Achieving equitable outcomes necessitates integrated and forward-looking policy approaches that are both inclusive and evidence-based, supported by interventions that are attentive to existing gaps in coverage, affordability, and accessibility related to social welfare systems, income security, care provision, and access to essential services across the life course.

## | OBJECTIVES

The Plenary Session will serve as a high-level framing for the sessions under Sub-theme 1 on (1) Social welfare systems, social protection, and fiscal sustainability, (2) Harnessing demographic dividends and silver economy, (3) Role of family, community, and supportive environments alongside demographic shifts, (4) Advancing intergenerational solidarity and equity in an ageing world, and (5) Inclusive policies for vulnerable and at-risk groups.

In particular, the Plenary will highlight cross-cutting themes and priorities. The Plenary will also explore the role of different stakeholders including governments, civil society, communities, the private sector, and development partners in shaping and implementing effective solutions.



## Panelist

### Aleksandar Sasha Bodiroza

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Dr. Aleksandar Sasha Bodiroza, MD, currently serves as the Deputy Regional Director of UNFPA, Asia and Pacific Regional Office. He brings 25 years of extensive experience in strategic foresight, leadership, and management at the country, regional, and global levels. A medical doctor by training, Dr. Bodiroza has consistently championed the provision of critical protection, sexual and reproductive health, and maternal health services to vulnerable populations affected by conflict, displacement, and natural disasters.

Between 2020 and 2023, Dr. Bodiroza served as the Resident Representative in Afghanistan, where he skillfully navigated the complex security, socio-political, and humanitarian landscape of multiple intersecting crises following the Taliban takeover. Under his leadership, UNFPA positioned itself as one of the largest and most impactful humanitarian operations in the country.

Prior to his tenure in Afghanistan, Dr. Bodiroza was the UNFPA Representative in Egypt (2016-2020). During this period, the UNFPA Country Office in Egypt significantly scaled up its operations and programmes, effectively supporting the Government of Egypt's efforts to end preventable maternal deaths, unmet need for family planning, and gender-based violence.

Dr. Bodiroza's experience also includes serving as the Head of the Integrated Field Support Unit of the Arab States Regional Office of UNFPA (2015-2016); Senior Technical Adviser on Youth for the Arab States Regional Office of UNFPA (2011-2016); UNFPA Technical Adviser in the Eastern Europe and Arab States Regional Office in New York (2006-2011); and Programme Specialist at UNFPA Headquarters in New York (1999-2005).

Throughout his distinguished career spanning government, non-governmental organizations, and UNFPA, Dr. Bodiroza has been a tenacious and vocal advocate for universal sexual and reproductive health, women's and young people's empowerment, and the principle of leaving no one behind. He has a strong and proven track record of forging broad-based partnerships to achieve meaningful results for women, girls, and young people.