Nigeria: Population and Demographic trends

Bolatito Ogunbiyi
Atlas Fellow, Population Action International

Nigeria Beyond the Headlines: Population Health, Natural Resources, and Governance

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Rapid population growth - will double by 2050, from 158 million in 2010 to 389 million

Of the 1.1 billion people who are projected to be added to SSA by 2050, about 20% will be born in Nigeria

Source: Compiled by Population Action International from UNPD 2011
Why Rapid Population Growth?

Young age structure - 42.8% of the total population below 15 years

Persistent high fertility rate - 5.7 children per woman

Source: Compiled by Population Action International from UNPD 2011

Source: NDHS 2008
Reducing Mortality

CDR is falling

Deaths per 1,000 population

So is childhood mortality

Number of deaths per 1,000 live births

Source: Compiled from UNPD 2011

Source: NDHS 2008
The year in which a country reaches replacement level fertility has a major impact on its ultimate population size.

Nigeria

Total fertility rate: 5.7
Unmet need for family planning: 20%
“Why Population Matters”
To Health

- High population density and urbanization drive infectious disease spread
- Frequent overlap among countries with youthful population, high HIV prevalence and low access to family planning

Countries with high maternal mortality also have high fertility rates

To Education

• Smaller family sizes allow more children to be educated, especially girls
• Link between educational achievement and poverty
• Educated women have fewer children

Source: NDHS 2008

To Employment

• High number of working-aged people implies more jobs needed
• Increasing unemployment rate, 23.9% in 2011, 21.1% in 2010 & 19.7% in 2009
• 14 million Nigerians are unemployed
• Rate highest among youths (15-24 years) and in the rural areas
To Economic Growth

- Countries like Thailand have shown that there can be no economic growth without reduction in population growth.

*Source: Compiled from World Bank 2012 and UNPD 2011*
To Migration and Urbanization

• Higher emigration than immigration
• Over 1 million Nigerian broad, mostly in Sudan (24%), USA (14%) and the UK (9%)
• International migration impacts receiving county age structure
• About 50% live in Urban areas, will be 75% in 2050
• Most of the expected population growth will be in urban areas
• The effect of rapid population growth in urban areas – poverty- over 60% of urban residents live in informal settlements
To Natural Resources

- High population growth increases demand for natural resources like water.
- Nigeria is 1 of the 15 countries in SSA suffering from water scarcity or stress.
- Combined with anticipated changes in climate, water shortages likely to become more acute.

To Agricultural Production and Food Security

- Population is projected to grow but agricultural production is declining.
- Pressure on the agricultural crop land is growing mostly due to population growth.
- Population growth and climate change are likely to compound the challenge of food insecurity.

To Climate change and Resilience

- Nigeria is one of the 15 hotspots countries in SSA—currently experiencing high rates of population growth, high projected declines in agricultural production and low resilience to climate change.

Security and Governance

• Population, an underlying variable for conflict
• Large youth bulge, high youth unemployment rates makes young Nigerians more susceptible for recruitment into insurgencies
• Internal migration and population growth differentials within the geopolitical divide have often been implicated in political destabilization
• “When countries with youthful age structures achieve democracy, it is less likely to be sustained” (Cincotta, R. 2009)

Source: Complied by Population Action International from UNPD 2011
Policy considerations

• Young population can be an asset if investment in Nigerian youths is prioritized—education, jobs, infrastructure and health care
• Institutions and frameworks should integrate population dynamics in both national and foreign policy planning
• Improvement in social services is key
• Nigeria population growth: opportunity or challenge?