

MOTION

Since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994, too little attention has been paid to the problem of rapid population growth particularly in some countries in Western Asia and in sub-Saharan Africa

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Our position is YES

Rebalance-not by reversing Cairo

We are NOT saying Cairo was wrong

- ✓ We are not opposed to reproductive rights, women's autonomy and voluntary family planning
- ✓ We are not saying population growth was completely ignored.
- ✓ We are not advocating coercive population control.

Our argument

- ✓ Population growth has moved from an explicit development objective to a demographic outcome expected to decline through reproductive health, education, women's empowerment and individual reproductive choice.
- ✓ Cairo should be rebalanced to make population growth an explicit development concern.
- ✓ Strengthen family planning programmes

Our support for 'YES' is based on the following arguments:

1 Global Demographic Reality Since 1994

2 Demographic Reality in Sub-Saharan Africa

3 Reasons for rapid population growth in SSA and the Role of Family Planning (FP)

4 Consequences of Rapid Population growth for development

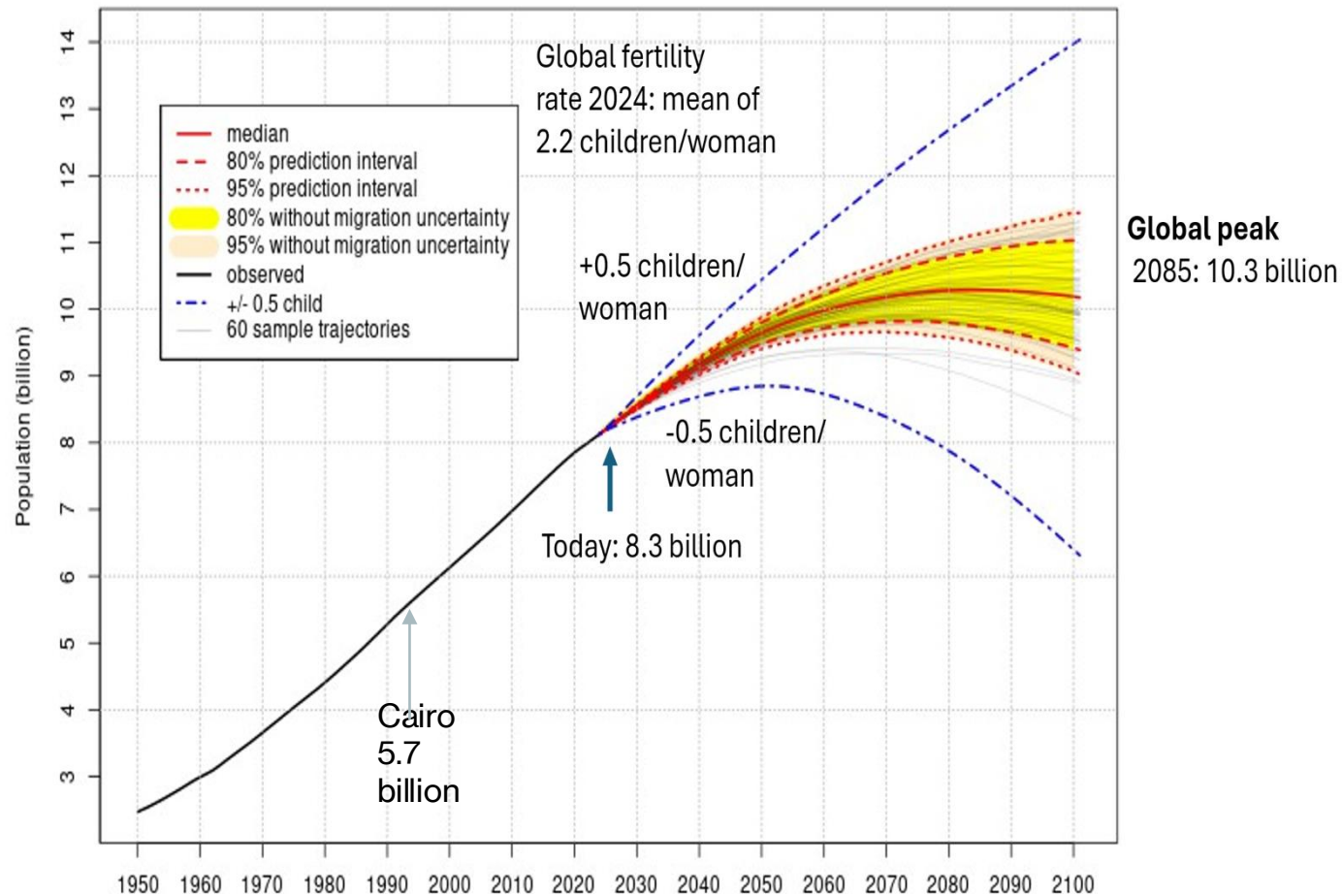
5 Nigeria as a case study

6 Reframing the Path Forward: Rebalance-not by reversing Cairo

7 Conclusion

Demographic reality since Cairo 1994

Global population growth 1950-2025, and ahead (UN projection, 2024)



5.7 billion

Global population, 1994

8.3 billion

Today

10.3 billion

Projected global peak, 2085

Global fertility rate, 2024: mean of 2.2 children/woman

SSA: Demographic reality since 1994

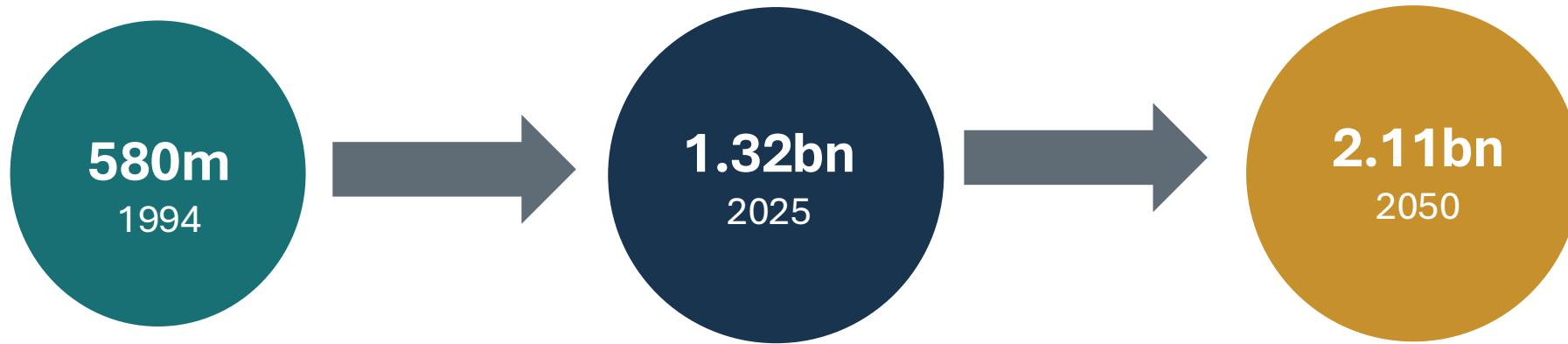


Figure 2: SSA: Population growth (1994 -2050)

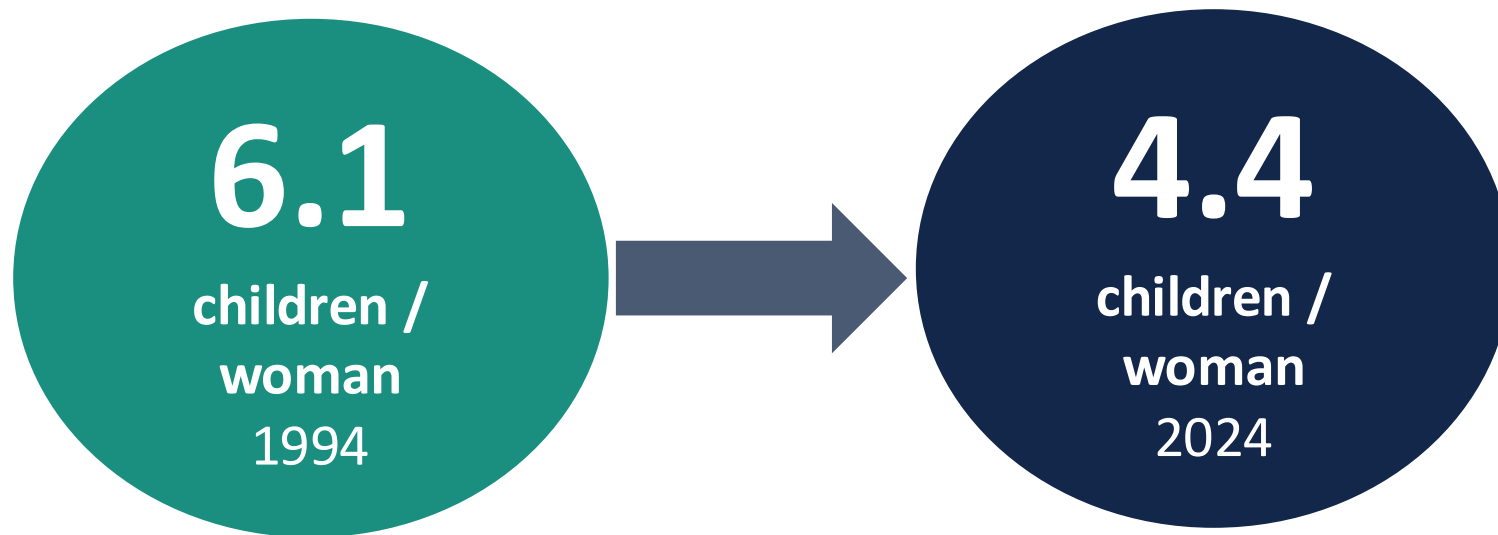


Figure 3: SSA: Fertility Rate (1994 -2024)

Fertility Rate in the Selected Countries

Fertility high: CAR (6.4), Chad (6.1), Niger (6.1), Somalia (6.1)

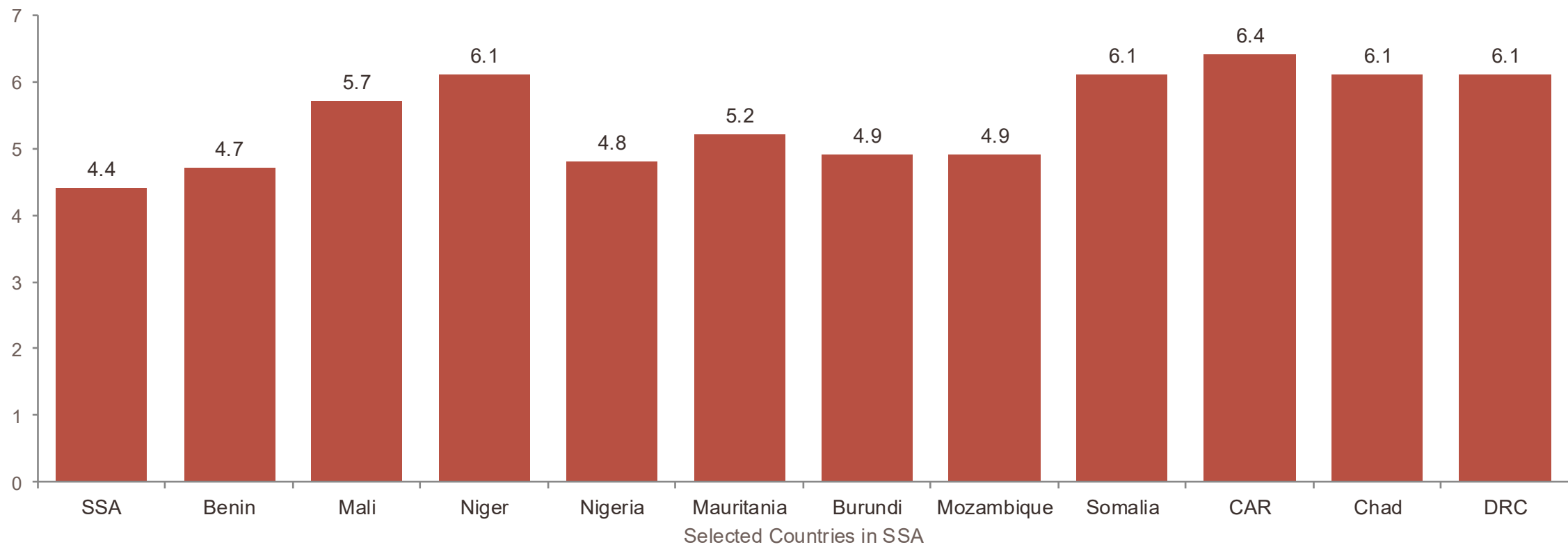


Figure 4: TFR among married women 15-49 in selected SSA Countries (2024)

Source: PRB, 2024

High Fertility, Adolescent Fertility and Population Momentum

High fertility is not only about births occurring now. These births add to rapid population growth and future population momentum

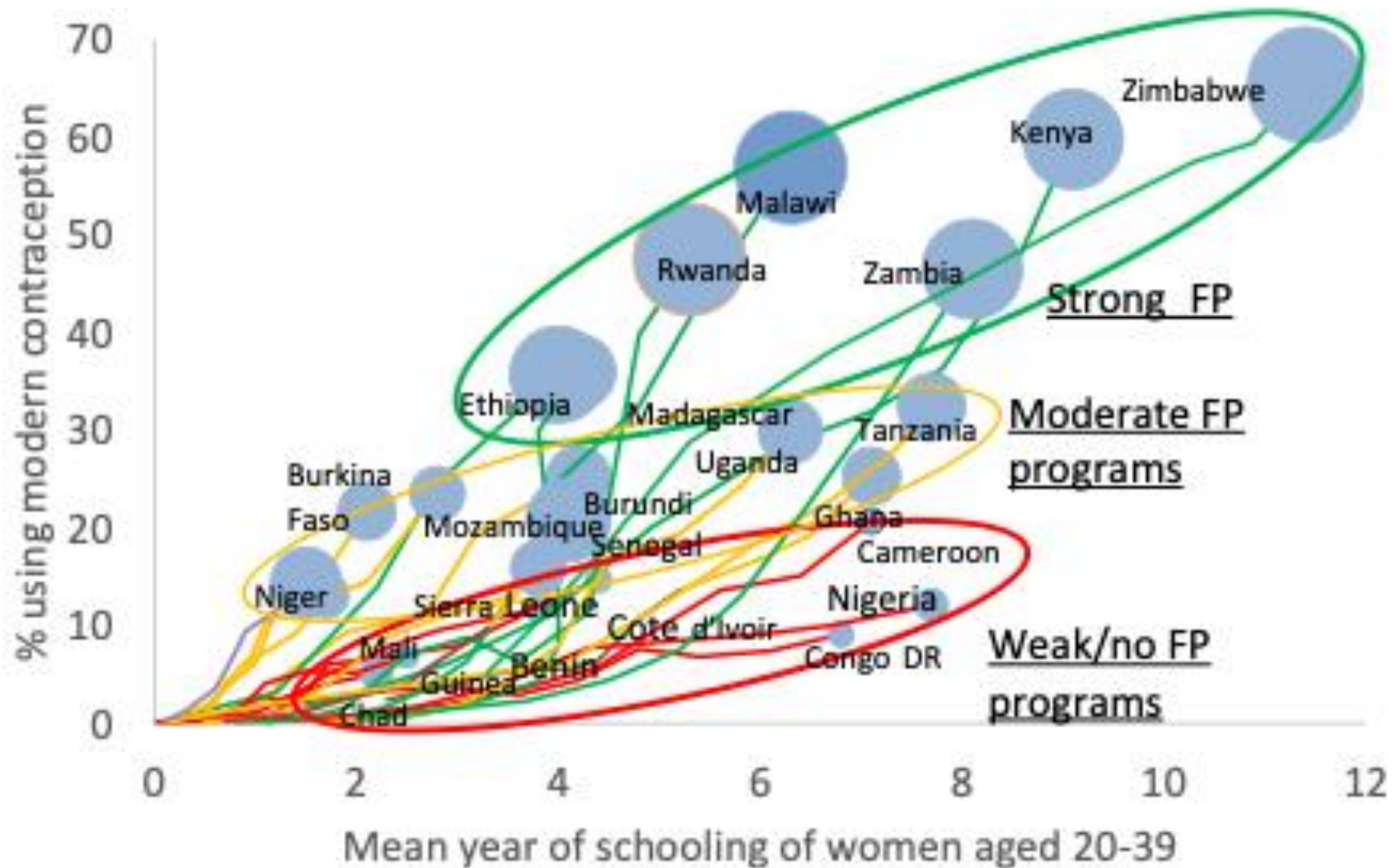
- ✓ High adolescent fertility – about 92 births per 1000 women ages 15-19.
- ✓ The population itself is not a problem if invested in-it could yield a demographic dividend.
- ✓ When too little attention is paid to rapid population growth, especially through poor investment in the population, it can lead to demographic burden.

Reasons for Rapid Population Growth in SSA and the role of Family Planning (FP)

- ✓ Low contraceptive use (only about 30% women use modern contraceptive) and unmet need for family planning (between 20-23%)
- ✓ Early marriage (1 in 3 women aged 20-24 married before age 18)
- ✓ Illiteracy and low levels of education
- ✓ Consideration of children as security at old age
- ✓ Low status of women
- ✓ Culture and religion

(Bongaart, 2017; Mundi, 2000,2002, 2006; UNDESA, 2020, 2024; UNFPA, 2022)

Women's mean years of schooling, strength of FP and use of modern contraception



When population growth exceeds the capacity to provide services and opportunities, development pressures intensify

Social services

- ✓ Schools
- ✓ health services
- ✓ housing

Economy

- ✓ Employment
- ✓ public expenditure
- ✓ poverty reduction

Households

- ✓ Dependency
- ✓ household pressures

Basic needs

- ✓ Food
- ✓ water
- ✓ energy

Infrastructure

- ✓ Transport
- ✓ housing
- ✓ other infrastructure

Environment

- ✓ Land
- ✓ Water
- ✓ food
- ✓ energy;
- ✓ climate stress and urbanisation

Population Growth and the Sustainable Development Goals

The SDGs address many determinants and consequences of population dynamics-but population itself is not a stand-alone SDG

- ✓ Poverty
- ✓ Health
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Gender equality
- ✓ Human development

When economic growth and investment do not keep pace with population growth, progress toward achieving SDGs is slowed

Nigeria as a Case Study

**Population: 110m (1990)
→230m (2026)**

TFR: 4.8
(2023–24)

70%
Population under age 30

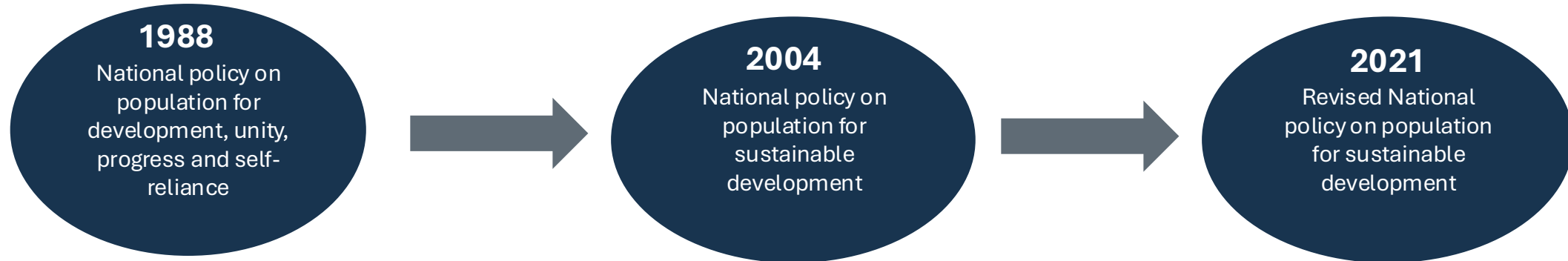
High population momentum + rapid urbanization place massive pressure on development efforts

- ✓ Inadequate housing, educational facilities and health facilities
- ✓ Poverty, unemployment and energy crisis
- ✓ Rapid growth is fueled by early marriage, poor use of contraception, illiteracy and low levels of education, children as old-age security, low status of women, culture and religion

Nigeria's Population Policies: Attention, but a Question of Priority and Implementation POLICY

Population growth has NOT been ignored

But has NOT received the attention, implementation and resource commitment needed to address the scale and persistence of rapid population growth



- ✓ 2021: rapid population growth is addressed through voluntary fertility regulation, reproductive health, women's empowerment, education and human capital development.
- ✓ Reality: choices are shaped by cultural expectations, religious beliefs, patriarchal gender relations and unequal access to contraception.
- ✓ Unmet need for family planning remains high.

Cairo should be rebalanced

- ✓ Reintegrate population growth into development planning

- ✓ Invest in girls and women's education

- ✓ Empower women economically

- ✓ Strengthen family planning programmes

- ✓ Strengthen demographic data systems and invest in the population to yield demographic dividend

Conclusion

We cannot afford another 30 years of demographic neglect. We must explicitly address the challenge of rapid population growth to ensure sustainable growth, economic opportunity, and human dignity.

We must pay more attention to the problem of rapid population growth in SSA.

THANK YOU !