



Population Matters: Forums on the impact of Population Growth on the Millennium Development Goals to complement the 2006 Parliamentary Hearings

September 2006 – January 2007

Background

There is overwhelming evidence that rapid population growth, together with the effects of high consumption levels in developed countries, pose substantial challenges to the attainment of the MDGs. Yet, population has been virtually ignored at a political level for the past decade. Since the term 'population' became increasingly tarnished by the brush of 'coercion' and 'control' during the 1980s it has remained politically sensitive. The link between poverty and population growth has been downplayed and financial and political support for population stabilisation has diminished.

This series of events aims to put population issues back on the public and political agenda. They will bring together a range of issues and perspectives to consider the evidence on the impact of population growth on the MDGs and to debate the major challenges and solutions.

The series aims to influence future policy and action on population and the MDGs

A series of Forums will consider the impact of population growth on the MDGs (and their key targets and indicators), together with consideration of the barriers and solutions facing each issue. This series will conclude with a high profile event in the Houses of Parliament in early 2007.

Population Forums

We aim to attract academics, health, environment and development NGOs to the sessions, and policy makers, and people from organisations who are either wary of discussing or acting on population issues or who know little about them.

Each session has two speakers, and one individual who will provide concluding remarks. The chair will be an MP from the APPG or other interested parliamentarian. The first five seminars examine the MDGs in relation to population growth issues and the final two examine pertinent cross-cutting issues relating to barriers to implementing population policies.



Population and Sustainability Network

www.populationandsustainability.org

1. Population, Poverty and the MDGs

Tuesday 12th September 2006, 6.00 – 7.30pm, Goldsmiths Lecture Theatre,
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street

MDGs addressed: Goal 1 to halve poverty and hunger

- What is the scale, nature and distribution of future population growth?
- What is the impact of population growth on achievement of the MDG goal to halve poverty and hunger?
- How has the world changed since Malthus developed his theory? (global terrorism and political insecurity; escalating environmental crisis precipitating drought and food insecurity etc.).
- What is the outlook regarding food security and hunger?

Speakers: Prof. John Cleland (LSHTM); Prof. Michael Lipton (University of Sussex)

Conclusion: Andrew Rogerson, (DFID, Policy Division)

Chair and Opening of Debate Series: Viscount Craigavon (cross-party Lord)

2. Gender, Education and Women's Empowerment – the impact of Population Growth

Tuesday 26th September, 6.00 – 7.30pm, The Elvin Hall, Institute of Education

MDGs addressed: Goal 2 – Education and Goal 3 – Gender and women's empowerment.

- What magnitudes of increase in enrolment are needed in different countries taking into account projected population growth?
- How do dependency rates affect the ability to finance growth in enrolments from domestic resources?
- How do constraints on expansion at secondary level affect enrolment and completion rates for universal primary education and gender equity at primary and secondary level?
- How should governments, Ministries of Education, civil society organisations and development agencies respond to the various challenges posed by MDGs 2 and 3?

Speakers: Fiona Leach (Sussex University – tbc); Prof Keith Lewin (Sussex University).

Conclusion: Elaine Unterhalter (Institute of Education)

Chair: Baroness Tonge (Lords)

3. Contraception, Population-growth and the link with maternal and child mortality Tuesday 10th October, 6.00 – 7.30pm, The Elvin Hall, Institute of Education

MDGs addressed: Goal 4 – Child mortality; Goal 5 – maternal mortality

Family planning plays a large and under-recognised role in a) saving lives of women and through averting unwanted and high-risk pregnancies and b) saving the lives of infants and children through wider birth-spacing and improved women's survival. Mothers' survival through their baby's infancy is one of the biggest determinants of under-five survival rates. Despite this, funding and political commitment for family planning is losing ground to the "pro-life" lobbies which seek to limit women's choices and access to services.

- What does the data say about the impact of FP on maternal and child mortality?
- How can we make the case to politicians and the international community?

Speakers: Cicely Marston, (Imperial/LSHTM); Carine Ronsmans (LSHTM)

Conclusion by: John Guillebaud, (Population & Sustainability Network/Margaret Pyke)

Chair: Christine McCafferty, MP (and Chair of the APPG-Population)

4. AIDS and Population – joined up working?

Tuesday 24th October, 6.00 – 7.30pm, Gavin de Beer Lecture Theatre, Anatomy Building, University College London, Gower Street

MDGs addressed: Goal 6 – AIDS and other infectious diseases.

- What is the impact of AIDS on population and development? Family planning Programmes have historically done very little to respond to the HIV epidemic, yet many see them as potentially powerful means to curb epidemic spread.
- Why do family planning agencies do little to promote condoms as a contraceptive and HIV programmes rarely offer contraceptive choice?
- What is the role of condoms in contraceptive promotion?
- What is the evidence for their efficacy?
- How can programmes promote both HIV prevention and contraceptive choice?

- What impact have US funding and programmes had on the positioning of condoms in the sexual and reproductive health service mix?

Speakers: *Dr. Ward Cates (Director, Family Health International); Nyovani Madise (African Population Health Research Center)*

Conclusion by: *Prof. Ian Timaeus (LSHTM)*

Chair: *Neil Gerrard, MP*

5. Environmental sustainability and population

Tuesday 7th November, 6.15 – 7.30pm, Room B34, Birkbeck College, Mallet Street

MDGs addressed: Goal 7 – Environmental sustainability and the targets of increased water security and sustainable development.

From an environmentalist perspective, this planet and its resources are finite: if we are not to over-stretch the earth's 'carrying capacity' we urgently need both to slow population growth (particularly in Africa) and reduce the 'ecological footprint' of those individuals already alive (particularly in the North and the emerging industrial countries of India and China).

- What could the effects of reduced population growth *and* altered patterns of consumption mean for water security, bio-diversity, sustainable development?

Speakers: *Toby Aykroyd, Population and Sustainability Network; Professor Tim Dyson (LSE)*

Conclusion by: *Camilla Toulmin, Director IIED*

Chair: *Richard Ottaway, MP (Vice chair APPG Population & Reproductive Health)*

6. States and Individuals: the discourse of rights

Tuesday 28th November, 6.00 – 7.30pm, Brunei Gallery, SOAS, Thornhaugh Street

Aims: to examine key current barriers to implementation of population policies relevant to the attainment of the MDGs

- Discourse on 'rights' is en vogue in almost every sphere, but who really has the say when it comes to issues of fertility and population growth?
- How can we balance the rights of individuals to 'freely decide the number and spacing of their children' with the rights of States to advocate and legislate for particular reproductive behaviours that safeguard the future of their populations (e.g. encouraging fertility in France, limiting fertility in China)?
- When does population control violate the rights of the individual and when do the rights of the State to safeguard the rights of 'society' override the rights of the few?
- Population control is also about generational interests – of the present generation vs. future generations. How and by whom are these interests decided and best safeguarded?

Speakers: *Paul Hunt, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health; Iranian Islamic representative (from SOAS) (tbc)*

Conclusion by: *Karen Newman (Reproductive Health and Rights consultant)*

Chair: *Sandra Gidley, MP*



7. Population: how do we tackle it in the 21st century?

Tuesday 12th December, 6.30 – 8.30pm (note different time)

at The Old Lecture Theatre, LSE

This debate considers what practical steps can and should be taken to tackle the Population issue. Both sides of the coin (see below) are considered: the need to slow population growth (particularly in Africa) and the need to reduce unsustainable consumption and pollution levels (especially in the north, India and China).

- What can individuals in different countries do to contribute to addressing the Population challenge?
- What is the role of programmes and how should governments and donors be supporting them?
- What role should the British Government and the Department for International Development be playing?

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| <p>On one side of the coin the social, economic and environmental effects of population increase.</p> | <p>On the other side Over-consumption per person and the consequences for sustainability.</p> |
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Speakers: Gareth Thomas, MP (DFID) (tbc); Prof. Sir Andy Haines, Director LSHTM (tbc)

Conclusion by: Member of the Select Committee on Development (Malcolm Bruce; Joan Ruddock) (tbc)

Chair: Lord Rea (Lords) (tbc)

The final Population Forum:

Population: The Word that Dares to Speak its Name Again From Research to Action

at the Houses of Parliament (January 30th 2007)

The culmination of the series is a high profile Population Forum that will be held at the Houses of Parliament on either January 24th or 31st. The event will be organised jointly with the APPG, who will probably use the event to launch their Hearings Report (this may already have been launched in Bangkok in November at the International Parliamentarians Biennial meeting, but will not have been launched in the UK).

The objective of the event is primarily **to summarise the issues** and in particular the **actions/solutions**, identified both through the Debate series and through the Hearings process. We envisage a heavy media presence with the aim of **providing messages** on what the UK and other governments and actors should be doing to tackle population growth, over-consumption and the attainment of the MDGs.

Invited Speakers (tbc):

- Shirin Ebadi (Iranian Nobel Peace Prize winner & women's rights activist)
- Dr Khama Rogo, (Lead Health Specialist, Africa Region, The World Bank)
- Professor Chris Rapley CBE (Director, British Antarctic Survey) (confirmed)
- Professor Jeffery Sachs (Director, UN Millennium Project)

Academic Discussant

- Professor John Cleland (Professor of Medical Demography LSHTM, Fellow of the Royal Society)

APPG Representatives

- Christine McCafferty (Hon Chair)
- Richard Ottaway (Hon Vice Chairman)

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