

SKOV seminar on Population  
Wageningen, 11 October 2016

World Population Growth;  
The case of Sub Saharan Africa

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# A Unique Century: The Twentieth Unprecedented quadrupling

World Population (bn.)

1900 - 1.6

1927 - 2

1960 - 3

1974 - 4

1987 - 5

1999 - 6

(2012 - 7

2016 – 7.3)

# Why this unprecedented growth?

- Disequilibrium birth and mortality rates
- Unfinished demographic transition in developing countries

## Life expectancy 20th Century

Developed countries: 50 to 80 years

Developing countries: 30 to 55 years

# Growth of Rich vs. Poor Countries

Population Growth as Share of World Total

Poor Countries: 97%

Rich Countries: 3%

Main reason: limited access Family Planning  
In Developing Countries, especially in Africa

# Selected Indicators: a) Increasing Availability Family Planning

- Global Average (%)
- 1950: 10%
- 2014: 65%

# Selected Indicators: b) Fertility

- Global Average (nr. children per woman)
  - 1950: 6
  - 2014: 3
- Unwanted pregnancies (globally): 40%
- Nr. of women in Developing Countries Without Access to FP: About 300 mn.

# Selected indicators: c) Annual Pop. Growth by Region (%)

- More Developed Countries: 0.3
- Less Developed Countries: 1.3
- Least Developed Countries: 2.3
- e.g. Western & Central Africa: 2.7
- World: 1.1

# Selected Indicators: d) Fertility Rate per Woman (2015)

- More Developed Regions: 1.7
- Less Developed Regions: 2.6
- Least Developed Regions: 4.2
- E.g. Western & Central Africa: 5.6
- World: 2.5
  
- Somalia: 6.6
- Niger: 7.6



# The Asian Tigers

- The case of Thailand:
- Fertility down from 6.2 to 2.2 between 1967 & 1987: Why?
- Several factors, incl. increased Social Sector Spending (20/20 Initiative)
- Similar trends in other countries in East Asia

## 2. History of Population Policies

- Who are the policy makers?
- National & Donor Governments
- UN
- UNFPA
- World Bank
- WHO
- Civil Society: local and international NGOs

# Population Policies before 1994

- Demographic Targets Dominated
- Coercion and lack of Freedom of Choice:  
Women are Instrument rather than  
Beneficiary
- Poor Services, i.a. Latin America

# International Conference on Population & Development (ICPD – Cairo, 1994)

- Context: Mega UN Conferences of the 90s on Global Issues
- Fear of Failure on the eve of Cairo:
- 3 factors: a) Confrontation “Demographers” vs. “Feminists”; b) Iran; c) Terrorism
- 3 Myths:
  - a) Women Want the Many Children They Get
  - b) Vatican will be major Stumbling Block
  - c) Unholy Alliance Iran - Vatican

# Cairo: a Watershed and Breakthrough Event

- New Concept and New Policy: Reproductive & Sexual Health & Rights, Facilitated by Recent “Unmet Need” Doctrine (Bridging the Gap Between Demographic Goals & Unmet Needs)
- From Population Policies dominated by Demographic Targets to Rights Based and Human Centered Policies
- Outcome of the ICPD Supported by 188 Nations

# After “Cairo”

- Progress, especially on Maternal Mortality: down from 600.000 a year in 1995 to 300.000 in 2015.
- Funding Problems, both with Donors and Recipient Countries: only half of committed money actually realised.
- Resistance George W Bush
- Competition with funding Aids Programs: Considerable downplaying of Family Planning

# Africa

- Current UN Projections see Doubling of Total Population of Africa before 2050: From 1.2 bn. now, up to 2.4 bn. in 2050 (versus only 450.000 mn. in 1980!)

# Implications Doubling Population for Africa's Natural Resources

- “Major Intensification and Expansion of Crop Cultivation, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture and Forestry (already happening) and Expanding Cityscapes
- Even Higher Pressure on Land and Water and Threats to Remaining Forests and Wildlife
- Geographical Expansion of Pressure on Land, Water and Minerals
- High Chances of Conflicts over Natural Resources and between People with different Ethnic Identity
- All at the Expense of Nature, Biodiversity and Climate Stability”

(Prof. Ton Dietz, Director of African Studies Centre, 8 Jun, 2016)



# WHY?

- Funding Shift from FP to Aids Programmes between 1995 and 2005, instead of additional Aids funding; after 2005 FP funding increasing again.
- Funding by Donor and Developing Countries considerably Below “Cairo” Commitments.
- Cultural & Religious Constraints
- Lack of Professional Skills of local NGOs
- Lack of Emphasis for FP in MDGs and SDGs of the UN

# How to Respond: “Delta Plan”

- New Approach by UNFPA: Focus on “Demographic Dividend” is beginning to Demonstrate Results;
- Major Advocacy Programmes;
- Higher Funding Levels;
- Inter-agency Coordination;
- Focus on Population Growth in SDG Monitoring.

# Global Population Growth: 3 Quotes

- Pop. Growth is “The Mother of all Problems”  
(Kofi Annan and Wim Kok). (Is it??)
- “Never before in the History of Mankind a Single Investment has brought more Benefits to more People at a Lower Price than Family Planning”  
(UNICEF)
- “Investing In Girls’ Education has the Highest rate of return of all Development Efforts”  
(World Bank)

# Final Note by the Speaker: Accelerating Action

- World Population Growth Deserves Much Higher Levels of Attention and Coordinated Action than we see today, especially For Sub Saharan Africa; this implies major Lobby-, Awareness Creation and Advocacy Efforts; and much higher Funding levels;
- If The World does not Speed up Action, it May well be too Late for Sub Saharan Africa because of Dangerous Levels of Shortages of Food, Health Facilities and Class Rooms; As well as Environmental Degradation, Acceleration of Migration to Europe and other Rich Regions as well a increasing Conflicts.
- The New “Demographic Dividend” Approach by UNFPA May Open Promising Perspectives.