



POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT -- DAC CONCLUSIONS

1. • When Development Co-operation Ministers and Heads of Aid Agencies met in December 1989 to discuss priorities and orientations for their aid policies in the 1990s, they concluded that "there is an imperative need to slow population growth in those many countries where it is too high to permit sustainable development. Offering people in developing countries the opportunity to plan the size of their families, now taken for granted in the industrialised countries, is essential to avoid an aggravation of already difficult social, economic and environmental problems. DAC Members are ready to help developing countries to establish, fund and implement effective population strategies and programmes as a matter of priority".

2. • DAC Members met on 19th-20th April 1990, together with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the Population Council, to follow-up on these conclusions and in particular to:

- -- Review demographic trends and population programme performance;
- -- Establish arrangements for co-ordinating strategies of support for population programmes;
- -- Consider the need for strengthened aid priorities for population programmes.

3. • The main conclusions were:

Need for New Initiatives to Slow Down Population Growth

4. • DAC Members reaffirm the conclusions of the 1989 DAC High-Level Meeting stated above.

5. • Current and projected rates of population growth in developing countries present serious problems. The most recent UN estimates (see Table 1) indicate that on present trends, population growth in many developing countries is threatening to overtake their hopes of achieving sustainable development and alleviating the poverty which already afflicts some one billion people. DAC Members also recognise that because population, environment, food and energy are issues that have assumed global significance, the implications of these problems will be felt in terms of worldwide environmental damage and increasing pressures for migration.

6. • On the positive side, where high-quality family planning has been available, it has been successful in reducing fertility at relatively low cost. Since the 1960s, family planning programmes have averted several hundred millions of unwanted births. This has led to considerable improvements in individual and family well-being as well as made an important contribution towards the achievement of development goals.

Invaluable experience has been gained. Still, the existing demand for family planning continues to be far ahead of services, and an estimated 300 million men and women who want to plan their families lack the means to do so.

7. • Thus, there is general agreement that strong new initiatives are now called for, both nationally and internationally, to slow population growth. Comprehensive, integrated population policies, based on careful assessments of population and development conditions and needs, are called for. It is for the developing countries to decide their own population strategies and programmes. Their efforts and inputs, already in many cases substantial, need to be expanded. Where family planning users can afford to, they should increasingly pay for the services. The indigenous private sector should be given a more prominent role. All of this will need to be supported by a large-scale sustained and concerted effort of population assistance.

8. • The determinants of fertility are varied and complex. Direct action to reduce birth rates by means of family planning information and services must be allied to efforts to improve social and economic conditions. DAC Members are addressing the indirect determinants through their overall development assistance, in particular, in the fields of primary health care, women in development (WID) and education. The demographic aspects of these programmes should be taken more fully into account. Beyond these activities, the main thrust of the new intensified efforts to moderate population growth must be through voluntary family planning, which has effectively demonstrated its potential for reducing the birth rate in many developing countries.

#### New Action to Assist Developing Countries Strengthen Population Analysis and Policies

9. • Developing country governments must have the necessary administrative and managerial capacity to plan effective population policies and programmes and to put them into effect. International assistance in this area should have high priority. Donors can help prepare an analytical framework for each country which will demonstrate the effects of unabated population growth on socio-economic development and on the environment, and indicate the policy options available, so that all governments will fully appreciate that investment in population and family planning programmes is not only cost-effective, but indispensable to sustainable development.

10. • Far more should be done to stress the implications of population growth for development prospects through the policy dialogue which aid agencies hold with their developing country partners. Members request the World Bank and the UNDP to stress the population issue in Consultative Groups and Round Tables, and will themselves actively participate in population discussions within these frameworks. More generally, Members will work towards adequate and coherent attention being given to population issues in all relevant international fora.

11.• DAC Members stress the need to involve local people and institutions closely with the design and implementation of aid-financed projects and programmes. Donors and recipients should work together to make full use of competent expertise available locally for both the design and implementation of aid-financed programmes, taking account of the diversity of country situations, including social and cultural factors. Greater emphasis should be given to ensuring the commitment of recipients' executing agencies through their active involvement in selection, design and implementation. Active involvement of end-users and beneficiaries, e.g., through communities and other local organisations, to ensure that the programmes meet actual needs and circumstances, is essential for programme success and mobilising local support so that programmes will in time be sustainable with the country's own resources.

12.• Women must be fully involved in the planning and implementation of population programmes. Development activities have too often been designed in a way which takes insufficient account of women in their reproductive role and as decision-makers, producers and beneficiaries. Consideration should be given to gender issues already at the stage of programme preparation.

13.• To increase the effectiveness of population policies and programmes and to help raise political commitment to these programmes, an improved understanding is needed on a range of population issues. High priority areas include research on cultural and social factors which determine reproductive behaviour, alternative approaches to service delivery, the socio-economic and environmental consequences of rapid population growth, the population impact of other development activities, the role and status of women and contraceptive technology. Strengthening research capacity in developing countries and enhancing interaction with the international research community will greatly benefit the process of in-country policy development and programme implementation. Special attention should be given to facilitating the operational use of research findings and to promoting co-operation between developing countries.

14.• The poorest countries, notably in Africa, where population is increasing very rapidly and where governments have recently demonstrated greater willingness to promote family planning programmes, will require a special emphasis, involving a broadly-based population strategy including health care and family planning, education and other social programmes. Special attention should be given to building up infrastructure and strengthening human resources and institutional capacity.

#### Better Co-ordination of International Support for Population Programmes

15.• Special efforts must be made to achieve a more coherent aid effort in the population field by co-operating closely with developing countries, the competent international institutions and NGOs. This aim, strongly re-affirmed by the DAC regarding international assistance generally, is crucial to the effectiveness of the new population initiatives envisaged.

Really effective mechanisms and working practices of regular co-ordination need to be established in order to make optimum use of resources, draw on collective experience and improve the quality and implementation of population programmes.

16.• There is general acceptance of the desirability of making new efforts to establish good working arrangements for co-ordinating population assistance at the country level. The recipient government should play the central role in such arrangements. It should be assisted and supported by donor agencies as appropriate. In countries where no effective arrangements currently exist, the local representative of the UNFPA, the World Bank or other agency with experienced field representation should offer its services to the government for this purpose. Non-governmental organisations and the private sector have been, and are likely to be, important sources of productive experimentation and innovation in this field. Their representatives should be encouraged to participate and contribute their special experience and skills.

17.• In order to economise resources, avoid duplication, and ease the burden on developing country governments, donors will exchange available analytical country reports such as the UNFPA Programme Review and Strategy Development Reports, and will use them within national frameworks as a basis for their own planning.

18.• One of the major functions of local co-ordination is to enable the government and donor agencies together to keep the implementation of the national population programme under close review and to monitor the progress achieved. The agenda of the national co-ordination meetings should cover, in addition, issues relevant to improving the design, the implementation and the quality of the national population programme. An important condition, therefore, is that there should be a full and frank exchange of information between interested parties on their respective experience, so as to avoid their repeating each others' mistakes. The need to give more adequate emphasis to population and population assistance issues in aid Consultative Groups and Round Tables has already been stressed above.

19.• In order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of international support for population programmes, greater co-operation is also needed at the international level. As a first step interested parties will seek practical ways of improving exchanges of information. The UNFPA will initiate this process and provide secretariat support. The UNFPA Governing Council will be kept fully informed.

20.• Possible subjects for discussion include: contraceptive supplies, training, operational research, census and survey programmes, and, more generally, review of progress in the implementation of population programmes and their funding.

#### Increased Priority for Population Assistance

21.• In view of the vast unmet demand for family planning and the manifest need for population policies and programmes, DAC Members are ready to help developing countries to establish, fund and implement effective population

strategies and programmes as a matter of priority and to make every effort to raise substantially the low level of population assistance. There are at present considerable differences in the extent to which individual DAC Members participate in the international population assistance effort (see Table\2).

22.• Given the special importance of population policies and programmes and the very tight budget situation in many developing countries, Members further agreed to treat requests for local recurrent cost funding with flexibility, bearing in mind the eventual goal of self-sufficiency of programmes.

23.• Most agencies' in-house population capacity is presently modest and clearly far below what would be required to provide effectively the strengthened and improved population assistance support, the enhanced policy dialogue and the co-ordination effort now envisaged. Members agree there is a need to increase population expertise in recipient and donor countries. They agree to examine ways of developing specialist expertise both in-house and externally. There is further agreement that non-population specialist agency staff need population training. This will be necessary, not only to improve the planning and implementation of programmes, but also to ensure that population issues are given due importance in the policy dialogue.

24.• The DAC is convinced that money to help developing countries implement effective population programmes is a sound --\indeed a vital -- investment for sustained development. It reaffirms its intention to convince key policy-makers of the force of this equation. DAC Members invite the participating international institutions to help developing countries put forward population programme proposals in line with actual needs.

#### Follow-up

25.• The DAC will keep a watching brief on the progress of implementation of the above population initiatives through Aid Reviews, improved statistical reporting and other relevant activities.

26.• A meeting of the DAC will be held in 1993 to review progress made and to prepare for the proposed 1994 International\Population Conference.

Table 1

Table 2

DAC MEMBERS' COMMITMENTS TO POPULATION PROGRAMMES  
BY KEY INDICATORS FOR 1988 (a)  
Commitments in thousands dollars

| Donor country (b) | Total amount | % by channel |       |          | % of total ODA (c) | % of GNP |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|-------|----------|--------------------|----------|
|                   |              | Direct       | UN    | NGOs (c) |                    |          |
| Australia         | 1 742        | 57           | 27.16 | 0.14     | 0.001              |          |
| Austria           | 1 556        | 0            | 100.0 | 0.32     | 0.001              |          |
| Belgium           | 1 180        | 0            | 100.0 | 0.16     | 0.001              |          |
| Canada            | 34 900       | 48           | 30.22 | 1.15     | 0.007              |          |
| Denmark           | 18 155       | 0            | 77.23 | 1.72     | 0.018              |          |
| Finland           | 12 129       | 1            | 93.6  | 1.94     | 0.012              |          |
| France (d)        | 707          | 51           | 49.0  | 0.01     | 0.001              |          |
| Germany           | 26 879       | 1            | 85.14 | 0.40     | 0.002              |          |
| Italy (e)         | 3 070        | 0            | 100.0 | 0.64     | 0.003              |          |
| Japan             | 57 253       | 9            | 90.1  | 0.42     | 0.002              |          |
| Netherlands       | 26 946       | 3            | 87.10 | 1.06     | 0.012              |          |
| New Zealand       | 439          | 0            | 60.40 | 0.50     | 0.001              |          |
| Norway            | 48 658       | 46           | 35.19 | 6.65     | 0.055              |          |
| Sweden            | 28 443       | 5            | 48.47 | 1.83     | 0.016              |          |
| Switzerland       | 4 400        | 0            | 100.0 | 0.62     | 0.002              |          |
| United Kingdom    | 25 700       | 16           | 37.47 | 0.87     | 0.003              |          |
| United States     | 247 059      | 51           | 0.49  | 2.21     | 0.005              |          |
| TOTAL             | 539 216      | 30           | 38 32 | 0.90     | 0.004              |          |

- a. No data available for the EEC and Ireland.
- b. Source: UNFPA, Global Population Assistance Report 1982-1988, September 1, 1989. The introduction states: "There is no precise and generally accepted definition of what population assistance is in fact. Thus this report must simply accept as 'population assistance' whatever a donor chooses to call population assistance".
- c. DAC Statistics.
- d. Bilateral data supplied by the French authorities.
- e. DAC Statistics. Contributions to UNFPA only; excludes bilateral funding, which is under review.

END-OF-TEXT