Development Bulletin
No. 62 August 2003

Population Change in Asia and the Pacific

♦ Features
  • Effects of population change
  • Social, demographic and economic impacts
  • Policy implications for Australia and the region
  • Population mobility and its effects
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Unexpectedly rapid changes are taking place in the size and structure of households, where people live, how long they live, and where and how they work. These changes and the national and international movement of people in the Asia-Pacific region are having a dramatic impact on the political and economic stability of some countries and on their future ability to reduce poverty and provide sustainable development. The speed and scale of these changes have yet to be widely recognised or incorporated into development policy, planning and debate. This is particularly true of the Asia-Pacific region.

This issue of Development Bulletin considers current trends and the future implications of population change against a backdrop of globalisation and free trade.

Symposium, workshop and film

The issues raised in this issue of Development Bulletin were fully debated at three Development Studies Network events. These were:

1. The symposium, Population Change in Asia and the Pacific: Implications for Policy Development, which was held at the National Museum of Australia, 5 June 2003. This event was opened by the Hon. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and supported by AusAID and the Australian National University's National Institute of Social Sciences and Law.


3. Showing of the ni-Vanuatu film, A Piece of Land; 4 June 2003. This film, scripted, directed and acted by the drama group Wan Smolbag Theatre, provides a dramatic account of what happens in a rural village when population outstrips the amount of land available.

The papers and discussion from the symposium, workshop and film are included in this issue, together with additional supporting information.

Collaboration and support

This issue of Development Bulletin is the result of collaboration between the Development Studies Network at the Research School of Social Sciences, the National Institute for Social Sciences and Law, and the Demography and Sociology Program (all at the Australian National University), and the Australian Reproductive Health Alliance. Support for the symposium was provided by AusAID, the National Museum of Australia and the National Institute for Social Sciences and Law.

We are very grateful for AusAID's support for the publication of this issue of Development Bulletin. Our thanks to all those who helped bring these important issues into the development debate. Thanks also to the Hon. Alexander Downer for giving the keynote address and for ensuring that population issues including reproductive health and family planning are now back on the development agenda. And our thanks go also to Professor Jack Caldwell for summarising the main points from the symposium so succinctly.
Advisory committee

Many thanks are due to the advisory committee for this issue, which comprised Professors Peter McDonald, Gavin Jones and Terry Hull and Dr Don Rowland of the Australian National University, and Ms Dianne Proctor of the Australian Reproductive Health Alliance.

The opinions expressed in this journal are those of the authors, not necessarily those of the organisations with which they are associated. The recommendations that emerged from the policy workshop are those of the 53 participants.

Next Development Bulletin

As this is the International Year of Fresh Water, our next issue will focus on the role of water in sustainable development and poverty reduction. Some of the papers will be those given at the network’s symposium, Water, Governance and the Political Economy: Water Security and Poverty Reduction in Asia-Pacific, to be held at the National Museum of Australia, 19–20 August 2003, and a community workshop to be held in Suva, 11–12 September 2003, which will consider practical strategies for improving community participation and communication in sustainable water use and management. If you would like to contribute a paper please contact us.

Interesting and fruitful reading.

Pamela Thomas
Managing Editor
Population change in Asia and the Pacific: Implications for development policy

The Hon. Alexander Downer, MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs

I am pleased to address this important symposium on the implications for development policy of population change in the Asia-Pacific region. Here we have a range of eminent speakers, including world-renowned demographers, economists and social scientists, debating on global population trends and their implications for the region. It is important that this issue is examined.

I do not propose to steal the thunder of the experts, but I do want to discuss some implications of population change in our region. I will argue that the most effective response to these implications is the promotion of economic growth and poverty reduction. I will then outline how the Australian Government is seeking to promote growth and poverty reduction through its trade and aid policies. More specifically, I will touch upon some of the programs we are supporting which are directly addressing health and family planning issues — all important factors in demographic change.

Population change in the Asia-Pacific region

Over the past 50 years, the Asia-Pacific region has experienced unparalleled social and demographic change. In less than two generations, the Asia-Pacific region has witnessed:

- a 2.2 billion population increase from 1.4 billion in 1950, representing 60 per cent of the total increase in world population;
- a reduction in infant mortality rates by almost two thirds and a decline in maternal mortality by half;
- an increase in life expectancy of about 25 years;
- a decline in the total fertility rate by more than half; and
- a sixfold increase in urban population.

Looking to the Future, a 2001 report co-funded by Australia and the Asian Development Bank, predicted that over the next 25 years, the population in Asia alone will increase by 50 per cent from 3 billion to 4.5 billion.

These population statistics make fascinating reading, but they do not tell the whole story. The demographic changes I have just described have also been accompanied by significant gains in disposable incomes — between 1970 and 1995 per capita incomes of Asian developing countries nearly trebled. Economic transformation and dramatic improvements in education, health care and family planning have been fundamental forces driving demographic change. Demographic change, in turn, has provided favourable conditions for social and economic development.

Despite a rapidly growing world population, the number of people living in absolute poverty has begun to fall — a reduction of 200 million since 1980. However, these positive developments have not been uniform across the region. Even though income levels have risen in many countries, there are still over 800 million people in the region living on an income of less than US$1 per day. Although mortality and fertility rates have declined in
While it is a pet topic of mine, I cannot stress enough the importance of trade and Australia's policy in reducing poverty and indirectly helping to address demographic change in our region. The Doha Round of World Trade Organization negotiations presents a major opportunity for developing countries to secure the better trading conditions and fairer trade rules that will help underpin development. This is especially the case for agriculture — many of the 100 WTO developing country members are agricultural producers. Protectionism in developed countries hurts poor countries — which depend on agriculture for their livelihoods — the hardest.

Australia has been at the forefront of trade liberalisation by reducing protection and subsidies. We continue to take an ambitious but pragmatic approach in international forums to champion the interests of free trade — and developing countries — in agricultural products. We will be spending A$31 million in 2003-2004 to help developing countries participate in the round. And we will be providing tariff and quota-free access for all goods produced in the world's 49 Least Developed Countries and in East Timor from 1 July this year.

We are leading by example because we believe that a fairer global trading regime is the biggest contribution we can make to developing countries and the two billion people estimated to be living in poverty.

The role of Australia's aid program

To maximise the benefits of trade liberalisation and growth in reducing poverty, developing countries need to strengthen domestic governance and improve access to basic services. Our aid program plays a critical role in helping countries in our region address these challenges. Poverty is often accompanied by unemployment, malnutrition, illiteracy, low status of women, refugee flows, and limited access to social and health services, including family planning. All these factors contribute to high levels of fertility, morbidity and mortality, as well as to low economic productivity.

Australia's aid program tackles these issues head-on. It places a high priority on development in the Asia-Pacific, where the majority of the world's poor live. And it puts Australia in a position to respond to the often wrenching changes in a dynamic region. We focus on enabling the poor to increase their productivity through access to credit, markets, property rights, technology, education and health, including reproductive health. We strengthen systems of governance to improve accountability and provide better access to services, resources and decision-making by the poor. And we address the vulnerability of the poor to illness, conflict, natural disaster and economic crisis.

The aid program specifically takes into account the demographics of poverty and population. While recognising the increasingly demanding issues of urbanisation, we know that the
majority of poor people still live in rural areas. Agricultural and rural development are therefore essential building blocks for our region’s future. That is why we will be investing some $255 million in 2003-2004 in rural development, mostly in the Asia-Pacific region. And that is why in countries such as Cambodia, Laos, East Timor and Papua New Guinea, we aim our development programs squarely at rural populations.

We also recognise that as population increases, the needs of industry, agriculture and food production are placing increasing pressures on natural resources. It is estimated that by 2025, 4 billion people worldwide will be suffering from lack of access to clean water. In March this year, on the eve of World Water Day, I launched our new policy on water, Making Every Drop Count. We are committing A$94 million to water-related programs next financial year, and have established an Australian Water Research Facility to help apply Australian expertise to regional water challenges.

While progress in agricultural technology has given the world the tools to produce sufficient food for everyone, over 800 million people around the world remain chronically under-nourished today — many of them in south and east Asia. The challenge now facing us is to find sustainable ways to increase yields without causing further damage to our fragile environment. Developments in biotechnology and genetically modified crops could deliver a second Green Revolution, and these new technologies must be put to use in the battle against world hunger. Australia has pledged A$1 billion over five years to programs and initiatives that enhance food security. The pledge covers not only immediate food aid needs, but also aims to boost agricultural production, research, and development.

Population and health programs

I now want to touch on some of our Government’s programs to help countries in our region with their population policies, including reproductive health and family planning. Our commitment to health and population programs in the region goes beyond humanitarian concerns. High fertility and poor health directly affect the ability of families to accumulate capital, and to feed and educate children, thus eroding economic development. Moreover the inability of governments to provide adequate essential services to rapidly increasing populations contributes to political instability. In this context, in 2003-2004, Australia will provide some A$75 million for family planning, population policy, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

Improving maternal health is vital in efforts to reduce poverty. Australia’s assistance for reproductive health programs includes women’s health services, such as safe childbirth, pre- and post-natal care, immunisation and safe, voluntary and affordable family planning. In the Pacific region, for instance, we are running a particularly successful reproductive-health and family-planning training project, aimed at developing local expertise among teachers, nurses and educators. Education for women and girls also has a strong correlation with fertility rates and maternal and child health.

In 2003-2004, Australia will provide an estimated $270 million in education assistance — 37 per cent of this will be directed at basic education with a strong emphasis on equity for women and girls in rural communities.

Australia has also played a leadership role in combating the spread of HIV/AIDS in the region, having facilitated regional conferences on HIV/AIDS. At the ASEAN meeting last August, I launched the Asia Pacific Leadership Forum on HIV/AIDS and Development. This initiative complements our ongoing work with UNAIDS, and puts HIV/AIDS on top of the region’s political agenda. Australia is also helping developing countries counter the advance of HIV/AIDS through a six-year, A$200 million initiative.

In the last two years, we have spent well over A$50 million on activities directly aimed at reducing HIV infections — and we are continuing to build on this work with new projects.

Of course there is much more to do. We will continue to work with regional governments, NGOs, and local communities to offer lifesaving treatment for mothers and their babies, prevent unwanted pregnancies through family planning, and help slow the spread of AIDS in the region.

Conclusion

Australia is very conscious of the need to come to grips with the complex issues of population and development in its own neighbourhood. We are tackling these issues at a number of levels, both directly and indirectly. But I cannot emphasise too much that promoting economic growth and reducing poverty lie at the very heart of the issue. Only through such action can we truly give developing country populations a fair chance to break the vicious cycle of poverty and high fertility and mortality rates. A symposium such as this provides new impetus for this important debate, and thereby advances the population and development agenda for our region. In that spirit, please accept my best wishes for the success of your deliberations.
Introduction: Population policy implications for Australia regarding the Pacific and Asia

John C Caldwell, Demography and Sociology Program, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra

Introduction

This paper summarises and evaluates presentations to the conference Population Change in Asia and the Pacific: Implications for Development Policy held on 5 June 2003 and organised by the Development Studies Network at the Australian National University. It also takes note of additional papers submitted to this issue of Development Bulletin.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Alexander Downer MP, who also has responsibility for the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), addressed the conference. The Minister made two important points about the principles guiding Australian overseas aid: first, our chief beneficiaries are to be the poorest and most disadvantaged; and, second, assistance in the population field is important. Helen Ware, formerly a senior officer in AusAID, added that funding was also influenced by closeness, historical ties, and geopolitical and trade considerations and needs, which Australia was uniquely placed to address.

My attempt to identify the poorest of the poor in the United Nations ESCAP region employed two measures: (1) an upper bound of US$2,000 in 2002 in GNI PPP PC (gross national income converted to international dollars by using a purchasing power parity conversion factor) (Population Reference Bureau 2002); and (2) an upper bound of 0.55 for the Human Development Index (HDI), a measure constructed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with income, mortality and education as elements (UNDP 2002). This definition identifies as the poorest of the poor most of sub-Saharan Africa, but few countries elsewhere and those mostly in our region. They are the three Melanesian countries, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, in the Pacific; East Timor, Cambodia and Laos in Southeast Asia; only Mongolia in East Asia; and all of mainland South Asia (Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Afghanistan) except India, which now has a GNI PPP PC of US$2,450 and an HDI of 0.56 because of sustained economic growth with the annual real increase in gross domestic profit averaging six per cent during the 1990s. The prime need of Melanesia for our technical aid was stressed by Dick Bedford, and is recognised by the Australian government in that around two-thirds of AusAID's budget is devoted to these three countries with a total population of less than six million people, a large number by Pacific but not Asian standards.

Peter McDonald's paper confirms this identification of the neediest people of Southeast Asia by demographic measures. The only countries in the region which still exhibit population growth rates above two per cent per annum are Cambodia (2.4 per cent), Laos (2.3 per cent) and Brunei (2.3 per cent), the latter being no cause for concern because of its small population and high income, with GNI PPP PC approximately equal to Australia's. In contrast, Indonesia's annual growth rate is now down to 1.3 per cent. The high Cambodian and Laos population growth rates are explained by the region's high fertility levels (total fertility rates (TFR) of 6.3 and 6.7),
Identified needs

Reproductive health and family planning assistance was identified as a continuing requirement. This is most obvious in Melanesia and Indo-China, but extends further. Because ideological and religious forces have played a role, Malaysia (TFR=3.2) and the Philippines (3.5) seem to be stabilising at higher levels than their development indices would predict. In South Asia, Bangladesh's fertility decline has stalled at a total fertility rate of 3.3 for over a decade, and India (TFR=3.2) is probably facing similar difficulties. It is this problem that has led the United Nations in its 2002 medium projections, in contrast to the 2000 projections, to postulate a slower fertility decline in some Third World countries than had earlier been their prediction.

The main reason for this slowdown is probably a failure to achieve low childhood mortality. Bangladesh and India still have infant mortality rates close to 70 deaths per 1,000 live births, levels not found in Australia for almost 100 years, and evidence of how little poor countries can spend on health provision. But there are other problems where Australia may be able to help or is helping, particularly by setting up model services. In poor countries, the move from family planning to reproductive health, launched by the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Cairo, has often caused confusion and has implied aims that are hard to meet. The decentralisation of administration, promoted by a range of international agencies, meant a loss of efficiency in traditional centralised population programs in India during the 1990s and in Indonesia today. We have used technical aid to assist China to move toward family planning with a human face in model areas and should continue with this valuable work.

Technical aid in the health field has a long tradition, but was only intermittently mentioned at the conference, probably because it is taken for granted. Yet, our region faces special challenges, especially in the case of child health. The only countries in the world, outside sub-Saharan Africa, Iraq and Haiti, with infant mortality rates above 75 per 1,000 births are found in the ESCAP region, in Papua New Guinea, East Timor, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

HIV/AIDS is a specialised health field in which many Australians have had aid experience, either on the behavioural side in developing countries or in vaccine research in Australia. Furthermore, Australia's highly successful program to control its own epidemic has yielded experience that has relevance elsewhere. I have argued (Caldwell 1995) that the epidemic is unlikely to exhibit anything like the severity of the sub-Saharan African epidemic anywhere in Asia, and that, given the social structures of the continent, nearly all Asian governments could adopt modified versions of Thailand's program to contain the epidemic. Thailand's adult HIV level is around two per cent (compared with over 30 per cent in some African countries), and, as Gour Dasvarma reports, Cambodia's level, which was probably somewhat higher, is now falling. This is not necessarily the case in Melanesia, especially Papua New Guinea (Caldwell and Isaac-Toua 2002). The Melanesian sexual culture and level of sexually transmitted infections strongly resembles the situation in sub-Saharan Africa. There is some possibility that other factors will militate against an African-type epidemic: smaller cities with a lower level of institutionalised commercial sex, poorer communications, less mobility of the population, and a lower level of economic development. But banking on the latter forces is hardly worth the risk. Part of the reason for our uncertainty about the PNG situation is the extreme inadequacy of HIV surveillance, a defect that can be remedied only by technical aid.

Education, and the attainment of gender equity in its services, is an old field in aid, partly because its contributions to building long-term human investment are subject to little risk or corruption. In addition, as Mayling Oey-Gardiner argues for Indonesia and more widely, higher educational levels, especially for girls, drive down child mortality and fertility, and fundamentally change the workforce and society. Australia has educational experience that can readily be exported. David Lucas argues that this is true also at the university level, and cites our successful program in South Africa.

Environmental issues were stressed, especially that of a sustainable global environment with a richer but stationary population, probably as high as 10–11 billion and possibly to be reached by the end of the present century. Thereafter the population may well decline. This is, of course, one reason to be involved in the reproductive/health field. Colin Butler contends that 'the best case may be that humanity will emerge from the current century with a battered but essentially intact environmental core, and with a smarter, better educated, more affluent and smaller population than now exists'. Richard Bedford argues that the major demand on Australia from Polynesia may well come if global warming persists and if this results in a significant rise in sea levels, a major peril for atoll populations. On the whole, we will have to wait and see, but an adequate system for monitoring Pacific sea levels is essential. At home, we could either sign and adhere to the Kyoto Protocol or legislate so as to move closer to its provisions.

As fertility declines, the average age of populations will rise and ultimately every country in the world will have a large...
proportion of its population beyond retirement age (up to almost 40 per cent in countries with fertility well below replacement levels). The situation is not as bad as it sounds because the proportion of the population of working age will change little — the rise in the old will be offset by a fall in the percentage of young. Nevertheless, there will be major problems of supporting the old and providing them with adequate health services. This can be done only by planned savings (employee, employer and governmental) in the form of insurance policies, superannuation and pensions. Australia will learn from countries reaching this situation 20-30 years before us: Germany, Sweden, Italy, Spain and Japan. We will be able to add our experience to theirs in providing developing countries with advice on how to build stable income support and health systems for the old. Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong will all reach this situation before us, but, in the coming decades, China (with 20 per cent over 65 years by about 2036) and Thailand (with 20 per cent by 2045) may well seek expert help to prepare for this eventuality. Zhongwei Zhao believes China might welcome policy and research advice at an early date.

In East Asia the majority of the population is likely to live in urban areas by 2015; in Southeast Asia by 2020; and in South Asia by 2030. Huge rural populations are moving into the cities, with most living indefinitely in makeshift shanty towns without legal residential rights or basic services (Caldwell and Caldwell 2002). Technical aid can be used to show how poor housing and amenities can be improved and how the legal problems of residence can be solved. Both Dang Nguyen Anh and Yu Zhu point to the thought that must go into solving China’s problems with internal migration, where over 100 million people are now described as ‘floating population’.

International migration, especially unauthorised and refugee movements, is likely to become increasingly widespread and distressing during the twenty-first century. It is a difficult area, but technical aid may be drawn in, especially to research the nature, origins and causes of such movements.

Other types of technical aid are of importance. The first is in areas where Australia has advantages arising from its specialised knowledge, skills and experience. Many examples come from the agricultural field, in areas such as savanna grassland farming. Similarly, the Australian Bureau of Statistics has provided invaluable help in census taking. Demographic training in Australia has helped Africa and Asia, particularly the univalved health resource, the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDRB). The second impetus for technical aid arises from moral obligations following military actions where we have been involved, such as Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq, irrespective of their geographical location. A third, and perhaps the most important and potentially wide-ranging of all, involves political and military instability in our immediate region. This certainly pertains to Melanesia, and, to a lesser extent, Fiji and Indonesia.

Finally, it might be noted that the prime aim of technical aid should be to build-up those types of infrastructure that cannot be damaged by public servants’ unfamiliarity with business or factories or by slipshod or corrupt governments. The clearest case is education and specialised training, but bridges, roads and railways, if needed and properly located, are also examples. So is the retention of natural infrastructure, whether potentially productive or not, in the form or state forests and national parks.

The geographical perspective

There is general agreement that Melanesia has to be our first priority with its manifest needs in such fields as health, fertility control, education and AIDS, and which are likely to extend at times to assistance with budgets, administrative organisation, policing and perhaps military operations. These needs could grow in time to absorb all of our overseas aid budget. There is a major need to increase that budget so we can also have a presence elsewhere.

Richard Bedford notes that there is as yet no great demand to migrate to Australia, but almost inevitably and perhaps very suddenly, conditions will change and ‘boat people’ will head our way. Given the short distance — a few kilometres in some cases — and the delicacy of our diplomatic ties, the problems may be immense and solutions difficult and expensive. Yet, given the risk that instability of the kind encountered in Bougainville and Solomon Islands and earlier found in Vanuatu, those solutions will have to be found, even if expensive.

Polynesia and Micronesia, with a couple of exceptions such as Kiribati, are sufficiently well-off, partly because of remittances from New Zealand, Australia and the United States, not to need much aid. Some aid will continue to be given as a sign of geographical amity and perhaps to build-up support in international forums. It seems unfair to condemn that aid, as Helen Hughes has recently done, for not producing productive gains, when sparse populations stretched over huge oceanic distances find difficulties in securing both markets and the right kind of labour, particularly pools with specialised skills. Christine McMurray and Sefuiva Muagututia put the case for education suited to the needs of the Pacific’s rural population so as to reduce migration to the local towns or distant affluent countries.

Indonesia is not a case of extreme poverty or population growth, but must remain a technical aid concern, especially when help is requested. It is a huge country with over ten times the population of Australia, but only one-ninth the real per capita income. We have common maritime borders, while Indonesia and Papua New Guinea have a long common land border. We
have had a complex relationship through the Australian government's backing of Indonesian independence in the late 1940s, to confrontation in Borneo in the 1950s, and Australia's recent role in securing the independence of East Timor. Mayling Oey-Gardiner reports that the education system has mostly survived the economic crisis over the last few years and that this has proved that aid investment in education is well worthwhile.

It is also justified by the fact that education underlies many other changes — social, economic and demographic — especially reductions in fertility and child mortality.

Beyond our immediate neighbourhood, Cambodia and Laos have claims for aid, partly because of their relative poverty, rapid population growth (around two per cent per annum) and the threat of AIDS. Gour Dasvarma reports on these countries’ need for a strengthening of their technical capacity. Bob Frame puts the case for not interfering with Bhutan because of its high ‘gross national happiness’, yet it scores badly by most socio-economic and demographic measures, and Buddhist Shangri-las, such as Nepal, have suddenly blown up in the past.

**Conclusion**

I agree with Mr Downer that development aid should be focused on the poorest, that high levels of population growth are still a concern, and that development will be assisted if more trade follows it. My main concern is how disgracefully low our level of technical aid now is, at 0.3 per cent of GNI, as always well below Scandinavia and the Netherlands, but now below Britain and even Spain, but just above Portugal. It is not only that the latter countries have lower real per capita incomes than Australia — 77 per cent for Spain and 68 per cent for Portugal — but that we and New Zealand live amidst much poorer countries where we should tread carefully and where further regional development would help us. This is the only region we have, especially if we find that trade associations with large far away affluent regions, whether North American or European, do not really work to our advantage. We may have to raise our levels of technical aid, just so the needed expenditure on Melanesia does not squeeze everything else out. Finally, the giving of aid is morally, and often materially, good for the donor as well as the recipient.

I also agree with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, focusing as they do on child mortality, education, gender equality, malaria and HIV/AIDS. I assume that assistance in family planning comes under both the child mortality and the gender equality headings. AusAID's efforts, as described by Helen Ware and with the constraints upon it explained, seems to me to be in the right direction.

Helen Ware and I am in agreement that, just as dealing with unprecedented population growth was the dominating issue in the twentieth century, illegal — or, perhaps better, unauthorised — international migration will increasingly concern the richer nations in the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, the demographic transition, largely shaped in recent decades by technical aid, is far from over. On its mortality side, some countries in our region have life expectancies 20—35 years less than us, at the level reached by Australia a century ago (PNG = 57 years, Cambodia = 56 years, Laos = 54 years, Afghanistan = 45 years; compare Australia, 1890s = 53 years, 2003 = 80 years). Total fertility rates around or over five are still found in Melanesia, Malaysia, Laos and Afghanistan (as in Australia in the 1890s) and of around four in Cambodia, Kiribati and Nauru (as in Australia a century ago). The United Nations medium population projections show the world population peaking towards the end of this century at about 10 billion. If we could constrain it to peak at 9 billion or even 8 billion there would be a greater assurance of raising incomes in poor countries and sustaining global resources.

Finally, technical aid fosters hope of a more cooperative and friendly world in the future.

**References**


**August 2003**
Demographic trends in Southeast Asian countries, 1960–2050

Peter McDonald, Demography and Sociology Program, Australian National University, Canberra

This paper describes broad demographic trends and projections across ten Southeast Asian countries (excludes Timor Leste) between 1960 and 2050. The data have been compiled primarily from UN agencies, particularly the United Nations Population Division's website (<www.un.org/popin/>). The central theme is that, by 2000, there had been an emergence of demographic diversity in these countries from a starting point in 1960 when all were facing a future of high fertility and rapid population growth. The diversity in 2000 was the result of the very different fertility trends in these countries between 1960 and 2000. The demographic diversity in 2000 then has implications for population prospects and age structures across these countries in the next 50 years.


In 1960, all ten countries had young age structures, high fertility and falling mortality. All were facing huge growth of their populations and this growth did indeed occur in the 40 years to 2000 (Table 1). Between 1960 and 2000, the populations of all countries increased two to three times (four times for Brunei). Indonesia, with the largest of all of the populations in 1960, experienced the largest numerical increase between 1960 and 2000 (an increase of 116 million people), but it had the lowest percentage increase (223 per cent). It is interesting to contrast growth in the Philippines with growth in Thailand. Both countries had a similar population size in 1960, but, by 2000, the population of the Philippines was 16 million more than that of Thailand.

In general, the rates of population growth (Table 2) trended downwards in all countries across the 40-year period from 1960 to 2000. However, the extent of the decline of population growth rates varied substantially. The largest fall was for Thailand with the rate of population growth falling from 3.2 per cent per annum in 1960–1965 to 1 per cent in 2000–2005. In contrast, the rate of growth remained almost constant across the same period in Laos.

Cambodia's growth rates are exceptional across the period because of fluctuations related to the severe population disturbances that occurred in this country during the period. These fluctuations and their causes are addressed in detail by Dasvarma in this issue of Development Bulletin.

Changes in fertility, 1960–2000

Wide diversity has emerged in the demography of these countries essentially because of variations in the history of fertility decline in the past 40 years (Table 3). While the fertility rate fell in all countries
in the 40-year period, the extent of the decline varied widely. All had high rates of 5–7 births per woman in 1960; by 2002, their rates ranged from 1.4 children per woman in Singapore (one of the lowest levels in the world) to 4.8 for Laos and Cambodia. The extent of fertility decline is broadly consistent with both the intensity of family planning programs in each country and with their rates of economic development. Thailand, scoring highly on both of these measures, shows the most spectacular fertility decline—from 6.4 births per woman in 1960–1965 to 1.9 in 2000–2005. The story for Indonesia and Vietnam is similar to that of Thailand. In Singapore, the early family planning effort had an immediate impact with the fertility rate falling to as low as 1.7 births per woman by the early 1980s. Fertility has also fallen substantially in Malaysia, Myanmar and the Philippines, where the intensity of family planning programs has been low and the rate of economic development has varied from very high in Malaysia to very low in Myanmar. However, the level of fertility in 2000 remained relatively high (around three births per woman) in all three of these countries.

Table 3 shows the UN’s estimates of the future trend in fertility in each country. Magically, despite widely different levels of current fertility (2000–2005), all ten countries are estimated by the UN to have a very similar level of fertility in 2045–2050 and that level is around replacement level. This lack of variation in the future is extremely unlikely, but it is also difficult to be at all precise about what future levels of fertility will be. Here, the main purpose of presenting the UN (medium) projection of fertility is to indicate the population sizes, rates of growth and age structures that will result if the UN projected fertility were to be correct.

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<td>1.9</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
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Note: The total fertility rate measures the average number of births per woman that would be born to a group of women across their lifetimes if they experienced the rates of fertility at each age that applied in the given period of time.

Changes in mortality, 1960–2000

With the exceptions of Brunei and Singapore, expectations of life were low in all countries in the early 1960s (Table 4). Subsequently, expectations of life have risen dramatically in all countries except Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. In these three countries, expectation of life remains low, roughly at the level of Thailand 40 years ago. Not unexpectedly, expectations of life are correlated with economic development, although the level in the Philippines is relatively high given its economic situation.

The levels in the table for 2045–2050 are UN estimates for these years. For all countries other than Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos, expectation of life in 50 years’ time is projected to be about the same as it is in advanced countries today — or the same as the level in Singapore today. In all cases, the mortality situation is projected to improve considerably. Behind this assumption is the assumption that living conditions and health systems will continue to improve in all countries. This does not happen without policy action.

Table 4 Expectations of life at birth in Southeast Asian countries, both sexes, periods from 1960–2050 (years)

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>78.2</td>
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Future population sizes and growth rates

Associating the UN assumptions about future levels of mortality in Southeast Asian countries (Table 4) with the assumptions about future fertility (Table 3) yields the estimates of future population size and population growth rates shown in Tables 1 and 2.

The UN Population Division also makes assumptions about future migration levels for each country in its projections and these are also incorporated in the results shown in Tables 1 and 2. The medium-level projections reported here assume relatively high levels of net out-migration (around 186,000 per annum) for both

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Indonesia and the Philippines between 2000 and 2050. For Vietnam, an annual net out-migration of around 20,000 is assumed for the period. Net out-migration is also projected for Thailand, Cambodia and Laos, but at levels that are insignificant. Migration is assumed to be close to zero for Myanmar. Net in-migration is projected for Brunei (1,000 per annum), Malaysia and Singapore. For Singapore, the level of net in-migration starts at 50,000 per annum, but falls progressively to just 10,000 per annum by the end of the projection period. For Malaysia, net in-migration starts at 30,000 per annum but falls quickly to negligible levels.

The results in Table 1 show that the population is projected to rise fairly sharply in all countries from 2000 to 2020 despite the falls in fertility rates that they have experienced and are expected to continue to experience. This is largely because all countries except Singapore still had age structures in 2000 that will promote population growth, that is, there will be relatively high concentrations of people in the childbearing ages in the immediate future years. Nevertheless, the expected increases in population are much more moderate in relative terms than had been the case in the 40 years leading to 2000. Projected rates of population growth are well under 2 per cent per annum by 2020-2025 in all countries and under 1 per cent per annum in half of the countries. In Singapore, most of the projected increase in population from 2000 to 2020 is due to the assumed levels of migration.

The rate of population growth slows considerably under the UN assumptions for all countries between 2020 and 2050. Seven countries by 2045–2050 have rates of population growth under 0.5 per cent per annum and two, Thailand and Singapore, would be declining in size.

Thus, the UN presents a scenario of a near end to population growth in all of Southeast Asia roughly by the middle of the twenty-first century. Before this happens, however, Southeast Asia’s population will have reached some 800 million people compared to 222 million in 1960. It is important to remember that this huge growth of population will have taken place despite falls in fertility in all Southeast Asian countries from around six births per woman to two. If fertility had remained at six births per woman from 1960 to 2050, Southeast Asia’s population in 2050 would have exceeded two billion.

Changes in age structure, 2000–2050

For future planning purposes, changes in age structure over the next 50 years are more important than changes in population size. In the following discussion, current age structures are compared with the age structures in 2050 that would result from the UN medium projections.

Cambodia and Laos (Figure 1)

In 2000, Laos had an age structure typical of a population with a history of high fertility — broad-based and tapering away to the higher ages. Cambodia would have had a similar age structure except of the severe effects of civil disturbances and war upon the population now aged between 20 and 40 years. The young age structure of both populations represents a considerable momentum for future population growth. However, if fertility falls as assumed by the UN, both countries will have very regular, flat-sided age structures by 2050. Such changes in age structure are projected for all countries except Singapore.
age structures are typical of populations with fertility close to replacement level and could be described as a 'demographic ideal form'. In these age structures, the numbers at each are roughly the same until the late age effects of mortality begin to reduce the numbers. Such populations also have approximately zero growth and are referred to by demographers as 'stationary' populations.

Malaysia and the Philippines (Figure 2)
With a more significant fertility decline than has occurred in Laos and Cambodia, the age structures in Malaysia and the Philippines are already taking on the flat-sided shape under ages 10–15. Nevertheless, both still have considerable momentum for population growth as those at younger ages move into the childbearing ages. Over the next 50 years, the
age structures of these populations would taper at the younger ages as the cohorts that resulted from a previous combination of relatively high fertility and population momentum from even higher prior fertility move to older ages. Consequently, the proportions at older ages would increase considerably over the next 50 years.

Myanmar and Vietnam (Figure 3)
The flat-sided shape is even more prominent in the 2000 age structure of Myanmar reflecting a gradual fall in its fertility over the 1960–2000 period. Tapering of the age structure at younger ages is a little more prominent by 2050 in Myanmar than is the case for Malaysia and the Philippines. Vietnam in 2000 had a sharply undercut age structure at ages 0–4 years reflecting a recent sharp fall in fertility. In 50 years’ time, this leads to a less regular age structure at ages 50 years and over and more rapid ageing of the population.

Indonesia and Thailand (Figure 4)
Indonesia’s 2000 age structure is relatively flat-sided to relatively high ages, reflecting the now long duration of its fertility decline. Nevertheless, population momentum is like an aircraft carrier — it takes a long time to stop — and, accordingly, we can expect Indonesia’s population to grow by another 50 million in the next 20 years, even though fertility and population momentum from the age structure will both be low. Thailand, having had a sharper and earlier fertility decline than all of the countries discussed to this point, had an age structure in 2000 that already tapered inwards from age group 20–24. This means that the ageing of its population will be more considerable in the next 50 years. If as seems likely, Thailand’s fertility continues to fall to lower levels rather than remaining constant at 1.9 births per woman as assumed by the UN, ageing will be more dramatic and labour supply issues will emerge.

Singapore and Brunei (Figure 5)
Brunei’s age structure is heavily affected by migration. The bulging of its age pyramid at ages 20–29 partly reflects this aspect of its demography. With a small population, dominated in numerical terms by migrants, Brunei’s future population and age structure will be determined by decisions of its government about migration. Accordingly, the UN projections can be regarded as very hypothetical. In 2000, Singapore’s population was concentrated in the age range of 30–50 years. As this group ages over the next 50 years, the population of Singapore will age dramatically. The 2050 age structure for Singapore is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that it is based upon the assumptions that the fertility rate will rise to near-replacement level and that there will be net in-migration as described above. A rise in fertility to a level just below replacement, if the rise is slow, will not draw Singapore out of its ageing and labour supply problems. Thus, besides policies that accommodate the combination of work and children, international migration on a larger scale seems inevitable. The issues here are the sources of the migrants and social acceptability.
Urbanisation, 1960–2020

Table 5 Percentage living in urban areas, Southeast Asian countries, 1960–2020

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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<td>17.0</td>
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<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>27.3</td>
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Another important story in the 1960–2000 period is the rapid rate of urbanisation. Here, however, the picture has been variable. The most rapid changes have been in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. The Indo-China group of countries and Myanmar have experienced much slower rates of urbanisation of their populations. The relatively low levels for Thailand to some extent reflect conservative definitions of 'urban' in that country. Nevertheless, there are now vast urban populations in many Southeast Asian countries, and the size of these populations will continue to grow sharply. The provision of jobs and services to the urban poor, particularly young people, is an issue for most Southeast Asian countries.

Urban populations in Southeast Asia tend to be concentrated in a relatively small number of cities. According to the United Nations Population Division, in 2000, only 17 cities in all of Southeast Asia had a population exceeding 750,000 people compared to 114 such cities in China.

Selected health indicators, c2000

Table 6 shows considerable diversity across four health indicators. Declines in child mortality have been a success story in most countries although the rates remain high in Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar. Child mortality rates tend to be closely correlated with the level of economic development. The story is not as favourable in regard to maternal mortality. Although the measures shown in the table have a low degree of reliability in most countries, very high rates of maternal death are still evident in most countries. It is likely that gender issues play a part in
Table 6 Selected health indicators, Southeast Asian countries, c2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deaths under age 5 per 1000 live births, 2000</th>
<th>Maternal Deaths per 100,000 live births, 1995</th>
<th>% of births attended by skilled health personnel, 2000</th>
<th>% with access to improved drinking water, 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>39</td>
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this outcome through their impact on the quality of reproductive health services. Where births are more likely to be attended by skilled health personnel, maternal mortality rates are lower. However, the very high level of maternal mortality in Indonesia stands out, despite a relatively high percentage of births being attended by health personnel, and stands in contrast to the relatively low level of child mortality.

Access to improved drinking water is also very variable across the countries, however, this access is above 70 per cent in all countries other than Cambodia and Laos where access is very low.

**Conclusion**

Where, in 1960, all ten countries considered in this paper faced a common demographic future of rapid population growth relating to high fertility levels, the variation in the trends of their fertility rates in the 40-year period to 2000 means that they now face very diverse demographic futures. The UN medium projections make the assumption that, by 2050, fertility will again converge in all ten countries to a level around the replacement level of about two children per woman. This would mean that, with the exception of Singapore and Brunei, all countries would have a similar age structure by 2050. This would be the 'demographic ideal' age structure of a stationary population that has population growth close to zero and an unchanging age structure across time.

Experience has shown, however, that when fertility falls to the replacement level, it tends to continue to fall to levels well below replacement rather than ceasing its fall as assumed in the UN medium-term projections. Continued falls of fertility to very low levels seems especially to be the case in Asian countries that reach replacement level fertility. Fertility has fallen to 1.2 births per woman in South Korea, to 1.3 in Japan and Singapore, and is continuing to fall in Thailand. In addition, again taking Japan, South Korea and Singapore as examples, Asian countries seem to face great difficulty in reversing their very low levels of fertility. Thus, it would seem more likely that the Southeast Asian countries over the next 50 years will continue to experience demographic diversity, but a diversity determined more by their capacity to reverse low fertility than to reduce high fertility.

**Note**

Dasvarma, in this volume, suggests a lower rate around 2000 for Cambodia. It is important to remember that the rates shown in Table 3 are UN estimates. More precise measures for individual countries may yield somewhat different results for current fertility, but the overall picture provided by the table is reliable.
Population mobility in Asia

Graeme Hugo, National Centre for Social Applications of GIS, University of Adelaide

Introduction

Two of the most striking changes in Asia over the last three decades have been a massive increase in the scale and type of population mobility, especially that of workers, and the transition from most people living in rural areas to a situation where there are almost as many urban as rural residents. This has involved a large increase in the proportion of workers who move away from their home place on a permanent or temporary basis to obtain work. For most people in Asia, the labour markets in which they perceive they can operate extend beyond the narrow confines of their local communities. This has meant that levels of labour mobility have increased for most groups — unskilled as well as skilled, less educated as well as highly educated, females as well as males, residents of isolated areas as well as those closer to major cities, and traditionally mobile ethnic groups as well as those who traditionally have not been peripatetic. Unfortunately, much of the transformation in labour mobility has not been captured in traditional data collections, such as population censuses and large-scale labour-force surveys. This is because these collections have failed to utilise definitions of mobility suited to contemporary patterns of movement, which often involve non-permanent moves or moves within administrative regions.

There have been a number of drivers of this increased mobility and urbanisation. No doubt massive improvement in transport has greatly reduced the real costs of travelling substantial distances in the search for work. Moreover, these developments, together with development in communications, have made it possible for migrant workers to maintain contact with their home areas through, for example, frequent visits and telephone calls. Improved communication, universal education schemes and the proliferation of social networks have contributed to the substantial geographical extension of labour markets. Structural economic changes have worked to reduce employment opportunities in the traditional agricultural sectors and expand them in secondary and tertiary sectors. In addition, the proliferation of an informal urban sector has also increased and widened the range of job opportunities in urban areas.

International population mobility

The United Nations (2002a) estimates that 50 million of the 175 million people worldwide who live outside the country in which they were born are from Asia. While this is equivalent to only 1.4 per cent of the total Asian population, there is enormous variation between countries. Indeed, while Asia is home to some of the world’s most migrant national populations (for example, Hong Kong 39.4 per cent, Singapore 33.6 per cent), other Asian nations have a very low proportion of migrants. Moreover, these data vastly underestimate the degree of movement that occurs since much of the mobility is out of the region, while a majority of all movers do not move permanently and are not included in most immigration statistics.

While one of the major features of international population mobility in the region is its rapid growth in scale, another is the increased diversity in the types of movement that have evolved. In this section, some of the major elements in the contemporary Asian migration system are briefly described and recent developments within them discussed. These movements include very large flows to nations outside Asia (especially the Middle East, North America, Europe and Australasia), movements from other parts of the world into Asia, and increasing movement between Asian countries.

For more than two centuries the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have been receiving substantial numbers of immigrants and are among the few countries in the world to have active immigration programs. Until the late 1960s, however, these programs discriminated in favour of Europeans. Since the early 1970s, discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity or birthplace has been removed, and immigration selection is now based mainly on skills and family reunion. As a result Asian immigration has increased substantially. Moreover, Europe has also become a significant destination for Asian migrants, with movement partly being associated with previous colonial linkages. Asians now make up almost half of the streams of new settlers in the traditional migration-receiving countries. Table 1 presents official figures from a number of sources on the contemporary stocks of Asia-born persons in OECD nations. Although it indicates there are 13,025,544 Asia-born people in these countries, this is a severe underestimate of the numbers involved since data are not available for all countries, it does not include the children born to immigrants1 and undocumented migrants are not included.

However, the increased numbers of Asian permanent settlers in OECD nations is only one dimension of south–north Asian population movement. In countries such as Australia there has been a shift to a totally new paradigm of international population

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Table 1: Traditional migration countries: Asian populations around 2001

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Notes: * 1996; " 1997; "" 1998

Movement. Whereas previously the overwhelming emphasis was on settlement migration, there have been dramatic increases in the numbers of non-permanent immigrants with the right to work. There is also undoubtedly a strong connection between student migration and eventual settlement of Asian origin groups in more developed countries (MDCs).

For much of the 1970s and 1980s, Asia was the origin of more refugees than any other world region, reaching a peak in 1991 of 8.5 million UNHCR-recognised refugees. However, as Figure 1 indicates, the numbers declined to 4.8 million in 1996 and then rose slightly to 5.8 million in 2001 (UNHCR 2002) — nearly half of the world total. Many of the refugees have moved to countries of asylum or final settlement outside of the region. Following the reunification of Vietnam in 1975, the Indo-Chinese nations generated substantial outflows to other parts of Southeast Asia. Of these, more than 2 million have been resettled in third countries, mainly in North America, Europe and Australasia, and most of the remainder have been repatriated to their home country (Stephan and Keenan 1997).

The largest international migrations influencing contemporary Asian countries are those involving largely non-permanent labour movements. These types of migrations have a long history in Asia (Hugo 1997) but entered a new era in scale.
and complexity with the 1973 oil price increase and the associated massive demand for workers in the Middle East with the development of large infrastructure projects. While South Asian migrant workers had a long history of involvement in the Gulf area, after 1973 their numbers expanded rapidly and large numbers of East and South-East Asians were also involved. Whereas workers in the early years were mainly involved in infrastructure development, those in more recent times have moved mainly into service occupations. Over time, women have become more significant in the migration flow with many moving into domestic service. During the last decade the destinations of Asian migrant workers have become more diverse, with Asian countries now accounting for more migrants than are directed to the Middle East. Much of the movement is undocumented and is not included in the available official statistics.

There are broadly two systems of labour migration involving Asian overseas contract workers (OCWs). The first and by far the largest involves mainly unskilled and semi-skilled workers who are employed in low paid, low status, so-called 3D (dirty, dangerous and difficult) jobs that are eschewed by local workers in fast-growing labour-short nations of Asia and the Middle East. This first group are drawn predominantly from the Southeast Asian nations of Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, China, Burma and Vietnam. The second group are much smaller in number, but still significant, and involve highly skilled professionals drawn mainly from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. They are attracted not only to fast-developing labour-short newly industrialising countries (NICs) and near NICs, but also to labour-surplus nations such as Indonesia where there is a mismatch between the products of the education and training system and the skilled labour demands of a rapidly restructuring and growing economy.

The estimated contemporary stocks of Asian origin migrant workers in foreign countries are summarised in Table 2. Clearly, South Asians are still dominant in the flow to the Middle East but, in several Asian countries, especially the NICs, rapid economic growth and an associated growth in employment is outpacing the rate of growth of the workforce. The latter is also due to the substantial fertility declines of the 1960s and 1970s, which resulted in cohorts of school leavers in the late 1980s and 1990s being smaller than the generations preceding them.

There are a number of important issues relating to international migration in the Asian region, which due to space restrictions can only be mentioned here. First, is the extent to which burgeoning international labour migration impinging upon Asia will remain...
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>1995</td>
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Notes: a Documented; b Undocumented.

Temporary: At present the bulk of OCWs return to their homeland, but the experience with guestworkers in Europe in the 1950s and 1960s saw temporary labour migration transform into permanent settlement (Castles, Booth and Wallace 1984). Second, international migration in the region is proliferating due to the rapid development of social networks between origin and destination countries and the expansion of an active immigration industry in the region involving a large number of gatekeepers and facilitators of movement. Third, remittances have become a major element in the economies of whole countries (for example, Philippines, Sri Lanka) or in regions of large countries (Indonesia, China, India, Pakistan).

**Internal migration**

The stereotype of Asians being born, living and dying in a rural village has never been accurate, but certainly is inappropriate in the contemporary situation — Asians are highly mobile. The last four decades have seen massive social, economic and demographic change across Asia. This has been both a cause and a consequence of substantial changes in the scale, type, nature, spatial patterning and composition of mobility, which have applied to internal as well as international movement. These changes in labour mobility have been driven by a number of elements including:
• the proliferation of an immense range of public transport, putting internal movement within reach of virtually everybody;
• rapid economic restructuring;
• marked spatial mismatches between sites of expanding job opportunity and the locations of potential workers;
• improvements in education resulting in young people in rural areas being unwilling to work in agriculture and moving to seek work in other sectors;
• rapid commercialisation of the agricultural sector replacing labour inputs with capital inputs;
• strong cultural imperatives among some ethnic groups which encourage people to move out of the home area to seek work and experience;
• a strong tradition of responding to local and regional conflict by moving on a temporary or permanent basis to work in other, more secure, areas;
• an entrenched pattern over much of Asia where families seek to enhance their security by deploying some family members to work outside of the home area to create multiple sources of income and reduce the effects on the family of the failure of one source of income;
• the proliferation of a 'migration industry' involving recruiters, travel providers, labour organisers and other intermediaries who facilitate the flow of labour to destinations within and outside the country; and
• rapid changes in the role and status of women.

Unfortunately, the traditional data sources of population censuses and labour force surveys have not been able to capture the increased scale and diversity of such movement and change. This is because it tends only to measure more or less permanent displacements in population, yet it is clear that the increase in non-permanent movements has been substantial. On the other hand, censuses and surveys usually adopt 'migration defining regions' so that migration only includes moves that cross the boundaries of these regions, while intra-regional movement is usually much greater than interregional mobility. Nevertheless, even though these limited data sources reveal only the 'tip of the iceberg' of all movement, time series data from them reveal the rapid changes which have taken place.

Movement from rural to urban areas

There has been a massive redistribution of population from rural to urban areas in Asia. Although there are major problem of definition (Champion and Hugo 2003), the proportion of Asians living in urban areas has increased from 14.7 per cent in 1950 to 37.2 per cent in 2000 and is projected to increase to 54.1 per cent in 2030 (United Nations 2002b). While these proportionate shifts are important, it is also useful to examine what this has meant in

Table 3 Selected Asian countries: Per cent of urban growth attributed to natural increase and net migration, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s

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<td>54.9</td>
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<td>-18.0</td>
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terms of numbers of people. Figure 3 indicates the massive absolute growth that occurred in the Asian urban sector between 1950 and 2000 (from 250 million to almost 1.5 billion people), while the rural population increased from 1.2 to 2.3 billion. On the other hand, the Asian rural population is expected to decline over the next three decades while the urban population will almost double. While reclassification of areas from rural to urban status has been of major significance, the main reason for faster population growth in urban areas has been rural-urban migration.

A distinctive feature of urbanisation in Asia has been the development of so-called megacities — massive poly-nucleated urbanised areas with more than 8 million inhabitants. An example is the Greater Jakarta metropolitan area in Indonesia, which is now one of the world's largest urban centres. In 1995, whereas 9.1 million people lived in DKI Jakarta, 15.4 million lived in the continuous built-up urban area of the metropolitan region and 20.2 million lived in all of Jabotabek, which incorporates the three neighbouring kampupaten (agencies). Between 1990 and 1995, the Jabotabek population increased by 18 per cent to reach 20.2 million persons.

In some Asian countries there have also been some forced displacements of population. Indonesia, for example (Hugo 2002), had some 1.3 million persons officially classified as Internally Displaced Persons in early 2002. Detailed knowledge of the massive effects of these displacements on the security and wellbeing of large numbers of Indonesians, disruptions of regional economies, labour markets and implications for longer term shifts in national and regional population distributions within Indonesia remain limited. Substantial population displacements caused by conflict has a substantial history in post-Independence Indonesia (Hugo 2002).

Labour mobility

One of the most substantial developments in labour mobility over the last four decades has been the expansion of non-permanent movement strategies by workers, involving long distance commuting or circular migration. Such mobility has a very long history in the region, but it is true that modern developments in transport have facilitated an enormous expansion in the scale, type and composition of that movement.

Several countries in Asia have adopted policies and programs which attempt to intervene in the processes of urbanisation and labour mobility. For much of the period of the 1970s and 1980s, strong anti-urban sentiments prevailed in some governments and international agencies. These saw rapid urban growth as having deleterious effects, both in urban areas through excessive demands being placed on utilities, housing, transport, waste collection, job opportunities, and health and education services for example, as well as rural areas being robbed of their most talented and entrepreneurial people, which created a barrier to economic and social development in those areas. This led to a rash of anti-urban policies and programs such as:

- In some cases cities were 'closed' so that people who were not registered residents and who were detected at check points were evicted from the city. This, for example, was the case for Jakarta in the early 1970s.
- In several large Asian cities, squatter settlements, whose inhabitants were frequently migrant workers, were bulldozed.
- In some cities, economic activity favoured by migrant workers, including street vendors and street-based service providers, was made illegal.

These anti-urban approaches were also influenced by somewhat romanticised notions of the 'rural way of life' being intrinsically better than that in urban areas. There were elitist views that the 'privileges' of living in the city should not be open to any citizen who wished to live there. Foreign observers were strongly influenced by contrasts of the superficial, rustic, attractive greenness of villages to the squalor of urban squatter settlements, but ignored the fact that people could get work in the city but not in their village.

The fact was that anti-urban policies seemed to fly in the face of market forces. In most countries this has led to an abandonment of anti-urban policies, although there are remnants. Indeed, Jakarta's 'closed city' legislation — abandoned in the mid 1970s — was revived by the governor of Jakarta in 2001. Currently, however, a number of other elements are important. Firstly, in recognition of the fact that there are increasing pressures on many urban areas and lagging in many rural areas, there is increased emphasis on integrated regional, rather than urban, development strategies, which self-consciously attempt to reduce the rural-urban economic gradient along which migration occurs. This emphasises decentralisation of government activity, investment, and decision making to encourage the growth of employment opportunities in regions. In addition, there is an effort to reduce the differential in service provision in such areas as health, education and electricity. It is often associated with development of devolution and democratisation policies.

Secondly, within urban areas there is less emphasis on policing and placing barriers in the way of migrants' integration into urban labour and housing markets. Instead, there is more of an 'accommodationist' approach, which accepts that migration to the city will continue and that there are insufficient resources to fully provide for them. This approach tends to facilitate migrants' integration into the city and build on the self-help and network-based support that already exists. Hence, for example, site and service schemes and upgrading of squatter settlements can improve the accommodation available. Productivity in the informal sector can be enhanced by access to services such as loans and training.
Conclusion

While this brief account has overly simplified and generalised the diverse range of approaches that seek to influence internal migration and urbanisation in Asia over the last four decades, it is no doubt true to say that there has been a general move away from policies and programs that seek to act in the opposite direction to market forces and to facilitate positive trends. In the process there has been a move away from a concept of urbanisation as somehow being unnatural and parasitic, toward it being inevitable and integral in improving economic and social wellbeing.

There is every indication that population movements into, out of and within Asia will continue to increase in scale and significance. While there is a great deal of variation between nations, it is clear that demographic, economic and social changes within the region will continue to favour increases in population mobility. Moreover, the growing Asian communities outside of their birthplace areas will grow exponentially in their ability to serve as anchors to attract their relatives and friends through the development of more and stronger migration networks. The growing migration industry will also play a major role in increasing migration flows, both documented and undocumented.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Migration Australia, Catalogue No. 3412.0, various issues, ABS, Canberra.
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia, Catalogue No. 3404.0, various issues, ABS, Canberra.

Notes

1 It is apparent that the fertility of recent immigrants is now an important contributor to Natural Increase in OECD nations (OECD 2001).
Population changes in East Asia and their major consequences

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East Asia, like many parts of the world, has experienced a rapid demographic transition during the last fifty years, which has significantly changed our lives and brought many opportunities and challenges. This article first outlines the diversities found in the region in political systems, levels of socioeconomic development and paces of demographic transition. It then reviews the major population changes and their trends and briefly comments on the impact of these demographic changes on future socioeconomic development.

Diversity

According to United Nations' official publications, East Asia now consists of only five countries: China, Japan, Mongolia, North Korea and South Korea. Even if Taiwan is included, and Hong Kong and Macao, China's two special administrative regions, are treated as separate entities, the whole area comprises only eight countries and regions. Despite its small number of populations, East Asia is probably one of the most diverse regions in the world in many respects. These countries and areas vary greatly in their population sizes and densities. While mainland China has the largest population of the world, which is now approaching 1.3 billion, the populations of Mongolia and Macao are only 2.5 million and 0.5 million respectively. If Hong Kong and Macao are excluded, Taiwan has the highest population density in the region with around 600 persons per square kilometre. However, in Mongolia there are only two people for every square kilometre of territory. According to the demographic transition theory, Japan entered a post-transition society more than four decades ago. The median age of its population has now reached 41 years. In contrast, such demographic changes are still underway in Mongolia, where the median age of the population is about 22 years (United Nations 2001).

These countries and areas also have very different political and economic systems. On one hand, the capitalist free market economy has been flourishing in Japan, Hong Kong, Macao, South Korea and Taiwan for many years. On the other hand, the orthodox, socialist, centrally planned economy still completely dominates North Korea. Between these is Mongolia, where the political and economic system is under reconstruction, and China, which has a self-labelled 'socialist market economy'.

As one of the leading industrial countries, with about 80 per cent of the population being classified as urban dwellers, Japan has long enjoyed its economic success and has one of the highest per capita gross domestic products (GDP) in the world. However, the Japanese economy has been experiencing considerable difficulty and the growth of per capita GDP has been rather slow in recent years (United Nations 2002a).

In contrast, more than 60 per cent of the population of mainland China are still regarded as rural residents. Its per capita GDP is only about one-fortieth of that in Japan. The figures for North Korea and Mongolia are even lower (United Nations 2002a). Nevertheless, China has been experiencing very rapid economic growth during the last two decades. The growth has been so impressive that some scholars now regard China as a new economic powerhouse in the world. Of course, per capita GDP may not be a good and unbiased indicator of the real level of economic development and standards of living, because of the differences in computing GDP and in measuring cost of living in these countries. However, the great gap in the level of development implied by these figures is undeniable.

Demographic change

Despite these radical differences, populations of East Asia have all experienced similar demographic changes in their recent history. If these populations are presented as a spectrum according to the pace of their demographic transition, current mortality and fertility levels, and trends, then Japan will be on one end and mainland China will be on the other. The rest of the populations, which are much smaller in size, can be broadly divided into two groups. The first group consists of Hong Kong, Macao, South Korea and Taiwan, which lie between the two extremes. The second includes Mongolia and North Korea, which can be broadly clustered with mainland China. Accordingly, population changes and major trends in Japan and mainland China have not only dominated the demographic transition in the entire region, to a large extent they also represent what has been taking place in the other populations.

Mortality

Significant population changes have been observed in many parts of the world in the last 50 years. However, in East Asia the reduction in mortality and fertility has been greater and taken place faster.
The fall in mortality in East Asia came rather late. Long-term mortality decline did not start in most of the populations until the mid-twentieth century. In the early 1950s, the average life expectancy in the region was some ten years lower than in Latin America and more than 20 years lower than in Europe. Since then, the fall in mortality rates has accelerated in East Asia. Life expectancy rose by some 20 years and surpassed that of Latin America in less than two decades. In the next three decades, it further increased by another ten years. The gap between East Asia and Europe has now reduced to less than three years (United Nations 2001).

In the early twentieth century, mortality in Japan was noticeably higher than in northern and western Europe, but it has fallen dramatically since the end of the Second World War. Life expectancy rose from 64 years in the early 1950s (which was three to five years lower than that in western and northern Europe at the time) to nearly 81 years (the highest in the world) by the end of the twentieth century (United Nations 2001). A major feature of this change is the marked reduction in old age mortality. For example, for Japanese females, life expectancy at age 65 was 13 years in 1950, but it has now increased to 22 years. The chance of surviving from age 65 to 100 has increased from one in a thousand to one in twenty (Oeppen and Vaupel 2002).

Mortality in China is not very low by world standards. Its life expectancy was close to 71 years in 2000, which was ten years lower than in Japan. Nonetheless, China has also made remarkable progress in combating mortality. In the mid-twentieth century, China was a very poor country with rather low levels of economic development and standards of living. In spite of that, its life expectancy rose from 40 years or lower in the early 1950s to more than 65 years in the early 1980s. This success, along with that observed in Sri Lanka, Costa Rica and some other countries, has been regarded widely as the route to low mortality in poor countries (Caldwell 1986).

Since the late 1970s, China’s socioeconomic reform has brought about considerable change in social security and health service systems. Some of these changes have made further improving public health difficult. The increasing inequality in income distribution also made the reduction in mortality hard to achieve in poor areas and among disadvantaged social groups. However, unlike some eastern European countries where mortality has either stagnated or increased during a period of reconstruction, China has managed to increase its life expectancy by another six or seven years.

**Fertility**

The fall in fertility in East Asia was as impressive as the fall in mortality and perhaps more so. Populations with the most rapid fertility declines are primarily found in this area. The fertility level was rather high in East Asia in the early 1950s, and the total fertility rate for the region as a whole was close to six children per woman. However, Japan had already witnessed a large reduction in fertility, which fell to the level of replacement in the late 1950s. Since then, it has been declining steadily (United Nations 2001, Ogawa 2003).

The fall in fertility began in the 1960s in all other east Asian populations except mainland China and Mongolia. Facing its rapid population growth, the Chinese government launched its unprecedented family planning campaign in the early 1970s. Driven by this campaign, China’s total fertility rate decreased sharply from about six to approximately 2.5 in less than ten years. In the next decade, it fell further to the level of below replacement. East Asia now has one of the lowest fertility rates in the world. Even in Mongolia, where the fertility remained very high in the mid-1980s, the total fertility rate has declined to 2.2 by the year 2002 (United Nations 2001; Population Reference Bureau 2002).

According to the latest figures published by the Population Reference Bureau, total fertility rates in Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan have all fallen below 1.5. While there is some uncertainty regarding China’s current fertility level, most demographers have agreed that the total fertility rate in China is about 1.8 and perhaps lower (Population Reference Bureau 2002). If it is legitimate to divide China’s huge population on the basis of urban–rural classification, then its urban residents have already had a total fertility rate of around one child per woman for more than a decade. Shanghai, which has a population of more than 16 million, is one such extreme case. Its total fertility rate was only 0.7 in the year 2000 (Population Census Office of Shanghai, 2002).

**Major demographic challenges**

Spectacular mortality and fertility decline like those reported above has significantly changed the age structure of these populations and the speed of their growth. Some of these consequences will become more pronounced in the years to come. Although these countries and areas have shared some broad similarities in their recent mortality and fertility transition, the major populations of East Asia will face rather different demographic challenges in the foreseeable future.

**Japan**

An extraordinary increase of old people, a very low fertility and a shrinking labour force are three such challenges that face Japan. Because of its great success in reducing mortality, life expectancy in Japan will continue to rise. This will lead to a sharp increase in the number and the proportion of the elderly. In the year 2000, the number of those aged 65 and plus reached 22 million and those aged 80 and plus nearly 3 million. By the year 2050, the number of those 65 and older is projected to rise to 40 million and
those 80 and older to 17 million. Their proportions in the population will increase from the current 17 per cent and 4 per cent to 36 per cent and more than 15 per cent, respectively. As a result, the Japanese population will become even older, and its median age will reach 53 years in the year 2050 (United Nations 2001). Japan is likely to hold the record of the oldest or one of the oldest populations in the world for a long time.

Are we too optimistic about mortality decline in Japan? Judging from the past experience, this may not be the case. A recent study suggests that 'best-practice life expectancy' has increased in the oldest populations in the world for a long time.

The figures for demographic changes in Japan used in the above discussion have been derived mainly from United Nations medium variant population projections undertaken in 2000 (United Nations 2001). Prior to that, the United Nations had made a number of population projections for Japan. Those conducted in the early years all considerably underestimated the reduction in mortality and have been modified subsequently, as shown by Oeppen and Vaupel. The mortality level applied by the 2000 UN projections is notably lower than that used previously. However, the life expectancy it implies is still markedly lower than what has been projected on the basis of the best practice life expectancy. If the improvement in life expectancy in the record-holding countries continues, then 'record life expectancy' will reach 100 years in about six decades. Centenarians will become commonplace within the lifetimes of people alive today (Oeppen and Vaupel 2002).

The second demographic challenge facing Japan is a very low and probably falling fertility. Japan has had below replacement fertility for nearly half a century. Its current total fertility rate is only about 1.3. While considerable effort has been made to reverse this trend in recent years, a fertility increase has not yet been observed (Ogawa 2003). According to the recent UN projections, which used a fertility level higher than that observed at present, the number of annual births will further decline. The total number of births was about 1.2 million in 2000, but it will probably decrease to 860,000 in 2050. The Japanese population will start to shrink by around 2010. By the mid-21st century, Japan's population is expected to decline by 15 per cent or about 20 millions (United Nations 2001).

The above two changes have led to the third demographic challenge. The working age population, those aged from 15 to 64 years, will decrease by more than 30 million from 87 million in 2000 to 56 million in 2050. Because of this remarkable reduction, which is faster than the decline of the total population, the dependency ratio (the ratio of those aged 0–24 and those 65 and over to those aged 15–64) will rise from 0.47 to 0.96 (United Nations 2001, 2002b). Although changes in labour supply may not be the most important factor affecting economic development, the following fact is noteworthy: Japan's working age population increased by 43 per cent between 1960 and 1990 when the country had miraculous economic growth. However, during the 30-year period starting from 2010, the population of the same age group is expected to fall by 24 per cent (United Nations 2001).

The above discussion was primarily based on the UN medium variant population projections, which assume that there will be a gradual increase in fertility in Japan with the total fertility rate rising from 1.33 in 2000 to 1.75 in 2050 (United Nations 2001). If this does not take place, then the problems addressed above will be more serious. Since population changes in Taiwan and South Korea have largely followed Japan's, they are expected to face similar demographic challenges though they may be less severe.

**China**

In contrast to Japan, mainland China is facing very different demographic challenges. A continuing increase in both total population and working age population remains a major difficulty. China's population will not stop growing until it reaches about 1.5 billion. The working age population will grow by another 130 million and peak at 1 billion before it starts to fall around 2030 (United Nations 2001). While the dependency ratio in China will be relatively low in comparison with those of Japan, Taiwan and South Korea, providing job opportunities for its growing working age population and further improving the living standards of its huge national population will be a daunting task in the next two or three decades at least.

The second demographic challenge facing China is increasing rural–urban migration. China has been experiencing rapid economic growth since the early 1980s, but the majority of the population still live in rural areas. As in other countries, increasing migration and urbanisation are both expected when China further develops its economy. In addition, China's rural–urban migration has been fuelled by its nationwide family planning campaign. Since the early 1970s, very different family planning policies have been implemented in rural and urban areas. While it might have suited 'Chinese characteristics', this practice has created two radically different fertility regimes and has had serious demographic consequences. In cities, women of reproductive ages virtually all have only one child. However, in rural areas, most of the women still have two or more children. Urban China probably now has the most unbalanced age structure ever recorded in any population. Without rural–urban migration, Chinese cities could hardly maintain their recent development.

Mainland China is also facing the challenge of population ageing. In comparison with Japan, Taiwan and South Korea, in China the proportion of old people is and will be relatively low. It will take 30 years for the elderly in China to reach a level similar to that recorded.
in present-day Japan, which makes the problem of population ageing appear less pressing in China. However, there will be a surge in the number and the proportion of elderly people after 2015 when the baby boom cohort starts leaving the workforce (United Nations 2001). China will become one of the fastest ageing populations in the world. Moreover, what makes population ageing an urgent issue is the fact that China does not have a widely established social security or pension system, which would provide the basic financial support for its fast-growing old population.

Further improving the health status of the Chinese population — especially those in less developed areas and in disadvantaged social groups — is also a major concern. China has made remarkable progress in raising life expectancy, but the fall in mortality in some less developed areas has become relatively slow. The health service available to a large part of its population is still far from adequate. Further improving the health infrastructure in the vast rural area has become more urgent in the wake of the recent outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

Concluding remarks

Because of the profound changes in their age structure and labour supply, some of the east Asian populations will gradually lose their demographic advantages in pursuing economic growth, but others will start or continue to gain their 'demographic dividend' (Bloom, Canning and Sevilla 2003). This could cause a further shift in the balance of regional political and economic power. For the same reason, nations in the region will become more economically interdependent, and the integration of the regional economy is expected to strengthen. Facing these changes and the new demographic challenges, the role of governments in managing population growth is likely to increase. In the past, population policies were largely about fertility and migration, but in the future government interventions designed to maintain a sustainable population and economic growth are more likely to be found in a wider area.

The extraordinary mortality and fertility decline experienced in the region in recent decades has been without parallel in the long history of humanity. These changes have led to the emergence of a completely new demographic regime, a regime whose major characteristics even demographers failed to predict a few decades ago. While the very low fertility now characteristic of the region may increase slightly in the future, and mortality may also rise temporarily, it seems unlikely that the major demographic trends outlined in this paper will be reversed. The demographic system that existed widely in East Asia in the 1950s and 1960s has already become a part of history.

References

'Birds of passage' also in Asia: Women and labour migration from a regional perspective

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Introduction

Since the late 1970s, the Asian region has witnessed increasing intra- and inter-regional migratory flows, of which women constitute an ever increasing, or even dominating, proportion. Morokvasic's classic statement, 'Birds of passage are also women' (1984: 886) has thus long applied to Asia as much as to Europe and North America (Piper and Yamanaka 2003; Kofman 1999).

In Asia it is estimated that over the period 1995-1999 some 2.6 million workers left their countries every year to work abroad under contract. The South Asian countries accounted for 46 per cent of this outflow. Southeast Asia made up 50 per cent (IOM 2003). With regard to Asian women, approximately 1.5 million—both authorised and unauthorised—were working abroad, while a total of 800,000 female migrants per year had left their countries to work abroad (Lim and Oishi 1996: 87).

Labour migration is linked to the international labour market, which has undergone major transformations due to the ongoing globalisation processes (Gills and Piper 2002). The types of labour currently in demand have become more diversified. There has been a significant flow of professional and technical workers to Europe and North America from India, the Philippines and Thailand to work in the IT and nursing sectors. At the same time, intensified intra-regional migration has occurred, particularly from Southeast Asia to East Asia and mainly in the context of unskilled labour. With the expansion of the service industries, demand for female labour has also been on the increase, pointing to the feminisation of labour migration. While this has become a well-recognised phenomenon, often it is still mentioned only in passing.

Traditionally, academic theorising and policy making has taken the experience of male migrants as the norm. In recent years, however, more attention has been paid to women's specific experience, at least by academics (Lim and Oishi 1996). This is related to the fact that labour migration in general, and in Asia in particular, is characterised by an increasing proportion of women. Academic writing is divided on the issue of whether international migration is empowering or disempowering to women (Presser and Sen 2000). This complex issue is very much context specific, depending on the regulatory as well as socio-cultural conditions of the migration process. Regardless of whether they are from a largely labour importing or labour exporting country, there are a number of common issues that all women face—the protection from and prevention of exploitative and abusive practices. The challenge of optimising the benefits of labour migration is linked to the policies and rights in the countries at both ends of the migration chain.

This paper simply aims at outlining emerging trends and issues in the subject area of female labour migration in the context of intra-Asian migration flows. The specific focus is on the clashes between official migration policies and what is actually happening on the ground—the migration reality.

Feminisation of labour migration

The feminisation of labour migration has become a well established fact. Not only are increasing numbers of women participating, but their numbers often exceed those of their male counterparts (OECD 1998). Most of these women migrate from Southeast Asia, notably the Philippines and Indonesia, but the numbers of women who migrate from South Asia, for example Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, to destinations in the Middle East as well as East and Southeast Asia have risen each year (Gamburd 2000, Siddiqui 2001). Although the growing feminisation of Asian migration has been acknowledged by mainstream migration scholars, this has mainly been done in passing and/or in a neutral manner (see, for example, Castles and Miller 1998).

By 2002 there were at least 1.3 million women working legally in the major labour importing countries of the region (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea and Japan). Including the large but unknown numbers of unauthorised female migrant workers, especially in Malaysia and Thailand, the total number of migrant women working in East and Southeast Asia could have reached as many as 2 million in the early 2000s. This figure does not include the large numbers of Asian women working in the Middle East (Yamanaka and Piper 2003). According to Battistella (2002: 406), by 2000 the stock of authorised migrants in the seven major labour importing countries in East and Southeast Asia was approximately 3.7 million, while unauthorised migrants in the same countries were estimated at 2.4 million. Based on these statistics, the estimated 2 million women then account for an unprecedented third of the 6.1 million migrant workers in the region.2
As regional economies have gradually become more integrated, increasing numbers of women also work abroad in increasingly diversified jobs and sectors. Despite these recent signs of diversification in skill levels and employment opportunities (Kofman 1999, RaghuRam 2000, Piper and Roces 2003) and rising numbers of women among migrating students (Ono and Piper forthcoming), the majority of migrant women in Southeast and East Asia still labour as unskilled domestic helpers on short-term work contracts (Chin 1998, Yeoh, Huang and Gonzalez 1999, Parreñas 2001) or in the service sector as ‘entertainers’ or sex workers, either on short-term visas (such as the entertainment visa granted in Japan and Korea) or as undocumented, often smuggled or trafficked, migrants (Piper and Uhlin 2002, Piper 1999). Despite the significant levels of risk and vulnerability they encounter, the harsh conditions experienced by migrant women have attracted some scholarly, but still little administrative or public attention, in the region (Lim and Oishi 1996). The stereotypical view of women as dependants (‘good’ wife or daughter) or as secondary earners remains dominant as the gap between scholarly perceptions and the reality of migrant women’s lives grows.

Under the prevailing institutional arrangements of migration in Asia, it is difficult to fully protect the rights, physical safety and psychological health of migrant women. Most governments have failed to provide protective legislation and services specific to their needs. Indifference to feminised migration has led to a lack of relevant policies and public awareness in countries of origin, as well as host countries (in Chin’s words (1998), ‘a wall of silence’). In addition, women migrants’ work in domestic or reproductive spheres, even more so when ‘illegal’, tends to have an isolating effect as it is outside any protective mechanisms and outside the coverage of receiving countries’ labour laws (Piper and Ball 2001). As a result, substantial numbers of female migrants are left to suffer alienation, mistreatment and injustice, with few means of recourse (Piper and Yamanaka 2003, Constable 1997).

The feminisation of labour migration can also be seen as involving wider violations of social rights, such as the right to family life. Recent studies have shown the psychological and other pressures women migrants in so-called ‘transnationally split families’ encounter, which often have long-term negative impacts (Parreas 2001; Piper and Roces 2003). When women migrants take on the role as main income provider, leaving husband and children behind in their country of origin, this can lead to a huge array of problems and strains on the women’s and their families’ lives. No Asian country, however, currently has or even contemplates the development of family reunification policies.

Migration policies and programs that are insensitive to women’s specific circumstances and which often reinforce stereotypes, have been seen as one of the important factors contributing to these vulnerabilities and hardships (Fincher 1997). In addition, harsh immigration policies offering only short-term contracts or no contracts at all, result in high incidences of women migrating as undocumented workers, and hence to their increased vulnerability.

**Migration reality and human rights in the Asia–Pacific region**

Over the last few decades, the labour market conditions in the region under discussion have undergone considerable changes. Intensified migration pressures have resulted in the supply side out-balancing the demand side, with the result that by pushing wages down the benefits for migrants have been reduced. These market pressures also allow for less protection, subjecting migrants to higher levels of exploitation. On the labour exporting front, new source countries such as Nepal and Vietnam have emerged, resulting in increased competition and lower standards in labour-migration policies at the importing end, where economic downturns and rising unemployment among the local workforce have lowered existing protective mechanisms and reduced the prospects for implementing rights-based regulations. Certain abuses, such as the non-payment of wages, have become more common, reflecting economic realities in receiving countries where unskilled migrants are typically employed at small- and medium-sized companies or in economically squeezed middle-class households as domestic helpers. Thus, the costs for migration have come to be disproportionately borne by the migrants themselves.

Intra-Asian labour migration flows have become a structural part of the regional economies and societies. Despite increasing cross-border movements, control over migration remains one of the last bastions of sovereignty for individual states and is aimed at keeping unskilled labour migration within narrow parameters. In this way, a growing discrepancy is created between the social reality of migration and its legal regulation. In much of Asia, this is also related to the political sensitivity of issues revolving around workers’ and human rights, which has prevented a regional dialogue on international labour migration from taking place in Asia. The human rights of workers are conspicuously absent in regional discussion in Asia, where workers’ rights are secondary to the pursuit of economic development. The aftermath of the Asian financial crisis has exacerbated this situation. The ratification of international standards set by the ILO or UN varies substantially across the region, leaving consistent or actual implementation something which can only be hoped for.

Thus, despite some variations, migration policies in Asia can be broadly summarised as follows:

- limiting labour migration;
- limiting the duration of migration; and
- limiting integration.

This is also indicative of the way many countries in Asia adopt a population policy for highly skilled or professional migrants but a labour policy for the unskilled, in accordance with which the
latter are supposed to leave after their contracts expire (for Singapore, see Wong 1997). These policies impact upon migrants’ rights because they reduce migrants to workers and also reduce the economic benefits for individual migrants. In addition, there is a tacit approval of unauthorised migrants in much of this region, although tolerance levels have declined since 11 September 2001.

Largely due to socio-political changes in the socialist countries in this region, new opportunities for women from countries that had not been sources of migrant labour before have opened up. These new faces include Vietnamese in Taiwan, Cambodians in Malaysia, and Mongolians, Russians, Uzbeks and Kazakhs in Korea. The seeking of new sources of migrant labour, however, is not only related to demand in terms of numbers, but also to demand for a different kind of worker, one less expensive and more docile (read less ‘rights’ conscious). For example, Filipino domestics in Hong Kong have been partially replaced by less organised, and thus less vocal, nationality groups, such as Indonesians and Sri Lankans. Similarly, in Taiwan, the proportion of Filipino women in the country’s foreign domestic worker population plummeted from 83 per cent in 1998 to 18 per cent in 2002, as they were replaced by less expensive Indonesian and Vietnamese women. These changes in the composition of women’s nationalities suggest their vulnerability to unpredictable changes in labour market forces and government policy. As a result, a new stratification is emerging, whereby women are ranked as a group in the demand and wage scale according to nationality, ethnicity, class and social capital (Yamanaka and Piper forthcoming).

Despite a prevailing policy of returning unskilled migrants on expiry of their contacts, there are signs of prolonged duration of employment and residence of migrant women in receiving countries. Domestic helpers are often granted extensions of their work permits, resulting in some women staying a decade. There also has been a considerable increase in the numbers and types of migrant women whose legal visa status gives them rights to reside and to work indefinitely in the new country. This is evident in the rising numbers of the women who arrive as brides of citizens, for example in Japan and Korea (Yamanaka and Piper forthcoming), or get married to local citizens as a result of labour migration (Piper and Roces 2003). These examples clearly point to the fact that, despite official policy and rhetoric directed at limiting migrant labour to short-term employment, migrants, especially women, tend to find ways to remain in the country longer than they and the government expected. This phenomenon is conspicuous in Japan and Korea, the two East Asian countries with a relatively homogeneous population. All of this has implications for family reunification (which at this stage is largely impossible in Asia) and policies dealing with the acquisition of citizenship.

There is, however, solidarity emerging among major sending countries toward collective bargaining at the governmental level. Also, in the absence of governmental protection in both labour importing and labour exporting countries, service provision and advocacy have been left to NGOs, of which there are a growing number all over the region (Piper 2003). Increasingly, one can witness political and economic activism on behalf of migrant workers, and also by migrant workers themselves. The emergence of regional networks such as CARAM ASIA based in Kuala Lumpur and the Migrant Forum in Asia headquartered in Manilla have resulted in more concerted efforts to pressure governments at both ends of the migration process. Despite this, civil society’s responses to the largely absent rights — labour, citizenship and human rights — for migrant workers, especially for women, vary significantly depending on upon types of policies, political freedom and ethnic relations in the host society, as well as country of origin.

**Conclusion**

Contemporary forms of labour migration are characterised by the increasing participation of women, increasing regionalisation, and obstacles to long-term residence. With the gap between government policies and migration reality widening and abusive practices rampant, NGOs have taken on an important role as service providers and rights’ advocates, engaging in transnational networking as best they can with limited human and financial resources.

Apart from a few exceptions, this type of ‘migration politics’ has been subject to very little research. Considering the complexities involved in improving the benefits of migration for the individuals involved, a holistic approach should be adopted. In this respect, migration scholars have much to learn from social movement literature and development studies literature about the ways in which the stakeholders in the migration process (the various civil society organisations, and labour importing and exporting governments) are operating and how this succeeds in empowering or disempowering marginalised groups.

**Notes**

1. In this widely quoted article, Morokvasic initiated feminist critique of conventional migration studies offering concepts and theoretical frameworks, which fitted the standpoint of male migrants only.
2. For a more detailed statistical breakdown, see the special issue of *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 12(1–2), edited by Piper and Yamanaka, and the introduction by Yamanaka and Piper therein.
3. Domestic helpers are excluded from Employment Act or Labour Standards Law in every receiving-country in Asia. If not explicitly excluded in the Acts themselves, they are excluded by specific policies stipulated in their work contracts.
4. A good example is Singapore where employers pay a $51 ‘fee’ to agents for an Indonesian maid, but the maid herself has to pay for her expenses and official fees, resulting in several months without wages to pay-off the debts.
In Colombo, Sri Lanka, April 2003, all the major labour sending countries in Asia met for the first time at ministerial level to discuss issues of common interest.

The Migrant Forum in Asia is a migrants’ rights advocate (see http://migrantnet.pair.com/index.html for more detail. CARAM ASIA stands for Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility (see http://caramasia.gn.apc.org/ CARAM%20Asia-About%20Us.htm for more detail).

References


The Solomon Islands is the South Pacific’s first failed state. The Honiara Government cannot maintain law and order and the economy is in ruins, with per capita GDP halved in the 25 years since independence... A nation in chaos, where everything is for sale, is ripe for exploitation by money launderers, drug traffickers and terrorists.

What the Solomons need is a restoration of the rule of law and stable, honest administration — the pre-conditions for self-sustaining growth. If Australian officials, perhaps supported by a short service multi-national police force, could restore stability, it would be a small price to pay (The Australian, cited in The New Zealand Herald, 3 June 2003:A16).

[I]n Honiara, where power and water supplies are erratic, life goes on much as ever... ‘Yes, it’s just the same and there’s not a serious law-and-order problem we are facing in Honiara’ says Priestly Habru, a journalist from the Solomon Star. ‘But the news about the intervention of Australia and New Zealand has made our image overseas such that we are being seen as a dangerous place and that there’s a law and order problem. But it’s not that dangerous compared to the past couple of years’ (Graham Reid in The New Zealand Herald, 28–29 June 2003:B6).

Two contexts: A ‘doomsday’ scenario and a village play

In 1993 the National Centre for Development Studies (NCDS) at the Australian National University published a grim portrayal of population and development prospects for the Pacific in the first decade of the new millennium (Cole 1993). A ‘doomsday’ scenario, articulated by journalist Rowan Callick (1993), was used to challenge academics, planners and politicians to take bold action ‘before events start to move out of control and the nightmare becomes a reality’.

Callick’s observations certainly stimulated debate amongst academics in the mid-1990s, attracting sharply critical responses from some eminent Pacific population specialists (Pirie, Hayes and Levin 1995). These, in turn, generated an equally sharp rebuttal from the editor of the Pacific 2010: Challenging the Future series, Rodney Cole (1995). The ‘doomsday scenario’ speculated that Pacific population growth by 2010 would be ‘careering beyond control’, with widespread social, economic and environmental malaise throughout the region unless Pacific leaders took ‘action boldly, in their own way, before looming disasters impose their own grim patterns on the next generation and beyond’ (Callick 1993:11).

A ‘failed state’

Ten years later, as the first quotation from The New Zealand Herald in June 2003 indicates, the Australian and New Zealand governments are contemplating military intervention in the Solomon Islands to restore civil order in the Pacific’s first ‘failed state’. It seems that aspects of Callick’s ‘doomsday’ scenario have become the reality, at least in some parts of Melanesia. The ‘bold action’ he was hoping to stimulate a decade ago to avoid such social, economic and political collapse is now about to play out in a way that was not contemplated in 1993. The prime minister of the Solomons has requested intervention by Australia and New Zealand to restore order in a country where systemic corruption and disrespect for law has produced a dysfunctional political and judicial system (Sheridan 2003:15, NZPA 2003:A6).

Yet, as Graham Reid (2003:B6) observes in the second quotation above, it may not be quite as desperate and dangerous as the extensive Australian and New Zealand media coverage of the situation in the Solomons suggests. What has contributed significantly to raising concern in Australia and New Zealand is the fear that the Solomons may become a haven for terrorists and ‘a pivot in an arc of instability in the region’ (Reid 2003:B6). This fear has been stimulated by two recent papers on Australia’s strategic responses to social, economic and political change in the Pacific. The first is Elsina Wainright’s (2002) critical assessment of the implications of ‘our failing neighbour’ for Australia (cited in Ansley 2003a). The second is Helen Hughes’ (2003) wide-ranging review of why ‘aid has failed the Pacific’. As Wainright (cited in Ansley, 2003a, B16) points out: ‘What we decide to do about Solomon Islands will shape Australia’s approach to the problem of maintaining stability among island states in our immediate neighbourhood.’

Greg Ansley (2003a:B16) summed up what he termed a ‘risky shift in policy in the Pacific’ by the Australian and New Zealand governments which are considering a proposal that would in effect take management of the [Solomon] islands from their elected government, install a new interim administration to set things in order, and embark on a programme of rehabilitation’.
This is intervention on a scale that is unprecedented in the post-colonial Pacific. As Ansley (2003a:B16) concluded: 'How that precedent is seen by the region, and exercised by its major powers in future crises, will be crucial for relations in the region.'

Just as the Fiji military coups in 1987 and the Bougainville rebellion in 1989 were defining moments in the contemporary geopolitics of Melanesia, so the collapse of civil order in the Solomons marks the commencement of a new phase in the relationships between Australia and New Zealand and their neighbours in the western Pacific. Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Tonga have also experienced turbulent times politically during the decade since the NCDS Pacific 2010 project that Callick's (1993) scenario 'launched'. Relations between the governments of these countries and their neighbours to the south that provide considerable development assistance in the region have become distinctly cooler, especially when the latter make allegations of corruption and political or economic mismanagement (Gamble 2003:B8, Garner 2003a:A16, Smythe 2003:A17).

A Piece of Land

The occasion of the Development Studies Network's conference 'Population Change in Asia and the Pacific: Implications for Development Policy' (Canberra, 5 June 2003) was used to launch a new film by Vanuatu's Wan Smolbag Theatre, A Piece of Land. This 90-minute video captures the essence of many of the contemporary tensions in rural Melanesia that are at the heart of both Callick's (1993) 'doomsday' scenario, and Helen Hughes' (2003) devastating critique of 30 years of 'development assistance' in the Pacific.

At the level of a village in Vanuatu, the film portrays the conflicts over land and family planning that are at the heart of the complex debate about population pressure in island societies. Ten years ago, Callick (1993:8) summed the situation up as follows: 'the region's population growth is careering, albeit happily for now, beyond control. Already the next generation's options are thereby diminished. There is less land for each clan or family, fewer resources to go round in the village and in the nation as a whole.' Although it is unwise to generalise over such a large and diverse region, Hughes (2003:2) argues that there is evidence in many countries of stagnating and falling living standards, deteriorating nutrition, education and health standards, deprivation and insecurity in villages and towns, and deep dissatisfaction that is erupting in a culture of arms and violence.

A central message of A Piece of Land is the growing disrespect for customary ways of resolving disputes through negotiation and payment of compensation. Resort to a mix of 'modern' strategies — surveying boundaries and registering individual title to land — coupled with rejection of the claims of siblings to a share of the territory that the larger family had access to, is generating an explosive situation in many parts of the Pacific. The diffusion of firearms, especially in Melanesia, and the use of guns to settle disputes, has become much more widespread, often with fatal, unintended consequences, as in the case of the final scenes in A Piece of Land. At a more general level, Hughes (2003:12), citing a study by Alpers and Twyford (2003), argues that the Pacific is awash with guns, coups occur and threaten, and urban crime, among the highest in the world, is spilling into villages.

A perspective

Crisis and corruption, rather than reform and progress, seem to have been the experience of several governments and economies in the region over the past decade. Indeed, as Hau'ofa (1987) remarked 15 years ago, only the political, business and bureaucratic elites have experienced significant improvements in living standards during the post-colonial era. The gap between rich and poor in the Pacific has widened markedly, as it has in many parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Hughes (2003:25), like Callick (1993), issues a very powerful challenge to Pacific governments, as well as to aid agencies, development banks and NGOs, to adopt different economic policies, or else 'poverty will increase, standards of living will continue to stagnate, and instability will worsen'. At the heart of Hughes' (2003:25) prescription for a better future is significant refocusing of aid programs to counter the negative effects that mineral endowments and high aid flows have inadvertently contributed to the 'corrupt accumulation of private fortunes by small elites ... in bloated public sectors'.

One of the most critical issues that confronts governments in most Pacific countries is youth underemployment and unemployment. This is a particularly acute problem in Melanesia where over half of the population is under 25 years of age. Prospects for wage employment in the towns are very limited throughout Melanesia, especially for those with limited education. The hope that rural development could absorb a burgeoning youthful labour force has not been realised in many parts of Melanesia. Indeed, shortages of land for those seeking to derive a satisfactory livelihood in villages rather than towns are causing serious tensions in many parts of the region. This is the clear message of the Wan Smolbag Theatre's A Piece of Land.

These tensions are not only caused by significant population pressure on available land; they are also caused by absentee land ownership, especially in Polynesia with its sizeable transnational communities. There are parts of Polynesia (for example, Niue, the outer Cook Islands, some islands in Tonga) where labour shortages are a serious constraint on rural development. However, the rights of absentees make it difficult for repopulation of the countryside by Polynesians from more crowded islands who are interested in working the land.

Niue's premier, Young Vivian, is determined that New Zealand's Niuean expatriates will not determine the future of the
island despite the decline in the island's population to around 1,500. As Garner (2003b:B2) notes with regard to a proposal by some New Zealand-based Niueans, that the island should re-integrate with its main aid donor, 'Premier Young Vivian said that if expatriates did not want to return, he could boost the population with people from other Pacific Islands such as Samoa and Tonga'. This problem of absenteeism is also at the heart of some major land debates in Fiji and other parts of Melanesia as Ward and Kingdon (1995) show in their collection of essays on contemporary land tenure in the Pacific.

Migration, both internal and international, has long had profound implications for population change and development policy throughout the Pacific. In the next section of the paper, recent trends in population growth in the three major sub-regions (Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia) are examined briefly. This is followed by a re-assessment of the limited options for international migration in Melanesia — a situation that is bound to change during the first half of the twenty-first century as Melanesians re-establish the tradition of sea travel to neighbouring countries, 1,000 years after the forebears of New Zealand's indigenous Maori population travelled by canoe from eastern Polynesia to Aotearoa (Bedford 2003).

**Population change: Looking back, looking ahead**

The Demography Programme at the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in Noumea, estimates that the population of the Pacific Islands in June 2003 is 8.4 million (<http://www.spc.int/demogl>). The great majority of these people (86 per cent, or 7.243 million) live in the island countries comprising Melanesia (Fiji, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu), with 5.5 million in Papua New Guinea alone. The populations of Polynesia (633,000) and Micronesia (525,000) are spread over 16 states and colonies, the largest of which (French Polynesia) had a population of just under 250,000 in June 2003.

Melanesia is the Pacific's demographic 'time bomb', with all countries aside from Fiji having estimated annual rates of growth of over 2 per cent in 2003. The average for the sub-region is 2.7 per cent per annum, reflecting the contribution made by Papua New Guinea. If this rate of growth persists, Melanesia's population will double to reach 14.5 million by 2030 — around three times larger than New Zealand's population (4.7 million) is projected to be by 2031 (Statistics New Zealand 2003:143, medium variant). Of course it is highly unlikely that Melanesia's population will continue to grow at a constant rate of 2.7 per cent per annum for the next 30 years, but the United Nations Population Division estimates that by 2050 this region could have 14 million people, after allowing for some decline in fertility and improvement in mortality (Bedford, 2003:10).

A population of 14 million for Melanesia by 2050 compares with a population of 2.1 million in these countries in 1950. In 2050 the population of the western Pacific could be almost seven times larger than it was in 1950, especially if there are no outlets for international migration. In 1950 Australia had a population of 8.3 million — equivalent to the current total population of the Pacific Islands. By 2050 Australia's population could have reached 26.5 million — just over three times what it was in 1950 (Bedford 2003). New Zealand's 1.91 million in 1950 could reach 4.8 million by 2050, according to recent projections — an increase of only 256 per cent, by comparison with Melanesia's 700 per cent.

The populations of the small island countries in Polynesia and most parts of Micronesia are forecast to grow more slowly, largely thanks to a longstanding legacy of international migration from many of the island groups to New Zealand, Australia (Polynesia) and United States (Micronesia and Polynesia). The average annual rate of growth for Polynesia's population is 1.2 per cent, with a doubling of the population at this rate of growth to 1.27 million by 2061, according to the SPC. Micronesia's population of 525,000 would double in size in 33 years (by 2036) if it continued to grow at the current estimated annual rate of increase (2.1 per cent).

The United Nations Population Division has produced projections for Polynesia (890,000) and Micronesia (1,080,000) that are significantly greater than the populations these islands had in 1950. Polynesia's population in 1950, before the exodus of Cook Islanders, Niueans, Samoans and Tongans to New Zealand, and the flows on to Australia as well as out to the United States, was around 236,000 (Bedford 2003:4). It is perhaps salutary to recall that in the early 1960s, academics in Australia and New Zealand were talking of an impending 'Malthusian crisis' in Polynesia (McArthur 1961, Borrie 1967). Emigration to countries on the Pacific rim was seen to be a necessary 'safety valve' for small island populations experiencing growth at the levels currently experienced in Melanesia (Cumberland 1962, McArthur 1964). By 2050, even allowing for the effects of this 'safety valve', the UN Population Division estimates that Polynesia's population will be 3.8 times larger than it was in 1950.

Micronesia's estimated population of just over 1 million by 2050 compares with a very small population in 1950 (168,000). The population of these northern Pacific islands is growing much more rapidly than the population of Polynesia, and between 1950 and 2003, when the total was estimated by the SPC to be 525,000, numbers more than trebled. Emigration to the United States has been much less significant as a regulator of overall population growth in Micronesia as a whole between 1950 and 2003, than the movement of Polynesians to countries on the Pacific rim during the same period. In addition, there is extensive immigration into some Micronesian countries from parts of the Asia–Pacific rim, especially
into the Northern Marianas and Guam. Over the next 50 years it is estimated that both Micronesia’s and Melanesia’s populations might each double in size, while Polynesia’s decreases by 40 per cent. By comparison, Australia’s population could grow by 38 per cent while New Zealand’s increases by only 26 per cent (Bedford 2003).

A ‘safety valve’ for Melanesia

Arguably the most contentious demographic issue confronting Australia and New Zealand in the Pacific during the next half century will be how to cope with pressure for an emigration outlet from Melanesia. It is unrealistic to assume that the islands of the western Pacific, especially Papua New Guinea, Solomons and Vanuatu, will not seek access to employment opportunities and residence for some of their citizens in their metropolitan neighbours. In the late nineteenth century, thousands of Melanesians from these three countries were recruited to work on sugar plantations in Queensland. This labour ‘trade’ ceased in 1906.

Successive Australian governments have been very reluctant to allow migration of unskilled and semi-skilled labour from Pacific countries through the twentieth century and, as Helen Ware (2003:14) recently observed, ‘now is not the moment’ to consider some form of guestworker scheme for Pacific Islanders. There have been guestworker schemes for Fiji citizens in New Zealand between the 1950s and the military coups in the late 1980s, but no deliberate work-related programs for Ni Vanuatu, Solomon Islanders or Papua New Guineans.

Australians and New Zealanders, however, significant destinations for Melanesians seeking tertiary education and professional training. There is a growing awareness, especially amongst the educated urban elites in the Western Pacific of the access that some other Pacific peoples to the West, especially and, with New Zealand citizenship, to Australia. There is pressure to allow Solomon Islanders undertaking training in New Zealand to stay on in the country after they have obtained their qualifications to gain work experience, especially as the latter is impossible to get under present conditions in the Solomons.

Helen Hughes (2003:26) argues that ‘to suggest that special exemptions should be made for unskilled (perhaps temporary workers) is the height of paternalism. People in the Pacific are just as able to acquire qualifications as those in other countries from which Australia receives immigrants’. This is patently not the case for large numbers of Melanesians. There are not the opportunities to gain the secondary and tertiary education that the populations of Australia and New Zealand have access to. The lead actress in Wan Smolbag Theatre’s A Piece of Land demonstrated the dilemma facing many young Ni Vanuatu women who are unable to complete their education because of the cost of school fees in a country where wage employment opportunities are scarce.

Michael Levin (1995:196), concluded his review of Pacific 2010: Facing the Challenge by noting that while some of the island nations had little out-migration at present, ‘it is not clear whether, over the longer term, Pacific rim countries will reject a source of cheap, enthusiastic labour’. For over 50 years New Zealand has quite deliberately drawn on a cheap Polynesian labour reserve. Over the next 50 years both New Zealand and Australia may have no choice but to consider, as Ware (2003:14) suggests, ‘the relative developmental benefits of aid, versus some form of guest worker scheme’, especially for young Melanesians.

The prospect of burgeoning, under-employed, youthful Melanesian populations, with very limited opportunities for obtaining work in towns, or access to land in sufficient quantities to ensure a reasonably rural livelihood, is going to necessitate a re-thinking of priorities for development assistance in the western Pacific. Just as the Australian government found it convenient to use isolated Pacific islands to ‘park’ the problem of boat people rescued by the Tampa, it will not be too long before we have increasing numbers of people from the western Pacific exploring ways of overcoming the problem of lack of work and money by heading for Australia and New Zealand (Ansley 2003b).

Around 1000 AD Maori were practising a long-established tradition of inter-island travel and colonisation by settling in the islands that came to be known as New Zealand. Around 2000 AD the flows of Melanesians overseas, while still very small by comparison with the flows of Polynesians and Micronesians, are increasing. Hau’ofa (1994:154) reminded us that before Europeans colonised the western Pacific, ‘large regions of Melanesia were integrated by trading and cultural exchange systems that were even more complex than Polynesia and Micronesia’. In his view, it would be only a matter of time before Melanesians began breaching the boundaries created by colonialism in the Pacific.

Like the Polynesians in New Zealand, Australia and the United States, increasing numbers of Melanesians early in the twenty-first century will strike roots in new resource areas, securing employment and overseas family property, expanding kinship networks through which they circulate themselves, their relatives, their material goods and their stories all across their ocean (Hau’ofa 1994:195). In part this will reflect pressures in home islands; in part it will reflect demands for labour overseas. As Cole (1993:vii) noted in his foreword to the ‘doomsday’ scenario:

[T]he inhabitants of the South Pacific island states ... want, and quite reasonably expect, what their neighbours in the industrial countries of the region enjoy. The island people of today want better standards of living, health, housing, education and leisure. These wants can only be met through improved incomes, regular employment and a move away from traditional village lifestyles.

Sustainable development in Melanesia in the twenty-first century, as in New Zealand and Australia, will depend heavily on opportunities for young people to travel overseas for training and employment.
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The recent release of a paper by Professor Helen Hughes has drawn attention to Pacific population and development issues and raised some important points for debate and clarification. Arguing that 'aid has failed the Pacific', Hughes correctly observes that the imbalance between population and resources is the most serious problem confronting much of the region, while aid has contributed little to the sustainability of Pacific economies. But this is not, as she claims, because warnings about the 'high economic and social costs of population exceeding economic growth' have been ignored (Hughes 2003:3).

Half a generation ago, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands became concerned about the growing imbalance between population and resources, and produced population policies targeting dramatic reductions in their population growth rates (Government of Papua New Guinea 1991, Solomon Islands 1987). Since then, a number of other Pacific countries have recognised that managing population change is central to their development strategies (for example, Government of American Samoa 2000, Government of Vanuatu 2001, Government of Western Samoa 1997).

The underlying reason that such initiatives have resulted in little improvement in the population–resources balance of most countries in the region is not that countries have ignored the problem, but that the pursuit of an urban-based pattern of development is inappropriate for Pacific society and Pacific needs. This pattern of development, founded by colonial powers, supported by globalisation, advocated by expatriate economic advisors, and supported by aid donors, has fostered an economic

Figure 1 Average annual population growth rates, c 2000

and social dualism that supports a large family norm rather than generating incentives to reduce fertility. Because this style of development is so inappropriate for the Pacific, it causes development assistance to be misdirected and is a leading cause of poor governance.

**Pacific population trends**

Figure 1 shows the latest available intercensal average annual population growth rates for Pacific countries. The dark bars represent the countries that have strong historical and economic links with Australia, or are likely to see Australia as their primary migration destination should other destinations, such as New Zealand, become less accessible or less attractive. Four of these 11 countries have growth rates in excess of 2 per cent per annum, including most of Melanesia.

Although the growth rates of most countries have declined as compared with the preceding intercensal period, the majority still reflect rapid population change, with growth rates of 2 per cent or more signifying the potential for populations to double in 35 years or less.

There are two other important features in Figure 1. First, substantial variability in population growth rates is evident both within and between the three subregions. Second, Melanesia has a total population size that is more than ten times those of either Micronesia or Polynesia, so any combined demographic indicators for the Pacific as a whole largely reflect conditions in Melanesia.

When we compare average annual growth rates with average rates of natural increase in the countries of most interest to Australia (Figure 2), we can see that most of the countries that have relatively low growth rates would have much higher growth rates if it were not for emigration. Much of this migration is to obtain education or employment, indicating that some Pacific communities already have needs that cannot be met within their own countries and are using migration rather than fertility reduction as a way of balancing population and resources.

With the exception of Indo-Fijians, Melanesians have not yet migrated internationally in significant numbers. This is partly because Melanesian countries have greater land areas and lower population densities than those of Micronesia and Polynesia, and partly because the majority of Melanesians lack the resources, information and overseas kinship networks to facilitate migration.

In general, Melanesian countries have the most numerous and rapidly growing populations, however, and are closely

![Figure 2 Comparison of average growth rates and natural increase](image-url)
associated with Australia, both historically and geographically. Even if their fertility rates were to decline rapidly, population pressure would inevitably increase in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu because of the population momentum that goes with having a predominantly young age structure.

It is thus possible that, within a few decades, Australia could face strong pressure to admit large numbers from these countries, while Melanesians with limited resources or who are unaccustomed to bureaucratic processes could simply climb into boats and travel across the Torres Strait or the Coral Sea. Because these people are similar to indigenous Australians, regulating such an inflow of 'illegal' migrants would be extremely difficult and have horrendous political implications.

Professor Hughes is right to draw our attention to this potential time bomb. What she fails to appreciate, however, is that it has come about because an urban-based pattern of development is inappropriate for most Pacific countries and so does not foster incentives to reduce fertility.

**Supporting high fertility**

There are several leading theories about the causes of fertility decline, but all relate to the changing cost of childbearing (see, for example, Becker 1991, Caldwell 1982, Easterlin 1985). Because the necessities of life are no longer produced at home, the cost of raising children is much greater in a modern, industrialised economy than in a traditional subsistence economy, and there tends to be a longer interval before investment in child rearing returns any benefit to the parents. At the same time, the opportunity cost of childbearing increases when women have the alternative of participating in paid employment, so couples are encouraged to have fewer children. Many studies in many countries have shown that the two variables consistently associated with fertility decline or low fertility are increasing levels of education among women and their increased participation in paid employment.

In most Pacific countries, development has been confined to urban areas and special development enclaves, such as mines and plantations, while village life in rural areas continues much as before. The bulk of wage employment is in primary and extractive industries, the public sector bureaucracy and services, while the small business and manufacturing sectors tend to be underdeveloped.

Most Pacific countries rely on overseas capital to develop their main assets — tourism and marine resources — and so lose much of the benefit, while Pacific culture tends to discourage individual enterprise. At the same time, the proliferation of Western foods, modern consumer goods and other modern ways of spending money has reduced the appeal of a wholly subsistence lifestyle and generated an enormous demand for wage employment and other ways of obtaining cash.

Contemporary Pacific islanders typically have dual affiliations with both the traditional and modern sectors and move easily between these contexts. Pacific societies have become very mobile, with high levels of long and short-term rural–urban movement, both within countries and internationally. The fertility decline normally associated with modern sector affiliations is thus moderated by the persistence of the family networks and obligations that are the foundation of village life.

Moreover, this duality of rural–urban lifestyles actually encourages large families. The more children born to a rural family, the better the chances that at least one will obtain well-paid urban employment, or maybe even find a job in New Zealand or Australia and send remittances to support the village family.

On the other hand, the risks of having a large family are small, because children who do not find wage employment can be absorbed back into the subsistence sector and cared for by the village safety net. While a family that lacks relatives employed in the modern sector might not receive the desired salary contributions and remittances to support conspicuous consumption, it is unlikely to starve. As a consequence, four or more children are still the norm in most of the Pacific.

Bertram and Watters (1985) have endorsed labour migration to Pacific rim countries as a way of extending the resource base of small Pacific countries, while Hughes (2003) argues that it provides capital for small business development, but these views fail to take account of the population implications of this strategy. Apart from the disadvantages of the selective nature of emigration, which tends to effect a 'brain drain', emigration encourages a large family size in order to maximise potential remittances.

It is also illogical to assume that increasing remittances will automatically result in more development of the small business sector in Pacific countries. Traditional cultural values of sharing and incurring obligations conflict with business practices and discourage small enterprise, while business investment costs are high relative to potential returns from limited consumer markets. Few businesses established with remittances to home countries survive in the long-term. Many fail, but others are closed down simply because entrepreneurs lose interest and want to enjoy a more relaxed lifestyle. Pacific people are shrewd, and well able to recognise that returns are better and risks lower from well-regulated employment in Pacific Rim countries than from risky business ventures in their own.

Hughes states that 'development implies a change from traditional to modern societies', and accuses Pacific leaders of being unrealistic in wanting both their traditional institutions and the benefits of modernisation (Hughes 2003:11). But why
should this be so? A meeting of Pacific planners agreed that development should be about capacity building to improve or maintain the quality of life (SPC 2001). There is no reason for development defined in that way to be considered incompatible with traditional institutions. What is incompatible with traditional Pacific institutions is not development per se, but patterns of development that concentrate in urban areas and economic enclaves and neglect rural areas.

**The solutions**

If donors were to withdraw assistance completely, as Professor Hughes suggests would be the strongest medicine for current ailments, Pacific governments would continue to follow the existing inappropriate, urban-based patterns of development. As Professor Vijay Naidu has pointed out, however, most of the development assistance to the Pacific in the past has been tied to the economic interests of donor countries or was intended to protect strategic interests (Naidu 2003). Such assistance has thus reinforced the export-oriented economies that were established during colonial times, and shaped Pacific economic development to suit donors rather than the needs of Pacific countries.

These days, development assistance is more focused on social objectives, as evidenced by the substantial expenditure on health, education and human rights by AusAID (the Australian Agency for International Development) (AusAID 2003, ACFOA 2002), while the ‘mutual obligations’ Hughes calls for are already in place. Even so, it is impossible to balance population and resources in any humane way by building on an inappropriate and unsound foundation.

If the present pattern of development continues, in Melanesia especially, population will tend to increase until food poverty becomes widespread, and the traditional Malthusian checks, such as famine and disease, would eventually force a fertility reduction and possibly also massive emigration. It is possible that such a crisis point could be reached within a few decades in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. The humanitarian costs of this approach would be very great, as a forced fertility reduction would probably not occur until Australia’s nearest Pacific neighbours were reduced to living conditions of the order that precipitated fertility reduction in Bangladesh.

Another option would be for Pacific rim countries to accept more migrants and guestworkers from Pacific countries. As we have seen, however, emigration may reduce population pressure and augment income, but it does not provide incentives to reduce fertility in the home country or lead to substantial development of the private sector. Accepting migrants is therefore a useful form of development assistance to supplement the resources of Pacific countries, but unless it is augmented by strategies to promote lower fertility, potential migrants could soon exceed the number that Pacific Rim countries are willing to absorb.

The third option, and the only reasonable alternative, is to change the approach to development. What is needed is a type of development that is adapted to Pacific needs and lifestyle objectives and promotes incentives to reduce fertility. In fact, this is well recognised by Pacific planners. At a meeting of senior Pacific planners in Noumea in 2001 (SPC 2001), several constructive suggestions were made about what kind of assistance would help their countries achieve sustainable lifestyles.

The planners pointed out that Pacific countries tend to regard ‘development’ as a foreign-driven concept that has not evolved from Pacific needs. They emphasised that development initiatives intended for Pacific island countries should recognise the potential and importance of cultural and traditional values, and integrate these values into development strategies. One of the main reasons that development initiatives fail is insufficient consultation and dialogue between donors, governments and the communities who are the intended beneficiaries. The planners pointed out that development is not just about economic and social statistics, but about people who have values, beliefs and aspirations, and the human dimension must remain paramount in all development initiatives.

In the view of planners, the integration of population issues into development planning suffered a major setback at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994. Although the Pacific submission to this meeting emphasised the region’s need for a cross-sectoral approach to population and development planning (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat 1993), UNFPA adopted a worldwide focus on reproductive and sexual health activities. Fortunately, UNFPA has now broadened its focus in line with the UN’s recent adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, which are more consistent with the objectives and needs of Pacific countries.

Two recommendations from the Noumea meeting of planners are crucial elements of appropriate development. First, modern infrastructure and wage employment opportunities should be extended to the outer islands and rural areas rather than concentrating them in urban areas. This is essential to achieve equity and make the benefits of modernisation available to everyone.

Second, education should be made more appropriate and relevant to local needs. Most Pacific education systems were founded by early colonists and missionaries and are still modelled on the education systems in the countries from which they came. School syllabuses emphasise the acquisition of basic skills for white-collar employment, while technical and vocational
training has been neglected, even though only a minority of Pacific workers find employment in the formal sector. Education should be tailored to the job market, with special attention given to technical, vocational and non-formal education to develop skills that adapt the labour force to the needs of the community. At the same time there is a need to upgrade the quality of white-collar oriented education, so that students can acquire the higher level skills required by professionals as well as the basic skills of clerks and service workers.

Clearly, development of this sort would not only meet the equity and quality-of-life objectives mentioned by the planners, but also contribute vastly to sustainability by providing incentives to reduce fertility. The process through which this would come about would be more or less as follows.

Improved services in rural areas would reduce the need to migrate to urban areas and generate more employment in rural areas. Appropriate education would enable more use of local skills and more self-employment. Since more children would remain to share in village income-earning opportunities and village resources, there would be more incentive to adapt family size to village carrying capacity. At the same time, women who participate in village-based income-generating activities would have an alternative way to earn status — by employment rather than by bearing large families. This would increase the opportunity cost of child bearing and encourage lower fertility.

Obviously, this is a simplified description of the process, which would vary from country to country according to local conditions, the availability of resources to support local enterprises and a host of other factors. It is not a process that will happen overnight, and it will inevitably be several decades, at least, before the bigger countries of Melanesia achieve replacement fertility. Nonetheless, pursuing an appropriate style of development of this sort does have some chance of promoting lower fertility, whereas blindly following the 'foreign-driven' pattern will continue to inhibit fertility decline.

Development assistance has a crucial role to play in helping countries make the transition to a more appropriate style of development. While many current donor activities in health and social development should continue, they need to be refocused to meet new goals. Although there has always been consultation and dialogue, few development projects have engaged in the protracted consultations and dialogue that are expected in Pacific countries. Yet this is essential to ensure that projects are appropriate, and that local communities feel they own their projects and are working towards their own goals, as opposed to a situation where donor activities are seen as 'foreign-driven' development.

In the past, population assistance has been perceived primarily as a health concern, with most of it directed towards reproductive and sexual health. Continuing support for reproductive health remains essential, but it is important to recognise that reproductive health projects have little influence on fertility unless they are supported by strategies that provide incentives to use contraception. Other categories of assistance that would help to generate fertility reduction incentives include better matching of education systems and employment opportunities, the improvement of services and communication links to rural areas and the promotion of rural employment and income generation. Especially important is assistance to increase the education levels and employment of women.

The population implications of every development project should be evaluated, along with the environmental and gender implications that are currently considered. There should also be cross-sectoral coordination of strategies to ensure they maximise opportunities to obtain cash for consumer goods without the need for in-country or international migration. This means improving services to rural areas, and providing education in a range of relevant skills to promote local enterprise and to equip human resources for a diversity of employment. Technical assistance is essential to identify and promote income-earning opportunities based on the agricultural, horticultural and craft skills of Pacific people. Some of the many potential opportunities that might be investigated include aquaculture, production of plant extracts for cosmetics and herbal medicines, home-stay tourism, and niche marketing of crafts.

Conclusion

The overview of the Pacific population trends and projections presented here is necessarily brief. The key point we wish to make is that the deteriorating balance between population and resources is a consequence of the pattern of development adopted. Since persisting with the present model will inevitably court disaster, it is crucial for countries to adopt a new approach that will bring population into balance with resources, preserve the aspects of life they value and lead to long-term sustainability.

The development principles we have outlined are not new, and have already been widely recognised in the region. They have been central to many regional discussions and the plans advanced by regional agencies such as the Pacific Forum Secretariat. It is not easy to change existing structures, however, especially when economies are already floundering. Donors have a critical part to play in working with countries to help them adopt new, more appropriate economic strategies that achieve good population outcomes. This means taking a much broader view of population assistance and prioritising the improvement of the balance between population and resources in every Pacific country.
Note

1 Natural increase is simply the difference between the crude birth rate and the crude death rate, whereas the growth rate allows for net migration.

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Family planning in the Pacific region: Getting the basics right

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Introduction
An estimated 8.3 million people live in the Pacific, inhabiting islands dispersed over nearly 30 million square kilometres of ocean (SPC 2002). There is great diversity in the land area and geographic features. Papua New Guinea (PNG) has the largest land area at 462,243 square kilometres but much of this is impassable, mountainous terrain. In contrast, the atoll countries are very small and flat.

Populations vary from over five million in PNG to Niue, which has an estimated population of less than two thousand. There are at least 12 Pacific Island countries whose population is less than 100,000. Population density varies from 567 people per square kilometre in Nauru to 12 or less in PNG (SPC 2002) and the Solomon Islands.

With less than 0.1 per cent of the world's population, the Pacific is home to one-third of the world's languages. Cultural practices, social norms and traditions vary considerably across the Pacific, both between and within countries. The political conditions also vary from quite stable to politically volatile.

Such diversity makes it difficult to generalise in a discussion of Pacific family planning programs. Program features in one country may not be effective in other areas. This article will try to provide an overview of family planning in the Pacific, and identify key issues involved.

Fertility rates and population growth in the Pacific
Fertility rates and mortality rates have declined in the Pacific over the past 20 years. However, the total fertility rates (TFR) are still high and there is still rapid population growth in parts of the Pacific. Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) data in 2000 show that TFRs exceed 4 in at least 12 Pacific countries (Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, PNG, the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Tokelau, Samoa, American Samoa, Wallis and Futura and Tonga) (SPC 2000). As a point of comparison, the TFR in Australia for the same period was just under 2.

Population growth rates vary across the Pacific from as high as 5.5 per cent in the Northern Mariana Islands to negative growth in parts of Polynesia (Tonga -0.5 per cent, Niue -3.1 per cent) caused by emigration rather than low fertility rates (SPC 2002). Tonga has a total fertility rate of just over 4, while the Northern Mariana Islands with a growth rate of 5.5 has a TFR of just over 2 (SPC 2002).

High fertility and decreasing mortality rates mean there is a young population plus a high dependency ratio. The Solomon Islands now claims that 65 per cent of its population is under 25. This has obvious economic implications, as well as creating a demographic profile in which the largest age cohorts are reaching childbearing age. As Paramanathan (1994:2) writes,

The extreme youthfulness of the population gives the countries 'demographic momentum', because even if fertility rates fall significantly, the population will continue to grow rapidly because of the young age structure.

Fertility reduction and family planning programs
There is some debate about the efficacy of family planning (FP) programs in reducing TFRs. For example, Pritchett (1994) argues that family planning programs have little, or no, effect on fertility rates: 'It is fertility desires and not contraceptive access that matter.' He argues that the social desire for smaller families is created through improvements in social and economic conditions that affect improvements in the status of women.

Freedman (1997:2) argues that FP programs may not influence preferences regarding the number of children couples
seek to have, but they do help to overcome cultural and practical barriers once preferences are established:

These ... studies indicated that, when women began to feel that they wanted no more children, they were often uncertain and hesitant about taking the steps necessary to halt conception. The evidence ... was that the [family planning] workers helped the women to overcome a series of obstacles presented by traditional institutions and values. The result was to convert latent demand, followed, in many cases, by the adoption of contraception.

Freedman's literature review suggests that FP programs play a supportive role for women or couples who choose to space, or have fewer, children but are unlikely to create the impetus for a reduction in preferences for larger families, although they may strengthen and quicken that process when it occurs. Because of the diversity of the Pacific region, establishing FP programs is complex and not achieved quickly. Reductions in fertility rates are achieved through changes in cultural perspectives as well as through providing the means for contraception.

While the role FP programs play in influencing fertility preferences is debatable, the positive role they play in meeting the contraceptive needs of women is unquestionable. Contraceptive needs may not be met due to limited, inconvenient or inappropriate services, cultural factors or religious beliefs (Bulatao 1998). While it is difficult to assess the extent to which continuing high fertility rates in the Pacific reflect 'wanted fertility' or inadequate service provision (House 1999), there have been some attempts to gauge the extent of unmet need in the Pacific. Notably, House (1998) conducted a survey of women in Vanuatu which suggested that approximately 24 per cent of women of childbearing age had an unmet need for contraception — they were women who were sexually active but stated they did not wish to bear any, or any more, children.

Contraceptive use in the Pacific: Current trends

One of the stated goals of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) plan of action is achieving a minimum of 55 per cent contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) in all countries by 2010 (UNFPA 2002). In attempting to reach this goal, Pacific countries have some advantages over other developing countries. Specifically, access to health services and trained medical personnel in these countries is comparable to that in many middle-income countries, universal education has been achieved in the majority of countries and annual average incomes are higher in the Pacific than in many other developing countries.

Despite this, all 14 Pacific island countries had failed by 1998 to meet the 55 per cent target. It is likely that these data represent inaccurate and under-reported CPRs in the Pacific. This is suggested by declining fertility rates that have occurred despite no reported increase in CPRs. For example, in Fiji, the CPR showed little change between 1982 and 1990, whereas the fertility rate dropped 20 per cent in the same period (Lee 1995). William House used data regarding the decline in fertility rates in each Pacific country to estimate more realistic figures for CPRs. With these adjustments, House estimates that, in 1998, the CPR may have surpassed 55 per cent in Fiji, Palau, Niue and Tuvalu. Rates still appear low, however, in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Tokelau (House 1999).

Table 1 Contraceptive prevalence rates, 1998

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In terms of contraceptive methods most commonly used, the long-acting drug Depo-Provera remains a favoured method, while tubal ligation is commonly used for family completion.

Elements of successful family planning programs

Essential 'requirements' suggested by Berelson (in Bulatao 1998) and others include:

- an effective logistics system for importing, storing and distributing contraceptive materials;
- accessible clinics, services and education programs;
- a variety of contraceptive methods;
- adequate training of front-line workers;
- social marketing (in Fiji, the sale of condoms through mail order);
- a national population policy; and
- political and bureaucratic support for policy implementation at national, provincial and local levels.
These elements provide a useful framework for assessing Pacific FP programs, but Bulatao (1998:41) cautions, “Rather than strict program requirements, a number of these items are alternatives that may be more or less important in particular settings. Few programs receive high scores across all these areas, and even some quite successful programs do little in some areas.”

**Contraceptive delivery, distribution and storage**

There are major practical barriers to adequate contraceptive supply in the Pacific: lack of funds, a weak supply chain, inadequate storage facilities and obvious geographical barriers.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Foundation were responsible for providing 40 per cent of contraceptive supplies in Pacific countries between 1992 and 1996. Since then, support declined due to major funding cuts by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In 2000, donors met only 27 per cent of the total estimated contraceptive requirements and Pacific governments have been unable to make up for this shortfall (New Zealand Press Association 2003).

Logistical or communication breakdowns are common in the chain of supply across the Pacific. For example, national pharmacists may only supply to distributors at the provincial or district level who then give priority to hospitals or larger health centres and do not necessarily supply smaller units.

**Diversity of contraceptive methods**

Although non-government family planning organisations in the Pacific have shown a marked increase in clients when a wider range of methods was made available, lack of staff training, lack of supply and religious teachings against particular contraceptive methods all pose a barrier to diversifying available methods. For example, the hormone implant Norplant could be an excellent long-term, reversible method but it is currently only available in Fiji, the Marshall Islands and Palau. This may be due to the difficulty of training workers in insertion and removal techniques. It may also be due to the fact that it may, in some instances, be physically obvious that a woman is using the method. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages, and specific logistics and training requirements.

**Access to family planning services**

Traditionally, many Pacific health centres operate a once-a-week session which is likely to be inconvenient for many clients. A bigger problem is the high visibility of the service. In small villages or regions, confidentiality is easily breached, and this can lead to discriminatory practices by workers. While clinic policies certainly do not advocate discrimination, there are numerous accounts of health workers being unwilling to supply contraceptives to young people, or people suspected of 'outside marriage'. The belief among young people that family planning services are only for married people is also a particular barrier (Burdon).

Outreach is one way of increasing access. A project in the Solomon Islands increased the CPR by 300 per cent when health workers started house-to-house visiting to introduce family health information cards (Chevalier 1997). Pacific NGO family planning organisations have incorporated community-based distribution of contraceptive supplies into their outreach programs and utilise mobile clinics and peer educators. In Fiji, community nurses take buses, bicycles and even horses to reach their targets. Geographical difficulties are highly problematical in PNG where Burdon reports outreach patrol costs averaging K19,600 (approximately A$10,000) per patrol (Burdon 1998). Funding is an ongoing barrier to developing outreach programs. Social marketing, recently started in Fiji, may overcome geographical isolation, but is expensive for the consumer and provides a limited contraceptive range.

Getting staff to carry out mobile clinics or patrols has also been difficult. The culture and practice of patrol has almost ceased for complex reasons that include financial cutbacks, nurses feeling more comfortable in their 'space' (the clinic) and the fear of violence which prevents female health workers moving into unprotected areas. Chevalier (1997) argues that, because of attitudes about both the 'bigman culture' and the status of professional positions, health workers' practices privilege the provider over the client. Simply put, the expectation is that the client comes to the clinic as for other curative services.

**Training family planning workers**

Problems regarding adequate FP training in the Pacific include:

- health workers' values and attitudes to FP, sex and sexuality;
- underestimation of the amount of training, both basic and in-service, required for adequate FP services;
- underestimation of the support systems required for FP workers; and
- lack of funding for training.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that many clients or potential clients are denied access to FP services due to the attitudes of health workers. Adolescents and unmarried clients are often refused contraceptives if health workers disapprove of premarital or extramarital sexual practices. Some religious groups will not allow contraceptives to be given out through their clinics even when the population may have alternative beliefs. Other health workers enforce their own regulation of obtaining the husband's permission in writing before contraception is given. Similarly, emergency contraception is often only prescribed for 'rape cases'
and not offered when the usual contraception has failed. An essential, although often neglected, part of FP training involves creating an awareness amongst health workers of how individual values and attitudes impact on their practice.

The Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Reproductive Health (JHPIEGO) recommends that an FP trainer or supervisor should receive, at minimum, eight to ten weeks' full-time training. This figure is based on findings from a program conducted in PNG between 1991 and 1993 (Bardon 1998). Family Planning Australia, which supports projects in five Pacific countries, also relies on an extensive accredited training program for key FP educators. Training is conducted in Australia for ten weeks before educators return to their own countries for practical and final assessment. However, this level of training is not available to most FP educators and trainers. Generally a train-the-trainer model is utilised in which most people receive a maximum of two weeks' FP education, which is grossly inadequate given that FP educators provide the main link between government policy and clinical implementation.

The cost of training presents another barrier to its further implementation in the Pacific. For example, a major child survival project in PNG focused on training over 7,000 health workers with an average training time of 0.5 day per year. The cost for this exceeded US$1,700,000 (A$2.8 million) (Bardon 1998). Unless funded by donors, many countries simply cannot afford continuing education programs. One option that has been successful in the Solomon Islands is a distance education program offering five basic certificates (including family planning) at a minimal cost to the government (Kenyon 1999).

**Population policies and family planning**

Of the 15 Pacific countries receiving financial assistance from UNFPA, three have official population policies, eight have policies in development and four have chosen to incorporate population issues into their development and sectoral plans (UNFPA 2002). Policies are an important step because they legitimise the work of health workers. There are a number of sound population policies in the Pacific, for example, the PNG national health plan 2001–2010 (PNG Department of Health). It states that:

- All couples and individuals shall have access to information needed to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children.
- All adolescents shall have access to information and advice on sexual health and family planning.

The Department of Health in PNG has now introduced training sessions that take health workers through the policy and discuss how this can be implemented, the pitfalls that can be expected and how to move ahead.

However, the implementation of population policies is often far from smooth. In some instances, policies have proved to be too cumbersome for an effective coordinating structure. In the Solomon Islands, the National Population Policy Council (NPPC) comprised all permanent secretaries of government ministries, 40 co-opted members from the commissioner of police, various non-government organisations, lands and labour secretaries and undersecretaries and many others and so was not able to meet in a ten-year period.

Other population policies have proved ineffective because they lack detail and a coordinating structure. Chee et al (1999) point out that, in countries such as the Marshall Islands and PNG, population policies developed in the late 1980s lacked detail in the actual budgeting of the policy and in accounting for human resources.

Perhaps a major reason [for their limited success] was the seeming lack of political commitment to the allocation of scarce financial resources and high-level manpower to ensure that the implementation strategies were being carried out in a systematic and coordinated manner. In many instances, the population policy implied that there was a population program with overriding national goals and objectives. In reality the 'program' often consisted of component parts or sectoral interventions which were implemented in an uncoordinated fashion with no assurance that they were not conflicting with the overriding national goals (Chee et al 1999:12).

Some policies also emphasise approaches to FP that have been shown to be ineffective. For example, Margaret Chung (1992) argues that many Pacific population policies aim at recruiting new acceptors rather than reducing the drop-out rate. This is because service providers define the main problem with low FP use to be the 'traditional' nature of their clients rather than the quality of service delivery.

Several countries have also shown a drop in fertility rates without a policy in place. Haberkorn (1995) reports a study from Guam where the TFR dropped from 7.3 in 1950 to 3.6 in 1977. This occurred in a 100 per cent Catholic country and in the absence of an official population policy.

**Public and political support**

Political, public and church support are required for FP programs and activities to be given legitimacy and to be removed from the realms of secrecy and shame. Princess Abile 'ulu Tuhu'aho of Tonga is a leading proponent of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) campaigns, as is the first lady of Fiji, Adi Lady Lalabalavu Mara CF STJ (PASA 2000). Many church leaders are at the forefront of AIDS campaigns but are less willing to publicly endorse sex education programs for young people.

It is vital to identify and engage at national, provincial and local level with the gatekeepers who can support or undermine FP activities. Public servants direct policy and funds, individual
teach and headmasters can censor sex education in schools or give their own version. Parents may prevent sex education classes going ahead while church pastors are particularly influential. Health workers can discriminate in the contraceptive methods they promote and to whom they will provide them.

Program activity
Promotional activities can have a substantial effect but have to be properly and sensitively done. Katz (1998) argues that knowledge, attitude and practice studies have improved our understanding of communities and cultures, but also demonstrate the gap between knowledge and the way people practice. New knowledge does not necessarily lead to new attitudes and new practices. Religion and culture may pose powerful barriers in such fundamental areas as sexuality and reproduction.

A survey in Fiji in 2001 by the Reproductive and Family Health Association of Fiji revealed that the majority of young people interviewed who were sexually active did not protect themselves from pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. Many reported ignorance of the need to use condoms, while others expressed negative views towards them. Only 5 per cent had experience of contraception other than condoms (Gibson 2001). The report also showed that there is inconsistency between belief systems and behavior. Most of the young people interviewed felt that there should be no sex before marriage; yet 69 per cent were sexually active before the age of 20. Social and cultural attitudes and practices take time and sensitivity to change.

Since the 1994 ICPD, program activities are beginning to actively acknowledge the role of men in reproductive health decisions and practices, and more awareness messages and programs are targeting men of all ages.

Relationships between the FP NGOs and ministries of health are varied and often dependent on personalities. Many government services are jealous of the speed and effectiveness of NGOs and the fact that they can access funds quickly. Some government bureaucrats feel that the NGOs are preaching a message of promiscuity or that they cannot be controlled. For NGOs, working with and through government agencies brings advantages in terms of provincial coverage, permanence and core funding. Staffing and management in government agencies are usually well established, while technical assistance provided to government agencies by NGOs can have a critical impact on policy, management and programs.

Conclusion
The Pacific region still has high population growth rates, high fertility rates and low contraceptive coverage. Getting the basics right means that more training is required for the senior supervisory levels and front-line health staff. Raising and maintaining an awareness of population-related development problems is also vital to long-term changes in social and cultural attitudes. Public and political support are needed to legitimise and popularise FP messages and concepts. The involvement of men, faith-based organisations and community leaders is essential, as is a more community-based approach to FP education. The rest is a question of securing contraceptive supplies and ensuring distribution to some of the most remote places on Earth.

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The environment always matters

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Introduction

Like population size, composition and rate of change, the environment matters to human wellbeing. To argue otherwise is absurd. The environment provides all of our oxygen, water and food. It also provides a tolerable climate and the raw material for shelter, tools and energy. Human ideas and ingenuity multiply environmental resources into sustenance and affluence, but people cannot survive, let alone thrive, on ideas alone.

Notwithstanding the views of some economists, nature is the true creator. Humans, harnessing mostly solar energy, simply add culture-dependent 'value' in order to enhance their security, survival, comfort and pleasure.

A bank of environmental stocks and services is needed to generate sustained affluence. Withdrawals are possible, but overdrafts sometimes attract heavy penalties. The maximum tolerable size of our overdraft remains poorly defined and intensely contested.

Humans, through the development of ideas, have repeatedly surprised pessimists—from Thomas Malthus to Paul Ehrlich—with our ability to generally minimise famine and conflict despite an ever-increasing population (Trewavas 2002). Sometimes, this success has been claimed as evidence that environmental concerns are now virtually irrelevant. However, the race between the stork and the plough—or, more accurately, between poverty and affluence—is yet to finish, and it still looms as a close contest.

Superficially, the high human populations of prosperous, well-fed city-states such as Singapore and Hong Kong might appear to support the view that high concentrations of human dynamism and enterprise can alone transcend environmental constraints. Indeed, extrapolations from such densely populated regions to the whole world form the historical basis for the most optimistic estimates of how many people the Earth might support. In fact, these affluent, densely populated regions require goods and services that are produced by areas far larger than the residential area of the state.

For the foreseeable future, the whole world cannot live as densely and as well as Singapore. For example, some of the fish eaten in Hong Kong is captured in Pacific Island fisheries. Beef from the Northern Territory is exported to Japan. More generally, the supply of environmentally dependent goods—including sinks for wastes—is always limited, as are inputs such as fertile soil, clean fresh water and a benign climate.

The stork, the plough and the ecological footprint

Over millennia, human history (at least for farmers) has involved competition between an increasing population and a limited environment. Ingenuity, technology, courage and exploration have allowed the harnessing (and in some cases, the appropriation and even razing) of additional environmental spaces, especially of ecosystems, for human purposes (Flannery 1994). The power to extract environmentally derived goods such as food, fresh water, timber and fibre from the Earth is now at an unprecedented high.

Yet these supplies remain finite, and the slowing rate of population increase suggests that many humans realise, subconsciously if not yet consciously, that the resources of the Earth—after accounting for the ingenuity of its human passengers (even if some of them consider themselves crew!)—are insufficient to generate the desired level of affluence for an unlimited population (McMichael and Butler 2003). Current resources are, in fact, unable even to generate affluence for more than a minority of the current global population.

One way to conceptualise the environmental resources needed to support a given population at a given level of affluence is to compare the 'ecological footprint' of different populations. This approach attempts to measure not only the area needed to provide the food, fibre and other natural products consumed by a given population, but also the area required to assimilate its waste products, such as its polluted water and its greenhouse gases.

Researchers calculate that the ecological footprint of Singapore is currently about 12 standardised hectares per capita, about six times the global average (this area does not refer simply to surface area, but to an averaged ecologically productive and assimilative area). These researchers argue that the resources of at least two more Earth-sized planets would be required, using current technologies, to provide an average Australian level of affluence for the six billion humans currently alive.
One can tinker with the assumptions that form the basis of the ecological footprint, but there is other substantial evidence (Vitousek et al. 1997) to support its main implication: the Earth's resources are insufficient to allow Western living standards for a population of six or more billion, unless there is a global scientific, technological and humanitarian revolution (Lubchenco 1998, Butler 2000).

Because the harnessing of extraplanetary resources remains a distant dream, there are only three ways that affluence for the entire global population can be realised. These are to greatly improve technology and social organisation, to reduce population, or to redistribute existing affluence. The last option is politically very difficult. The second option is unattainable over the next few decades. The first option looks more encouraging.

However, though new technologies that would allow affluence at a lower environmental cost continue to be unrolled, even as many other ideas for increasing sustainability remain to be developed (Hawken et al. 1999), the rate of realisation of these new ideas is still too slow. In reality, affluence for all is extremely improbable in this century. Yet increased affluence for many, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, is highly desirable, not only for ethical and health reasons, but also as an important component of increased social stability. This task will require immense environmental resources, as well as goodwill and ingenuity.

Environmental concerns: New and old

Four decades ago, the major focus of environmental concerns were an emerging food shortage and a predicted scarcity of raw inanimate materials, such as oil and metals. Such concerns have broadened to include worries about the supply of fresh water, the flood and drought mitigating properties of forests, and the capacity of the Earth's waste absorption systems. The green revolution prevented large-scale famine, most mineral prices fell, but oil reserves remain physically limited and politically vulnerable.

Greenhouse gas accumulation, probably in combination with a degree of solar fluctuation, has already caused noticeable climate change. Food distribution remains grossly unequal (Food and Agriculture Organization 2002), and there are increasing concerns that climate change will adversely affect the quantity and distribution of food supplies in the coming decades. John Sheehy, at the International Rice Research Institute, claims that higher temperatures are already reducing grain yields in Cambodia and India (Kirby 2001).

Trading the environment for affluence

There is growing recognition, at least for high-income populations, that increases in income beyond a threshold entail a disproportionately small increase in human wellbeing. Nevertheless, high-income populations continue to act aggressively to increase their affluence, whether that is measured by consumption of goods and services, income adjusted for purchasing power, or life expectancy. The size of the newly emerging consuming class is estimated at a billion, mostly in Asia (Myers and Kent 2003).

An important item of consumption has been environmental 'integrity', which, however measured, has declined precipitously in recent decades (see Figure 1) (Butler 2000). Until recently, global environmental integrity remained high, despite ancient cases of localised environmental decline, such as around the Mediterranean and in Mesopotamia. Human societies are patch disturburs and, until recently, new patches to disturb — at least for militarily successful populations — have been comparatively plentiful. New technologies, such as agriculture, have allowed the same raw environmental materials to generate more goods desired by humans, but at the cost of environmental integrity.

There are numerous examples from the Asia-Pacific of how environmental resources have been converted to short and long-term economic benefit (see Table 1). For example, forests have been systematically harvested, and often burned, in exchange for new agricultural lands, cash crops and timber revenue. Fisheries have been exploited, indeed depleted, for money and better nutrition. Often, though, the costs are great. Deforestation in the Yangtze catchment, and the infilling of many lakes and wetlands in the Yangtze basin are blamed for worsening the Yangtze River flood of 1998. Flooding along the lower Mekong is probably also related to deforestation. Coral reefs have been poisoned and dynamited (White et al. 2000).

In all of these cases, the environmental accounts have been drawn down at a greater rate than the accrual of interest. The resource utilisation has been unsustainable, and the rate of environmental withdrawal only temporary. In some cases, such as the extent of deforestation in China, the ecological and ultimately economic risks of excessive environmental withdrawal have been realised (Zhang et al. 2000).

Less visibly, the capacity of the atmosphere to absorb carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases has been exceeded, consequent to the burning of fossil fuels and land clearing. In turn, this is altering the global climate, with implications for human health, for human wellbeing, for extreme weather effects and, probably within a few decades, for food security and the resulting regional tension and conflict (Cohen and Pinstrup-Andersen 1999). Also invisibly, the self-cleaning capacity of the atmosphere appears to have been reduced, aggravating air pollution and leading to the recently described, continent-sized 'Asian brown cloud'. This has also been linked with climatic change, including warming and reduced rainfall and light, all of which are likely to reduce food security.
Yet another adverse consequence of human activities may be a change in the frequency and intensity of the El Niño pole of the Southern Oscillation. Consequences of this within the Asia-Pacific include droughts, fires and food scarcity across many parts of south and Southeast Asia. As well, vector-borne diseases, especially malaria and dengue fever, have been linked to the increased rains that sometimes follow El Niño periods, during the La Niña phase.

The environmental Kuznets effect

So-called 'linear optimists', who generally deny the importance of the scale, complexity, threshold and inertial effects of both the causes and consequences of global environmental change, sometimes assert that more of the same is harmless, since the recent trajectory of human wellbeing has clearly been positive. This view equates to position A in Figure 1. However, ecologists, ecological economists and systems theorists point to the existence of threshold effects, and argue that continued environmental depletion will eventually lead to a reduction in affluence, which could trigger a negative spiral leading to further reductions in affluence and environmental integrity (Butler, Corvalan and Koren 2003). This scenario is represented by position B in Figure 1.

A third possibility exists. Some writers point to improvements, such as in London's air and the water quality of the American Great Lakes, as evidence of a general principle, allowing improved environmental amenity as a function of increased affluence. This is sometimes called the 'environmental Kuznets effect'. This view is represented by position C in Figure 1. Unfortunately, there are many scale, lag and threshold effects that make reversal of the global environmental trajectory far more problematic than that of local and regional trajectories. These include the economic and social costs of dislocating major, keystone, established industries (such as coal mines), the problem of powerful free riders attempting to ensure their own security at the expense of global public good (such as the US and Australia have done with regard to climate change), and the lagged effects of both greenhouse gas accumulation and the subsequent climate response.

'Systemic optimists' agree that increased affluence is not necessarily inconsistent with the preservation of a minimum set of environmental services, but argue that the changes needed to guarantee minimum environmental integrity will not come automatically, but only through the coordinated action of millions of people. There is ample evidence that this position is becoming better understood by both science and the general public, especially among affluent and educated populations.

This school of opinion points out that many developing countries have opportunities to leapfrog the 'hot, heavy and wet industries' (resource and pollution intensive), progressing directly to industries that are cooler, lighter and dry. For example, the development of a mobile phone network, or of village-level energy provision using solar cells, windmills and smart technology, has the potential for a faster roll-out, to be lighter on resources, and to be less reliant on error and terrorist-prone centralised systems. In urban areas, composting toilets may be
cheaper, less water-intensive and faster to install than centralised sewage systems.

Ideally, Asian ingenuity and labour may be able to produce these goods at a competitive price. However, many obstacles — political, cultural and economic — lie in the path of sustainability. Claims that Chinese carbon emissions have declined (Streets et al. 2001) are welcome, and probably reflect the retirement of some of the most inefficient coal-dependent power stations, analogous to the decline in carbon emissions reported in Russia and eastern Europe. However, other Chinese data have been found to be deliberately misleading, including those for the size of the Chinese fish catch (Watson and Pauly 2001). The recent increase in the openness of Chinese officials in response to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic, though encouraging, also provides more evidence of a deep tradition of official secrecy.

Cultures of secrecy, 'spin' and frank deceit are not uniquely Asian. These traits are also common in the West. An unwillingness to contemplate the potentially frightening future that may be the result of what has been discussed in this paper may be an inevitable part of being human. However, failure to discuss these problems, while there may still be time to significantly improve our chances, could be a very costly error.

Conclusion: The noosphere and the biosphere

The writer HG Wells warned that 'human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe' (Birch 1976). In the 1940s, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Edouard Le Roy and Vladimir Vernadsky collectively developed the concept of the noosphere, the world of knowledge (Vernadsky and McMenamin 1998). As they foresaw, the retention of a biosphere with a repertoire of function sufficient to support the still enlarging human population depends on the continued expansion of this world of ideas, knowledge and application.

Inevitably, this will involve further transformation of the biosphere to an 'anthroposphere' (Crutzen 2002), in exchange for short-term gains in human wellbeing. While it is unlikely that the recent rate of ecosystem damage will continue at the same rate, further declines in global environmental integrity are inevitable. Greenhouse gases will continue to accumulate, deforestation (perhaps resulting in runaway, almost unstoppable, fires) will continue in both the tropics and in Siberia, and invasive species will continue to be problematic. On the positive side, stratospheric ozone depletion has been stabilised, and the large-scale technologies required to address greenhouse gas and particulate emissions are in sight.

The major missing ingredients that would enable the sustainability transition are sufficient political will and sufficient affluence. The best way to generate this political will is not by suppressing environmental information, but by frank and open discussion. The best way to generate affluence is not by laissez-faire economics that enhance inequality (Butler 2000), but by education, fair trade and the promotion of the global public good.

Excessively harsh environmental protections are neither feasible nor desirable. Their attempted imposition would probably slow increases in wellbeing and further erode the buffer that separates global social function from global social 'systems failure' (Butler, Corvalan and Koren 2003). At the same time, reliance on self-generating technical and social solutions for the problems discussed would be short-sighted. If problems alone could create solutions, then vaccines for both SARS and AIDS would already exist, and the wounding suffering of the Black Death would have been avoided. With luck, solutions are likely to be found, but their implementation will require an immense amount of work.

The best case scenario may be that humanity will emerge from the current century with a battered but essentially intact environmental core, and with a smarter, better educated, more affluent and smaller population than it has now. The risks are that social and environmental resilience will prove more fragile than we now hope, and that the technological, economic and social reforms required to achieve the sustainability transition will remain mainly in the realm of ideas.

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The implications of population change for Australian development assistance to Asia and the Pacific

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Introduction

This article will not attempt to set down prescriptions for what AusAID should do, not least because circumstances and needs vary so very widely across the countries which AusAID deals with, ranging from Thailand to the Solomon Islands. What it will do is to raise some of the demographic issues that AusAID should think about in making choices in country programming.

Constraints on aid choices

As a governmental agency, AusAID faces a number of constraints in deciding how to advise the government on the direction of development assistance expenditure. The total quantum of expenditure is determined by cabinet. The country-by-country distribution of expenditure is decided by the minister on the advice of AusAID. History plays a considerable role in this, not least because there are existing bilateral commitments and commercial contracts to be funded, and it is thus unusual to find dramatic changes in individual country allocations from year to year (unless there has been a coup).

Allocations to individual sectors are determined by broad government priorities (for example, if the government wishes to promote Australia's expertise in a particular sector, such as information technology); by existing projects and programs that still need funding; and by the views of the recipient governments.

Sectors come and go in the aid fashion stakes — a good governance project is the current must-have accessory. Unless there has been a ministerial announcement of a sectoral initiative with an expenditure figure attached — as with the announcement in July 2000 of a A$200 million HIV/AIDS initiative — AusAID does not normally consider how much it is spending in a particular subsector before deciding on a new project.

Australia is more honest than many other donors when it says that its aid priorities reflect those of recipients. There is a genuine exchange of views and, whilst there is always scope for the recipient country to ask for funding in the sector it knows is favoured in a particular year and/or from particular countries that favour such projects, the end result does represent a match between Australian and recipients' views on priorities.

As a result, apart from specific government initiatives to spend more (rarely less, hence many difficult choices among priorities) in a particular sector, the overall sectoral distribution of aid is determined by a multitude of programming decisions made at the country level, hence the power of country desk officers in AusAID. Desk officers are, of course, also influenced by current aid trends as reflected in the ethos of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) Development Assistance Committee (the DAC), the World Bank and the most recent United Nations (UN) megaconference.

Proportionality and impact

Another significant factor is the question of just how important Australia is as a donor to a particular country. To China, all aid only represents 0.2 per cent of gross national income, and Australian aid only represents 0.02 per cent of that total aid. To Papua New Guinea, total aid represents 7.5 per cent of gross national income and Australian aid represents 60 per cent of total aid (World Bank, aid dependency figures for 2000). In other words, in China, Australian aid is no more than a fleabite (although expenditures that are relatively very small can still have real political significance) whereas, in Papua New Guinea, Australia can have the effect of a bull in a china shop or, alternatively, that of a true friend in time of need.

Although the reality is quite complex, in countries such as China AusAID simply has to look for a very small number of activities in which a small amount of money will achieve the maximum impact (training Chinese officials in negotiating entry to the World Trade Organization being a very good example). In contrast, in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Island states, Australia has a much stronger moral responsibility for its aid impact at the national level and has to look very carefully at the total economy, the activities of the recipient government and those of other donors before deciding on its priorities.

In the Papua New Guinea/Pacific Island country context, what Australia does is highly significant, but so too is what Australia does not do. In China, there cannot realistically be sins of omission for which Australia is responsible. However, in
Papua New Guinea there certainly could be: for example, if AusAID had done nothing about HIV/AIDS instead of having a A$60 million HIV/AIDS program there, as it does. Indonesia is a midway case because of the importance to Australia of political stability in Indonesia, yet Australia makes a relatively small contribution to all aid in that country, much less so the total economy (7 per cent of total aid and total aid is 1.2 per cent of gross national income) (World Bank, aid dependency figures for 2000).

In Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Island countries, where Australia looms large, AusAID has to think very long and hard about failures to act and omissions. What is it that Pacific Island country governments and other donors are not doing? This is particularly important in the context of human rights because, if human rights are not protected, then almost all other developmental activity is potentially under threat. Upholding human rights includes ensuring that everyone, and particularly children, can have the basic necessities of life. For a long time, one glaring omission in Australia’s aid policy for the Pacific was a commitment to providing basic needs in Melanesia, for example, helping to ensure that all children were able to complete primary school. Such action is now under way in Papua New Guinea, but is still needed in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Development assistance and population issues

Population issues are very clearly linked to human rights. This is not only a question of the right of access to contraception so that women are not forced into pregnancies that they do not want and cannot afford. As Australians know only too well, migration also raises very significant human rights issues, as does HIV/AIDS, which threatens the lives of millions of Asians and Papua New Guineans.

In the 1980s, demographers and development planners often joined together in promoting the ‘basic needs’ approach to development, which was founded on establishing what percentages of the population could not meet their basic needs for food, education, reproductive health services and so on, and then working out how to supply what was required. A heavy focus on promoting overall economic growth as the means to fight poverty meant a move away from ‘basic needs’. However, now this approach is somewhat back in fashion with the UN’s recently adopted Millennium Development Goals, which are heavily focused on demographic and social goals such as achieving universal primary education by 2015.

There are perennial and very difficult questions about where assistance should be focused: in those countries which need aid most or those which can use it best; in urban areas because they are growing so fast or in rural areas because they are so disadvantaged; in the very poorest and most remote provinces or in poor but not totally poverty-stricken provinces, where aid may have a much greater immediate impact. (A former planning minister once revealed that all World Bank analysis for his country showed that, in terms of simple economic rates of return, all aid funds should be spent in the capital and that rural roads more than 200 kilometres from the capital should never be funded.)

One comparative calculus, which AusAID rarely performs, is how many poor people will be assisted for a given expenditure of funds. Across the Pacific, there is a vast inter-country imbalance between needs and capacities. There are countries without a single trained obstetrician and there are countries where diseases linked to overeating are a major problem.

The impact of demography on political stability is little studied (although the Journal of International Affairs devoted its fall 2002 issue to population and security). However, while NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) countries decide between new guns or grandma’s pension, Pakistan, with half of its population under 19, simmers ready for conflict. Among the 25 youngest countries in the world, 16 have hosted major conflicts during the past decade while, among the 25 oldest, only Croatia has been so engaged.

Individual fertility but not growth rates

AusAID’s health policy (1998:9) recognises that ‘family planning is a highly cost-effective way of reducing maternal, infant and child death and disability’. However, AusAID supports ‘family planning activities that are primarily concerned with upgrading the training of health and family planning professionals’ (1998:9). For AusAID, family planning is a matter of health and human rights rather than the demographic or economic impact of high population growth rates.

Yet, to many people, the most obvious link between aid and demography lies in the area of population growth: assistance should be given to help developing countries reduce the brake on development created by galloping rates of population growth. In this view, where economic opportunities are lacking, high fertility is a direct cause of poverty as in the Malthusian model (where population growth outstrips growth in resources). In 1993, Gordon Birney, as Minister for Development Cooperation and Pacific Island Affairs, reflecting this view, announced that Australia’s assistance in the population sector would treble with a $130 million program over four years. Since then, personalities and political priorities have changed and more demographers have probably become ‘neutralists’ regarding the relationship between population growth and economic growth.

In the specific case of the Pacific Island countries, it is difficult to believe that they would not be better off with slower rates of
population growth, given that they cannot supply jobs or viable self-employment prospects for the majority of young people they have now (even in comparatively rich Fiji, only one young person in eight finds a job on leaving school and many of the remainder cannot be productively absorbed into the informal sector).

Even for those who are not convinced by simple arithmetical relationships between rates of growth in population and rates of growth in per capita incomes (for example, that a population growing at 3.5 per cent per annum, as is alleged for Vanuatu, needs an annual 3.5 per cent gross national income growth just to keep incomes constant), there should be convincing human rights, health and education arguments for contraceptive access. Now many Pacific Island countries stand out on the world stage for having some of the highest fertility rates, especially Melanesia. Even in mainland Asia, the case that reduced population growth rates have already been achieved and that continued declines in fertility are inevitable can be overdone. For example, fertility decline would appear to have stalled at comparatively high levels in regions of India, Bangladesh and the Philippines.

Demography and the Millennium Development Goals

The Australian government has not been particularly keen on supporting the Millennium Development Goals (which appeal more to NGOs), yet they are a clear set of goals with international currency and are worth examining in determining development priorities (see http://www.developmentgoals.org/). The specific demographic goals relate to reducing under-five child mortality by two-thirds and maternal mortality by three-quarters by 2015. (Other goals relate to universal primary education, gender equity in primary and secondary education, and combating malaria and HIV/AIDS, including by raising condom usage as a percentage of all contraception).

In least developed countries, child and maternal mortality are still very significant issues which AusAID should not ignore, especially since achieving a capacity to deal with these effectively means that grassroots-level health services are effective and efficient. In conflict situations, these indicators, though unlikely to be accurately measured, are likely to decline rapidly.

In the Solomon Islands, AusAID is supporting the provision of essential health services to the community through the Solomon Islands Health Sector Trust Account, in particular ensuring support for provincial health services. It would be interesting to know how the mortality and morbidity impact of this apparently very worthwhile activity is to be measured under prevailing conditions.

Conditions in Fiji and Samoa are much better but it is worrying that AusAID appears to think that a successful health program in these countries can be defined as one that supports improved management of health services without needing evidence of the impact on health.

Although AusAID’s health policy, as is usual with such policies, suffers from trying to be all things to all people: AusAID does support many worthwhile health activities across Asia and the Pacific. However, apart from HIV/AIDS activities, what is usually lacking is any justification of why the health activity is chosen over any other. Individual project documents may make reference to the case for attacking particular diseases, but the health policy offers no clear justification for Australia’s health aid [giving] increasing attention to the prevention of non-communicable diseases and injuries, let alone proof that this would offer the maximum benefit in terms of health interventions to reduce poverty (AusAID 1998:10).

The World Health Organization’s (WHO) decade of work on the economic impacts of disease and disability still gathers dust in a neglected corner. To be fair, this is probably not because of either ignorance or sloth, but more because AusAID’s approach to the selection of aid activities rarely allows scope for the ranking of possible economic or human returns.

Since most of AusAID’s investment in monitoring demographic trends is through the multilateral agencies and development banks, probably its biggest strictly demographic activity in recent times has been its support for the 2000 Papua New Guinea census. It would certainly be good to see the detailed results from this emerge before they become of historical interest only.

HIV/AIDS

The impact of HIV/AIDS has the potential to be the most significant demographic development in the Asia-Pacific region in the next two decades. AusAID already has a good reputation for giving appropriate attention to HIV/AIDS and its potential demographic and economic impact. It will be important to ensure that lessons learnt in countries such as Thailand and Cambodia, which appear to have been able to stem the spread of AIDS, are examined for their relevance to other, less fortunate countries.

Another issue is whether, outside Papua New Guinea and possibly Fiji, the AIDS industry will be seen as having cried wolf so often that it has been strongly counterproductive. But the biggest question of all remains what is going to happen to the spread of HIV/AIDS in India and China and what can donors do to help to stop them expanding exponentially.

Bill Gates read a Central Intelligence Agency report predicting that India, which currently has about 4 million HIV/AIDS victims, will have 20 to 25 million by 2008–2010, making it the country with the most people affected. He donated
US$100 million to help curb the spread of the disease in India alone. In China, the government has long been heavily into denial, and the incidence figures are even less reliable than those for India, but there would be at least one million people living with HIV/AIDS in China. HIV/AIDS is likely to be a particular problem for minorities around the Chinese borders, and AusAID is about to begin a potentially groundbreaking health program that includes HIV/AIDS prevention in Tibet. Where HIV/AIDS can be controlled there is then the possibility of a 'demographic dividend'.

The demographic dividend

In 1950, the typical east Asian woman had six children, today she has two. Between 1965 and 1990, the working age group rose from 57 per cent to over 65 per cent of the total population, increasing four times faster than the number of dependents. The 'demographic dividend' is a single window of opportunity, a potential reward of declining birth rates due to a temporary bulge in the number of working age citizens (Bloom et al. 2003).

Some experts believe as much as one-third of the total growth in per capita income which constituted the east Asian economic miracle can be attributed to such a beneficial age structure.

The relevance of the demographic dividend to aid is that its benefits can only be reaped within the right policy context and where governments are ready with 'flexible' labour markets, investment and saving incentives, high-quality health care and education (which is why richer areas of Latin America did not gain the same demographic dividend). Much of south Asia could experience the demographic dividends between 2015 and 2025 (but not Pakistan or the Hindi belt of India).

The aid donors' contribution should be to help the south Asian countries understand that the opportunity is at hand and get the right policies in place. One great advantage of capacity building in policy areas is that it is not very expensive, yet can have a very considerable impact if the timing is right and virtuous circles of wealth creation (where once people begin to get out of poverty they find it easier and easier to create wealth) can be established. As this window of opportunity closes, the next stage is population ageing.

Does population ageing matter?

It took France 114 years to double its proportion of retirees, to go from people 65 and above comprising 7 per cent of the population to 14 per cent. China, Brazil and Indonesia could accomplish this transition in 25 years or less. In development assistance, there are two core questions: does ageing matter for overall economic growth and does it have an important impact on poverty? Also, in particular instances, Australia may have valuable expertise in areas such as establishing pension funds (as the International Labour Organisation has recognised in Vietnam). Again, as populations age, societies may need donor assistance with policies to facilitate the participation of younger women in the labour force, which will decrease the dependency burden but may also reduce the availability of care for the aged within the family.

The American journal Foreign Affairs is currently running a lively debate on ‘foreign assistance in an aging world’ in which Susan Raymond (a former World Bank staffer) argues for assistance to combat chronic ailments such as diabetes and heart disease (2003). The rejoinder comes from Adam Smith (2003) (another former World Bank staffer) who argues that Raymond is not interested in alleviating poverty, that the world’s elderly will be very heavily concentrated in China and India, and that a grab for attention by the non-communicable diseases lobby would counterproductively focus aid on the wealthier developing countries, leaving the real poor to die of AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

This is a debate that is quite important in the Pacific. It is important that population ageing should not automatically be considered a problem. It is only a problem in so far as older people are not still able to play economically productive roles and do not have access to supportive families or savings. Why should societies suffering from massive youth unemployment fear ageing? True dependency ratios depend on the real variations in economic productivity by age, not artificially defined ‘retirement ages’.

Migration issues

Development assistance planners do not usually think about migration (except of refugees and groups displaced by conflict), probably because they regard it as largely beyond the scope of donors. However, Australia has been involved in the area of sex-trafficking. For AusAID, one relevant question is whether Australia has any useful experience to transmit on slowing down the feverish pace of urbanisation in Asia? One day, perhaps, AusAID may be in position to consider the relative developmental merits of aid to the Pacific versus some form of guestworker scheme for Pacific islanders, but now is not the moment (compare this with Dobell 2003).

Gender

Demographers, gynaecologists and urologists are among the few professionals who naturally consider gender issues as part of their daily work. Aid workers have now spent more than two
decades trying to incorporate gender issues into their work without spectacular success. Essentially, this reflects the fact that the donors and recipient governments with whom they collaborate rarely place a high priority on gender issues. Just as economic policy-based aid can effectively nurture policy reform only among committed reformers, gender policy reform only works with recipients who are already committed to gender transformations, and they are hard to find.

In many countries where women suffer the most disadvantage, even women in the bureaucracy do not support reform. Overall, Asia now has a sex ratio of 104, showing how much discrimination against females remains. The one area where there has been significant success is in increasing girls’ access to formal schooling. Countries must now capitalise on this success by helping to increase women’s access to adequately rewarded employment and to political power.

Much is known of the comparative poverty of female-headed households. In the poorest areas of poor countries such families predominate. One low-cost, high-impact, policy area where AusAID could work with recipient governments and local NGOs is the removal of the mass of petty regulations that enable local officials to harass female street traders and other informal sector workers.

Environment

Although fertility is declining, Asia’s population is projected to grow by nearly one-half before the numbers stabilise — from 3.5 billion in 2000 to 5 billion in 2050. Clearly, even with the highest rates of urbanisation in the world, this will still have a massive impact on the environment. Ecoviolence is the new result of the linkages between population growth, environmental scarcity and violent conflict. At crucial points in south Asia, for example, beneath the Himalayan water catchment, the impact of population pressure on the environment risks creating open warfare.

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Urbanisation and migration in China: Some development issues

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Migration and urbanisation at the turn of the century

China has entered a new era characterised by the acceleration of urbanisation and a dramatic increase in population mobility since the 1980s. According to the 2000 census, China's urbanisation level had reached 36.1 per cent by 1 November 2000. This compares with the urbanisation level of 20.6 per cent at the 1982 census; an average annual increase of 0.8 of a percentage point in the urbanisation level, or an urbanisation rate of 3.1 per cent. This urbanisation rate is unprecedented in the history of China, and very rapid by international standards.

The increase in population mobility has been even more dramatic. The 2000 census revealed that 131.2 million people, or 10.6 per cent of the population, had experienced mobility in one way or another during the five-year period before the census, and the volume of the floating population had reached 120.1 million. This compares with a floating population of 55.8 million in the 1995 1 per cent population sample survey, suggesting an average annual growth rate of 16.6 per cent in the volume of the floating population. Although changes in the definitions of migrants and the floating population prevent us from making a more direct comparison of migration volumes between the censuses, the above figures are sufficient to demonstrate the significance of the unprecedentedly large and fast-growing migration wave in China.

What is more, the 1990s have seen some great changes in the perceived role of urbanisation and migration in China's development. There is an increasing consensus that China's urbanisation process should be accelerated so that it no longer lags behind economic development.

The urbanisation strategies stipulated in the Urban Planning Act of the People's Republic of China 1989 — that is, to 'strictly control the size of large cities and reasonably develop the medium-sized and small cities' (China, Standing Committee of NPC 1990) — have been increasingly under criticism (Wang 1995, Liao 1995, Zhu 1999, Wang 2000). Large cities have been favoured again as the most efficient location for development, and many local governments have developed their regional urban centres (especially provincial capitals) into very large cities in the 1990s (Zhu 1999:110). In most cases this has been achieved by expanding urban administrative boundaries.

Although the central government seems to be more cautious, insisting on the 'coordinated development of large, medium-sized, and small cities and small towns' (Hu 2000), it has obviously also taken a much more positive attitude towards the development of large cities, compared to its previous position advocating the development of small towns (Hu 2000). Rural-based in situ development, which has been driven largely by the spectacular growth of township and village enterprises (TVEs) and has made a significant contribution to China's general economic growth (Zhu 1999, 2002; Lin and Yao 2001), is regarded by some observers as undesirable (for example, Zhao 2002).

The late 1990s have seen an increasing number of provinces implementing various measures to remove the hurdles to rural-urban migration caused by the hukou system (household registration system), whose role as the central mechanism controlling rural-urban migration has already been considerably weakened in the process of reform (Zhu 2003). Instead of fearing the influx of migrants into cities, many local governments now encourage the growth of the urban population, and regard reform in the hukou system as a major way of promoting the urbanisation process.

More importantly, temporary migration — the majority of migrants in China are temporary migrants — is increasingly regarded as undesirable, and the hukou system is often blamed for this situation. Some observers argue that it is time to cut off migrant farmers' links to the land in their home towns, and encourage them to leave the land as well as the village and settle down in the destination cities (for example, Xie 2000:15-17, Liu 2002). This could be done through reforms in both the hukou system in urban areas and the land transfer system in rural areas. Clearly, migration and urbanisation are expected to, and will, play much bigger roles in China's development in the new century.

Emerging development issues for migration and urbanisation

While consensus is increasing that the above trend of accelerating migration and urbanisation is a positive and unavoidable step...
in China's modernisation drive, more discussion is still needed on what the best policy responses are to these trends. As mentioned above, there have been some policy changes regarding migration and urbanisation in recent years. To a certain extent, these changes are necessary because many elements of the old policies restricting the development of large cities and migration are legacies of the planned economy. Because they were not based on a sound analysis of the role of migration and urbanisation in China's development (Zhu 1999:190), they have to be reassessed and even removed. However, commentators indicate that the following three issues have to be addressed in order to achieve a solid theoretical and empirical basis for policy responses to the new migration and urbanisation trends.

'Rules of urbanisation' versus blurred rural–urban distinction

In the discussion of China's urbanisation trends and policies, the world experience of urban growth and urbanisation has been frequently mentioned and has served as a benchmark for judging China's urbanisation trends and policies (Gao 1990, Zhao 2002). Some Chinese scholars summarise the urbanisation experience of the world in two major rules. The first is that the industrialisation of an agricultural society is a process of the migration of rural people into cities. The second rule is that, at the initial and middle stages of urbanisation, the population growth of large cities is faster than that of medium-sized and small cities (Liao 1995, Wang 1995, Wang 2000). These rules have played an important role in justifying the policy shift mentioned above, and increases in the size of provincial capitals.

These rules certainly reflect a general trend of world urbanisation at a high level of generality, and constitute important components of the analytical framework for China's urbanisation. Nevertheless, research on more recent experience of settlement changes in some developing countries shows that such rules alone are no longer an adequate basis for a solid discussion of China's urbanisation. Apart from the problem of oversimplifying the process of urbanisation in the world, as I have pointed out elsewhere (Zhu 1999), such rules have not yet incorporated some important conceptual developments and empirical evidence in urbanisation studies, such as the paradigm of extended metropolitan regions (McGee 1991), blurred rural–urban distinctions and new forms of urbanisation, especially in situ urbanisation, and their conceptualisation (Zhu 1999, 2002; Champion and Hugo 2003), all of which are closely related to China's current situation.

Compared with more conventional theories such as the two rules, these conceptual developments and empirical evidence have been less adequately discussed in academic circles in the context of the above discussion in China, and have certainly attracted far less attention among policymakers. However, they have rather different implications for the assessment of policy responses to China's new migration and urbanisation trends, and need to be considered more fully in policy making.

One such important implication was reflected in a point made by McGee (1991:4) in the context of the paradigm 'extended metropolitan regions':

in the Asian context the conventional view of the urban transition, which assumes that the widely accepted distinction between rural and urban will persist as the urbanisation process advances, needs to be re-evaluated.

This can also be said about the discussion of China's urbanisation, as similar assumptions also underlie many assessments of China's urbanisation trend and policies (for example, Zhao 2002:66). Research based on the more recent experience of developing countries has increasingly revealed massive changes in human settlement systems, which have involved a blurring of the rural–urban distinction through both the increasing prevalence of non-agricultural activities as well as the permeation of 'urban' facilities into rural areas, and the increasing complexity of the structure of urban settlements themselves (McDonald and Sontosudarno 1976, McGee 1991, Jones 1997, Zhu 2003). Clearly, such findings should be considered in the understanding and conceptualisation of today's urbanisation process.

Based on this kind of phenomenon in Asia's 'extended metropolitan regions', McGee and Ginsburg have already proposed the concept of 'settlement transition', which involves 'the urbanisation of the countryside without massive rural–urban migration' in the Asian context (Ginsburg 1991, McGee 1991). My studies in China show further that, under certain conditions, urbanisation can be achieved in situ in rural areas without the influence of large cities (Zhu 1999, 2002).

The recent activities of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUNSSP) working group on urbanisation and its forthcoming publication, New Forms of Urbanization: Beyond the Urban–Rural Dichotomy (Champion and Hugo 2003), are a further indication that the dichotomous conceptualisation of rural versus urban, large city versus small city, is increasingly inadequate for understanding the trend in urbanisation today.

The above discussion indicates that at least some of the justifications for the policy shift in favour of large cities and discouraging rural-based development may be based on an incomplete understanding of the recent trends in human settlement changes. In fact, the whole policy debate on the choices between urban and rural-based development, and between large city development and that of small and intermediate towns, may no longer be as meaningful as assumed, since the rural–urban division is no longer clear-cut and the structure of urban settlements has greatly changed. A new
conceptual basis may therefore be needed for the assessment of China's urbanisation trend, and for the debate on relevant policy responses.

The changing context of urbanisation and settlement
A question arises from this discussion: what is the mechanism underlying the above settlement changes? In the context of China there is a great temptation to attribute these changes to various 'institutional factors', focusing on the role of the hukou system in preventing people from entering cities, especially large ones (for example Ban et al 2002, Liu 2002, Zhao 2002). This often leads to the argument that China's dispersed urbanisation could only exist under institutional arrangements such as the hukou system and, as soon as these institutional arrangements are removed, it will no longer persist.

However, recent evidence shows that this may not be the case. Studies in some areas where dispersed urbanisation is well developed show that local people have little intention of moving to cities, and this would still be the case even if the hukou system did not restrict them (Wang et al 2002, Zhu 2002). Furthermore, dispersed urbanisation is not unique to China as is often assumed: similar settlement changes have occurred in other developing regions (especially in Asia), although China's case may be unusual given the extent of its population and area. This suggests that there are forces other than 'institutional factors' at work universally in contemporary settlement changes in certain developing regions, and that more needs to be done to achieve a complete understanding of these forces.

So far numerous studies have documented two factors, high population densities and improved transport and communication conditions, which have played big roles in changing settlement patterns in many developing regions (see McGee 1991, Zhu 1999, Rögé et al 2000). They have shown that today's urbanisation in many developing regions is occurring in situ in rural settlements (often agglomerated) with population densities that are as high as those in the urban areas of the west. These rural settlements are already of an urban or quasi-urban nature in terms of population densities. Furthermore, villages in these areas are often connected by well-developed internal road networks, which are further connected to large cities, and relatively cheap transport such as motorcycles, buses and trucks is increasingly available and affordable to local people. These kinds of conditions make further spatial concentration in large cities less important than it was when developed countries were being urbanised.

Moreover, recent studies suggest that, under certain conditions, rural communities themselves can play a much bigger role in initiating in situ development than is assumed by conventional theories (Marton 1995, Zhu 2002). All this suggests that, as the context under which China is urbanising is different from that of developed countries in the past, those countries' experiences and the theories based on them may not be neatly transferable to China. Such a changing context should be adequately taken into consideration in the assessment of China's urbanisation trend and policies.

Permanent versus temporary migration
Circular migration and its prevalence and significance in some developing countries have long been noted by students of migration (Hugo 1978, Goldstein 1993). However, a puzzling fact is that, although the mobility pattern of China's floating population is similar to circular migration (Solinger 1999:22), very little effort has been made to relate it to the literature on circular migration in other developing countries. So far, the majority of studies have focused on the implications for China's migration patterns of its household registration system and its reform, and there seems to be an expectation that temporary migration will become permanent as soon as that hurdle is removed (Liu 2002).

However, existing literature on circular migration in other countries, as well as recent empirical evidence in China, suggest that such an expectation is too simplistic. In fact, as Guest's (1999) study on the ESCAP region shows, the temporary character of a large proportion of moves is a feature of internal migration elsewhere in this region, although a mechanism similar to the hukou system does not exist in most countries. In the case of Indonesia, the widespread incidence and socioeconomic significance of circular migration and commuting from rural to urban areas were identified as early as the 1970s, and the tempo of this kind of migration has greatly increased in the two decades since then (Hugo 1978, 1997).

Such experience of non-permanent migration in other developing countries suggests that there are other dimensions to China's floating population that should be considered in the discussion of China's migration. As Guest (1999) suggests, the establishment and maintenance of temporary migration are closely related to the situation where the existing patterns of smallholder agriculture and the utilisation of agricultural surpluses in urban-centred industrial development coexist, and where the demand for skilled labour has not exceeded the demand for unskilled labour. This also seems to be an important factor in the existence of the floating population in China that will not change with reform in the hukou system.

If, as some observers have proposed, reform in the land transfer system does cut the link between the floating population and home towns, then many temporary migrants will live permanently in cities. However, given the fact that most of these temporary migrants do not have stable jobs and are not covered by the social security system, the feasibility of such a change in many major migrant source areas in China at the current stage is questionable.
Another neglected dimension of China's floating population is household strategies in migration. In fact, contrary to a common perception that temporary migration is undesirable, migrants' decisions to work in the destination area while leaving all or some of the family members at home is an important part of their strategy 'to maximize family income while minimizing risk by diversifying the range of income sources' (Hugo 1998:148). Under conditions of unstable employment, low wages and very limited social insurance, the land in their home towns remains to them as a resource and serves as the most important form of insurance. Many studies of temporary migration in other developing countries have proved the importance of such a strategy, and there is increasing evidence that this is also the case in China.

My survey of 243 temporary migrants in Fujian province in 2002 shows that 72 per cent of the migrants wanted to keep their land in their home towns, even if they were doing well in their migration destination. Moreover, if having household registration in their destination cities is conditional on relinquishing land in their places of origin, the majority of the respondents wanted to retain the land and the household registration at their places of origin rather than taking the hukou of the cities.

The above analysis is not meant to suggest that reform in the household registration system should be delayed or even stopped. On the contrary, it is the author's strong view that such reform should be accelerated to make it easier for migrants to have access to employment, housing, medical services, education and social welfare in their destination areas. If this is achieved, it will certainly lead to more permanent settlement of China's floating population at its destination points.

For most of the temporary migrants, circulation is still one of the best strategies because they still need their land and home in their home towns as insurance in case they do not do well in the cities. The complete relocation of their families may not necessarily be in their best interests before they are covered by a reasonably well-established social security system. Such considerations should be taken into account to balance the suggestion that farmers be encouraged to move to the cities, which is focused on the need to accelerate the urbanisation process and use land more efficiently in rural areas.

**Conclusion**

Much still needs to be done to establish a solid theoretical and empirical basis for the policy response to China's accelerating urbanisation and migration trends. Much of the discussion so far has been based on a more conventional conceptual and theoretical framework and the experience of developed countries, and some important new developments and evidence derived from more recent experience of developing countries should be incorporated. In fact, a great challenge facing Chinese policy makers is that it is not enough for them to follow the 'world experience' of migration and urbanisation in general terms: they must take into account the changes in settlement systems, the changing context of urbanisation and migration, and the increasing complexity of migration patterns in their policy making.

This is certainly not an easy task, however, it is vitally important, and has significant implications for the handling of some pressing socioeconomic issues in China, including stagnating rural income levels, rising rural–urban income gaps and rising urban unemployment. China's experience may also be significant for other developing countries, as many of them are facing similar challenges.

**Acknowledgment**

The author is grateful to the Wellcome Trust in the United Kingdom for providing the fellowship which funded this research.

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Towards population and migration policies for poverty reduction

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Introduction

The concern about population growth arose considerably earlier than concern about poverty in the development literature. In some ways, population growth was not a serious concern in the early decades of development. It was assumed that the demographic transition that took place in developed nations would eventually assert itself and promise a steady rise in per capita incomes (Coale and Hoover 1958). The demographic transition was, however, made considerably more difficult for contemporary developing countries. The patterns of economic growth that actually took place in Asia and the Pacific not only failed to reduce population growth rates consistent with the objectives of attaining higher levels of incomes, but also created the problems of increasing income inequality and poverty.

Many countries in the region have been forced to pay attention simultaneously to the problems of reducing the population growth rate and reducing the levels of poverty. However, policies concerning population and poverty are often conceived and implemented independently of each other, often ignoring the possibilities of strong synergies between them. The relationship between population change and poverty reduction has seldom been examined and used in the context of unexpected rapid changes in population processes.

While the demographic transition has been largely taking place in Asian and Pacific countries, there has been a shift in emphasis from the quantitative to the qualitative aspects of both economic growth and population changes in the region (IUSSP 2002). This shift in emphasis has given rise to concerns about more equitable income distribution and a reduction in poverty. With the declines in and low levels of fertility and mortality, migration has become an important process of demographic change in Asia and the Pacific.

In fact, over the last few decades, migration has become an increasingly important factor in the economic development and livelihood strategies of poor people in the region. Globalisation is transforming labour markets in the region and migration, both internationally and within Asian and Pacific countries, is expanding rapidly. Remittances from international migrants now exceed the value of official development assistance in the region.

The emigration of individuals frequently forms part of the income and livelihood strategies of households which remain in the areas of origin.

Although this is not a new phenomenon, patterns of migration have changed, with the 1990s witnessing a rapid increase in intraregional labour migration. Some countries, such as Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, are already important destinations for migrants from other parts of the region. Population movements in Asian and Pacific countries have greatly increased in scale and complexity, involving a wide range of sociocultural and demographic groups. The proportion of women migrants in the region has increased (Jones 1992, Skeldon 1997). Indeed, the region is among the most dynamic in the world in terms of migration. Some of this reflects the extent to which the region has been affected by globalisation processes and the increasingly flexible movement of all factors of production across national borders.

Migration policies and poverty reduction

With the increasing importance of migration in Asia, governments recognise the need to put in place comprehensive policies designed to maximise the contribution of migration to economic growth and poverty reduction. While innovative programs for migrants have been introduced in many Asian countries, national and subnational development plans currently do not focus on the importance of migration to national development, or seek to increase benefits and opportunities for poor migrants.

While international migration is often recognised as an important source of foreign exchange and investment, internal migrants are often 'invisible'. In fact, internal migration is one of many livelihood strategies for poor people and has become a part of the development process. Migration has enormous potential to contribute to development and poverty reduction, but we have to understand the process better if we are to put in place policies that maximise gains from migration for poor communities and for governments.

There is a tight linkage between migration and poverty. Migration can be considered a way of escaping poverty. Through remittances, it contributes to poverty reduction, at least at the place of origin. Conversely, poverty creates the premise for the
decision to migrate, though it does not necessarily lead in itself to that decision. In many cases, migration occurs because of a perception of relative poverty, thus providing a mechanism for the continuation of the migration process. Notably, the link between poverty and migration is sometimes blurred by policy interventions and the conditions of migration.

Poverty may be a cause of immobility as much as of mobility. The severely malnourished, the disabled and the unhealthy are unlikely to be able to move to better their prospects. Illiteracy and lack of information about economic opportunities and social contacts in potential migration destinations also impede movement. For the better off, emigration provides access to additional income sources and subsequent return migration.

**Vietnam**

As in other developing countries, most service and industrial activity in Vietnam tends to be concentrated in major urban centres, while agriculture remains widely dispersed. The country is still predominantly rural and at the early stage of the rural-urban transition. In 1999, of the 76.3 million population, about one-quarter were estimated to reside in urban areas. Of the total estimated active labour force of 31.6 million in 1996, 23.2 million (73 per cent) were engaged in farming, fishery and forestry.

Many of the factors motivating rural emigration seem to reflect a stagnant traditional agricultural sector that economic development has aimed to transform. The current total of seven million hectares of cultivable lands would require about 17 million agricultural labourers, including those needed for animal husbandry. Currently, a total of 23 million labourers live in rural areas and depend on agricultural production, representing a surplus of at least six million rural labourers who need employment and income.

**Understanding migration policies**

The fear of masses of uneducated urban poor flooding into the cities of Vietnam has resulted in a number of policy measures that place strict limits on migration into the major cities. Although these new restrictions have not been effectively implemented, perhaps because of the recognition that increased rural-urban migration is unavoidable, government officials and policy makers remain concerned about migration patterns. This concern is exacerbated by the lack of information on the extent of population movement into urban places and a lack of understanding of the characteristics of the movers. The ambitious search for a 'rational distribution of the productive force' remains a major feature of Vietnamese migration policy today. The most recently explained approach has been oriented to population and labor redistribution (see Nguyen 1998, NCPFP 2001).

Although government policy intervention may make it difficult for market forces to operate fully in relocating labour, the rural-urban differentials in economic growth have led to different demands for labour, and for labour mobility to occur across provincial boundaries in response to the new economic opportunities. The importance of migration as a component of population change is attested to by the magnitude of the population flows involved. Migrants arriving in the cities of Vietnam are mainly from the rural areas surrounding the cities to which they relocate. They move, for the most part, by themselves, following migrant networks (Dang 1998).

The expansion of these informal networks and recruitment channels helps to ease restrictions on urban entry. Increasingly the migrants are young, never-married people with the moderate level of education required to work in the expanding production and service sectors of Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi. The growth of transportation, telecommunications and the mass media across provinces has facilitated spatial mobility and enhanced social contacts between rural and urban areas.

In principle, programs that alter economic development should alter migration flows, since most of migration is economically motivated. Why did some rural development policies fail to affect emigration? Why did they have influences different from the expected ones? What is wrong with the policies?

The basic premise of most rural development programs, and especially those seeking to decelerate rural emigration, is that rural labourers want to stay in rural areas. In addition, program designers assume that, if the rural poor have the appropriate inputs and supportive services, it is possible for them to raise output sufficiently to overcome poverty and to generate a reasonable level of living.

However, if we ask a Vietnamese farmer whether it is easy to earn a living as a farmer, the response is surely going to be 'No'. Farming is a risky occupation. Income and expenditure are governed by prices over which farmers have no control. They must continually juggle their outlays for seeds, fertiliser, fuel and other agricultural inputs against the sale value of their crops, which is often too low to allow them to survive. The rural poor must seek alternatives that permit several family members to work.

The emerging issues of migration and the rapid development of spontaneous movement require a new approach in migration policy. However, policy related to migration tends to emphasise its negative impact in the form of urban overcrowding. Migration policies remain at the level of dilemma. There is no government agency fully in charge of migration issues: the task is shared by different ministries. Management of the process of migration therefore cannot escape influences from many directions, decrees and policies which are often contradictory in reality. Rural-to-urban migration is not seen as an integral
part of development. Neither is it considered a positive contribution to nation building. Urban development policy and planning do not recognise and include the administration of housing and services for migrants, of residential permits, or of labour recruitment in every economic sector.

The increase in the age of the rural labour population each year has not been absorbed by non-farm activities. There is little scope for the expansion of non-farm jobs in the rural sector. The fact that, each year, one million (net) young people reach working age has inevitably made the current overcrowding and underemployment more serious, especially in overpopulated areas. The low incomes of rural families, compared with those in urban places, tend to increase disparities in regional living standards. Areas characterised by little and poor cultivated land and poverty face deadlocks with very little possibility of a breakthrough.

The importance of migration to poor people

There are three basic strategies that rural households use to manage and alleviate rural poverty. First, there are various forms of agricultural intensification, including the improvement of irrigation, diversification of crops and intensification of cropping cycles. Second, farm households can earn non-farm income locally through developing local services, small-scale manufacturing enterprises or wage work, either in their own commune or nearby. Third, people can emigrate to places where their labour has higher value, agricultural land is available, or local agricultural and non-agricultural products fetch higher prices. This also introduces remittances, through material flows, and the exchange of information through migrant networks.

Among these three options, the emigration option has been adopted increasingly. Migration is seen as a positive process of transferring labour from a poorer to a richer area, with little or no negative impacts on either sending or receiving areas. The benefit of migration, in relieving employment pressure on the sending areas and deflecting population from urban areas, has been documented (see Dang 1999). Rural-to-urban migration connects poverty in cities to its rural origins through remittances and the mixing of incomes within households over distances. Urban places provide flexible sources of income for residents of nearby villages.

The traditional division of labour calls for women and children to continue and intensify their work in the countryside, while men seek wage labour nearby or in distant locations. Without cash-earning labour, the family may not have enough income to survive and cover expenses such as education and health care. Those who cannot move the entire family into the city must depend on both farming and wage labour activities. They know that, in contrast to the income earned from paddy rice and farming, they will get a certain amount of cash. Though, by itself, this cash income may not be sufficient, when it is pooled with the in-kind income or cash from farming activities, it is more likely to meet a family's subsistence requirements. Family members who need cash incomes and earning opportunities count on migrant remittances.

Similar strategies are used by young females seeking employment as maids or — after very different decision-making processes — in karaoke and massage parlours. Many of them remit money to their families and some hope, after a few years in the city, to go home with enough money to set up a small business. A number of them, however, aim definitively to escape their mothers' lives in the paddy fields by settling away from home.

Vietnam's poverty alleviation strategy and programs have recorded phenomenal success in reducing the levels of poverty in Vietnam in the 1990s. Although estimates vary significantly depending on definitions and data used to measure poverty, the country has achieved remarkable successes in improving the welfare of its citizens. Between 1993 and 1998, one measure of poverty shows that the proportion of the population at the basic needs level of poverty declined from 58 to 37 per cent (World Bank 1999). Malnutrition declined in children by 25 per cent during the same period. Much of this success has been attributed to market-oriented economic reforms, which aided in tripling the per capita gross domestic product in the 1990s.

While the program's achievements in reducing poverty are substantial, there are reasons to be concerned about the actual levels of poverty, as well as the means and processes of poverty alleviation. As it is in many other countries, poverty in Vietnam has generally been defined on the basis of indices of income and expenditure. While these are useful means of determining individual and regional entitlements, and of making international comparisons, they are weak indicators of poverty as a lived experience and inadequate tools for analysing poverty in the urban transition. Basic needs poverty lines cannot explain why people are poor or what is needed to get out of poverty.

Migrant remittances

In Vietnam, large-scale data on migrants' remittances are severely limited and hence hamper our understanding of the role of migration in poverty reduction. Nevertheless, remittances sent to family members and relatives by rural emigrants are an important aspect of the migration process. Remittances also reflect a long Vietnamese tradition of strong family support and play a significant role in the livelihoods of Vietnamese households, particularly rural households. According to the Vietnam Living Standard Survey 1993, about 23.1 per cent of households received remittances during the 12 months before the survey, and remittances accounted for 38 per cent of their
expenditure (Le and Nguyen 1999). A survey by the Institute of Sociology (IOS 1999) showed that, without participation in the cash economy, rural families did not have enough income to survive and cover the costs of education and health care.

Findings from the IOS survey showed migrant remittances accounted for 60 to 70 per cent of the total cash incomes of rural households. Seasonal migrants earned less, on the average, than permanent migrants (434,000 VND and 647,000 VND respectively in 1997). As women migrate nearly as often as men, they often play a key role in migration decisions. Migration often provides women with employment opportunities and thereby increases their ability to improve the living standards of the family at home. The IOS study shows that migrant women tend to remit much larger amounts of money than their male counterparts, as is often the case in many parts of the world (IOS 1999).

Remittances from emigrants may be used either for consumption or for investment in productive assets. Among the poorer sections of society, however, a larger proportion of remittances is likely to be spent on consumption rather than investment. In many cases, rural migrants do not earn enough to allow a considerable amount to be remitted. Nevertheless, cash remittances can help repay debts, and cover the costs of schooling and health care for relatives left behind. Cash remittances can reduce the need for farmers to sell their paddy rice as a source of income and ensure food security for rural families and the community.

Conclusion

Migration can respond much more rapidly to changing situations than can fertility, or the age, sex or ethnic structure of a population. Migration may be initiated and regulated by powerful institutions while government policy interventions over movement may create barriers to market forces. Part of the reason why rural development efforts have failed to have the hoped for result of decelerating rural emigration is that they have not fully considered the context in which the rural populace makes its migration decisions.

The conditions of poverty and migration are not new to Vietnam. In rural areas, any combination of population pressure, the commercialisation of agriculture, land degradation, floods and debt has resulted in increasing landlessness among farming households, the need for income from non-farming sources, temporary and permanent migration, and poverty. Migration becomes a viable option mainly for households with adequate available labour, and without disabilities, severe malnutrition or other major impediments. The greatest gain from migration is achieved by those with higher levels of education and better networks of contact, not necessarily the poorest. Migration, as a survival strategy for rural households, can improve the incomes and wellbeing of families in rural areas, help to reduce inequalities between rural and urban places, and have a long-term impact on rural development.

Policy concerns in migration can be explicit and implicit, and can cover the range from control to accommodation, residence and permanent relocation. Policies established and used by governments to influence migration have varied widely in efficiency and cost-effectiveness. In reality, however, policy instruments are often designed without taking account of whether they are consistent with the individual goals of migrants.

Consequently, macro policies aimed at creating a socially optimal match between population and resources may not be consistent with, or may even conflict with, the desires of migrants, limiting policy success. This has seriously impeded the positive role that migration can play in the process of development and poverty reduction. Welfare and social protection policies, aimed at helping needy individuals and families meet their own objectives by controlling migration and fertility, have a place in anti-poverty programs. In any case, policies for reducing poverty are more likely to be effective if they act directly on the social and economic institutions and processes involved.

Note

1 Measures of poverty based on income can be extremely misleading. Such approaches risk reducing poverty to simply a matter of income, leading to the equally oversimplified view that poverty reduction is just a function of economic growth, which has not been the case in any East Asian country.

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"Most useful": A rapid qualitative approach to mapping young peoples' issues and programs in Vietnam

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Introduction

'Adolescents' and young people account for approximately three out of ten people in Vietnam (WHO 1999). Rapid social changes in Vietnam after doi moi (the communist government's 'renovation period' beginning in 1986, which resulted in the partial opening up of the country to the competitive worldwide marketplace) have brought the issues facing young people sharply into focus (Nilan 1999).

The list of issues now facing young people in Vietnam is long. These include the more than one million new job seekers missing out on jobs each year, the growing gap between the new middle-class and the poor, growing inequalities in education, 'within country' migration to the cities as young people look for work, human trafficking into other countries and associated exploitation, the ever-looming threat of HIV/AIDS, lack of access to quality 'youth friendly services', substance use and abuse, ethnic-minority disadvantages, and mental distress (for example, middle-class young people face enormous pressures to achieve in education) (WHO 1999, Ridge and Murphy 2002).

Currently, there is a strategic opportunity in Vietnam to grapple with the issues affecting young people. The UN Heads retreat (June 2002) in Vietnam made 'youth' a priority issue for action for all UN agencies. Youth subsequently became a priority area for discussion by the United Nations (UN) Inter-Agency Programme Working Group (IPWG). In these discussions, it became clear that, while there was a body of knowledge and expertise in Vietnam about 'youth issues', this information was incomplete, frequently undocumented, scattered among agencies and, in many cases, not shared. A 'social mapping' of this knowledge was sought, to consolidate knowledge about young people — to identify what was known and where the gaps were. Out of the mapping exercise, the UN wanted to identify new areas in which to develop policy and take action. We were engaged as UN consultants to conduct this broad social mapping of youth issues and programs in Vietnam.

As Melbourne-based researchers at the time, we faced a number of problems conducting the consultancy. The main problems were the extreme time constraints, the limited resources and the fact that neither of us had an in-depth local knowledge of Vietnam. We could only spend ten days in the country. In that time, we were expected to interview a range of stakeholders, view a wide range of documents, conduct analyses, write a report on our findings and present our findings to the UN group of agencies in Vietnam.

There was to be an initial briefing with the UN Youth Task Force on 9 September 2002 in Hanoi, and a draft report and a presentation to the UN IPWG was scheduled for 16 September (a final report was delivered a few weeks later on 5 October). There were initial concerns raised about the suitability of 'outsider' Western consultants to conduct a social mapping that was sensitive to the nuances of local issues and comprehensive enough for UN purposes. This article outlines the approach we took to solving the problems encountered in the consultancy, to produce a report that was widely embraced and acted upon as a basis for developing a more coordinated strategy to support young people in Vietnam.

The approach to evaluation

Given the extreme constraints on the project, we had to develop a number of strategies to ensure that we completed the task on time and kept costs down, while ensuring that we were well informed about, and sensitive to, the Vietnamese and UN context.

The final strategies adopted included tightly scheduling interviews prior to entering the country, working with a trusted contact person in Vietnam who had excellent local knowledge, using group interviews, modifying interview guides to suit different profiles of interviewees and stages of research, having both researchers attend each interview, using skilled interpreters, using supplementary questionnaires, collecting secondary data which could be analysed back in Melbourne, using the sophisticated searching facilities of the NUD-IST software to systematically analyse interviews, and presenting results to the UN to stimulate further discussion and clarification of the analysis.
Setting up interviews

Before taking on the consultancy, we wanted to make sure we could more than adequately complete the task. We made our requirements known to the UN from the outset. Since evaluation expertise is still consolidating in Vietnam, such expertise is not always readily available to projects. While we could readily bring a high level of evaluation expertise to the project, the trade-off was that the UN would need to do more groundwork in setting up the consultancy. Key stakeholders to be interviewed were identified in consultation with the UN Youth Task Force. Before we entered the country, a list of interviewees was negotiated and interviews were subsequently scheduled using UN administrative support.

Further, we insisted that the interviews must only take place on the first 3.5 days of the consultancy — the rest of the time would be needed for analysis and writing up. We set up base in the World Health Organization (WHO) office in Hanoi, where administrative support was provided. This allowed some stakeholders to contact the consultancy in between interviews to provide further information and to suggest other people to interview.

In order to ensure a diverse coverage of stakeholders, 11 focus group interviews and four individual interviews were conducted in all. Interviews included those with groups and individuals representing NGOs, INGOs, researchers, the Youth Union, the Women’s Union, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Training, the Committee for Population, Family and Children, reproductive health groups, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (UNIAP). A total of 50 people were interviewed.

Collecting data

The interview guide for the consultancy was initially developed in Melbourne from the terms of reference provided in the consultancy brief, and then clarified once we were in Vietnam. We had an excellent contact in Vietnam who was not only highly regarded by us, but also highly regarded in Vietnam. This contact was pivotal in helping to gain trust and access to stakeholders from high levels of government to project workers in the field. It was agreed that this contact would also provide the information needed to clarify the interview guide on arrival in Hanoi.

As a means of ensuring high-quality data and time efficiency, all interviews were face-to-face, attended by both researchers and limited to one hour each. We alternated between conducting and transcribing the interviews. Transcribing the interviews involved typing interviewees’ responses directly into a wordprocessing program using a laptop computer.

There were several advantages to this approach. The interviewer could focus on the line of questioning — this is important in a recursive approach to interviewing (see below), which relies heavily on interviewing skills and concentration (Minichiello et al. 1999). The transcriber was also free to focus on keying in important information and quotes. Additionally, this alternation in roles allowed us to maintain better levels of concentration in a very hectic schedule, as well as to select groups to interview that better suited our own areas of interest.

Finally, because we both attended all interviews, we could debate and clarify the meanings of the interviews after each occurred. Unlike quantitative research, which tends to have uniform methodological approaches, qualitative research encompasses a ‘changing and contested field’ in which different ways of looking at the same issue are thought to increase understanding of complex phenomena (Punch 1998, Barbour 2001).

So, while Ridge was particularly focused on revealing and documenting the social complexities of youth issues and programs, in order to inform what needed to come next, Murphy concentrated more on exploring issues of programmatic theory as they translate into practice. These differing vantage points provided a basis for a more comprehensive analysis of the data.

Interpreters were needed in a number of the interviews. The identification of skilled interpreters was negotiated with our contact to ensure the quality of the data collected. Developing a good rapport with the interpreters also contributed to the collection of high-quality data.

Interviewees were guaranteed that confidentiality would be maintained. They were also informed that we would delete names and identifying details from reports, and that the quotes used in the final report would not be attributed to any source or category of source. Confidentiality was important in the decision not to tape interviews. We were informed by our contact that, owing to cultural sensitivities and the centralist communist system, many stakeholders would be reluctant to be candid in taped interviews.

Initially, an interview schedule was designed to ensure that the major issues in the terms of reference were covered. Nevertheless, the interviews were open-ended and recursive to the extent that we could rapidly establish rapport and pick up on sensitivities and new themes in the responses in order to probe them more deeply (Minichiello, Fulton and Sullivan 1999). For instance, if interviewees were initially defensive, a rapid switch to more general ideas, positive issues or familiar language helped them to trust that their information would be respected. In very
many cases, interviewees ended up being candid about their views, as well as about program strengths and weaknesses.

The interview guide (see Table 1 for common themes covered) was modified on a daily basis between interviews (and sometimes even in the taxi between interviews) in order to accommodate the need for contextual sensitivity, to further explore emerging themes, and to tap into the differing profiles of discussion groups.

Table 1 Major themes covered in interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current programs related to young people</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation for young people in Vietnam, for example, those most in need, helpful things about Vietnam for young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main issues affecting specific groups of young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs, for example, decision making, successes, effectiveness, gaps, challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services, for example, access, appropriateness and quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor organisations/NGOs/INGOs — for example, role of the UN, advocacy, collaboration, partnerships, coordination, technical assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key stakeholders, for example, driving the agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation of young people, for example, kinds of participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priorities — what needs to be done next? enablers, barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging issues — next three to five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future directions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We found that the one-hour individual and group interviews were adequate for collecting the range of data sought. Indeed, towards the end of the interview phase of the consultancy, it was clear that the project was reaching saturation — very little new information was being collected. Nevertheless, questionnaires that had been developed beforehand in Melbourne were used to collect additional data from interviewees who wanted to provide further details about their programs. The questionnaires used mainly tick boxes, but included some open-ended questions, and were distributed at the time of the interviews. As well as being provided in English, the questionnaires were translated into Vietnamese. Interviewees were informed that they were required to return the questionnaires within 48 hours to the UN and ourselves. Initial document collection (for example, previous evaluations and reviews of programs) was coordinated by the UN before we entered Vietnam. We then collected further documents at the time of the interviews. It was made clear to the stakeholders that documents would be analysed when we returned to Melbourne, to inform the final report, rather than the draft report that was to be presented in Vietnam.

The document analysis was a key source of information for developing a 'living matrix' — an updateable Excel spreadsheet that outlines the range of youth programs currently under way in Vietnam. The matrix we developed includes coverage of target groups, key issues addressed, approaches, partners, funding, duration, evaluation, access, economic participation, youth participation, gender and rights. This 'living matrix' is the subject of a separate paper and is not discussed in more detail in this article.

**Rapid data analysis**

In addition to developing data collection strategies, we had to find ways to rapidly analyse the data. Initially, we developed a visual 'mind map' of the findings and then debated and clarified it. This map was based mostly on intuitive analysis of the interviews (Malterud 2001). From this map, the structure and headings of the final report were developed. The stakeholders wanted an 'accessible' report, so all of the findings were generally presented in three forms: text, tables and quotations.

At the same time as developing the map, we entered the electronic textual data from all of the interviews into the NUD-IST (N6) qualitative software program. Each line of text was numbered and indexed by the software. Given that there was not enough time to code the data, the NUD-IST software was used primarily to search rapidly for themes and categories in each of the interviews. From these searches, a quasi-coding system was developed.

Using the software made it possible to rapidly develop and test the propositions that we developed intuitively to ensure they were well grounded in the data, revised where they could not be supported, and tabled where they were consistent with the entire data set (Dey 1993, Browne and Sullivan 1999). With two laptops, we were able to focus on different aspects of the analysis, conduct systematic examinations of the data using NUD-IST, and write up the results for different sections of the report, all in parallel.

On the final day of our stay in Vietnam, the draft final report (including broad recommendations) was presented to the UN group of agencies. The presentation was run as a way for us to generate group discussion and thus gather further data that would shape the final analysis. Again, this discussion was transcribed and used to develop the final report after we returned to Melbourne. Three different stakeholders also provided email feedback once we were back in Melbourne. By this stage of the consultancy, however, only minor changes were needed to
develop the final report. A 10,000 word final report was submitted to the UN in Vietnam on 5 October, less than one month after the commencement of the consultancy.

Conclusion

The presentation of findings and final report to the UN family of agencies at the end of the project was reportedly widely embraced. One key stakeholder noted, 'This is quite a commendable recording of the relevant information in such a short period of time, and most useful' (email communication to D Ridge, 26 September 2002). Our contact in Vietnam reported in early 2003 that the major recommendations arising from the consultancy were being implemented (including translating our final report into Vietnamese so that it was accessible to all stakeholders, holding a national survey of adolescent health and social wellbeing, improving coordination of programs, providing support for youth economic participation, introducing a campaign to counteract negative stereotypes of young people, and the UN employing its credibility in the country to advocate for key youth issues at government level).

We consider that many factors contributed to gaining wide endorsement of the final report under difficult conditions. These factors included:

- being sensitive to the importance of cultural variations;
- scheduling interviews prior to our entering the country to ensure that all the time in the country was devoted to interviewing and analysis;
- working with a trusted contact person in Vietnam who had excellent local knowledge and acceptance. We were struck by the openness of interviewees and their willingness to provide information for this project. This was a surprise given competition between different programs and concerns about confidentiality;
- having the flexibility to modify interview guides to suit different profiles of interviewees and stages of research;
- having both researchers attend each interview to ensure the quality of the data, as well as to increase our ability to reflect on and discuss the meaning of data;
- using highly skilled and accurate interpreters;
- using sophisticated searching facilities available in the NUD-IST software to systematically analyse interviews and test our intuitive propositions; and
- gaining feedback from stakeholders about the directions in analysis and recommendations before the submission of the final report.

There were a number of limitations in this evaluation. The obvious limitation pertains to the intensiveness and rapid nature of the data gathering and analysis — having more time in qualitative analysis is always useful for further maturation of the analysis. Additionally, the documents used to inform the final report and to build the 'living matrix' were only produced in English, as resources were not available to translate these documents into Vietnamese.

A further limitation was that, while efforts were made to be as inclusive as possible of stakeholders by having individual interviews, group discussions, interpreters and document collection, the findings were more indicative of the situation of youth programs in Vietnam, rather than being a comprehensive assessment. For instance, while we talked to the Youth Union (which has extensive networks throughout the country to contact young people), further work is now needed to assess the perspectives of young people in Vietnam. Presently, youth participation in projects in Vietnam often amounts to tokenism, and it is frequently difficult for adults to really hear the voices of young people (Ridge and Murphy 2002). The 'living matrix', to be discussed in a separate article, is designed to provide the UN with a means of developing a more comprehensive and updateable picture of programs in Vietnam that relate to young people.

References


Population change in Cambodia and issues for development and poverty reduction

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Introduction

Overview of population change, 1962–2000

Cambodia has so far had only three censuses. The country's first ever census, conducted in 1921 recorded a population of 2.4 million. This was followed by the first post-colonial census in 1962, which gave a population count of 5.7 million, later revised to 6.0 million (Siampos 1970, Desbarats 1995). The third and the most recent census was conducted in 1998, at which the population of the country was counted as 11.44 million (NIS 2000). A population count was undertaken by the government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea in 1980, but it is suspected of undercounting the population (Desbarats 1995:111). Nevertheless it was the basis of future population estimates produced by the government until the Demographic Survey of 1996. For the intervening years, only estimates of the country's population are available. Cambodia's population from 1921 through 1998 are given in Table 1.

Noteworthy is the massive decline in population in the 1970s and early 1980s due to increased mortality, reduced fertility and large-scale migration to neighboring countries such as Thailand and Vietnam.

Table 1: Population of Cambodia, 1921–1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population in millions</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population in millions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>7.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>7.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>8.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>8.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>8.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>9.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>10.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>11.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The war and devastation of the 1970s and 1980s had gripped the country in economic chaos and demographic stagnation, but Cambodia has since made a remarkable recovery in its demographic, social and economic conditions. The population growth rate had suffered more than a two-fold decline from a positive rate of 2.3 to a negative rate of more than 2.3 between 1971–1974 and 1975–1979, but recovered thereafter with a similar magnitude of increase (Table 2).

Table 2: Population growth rate Cambodia, 1960–1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Rate of growth (% per annum)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early 1960s</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1960s</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971–1974</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975–1979</td>
<td>Between (-) 2.30 and (-) 2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981–1987</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996–1998</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The current population situation of Cambodia is the result of interplay between past fertility, mortality and migration, all three of which have had substantial impacts on its population, particularly through the 1970s and 1980s.

The objective of this paper is to describe, and explain where possible, the changes in the country's population and in its demographic parameters with respect to the following periods of time: (i) 1950–1975, (ii) 1975–1979, (iii) 1980–1990 and (iv) the period since 1991, and to highlight the population issues that have been identified as having implications for socioeconomic development and poverty reduction.

Trends in fertility

The overall trends in Cambodian fertility during 1958–1990 indicate an increase between the late 1950s and early 1970s,
considerably sharp declines between the mid to the end of 1970s, and recovery with a 'baby boom' in the 1980s.

1958–1975
In this period, Cambodia had a high fertility typical of a traditional rural society, with the crude birth rate (CBR) above 40 per 1,000 (Desbarats 1995:85–86). The total fertility rate (TFR) estimated from the 1962 census was between 6.7 and 7.1 (Heuveline 1998; Siampos 1970). Fertility might have increased during the 1960s and early 1970s due to improved health conditions and a pro-natalist policy (Martin 1989, reported in Heuveline 1998), before declining in 1973. Cambodia's involvement in the Indochina war of the 1970s had little effect on the country's fertility (Ea Meng-Tty 1981).

1975–1979
There is no clear information about fertility in Democratic Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge during 1975–1979 (Desbarats 1995:86–88). However, the highly adverse conditions during this period are believed to have resulted in large declines in fertility. An indication of the magnitude of fertility decline in this period can be obtained from estimates produced by the United States Central Intelligence Agency which showed that, between April 1975 and late 1978, the CBR of rural dwellers declined from 43 to 28 and that of urban dwellers from 32 to 10. However, Ea Meng-Tty (1981) is considered to have produced a more plausible estimate of a CBR between 20 to 25 per 1,000 during 1976–1978 (Desbarats 1995:88).

1980–1990
This period provided more stable conditions favouring normal family life. There was a dramatic increase in fertility as a reaction to the harsh conditions faced by Cambodian families in the Khmer Rouge period. With a 'baby boom' in the early 1980s, the CBR rose to between 35 and 48 per 1,000, but the consensus among international organisations working in Cambodia was that the CBR was 44 per 1,000 in the mid-1980s. Fertility is reported to have started declining thereafter, with CBR of 40.4 in 1987, 40 in 1988 and 38 in 1990. The corresponding TFR for 1990 was around 6 (Desbarats 1995:88–89).

The period since 1991
There has been an increase in the frequency and number of population surveys in Cambodia since 1991, providing more information for assessing the demographic trends in the country. A second 'baby boom' appears to have occurred after the 1991 Paris Peace Accord, which resulted in a CBR of between 48 and 49 per 1,000 during 1992–1993, although a World Bank estimate shows a lower fertility with a TFR of 4.2 in 1992 (Desbarats 1995:90).

The estimates shown in the shaded portion of Table 3 are derived by using the Arriaga variation of the P/F ratio method, while those in the unshaded parts are direct estimates based on birth histories of the interviewed women. Fertility appears to have remained unchanged during 1993–1995 and 1996–1997. However, a comparison of the direct estimates based on the KAP Survey of 1995 and the Demographic and Health Survey of 2000 (DHS) reveals that fertility had declined by almost one child between June 1993 and November 1997, or in this case a decline by 18 per cent in almost four and a half years.

Alternative estimates based on the Rele method (Rele 1967) and the 'own children' method (Cho 1973) produce further evidence of fertility decline in Cambodia from the early 1990s (Tables 4 and 5).
The estimates of TFR derived by the Rele method\(^2\) from the 1962 Census, the 1998 Census and the 2000 DHS show a declining trend in fertility (Table 4), although this trend masks the fluctuations in fertility in the 1970s. Likewise, the estimates based on the 'own children' method, applied on the 1998 Census data also show declining fertility for the period 1989–1993 (Table 5).

### Table 5 Estimates of total fertility rates from 1998: Census data by the 'own children' method, 1984–1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference period</th>
<th>Total fertility rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984–1988</td>
<td>5.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989–1993</td>
<td>5.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994–1998</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dasvarma and Neupert 2002

Figure 1 shows the results of the application of the 'own children' method\(^3\) to the 1998 Census data by single years from 1984 to 1998, which indicate that fertility started to decline in Cambodia sometime between 1992 and 1993.

### Trends in mortality  
Like fertility, trends in mortality in Cambodia reflect the fluctuations associated with unnatural occurrences such as violence, famine, etc.

#### 1950–1975
Mortality was falling in the early 1950s as in many other countries, as shown by an increase in the estimated life expectancy at birth from 35 years in 1945 to 45 years in the early 1960s. But mortality increased during 1970–1975, with the crude death rate (CDR) increasing from 20 per 1,000 in 1958–1962 to 22.5 per 1,000 in 1970–1975. The higher mortality during 1970–1975 is largely attributable to an estimated 600,000 war casualties during the Lon Nol period (Desbarats 1995).

#### 1975–1979 (Khmer Rouge period)
The Khmer Rouge period (Democratic Kampuchea) saw the most violent period in the history of Cambodia's population, with drastic declines in fertility and very large increases in mortality and migration.

By the end of the 1970s, mortality had reached very high levels with an estimated infant mortality rate (IMR) of 263 per 1,000 live births, perhaps the highest in the contemporary world, and a life expectancy at birth of 31 years, one of the lowest in the world.

Large numbers of people died through starvation, execution and other causes. There are varying estimates of 'excess deaths' during the Khmer Rouge period of April 1975 to January 1979, which range from 1.2 million (Desbarats 1995:92–93) and between 1.5 and 2 million (Heuveline 1998:60).

#### 1980–1990
Mortality declined considerably during this period, largely due to declines in infant mortality from 212 per 1,000 live births in 1980 to 117 in 1990. There were corresponding changes in the crude death rate and expectation of life at birth (Table 6). However, mortality was still very high compared to the rest of Asia and the world.

---

**Figure 1** Trend in fertility, 1983–1999, implied by 'own children' estimates of total fertility rate

Source: Dasvarma and Neupert 2002.

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Table 6  Mortality indices, 1980–1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Crude death rate</th>
<th>Life expectancy at birth</th>
<th>Infant mortality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>212</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Desbarats 1995.
Note: Parentheses show the period of reference.

1991 and after

Demographic data collection became more frequent after 1991 enabling the production of various estimates of mortality (Table 7). The discrepancy between the IMR of 80 (1998 Census) and that of 95 (2000 CDHS) is largely explained by differences in the methods of estimating IMR (Huguet 2001). The CDHS estimate is considered a better estimate, because it is based on good quality birth history and is a direct estimate, whereas the Census estimate is an indirect estimate based on child survivorship data applied to an inappropriately chosen model life table4 (PDPST 2002). Infant mortality declined between 1980 and 1990, but appears to be rising thereafter, mainly due to a rise in post-neonatal mortality (National Institute of Statistics et al., 2001).

In summary, Cambodia had high mortality typical of rural, traditional populations, in the 1940s and early 1950s. Thereafter mortality started declining as in other developing counties, but the declining trend received a serious setback due to the turmoil motivated by two political periods of the country, namely the Lon Nol period of the early 1970s and the Khmer Rouge period of 1975–1979. In the latter period, Cambodian mortality was among the highest in the world with more than 1.2 million people dying due to violence and food shortages. Mortality started to decline with the restoration of normalcy in the late 1970s to early 1980s and has continued its downward trend through the 1990s into the new millennium, although recent data show signs of a rise in infant mortality due to a rise in post-neonatal mortality.

Trends in international migration

International migration has played a significant role in shaping the population of Cambodia in recent times. Emigration and return migration have been numerous and, at times, substantial since the 1970s, affecting both the size and the composition of the population. Emigration since the 1970s caused a large deficit in the population of the country. Emigration and immigration includes those large numbers of refugees now settled in other countries, and the return movement of temporary refugees after the end of famine and war conditions (Desbarats 1995:97).

The period before 1975

About 200,000 Vietnamese were expelled after General Lon Nol took over in 1970 as the Head of the Khmer Republic, reducing the size of the Vietnamese community in Cambodia by half. There was a second big exodus in early 1975 in anticipation of the Khmer Rouge victory, which included large numbers of Chinese Cambodians. These two waves of outward movement had caused a significant reduction in the size of the Cambodian population (Desbarats 1995:97–98).

1975–1980

This period covers the Khmer Rouge regime and immediately thereafter, which witnessed the largest population movement, both within and outside of Cambodia. About 400,000 persons fled the country between 1975 and 1978, bringing the total number of those leaving between 1970 and 1978 to about 650,000. In January 1979, about 100,000 persons crossed into Thailand, of whom about 44,000 were pushed back into Cambodia. Many of those pushed back died from starvation, illness, gunfire and mines. Between late 1979 and early 1980, about 500,000 fled to Thailand, mainly because of widespread famines in Cambodia in the later part of 1979 (Desbarats 1995:98–100).

Table 7  Most recent estimates of mortality for Cambodia (estimates refer to the past 5 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Infant mortality rate</th>
<th>Under five mortality rate</th>
<th>Maternal mortality ratio</th>
<th>Life expectancy at birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Census 19981</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>130.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Health Survey 19982</td>
<td>89.4 (35.7 + 53.7)</td>
<td>114.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Health 19993</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>473 (1996)b</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDHS 20004</td>
<td>95.1 (37.3 + 57.8)</td>
<td>124.4</td>
<td>437 (1994–2000)b</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDPST 20025</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>56.1 (1996–2000)b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:  a. The parentheses show the neonatal and post-neonatal mortality rates.
b. The parentheses show the reference period.
1980 and after
The gradual restoration of normalcy encouraged return migration to Cambodia. About 100,000 Khmers, who had fled to Vietnam during the Khmer Rouge period returned in 1979. After 1980, some of the Vietnamese settlers who had earlier escaped to Vietnam came back to Cambodia, along with new Vietnamese immigrants. Subsequent back and forth movement of many Vietnamese between the two countries makes it difficult to enumerate precisely the number of immigrants and emigrants. About 56,000 Cambodian refugees returned between June 1980 and July 1982, and such repatriation of refugees continued until April 1993 (Desbarats 1995:97-106).

To sum up, over one million persons had left the country during the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, while more than 400,000 persons had returned, mostly in 1992–1993.

Urbanisation and internal migration
Urbanisation
Cambodia has been and still remains one of the least urbanised countries in Asia. In the early 1960s only 11 per cent of the population was urban. By 1968, this proportion had reached 12.5 per cent. During 1975–1979 (mostly the Khmer Rouge period), the proportion of urban population was reduced to almost zero due to the forced movement of people from urban to rural areas. By 1985, some five years after the end of the Khmer Rouge regime, the proportion of urban population grew back to 7 per cent. The United Nations estimated the proportion of urban population in 1993 as 15 per cent (Desbarats 1995:143–144). The most recent data, from the 1998 Census, reveals the proportion urban as 15.7 per cent (NIS 1999a). According to a proposed new definition the proportion urban in 1998 would be 17 per cent (Rama Rao et al. 2002).

Internal migration
As international movements during the 1970s and early 1980s changed the size and composition of the total population of Cambodia, so too did internal migratory movements change the distribution of population between rural and urban areas and between provinces of the country. The 1998 Census provides the most recent and systematic data on internal migration. Based on place of previous residence, there were 3.6 million migrants in Cambodia, which comprised 31.5 per cent of the total population of the country. The migration streams consisted mostly of rural to rural (64.2 per cent), followed by rural to urban (17.3 per cent), urban to urban (12.3 per cent) and urban to rural (6.2 per cent) (NIS 2000).

Population issues
The past trends in fertility, mortality and migration that occurred over a period of almost ten years — comprising the Lon Nol period (early 1970 to early 1975) and the Khmer Rouge period (April 1975–January 1979) — were quite unusual. These have left their mark on the population situation of Cambodia. The age-sex pyramid of Cambodia’s population reflects the effects

Table 8  Population issues for Cambodia’s socioeconomic development and poverty reduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population growth rate (2.6%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High fertility (Total Fertility Rate 4.1, but declining)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High mortality (Infant Mortality Rate 95 per 1,000 live births, Maternal Mortality Ratio 437 per 100,000 live births, Expectation of life at birth 56 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High but declining HIV/AIDS (Prevalence rate: 1997: 3.6%; 2002: 2.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politically induced migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbalanced age-sex structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High poverty (36% of the population living below the poverty line in 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low levels of human resources development and gender inequality (1998 Census: adult literacy 79.5% for males, 57% for females)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population pressure on natural resources in selected areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

of fluctuations in these demographic parameters, as shown in Figure 2. The base of the pyramid probably reflects a drop in fertility in the last five years before the census, but possibly also under-reporting of children under five (Hayes 2000). The dent in the 20–24-year age group reflects the decline in fertility during the Khmer Rouge years of 1975–1979, while the disproportionately smaller proportions of males at ages 25 and above reflect the high mortality and migration of males during the crisis periods. Besides the points relating to fertility, mortality, migration and urbanisation discussed in this paper, there are other population issues, such as HIV/AIDS, human resources development and gender disparities, that have implications for the country's socioeconomic development and poverty reduction. These issues have been discussed in detail by Hayes (2000) and RGC (2002), but a summary list is given in Table 8.

**Government response**

The population situation of the country and its implications for socioeconomic development and poverty reduction have been recognised by the Royal Government of Cambodia in the following initiatives to address the problems:

- Incorporation of population issues in the National Socio-economic Development Plan II (2001–05).
- Implementation of a Population and Development Strategy project in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Australian national University (ANU):
  - Establishment of Population Analysis Unit (PAU) in the Ministry of Planning;
  - Establishment of Population and Development Policy Unit (PDPU) in the Council of Ministers;
  - Strengthening the capabilities of the Centre for Population Studies, Royal University of Phnom Penh;
  - Strengthening the data collection and analytical capabilities of National Institute of Statistics (NIS);
  - Preparation of analytical reports on key population issues;
  - Formulation of National Population Policy (NPP); and
- National Reproductive Health project.
- HIV/AIDS programs.
- Establishment of a Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Technical Unit in the Ministry of Planning.

If these responses are properly implemented together with appropriate population policies and strategies then Cambodia would be able to ensure the optimum mutual reinforcement of population and development issues and a balanced and sustainable development. In this endeavour it will be crucial to regularly analyse and monitor the country's population trends and their implications for development, local capacity for which is rather limited. This shortcoming can be addressed by appropriate training of government and non-government officials.

**Notes**

1 In countries where information on births and deaths from registration data are not available or incomplete, 'indirect techniques' are employed to estimate demographic rates. The P/P ratio method is a an indirect method of estimating current fertility rates based on the number children ever borne by women of reproductive ages classified by women's 5-year age groups (parity), and the cumulative fertility obtained from the number of children borne by women in the recent past (last 12 months) classified women's by 5-year age groups. The method was first developed by William Brass (Brass 1975). It involves the use of a polynomial model of fertility to calculate the relationship between average parity and cumulative fertility for successive age groups (United Nations 1983:33). Brass's original method assumes constant fertility, which is not met in developing countries, where fertility is declining. Arriaga (1994:209) modified Brass's technique to account for declining fertility.  

2 The Rele method is another indirect method of fertility estimation, based on the relationship between child–woman ratio (i.e., ratio of the number of children to the number of women of reproductive ages) and gross reproduction rate for given levels of expectation of life at birth. Gross reproduction rate (which is the total fertility rate for female births only) is converted to total fertility rate (i.e., both male and female births) with information on sex-ratio at birth. The method was developed by JR Rele (1967).

3 The 'own children' method is yet another indirect method of fertility estimation which consists of identifying children up to the age of 15 years with their biological mothers. The information, which is collected at censuses (household schedule), gives the number of children and their mothers who are alive at census date. Estimated numbers of children born at successive periods during the past 15 years and the estimated numbers of women who were alive at the time of the respective child births are obtained by using prevailing life table survival ratios. This information is then used for calculating age-specific and total fertility rates for periods during the 15 years prior to the census. The method was first developed by Lee-Jay Cho (1973).

4 Like fertility, infant mortality rate, based on the 1998 census was also estimated 'indirectly'. The method is based on converting the proportion of children dead classified by age group of mothers to child mortality rates (i.e., children under the age of 5 years) by using multipliers which are based on information on parity of women by age-group. Mortality at a
particular age is mathematically related to mortality at a successive age. This information is used for estimating, say, infant mortality rate from the mortality rate under 2 years of age, by referring to ‘model life tables’, which provide detailed mortality rates by age. Model life tables are life tables constructed on the basis of mortality experiences of different populations of the world depicting different mortality patterns with respect to age. Depending on the mortality pattern of a particular country obtained from child-survivorship data, a suitable model life table is chosen. If the life table so chosen is not suitable for the population under study, i.e., if an inappropriate model life table is chosen, then the resulting estimate of infant mortality rate will not be correct.

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Private providers of contraceptives in one northeast Thailand district

Aree Prohmmo, population and health consultant, New Zealand

Introduction

Thailand has completed its fertility transition. The total fertility rate fell from 6.3 births per woman in the 1950s to 1.93 in 2000 (http://esa.un.org/unpp, June 2003). Contraceptive use accounted for at least 90 per cent of the early reductions in fertility (Knodel, Chamratrithirong and Debalaya 1987). Family planning services are widely available through both public and private sources. In the public sector, family planning services have been integrated into maternal and child health programs at all health care facilities. All contraceptives at government facilities are, in principle, free, though clients are often asked to give a donation. The current high levels of subsidies date from the time when fertility was very high and people's ability to pay was limited. Some researchers and policy makers have begun to ask whether high subsidies are still appropriate when fertility is below replacement level and people are better off economically.

As in many countries, policy makers in Thailand are debating whether the government should start charging fees for contraceptives, and whether the private sector, which already distributes many types of pharmaceuticals, should take on a larger role in contraceptive distribution (Knodel et al. 1984, Knodel et al. 1987, NESDB 1991, Bennett and Targcharoensathien 1994, Panarunothai 1994, Wibulponprasert 1994, Guest 1995, Varangrat, Guest and Jones 1996, Leoprapai 1999, Jungsathiensup et al. 2000). However, in Thailand and elsewhere, little is known about the extent to which family planning services are currently provided by the private sector. Little is also known about what private providers provide, to whom, and at what level of quality and cost (Berman and Rose 1994).

This paper seeks to answer the following questions: Who are the private providers? What methods do women obtain from private providers? Why do women use private providers? And, what information do women receive from private providers? Where relevant, comparisons with the public sector are made. The data presented in this paper come from a small but intensive study conducted in one district in northeast Thailand. The study employed a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods, including: focus groups with community leaders; interviews with local providers; household surveys; a survey of women ages 15-49 years using a modified version of the standard Demographic and Health Survey questionnaire; in-depth interviews with selected women; and focus groups with women.

Who are the private providers?

Clinics run by doctors

There were four doctors' clinics, all located in the district town. Three clinics were run and owned by the doctors, who were also employed and worked at the district hospital, while the fourth was owned and run by a doctor who worked in the provincial town. The former were open early each morning, at lunchtime, in the evenings, and on weekends. The latter opened on weekends only. Three of the doctors were general practitioners and one was a gynaecologist. The clinics provided primary medical care and dispensed medicines.

Clinics run by nurses

There was one clinic in the district town and one in a village. Both had the same opening hours as the doctors' clinics. By law, nurses are only allowed to provide midwifery services. In practice, however, both clinics also provided curative care and dispensed medicine.

Drugstores or pharmacies

There were four drugstores in the district town. These stores were licensed, and were required by law to sell over-the-counter drugs only. In practice, however, they sold a wide range of medicines, including restricted and dangerous drugs. One drugstore had been running for more than 30 years. None of the owners had received formal training in pharmacy or health, apart from a daughter of one of the owners, who was studying for a degree in pharmacy at a local university. The drugstores were open between 4 am and 6 pm, seven days a week.

Village or grocery stores

There were three stores in a village located far from the town, and one store in a village near the town. These stores sold a wide range of household goods, including some medicines. The store owners bought the medicines from the drugstores.
Table 1  Contraceptive methods available and costs in private sources in the three communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Clinic</th>
<th>Cost per unit (baht)</th>
<th>Drugstore</th>
<th>Village store</th>
<th>Cooperatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pill</td>
<td>40–200</td>
<td>20–200</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency contraceptive</td>
<td>80–100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injectables</td>
<td>80–160</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUD</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condom</td>
<td>5–30</td>
<td>5–30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: These methods are not provided directly to users. However, the drugstores supply them to the clinics run by nurses or health centre staff.

Village cooperatives

There was one cooperative in each village. They were opened in April 2002, as part of an official community development project. Once they were established, each cooperative received 70,000 baht (30 baht = A$1) from the government as a revolving fund. The villagers who were registered as members of the cooperatives owned shares worth 100 baht. The cooperatives were run by a village committee. The cooperatives sold exactly the same products as the village stores.

There was also a district hospital and two health centres in the study area. The district hospitals and health centres held family planning clinics once a week.

What contraceptive methods are provided?

Among the private providers, clinics provide a wide range of methods, except for permanent methods, and charge relatively higher prices than other sources (see Table 1). Drugstores provide the oral contraceptive pill, emergency contraceptives and condoms directly to users. They are the main suppliers of pharmaceuticals, including contraceptives, to the stores in the local communities. Only one or two popular brands of the contraceptive pill are sold in village stores and cooperatives. The pill has been available at both drugstores and village stores for more than 20 years.

Virtually all methods were available at the district hospital, whereas only temporary methods such as the oral contraceptive pill, injectables, IUDs and condoms were available at the public health centre. The family planning services provided through the government health facilities are free or charge at a minimum cost.

Where do women obtain the methods?

Among women who reported currently using contraceptives, most received the methods from the public sources. The district hospital was the main source of female sterilisation, while the public health centres were popular sources for injectables and pills (Table 2). Only one per cent of women reported using methods obtained from private providers. However, if sterilisation is excluded, the private providers supply nearly one-fifth of all contraceptives, a significant amount.

Studies have shown that the private sector is the least popular source of contraceptives in the poorest northeast region of Thailand, where the state-subsidised family planning programs have dominated. The private share in the provision of contraceptives is much higher in other regions, and especially in Bangkok (Chamratrithirong et al. 1997, Leoprapai 1999).

Why do women use private providers?

The majority of women who had bought contraceptives from drugstores stated that the main reason was convenience. Seven women regarded private providers as substitutes for public

Table 2  Number of women currently using contraceptives, by method and provider type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Private clinic</th>
<th>Private drugstore</th>
<th>Private hospital outside district</th>
<th>Public health centre</th>
<th>Public hospital</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female sterilisation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male sterilisation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implants</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injectables</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pill</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: '*' = Method not available at these sources.
providers for times when the public providers had run out of a particular method. Some women occasionally visited the private clinic for their injectables when they could not get to the hospital early enough to avoid a long queue.

Some of the women who migrated to the central provinces each year to work in the sugar-cane fields said that they used injectables while at home, but the pill while away. The pill was easy to buy from drugstores near the cane fields. Women who normally used the pill while at home were unable to obtain sufficient supplies from the health centre to cover the whole 5–6 months they were away, and were thus forced to turn to private providers.

Some women said that the pill obtained from the public health centre was 'too strong' and made them ill. They were reluctant to go back to the health centre, and preferred to buy a different brand from the drugstore or village shop.

What information is given to the women?

Table 3 shows the proportion of current contraceptive users who received information from the contraceptive provider. Comparing across different types of providers, private clinics provided information to a far greater proportion of women than did public health centres or hospitals. Some rural women said that they felt comfortable talking to the doctor at the private clinics, and that the doctors spent time talking to them. The women also said that doctors at the public hospital seemed very busy, and the women were reluctant to ask questions. Very few women questioned anything at all at the family planning clinics.

If a woman told the health workers, for instance, that 'people said using pill cause cancer', the health workers would respond by saying 'who said that, nonsense'. Health workers also told women who had had two children that 'it's time you should stop having children and get sterilised'.

Conclusion

Private providers are already an important source of temporary contraceptive methods, even in the relatively poor communities described here. Private providers will presumably attract more customers if the Thai government introduces user fees into the public family planning program. Even if fees are not introduced, people are likely to turn to the private sector for convenience as their incomes rise, just as people in wealthier regions do. This may cause some problems, because of the weak enforcement of existing regulations. It may be dangerous, for instance, for non-qualified providers to give injectables. However, the potential for harm is, perhaps, less than with other pharmaceuticals commonly provided through the private sector, such as antibiotics and antidiarrhoeals. It should be also be acknowledged that private providers do have some attractive features. They can be much more convenient than overcrowded public hospitals. In the case of private clinics, they may also provide more advice and a friendlier service to users.

* The data used in this paper are derived from a research project on 'Explaining people's choices of contraceptives and antidiarrhoeal drugs: A pilot study in one province in northeast Thailand', funded by the Wellcome Trust Post-Doctoral Training Fellowship through the Department of Public Health and General Practice, Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Science, Otago University, New Zealand (March 2002 to February 2003).

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The political economy of reproduction and population:  
An Indonesian case study

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Introduction

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in 1994 set goals aimed at improving women's control over their reproductive lives. The international community of donors, in agreeing to the program of action (POA), committed to providing sufficient funds to advance the micro-objectives of women's empowerment, reproductive rights and health in population programs.

However, the POA's drafters failed to take into account significant changes at the macroeconomic level already evident in the early 1990s. These trends have increased the difficulty for governments implementing changes to population programs. Events at the macroeconomic level have profound impacts on women's reproductive lives; they restrict governments' ability to provide reproductive health services and provide free, quality education to girls, key elements in the ICPD's approach to population issues.

While the ICPD focused on the microagenda of enhancing women's empowerment, access to reproductive health services and ability to exercise their reproductive rights, the Marrakesh agreement, which established the World Trade Organization (WTO), was completing the framework to enforce the globalisation of the world economy on neoliberal lines. Increasingly, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are advising governments to improve their receptivity to investment and to trade their way to development. Grants, project aid and low-interest loans are more readily available for infrastructure projects which enhance countries' attractiveness to investors and improve their capacity to participate in the global market.

Governments are advised to reduce their role in service provision and to introduce charges for health services which have hitherto been available free of charge to poorer members of the community. In this climate, funding for reproductive health services fares poorly, since, of all health demands, these are the most controversial and marginalised, and its small domestic lobby group, usually women, lacks influence over finance and planning departments (Sen 2000). The use of DALYs (disability adjusted life years) to determine health budgeting priorities leaves feminist health activists wondering how to raise demands for reproductive health care above 'special pleading' (Standing 2002).

Yet, as the proceedings of the fifth Asia and Pacific Population Conference (APPC) held in December 2002 reveal, Asia–Pacific governments are committed to the microagenda of the ICPD (Sen 2003). The United States, which previously set the terms of population programs, was isolated at the APPC in its opposition to the use of terms such as 'reproductive health' in the POA. However, while the states of the Asia–Pacific region reiterated their commitment to the goals of the ICPD, their ability to achieve them has been eroded by macroeconomic constraints on their budgets.

The ICPD made the gendered politics of reproduction explicit by focusing on the micro-issues of reproductive rights and health. At the same time, the conference endorsed neoliberal economic policies which are antipathetic to achieving women's empowerment and reproductive health. This article explores the experience of Indonesia in the 1990s, to demonstrate that factors shaping the politics of population intersect with the reproductive lives of girls and women.

Before the crisis

Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country, played a leadership role at the fourth Asia and Pacific Population Conference in Bali in 1992. It is viewed by the population establishment as a model in engineering fertility decline, since over 30 years it has reduced its overall fertility rate to three children per couple. These changes occurred in the context of a militaristic dictatorship, an expanding economy and support from influential donors such as the United States and the World Bank.

The success of Indonesia's population programs owed little to the enhancement of women's reproductive rights, a term avoided in government circles. Although a signatory to the Women's Convention, the Indonesian government's representative at the ICPD stressed the strengthening of family values and reiterated the government's opposition to abortion and its unwillingness to allow women to control their reproductive lives (Haryono 1994, cited in Johnson 1995: 156):
Furthermore, it is also our conviction that decisions concerning sexual and reproductive matters are family decisions and therefore are not solely the exclusive rights of an individual.

Most government officials believed that Indonesia had been on the right track since the 1970s; some officials asserted that Indonesia, with its reproductive health programs and income-generating schemes for women, had 'gone beyond ICPD' (Sadli et al. 1999:257–58). Yet the involvement of Indonesia's military force, Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (ABRI), in providing facilities and personnel for 'safaris' — rapid visits to outlying districts to sign up as many 'acceptors' as possible — indicates that women's involvement was not always voluntary. 'If the target is still high and has not yet been reached, and the people are difficult to reach, the army makes them a little bit afraid so that they are willing to come together for a family planning session' (family planning fieldworker in Hull and Hull 1997:395). Hull and Hull (1997:398) go on:

This ideology was never committed to notions of individual, and especially women's, rights, and as a result the family planning 'successes' in Indonesia are not necessarily consonant with the definitions of success sought by those with other ideological assumptions, a subject much in the spotlight in the period surrounding the International Conference on Population and Development.

The Indonesian government excluded Indonesian feminists from the preparation of the government's country paper for the ICPD or ICPD + 5 (Correa 2000:229). Nonetheless, the government department responsible for family planning, the Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional (BKKBN), was sensitive to criticisms from women's groups about the lack of voluntarism and the poor quality of programs, and adopted the language of 'quality of care'. As Hull (1998:30) points out, however, due to the emphasis on fertility reduction and concern about increasing expense, there was little effective change.

Similarly, Correa (2000:229) notes that

In the first few years after Cairo, there was reluctance from the government to talk about the rights aspect of the [Beijing] Plan of Action ... in areas that were regarded as sensitive and controversial, such as abortion, adolescent sexuality and reproductive rights.

Despite Indonesia's success at reducing fertility, its maternal mortality rate has officially remained at 450 deaths per 100,000 live births throughout the 1990s. A number of factors evident before the economic collapse contribute to this. Reproductive health issues fall into the cracks caused by the division of responsibility and funding between the BKKBN and the Department of Health. The program focused on increasing the numbers of contraceptive users rather than delivering quality services. Users and women's organisations were not consulted about the program's objectives and methods. Private sector involvement in program delivery has steadily increased, leading to a two-tiered service which offers a choice of contraceptive methods to men and women who can afford them, but reduces services to the poor.

After the ICPD, the Suharto regime changed its rhetoric without changing its approach. Its notion of 'gender equality', for instance, did not increase male involvement in family planning programs. Indonesia's family planning program has always promoted female methods of contraception and the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) study found that 90 per cent of birth control acceptors are women, since 'mothers are considered to be more responsive and responsible than fathers' (Sadli et al. 1999:258). Hull (2002) reports that the use of the male methods of condoms, vasectomy and withdrawal decreased from 3.1 per cent in 1987 to 1.9 per cent in 1997.

A change in more than rhetoric is needed to shift culturally and politically embedded discrimination against women. Many, especially among the Muslim officials in government, feel that men and women are not equal from the start, so the question of equality should not arise (Anwar 1999:276). Restricting reproductive health and family planning services to married, heterosexual couples denies many people their reproductive rights. ARROW found that government officials at all levels had a poor conceptual understanding of reproductive rights and health, and took a selective approach to the ICPD agenda. Researchers observed that 'safe motherhood' interventions are more concerned with babies' health than women's.

The government defines reproductive health as 'reproductive welfare' which 'accentuate[s] the economic/material side [and] may divert the government's attention from issues of women's reproductive health and reproductive rights' (Sadli et al. 1999:266). While the Suharto government was reluctant to implement the transformative aspects of the ICPD's microagenda, after the economic and political crises of 1997–1998 successive Indonesian governments lacked the fiscal ability to do so.

After the crisis

Prior to the krismon, the economic collapse, Indonesia was regarded as an exemplar of the export-led economic growth model. The 'open door' policies that attracted the investment that contributed to Indonesia's economic success prior to 1997 also contributed to the crisis, as western lenders called in their loans while investors 'sold down' borrowers' currencies, making it impossible for Indonesia to repay its debts (Stretton 2000:126). AusAID describes Indonesia's experience as 'one of the twentieth century's worst economic collapses, surpassing in severity that experienced by developed countries during the Great Depression of the 1930s' (AusAID 1999:7).
The structural adjustment loans provided by the IMF and the World Bank exacerbated the situation (Stretton 2000:126). Five years after the crisis, poverty has increased and evidence indicates that its impacts are integrally gendered.

The crisis had immediate and stark impacts on the Indonesian economy. The Indonesian economy contracted by 13 per cent in 1998 (UNSFIR and BPS-Statistics Indonesia 2001:35). The number of Indonesians living in poverty increased from 19 per cent (February 1996) to 37 per cent of the population at the height of the crisis (September 1998), while the severity of poverty sharply increased (UNSFIR and BPS-Statistics Indonesia 2001:10–11). Reduced government spending on public services compounded the situation for the poor. Health statistics reflect the impact: Indonesia’s Ministry of Health reported that, in 2000, 20 per cent of children under five suffered from malnutrition (Anon 2002).

The impact of the crisis disproportionately fell on poor women, increasing the income-generating and social reproductive work required to feed their families (Francisco and Sen 2000). The Indonesia Human Development Report 2001 states that female labour force participation increased from 40 per cent in 1995 to 55 per cent in 1999. This did not lead to increased wellbeing: between 1997 and 1998 the number of women on wages below the poverty line doubled from 11 per cent to 22 per cent while, in 1998, women’s real wages were a third lower than men’s (UNSFIR and BPS-Statistics Indonesia 2001:13). There is anecdotal evidence that prostitution has increased (UNFPA 1999) and that the number of marriages of children under 17 has increased (Republic of Indonesia 2002).

The contraction of public funding strongly affected health and education. Government expenditure on public education fell from 1.4 per cent of gross national product in 1996–97 to 0.7 per cent in 1997–98, while expenditure on health fell 9 per cent per capita in 1997–98 and a further 13 per cent in 1998–99 (World Bank 2000:4). Overall, numbers attending public clinics decreased by 1.8 per cent, while numbers of children attending dropped by 6 per cent. Abortion rates are reported to have risen dramatically due to the increased costs of contraception (‘Number of abortions performed last year “astonishing”’ 2000). Many poor people are unaware of their eligibility for free treatment at public clinics; others distrust the services or fail to satisfy the headman’s requirements (Mukherjee et al. 2002). Consequently, social safety net funds have been underspent.

The report People, Poverty and Livelihoods: Links for Sustainable Poverty Reduction in Indonesia (Mukherjee et al. 2002) studies the impact of the crisis on poor people in four localities. A gender perspective informs the study design, and men and women were consulted separately. Although the team found different problems at each site, they offer some general observations. First, the poor are losing access to the common property resources which they rely on for their livelihoods as they are taken over by competitors with greater technological and financial resources, often in collusion with local government authorities. The new technologies introduced by wealthier owners and lessees further marginalise the poor by destroying and degrading the environments which provide their livelihoods.

Second, few poor families can afford the secondary education crucial to remove children from the cycle of poverty. Third, few credit services cater to the needs of very poor people. Fourth, although many poor people do not trust the village councils and headmen who administer the services they rely upon, they lack the mobility to seek out alternatives. Mukherjee et al. (2002:85) conclude that long-term solutions to poverty in Indonesia require intervention at the macroeconomic level: ‘While policies may appear balanced and economically convincing at the macro level … they do not necessarily favour sustainability for poor peoples’ livelihoods.’

The reproductive body in Indonesia’s political economy

Women experience economic trends differently to men due to their gendered roles in social and biological reproduction. The gap between government rhetoric and financial decisions is complicated by the devolution of the delivery of reproductive health services to district level.

Decentralisation is a key condition of IMF and World Bank rescue packages. Its impact on reproductive health programs is uneven, since provincial and district politicians’ priorities may differ from national aims, and across sectors. This is illustrated by the following extract from the Indonesian government’s report to ESCAP (Republic of Indonesia 2002).

Other constraints ... are still faced to achieve gender equality and equity ie: the lack of the political will and commitment of sectoral ministries and community to implement the gender mainstreaming strategy in their respective policies and Programs ... Furthermore, women’s empowerment is regarded as the least priority in sectoral ministries plan. Recently, the regional autonomy euphoria has led to misconception on gender implementation authority. All of these constraints are more becoming serious with the low level of education of most of the women ... increased ... poverty is leading to various new emerging critical issues for women, especially ... [because of the] prolongest economic-crisis and disintegration.

Clearly, there are conflicting forces at work in post-crisis Indonesia. The amended national constitution calls for the equality of men and women and President Wahid’s Minister for Women’s Affairs renamed her position Minister for Women’s Empowerment and claimed the authority to oversee the BKKBN in order to bring a gender perspective to its operations. The 2000–
2004 national strategic plan on empowerment of women aimed 'to achieve gender equality and equity of men and women in the family, community and state' (Republic of Indonesia 2002).

The Megawati government is making further progress towards achieving the ICPD's objectives. In its report to ESCAP, the Indonesian government acknowledged for the first time the need to address the unmet reproductive health needs of adolescents and other unmarried people. The implementation of micro-objectives, however, takes place in the face of macroeconomic constraints and moral conservatism within government and civil society. Ninety per cent of Indonesia's population and reproductive health budget is provided by donors. The government is reluctant to increase its debt by incurring more loans from development banks for 'soft' projects such as reproductive health.

In this environment, the BKKBN has returned to the basics of contraceptive provision, implying that reproductive health is an optional extra. Another cost-reduction measure, 'empowering' village midwives and volunteers to attend births and provide contraceptives, assists many women whose births are uncomplicated but fails to answer the needs of women who need more sophisticated medical interventions. Furthermore, there is anecdotal evidence that child and maternal mortality statistics emerging from district bureaucracies are grossly under-reported (Collins 2003).

These measures reflect respective post-Suharto regimes' preoccupation with economic matters and ethnic and religious violence rather than population and reproductive health. Yet, as Hull (2002:9) points out, this short-term thinking will be reflected in population and health statistics in decades to come:

> While it is easy to dismiss these as parochial interests of men in suits, there are clear links between these myopic visions and the factors shaping the plans and aspirations of young women entering the years of potential motherhood. Each woman who fails to progress to higher levels of education risks having parents consider marriage as an alternative future. Each worker laid off from factory work risks finding the most feasible alternative to be the maintenance of a household. Women without education and without work find their negotiating position in the family potentially undermined.

Overseas development assistance is essential to provide reproductive health services for Indonesia's poorest people. The needs of poor women require considerably more resources than the US$28 million UNFPA can provide (UNFPA 2000:7). Female participants in the study by Mukherjee and colleagues on sustainable livelihoods reiterated many times that family planning services were inaccessible, too expensive, or came too late for them (Mukherjee et al. 2002:25).

How can we spend that much for contraception when we can't buy enough rice to feed our children? We are seeing more births per year in the village since the last two to three years [survey participant in Mukherjee et al. 2002:35].

### Conclusion

Poor women want access to family planning information and methods, and to trained midwives at local birthing clinics (Mukherjee et al. 2002:77). The government also prioritised these objectives in its report to ESCAP (Republic of Indonesia 2002). The congruence between the stated objectives of government and poor women's needs indicates that, with financial support from the international community, the involvement of UNFPA and women's and other health-focused organisations within Indonesia, the ICPD agenda has the potential, over time, to transform Indonesia's approach to population issues. Poor Indonesian women will benefit from that change.

Falling levels of development assistance from the United States to UN agencies like UNFPA, and decreasing aid flows at the bilateral level, indicate that funds are not forthcoming to compensate for Indonesia's inability and district administrations' reluctance to finance reproductive health programs. Consequently, the economic and political changes caused by the Asian crisis will continue to shape the reproductive lives of Indonesian girls and women.

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Declining population growth and rising education levels in Indonesia

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Introduction

Two phenomena of social change are here to stay on the Indonesian scene, in spite of the deep economic crisis which started in 1997 and continues to linger on until the present. Moving in opposite directions are the confirmations of demographic transition: steadily declining population growth and rising education levels. The economic crisis — which started as a monetary crisis and later turned into a total crisis — had resulted in parents withdrawing their children from school. Whether because of public sector initiatives (with assistance and pressures from the international lending community) or because parents and children increasingly recognised the benefits of education, the facts now point to a continually rising demand for schooling.

In the meantime, concerns about declining education quality continue to draw public attention. As we write in May 2003, the hectic debate on the education scene concerns a proposed national education bill, which demands that students be taught religion by teachers of the same faith and that facilities for that be made available when a minimum number of students of a particular faith is reached. This article examines the change in the value placed on education shown by rising levels and participation, and therefore achievement.

Population growth

A fundamental change from a pronatalist to an antinatalist policy is reflected in the population growth recorded by the five censuses conducted by independent Indonesia. The country's population more than doubled in the almost 40 years between 1961 and 2000, and the growth rate first rose and then declined during the last two decades of the century (Table 1).

Table 1  Population growth according to census data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (millions)</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>118.4</td>
<td>146.8</td>
<td>179.2</td>
<td>205.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth rate (per cent)</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: BPS Population Census publications.
Note: Annual growth rates are calculated exponentially.

A good proportion of the slowdown in population growth is attributed to declining fertility, though migration is also a significant contributor. Over this period, total fertility declined from 5.6 to only 2.3 children per woman, and across all age groups (Figure 1). Young mothers particularly tended to postpone pregnancy, reducing statistical fertility for those aged 15 to 19 years by more than 70 per cent, and for those aged 20 to 24 years by over 60 per cent. Older mothers reduced their fertility by more than 50 per cent.

Figure 1  Rapidly declining fertility

Another major factor in fertility decline has to be the successes achieved by the Indonesian national family planning program. However, these appear to have reached a plateau over most of the last decade (Figure 2). Overall, slightly over half of married women are users of contraceptive devices (around 55 per cent) and peak users are among women aged 25 to 39 years. Acknowledging the use of birth control devices is no longer taboo or embarrassing because it is so common. On the contrary, having 'too many' children is now an embarrassment.

The role of delaying marriage is also important. Overall, the singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) rose gradually by more than three years until, by 2000, it was 22.5 years (Figure...
3a). Increasingly, Indonesian women also opt to remain single for a longer period, moving the curve upwards towards the right (Figure 3b), which Hull appropriately refers to as a marriage revolution (2002). This is especially true of young adults. Take the age group 15 to 19 years: in 1971, 63 per cent were single but by the end of the century 87 per cent were still single. Among the next age group of 20 to 24 years, the rise was from 19 to 43 per cent. Even among 25 to 29 year olds, by the turn of the century 17 per cent were not married.

These are phenomenal social changes over three decades. Following Caldwell’s wealth flow theory (1978), children are no longer being seen as a source of security in old age, but as a cost to parents making investments in their children’s health and education.

Globalisation and the demand for education

Changes, including social changes, are occurring at increasing speed. Globalisation places increasing demands on people to be part of the international community, including for both public and private sector investment in education. People increasingly value education, which increases the demand for it. That education is at the centre of the fertility transition — as suggested by Caldwell (1980) and Caldwell and colleagues (1985) — is well documented by the Indonesian experience. The consequences of these dynamics are the focus of the following analysis of educational expansion.

Declining school-aged population

As the slowdown in population growth is mostly attributed to fertility decline, the impact is recorded in declining proportions of younger ages. Until the turn of the century, the proportion of younger children — up to primary school-aged children — continued to decline, the proportion of secondary school-age youngsters remained fairly stable and it is the adult population, beyond secondary school-age, which continues to expand (Figure 4). Thus the share of preschool-aged youngsters five to six years old declined from almost 7 per cent to 4 per cent, the
The proportion of primary school-aged children seven to 12 years declined from 17 per cent to 12 per cent, lower and upper secondary school-aged children 13 to 15 and 16 to 18 years stayed at around 6 per cent each, but the proportion of post-secondary school-aged youth of 19 to 24 years rose from 8 per cent to 11.5 per cent, and those 25 years and over made up 40 per cent of the population in 1971 and close to half in 2000.

Figure 4 School age composition of population

![School age population composition (%)](image)

4b - School age population distribution (in millions)

![School age population distribution (in millions)](image)

Source: BPS Population Census publications.
Note: The 2000 census was conducted during a period of widespread turmoil and social upheaval, which caused a failure to implement the census in a number of areas. The absolute numbers for 2000 in Figure 4b were calculated based on the age distribution of the enumerated population plus a crude estimate derived from applying the age distribution of the enumerated population to the BPS estimated missing 4.6 million people.

The age-specific differential impact of declining fertility is even more strikingly recorded by the absolute age distribution of the population. Most of the increase is among adults. While the total population almost doubled over the last three decades, rising from 118 to 206 million, the under fives have increased only slightly, from 19 to 21 million. The size of the preschool population remained fairly stable at around 8 million, the primary school-aged population rose by only one-quarter from 20 to 25 million, the secondary school-aged population almost doubled from 15 to 26 million, and the size of the population 25 years and over more than doubled, from 57 to 126 million. The slowdown in the growth of the school-aged population has certainly helped to ease pressure on education facilities while enrolment levels are on the increase.

Rising school enrolment

As the proportion of youth in the population is declining and the number of young people, in absolute terms, is growing only slowly, it is also this group who are the greatest beneficiaries of educational facilities. Demand for education continues to rise, even during the crisis and in spite of doomsday predictions towards the end of the last century. Of course, the higher the education level the lower enrolment levels. Whereas primary school enrolment is practically universal, post-secondary education is only enjoyed by a small minority of less than 20 per cent of the relevant age group. In the longer perspective, the economic crisis, though fairly severe, resulted in a rather short-lived dip when financial pressures prevented especially the less advantaged from continuing schooling beyond primary school. The impact of a slight drop in lower secondary enrolment is even reflected three years later among upper secondary school age youngsters. This is the picture recorded by the annual Susenas series from 1993 to 2002, which allows calculations of age-specific, gross and net enrolment ratios.

A society like Indonesia’s, which cannot yet afford true compulsory education, can be considered to have achieved universal enrolment when enrolment ratios reach 90 per cent. Further increases are slow to occur thereafter. This condition has been achieved as a result of past public policy, which emphasised schooling for primary school-aged children through provision of at least one primary school per village. This policy was introduced in 1974 and implemented as the SD Inpres (literally ‘presidential instruction’) or special primary school program. Standardised public schools were built throughout the country and vast numbers of teachers were recruited in the following years.

A further important incentive to entice parents to send their children to school was the elimination of tuition fees at the primary level for grades 1 to 3 in 1976 and for grades 4 to 6 in 1978. The results have been phenomenal. The 1971 population census recorded an age-specific enrolment ratio of only 60 per cent among primary school-aged children seven to 12 years. Only one and a half decades later, the 1985 Supas (intercensal
population survey) recorded an enrolment ratio of 93 per cent for the same age group.

As a result of a slowdown in the growth of the primary school-aged population, a slow but steady increase in enrolment ratios of only 2 to 3 percentage points was recorded for primary school-aged children, as most were already attending school (Figure 5). Age-specific enrolment, which measures the proportion of the age group enrolled in school, still rose from 93 to 95 per cent between 1993 and 1997, and stabilised during the years of the crisis to stand at 96 per cent in 2002. Those still left out of the school system, constituting some 4 per cent of the age group, are likely the 'unreachables' — those living in very isolated areas, the disabled and some of the poor no longer wanting to abide by school discipline, such as some street children.

Similarly, gross enrolment among primary school students rose from 105 to 108 but slowly declined thereafter to stand at 106 per cent in 2002. Net enrolment rose from 91 to 93 per cent during the same period. These high enrolment levels have been achieved through widespread availability of primary schools. In fact, in many places primary school facilities are already in oversupply, leading to suggestions of mergers or even the closure of public schools. The difference between gross and net enrolment suggests that there are still substantial numbers of those aged 13 and over attending primary school due to late entrance and repetition. 'Overaging' and repetition are educational characteristics of the disadvantaged and poor, including those living in isolated areas. For a good proportion of these youngsters it is an achievement to complete primary school and thus the probability of continuing to even lower secondary school is generally low.

On the other hand, as there is still much room for improvement, much faster increases were recorded in enrolment ratios among lower secondary school-aged children. Apparently, the negative impact of the economic crisis on enrolment has been mostly felt at the lower secondary level, which shows a very slight dip in enrolment ratios in 1998, the year of the depth of the crisis. Age-specific enrolment among 13 to 15-year-old youngsters rose steadily from 69 to 78 per cent between 1993 and 1997, declined slightly to 77 per cent in 1998. However, it has returned to 79 per cent in 2002. Similar slight dips were also recorded in gross and net enrolment ratios. Gross enrolment rose very fast from 61 to 74 per cent between 1993 and 1997, declined to 73 per cent in 1998 and then rose again to 80 per cent. Net enrolment rose from 47 to 58 per cent, to drop slightly to 57 per cent, and rise to 62 per cent.

A slightly different pattern was experienced by upper secondary school-aged youngsters of 16 to 18 years. For this age group, enrolment ratios continued to rise steadily even during the crisis, but the dip observed for the lower secondary school-aged materialised three years later. Age-specific enrolments continued to rise from 43 to 51 per cent between 1993 and 2000, to take a dip to 49 per cent in 2001 and appear to have returned by 2002 to 50 per cent. Gross enrolment rose from 40 to 50 per cent, to drop to 47 per cent and then rise again to 48 per cent for the same years. A similar trend is also noticeable for net enrolment, which initially continued to rise from 31 to 39 per cent to then drop to 37 per cent; it is now back again at 38 per cent.

Education is still a luxury after secondary school. Only 11 to 12 per cent of those aged 19 to 24 can afford to attend school.

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Notes: Age specific enrolment is the ratio of those enrolled in school over the number of youngsters in the relevant age group; Gross enrolment refers to the ratio of youngsters attending a particular level of schooling over the number of youngsters in the relevant age group; and Net enrolment is the ratio of youngsters enrolled at a particular level of appropriate ages over the number of youngsters in the relevant age group.

Source: BPS, special tabulations from annual Susenas.

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Figure 5 Age-specific, gross, and net enrolment ratios
Gross enrolment is at about the same level and net enrolment is at an even lower level — less than 10 per cent.

**Figure 6** Education composition of adult population (over 15)

Even though the economic crisis still remains in 2003, doomsday predictions are no longer heard. The value of education, and therefore the demand for education, is and has remained on the rise. As globalisation and modernisation are spreading rapidly, more parents and children are realising the benefits of education, want to go to school and want higher levels of schooling.

As a result of continuing rising enrolments, the Indonesian adult population is also better educated (Figure 6). The proportion of adults over 15 with no education declined from 15 to 10 per cent between 1993 and 2002, and similarly the proportion with only primary schooling also declined from 56 to 50 per cent during the same period. The proportion of those with more than primary schooling is rising. Those with lower secondary education rose from 14 to 18 per cent, while those with upper secondary schooling rose from 13 to 18 per cent. The proportion of those with post-secondary schooling also rose from 2 to 4.5 per cent in almost a decade to the early years of the current century.

**Source:** BPS, special tabulations from annual Susenas.

**Figure 7** Rural–urban gross, net and age-specific enrolment ratios

**Source:** BPS, special tabulations from annual Susenas.
These results of continuing fertility decline and rising school enrolment, even during the difficult years of the crisis, further reinforce an earlier observation of a coming education explosion in Indonesia (Gardiner and Gardiner 1997), at least in quantitative terms. If, a few decades ago, having an education referred to literacy acquired in primary school, increasingly in the labour market the demand for schooling refers to at least upper secondary schooling and even more.

**Problems in the education scene**

The above discussion emphasises achievements in both curbing population growth and enhancing the human capital through education. That does not, however, mean that all is well and that Indonesians are satisfied with current conditions. Instead, dissatisfaction is fairly widespread, particularly after decentralisation and the extension of regional autonomy.

**Inequities in access**

There is a significant variation in access to education services across areas and social groups. While the gap widens with educational level, it narrows over time.

Education services are in greater abundance in urban than in rural areas. However, at the primary level, the rural–urban gap has narrowed to the extent that rural–urban ratios of gross and net enrolment already exceed 100 per cent, indicating that they are already slightly higher in rural than urban areas (Figure 7). Age-specific enrolment of primary school-aged children of seven to 12 years is not yet equal even though approaching unity, rising from 95 to 98 per cent. Because there is more over-aging among rural than urban youngsters at the primary level, the rural–urban ratios for age-specific enrolment are higher than those for gross and net enrolment. At the turn of the century, rural lower, upper and post-secondary enrolments were still substantially less than urban rates.

Whereas the rural–urban gap is still significant at levels beyond primary school, the gender gap is rapidly closing (Figure 8). Both at the primary and lower secondary levels, girls' access to schooling is equal to, if not greater than, boys'. On all three indicators — gross, net and age-specific enrolment — the female–male ratios exceed unity, implying that girls do better than boys. Moreover, the gender gap narrows faster at higher levels. Female–male upper secondary enrolment ratios rose by 3 to 6 percentage points while at the post-secondary level the gender ratio rose by double digits. If these trends continue, by the end of this decade girls may have equal access to all levels of education facilities.

However, even though class differences are declining, they still remain significant. The poor have much less access to education facilities, especially beyond primary school. Even until early this century, the children of the poorest quintile (Q1) had only around 60 per cent as much chance as those of the richest quintile (Q5) of attending lower secondary school. For upper secondary school it was less than 30 per cent and for post-secondary it was less than 5 per cent. Again, as it is the poor who are more likely to be overaged students, ratios of Q1 to Q5 age-specific enrolments are higher than the parallel gross or net enrolment ratios.

![Figure 8 Female–male gross, net and age-specific enrolment ratios](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

Source: BPS, special tabulations from annual Susenas.

However, even though class differences are declining, they still remain significant. The poor have much less access to education facilities, especially beyond primary school. Even until early this century, the children of the poorest quintile (Q1) had only around 60 per cent as much chance as those of the richest quintile (Q5) of attending lower secondary school. For upper secondary school it was less than 30 per cent and for post-secondary it was less than 5 per cent. Again, as it is the poor who are more likely to be overaged students, ratios of Q1 to Q5 age-specific enrolments are higher than the parallel gross or net enrolment ratios.

**Quality**

Complaints about the quality of the education system are widespread. A recent study (Gardiner, Gardiner and Triaswati 2003) recorded the following conditions in schools in poor areas. About 80 per cent of school buildings are falling apart. In some cases teachers and children simply have to double up, using a room for two different classes. School furniture is often not available, not sufficient or in a state of disrepair. As a result, children often have to sit on the floor. As books are in short supply and many cannot afford to purchase them, the poor are further handicapped. Many teachers are not qualified and are
Moving from primary to lower secondary school means sudden and significant increases in school-related expenses. Clark and colleagues (1998) estimated a twofold rise in household financial requirements when a child shifts from public primary to public lower secondary school.

The difference in gross and net enrolment at the lower secondary level is already substantially less than at the primary level, implying far less overageing and also less access to these services among the poor.

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Can being single become a choice for young Indonesians?  
Generational differences

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The setting

In Indonesia marriage is still universal, even though age at first marriage is increasing. Young women are increasingly involved in higher education and paid work, and some even have professional careers and are economically independent (see Oey-Gardiner 1997, Raharjo 1997, Cameron 2002, Jones 2002). Being single for both males and females is still not socially acceptable. This was revealed in focus group discussions among male and female university students in Jakarta who were in their last year, as well as in in-depth interviews with single women in their late twenties and early thirties. They stated that marriage, as well as a career, was important, but none would just have a career as priority in life without marriage (Utomo 2001, see also Sitepu 2000).

The age at marriage in urban as well as in rural areas is increasing. In 1971, the mean age at marriage in rural areas was 18.8 years while in urban areas it was 21.1 years. In 1990, the mean age at marriage increased to 20.5 in rural areas and 23.5 in urban areas (Hull 2002). The pattern of marriage formation is also changing dramatically as marriages are more likely to be love marriages and a decision to get married is strongly decided by the couple rather than the parents. The 'hunting' for a future wife or husband which was once a family or kin matter is now more managed by young people, even though parental agreement with the prospective marriage partner is still regarded as very important by young Indonesians. Hull (2002), Jones (2002) and Oey-Gardiner (in this publication) confirm there is a growing class of young never-to-be married women in Jakarta and other major cities in Indonesia, but the proportion is very small. If compared with other countries in the region, the proportion of young women remaining single at any given age is very low. In 1990, the proportion of women remaining single in Indonesia is only 4.5 per cent, while it was 13.4 per cent in the Philippines, 14.1 per cent in Thailand and 15.8 per cent among Chinese in Peninsular Malaysia (Jones 2002:228). The theme of this paper is to explore whether young Indonesians can choose to be single or whether they are still 'trapped' with the idealised morality of marriage and family formation.

The aim of this paper is to examine values, attitudes, and behaviour toward mate selection and marriage values among Jakarta's middle-class young people (single, 15–24 years old) and the older generation (married, 30 years and older). It is hypothesised that there are generational differences in mate selection, age difference between husband and wife, and marriage values between the younger and the older generation.

Data used in this paper are derived from the 1994–1995 Jakarta Marriage Values and Sexuality Survey. Young people (n=519) in this survey were selected using purposive random sampling through public schools and universities, and older generation (n=120) participants were identified through households. Beside the survey, 12 focus groups, discussion among young people and in-depth interviews among both generations were conducted in Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Palembang.

Research findings

Generational differences: Attitude and values towards religion, media exposure and marriage

Table 1 presents differences between young people and older respondents in attitudes, values and behaviour towards religion, media exposure and marriage. Both groups expressed a strong attachment to religion: 97.2 per cent of young people and 99.2 per cent of older respondents strongly agreed that religion is important in one's life. The young generation were more exposed to Western-type programs in the media, including Western sports programs, while the older respondents were more exposed to health and reproductive health programs on television (15.1 per cent for young people and 29.4 per cent for older respondents).

When dealing with marriage values, older respondents agreed more than young people with values related to status equity between husband and wife such as: husband and wife have the same power in family decisions (88.2 per cent of older respondents and 80.8 per cent of young people agreed); in a successful marriage both partners can actualise themselves (87.4 per cent for older respondents and 77.2 per cent for young people) and marriage should be terminated if both partners...
cannot actualise themselves (27.1 per cent of older respondents and 17.9 per cent of young people). While these values related to status equity between husband and wife can be regarded as expressions of a liberal viewpoint on marriage, older respondents also seem to have been more likely to keep many traditional views about marriage. These values include: after marriage the

Table 1  Percentage of young people and older respondents by religiosity, media exposure and marriage values, Jakarta, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Young People</th>
<th>Older respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=519</td>
<td>N=120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Leaves prayers</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>86.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening to religious preaching at school-faculty</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to religious preaching at the place of work</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to religious preaching at the mosque or church</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>51.3*</td>
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<td>Listening to religious preaching over the radio</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>50.0**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to religious preaching elsewhere</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>22.6**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads religious books and/or material</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>47.8**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of religion on one's life</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>99.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media and Western values</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens to Indonesian popular music</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>17.2**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens to Western popular music</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>18.3**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens to religious songs</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>32.7**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens to religious preaching</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>54.7**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens to news</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>32.8**</td>
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<td>Listens to reports on science.</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>86.2</td>
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<td>11.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watches programs on Western sports</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>18.3*</td>
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<td>27.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watches programs on Western popular music</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>22.7**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watches programs on religious songs</td>
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<td>30.5**</td>
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<td>Watches programs on religious preaching</td>
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<td>Watches programs on health and reproductive health</td>
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<td>29.4**</td>
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<td>Usefulness of the Media</td>
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<td>Knowledge on religion</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>93.0*</td>
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<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>59.8*</td>
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<td>Knowledge on national political condition</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>66.7*</td>
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<td>56.1**</td>
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<td>84.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>General knowledge about other countries</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>58.8**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge on health</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>91.2**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge on reproductive health-sexuality</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>50.4**</td>
</tr>
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<td>Knowledge on family planning</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>76.8**</td>
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<td>If a woman is already married, then she should not work outside the family circle</td>
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<td>25.2**</td>
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<td>Husband has the right to stop wife from working</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>65.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education levels of the husband and wife should be equal</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband is the head of the household who has the power</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>81.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As the head of the household, husband has the power like a king</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family income should totally come from the husband</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>42.0**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband and wife have the same power in family decisions</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>88.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a successful marriage each couple can actualise themselves</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>87.4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage as an institution is not important</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage should be terminated if each partner cannot actualise themselves</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>27.1*</td>
</tr>
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</table>
wife should not work outside the family circle (25.2 per cent of older respondents and only 8.7 per cent of young people), the husband has the right to stop the wife from working (65.5 per cent of older respondents and 54.6 per cent of young people) and family income should come from the husband (42.0 per cent of older respondents and 26.7 per cent of young people).

The importance of marriage

The 1994-1995 Jakarta Marriage Values and Sexuality Survey strongly supports that the concept of marriage as an institution and as something that is essential in one's life is still very strong for both sexes and generations (Table 2, 81.1 per cent and higher). But, interestingly, more males of both generations (66.1 per cent of young people and 81.5 per cent of older respondents) still believe that divorce is strongly against Indonesian cultural values compared to females (54.4 per cent of young people and 58.1 per cent of older respondents), and the difference is statistically significant. Similar results in the case of Jakarta were also revealed by the 1978 Indonesian Marriage Survey. Even though a high level of divorce is commonly practised among the Betawi society, only one-fourth of the respondents stated that divorce is all right (biasa) and more males compared to females agreed that divorce is disgraceful (Muliakusuma 1982:80).

In her study on marriage and divorce in Indonesia based on the 1973 Indonesian Fertility and Mortality Survey, Al Hadar (1977:72-73) stated that there are different views on values relating to divorce by ethnicity. Among the Sundanese, Javanese and Minangkabau, divorce is not seen as something that is ignominious. In several areas of West Java and among the Minangkabau, the number of times of that a woman has experienced the more prestigious it is for her. But a contrasting situation applies to Batak, Minahasan, Balinese, and Bugis-Makassarese. In these ethnic groups, divorced people will be treated with ridicule by the society.

The notion of males compared to females who see divorce as something that is against cultural values is consistent with the notion of male power in marriage and maybe the male view of the double standard. Sexual affairs outside marriage have long been apparent and to some extent institutionalised, especially among high-level bureaucrats (Suryakusuma 1996). Young males are still wanting to find a ‘virgin wife’, while premarital sex is increasing (Utomo 1997, Adrina et al. 1998, Situmorang 2001, Utomo 2002). Thus, the marriage institution in Indonesia is highly valued and seen as giving social status, but whether the marriage really works or not is another question. In most cases, even though the marriage is not working, many couples will stay married just for the sake of their social status and children.

Ever pressured to get married?

Another indicator of the importance of marriage is whether the respondents have ever been pressured either by family or society to get married. The results show that only a small percentage of respondents report feeling pressured to get married (see Table 2). As expected, the percentage is higher for the older generation of both sexes (12.5 per cent males and 22.2 per cent females) compared to young people (3.3 per cent males and 4.5 per cent females). The data for the older generation refers to the time before they married. It must be remembered that young people in the 1994-1995 Jakarta Marriage Values and Sexuality Survey are aged 15-24 years old, so many of them may still be too young to be candidates for pressure to get married.

However, the following in-depth interviews revealed that single young people in their late twenties and early thirties have experienced pressure to get married, especially from family. The following are Yana’s and Nadira’s stories.

Case 1: Yana (female, 24 years old, single, Moslem, very strong religious belief and practices her religious obligations regularly, bachelor in economics, West Sumatra, married to Jakarta to work, parents still very conservative about marriage arrangement)

Yana has a time limit to get married given by her parents. Yana is from a very religious Padang family with four children. She is the second in her family and migrated to Jakarta to work. Her parents said that if within two years she could not find a husband then they would arrange her marriage. Her mother especially believes that she has to get married before her younger sister or brother, or else she could become an old maid. Yana’s younger sister already has a boyfriend, but they cannot get married before Yana marries.

August 2003
Yana's mother told Yana that if her younger sister reaches her 28th birthday and Yana has not yet found a partner, then her sister can marry first. For Yana, the concept of her parents' arrangement of marriage is different from earlier times. Even though it will be an arranged marriage, her parents would want her to meet the man and get acquainted before the marriage. If she does not like him, then her parents would look for another prospective partner. This concept of an arranged marriage is different from Siti Nurbaya's time. At that time children, could not refuse their parents' choice. Even if though they will choose her prospective husband, Yana will still have the freedom to agree or disagree their choice. The following is Yana's story:

I want to find a husband who adheres to the same religion and can guide me through his religious knowledge on how to conduct our life. I prefer to marry someone that is older than me and for me marriage is a commitment for life and not just to fulfill my sexual needs. I have experienced going steady twice. I knew these men from my parents. But then after knowing them I found out that I am not compatible with these men. For me, I would never marry someone if my parents did not agree with my choice. I want my marriage to be blessed by my parents, that is why I do not mind if my parents arrange for me to meet someone, because the decision to choose my spouse is still my decision (Jakarta, 25/7/1994, case no. S15f).

Case 2: Nadira (female, 32 years old, single, Javanese, Moslem, bachelor degree in economics)

Nadira is the fourth in a family of seven brothers and sisters. All of her brothers and sisters are married and have children and wanted for Nadira to get married as well. Nadira really wants to get married, but has not found anyone yet. Following is Nadira's story:

If somebody proposed and asked me to be his wife, I would directly take the proposal. I will not worry whether I love him or not, I will adjust to this during our marriage. I just really want to get married. Even though I am very conservative and believe strongly in Allah, I will even marry someone if that person is a foreigner and he propose to me. My brothers and sisters all want me to get married. My father and my mother have passed away, I also think that they would want me to get married and I assume that if they were still alive they would have worried about my single status (Jakarta, 22/8/94, case number S34af).

Bianti (30 years old, female, single, Javanese, Protestant, very active attending church and other duties related to her church, hairdresser) also experienced being pressured by family members to get married, similarly to Yana and Nadira. On the other hand, besides family members, Isti (female, early 30s, single, working, Christian) has also been pressured by friends and work colleagues. Isti thinks that the society still operates in favor of married women as compared to women who are still single, so at times it is very uncomfortable to be single, especially if Isti has to be involved in social functions and gatherings. Thus single females in their late twenties and older at some stage have been pressured to get married or have been asked about their single status. This is also enforced by social norms and attitudes that still see single women as 'belum laku' (which literally means 'nobody has bought it yet', and is often used for both women and men who are still single). From my observations, the older a young woman gets the more she worries about not being married. In the search for her future husband, these women often ask friends or relatives to find them a spouse or to introduce them to someone they know.

**Mate selection: Ideal criteria for a spouse**

Mate selection theories developed in Western settings would not be ideal to evaluate the mate selection process in Indonesia, which has a very different cultural setting, norms and values, but they can be useful in understanding how a person selects a mate. In his theory of mate selection, Rice (1990:181) developed a filtering process of mate selection in several phases: propinquity filter-physical proximity, attraction filter, homogamy filter, compatibility filter, trial filter, decision filter, and marriage. In this paper only the attraction and homogamy stages are evaluated. Interestingly, when ideal criteria for spouse selection are compared between the young generation and the older generation, it is evident that lots of changes have been happening. But religion and religiosity as important criteria in looking for a spouse have not changed between generations (Table 3, 89.0 per cent and higher). Religiosity in this case is

---

### Table 2: Percentage of respondents agreeing to statements of importance of marriage by sex, Jakarta, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young People</td>
<td>Older resp.</td>
<td>Young People</td>
<td>Older resp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage is a must</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>90.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In our society divorce is still seen as something against our cultural values</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>81.5**</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>58.1**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever been pressed to get married</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>12.5**</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>22.2**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data are from the 1994–1995 Jakarta Marriage Values and Sexuality Survey.

Notes: 
- a. Test of significance difference is based on Chi Square, **significant different at less than one per cent, * significant difference at less than five per cent.
- b. For the parents, the question 'ever been pressed to get married' is asked in relation to their status when they were young and not married yet.
defined as strong religious belief and practice. The changes in spouse criteria that have occurred are related to the education level, ethnicity, citizenship and socioeconomic background of the family of the spouse-to-be (Table 3). Young people of both sexes (51.6 per cent for males and 83.0 per cent for females) compared to older respondents (26.8 per cent for males and 63.5 per cent for females) prefer to have a spouse with an equivalent education level. Females of both generations were consistent in wanting the same education level as their spouse. In this case, the difference between young and older males, and also between young and older females, are statistically significant at less than one per cent.

Other criteria that have changed include ethnicity and nationality: young people tend to think that these issues are not important, unlike the older respondents. For both generations, having the same nationality is more important than coming from the same ethnicity and the difference is significant at less than one per cent. More of the young generation of both sexes (12.2 per cent for males and 26.9 per cent for females) think that having a spouse with high socio-economic status is important, compared to the older generation (5.4 per cent for males and 11.1 per cent for females), and the difference is statistically significant at one per cent for females respondents.

When comparing males with females of both generations, it seems that males are more interested in having a spouse who is physically attractive, and do not really care whether she has the same education level as their own, or whether she is working. Females are more interested in having a spouse at the same education level (presumably high), with a job and high socioeconomic status. For males of both generations, the ideal criteria for a spouse are consistent with the notion of the breadwinner model and male power over women. But for the females of both generations, the equity status model is preferred.

Age difference between husband and wife

The age difference between husband and wife can also be used as an indicator of whether the relationship between husband and wife is more on an equity basis or more towards the male-dominant model. It is assumed that if age difference between husband and wife is not an issue then the relationship is more towards the equity model. In contrast, if couples still believe that the husband should be older than the wife, then the relationship is based on the male-dominant model. The survey data show (Table 3) that there is a generational difference. The young generation of both sexes seems to be increasingly less caring about age difference between husband and wife. Males of both generations (31.9 per cent of young people and 29.8 per cent of older respondents) seem to not really care about age difference, compared to females (16.2 per cent for young people and 15.9 per cent for older respondents). The young generation of both sexes also prefer the husband to be one to four years older than the wife, while the older generation of both sexes prefer the husband to be five or more years older than the wife. Thus, the older generation of both sexes prefer the husband and wife to have a wider age gap. The age gap issue can be used as an indicator that the older generation prefer the breadwinner model, while the young generation prefer the equity relationship between husband and wife. This finding is similar with other surveys on age differences between spouses in Southeast Asia. Casterline, Williams and McDonald (1986) did a study on this issue in developing countries. The study revealed that in Southeast Asia, the age differences between husband and wife tended to be four years, but closer to five years for Indonesia. Reasons for the age differences can vary between countries, but the study concluded that relatively large age differences are usually evident in patriarchal societies and those characterised by patrilineal kinship organisation, and also in societies where women's status is low.

In his book on Marriage and Divorce in Islamic South-East Asia, Jones (1994a:103–107) stated that in these countries there has been a clear tendency for the age difference to narrow over time. Indonesian data from 1970 and 1980 have shown a steady narrowing of age differences between spouses. Based on her study, Muliakusuma (1976) revealed that more than half of all women in urban and rural areas of West Java, Central Java, East Java, Sumatra and Sulawesi (and over 60 per cent in East Java) married a husband at least five years older than themselves. Further analysis of this study revealed that there are no clear time trends towards wider or narrower age differences between husband and wife, but there was an inverse relationship between age of the women at first marriage and the age difference between spouses. In conclusion, one has to remember that most women in Muliakusuma's study were only in their teens when they married a husband five or ten years older. Therefore, power and authority in the marriage relationships is easier to impose by husbands who are more mature and experienced than their wives.

Even though the 1994–1995 Jakarta Marriage Values and Sexuality Survey supports the idea that the young generation tends to have a more liberal view of spouse selection than the older generation, the former still appears to agree to parental agreement to a self-choice spouse (74.3 per cent of males and 90.1 per cent of males among young people). This finding also accords with findings from the in-depth interviews. For example Yana, who would not marry anyone that her parents do not approve of. The focus-group discussion participants also aired the view relating to parental agreement to a self-choice spouse (Focus group discussion, Jakarta, 2001). Interestingly, Malhotra (1991:566) reported similar observations.
### Table 3 Percentage of respondents stating ideal criteria for a spouse by sex, Jakarta, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Must have the same religion</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>96.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obedient to religious teachings and practices</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>96.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Must have equivalent education</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>26.8**</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same ethnicity</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>35.7**</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian citizen</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>83.9**</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent's agreement</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High socio-economic background</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents have formal or informal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11.1**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leadership position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a job</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically attractive</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>73.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age difference between husband and wife

| Age difference does not really matter  | 31.9                   | 29.8*                  | 16.2                                                            |
| Prefer husband 1-2 years older than wife | 16.2                   | 7.0                    | 19.1                                                            |
| Prefer husband 3-4 years older than wife | 23.8                   | 28.1                   | 34.2                                                            |
| Prefer husband that is 5 or more years older than wife | 18.3                   | 33.3                   | 22.7                                                            |
| Do not know                            | 9.8                    | 1.8                    | 7.9                                                             |

Notes: a. Test of significance difference is based on Chi Square, ** significant different at less than one per cent, * significant difference at less than five per cent. b. Question for the young people: 'If you were looking for a spouse what criteria are you looking for?' For the older respondents the question was formulated: 'When you were not yet married and young, what criteria did you look for when you were trying to find a spouse?'

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two types of control at the opposite ends of a continuum may not necessarily fit the facts of social change in a society like Java. Although younger men and women are increasingly taking the initiative in spouse choice, parents continue to play an important role in the marriage process. Not only are parental approved self-choice marriages the most popular new form, but this type of marriage also may be emerging as the normative ideal, as suggested by the fact that young people most likely to be leaders of new trends — educated men (and sometimes women) — are often more likely to involve parents in marriage decisions. These results suggest that given a long tradition of parental control of marriages in Java, the issue at hand may not be one of displacing the authority of parents, but rather one of accommodating it.

### Conclusion

This study supported the understanding that there are differences between young people and the older generation in regard to marriage values and concepts, as well as mate selection. In general, both groups shared the same attitudes and values regarding attachment to religion, but the young generation are more exposed to Western-type programs in the media compared to the older generation. Thus young people are at the forefront of a change to more liberal values. In respect to marriage values, both generations still preserved traditional ideas about marriage — the male breadwinner model — as well as having a positive view of status equity between husband and wife — where husband and wife have the same power in family decisions and in a successful marriage both partners can actualise themselves — but the tendency of the older generation wanting to preserve traditional marriage values is stronger. Therefore, the findings suggest that there are changes in marriage values between the young and older generation, but there are also values that are still preserved by both generations.

Regarding the importance of marriage, both generations still think that marriage is a must and divorce is seen as something against Indonesian cultural values. Findings from the survey data do not support the notion that the young generation of both sexes are being pressured to marry. This fact has to be treated carefully because to some extent the young generation is still too young to experience such pressure to marry, but from the in-depth interviews with respondents in their mid-twenties or older, the pressure to get married is evident.

With regard to criteria for spouse selection, males of both generations choose criteria related to the notion of a male-dominant model, whereby education and the working status of the wife does not really matter. This is in contrast with the females of both generations, where equivalent level of education between husband and wife and the working status of husband is quite important. In regard to age difference between husband and wife, the young generation prefer the husband to have a smaller age gap with the wife compared to the older generation. But females of both generations disagree more with having a husband who is much older than the wife, compared to males of both generations.

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In conclusion, the younger generation are more liberal in regard to marriage values compared to the older generation. Nevertheless, females of both generations seem to be in the forefront of developing values that promotes gender equity in marriage and family responsibilities as increasing numbers of females delay the entry into marriage and remain single; engaged in higher education, as well as work outside the homes. The ideal of marriage and children, enforced by social norms and tradition, is still very strong. Therefore, the choice to remain single for young Indonesians, especially young women, remains limited.

A earlier version of this paper was presented at the Psychosocial Workshop 2003, Population Association of America, Minneapolis, MN, 29–30 April 2003.

Notes

1. The term 'actualise' is adopted from Maslow's theory on hierarchy of needs. The needs are physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem and self-actualisation. Self-actualisation is the realisation and fulfilment of our potential (Schultz and Schultz, 1994: 279–283)

2. Siti Nurhayati is the title of a famous novel about a young girl who had to marry someone as old as her father because her family was in great debt. This novel was first published in 1922 (Rusli 1992).


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Bhutan: Demographic challenges, sustainable responses

Bob Frame, Landcare Research, Lincoln, New Zealand

Development has many more dimensions than those associated with Gross Domestic Product, and that development should be understood as a process that seeks to maximise happiness rather than economic growth.


Introduction

Bhutan's unique approach to sustainable development is intrinsically fascinating and of wider interest to development practitioners as a case study. This article presents a review of key aspects to date and some responses to the impact of its rapidly growing population.

The context: gross national happiness

Bhutan is a tiny, remote landlocked Himalayan kingdom squeezed between Asia's giants, China and India. It has an unspoilt natural environment and a unique Buddhist cultural heritage. It is one of the least populated and least urbanised countries in the world with only 15 per cent of the population living in urban areas.

Isolated from most of the world until the 1960s, Bhutan has never been colonised and, as Mathou (2000) notes, 'it entered the 20th century without a complex of inferiority and subservience vis-à-vis foreigners'. It has addressed its development challenges with careful consideration, building on the core Buddhist values of the Drukpa tradition, the official religion of Bhutan and a branch of Tantric Lamaism. This gave Bhutan religious and political independence from Tibet and resulted in its unique traditions, including a dress code and distinctive rituals. The country has acquired a reputation for a conservative approach to development that is both unique and thorough. For example, under Bhutanese law, 60 per cent of the kingdom will remain forested for all time, plastic bags are illegal, and a significant 26 per cent of the country is protected by national parks and reserves.

Bhutan demonstrates an ability to jump stages of development in a single bound. For example, the BBC reported (21 January 2003) that the director of health wants Bhutan to become the first nation on Earth to entirely ban tobacco use. This decision was based not only on health grounds but on tradition (the use of tobacco was banned in government buildings in the 1640s), religion (Guru Rinpoche stated that no follower of Lord Buddha should smoke) and economics (all tobacco products are imported).

This human development perspective was defined by his majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck in the late 1980s as ‘gross national happiness’ and has been summarised in the national vision for peace, prosperity and happiness as quoted at the beginning of this article. National development follows a succession of five-year plans. Since starting in 1961 with basic infrastructure, the nation has moved on to diversify its economy and develop basic democratic processes with the current ninth five-year plan (2002–2007).

Of interest here is the effect of a rapidly growing population (expected to double over 23 years), an over-reliance on expatriate labour (mostly from India) and a growing problem with unemployed urban youth.

The population

Historically, there has been a significant discrepancy in population figures for Bhutan. The Royal Government of Bhutan estimated a national population of 1.035 million in 1969 and this was used by the United Nations (UN) to project a figure of 1.9 million for 1997 on which it based other development indicators. However, this was at odds with a revised government estimate of 636,499 in 1998. The latter is now the accepted figure. The revised estimate is based on data going back to 1984, when demographic data were first compiled. This survey relied on an ad hoc sample of only 5 per cent of the total population (that is 56,205 people in total) in each dzongkhag (district).

While more detailed surveys have been conducted, there is yet to be a national census as such. In turn, this also gives rise to problems in assessing health indicators such as maternal mortality. Government sources indicate subsequent dramatic increases in birth rates and sharp decreases in death rates between 1980 and 1994, resulting in a population increase of almost 33 per cent in 12 years with 43 per cent under the age of 15 years. If control measures are not taken it is estimated that the national population will double in 23 years. (Planning Commission 1999, 2000)

Although the kingdom is multiethnic, multilingual (English is the second language from primary school onwards) and
Table 1  Population by gender and economic status (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Both sexes</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under age 15</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 15 and over</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>64.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically inactive</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically active</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent female</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Royal Civil Service Commission 2000, tables 4.0a and 4.0b.

multireligious, the northern Bhutanese culture associated with the Drukpa tradition prevails. Yet, for successful modernisation and development, national integration is essential. However, a major risk to integration arises from ethnic tensions. During the 1980s, sections of Lhotsampas (literally, people from the south or Nepali minority) started to consider that integration was detrimental to their identity and that modernisation was leading to domination by the Drukpa culture.

This led to anti-government demonstrations in 1990 and a process described by the government as 'voluntary migration' which arose from applying the Citizenship Act 1985 and identifying illegal immigrants from demographic data. As a result, almost 100,000 ethnic Nepali people from southern Bhutan are living in seven refugee camps administered by the UN High Commission for Refugees in eastern Nepal (Amnesty International 2002).

These events highlight a marked difference between Drukpa society, with its low level of politicisation, and the people of Nepali origin, who have been exposed to politics and ethnic dissent since the 1950s. It is unclear how this process will be resolved, but the tension between ethnic Bhutanese and Lhotsampas appears to have been contained — though it is perceptible in the capital, Thimphu. The presence of a large minority that senses some level of marginalisation remains a challenge to the political order. Such a threat has to be seriously considered as the kingdom also borders some volatile areas. militants rebelling against the Indian government have already established a presence in eastern border areas, have effectively closed the polytechnic and are a direct threat to both sovereignty and security (Mathou 2000).

The change: Market economy

Since 1981, the economy has exhibited robust growth with the move from a non-monetarised traditional economy based on agriculture and household production to a modern wage-based exchange economy. There is diversification of agricultural production and encouragement for the development of private sector initiatives. During the 1990s, the economy grew at an impressive 6 per cent per annum on average, led by manufacturing and other secondary sectors. This led to a popular expectation that growth would continue, though there are many constraints that will hinder such progress, especially changes to demographics, an increasingly educated population and exposure to international norms.

The estimated gross national product per capita was US$550 per head in 2000, which is one of the highest in south Asia, though there is still considerable poverty. This is not obvious, especially in Thimphu, the capital, because of the government's social welfare policies, including free medical care, that have resulted in high levels of human capital and relatively widespread social wellbeing.

National labour force surveys in 1998 and 1999 (Royal Civil Service Commission 2000) were the first attempts to obtain reliable data on the economically active population across a range of parameters and a few key findings are summarised in tables 1 to 3. These show a gender balance in the workforce. There are also concerns over the number of young people moving into the workforce and that this is causing unemployment to grow in rural areas, at least for the present. In urban areas, unemployment numbers are rising among 15 to 24 year olds and declining in higher age groups (25 and over).

A survey commissioned by the Asian Development Bank (ADB 2001) showed that generally employers do not consider Bhutanese graduates to have relevant practical skills and job-related experience. This is compounded by a traditional career preference for high-status white-collar occupations in the public sector with associated job security, career prospects and less stressful working conditions. This situation is further complicated by the presence of about 50,000 mostly Indian expatriate workers, who are filling shortages in the supply of domestic skilled and unskilled labour — about 48 per cent of all jobs in the private sector. As a result, human resource development closely linked to job creation in the private sector...
Table 2  People in paid employment, by employment status (per cent)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Both sexes</th>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government employee</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private employee</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own account worker</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Royal Civil Service Commission 2000, tables 7.0a and 7.0b.
Note: Excludes unpaid family workers, others and no-status categories.

Table 3  Distribution of unemployment (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1998</th>
<th></th>
<th>1999</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Royal Civil Service Commission 2000, tables 9.0a and 9.0b.

should be a priority issue for national development. If it is not, industrialisation could create a serious unemployment problem for Bhutanese in the near future.

While private sector development is in its infancy, Bhutan has a chamber of commerce, a growing tourism sector and trade opportunities, leading to the development of a group within society whose role will be pivotal in coming years. With the shift of the role of the state from that of 'provider' to that of 'enabler', the issue of power sharing between government, private sector and community organisations will become more complex. This will result in 'obvious contradictions between market economy and Gross National Happiness' (Mathou 2000), centred around opposing sets of values. In particular, the rapidly growing educated workforce will threaten the monopoly of the bureaucracy as the ruling elite.

The government has therefore emphasised education in general in recent years, placing particular emphasis on technical and vocational education and training (TVET) with the assistance of donor funding, such as that from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), relevant UN agencies and the World Bank, plus a few bilateral donors that include Japan, Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands.

A response: Human resource development

Considerable progress has been made in the education sector over recent decades. The ADB (2000) estimated that only 450 children attended primary schools in the late 1950s and there were no secondary schools. In 1999, there were 253 primary and community schools and the number of teachers trebled between 1977 and 2000. Secondary education has also expanded rapidly though a shortage of trained, competent teachers is a constraint to faster growth.

The government provides nine years of free basic education up to junior high school, with universal primary enrolment expected in the near future and with girls comprising over 45 per cent of all primary schoolchildren. Adult literacy was estimated to be 54 per cent in 1998, though for women this is averaged at 28 per cent nationally and could be as low as 10 per cent in rural areas. Similar developments are occurring in the secondary education sector but there are acute problems in the TVET tertiary sector, which is male dominated.

With young people reluctant to enter the private sector and a consequent need to continue the dependence on expatriate workers to meet its workforce demands, the government believed policy intervention in the private sector would enable more favourable working conditions and encourage young people to take up private-sector employment. Such policy had to address both the aspirations of the rapidly expanding private sector and young people's resistance to certain professions.

As a result, the National Technical Training Authority (NTTA) was established in 1999 to act as a coordinating body for the national TVET sector, with the purpose of responding to the acute need for an employable indigenous labour force and to reform TVET as private-sector oriented. In parallel, the
government also created the National Employment Board (now the Ministry of Labour) with a mandate to regulate and administer the labour market.

The development of both these institutions has been rapid and this has stretched the internal capacity to accommodate change. There are currently two skills-training institutes focusing on providing basic training for young skilled tradespeople (electrical, mechanical and automotive engineering, building construction and drafting). There are also institutes for vehicle training and maintenance (a major need given Bhutan’s recently constructed mountain roads), traditional arts and crafts (Zorig Chusum) and a polytechnic. Institutes for management, traditional medicine, natural resources and forestry also exist but are not part of the NTTA system.

An interministerial task force was established in 2000 by the NTTA to develop policy recommendations for TVET. These interventions have seen policies developed for the ninth five-year plan regarding long-term skills development and utilisation, and the establishment of a relevant qualifications framework.

A national project has been established to reform skills training to boost the growing private sector with a total cost of US$12.5 million, with US$7 million from the ADB, a further US$2.5 million from Germany, and the balance from government. As well as modernising the curriculum, the project will build new training centres, rehabilitate others, and strengthen links to the private sector, including providing career counselling and job placement services.

The project will also give those who have already graduated a chance to upgrade their skills under the new system. It also aims to change traditional attitudes towards private sector work by creating a qualified workforce more in tune with the demands of a modern economy, and by increasing incomes. Salaries in the public sector are relatively flat while those in the private sector tend to be lower at entry level but have greater potential for growth.

However, external pressures arising through increased exposure to global developments are real. Exposure to western values does not come through exposure to tourists, as numbers are self-regulating (Bhutan charges tourists a fee of around US$200 per day and currently numbers are about 7,000 per year). However, satellite television and Internet connections are now readily available in local bars and cafes in Thimphu and this is having a strong influence on young people, especially those of the middle class with disposable income. Although national dress is compulsory during the working week, shops do sell western fashion clothes. The emergence of this middle class and its growth will have a decisive impact on Bhutan’s traditional social and political values.

Concerns over the refugee issue appear to have been mitigated, with a joint Bhutan–Nepal verification team working to resolve outstanding issues (March 2003). Bhutan’s success at dealing with this issue may provide a key to its future success at managing the aspirations and careers of its future business people and skilled workers. These will be challenges of great interest from a development perspective.

Conclusion

Some of the foregoing issues are being discussed nationally, as can be seen in the national weekly newspaper *Kuensel*, available at www.kuenselonline.com and in the *Journal of Bhutan Studies*, which has shifted in focus from historical and cultural perspectives to more social and economic themes during its short life. In particular, papers such as those by Rapten (2001) on the mass media and Wangyal (2001) on the development of social sustainability indicate the unique Bhutanese approach to sustainability may yet provide solutions. The institutional aspects of this approach place Bhutan at a crossroads in its development, from which I hope Bhutan will go on to address development issues successfully in its unique way.

The implications

This investment project should provide Bhutan with a more robust and market-led TVET sector that addresses the needs and aspirations of young people and is successful in achieving the crucial mind shift towards employment opportunities. Bhutan remains sensitive about donor involvement, but should remain vigilant of over-reliance on such investment, especially in an increasingly volatile global environment. To date, it has provided careful and conservative management of donor resources, has been anxious to provide the best resources for its people, and has not been willing to compromise this when faced with donor pressure. It will be a challenge for government institutions to sustainably manage the process of increasing capacity internally and maintaining the quality and quantity of management.

References


Polarising Polynesia: The impact of migration on population change and economic growth

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Introduction

International and family migration have become common phenomena in Polynesia in the past three decades. It has been argued that migration has been the main cause of population change in Polynesian society. As Connell and Lea succinctly put it, migration is ‘becoming a significant regulator of demographic change, where mobility is an intrinsic element of social, economic and political life’ of smaller island states (2002:52).

In the population data produced by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2002), in 2001 the population of Samoa was 169,000 people with a population growth rate of 0.6 and a total fertility rate of 4.5. In Tonga, the population was 100,200 with a population growth rate of 0.6 and a total fertility rate of 4.2. The low population growth in Samoa and Tonga, even though the total fertility rate for both islands is above 4, is indicative of increasingly high international migration. Migration is therefore a critical factor in predicting future population trends in Samoa and Tonga, and the reason for the continuous exodus from these two islands has to be explained in order to gauge the implication of this migration on economic growth and population change.

The reason for migration has never been studied in any great detail and the dearth of written knowledge on the correlation between migration and population change has failed to establish a connection between traditional institutions, cultural practices and economic development. Only doctoral thesis studies have considered this correlation, but more detailed studies are needed.

This article is a critique of the literature on the effects of international migration on population change and economic growth. It seeks to advance debate on this critical issue for contemporary Samoan and Tongan society.

Population mobility in Samoa and Tonga

For the past three decades, the most significant contributing factor to low population growth in Samoa and Tonga has been international migration, the consequences of which include the loss of the most fertile group in the population.

In the late 1960s, Pacific Islanders began to emigrate and emigration has rapidly increased over the years. Connell attributes this large-scale migration to ‘a combination of reasons’. The realisation that there are ‘substantial income differentials’ between Polynesia and such metropolitan states as New Zealand and the United States, higher education levels and better health care services to be had in those places, ‘improved transport links (especially air transport), a relative reduction in transport costs and growing population pressure on domestic resources, all stimulated mobility’ (Connell cited in Connell and Lea 2002).

However, by the early 1980s, migration had slowed because of adverse economic conditions in New Zealand. It is estimated that almost as many Samoans and Tongans lived at home as overseas, in countries where their future was intricately related to economic prosperity, recession, restructuring and the nature of the employment market (Connell and Lea 2002).

Many believe the economic future of Samoa and Tonga depends ‘on the continued flow of remittances, and hence on some continuity of migration’ (Ahlburg 1991, Connell and Brown 1995 cited in Connell and Lea 2002). A restrictive immigration policy and economic recession in New Zealand is problematic ‘since there is now a “culture of migration”: emigration is normal, expected and anticipated, and an important element in national social and economic systems’ (Connell and Lea 2002).

Traditional institutions and cultural practices

The institution of the family is crucial to understanding Polynesian society. The Samoan and Tongan concept of family is best explained by Anae’s work, in which it is seen as extended family, descent group or kinship, a transnational corporation of kin (Anae 1998:ix). In Samoa, the institution of the family (aiga) is the centre of the fa’aSamoa (Samoan way), the cornerstone of Samoan life. Within fa’aSamoa, the institution of the chief (matai) and associated values such as love (alofa), embody the practice of fa’atasi (personal and family obligation), a cultural practice which requires both material and tradition wealth (Anae 1998:102).

The family (kainga) is also the cornerstone of Tongan life. It governs traditional values and practices, kin group obligations (fātonga) and associated values such as reciprocal love (ofa) —
which embodies the practice of *kaesenga* (giving material wealth and traditional support during wedding, funeral and remittance occasions) — that underpin Tongan social, economic and political life (Taufa 1993:54).

**International migration**

In order to understand the reasons for the increasingly high rates of migration from Samoa and Tonga, Anae provides the following perspective: 'it is important to note that the homeland and migrant communities are closely inter-linked'. In fact, the reason for migration 'is not for the most part the result of individual decisions by young people cutting ties and going to make their fortunes in a new land, but of decisions made by family groups of various kinds, representing an important diversification in investment strategies of transnational corporations of kin' (Anae 1998:101).

Another perspective is provided by Hau' ofa: 'Polynesian migration is not as a result of a whole lot of individual decisions, but by the way in which Pacific Islanders and their families and each Pacific island nation has chosen to become articulated with the modern world system' (cited in Anae 1998:101).

It is important not to oversimplify the reasons for migration and consider only the economic. Rather, to paraphrase Anae (1998:101–102), migration is tied to complex social, cultural and political factors. For migrants and non-migrant Polynesians, culture has to do with not only the notion of beliefs, attitudes, customs, social relations, but also with political economy, and this aspect is important when considering *fo'atu'avea* (family obligation). As Anae observes, it is significant that cash is not being used to develop Samoa. Rather, it is being used to power the cornerstone of Samoan culture, the fa'aSamo. This has to do with the investment strategies of 'transnational corporations of kin' and the 'MIRAB economy' (That is, the Migration, Remittance, Aid and Bureacracy economy: Bertram and Watters 1985). Samoa has chosen to export her labour and the remittances being sent home are used to buy necessary commodities, as as part of the fa'aSamo. (Anae 1998:101–102).

The response to migration will depend on each individual's migration experiences and their interpretations of the choices between traditional values and individual tendencies. They will seek to find a balance between their new environment and elements of the traditional value in order to 'become successful cosmopolitans at ease in multiple worlds' (Connell 1994:276).

**The impact of globalisation on population mobility**

Globalisation and developments in modern technology now mean that remote islands are no longer isolated from the outside world and, as a result, migration has rapidly grown in extent and significance. In fact, Connell (1994:265) makes the point that a major influence on migration has been the radical change in expectations over what constitutes a satisfactory standard of living, a desirable occupation and a suitable mix of accessible services and amenities. Different values following educational growth, reflecting and influencing the expansion of bureaucratic (largely urban) unemployment, and youthful disdain for agriculture, have further oriented migration streams away from Samoa, as new employment opportunities have not kept pace with population growth.

Connell (1994:266) also argues that the implications for the home country are critical shortages of professional, technical and managerial staff side by side with large numbers of workers with low-quality general education and limited formal employment opportunities, [which] are other serious constraints to development.

In Liava'a's study on Tonga, he states 'international migration has an effect on both the recipient country and the originating country' (2000:16). As a consequence of international migration, Tonga, an originating country, is losing people who are in the most resourceful and productive age group of 15 to 49 years.

**The effects of migration on economic growth and development**

Migration has also been a result of colonial links: the old administration seeking human capital and the local population seeking economic opportunities outside the homeland. Va'a says that 'the lack of economic opportunities in the islands encouraged external migration, while the historical relationships with the colonial governments facilitated the process'. In fact, international migration was 'motivated mainly by economic considerations and encouraged by the corresponding need for unskilled labour' (2001:63).

However, Bedford makes the point that 'migration is a process that thrives on differentiation and selectivity; what is a positive outcome for one region or community is not necessarily mirrored in another' (2002:18).

Mohanty and Naidu (cited in Bedford 2002:18) argue that 'the interrelationships between poverty, migration and development, the poor and the rich have very different opportunities when it comes to migration, especially international migration'. In fact, they (cited in Bedford 2002:18) believe that at the heart of the debate about sustainable development in Australia and New Zealand ... are questions about patterns of population movement and policies that governments adopt to attempt to influence or regulate flows of people between regions and communities.
Conclusion

International migration has polarised Polynesia for the past three decades and emigration is a common phenomenon in contemporary Samoan and Tongan society. The implications of international migration have become so critical to contemporary Samoan and Tongan society that these two island nations must seek international, national and local expertise to achieve a solution that will provide an impetus to economic growth and sustainable development.

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Implications of ageing: The case of Fiji

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Introduction

This paper looks at the current and future demographic trends relating to ageing in Fiji. It addresses the implications for future health and infrastructure needs and emerging social concerns, especially in relation to elderly women.

Global experience of ageing

Population ageing is a relatively new phenomenon and is primarily a result of declining fertility. The increase in average age and the proportion of people over 60 years in developed countries and currently being experienced by developing countries, are the result of declining birthrates. The twentieth century saw the decline of fertility from 5 to 2.7 children per woman. It is projected that fertility will decline further to replacement level at 2.1 in the first half of this century. Fertility is below replacement level in all developed countries (UN 2002:5). The fertility level in developing countries at 5.2 is heterogeneous with Eastern, Western and Middle Africa at 5.5 children per woman and South Central Asia, South America and the Caribbean at 2.5 children per woman. Moreover, fertility is expected to decrease further (UN 2002:5).

Extended longevity also contributes to ageing. It is one of man's greatest achievements and is attributed mainly to advancements in medical knowledge and technology. The product of declining fertility combined with declining mortality at older ages is both increased survivorship among older people, and marked ageing of the population. The last half a century saw on average an increase in life expectancy of 23.1 years in developing countries and 9.4 years in developed countries (UN 2002:6). By 2025 life expectancy at birth in developed countries is projected to reach 80 years and 71 years in developing countries (UN 2002:6).

Between 1950 and 2025 the number in the elderly category will increase from 200 million to 1.2 billion (UN 2002:6). This period will also see an increase in the number of people over 80 years. Currently the growth rate of the elderly population (1.9 per cent) exceeds that of the total population (1.2 per cent) (UN 2002:6). By 2025–2030 it is expected that the elderly population will be growing to 3.5 times that of the total population (UN 2002:6).

Dramatic increases in the elderly population are now occurring in developing countries, where the pace of ageing is much faster than in developed countries because of the larger population bases. The UN indicated that this process took 115 years in developed countries, whereas in developing countries such as Jamaica and Tunisia it has taken less than 20 years (UN 2002:15).

Already more than 65 per cent of the world's elderly people live in developing countries (UN 2002:13). The UN has also projected that in 2025 more than 70 per cent of older persons

Table 1 Proportions of the population 60 years and over by ethnicity and sex, 1966–1996

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fijians</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Ratio (per 100 women)</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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are expected to live in developing countries (UN 2002:14). Most of those in the elderly category are widows and among the poorest and most vulnerable.

### Ageing in Fiji

In Fiji the proportion of the population 60 years and older is relatively small, but the absolute size of the elderly population is increasing rapidly (Table 1). In 1996 there were about 40,000 people aged 60 years and over in Fiji. This is of considerable significance to a small country such as Fiji.

Tables 1 and 2 show the increasing proportions of elderly in the population. However, Table 2 shows that the increased proportions of the elderly are accompanied by a decline in the proportion of children under 15 years from 41.2 per cent for the total population in 1976 to 35.4 per cent in 1996.

UN projections for Fiji 1950 to 2050 (Table 3) indicate that in 2000 the proportion of the elderly would be 5.7 per cent and by 2025 it would account for 13 per cent of the total population. By 2050 about one in every four people would be 60 years or older and about four per cent of the Fiji population would be 80 years or older. At the same time it is expected that the proportion of children under 15 years would decrease to 23.3 per cent in 2025 and to 17.8 in 2050.

The dependency ratio is a rough indicator of the proportion of the economic burden the economically active portion of the population (15–64 years) must carry in order to support the dependent portions of the population (under 15 years and 65 years and over). Because of the declining proportions of children in Fiji, the dependency ratio is expected to decrease in the first two decades of this century. Thereafter it will increase, and the consumption needs of large numbers of this economically non-productive group will reduce Fiji’s future overall capacity to save and invest.
to increase rapidly in the first 50 years of this century (Table 3). This suggests to policy makers which group of dependents should be the focus of assistance and greater resource allocations. It calls for fewer schools in future and more facilities and support for the elderly.

The potential support ratio is the number of people in the working ages 15–64 years per every person 65 years or older. It is expected to decrease to eight people in the working age group for every person 65 years and older in 2025 and to decrease further to four in 2050 (Table 3). This is important in assessing the potential for future support of the elderly by the working age group in terms of traditional old-age support. The 'parent support' category measures the demands on families to provide support for their most elderly members. This increases very slowly in Fiji.

The process of population ageing in Fiji

Declining fertility

The principal mechanism bringing about the increase in the elderly population in Fiji is the consistent decline in fertility in the past 40 years. This is illustrated in the completed fertility of women aged 45–49 years between 1956 and 1996 (Table 4).

Table 4 Average number of children ever born by age of mother and ethnicity derived from census lifetime fertility data, 1956 and 1996

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<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5–19</td>
<td>0.23 0.08</td>
<td>0.09 0.08</td>
<td>0.04 0.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–24</td>
<td>1.64 0.75</td>
<td>1.10 0.70</td>
<td>2.23 0.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–29</td>
<td>3.32 1.79</td>
<td>2.58 1.76</td>
<td>4.25 1.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–34</td>
<td>4.62 2.60</td>
<td>3.80 2.71</td>
<td>5.73 2.51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35–39</td>
<td>5.50 3.15</td>
<td>4.79 3.40</td>
<td>6.60 2.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40–44</td>
<td>5.81 3.57</td>
<td>5.47 3.88</td>
<td>6.73 3.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–49</td>
<td>6.11 3.88</td>
<td>5.88 4.19</td>
<td>6.94 3.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Declining mortality

Fertility decline is usually accompanied by mortality decline, especially at older ages, which also contributes to the ageing of Fiji's population. Table 5 shows the increase in life expectancy at birth from 1976 to 1996 for the two major ethnic groups and genders. The table also shows the life expectancy for those who reach 60 years, 65 years and 80 years. There is an increase in life expectancy at ages 65 and 80 years in 1996.

Table 5 Average life expectancy (years) at birth, 60, 65 and 80 years, 1976–1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>1976 Fijian</th>
<th>1996 Fijian</th>
<th>1976 Indian</th>
<th>1996 Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>68.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at 60 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>13.94</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>14.73</td>
<td>16.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>14.43</td>
<td>15.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at 65 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>10.76</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.34</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>10.63</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>11.13</td>
<td>12.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at 80 years</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>5.1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


UN projections indicate that Fiji will have a life expectancy at birth of 69.8 years in 2000–2005, increasing to 74.7 years in 2025–2030 and 77.8 years in 2045–2050.

Ageing of rural populations

In rural areas ageing occurs much faster than in urban areas. The most important determinant of ageing in rural populations is urban migration, which sees large proportions of elderly people left behind in the rural areas. This is illustrated in Table 6, which shows that from 1976 to 1996, the proportion of elderly in rural areas was higher than the proportion in urban areas. In some cases, retirees returning to the villages and rural settlements speed up this process. However, this needs further investigation. It is in the villages and rural settlements that the consequences of ageing are most likely to be felt, and most particularly by women who make up a higher proportion of the elderly.

Implications of ageing in Fiji

The future demographic scenario for Fiji raises many critical issues and challenges. Fiji faces a situation where the ageing process will accelerate. The challenge is that Fiji will face this at a lower level of economic development. The average annual economic growth rate in real GDP between 1992 and 2002 was a low of 2.8 per cent (Shah 2003). Two per cent per capita income growth is inadequate to fight unemployment and poverty. Shah (2003) indicates that very low private savings are cause for concern at the macro level in terms of the country's capital formation and at the micro level in regard to the economic independence of the elderly.
Table 6: Population aged 60 years and above (%) by urban/rural ratio of percentages of the elderly, Fiji 1976, 1986 and 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year and ethnicity</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Urban population: 60 years (%)</th>
<th>Rural population: 60 years (%)</th>
<th>Urban/Rural ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>588,068</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fijians</td>
<td>37,412</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>39,069</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>715,375</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fijians</td>
<td>329,305</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>348,704</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>775,077</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fijians</td>
<td>393,575</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>388,818</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Fiji Bureau of Statistics 1977:Table 2 and 3; Fiji Bureau of Statistics 1988:Table 2; Fiji Bureau of Statistics 1998.

There is scant research in the area of the elderly in Fiji despite their growing numbers. Ageing and its implications deserve to be placed on Fiji's social agenda so that government, society and the family roles and responsibilities towards the elderly population are addressed.

Lack of income security
There is no employment security for the elderly, nor are there any government regulations to protect them from age discrimination. The mandatory retirement age for most government positions remains at 55 years. Early retirement is encouraged, and there is reluctance to retain or deploy elderly workers. Unemployment is high among the elderly and their main source of support is the family. A study conducted by Plange (1987) found 8 per cent of the elderly received a pension, 1 per cent received superannuation benefits and 11 per cent of the younger elderly received other income, such as rent, royalty payments and remittances from children.

Women are particularly vulnerable. They tend to outlive men and most women in Fiji are homemakers and outside wage employment. They therefore lack control of resources and wealth and so have no economic security as they grow old. In addition, men tend to remarry more frequently after divorce or widowhood than women. This emphasises the dependence of elderly women on their male spouses and family members.

Further, reduced fertility means fewer potential sources of economic, emotional and psychological support for the elderly. There is concern about the reduced availability of the social network of kin to provide support for the elderly. Many elderly people therefore face deprivation, marginalisation and insecurity. The threat of poverty is real among Fiji's elderly.

Social disability
Social disability is the absence or the lack of social and financial resources to ensure health and wellbeing of the elderly. Presently many families are finding it difficult to meet the needs of the elderly against a backdrop of inflation, unemployment and a decrease in family disposable incomes. Barr (1990; 1998) and Plange (1992; 1993) indicate that the elderly in Fiji face marginalization. There is no safety net for the elderly (Barr 1990).

The Fiji Poverty Report (1997) indicated that 20 per cent of poor household heads were in the elderly category. In addition, the proportion of poor household heads who were disabled rose sharply with age (Table 7). The report concluded that there is a clear link between old age, disability and poverty.

Table 7: Percentage of poor households with a disabled head, by age and ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fijian</th>
<th>Indo-Fijian</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 60 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 years and over</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNDP 1997:Table 35.

Health issues
Rapid socio-economic development has contributed to the decline in mortality in Fiji in the past 70 years, resulting in increasing longevity. This has been accompanied by an increase in illness, especially chronic impairments that affect the functional capacity of the elderly. A major concern is how to provide health care to an increasing ageing population.

In Fiji there are increases in such diseases as diabetes, cancer and hypertension among the elderly. These diseases require long-term care and can be a burden on the family and other social support network systems. The 1996 census recorded that one in three disabled people were 60 years and over (Table 8).

The increase in the elderly population will present major challenges to Fiji's health services. It will place greater demand on the already stretched health care system and resources, and thus will put pressure on government budgets. Adjustments have to be made as the needs of the elderly quickly translate into hospital, medical care and medication expenses. In many cases these costs become a burden on the family economy. These costs can affect the family's willingness and ability to provide old-age support.

Fiji does not have the medical infrastructure of developed countries. In addition, the primary health care system provides no specialist services for the elderly, despite growing demand. There is a need for preventive and rehabilitation programs to deal with age-specific disorders. There is a need also for geriatric
training for nurses, physicians and social workers. The elderly therefore use traditional medicines, massage and on occasions contact with health centres.

Table 8 Age distribution, total Fiji population and disabled population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age groups</th>
<th>Fiji total (%)</th>
<th>Disabled (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 20 years</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–29 years</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–34 years</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–59 years</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Public support mechanisms in Fiji are uncommon. Old people's homes are few in number and have limited capacities. Government does not encourage institutionalisation except when necessary. Government poverty allowances are difficult to obtain and insufficient to meet daily requirements. A very small number of the elderly live in homes run by the government and other charitable organisations.

Gender and marital status and living arrangements

Women predominate in the elderly category and their proportion increases with age (Tables 1 and 3). The problem of care for elderly women is likely to be very serious because of their greater and increased longevity. Older men rely on their wives for care but women are often left without a spouse to provide the care they need as they age. Their situation is aggravated by the fact that many are likely to be less educated, with minimum work experience, as well as having less access to public assistance and income sources.

The presence of a spouse/partner is seen as central to quality of life of the elderly regardless of household type (Panapasa 2001). However, with age and the onset of chronic impairment, women gain less and less from the presence of partner. Women pay a heavy price for a long-term survival of their spouse because the care-taking burden is their responsibility at all stages of ageing.

Conclusion

The Fiji government needs to recognise the importance of the process of ageing, that it is expected to accelerate and that its implications will permeate almost all aspects of life. Government and families need to act now to ease the burden of adjustment. If action is delayed this could affect Fiji's ability to develop sustainably. There are traces of awareness of the importance of ageing but this has not been translated into policies and programs. We must prepare for a multi-generational society. The development agenda and strategies need to be in place to direct public investment efforts and programs to address the implications of ageing. It is our task as demographers to provide decision-makers with relevant, accurate and convincing information about demographic ageing so that they could respond to its challenges.

There is a need to invest in health to enable the aged to remain independent and healthy as long as possible. Good health must be promoted throughout life in a setting where health care information and services are affordable and accessible. At the same time, older persons need to be empowered to enable them to participate fully and effectively in the social, economic and political spheres of their societies.

However, ageing in Fiji often occurs in a complex or extended family setting, where the economic, social and emotional needs are provided for. The family is still an important institution for providing care to the elderly. The important question is how the elderly will be supported now and in future. Family size is getting smaller, which reduces the capacity of the family to care for the aged. In addition, rural to urban migration results in the elderly remaining in rural areas. Modernisation, urbanisation, education and the trend towards nuclear families will affect the ability and willingness of families to care for their elderly relatives.

Old people will make more demands on the already stretched health system. Adjustments have to be made to provide health care services specifically designed to deal with the elderly. Currently demand for such services continues to be unmet. More geriatricians will be needed. The costs of adjustments and health care for the elderly will soar because health care utilisation will increase dramatically. There will be a rapid increase in the octogenarians, who are more often dependent on others for their wellbeing. Improvement in life expectancy has not been accompanied by an increase in human ability to prevent or delay disabling conditions.

Of concern are the lowering expectations of old age support from children, which weaken as do filial values and norms for caring for elderly parents. This is aggravated by the fact that there is an increasing prevalence of participation of females in the labour force. This increases the opportunity costs of staying at home to care for elderly relatives who need care. Principally family members remain the primary providers of care to the elderly. This type of care, requiring personal ministrations in most cases, is provided by females.

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August 2003
In recent decades, the populations of the Pacific have undergone a decline in fertility, albeit to different extents. Among the first to experience fertility decline was the Republic of the Fiji Islands (Fiji). For the Indian population, the decline began in the early 1960s and was relatively rapid, while for indigenous Fijians the decline began about five years later and was less pronounced.

Declining fertility is closely associated with socioeconomic development. While various theories of fertility transition seek to explain this association, it is generally accepted by demographers that a main proximate determinant of fertility is age at marriage (Bongaarts 1978). The postponement of marriage has been shown to be an important factor in the fertility transition of many developing countries, especially in the early years of fertility decline (Cho and Retherford 1973, Mauldin 1981). Among the socioeconomic factors leading to delayed marriage, the education of females has been shown to play an important role (for example Diamond et al. 1999). Development, fertility decline and delayed marriage thus go hand in hand.

Declining fertility inevitably affects the age structure of the population. One of the consequences of such structural change is an imbalance in the marriage market, producing pressure on females to marry at an earlier age. This push towards younger age at marriage is in direct opposition to the delays in marriage associated with development. This paper addresses the outcome of these opposing forces in the Fijian and Indian populations of Fiji.

### Demography of the marriage market

When fertility has been constant for a lifetime or so, the population age structure is that of the familiar population pyramid in which each age group is smaller than the younger adjacent group. With such a structure, and since more males are born than females, males typically marry at an older age than females, the sex difference in age at marriage being such as to roughly balance the numbers seeking partners. In other words, the marriage market is in balance.

A decline in fertility results in fewer children at young ages than would otherwise be the case and may be such as to produce 'undercutting' of the population pyramid at the base. When these children reach marrying age, the number of males exceeds the number of females in the marriage market creating an imbalance. The demographic response to such an imbalance is decreasing female age at marriage as 'excess' unmarried males are obliged to seek partners among younger cohorts. The sex difference in age at marriage is thus widened. If, however, a lower bound exists on female age at marriage, males are obliged to wait for females to reach marrying age, which means that male age at marriage increases and the sex difference again widens. The lower bound may be a legal minimum or a cultural norm.

In the context of socioeconomic development, the trend towards higher female educational attainment and later marriage creates a more effective lower bound on female age at marriage. Whether this bound holds depends on the relative strengths of the two forces involved. If the demographic effect is stronger, female age at marriage will decrease regardless of increased educational opportunities. On the other hand, if the development effect is stronger, female age at marriage will increase accompanied by an even greater increase in male age at marriage. Whatever the relative strengths, the sex difference in age at marriage will widen to achieve a marriage market balance.1

In practice, the opposing forces are differently balanced in different sections of the population. Since the development effect is by definition greater at higher socioeconomic levels, female age at marriage is more likely to increase for this section of the population. Conversely at lower socioeconomic levels, female age at marriage is more likely to decrease. Thus socioeconomic divergence occurs. Increases in female age at marriage at all socioeconomic levels will only occur if even greater increases occur in male age at marriage, but a degree of divergence would by definition remain.

### Fiji: Trends in age at marriage

Trends in average age at first marriage by sex are shown in Figure 1 for the Fijian and Indian populations of Fiji Islands. (The term 'marriage' is used to include de facto marriage and all references are to first marriage.) The Fijian population is relatively late-marrying and exhibits slow increases in both female and male age at marriage: over the 40-year period, the average age at marriage has increased by about one year. These increases can be attributed to development — since age at marriage is already late, socioeconomic development has little effect. The fact that the sex difference in age at marriage has
remained roughly constant suggests no marriage-market effect. The Fijian fertility decline, shown in Figure 2, began in the mid-1960s, but has not been continuous (Naroba 1990, Bureau of Statistics 1998a); in fact only the decline from 1967 to 1972 is of relevance since the post-1983 decline is too recent to have had any effect on the marriage market (especially as the most recent data are from the 1996 census). This short period of decline would have affected the marriage market after 1992 but it is barely discernible at the population level (see below). In 1991, females married on average at 23.2 years and males at 26.7 years, giving a sex differential of 3.5 years.

Figure 1 Trends in average age at first marriage by sex by ethnicity, Fiji, 1951–1991

Source: Booth (2001), author’s calculations based on census data. Note: Fijian estimates for 1981 are too low (see Booth 2001).

Figure 2 Trends in TFR by ethnicity, Fiji, 1967–1995

Source: Bureau of Statistics (1998a)

For Indians, female age at marriage increased rapidly to 1971 followed by a levelling-off, while male age at marriage increased over the entire period. In the early twentieth century, females married at very young ages due partly to cultural factors and partly to the shortage of females created by migration patterns. As the Fiji-born population became of marriageable age, the shortage of females eased and consequently female age at marriage began to increase, resulting in the rapid increase during the 1950s and 1960s (McArthur 1971). (This is the reverse of the demographic effect described above.) In 1951, the sex difference in age at marriage was four years. By 1966, there was a surplus of never-married females relative to males of the appropriate age (McArthur 1971), leading to yet later marriage and further reductions in the sex difference in age at marriage (2.5 years in 1971).

It is unlikely that changes in the legal age at marriage can be held responsible for the increases that occurred. In 1947 the legal minimum age at marriage for Indian females was raised from 13 to 14 years; the legal minimum for males was 18 years. In 1969 the legal minimum age with parental consent was set at 16 years (21 years without parental consent) for all females in Fiji (Pulea 1986). Given that the average age has exceeded the minimum age by at least three years since 1951, it seems unlikely that legal issues would have had more than a marginal effect. However, increased education and participation in the labour force among females would have reinforced the trend towards later female marriage. Similarly, increases in male age at marriage are influenced by the development effect.

The recent levelling-off in Indian female age at marriage can be attributed to the reversal of the earlier marriage market effect and counterbalancing by the development effect. The Indian fertility decline began in 1962 (Naroba 1990) and continued to 1976 (see Figure 2). The marriage-market effect would thus be expected to lead to a decrease in age at marriage from the early 1980s. That this is not seen in Figure 1 is indicative of a roughly equal development effect and some overestimation due to female emigration for marriage (Booth 1994, 2001). The strength of the marriage-market factor is apparent from the widening of the sex difference in age at marriage to 3.4 years in 1991, the female age being 21.4 years and the male 24.8 years.

Socioeconomic differentials and divergence

The recent stability in age at marriage in both populations belies the existence of socioeconomic differentials and opposing trends. Figure 3 shows male and female average age at marriage by educational attainment in 1986 and 1996 for the Fijian and Indian populations. In most cases, those with tertiary education marry later on average than those with only secondary education. These differentials are in the expected direction. The exception is Fijian males, due in part to late marriage among those in subsistence and remunerated agriculture, which in turn may be
attributed to a greater observance of tradition and a shortage of females (who leave rural areas for training).

**Educational attainment**

The decrease in age at marriage for Indian females with secondary education might be taken as indicative of a reduction in their educational attainment. However, there is no evidence to suggest that the educational attainment of Indian females is declining. Rather, the available evidence suggests that educational attainment and attainment have increased between 1986 and 1996. In 1996, 82 per cent of Indian females aged 15 years were attending school, compared with only 62 per cent in 1986 (Bureau of Statistics 1988, 1998b). A general improvement in educational attainment is indicated by the fact that among the population aged 20–29 (excluding students) the percentage with tertiary education increased from 4 to 14 between 1986 and 1996 while the percentage with secondary education decreased from 81 to 78 (the balance comprising those with primary education only).

Among Fijian females, educational attainment and attainment have also increased appreciably though age at marriage has barely changed. School attendance rates at age 15 were 57 and 79 per cent in 1986 and 1996 respectively (Bureau of Statistics 1988, 1998b). Among those aged 20–29 (students excepted) the percentages with tertiary and secondary education changed from 2 and 87 in 1986 to 10 and 84 in 1996 respectively, indicating a general improvement.

**Explanatory factors**

Thus increasing educational attendance and attainment and decreasing (or in the Fijian case roughly constant) age at marriage are occurring at the same time. One explanation for this is that in both populations, female average age at marriage is sufficiently late to absorb much of the marriage-market effect without impinging on secondary education. The youngest age in question is the average of 19.8 years for Indian females with secondary education in 1996, which is at least one year later than the completion of secondary education. Given the preponderance of arranged marriage for females with secondary education (Chandra 2000), it is likely that the range in age at marriage is relatively narrow, so that this reduced average does not necessarily imply a curtailment of secondary education. The increase in educational attendance and the decrease in age at marriage for Indian females imply that the interval between secondary school attendance and marriage decreased by at least one year between 1986 and 1996. This may imply that Indian females with secondary education have a shorter time than previously to establish themselves in employment before the commencement of childbearing.

An additional factor explaining these opposing trends and contributing to socioeconomic divergence among Indian females
is the way in which educational attainment is increasingly linked to marriage. A higher level of education increases the prospects of both a 'good' marriage and a 'love' marriage, such that education is valued, but a daughter may nevertheless be withdrawn from school for a hastily arranged marriage if family honour is in danger of being violated by her sexual impurity (Senolli 1996, Chandra 2000). Thus educational attainment and age at marriage are intertwined: early marriage is closely associated with incomplete schooling and late marriage with tertiary education. Increased sexual freedoms in society at large resulting from development may contribute to this divergence through the increasing exposure of younger adolescents to Western ideas.

Future prospects

Given the transitional basis of the marriage market effect, the trends experienced between 1986 and 1996 are unlikely to continue. For Fijians, the period of steady fertility in 1972–1983 will have produced a more balanced marriage market in 1999–2010 during which time female age at marriage is likely to increase as a result of both this greater balance and the development effect. Thereafter the fertility decline of 1984–89 will lead to a further shortage of females in 2010–2015, but since this decline is less rapid than that of 1967–1972 it may similarly not result in decreasing age at marriage.

For Indians, the shortage of females will give way to a more balanced marriage market in 2001–2006 due to steady fertility in 1976–1981. Female age at marriage is likely to increase fairly rapidly especially among the lower socioeconomic group due to both the development effect and the greater balance in the marriage market. The fertility decline of 1982–1989 will result in a further shortage of females in 2007–2014 creating the conditions for further socioeconomic divergence.

Since the timing of marriage affects the pattern and level of fertility, these fluctuations in female age at marriage may lead to some irregularity in future fertility. This in turn will affect population growth.

Policy implications

What are the policy implications of these diverging trends in female age at marriage? From many points of view, early marriage is disadvantageous. This is particularly so when other sections of the population are moving to later marriage. For the individuals involved, early marriage tends to limit educational and employment opportunities — particularly because of its association with early childbearing — and maintains the powerlessness of women. At the macro-level, lower labour-force participation limits the growth of the economy, while early childbearing encourages higher fertility and more rapid population growth. Policy measures might thus seek to encourage and provide resources for the completion of secondary and tertiary education, training and employment by females, so as to both build human capital and discourage early marriage. Since the trend towards earlier female age at marriage can only be reversed in conjunction with further increases in male age at marriage, similar measures would be needed for males.

Any policy aimed at encouraging later marriage would be more effective if accompanied by a wider availability both of educational materials on sexuality and reproductive health and of contraceptives to young people. This would aim to reduce premarital conceptions and associated marriages. In the Fijian case, where significant numbers of births occur before marriage (Reproductive and Family Health Association 1996), both the mother and child are vulnerable to disadvantage. In the Indian case, a reduction in the number of abortions and unwanted marriages, which are often the result of premarital sexual activity, would clearly be beneficial. A policy to broaden societal acceptability of contraceptive use among young people would also encourage the use of contraceptives to delay the first birth within marriage. Indeed, if the timing of childbearing were not so closely tied to the timing of marriage, early marriage would not be so disadvantageous to women.

Finally, policies aimed at ensuring equal access to tertiary education and training would help to redress the disadvantage suffered by those young women whose education is terminated by marriage or motherhood. It should be acknowledged that the pressures on females to marry early not only exist, but are due to past trends which have been beneficial to society as a whole.

Notes

1 An increase may also occur in the proportion of males who never marry.
2 Educational attainment groups exclude students.
3 The constant sex difference for the total Fijian population is due to its inclusion of those with only primary education and students.
4 Comparable data at ages 16 and above are not available.

References


Young men and sexual risk behaviour in Fiji

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Introduction

The increase in incidence of reported HIV/AIDS positive cases in Fiji indicates that there is a need to revisit and assess the reproductive and sexual behaviour of indigenous Fijian men. Today, Fijian men are at high risk of becoming HIV positive. At the end of 2002, the number of people who were HIV positive in Fiji was 111; from 1999 to 2002 the number of reported cases of HIV positive increased by 92 per cent. About 80 per cent of those infected with HIV in Fiji are indigenous Fijians. Seventy per cent of those who are HIV positive are males, while 62 per cent are young adults aged 20–29 years.

This paper looks at the socio-cultural factors, including changing sexual values, which influence the reproductive and sexual behaviours of young men in Fiji. Two social features that influence behaviours— the changing institutions and tools used to disseminate knowledge on sexual behaviour, and the incidence of unsafe sexual practices among young Fijian men, including casual sex, group sex and exposure to child abuse—are discussed. The paper draws on selected results from a 2001 study carried out in Suva of men aged 15–24. The data collected included structured interviews (n=822), focus group discussions (n=6), in-depth interviews (48) and participant observation.

Dissemination of knowledge

The source of information on reproductive and sexual health behaviour plays an important role in influencing an individual's attitudes and sexual behaviours. Studies have noted that although individuals are knowledgeable about reproductive and sexual health risks, there is a still a tendency to engage in high-risk practices (Werdelin et al. 1992, Grunseit et al. 1994, Utomo 1997, Kaitani 2000). One of the major reasons that knowledge and practice contradict is the individual's attitude to the source of information and/or to the mode of transmitting knowledge on reproductive and sexual behaviour.

Throughout the Pacific, there is a general assumption that the norms relating to sexuality are not a subject for open discussion. Sexuality is a taboo topic in mixed gender and age groups and among people in certain kinship relationships. It is regarded as disrespectful to discuss sexuality in the presence of, for example, siblings and elders. However, knowledge on sexual and reproductive behaviour is today mostly disseminated through peers, the mass media, magazines, books, videos, and motion pictures.

In the past, knowledge on reproductive and sexual behaviour was obtained through stories and tales passed from one generation to another; by observing the behaviour of the older generation; and from people whose special role was to disseminate such knowledge—grandparents, uncles and aunts, other extended family members and peers. When the members of a society did not follow the norms of society they were punished; when they adhered to prevailing norms they were rewarded.

History shows that knowledge of reproductive and sexual behaviour has been passed down from one generation to another through a relative (third party) whom the recipient of the information respected because of their kinship relationship and status in society. For example, in the Fijian culture it is general practice for the youth to receive information and to be advised by grandparents, uncles and aunts. Young men respected the advice because to disobey would be to show disrespect. Today, the third parties who disseminate knowledge may have weaker kinship relationships with those receiving the knowledge. The advice and information received may not always be followed because there is little cultural expectation of respect towards these relatives.

These are major reasons why knowledge and behaviour are contradictory. This in turn indicates that there is a need to reassess the tools used to disseminate knowledge, perhaps so that these can be developed to positively influence attitudes and behaviours. The mass media, books and magazines, and television and motion pictures cannot be relied on to fill the traditional role of third parties, because information from these sources is not always accurate or reliable.

Child abuse

The reported incidences of sexual abuse of children in Fiji are rising, yet there are no reported cases of incest or sexual assault on young boys. The study revealed that young boys are sexually abused, but that this is kept a secret by both the abused and the abuser because society sees it as masculine for men to enjoy any form of sexual practice. Children are no longer safe in the hands of relatives and friends, indicating a breakdown in the traditional...
Casual sex

Although premarital sex is not culturally accepted it is still practiced in society. While it is generally assumed that first sexual intercourse occurs after marriage, the survey showed that 80 per cent of those who have never married have had sexual intercourse. Traditionally, if a man is having an affair with a young woman, the woman's relatives can force the man into marriage. The custom is less common today, allowing Fijian men to have premarital sex with little chance of being forced into marriage.

The closed village communities Fijians once lived in have not translated to life in urban areas. Thus, for example, news of what a girl might do in another suburban area is unlikely to filter back to her immediate family. As a result, adolescents and young adults engage in premarital sex without the knowledge of their parents and immediate relatives. Parents are ignorant of their children's sexual relationships, assuming that cultural and religious taboos mean their children will not engage in premarital sex. Parents also have double standards—they would never allow their children to have premarital sex or bring their dates home, but they will allow their relatives to bring casual dates home for the night.

Casual sex is common among Fijian youths, and the most common meeting place to get a partner for casual sex or a one-night stand is in nightclubs. Asked why they go to nightspots, many young men replied that they go solely for the three Fs (FFF or F³—meaning to Fix, Fuck and Forget). This is common knowledge and an accepted behaviour among young men and women.

The incidence of casual sex is common among people with sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Interviews with patients who attended a Suva clinic showed that most were infected through casual and unprotected sex. Some informants did not even know their partners' names. Those who knew their partners stated that their affairs were mostly one-off encounters. The survey also showed that 72 per cent of the never-married males who have had coitus did not have a regular partner. This reflects the high incidence of casual sex taking place amongst indigenous Fijians.

Barriers to behavioural change

The main issues affecting reproductive and sexual health and behaviour are discussed below. First is the contradiction between knowledge of reproductive and sexual health risks and participation in high-risk behaviours. Information, education and communication (IEC) are priorities in Fiji's efforts to improve reproductive and sexual health services and behaviours. It was observed, however, that many people are not fully informed about reproductive and sexual health issues. As one 18-year-old STI patient reported: 'I know about condoms, but I do not know about where can I get it ... [that] it also free ... I do not know how to use it.'

As the above example shows, although the concept of condom use is well known, some young people have never actually seen a condom. This is not helped by the fact that is not culturally acceptable to show a condom in public places. Similarly, many men have a poor understanding of women's bodies. For example, men's understanding of the menstrual cycle is often based on myth. Thus, the bare biological aspects of reproduction taught in schools are inadequate, and there is a need to broaden men's knowledge on the social factors influencing reproductive behaviour.

Second, the traditional institutions used to educate Fijian children on accepted norms have disappeared in the process of development and modernisation, while the increase in the incidence of casual sex implies that it is becoming an accepted norm in society. Casual sex is a risk behaviour that could result in the transmission of STI. In an age of HIV/AIDS this is high-risk behaviour.

Third is the issue of double standards and secrets. There are many types of secrets which men have—secrets about sexual abuse, unacceptable love affairs, extra-marital affairs and even masturbation.

Men hide their secrets from the public for fear of being rejected, given unacceptable names or punished. One study informant stated that his participation in the survey was the first time he had told anyone about abuse he had suffered as a child 10 years earlier. The informant believed that the incident had led to his being aggressive during sexual encounters. In addition, double standards are common. Although extramarital affairs are not culturally accepted, they are a common practice among some Fijian men. Although premarital sex is not accepted culturally or in religious beliefs, it is commonly practiced amongst Fijian youths. The traditional importance of maintaining virginity before marriage is fast disappearing.

Finally, there is the issue of the interpretations of traditional and religious values and practices. People cannot differentiate traditional values from religious values. One must define what are our traditional values today because cultural and traditional values and beliefs are common barriers to behavioural change in society. It must be noted that traditional values change over time.
Conclusion and recommendations

The issues discussed above reflect the evolution of traditional and cultural values in Fiji. The disappearance of traditional institutions and customs, such as the role of the extended family in caring for children and grandparents as educators of children, has led to a breakdown in the system. Young people are not knowledgeable and well informed about sexuality, and this is clearly shown through the increase in sexual abuse, incest and promiscuity in Fiji. There is a clear indication that parents and educators do not want to accept the fact that adolescents are having sexual intercourse and sexual experiences. There is a need for new institutions to replace those that have disappeared in the process of modernisation. Traditional institutions must be reconstructed or new model institutions constructed to replace the extended family structure and the role of grandparents as educators of young people.

It is recommended that sexual and reproductive health education begin at primary level. At the same time, sexual health education and public awareness programs must continue at all levels of society. The development of popular television programs that communicate accurate and reliable information should be encouraged. Educating the public in this way will be more effective than the charts and pamphlets used today.

More research is needed to identify the factors that influence men’s reproductive and sexual behaviours. To date, little research has been carried out on the reproductive and sexual behaviour of men and women in general, and little is known about historical influences on the sexual behaviours of indigenous Fijians. Behavioural trends and patterns need to be identified in order to address behavioural issues.

Finally, the problems created by double standards and secrets can only be resolved through the process of breaking down cultural and religious taboos. Fijian men should not hide behind the curtain called culture and religion, and open dialogue on sexuality must be encouraged in society.

References


Stripping South Africa of its human capital

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Introduction

Hugo's (2002:4) 14 main questions about Australia's population included the following:

'Is Australian immigration contributing to a costly brain drain from less developed countries? In the case of Africa, and particularly South Africa, the answer to this question — as shown by birthplace data on the South Africa-born in the 1996 Australian and New Zealand censuses — must be yes. These are not the only countries stripping South Africa of its stock of human capital, with the United Kingdom holding first place in this regard. However, whereas European nations may in some sense be claiming back many of their own citizens, Australia and New Zealand have no such claim.

The 1996 census of South Africa was the first to be held after the dismantling of apartheid and the first democratic elections in 1994. Around the same time, South Africa's legal immigrants began to be consistently outnumbered by emigrants going to the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, the United States of America and other countries. Because of apartheid, South Africa's permanent skilled immigrants had mostly been white people. The brain drain that accelerated during the 1990s was again predominantly white.

With additional support from the National Research Foundation, Pretoria and the North West Provincial Government, and financial support from the South African Human Sciences Research Council, the Population Unit of the University of the North West was able to undertake primary analysis of those born overseas but living in South Africa, using the 10 per cent sample of the population on which the 1996 South African census was based. Using published census data on the South Africa-born living in Australia and New Zealand, it is possible to compare the characteristics of different groups of migrants to give a partial picture of South Africa's brain drain, as is shown in Table 1.

In 1996, the white population of South Africa numbered around 4.4 million, of which 8 per cent were born overseas, with perhaps 1 per cent of the total born in the UK. Since the UK has been a major source of immigrants to South Africa in the past, many South Africans are British citizens with a right to enter the UK, the major destination country. Although there is little detailed census information on these immigrants, van Rooyen (2000:25) estimates that they number 300,000, without giving a source or specifying whether these were all South African born.

Since Australian and New Zealand citizens can move freely between their two countries, these countries can be considered together and hold second place after the UK. Recent 2001 census figures show the number of South Africa-born was just over 79,000 in Australia while New Zealand had around 26,000. This total of 105,000 is a gain of 32,000 or 44 per cent in the intercensal period 1996–2001.

Table 1 Overseas-born aged 15 and over in South Africa and the South Africa-born in Australia and New Zealand: Percentage distribution by qualifications, sex and population group, 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>South African residents</th>
<th>South Africa-born in Australia</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overseas-born</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma etc</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25,271</td>
<td>8,528</td>
<td>14,958</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: The South African census was based on a 10 per cent sample, whereas the actual numbers are used for Australia and New Zealand. Differences in the totals are due to rounding.
South Africa's brain gain and brain drain

In the analysis of the sample of the overseas born in South Africa in 1996 the main emphasis was on two population groups, the whites and the blacks, since they comprise most of the enumerated immigrants. The analysis confirmed the effectiveness of apartheid policies. White immigration was encouraged while black people were brought in as contract labour to work in the mines and agriculture, and had no rights to settle. Black immigrants to South Africa were shown to be predominantly unskilled and lacking in qualifications, as shown in Table 1. Indeed, the black immigrants appeared to be as poorly qualified as the black population of South Africa as a whole.

Since emigrants from South Africa to the major destinations are predominantly white, South Africa's brain drain and gain can be assessed by comparing the emigrants with South Africa's white population, as in Table 1. From this table it can be estimated that South Africa gained about 36,000 overseas-born white graduates. Further analysis of the 10 per cent sample (not included in Table 1) shows that if the Black, Asian and Coloured population groups are added, this number rises to around 43,000.

Australia and New Zealand had gained between them about 15,000 South African-born graduates by 1996. By 2001, the number in New Zealand had more than doubled, to around 5,500 (Statistics New Zealand 2001:138). Given that the UK is the major destination and that there are other important destinations, such as the USA, for skilled workers, it must be assumed that by now the South African brain drain is well established, and has exceeded the previous brain gain. Part of South Africa's brain gain in the past comprised white people moving from other African countries as they achieved independence, a source of immigrants that could not be sustained.

Compensating for the brain drain

According to Olesan (2002), the ways that source countries may profit from the brain drain include:

- overseas development assistance from the country of destination,
- remittances, and
- return migration.

Overseas development assistance

Africa is not of major concern to Australia; in recent year the overseas development assistance budget for South Africa has been similar to that for Samoa. In its response to the 2003–2004 Federal Budget, the Australian Council for Overseas Aid (2003:2) noted that, in real terms, aid to Africa had decreased by 54 per cent since 1995–1996. As shown on its web pages, the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID) has similar geographical priorities to Australia and 'works closely with other Pacific donors like Australia' (NZAID 2002).

According to Downer (2003:40), Australia's aid program in 2003–2004 will support land care and governance projects. In the period 1996–2003, Australia contributed A$6.2 million to the Australia South Africa Institutional Links Program, which linked Australian and South African higher education institutions through 30 funded projects (Stokes 2003). However, this program has now ended. More recently, Australia has assisted the African Virtual University in Nairobi to provide improved access to university education for African students (Downer 2003:40).

Remittances

Remittances are seen as having a beneficial impact on the sending countries and many African countries rely heavily on remittances from migrant workers (Olesan 2002). However, the South African economy has traditionally been a provider of remittances rather than a recipient. Lesotho and Mozambique, in particular, have had large numbers of contract workers in the South African mining industry sending savings to their families at home. For many years, South Africa has been reducing its reliance on overseas contract workers, which presumably has meant a smaller outflow of funds.

Return migration

According to Olesan (2002:138), 'It appears that the maximum benefit to the sending country is obtained when highly skilled migrants leave for relatively short periods of ten to 15 years, remit while they are away, and return with financial and human and social capital.' Recent research in South Africa by the Human Sciences Research Council suggests that most graduates who wanted to go overseas did not intend to settle there permanently, and Australia's relaxation of the rules for temporary migrants might enhance the possibilities envisaged by Olesan. On the other hand, there is little evidence of return migration.
from Australia and New Zealand, and given that major reasons for emigrating include crime and black empowerment, return migration by white people seems unlikely.

Discussion

As shown above, Australia has made some efforts to improve Africa's human capital.

However, aid is largely allocated on geopolitical considerations so there is no reason why either Australia or New Zealand should try to compensate Africa for its brain drain. At the same time, aid and immigration programs are unconnected but may in fact be in conflict. While AusAID (Australian Agency for International Development) and NZAID emphasise 'building capacity' and 'good governance', national immigration programs have the effect of reducing capacity in the source countries and may negatively affect governance.

Destination countries such as Australia and New Zealand can also use immigration to offset their own poor capacity building and manpower. For example, the shortage of nurses in the developed world is widespread. One estimate is that there is currently a shortage of 5,000 nurses in Australia, a number which will increase sixfold in the next five years because of the ageing of the profession. Australia has made it more difficult to become a nurse by shifting the training from hospitals to universities and there are now more applicants than university places (Vergani 2003), yet the recent Australian budget included provision for only a few hundred new places.

In the UK, 2,114 nurses were recruited from South Africa in 2001 alone. Dr Evan Harris, Liberal Democrat spokesman on health, echoing Nelson Mandela, said that it was unacceptable to recruit nurses, 'from third world countries that had too few of their own staff' (Day 2002). There is, however, little that governments can do within the framework of a non-discriminatory immigration policy. Whereas they can say that nurses — or, in Australia's case, doctors — are not needed, they cannot say nurses are needed but that Africans need not apply.

Table 1 suggests that emigrants to New Zealand are as well qualified as those to Australia, even though New Zealand is believed to be easier to enter than Australia. Yet, because of the free movement of Australian and New Zealand citizens across the Tasman, these countries may be eventually taking South Africans with skills that are not needed at the final destination. When Australia was discouraging the immigration of doctors (Birrell 1997), there is anecdotal support for the idea that South African doctors were reaching Australia after spending two years in New Zealand and acquiring citizenship.

In contrast, South Africa has chronic shortages of skilled labour and has had very restrictive immigration policies since 1994. An attempt was made to remedy this by promulgating new immigration regulations, but these were felt to be controversial and confusing, and were ruled to be unconstitutional by the Cape High Court in April 2003 (South African Migration Project 2003:22–31).

Conclusion

Destination countries such as Australia and New Zealand will be of little assistance to South Africa, which will have to solve its skills shortage largely on its own. The current outflow of white people who are unlikely to return means that the shortages in South Africa will persist in the medium term. The loss of experienced workers through HIV/AIDS will compound this. One short-term solution, bringing in skilled Africans from other countries, may not be politically acceptable.

Note

* In order to monitor progress, Statistics South Africa has continued to classify people into four main population groups: White, African/Black, Indian/Asian, and Coloured. The term Black is used above in preference to African because a number of White immigrants are from Africa.

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Population Change in Asia and the Pacific: 
Implications for Development Policy
Discussion and recommendations from the policy workshop

Pamela Thomas, Development Studies Network, Australian National University, Canberra

The Development Studies Network symposium on population change in Asia and the Pacific was followed by a full-day workshop aimed at identifying the key issues that need to be addressed to assist Asia-Pacific countries in meeting the UN's Millennium Development Goals. The workshop was then tasked to recommend practical policies for donors that would help address these issues.

The workshop was attended by 35 internationally recognised demographers, economists and health professionals, as well as representatives of government, non-government and donor organisations from a number of counties in Asia and the Pacific, Australia and New Zealand. The participants worked together to identify common issues and concerns, then divided into region-specific working groups to consider and formulate the key issues for Asia, Melanesia and Polynesia, key cross-cutting issues, and overall policy recommendations for donors.

Key issues identified

The key issues identified by the workshop participants were:

1. continued high levels of population growth and its relationship to poverty;
2. limited infrastructure and support for reproductive health and family planning services and high levels of unmet demand;
3. changes in population structure resulting from declining infant mortality, increased life expectancy, HIV/AIDS and migration of young men;
4. extensive and increasing national and international, legal and illegal movement of people;
5. limited availability of detailed demographic data and information about its social and economic implications; and
6. limited consideration for demographic change in development planning and policy making.

Population growth

Population growth and lack of opportunities to make choices about fertility remain a major hindrance to alleviating poverty in the region. This will remain a key development issue for at least the next 50 years, as current high fertility means ongoing rapid increases in those of reproductive age. The long-term implications of continued high fertility in the countries of Melanesia, Cambodia and Laos exacerbate existing problems related to lack of arable land, shortage of water, lack of safe waste disposal, urban migration of the poor and displaced, and the development of an even larger urban underclass. In Polynesian communities, in particular those in New Zealand, continued high fertility and its consequences are masked by out-migration and remittances from family members living overseas. The workshop discussion highlighted the relationship between rapid population growth and increased poverty, the escalation in violence, lawlessness and political instability, and a likely rapid increase in illegal international migration. There was agreement that high fertility and accompanying poor health directly affect the ability of families to accumulate capital and to feed and educate children, thus eroding economic, social and environmental development.

By all measures of poverty, the countries in the region that need most assistance are Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Cambodia and Laos. All feature high fertility, high infant and maternal mortality, high unemployment, especially among young people, and, with the possible exception of Vanuatu, high risk of HIV/AIDS and political instability. Similar situations exist in Afghanistan, Pakistan and parts of Indonesia.

There is a need for a multifaceted approach to addressing continued high fertility, including increased effort in providing education for girls; empowerment and economic opportunities for women; and continued support for young people, including educational places, employment opportunities and access to reproductive health services and contraception. The lack of incentives for reducing fertility in very poor communities or those where there are high levels of migration and remittances is an important factor in continued high fertility.
Access to reproductive health and family planning

There is need for greatly increased support for maternal child health and reproductive health services; and user-friendly access to family planning, including for young, unmarried people. Withdrawal or a reduction in funding for family planning activities and the withdrawal or collapse of rural and public health services, combined with user-unfriendly services and lack of regular supplies of contraceptives (and, in some countries, the introduction of user pays systems), have left rural populations in poorer countries with extremely limited access to health services. To a large extent, active family planning services were found to be those run by non-governmental organisations, including churches.

Innovative programs need to be established for young people as an urgent priority. An example of a very successful and user-friendly reproductive health service for young people is the Wan Smolbag Theatre Group in Vanuatu. The theatre group provides a youth drop-in centre with TV and music, information on reproductive health, as well as professional contraceptive services. The theatre group also provides community theatre, which deals with reproductive health issues, videos and a regular radio soap opera.

Changes in population structure

Unexpectedly rapid changes in the population structure in countries in the region over the last 50 years have led to problems associated with an older population and an increase in the proportion of school-aged children. The result is a very high dependency ratio, providing yet another factor keeping the poor in poverty. The impact of HIV/AIDS in Asian countries and Papua New Guinea will increase the dependency ratio further as those of working age become ill and die. Social and economic implications of increases in both the elderly and the dependency ratio are not being addressed by governments or by donors. The specialised and high cost of health needs for older people and the lack of policies or social services to deal with the elderly poor, a high proportion of whom are women, and an increasing number of whom will be without family support are emerging issues. However, policies and programs that address the education, employment and reproductive health needs of young people are more urgent than those for the elderly.

Population movement

Internal and international migration and short-term labour migration and the impact of these extensive and increasing population movements will be key development issues this century. Unauthorised internal and international migration are of very high significance in social and economic development and poverty reduction in Asia.

Extensive national and international labour migration in Asia has changed population structures, often leaving women and children in poor rural areas without adequate support. Abuse of female workers and the health problems, including HIV/AIDS, associated with labour migration are not being adequately dealt with and will worsen as population movement increases.

Brain drain is another significant issue, particularly in the small Pacific Island countries. Out-migration of health workers and school teachers from Fiji and Tonga is currently crippling the provision of these services, and the situation will worsen. Rural to urban migration of trained service providers is having a similar impact on other Pacific Island and Asian countries.

Urbanisation and the inability of countries to provide adequate infrastructure to support the rapid influx of the very poor is considered to be a major social and economic issue throughout the region. Adequate facilities, infrastructure and policies need to be put in place to deal with urban migration and legitimate avenues for immigration to developed countries negotiated to reduce the risk to regional security.

An emerging trend in Polynesian countries is the increase in criminal behaviour related to the deportation of young people (usually men) from New Zealand, Australia and the United States back to their country of origin. Pacific Island governments have no policies or institutional infrastructure for dealing with these young people, who have been in trouble with the law in overseas countries, have little respect for traditional culture, are unemployed and are not necessarily wanted by their extended families.

Availability and use of demographic data

There are widespread difficulties in planning and policy making among national governments and donors as a result of lack of reliable demographic data; the lack of analysis of the social and economic implications of data; and the shortage of detailed sub-regional data. Capacity in the region to provide relevant and useful data is very limited. This is closely related to limited recognition of the value of good demographic information in the planning and policy-making process, both among governments and donor organisations. It is exacerbated by the limited recognition that population is a cross-cutting issue and not related solely to fertility and family planning. As a result, planning and policy-making is undertaken without taking critical demographic trends or their implications into consideration. Examples are education plans that do not take into consideration the impact of urban migration or of the attrition rate for school teachers, and health planning that does not allow for the costs, staffing and services required to address the rapid increase in the chronic diseases of the elderly. Where data is available in-country, it is often not made available to planners and/or is not shared with those in other
sectors. Finally, Australia has considerable expertise in collection and analysis of demographic data and training, which could be of assistance in this area.

Feedback from working groups

Polynesia
The key population issues facing Polynesian countries decided upon were:

- **Youth unemployment**: Although education levels are high for both girls and boys in Polynesian countries, there are limited opportunities for paid employment, particularly on smaller islands. Around 50% of the unemployed are youth. The situation is exacerbated by the shortage of land and growing lack of interest in working in agriculture. Governments have no comprehensive programs to deal with this issue. High levels of urban and international migration among young people are considered to result largely from the lack of outer island development or opportunities for young people, but there is no data collected on inter-island migration. Infrastructure development and training opportunities for young people has been shown to keep them on their home islands. For example, infrastructure development on Haapai group in Tonga is now so advanced that members of the younger generation are looking for employment opportunities at home. This was thought to be a potential area for donor support.

- **Deportees**: There are no policies or institutional structures to deal with deportees. This problem needs to be incorporated within the population policy as deportees usually end up as troublemakers who have difficulty fitting back into island society. Some have never have lived in Tonga or Samoa, and are ending up on the streets. Unofficial deportees are young people often born overseas and who are legal immigrants in developed countries, but whose families send them back to relatives in the islands because they are causing trouble.

- **Migration and brain drain**: International migration and remittances home have been features of Polynesian social and economic systems for the last 40 years. The current trend is for rapid migration overseas of skilled people, especially teachers and nurses. Remittances remain an important part of the household and national economies, and governments need to reconsider training programs and policies for retaining trained workers.

- **Development planning**: Population issues are not adequately incorporated into country development planning because information is not readily accessible; there is often political opposition to sharing information; and there is very limited cross-sectoral communication in the planning process.

Southeast Asia

- **Poverty and high fertility**: Participants in the Southeast Asia group agreed that the key issues are continued high fertility, high infant, child and maternal mortality in Cambodia, Laos and parts of Indonesia. A similar situation exists in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Burma. These issues are closely related to poverty.

- **Unmet basic needs**: Basic needs still need to be fully addressed in Southeast Asian countries. They are all closely related to population change. The basic needs approach was considered to be extremely relevant and to provide a framework within which reproductive health and family planning can be incorporated. It was agreed that the Millennium Goals provide an accepted and useful, if incomplete, framework in the approach to reproductive health and family planning.

- **Increased HIV/AIDS**: Current projections show higher rates of HIV/AIDS. Throughout the countries of Southeast Asia today, the already high rates of HIV/AIDS are creating social and economic problems.

- **Human resource development**: It was agreed that a feature in large parts of the region continues to be low levels of human resource development, including gender inequality, and limited education, health and food security, notwithstanding considerable donor assistance.

- **Governance**: Corruption and governance are still of matters of concern in countries that are attempting to deal with population issues. Participants noted that in some countries, even where there is good governance there are constraints in dealing with reproductive health, family planning and other population change issues. These constraints are caused by requirements to operate in accordance with IMF and World Bank policies for reform, and by the promotion of user-pays health and education.
systems. It was suggested that World Bank should promote a reduction in arms spending rather than a reduction in health and education spending.

Melanesia

- Poverty indicators: Melanesian countries, with the exception of Fiji, remain among the least developed countries on most poverty and human resource development indicators. They are characterised by high fertility, high infant, child and maternal mortality, poor education levels, widespread lack of employment opportunities for young people and increasing levels of conflict. Participants discussed the impact of population pressure on resources, which included conflict related to lack of access to economic and political resources. Lack of access to land; the depletion of forest and marine resources and growing levels of soil degradation as steep slopes are cultivated, contribute to an escalation in instability and poverty.
- Support for family planning: Participants considered there was insufficient support for long-term promotion of family planning or for ongoing advocacy at the political level, resulting in very limited services on the ground, particularly in rural areas where a high proportion of the population lives.
- Infrastructure: Throughout Melanesia, with the exception of Fiji, the lack of rural infrastructure contributes to serious constraints in the delivery of services and medical and contraceptive supplies. Government maternal and child health care and family planning services do not function in many areas. There is a related need for more roads, electricity (hydro and solar), and more communication (for example, two-way radios).
- Youth education and unemployment: All Melanesian countries have a very high under-25 population with low educational qualifications. With the exception of Fiji, around 50 per cent are unable to finish primary school as places are not available. Schools currently cannot keep pace with the expanding population. This situation is likely to continue. Associated with low levels of education is a widespread problem of unemployment or under-employment among young people and a corresponding escalation in violence and instability. Current education is seldom appropriate for rural job creation. Most young people do not have access to reproductive health information or family planning services.

East Asia

- Internal migration: In China there is a 'floating population' of around 100 million. As they do not have authority to move, they are without rights and form a large proportion of the very poor. There is limited data available on this population, which makes it difficult to improve their living standards and provide rights.
- Environmental deterioration: East Asia is characterised by serious environmental deterioration resulting from overuse of land, industrial pollution of land, air and water, and salinity. Participants agreed that 'technological leapfrogging' is needed, and that these countries learn from the mistakes of further developed countries. For example, greater use should be made of composting toilets, solar cells and communication via mobile rather than landline.
- Institutional reform: In the past, strong socialist economies provided good public health for low-income earners, but the situation is now changing with an increase in privatisation and the loss of public services. Participants considered this a real risk for poverty reduction, particularly when accompanied by the lack of correct information. Incorrect information has contributed to a number of problems, for example with HIV and SARS.

Issues for development policy and donor assistance

There was agreement among workshop participants that the following were priorities to be addressed in donor development policy.

Current priorities

1. Further strengthen the capacity of the poorest countries in the region to address, as a matter of high priority, the unresolved issues of continuing high fertility, high infant, child and maternal mortality and low rates of education. As rapid population growth is shown to be a critical barrier to poverty reduction and to regional stability there is an urgent need to increase support for reproductive health services and family planning, including the provision of information
on reproductive health and contraception for young people, and to further support basic education, particularly for girls, as a key factor in lowering fertility.

- Strengthened support should be given to improving the infrastructure for integrated health service and family planning service delivery, with increased support to non-government organisations where these have been shown to have a strong track record.

- Strengthened support should be given to providing innovative and user-friendly reproductive health services for young people, including access to contraception. Services specifically developed for young people should be incorporated within all programs of support for reproductive health. Greater support needs to be given to providing reproductive health within primary and secondary school curricula.

- A policy for addressing population growth should be developed with support sharply focused on countries and/or specific areas within country where high levels of poverty have been identified. Countries identified by the workshop were Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, East Timor, Cambodia and Laos.

- Support for strengthened reproductive health and family planning services should be incorporated within the policy frameworks for poverty reduction, building human capital and security, and within the overall strategy of meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

2. Strengthen capacity of governments and non-government organisations in Asia and the Pacific to identify and use demographic data as a key tool in development planning and policy development.

Detailed demographic data relating to current and future population growth, national and international population movement, population location and densities, population structures and dependency ratios, occupations and health status together with analysis of the future social and economic implications of this information are critical for adequate national planning and for planning donor assistance. Moreover, increased support is needed to make this data available and to encourage its use.

- The capacity of universities, key research organisations and government departments to undertake high quality demographic research and analysis that has a focus on the future implications of population change needs to be strengthened throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Support for national and international demographic training should be increased. Australia has an advantage in providing demographic training both in-country and in Australia.

- Support is required to strengthen skills in development planning and the utilisation of demographic data, and to encourage cross-sectoral understanding that demographic information extends beyond population growth policy areas.

- Donor policy should require that analysis of demographic information and the future implications of demographic change is included in the development of all country program strategies.

- Donor policy should require that any demographic information and analysis undertaken with support from the donor is made widely available and is discussed in cross-sectoral workshops.

- Support for strengthened development planning capacity should be incorporated within the policy frameworks for good governance and development of human capital.

Emerging issues

3. Build government capacity in the region to address rapid urbanisation and legal and unauthorised cross-border migration in ways that accord with human rights agreements and reduce the likelihood of conflict and increased poverty. The most critical emerging population issue for this century will be population movement. Unprecedented rates of urbanisation and an increasingly widespread international movement of people increase the likelihood of conflict and destabilisation, human rights abuses, lack of access to basic services and increased poverty. The situation calls for concerted efforts to support infrastructural development and capacity building.

- Build the capacity of universities, key research organisations and government departments to monitor national and international migration, including urbanisation and unauthorised cross-border and refugee movements, and assist with the development of appropriate policy responses that accord with basic human needs and international human rights agreements.
• Support skills development in research into the location, nature and origins of national and international population movements.
• Provide technical assistance in planning and building urban infrastructure, including inexpensive housing, water supply, health and education services for the rapidly growing numbers of urban poor and support the development of policies that will equally protect the rights of women, children and those from different ethnic groups.
• Support the development of policies and institutional infrastructure that will allow urban migrants and deportees to have access to social services.
• Donor policy should require that basic human needs, human rights and gender concerns are incorporated in assistance that deals with population movement.
• Provision of assistance with issues surrounding population movement should be incorporated within the policy frameworks for human resource development, governance and security.

4. Build capacity to provide appropriate skills-based education and income generating activities for young people.
A key issue in the likelihood of increasing regional conflict, instability and poverty will be the rapid increase in the numbers of unemployed young people, many of whom will live in rural areas, with limited opportunities for education that would provide employment opportunities or the skills that would allow them to contribute economically to their rural communities.
• Strengthen non-formal, community-based education that focuses on practical skills-based training for young people that will support income-generating activities in their own communities.
• Provision of further assistance with innovative, community-based leadership programs for young people.
• Consideration for strengthened non-formal, skills-based education for out-of-school youth should be incorporated within policy frameworks for poverty reduction, building human capital, and within the overall strategy of meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

5. Build institutional capacity to provide appropriate policies, services and support for the elderly.
As life expectancy increases and the average age of populations rises, a growing proportion of the population in Asian and Pacific countries will be over the age of 65. As those in the poorest countries do not have savings, superannuation or pensions and governments have no social services for the elderly and destitute, policies for support for the elderly are a matter of priority.
• Provide technical assistance to explore planned savings for the elderly, including insurance, superannuation and pension schemes, with a special focus on the situation of elderly widows.
• Build human resources in care of the elderly and provision of health services that deal with the diseases of old age.
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New Books

**Demographic Methods and Concepts**


This book makes accessible the most commonly needed techniques for working with population statistics, irrespective of the reader's mathematical background. For the first time in such a text, concepts and practical strategies needed in the interpretation of demographic indices and data are included. Spreadsheet training exercises enable students to acquire the computer skills needed for demographic work. The accompanying free CD-ROM contains innovative, fully integrated learning modules as well as applications facilitating demographic studies.

A website to supplement this title is available at <http://www.oup.co.uk/best.textbooks/geography/rowland/>.

**80:20 Development in an Unequal World**

Colm Regan (ed), 2002. ISBN 095351366 6, £16.00. Published by and available from 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World, St Cronan’s National School, Vevay Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow, Ireland. Tel: +353 1 286 0487; Email: info@80.20.ie. Also TIDE, 999 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6LE, England. Tel: +0044 121 415 2320; Email: info@tidec.org.

This is a new comprehensive introduction to many of the major development, human rights and justice issues which affect us all. It is written and designed to be used in a variety of educational settings by an international network of experienced development educators. As well as comprehensive use of statistics, case studies, graphs, website information and so on, 80:20 also includes a specially commissioned set of viewpoints from authors such as Robert Chambers and Bhiku Parekh. New cartoons by Martyn Turner and Brick are also featured.

**Innovative Governance: Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities and Protected Areas**

Hanna Jaireth and Dermot Smyth (eds), 2003. US$15 (plus US$10 airmail postage). Ane Books, 4821 Parwana Bhawan, 1st Floor, 24 Anari Road, Darya Ganj, Delhi – 110002 New Delhi, 200. Fax: 23276863; Email: anebooks@vsnl.com.

This book identifies and promotes innovative approaches to protected area governance for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development for Indigenous peoples and local communities. It aims to promote law reform and the transfer of policy ideas and recommendations within and across jurisdictions. Innovations from ‘the south’ feature prominently.

Contributors analyse laws and policies that are taking protected area governance in new and positive directions. The introductory chapter highlights three trends explored in the book: the wide range of actors that can now designate and manage protected areas, particularly community conserved areas; the broader scale being taken to the designation and management of protected areas (embracing bioregional planning,
multiple tenures and trans-boundary jurisdictions); and the extension of the concept of protected areas to include lived-in productive landscapes.

The book is one of the outputs of the IUCN Theme Group on Indigenous and Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA) and the Co-management Working Group, which are joint working groups of IUCN’s World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy (CEESP). It is being produced for IUCN stakeholders and the 2003 World Parks Congress (WPC).

**Reduction Poverty in Asia: Emerging Issues in Growth, Targeting and Measurement**

Christopher M Edmonds (ed.), 2003. ISBN 1 84376 264 1, £69.95. Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd, Glensanda House, Montpellier Parade, Cheltenham, Glos, GL50 1UA. Tel. +44 (0) 1242 226934; Fax: +44 (0) 1242 262111; Website: www.e-elgar.co.uk.

In this important book a group of distinguished authors addresses three broad themes: broad macroeconomic questions relating to poverty reduction efforts in Asia; the importance of anti-poverty interventions targeted to particular sectors or demographic groups; and issues of poverty measurement as applied to selected Asian nations. These broad themes are also considered together in detailed analyses of the poverty situations in a number of countries in Asia and the Pacific. The book is a joint publication with the Asian Development Bank.

**Passage of Change: Law, Society and Governance in the Pacific**

Anita Jowitt and Tess Newton Cain (eds), 2003. ISBN 1 74076 025 5, A$A50. Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200. Tel: +61 2 61253269; Fax: +61 2 61259975; Email: Thelma.sims@anu.edu.au.

There are many challenges facing Pacific Island states as they move into the twenty-first century and one of the greatest is establishing legitimate frameworks for issues of law and governance. In this interdisciplinary collection of writings, commentators present sociological, anthropological and political insights into such issues, including governance and corruption, human rights and customary law, resource issues and the establishment of social order. It is an excellent introduction to legal issues in the Pacific for students of law, sociology and development studies, as well as an important resource for policy makers, aid donors and those who have a more general interest in the nature of law and the state or in political theory and philosophy.

**A Kind of Mending: Restorative Justice in the Pacific Islands**

Sinclair Dinnen (ed.) with Anita Jowitt and Tess Newton Cain, 2003. ISBN 1 74076 032 8, A$34.95. Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200. Tel: +61 2 61253269; Fax: +61 2 61259975; Email: Thelma.sims@anu.edu.au.

This collection of stories and practical models is an important contribution to the policy debate on reducing and resolving conflict in Pacific Island states. As well as presenting different approaches to issues of crime and conflict and the operation of state mechanisms for law and order, it brings to the attention of a wider audience some of the more innovative and lesser-known approaches to conflict resolution and the concept of restorative justice. Contributors to the book include scholars, senior representatives of the law and justice sector, policy makers, traditional leaders, community activists and members of NGOs and church groups. They represent voices from within the Pacific — from Vanuatu, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Bougainville — as well as outsiders with experience in and knowledge of the region.


Siew-An Khoo and Peter McDonald (eds), 2003. ISBN 0868405027, pb, 320 pp, A$49.95. Published by University of New South Wales Press, available through UNIREPS customer services, Tel. (02) 9664 0999; Fax: (02) 9664 5420; Email: orders.press@unsw.edu.au.

This book tracks the profound changes that have occurred in Australia's population profile over the last 30 years and then predicts the expected population trends for the next 30. Many of these changes are well documented: Australians are living longer than ever before; men and women are marrying much later than previously, and are now more likely to live together before marriage. Couples are having children at a later age, and having fewer of them. Australians are also divorcing at a higher rate. Further changes to Australia's population have been brought about by the large increase in immigration from non-European countries over the past 25 years, with more changes anticipated over the next 20 years. Such issues, along with many others relating to Australia's current population trends and patterns, are described and analysed in this book.
Book Reviews

Primary Mother Care and Population

G Mola, J Thornton, M Breen, C Bullough, J Guillebaud, and F Addo (eds), Maurice King, Knowledge Engineer, 2003. ISBN 0 9544212 0 5 (definitive edition). ISBN 0 9544212 1 3 (politically censored edition), 412 pages, 700 illustrations. Price £17.50 in stores or £7.50 plus postage. Also available in pdf format from <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/demographic/disentrapment>. Spiegel Press, Thorntom, M Breen, Mala, 700 pages, ISBN 0 86255 0; Fax: (0) 1780 762040; Email: Sales@spiegl.co.uk.

Dr Maurice King has always been a pioneer. His first book, Medical Care in Developing Countries, was regarded as a classic soon after its publication in the mid-1960s. This book, his tenth, began as a companion volume to his Primary Child Care. Ninety per cent of it follows that precedent — beautifully illustrated, with meticulously detailed knowledge and instructions for the health workers of the developing world. But it is the remaining 10 per cent — mostly confined to the final chapter (‘The population demons’) but some flavouring other pages — that makes this book so unusual, and so controversial.

This book is primarily intended for midwives, traditional birth assistants and doctors concerned with the health of mothers and mothers to be. It is peppered with figures, aphorisms, charts and humour. I have no doubt, given the depth of detail in randomly perused pages, that this manual will be an invaluable resource for the thousands of isolated individuals who, under-recognised and underpaid, perform most of the world’s health work in the villages and slums of the developing world. Indeed, if such workers could only have one book on this subject, I would recommend this.

It is thus tragic that Oxford University Press, breaking a long publishing relationship with King, have declined to publish it. The book has an anti-Western flavour that challenges those with power. King’s first book identified global inequality as a root cause of Third World ill-health. More recently, King has challenged what he perceives as indifference by most governments and academics to overpopulation. He is especially critical of demography, arguing demographers have been diverted by the success of the Green Revolution, European grain mountains, and pension-endangering perils of future under-population. Nor has King received much support from the environmental movement or the mainstream left, each of which prefer to focus on the poverty and inequality sides of the development coin.

Living, as I do, in a population-controlled fortress, news from outside the ramparts rarely penetrates. But, in Nigeria alone, 60,000 women die each year due to complications of childbirth. A French military paper has expressed little optimism for a planned intervention in the Congo, where almost five million people have been killed in recent years. According to the UN, some 300,000 armed children now serve in Africa, some as young as seven. In Australia’s immediate region, the Solomon Islands is an increasingly violent and chaotic failed state; without major policy change and additional funds Papua New Guinea may soon follow. King identifies these phenomena as arising from a fundamental mismatch between population and resources, fuelled by population growth rates that have outrun the capacity of governments to provide infrastructure, leaving affected nations to run backwards, becoming ‘entrapped’.

For most of the last two centuries his essential thesis was far from radical, though the natural check of high infant mortality and the escape route of emigration prevented most Western cases of ‘demographic entrapment’, with the outstanding exception of Ireland. (King prefers this term as more generic than the Western-orientated ‘Malthusian entrapment’.) This thesis has remained mainstream in China, even in recent decades.

King seems to have now crept too far along the limb of political incorrectness to be widely published. According to Hugh Philpott, even the ‘politically censored’ edition of the book prepared at the behest of the distributing agency remains a hot document (I have the ‘definitive’ edition before me). King’s energy and passion has enabled an impressive and much-needed book. The final chapter is idiosyncratic, funny and provocative. Does King go too far? Some will judge not far enough, though probably not the US State Department, which gets special treatment. Surely though, that large office will not mind this small pinprick. I hope that OUP, in its wisdom, will in future enable a far larger future audience to judge for themselves.

Colin Bulter, National Centre for Epidemiology and Public Health, Australian National University, Canberra

The Earthscan Reader on NGO Management

Michael Edwards and Alan Fowler (eds), 2002. ISBN 1 85383 847 0, hardback. ISBN 1 85383 848 9, pb, Price: UK£18.95. Earthscan Publications Ltd, 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN, UK: Tel: +44 (0)1903 828 800; Fax: +44 (0)20 7728 1142; Email: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk

August 2003
To people in NGO circles the names Michael Edwards and Alan Fowler are already well known. They have designed this book to bring together into one volume some of the widely dispersed recent literature on NGOs and the challenges NGOs face. Around half the contributions are authored by the editors themselves, while the others come from a range of mainly 'Northern' NGO writers. All the articles have been previously published elsewhere. My initial reaction to the book was disappointment that there was nothing new in it, but further reflection made me realise that it would be of use to NGO managers who have not had time to or been able to access this literature over the last 10 years. This was the goal of the editors.

The selection of articles for such a volume is always fraught with difficulties, and the editors have necessarily included material that reflects their own views on the roles of NGOs as transformative agents in a rapidly changing world. Also implicit is the view that you cannot just 'manage' an NGO — leadership is required if the NGO is to successfully negotiate the choppy waters of the development environment. The main focus is on managing development programs, with only limited discussion of fundraising and resource management, although there is a useful section on managing people. The section on change (Part 3) should be particularly useful for today's NGO leaders — particularly Davine Thaw's article, which provides some particularly valuable frameworks for thinking about change. While there is a section on governance, none of the book's articles grapple adequately with some of the challenges facing board members, or the relationship between senior staff and boards, where such governance models exist. But you cannot do everything in one book!

Overall, the articles encourage a high level of conceptual thinking, and offer useful frameworks for NGO leaders to apply. They are stimulating and challenging, urging NGO leaders to build their ability to self-reflect, assist their organisation to learn, and to critically assess the impact of the work they do. However, it may have helped to include a handful of articles illustrating NGO efforts to apply such thinking. NGO people are essentially practical people, who like to learn from how others have done things. In the gender area, for example, Angela Hadjiipatras' 1997 article 'Gender and development', about ACORD's efforts to implement a gender policy would have illustrated many of the points made in the more abstract articles.

In addition to its value for NGO leaders, and particularly staff responsible for the development programs within NGOs, this book will be a useful sourcebook for students of NGOs in international development.

Janet Hunt, Senior Lecturer, International Development, RMIT University, Melbourne

Participatory Workshops: A Sourcebook of 21 Sets of Ideas and Activities

Robert Chambers, 2002. ISBN 1 85383 862 4, hb. ISBN 1 85383 862 4, pb. Price: UK£18.95. Earthscan Publications Ltd, 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1903 828 800; Fax: +44 (0)20 7278 1142; Email: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk.

This delightful little book is essentially a smorgasbord of very practical activities combined with some lessons from experience, aimed at facilitators of participatory workshops. If you are looking for theory of participation, look elsewhere, but if you have run out of good ideas for group introduction sessions or group energisers, this is the book for you. The book is divided into six sections. The first chapter deals with some basics of preparing for a workshop; the second has activity ideas for introductions, energisers, and evaluation; followed (in a rather odd position in the book) by a salutary section on things that can go wrong. The fourth section is on seating and using space; the fifth has a useful range of activities to help groups undertake analysis and learn together, and the sixth and final section covers group management and facilitator behaviours. The latter seems to focus more on reducing the effect of dominant people, rather than strategies for gradually boosting the confidence and participation of others. I would have liked to see a few more ideas and discussion about gender dynamics in groups and ways to enhance women's participation in mixed workshops.

This would be a very handy book to have for anyone required to facilitate workshops, even for the experienced facilitator who may find some fresh ideas to try out on some unsuspecting victims! The book does not try to be a guide to planning participatory workshops, rather it assumes the facilitator already has a range of planning skills, and offers a variety of activities to liven up any workshop. At the end there is a very useful reference guide to complementary materials.

Janet Hunt, Senior Lecturer, International Development, RMIT University, Melbourne

Poverty and Democracy: Self-help and Political Participation in Third World Cities

Dirk Berg-Schlosser and Norbert Kersting (eds), 2003. ISBN 1 84277 204 X, hb. ISBN 184277 205 8, pb. Zed Books Ltd, 7 Cynthia Street, London N1 9JE Tel +44 (0) 207 837 4014; Fax: +44 (0) 297 833 3960; Email: Sales@zedbooks.demon.co.uk; Website: <http://www.zedbooks.demon.co.uk>.

Poverty and Democracy is a worthy book achieved through an interesting methodology and arriving at some telling
conclusions. The editors are political scientists from Philipps University, Marburg, Germany, and the book is a culmination of years of research and fieldwork. The book sets out to examine the intersection of poverty and democracy from the perspective of shantytown dwellers in four countries: Brazil, Chile, Kenya and Ivory Coast. It seeks the 'view from below' through comparable surveys of 16 shantytowns in the four countries. Four doctoral students working with local academics and NGOs conducted the survey work.

The use of doctoral students in such a focused way is not unusual in the hard sciences, and it is interesting to see this methodology employed in the social sciences. One of the strengths of this methodology is the specific country knowledge the researchers bring to this comparativist project. The survey methodology is also quite rigorous, with 1,600 individuals being surveyed allowing for quite robust statistical analysis (there are over 50 tables and figures).

Without challenging the process, I have to admit that I was never quite convinced of the validity of the statistical conclusions based on these surveys. It is hard to control for all aspects of language, cultural and particularist distortions that must inevitably creep in. For example, in the Ivory Coast there was a strong refusal to answer questions by the most marginalised groups within these marginalised communities, women and immigrant workers. Also, the conclusion drawn from the questionnaires that 75 per cent of shantytown dwellers vote is not tested against actual voting records. The surveys have been conducted at a certain moment in time and very different results could arise a year or a decade later, depending on political changes in the country. Indeed, there are significant discrepancies between the views expressed in the older favelas and those arising in new squatter camps in Brazil. The authors themselves are alive to these problems and they acknowledge that it is difficult to reach inductive conclusions about global poverty based on the four country surveys.

The book spends most of its pages attempting to articulate the view of the shantytown folk on issues of membership of interest groups and political parties, attitudes to democracy and political leaders, and questions of trust and representation. One of the strengths of the work is the clear division between these findings and their analysis. This allows other researchers to employ the survey data in their own fields while not necessarily adopting the book's analytical findings. One of the surprising weaknesses of the volume is the lack of an index, as well as some spotty work in terms of gaps in the bibliography.

The concluding chapters attempt to draw certain common understandings. The most important finding is to debunk a widely held cliché that seems to have crept into the political discourse without the benefit of any accompanying evidence. The authors conclude that the poor shantytown inhabitants in all four countries are not listless, apathetic and passively awaiting their fate as they are sometimes portrayed. They are interested in politics and see politics as a means to escape their poverty. They join interest groups and follow relevant political developments. They see politics as directly relevant to their situation. In this regard the book adds some useful evidence to the pioneering analysis of Amartya Sen on the merits of democracy as a means of social uplift.

The penultimate chapter deals with the implications of this finding for development policy. Given the identification of poverty alleviation as the fundamental goal for so many development programs, the authors attempt to view the question 'from below'. The issue boils down to what position development policy should take towards self-help groups established by poor people. Self-help groups with all their strengths and weaknesses are seen as key actors in the development process. The self-help largely takes the form of neighbourhood interactions, often in the form of reciprocal egalitarian exchanges. The greatest limitation on these groups is their lack of resources. The question is therefore posed whether development assistance policies directed at these interactions might be able to trigger development from below. The debate on the urban poor as vectors for development thus dovetails usefully with a broader debate on development and third-sector policies currently underway in OECD capitals and beyond.

Roland Rich, Director, Centre for Democratic Institutions, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra, <http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au>.

August 2003
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This site is a goldmine for readers with an interest in development and demography issues. A vast array of topics and issues focusing on Asia and Pacific are covered. The section we have highlighted (url above), 'Asia-Pacific population and policy', features an excellent range of papers, many available online and free of charge. Examples of the material available include 'Population and environmental challenges in Asia' by Vinod Mishra, 'HIV/AIDS in China: Survey provides guidelines for improving awareness' by Chen Sheng Li, Zhang Shi Kun, Mo Li Xia, and Yang Shu Zhang, 'Assessing women's well-being in Asia' by Sidney B Westley, 'The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Asia' by Tim Brown, 'A "snapshot" of populations in Asia' by Sidney B Westley, and 'Surveys show persistence of teenage marriage and childbearing in Indonesia and Nepal' by Minja Kim Choe, Shyam Thapa, and Sulistinah Irawati Achmad.

Population and Rural and Urban Development Division (PRUDD)

PRUDD, ESCAP, United Nations Building, Rajdamnern Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand; Tel: 66-2 288-1536; Fax: 66-2 2881009; Email: ertuna.unescap@un.org; Website: http://www.unescap.org/pop/

PRUDD is a sub program of the UN ESCAP Population program. It focuses on the identification and understanding of social and economic issues in the areas of population and rural and urban development that are directly related to the alleviation of poverty; on advocacy to increase the awareness of the critical issues in population and rural and urban development among policy makers, civil society and individuals; and on the development of appropriate population, rural and urban strategies and policies to improve the quality of life of the poor.

Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference (December 2002)

http://www.unescap.org/pop/5appclindex.htm

This ESCAP site is home to a wide range of useful and downloadable documents, including country reports, background papers and parliamentary documents. The conference theme was 'Population and Poverty in Asia and the Pacific'. The organisers say that while many countries have been able to reduce fertility and improve the overall quality of life of the population, poverty still persists in many countries and has even increased in some countries, particularly since the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis. On the other hand, even in countries where fertility has declined, there are still areas and population sub-groups which are in general poorer, for whom access to health services, including reproductive health and family planning services, remains inadequate. As a result, there has been a serious rethinking of the population-development links within several agencies of the United Nations during the decade that had elapsed since the convening of the Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bali in 1992. The materials on this site reflect and expand on many of these issues.

Wan Smolbag Theatre

PO Box 1024, Port Vila, Vanuatu. Tel: (678) 27119/24397; Fax: (678) 25308; Email: smolbag@vanuatu.com.vu; Website: tellusconsultants/wanmolbag/welcome.html
Wan Smolbag Theatre has been operating in Vanuatu and the Pacific since 1989. It is a Vanuatu NGO, which uses theatre for education and development in Vanuatu and other Pacific Island countries, addressing health (in particular reproductive and sexual health), human rights, good governance and the environment. WST also works extensively in video and radio drama. It specializes in using live theatre, radio and video to inform, raise awareness and encourage community involvement and responsibility for development issues. WST also undertakes theatre and media development training of other groups in the Pacific.

Web Resources

Asian Metacentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis

C/- Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, 5 Arts Link, Singapore 117570; Tel: 65-6874697; Fax: 65-67791428; Website: http://www.populationasia.org/

The MetaCentre is a consortium of Asian population studies centres that include the Asia Research Institute, Singapore (Headquarters); the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Austria; the College of Population Studies, Thailand; and the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health (NCEPH), the Australian National University. It was established under the auspices of the Wellcome Trust’s Asian Meta Centre and APN activities.

The MetaCentre is a research programme focusing on population issues in Asia. Its work will be largely based on the internet and through a series of research seminars and training workshops. Substantively analysis will focus on the complex set of Population Development-Environment (PDE) interactions in the region, on population forecasting and projections, age-structural transitions and ageing, changing family structures, fertility, international migration in the region, and the consequences of those population dynamics on human well-being and health. The Asian MetaCentre’s major aims include networking among Asian population experts, capacity building and the advancement of research methodologies, in-depth case studies and collaborative researches.

The MetaCentre has established and built up a significant Asian Population Network (co-sponsored by the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, IUSSP) through several expert workshops and high-level training workshops. It has also disseminated its research findings through research papers, reports, and special issues of population and social science journals. It has brought together Asian sociologists, geographers, anthropologists, and Asian studies experts in collaborative work in developing proposals and publications.

Asian Population Network (APN)

http://www.populationasia.org/apn.htm

APN is a broad network of individual demographers and other population experts in the region and beyond. APN (which later might lead to the establishment of an Asian population association) will be largely based on the Internet. The existing network of Asian members of the IUSSP (International Union for the Scientific Study of Population) will be utilised and subsequently expanded to all interested scientists and experts in Asia and beyond. The APN will also act as a conduit for the dissemination of research and information on population matters and will be an important source for the recruitment of experts and participants to expert meetings and for specialised training courses. To sign up as a member of the APN, send an email to apnasia@nus.edu.sg stating your personal particulars including your full name, title, institutional affiliation, postal address, telephone number, fax number and email address(es). You will be included in our mailing list to receive any updates on the Asian MetaCentre and APN activities.

Asia-Pacific POPIN

http://www.unescap.org/pop/popin/index.htm

Asia-Pacific POPIN is a decentralised network involving regional, sub-regional, national and non-governmental population information centres in the ESCAP region. The ESCAP secretariat currently serves as the coordinator for the network. It also promotes and assists in the development of the following sub-regional networks: East and South East Asia POPIN, South Asia POPIN and POPIN Pacific. Asia-Pacific POPIN is part of the global POPIN system, the Coordinating Unit for which is located within the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat at New York.

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The Network

The Development Studies Network provides information and discussion on social and economic development issues. It publishes a quarterly journal, Development Bulletin, runs regular seminars on development policy and annual conferences on international development. Members of the Network are encouraged to contribute information and papers to the Development Bulletin.

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ISSN 1035–1132
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