

The Reporter



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POPULATION
CONNECTION

40th Anniversary Issue
Reflections by Paul & Anne Ehrlich
and Jeffrey Sachs



from the president

Now we are 40. We've been Population Connection for the past six years, and Zero Population Growth for 34 years before that. Throughout our 40 years, we've remained focused on sensible approaches to achieve zero population growth. That will not change.

Our cofounder Dr. Paul Ehrlich wrote *The Population Bomb* in 1968. Since then, the world's population has increased by three billion. That's more than the current population of the entire world outside of Asia. Population growth remains a global challenge.

In many ways, the world is today a different place than it was in 1968. I vividly remember the struggle for civil rights and the shock and pain of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Forty years later, a black man will lead one of the two major party presidential tickets. In 1968 UCLA was selected to be the first node on what would become known as the Internet. Today's Internet is part of daily life (and a source of some aggravation) for most Americans and a growing fraction of the rest of the world as well. And we've become aware of a new global challenge, global warming, that is inexorably linked to population growth.

Population growth remains a preeminent, if largely ignored, global challenge. The world's population is growing just as rapidly today as it was in '68 at about 78 million people per year. The good news is that we seem to have moved beyond the high water

mark of global population growth which occurred in the late '80s when it topped out at 87 million people.

The population issue has changed in some profound ways. Population growth, once an almost monolithic challenge, has become a mosaic of sorts. Today there are great success stories on almost every continent. And there are enormous gaps from the tragedy of sub-Saharan Africa to our own disgracefully high teen birth rates. Our opponents are frankly much more organized than they were in the '60s and '70s when virtually every major U.S. political figure in both parties supported population programs.

For our 40th anniversary cover, we chose a photo of Filipino children taken by our magazine editor, Marian Starkey, during her recent trip to the Philippines. These children and literally billions of others are the face of population in 2008. Will they grow up to be healthy, productive adults? Will they be able to make thoughtful, informed choices? If so, then we can—and will—see zero population growth achieved within their lifetimes. But it won't happen by itself. It will take hard work and hard money.

As we look forward, we also look back with respect and appreciation to those who raised the alarm. Recently, we lost one of the early leaders, longtime member William Paddock, who died in March at age 86. An agronomist, he worked to feed the world. In a 1970 article, he warned that "optimism

about man's ability to feed himself as today's rate of population growth continues is precisely what we do not need and cannot afford in the race with the population bomb." A glance at today's headlines about food shortages tells us there is much unfinished business as few news stories make the obvious link to population growth.

Over the past four decades, we've learned three critical lessons. We know that voluntary methods can work everywhere. We know that the cost of family planning and related services is modest, especially compared with the cost of neglect. And we've learned that women and couples everywhere choose smaller families, but only if they have the information they need, along with affordable services.

As we turn 40, I want to offer a special word of thanks to the thoughtful people who have seen fit through many years of constant, loyal support to make our work possible. Without you, there would be no national program of population education that educates more than three million students every year. Without you, there would be no national grassroots organization with members in every congressional district dedicated to achieving zero population growth. Thank you for your unflinching support.

John Seager
john@popconnect.org

The Reporter

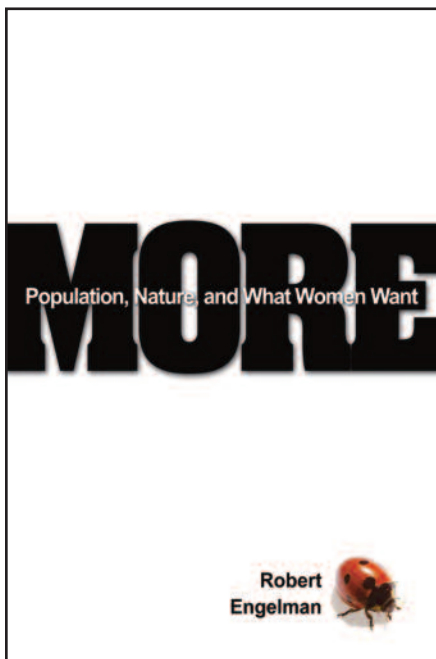
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Cover: Girls in the Batangas Province, Philippines in their house on stilts over the ocean. Photo: Marian Starkey

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PopPourri

Former President George H. W. Bush was nicknamed “Rubbers” for staunchly supporting family planning as a congressman.

Robert Engelman, author of *More: Population, Nature, and What Women Want*

Excessive nitrogen and phosphorus has emerged as one of the leading causes of degraded water quality. Over the past 50 years, **human activities** have caused a **doubling of nitrogen pollution** and a **tripling of phosphorus pollution** in coastal areas.

World Resources Institute



Nitrogen and phosphorus run-off from greenhouses has seeped into Dian Chi Lake near Kunming, China, turning the water green with algae blooms. Eutrophication suffocates fish by depleting oxygen and can also be harmful to the people who fish in the lakes. Photo: Bob Sacha/Corbis



On any given day more than **twice as many people begin their lives (373,000) as end their lives (159,000)**.

Robert Engelman, author of *More: Population, Nature, and What Women Want*

Today more than a billion people live in the areas richest in species diversity and the most threatened by human activities. While these areas comprise about **12 percent of the planet's land surface**, they hold nearly **20 percent of its human population**. The population in these so-called biodiversity hotspots is **growing at a collective rate of 1.8 percent** annually, compared to the world's population's average annual growth rate of nearly 1.2 percent.

Population Action International

Between 2000 and 2050, the **U.S. will add 114 million kids** to its population. **Africa will add 1.2 billion**—but their respective CO₂ emissions will be the same.

Mother Jones



Floods and erosion damage thousands of lives and property each year in India. The government and the River Planning Commission have failed to stop it, and now some of the ecological damage has become permanent. Photo: Gopal Bhattacharjee, Courtesy of Photoshare

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Population Connection

Overpopulation threatens the quality of life for people everywhere. Population Connection is the national grassroots population organization that educates young people and advocates progressive action to stabilize world population at a level that can be sustained by Earth's resources.

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Condoms Save Trees in More Ways Than One

By Pratyusha Rao, *Communications/Education Fellow*

When it comes to preserving the rainforest, Brazil has a plan. The country has one of the world's largest government-run free condom distribution programs, part of its comprehensive program to fight HIV/AIDS. Consequently, the Brazilian government is the world's largest condom consumer.

The government plans to cut costs by building a condom factory of its own, using sustainably harvested latex from rubber trees in the Amazon rainforest. Brazil's Health Ministry hopes this method will cut down on its dependence on foreign imports of contraceptives, while giving trees an economic function that doesn't require felling.

The new state-run factory will be called Natex and it will produce the only latex condoms in the world harvested from a tropical rainforest. The operation will provide much-needed jobs in the town of Xapuri for 150 people, which will benefit 500 families.

The latex will come from the Chico Mendes reserve, an area named after the famous conservationist. Mendes was killed by local ranchers in 1988.

Raymond Colitt, "Brazil says condoms to stem Amazon losses, AIDS." *Reuters*. April 7, 2008. <http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSN0721438020080407>.

Gary Duffy, "Brazil makes 'rainforest' condoms." *BBC News*. April 8, 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7335925.stm>.

Today's Teens: Rising STIs Give Impetus to Demand for Comprehensive Sex Ed

By Erin Zimmer, *Education Program Assistant*

A recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that 26% of American girls aged 14-19 are

infected with at least one sexually transmitted infection (STI). They tested 838 teenaged girls for four leading STIs, excluding those that are less common among younger women. African American girls had a prevalence rate of 48%, compared with 20% for white and Mexican American girls (other groups of Hispanic females were too small to analyze separately). The most common STI was human papillomavirus (HPV), (18%), with chlamydia a distant second (3.9%). Authors of the study estimate that around 3.2 million female teens in the United States have at least one STI. About half of the girls in the study had had sex at least once.

Comprehensive sex education significantly reduces the incidence of teen pregnancy, according to a 2002 national survey conducted by the University of Washington in Seattle and published in the April 2008 issue of the *Journal of Adolescent Health*. Compared with teens that received abstinence-only education or no education at all, "teens who received comprehensive sex education were 60 percent less likely to get pregnant or to get someone pregnant than those who received no sex education."

Considering the results of these two studies, the message has never been clearer that medically accurate sex ed is the only program that can protect teens from unwanted pregnancy and disease.

2008 National STD Prevention Conference, "One in Four Female Adolescents Is Infected with At Least One Sexually Transmitted Infection, New CDC Study Finds" March 11, 2008 <http://www.cdc.gov/std-conference/2008/media/summaries-11march2008.htm#tues1>

"Sex Ed Can Help Prevent Teen Pregnancy" *Washington Post*, March 24, 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/24/AR2008032401515.html>

Women Want More (Choices, Not Children)

By Marian Starkey



Robert Engelman has published his first and long-anticipated book, *More: Population, Nature, and What Women Want*. It's a treasure trove of anthropological anecdotes for us

who work to stabilize population through voluntary measures. Bob writes, "The key to a sustainable global population is to understand what women want: *more for their children and not more children.*"

Bob's research goes back tens of thousands of years and across species. He describes how female members of the great ape family are strategic about their reproduction and often maintain fairly stable population sizes, just as early hominids did. He dispels the myth that the preference for small families is new: primitive contraception and abortion techniques have been used for millennia. In writing this book, Bob shares his vision of a world in which modern contraception and women's empowerment replace the crude practices of the past to keep population levels in balance with nature.

Bob was kind enough to answer the following questions for this issue of *The Reporter*.

PC: Why is it so difficult for people to recognize the rapidly growing human population as a problem?

Bob: No one really "sees" world population. You only really see the people around you, and from one day to the next you don't see much change. Any problems you're aware of have more direct or immediate causes than the number of people—a hurricane, for example, or governmental mismanagement, or price gouging, or long-standing ethnic tensions. Population dynamics tend to act gradually and in the background, which makes their influence hard to detect unless you know what to look for—especially when problems like surges in food prices seem very sudden. And then, of course, population is just awfully sensitive, dealing as it does

with sex, childbearing, contraception, abortion, race, and immigration. It's not a safe topic for a good conversation, so most people don't want to talk about it.

PC: How low would the global fertility rate go if every woman had access to voluntary contraception?

Bob: Well, we know what happens in those societies where this is the case—or as close as societies can come to such access. Women have two or fewer children on average, pointing their populations toward a peaking of growth followed by gradual decline in the absence of net migration. We're actually not far from replacement-rate fertility right now as a species. Women are having an average of 2.6 children worldwide, and yet an estimated 40 percent of pregnancies are not intended. I can't prove any specific number, but based on the experience of industrialized and developing countries with good access to contraceptive options, it's a good bet that a world in which women had the final say on when and

whether they become pregnant would have fewer than two children on average—with a lot of family-size diversity within that average.

PC: What sorts of things can the average American citizen do to help women in the U.S. and abroad plan their families?

Bob: The main thing is to consistently and vocally support access for all to good and affordable reproductive health care—including family planning services—and comprehensive sexuality education programs in your own community and everywhere in the United States. For the world as a whole, support unrestricted U.S. foreign assistance for voluntary family planning and related reproductive health care in countries whose governments request such assistance. Find out which non-governmental organizations actively help improve access to reproductive health care, and volunteer with them or give generously to them. Learn about these issues, talk about them with your family and friends, and be proud and visible in your support.





PHE in the Philippines

How Family Planning Helps People In Remote Areas Protect Their Natural Environment

Story and Photos by Marian Starkey

In 1950 the population of the Philippines was 20 million. It now stands at nearly 90 million and will likely grow to at least 150 million by mid-century. Reports of prohibitively high food prices, and the relationship between the rice shortage and the scarcity of contraceptives in the Philippines have been international news in recent weeks.¹ One program may be able to help both problems.

I attended the 3rd National Conference on Population, Health, and Environment (PHE) in Tagaytay, Philippines from March 5-7. The conference was the third in a series aimed at improving the effectiveness of PHE projects in communities across the Philippines. American representatives from a variety of organizations attended in order to become better advocates for the programs. With over 300 participants representing more than 100 organizations, the next phase of the initiative is sure to reach its goal of “Scaling up PHE.”

What is PHE?

The Philippines PHE Network formed in 2002 with the help of the Population Reference Bureau and Save the Children. The coalition is comprised of two-dozen Filipino organizations. The premise of the crosscutting approach is that population, health, and environmental concerns are more efficiently addressed as a bundle, rather than individually—especially in biodiversity hotspots like the Philippines.

The network manages twelve programs in locations around the Philippines, forested and coastal. The vision is “To have healthy people living harmoniously with nature in a healthy environment.”

Why is PHE Appropriate for the Philippines?

The Philippines has one of the highest levels of endemic species in the world and is one of only seventeen countries

categorized by Conservation International as megadiverse.² Sadly, this classification might not last long. The Philippines has 194 threatened and endangered animal species and 193 threatened and endangered plant species.

Between 1990 and 2000, people cleared 88,000 hectares of forest in the Philippines for agricultural use. This action has increased the susceptibility of the land to flash floods, which are particularly devastating in areas of high population density.³ Only 7% of the original, old growth forest in the Philippines remains.

Using dynamite or cyanide are common techniques that fishermen use to catch more fish to feed their large families, within ever-growing communities of people who must do the same. But these practices have devastating environmental and health consequences. Coral reefs and the ecosystems they support suffer damage and sometimes die off completely. The health of fishermen is compromised as well, due to injuries, accidents, and long-term exposure to cyanide, a potentially lethal poison.

By introducing family planning to fishing communities, fishermen and their wives can limit the number of children they have and must feed. In effect, they ease the burden on the marine ecosystems on which they so strongly depend.

The population growth rate in the Philippines is one of the highest in the world, at 2.36%. The total fertility rate (TFR) of 3.4 births per woman is down from 6 births in 1970. But it is not dropping quickly enough to avert massive population growth as the next generation of young women move into their reproductive years (34% of females are under age 15).

The Philippines is a Catholic country and the president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, condemns modern contraception (although she used it herself as a young mother). The government, therefore, does not support family planning in



public clinics. Aside from three-dozen clinics run by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (known locally as the Family Planning Organization of the Philippines), only private clinics and pharmacies supply services and commodities.

Many people in the Philippines cannot afford to pay for contraceptives, so their childbearing is left up to chance. To illustrate how important cost is as a factor in contraceptive use, the TFR is 6.5 for the poorest fifth of women, but 2.1 for the richest fifth. According to a recent government report, 27.6 million people in the Philippines live below the poverty line.⁴ They simply do not have the disposable income necessary to afford \$1 per month for family planning.

Do Filipinos Want Family Planning?

Only 36% of married women ages 15-49 use modern contraception, compared with 68% of women in the United States. However, 18.8% have an unmet need for family planning: they do not want another child in the next two years but are not using contraception.

Findings from a 2002 survey indicated that 18.2% of mothers did not want their last baby and 26.9% wanted to have their last baby at a later date. According to a 2006 report by the Guttmacher Institute, "Six in ten Filipino women say they have experienced an unintended pregnancy at some point in their lives. About 1.43 million pregnancies each year—nearly half of all pregnancies in the Philippines—are unintended."⁵

Dr. Martha Campbell, lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley and president and founder of Venture Strategies for Health and Development, presented her recently published "freedom" model of contraceptive use at the PHE conference. She challenges the standard theory of

fertility decline, which supposes that although couples naturally want many children, they choose to have fewer based on socio-economic factors. Instead, she believes that access to family planning is the driving factor behind its use. She uses Thailand as an example, where contraception is widely available at no charge and there is no difference between the proportions of users within different income quintiles.

Regarding the freedom model, Campbell says:

This model suggests that a latent desire for controlling their family size may be widespread among women, who act upon it when they perceive the disadvantages of seeking or using fertility regulation methods to be lower than the benefits, and when they recognize that they actually have options about their childbearing.

This new theoretical model implies that high or stalled birth rates are open to rapid change within a human rights framework. For the Philippines this is extremely important, because of the high unmet need for family planning, the widespread desire of couples to strengthen their families' economic situations, and also the need to protect the environment for the benefit of tomorrow's children.

She argues that many environmental crises are due to population growth rather than overconsumption. The Nile River is nearly depleted when it reaches the Mediterranean not because of irresponsible use, but because too many people are drawing on it for drinking water and agriculture.

Campbell pointed out that the current population of the Philippines is larger than the UN high projection for 2008, made in 2002. This fact illustrates the conditionality of population projections. Unless fertility quickly begins to drop, many developing countries will face the same reality. Even high projections assume some fertility decline, which might be wishful thinking in countries that have little access to affordable family planning.

PHE in Action: Programs USAID Funds in the Philippines

1 In 2001, the Path Foundation Philippines, Inc. established the Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management (I-POPCORM) project. The program incorporates family planning and other health interventions into sustainable fishing practices in order to “reduce fishing effort and population pressure on the natural resource base.”⁶ By 2006, the project had served 183 communities. Of these, ten local government units (LGUs) incorporated reproductive health into their municipal coastal resource management plans. Thirty-three LGUs signed memorandums of understanding with local non-profits, stating their support for community-based family planning.

2 Conservation International (CI) has a program in the northern Sierra Madre Biodiversity Corridor. They collaborate with a non-profit called PROCESS Luzon and with LGUs. CI helps local health workers run family planning campaigns in the same spots where they already work on natural resource conservation and forest management. They also work at the grassroots with indigenous people, teaching them about the consequences of overpopulation and how it affects their livelihoods. Most people in this region practice subsistence agriculture and rely on the natural environment for their occupations. Learning about sustainable forestry and resource conservation helps indigenous people protect their livelihoods and their environments.

3 The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) manages a program in Roxas, Palawan. WWF works with Save the Children and the LGU to improve family planning services alongside marine resource management. Community health volunteers practice reproductive health outreach, while some have found new jobs as family planning commodities distributors in the private sector. They promote sustainable fishing and have established protected marine areas. Contraceptive prevalence increased from 32% (2006) to 33% (2007) in the seven marine protected areas. Fishermen improved their catches from 0.07-2.4 kg per hour in 2004 to 1-3 kg/hour in 2006.⁷



United States Support for PHE

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) finished the phase-out of its long-running contraceptive supplies program in the Philippines last year. The euphemistic explanation for the discontinuation is that the Philippines “graduated” from the program. USAID still provides technical support and sponsors the PHE programs mentioned at left, but does not donate any contraceptives.

Outside of the twelve PHE program sites run by the three programs at left, the only clinics offering subsidized contraceptives are those that the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) manages. IPPF is one of the international organizations that no longer receive money from the United States government because of the Global Gag Rule. The Gag Rule (formally known as the Mexico City Policy) is a policy that prevents U.S. funds from going to foreign non-governmental organizations that provide abortion services including counseling, referral, and lobbying for more progressive laws on abortion in their own countries. As a result, many organizations that cannot comply have lost critical funding and have downsized their programs, hurting millions of poor women around the world.





Where is the Philippines Headed?

Assuming that the fertility rate begins an immediate decline, reaching replacement level (2.1) by 2030 and 1.85 by 2040, the population in 2050 will be 140 million. If, however, the fertility rate remains constant, the population in 2050 will be 209 million. Such a massive increase in population will prove disastrous for the economic development and environmental future of this megadiverse island nation.⁸

During the time of the conference former World Bank president, James Wolfensohn, visited Manila. He warned that the widening income disparity in the Philippines and other countries could lead to civil conflict.⁹ His comments were based on the recent release of a report which stated that the number of Filipinos living below the poverty line rose 2.5%, from 23.8 million in 2003 to 27.6 million in 2006.¹⁰

The newspaper *Business World* wrote, "Acting Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Augusto Santos yesterday said that part of the poverty problem was rising costs for food and fuel, exacerbated by a hike in the national sales tax, as well as rapid population growth. The Philippines' population is currently estimated at 90 million and is growing at an average rate of 1.8 million people per year as Mrs. Arroyo, a devout

Catholic who relies on the support of powerful bishops, emphasizes natural family planning over artificial methods."¹¹

To read more about PHE and the projects that USAID funds, go to www.ehproject.org/phe/phe_projects.html. To ensure that people from all economic classes can afford contraception, support the reversal of the Global Gag Rule. This will enable IPPF to do its job of providing subsidized family planning to everyone who needs it.

Sources

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⁷ E. Hernandez, J. Castro, L. D'Agnes "Integrating Population and Coastal Resource Management for Sustainable Development through Local Policy Reforms" brochure, PATH Foundation Philippines, Inc.

⁸ Albasin et al. "Experiences in implementing the population, health and environment (PHE) approach in seven pilot barangays in Roxas, Palawan" paper presented at the 3rd National Conference on Population, Health and Environment in Tagaytay, Philippines.

⁹ World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision, <http://esa.un.org/unpp/>, accessed 3/18/08.

¹⁰ "Ex-World Bank chief sees rise in class conflicts" *Business World*, 3/6/08, BusinessWorld Publishing Corporation, Manila, Philippines.

¹¹ "Philippine impoverished population rises to 27.6 million" *Xinhua General News Service*, 3/5/08.

¹² "Poverty worsens despite growth" *Business World*, 3/6/08, BusinessWorld Publishing Corporation, Manila, Philippines.



Small Stories from a Crowded Country

By Marian Starkey

Manila broadcasts all the sounds of a metropolis in a developing country undergoing modernization: jackhammers preparing for construction, honking horns, and roosters crowing, tethered to poles on the sidewalk. It's true that the city is home to some very wealthy people and that parts of it resemble affluent western cities. But outside the chicest shopping malls shoeless and sometimes naked children play in front of shacks made from cardboard and automobile tires.

One night, I walked past a little girl who was smoothing a blanket over her baby doll on a mat on the sidewalk. I wondered where her mother was and felt anxious that she was alone at night. As I got nearer, I realized that the doll was a live newborn baby. A couple hours later, I passed by the girl again to make sure that she was safe. She was lying on the mat with her mother, who was holding the newborn loosely on her forearm. All three were asleep, as teenaged boys stood next to them, begging for money from patrons of nearby bars drifting home.

Because the place names painted on the sides of jeepneys (oversized Jeeps, converted into the equivalent of city buses) meant nothing to me, I often requested help from other commuters. One young man was selling upscale real estate on the side of the road. His glossy brochures depicted homes that would be considered extravagant by American standards; they were probably out of reach for most Filipinos as well. He told me that his girlfriend had his baby about eight months ago but he hadn't met the infant yet. I asked him whether he and his girlfriend had planned to have a baby. He patiently responded, "No, it was an unplanned pregnancy. We didn't have any family planning."

A different day, I asked two women where one could buy family planning in Tagaytay. They both giggled and shrugged, indicating either that they didn't know or that they were unwilling to discuss the matter with a complete stranger. The older, married woman told me later on our jeepney ride that she already had three children and didn't want any more, but she left her method of family limitation up to my imagination.

On my last day, I went for a walk near my hotel down a country side-road. Everyone I passed said "good morning" to me and looked very pleased and amused that I was curious about their neighborhood. I walked alongside two boys driving a cattle-drawn trailer until I reached the local church. A handful of locals gathered on the front porch to stare at me as I took pictures of the surroundings. A group of teenaged boys asked me to take their picture and then hooted with laughter at the image recorded on my camera.

On my way back to the hotel, a woman standing in front of her home called out, "Hello, Sistah!" I went over to talk with her and as her children started poking their heads out of the house, I took their pictures. That sent them into fits of laughter and I finally asked whether I could take a family photo. Noraida was very pleased to pose with her three children and niece, who lives with her. Her husband works during the week as a security guard an hour and a half away. I told her about the conference I had just attended and asked her if she knew where to get family planning nearby. She ran into her house and came back out with a month's supply of pills that she bought at the pharmacy in town. She said that they cost 39 pesos—about one dollar. She laughed as she said that three children are enough for her. Her 14-month-



old daughter held the packet of pills for most of the rest of our visit, until I gave her my button from the conference, at which point she dropped the pills on the dirt floor.

Inside Noraida's house was a thin piece of foam on top of a wooden plank that she and her husband and children all share to sleep. Her kitchen consisted of a pot over a tiny kerosene stove and a plastic bucket to soak dirty clothes. There was no bathroom in her house, but she claimed that her in-laws next door have one they can use. While I was there, the leader of the squatter settlement stopped by. He was curious about different methods of family planning and asked if I had samples to show. Not being a clinician, I didn't have samples, but I discussed various methods and they nodded in understanding as I described how each worked.

For a country with such an unsupportive national government, the individuals that I spoke with certainly seemed eager to have contraception. Considering that the Philippines is one of the countries most affected by the food crisis and that so many people are stuck in the poverty trap, family planning might be the most effective development tool the government could implement. As the high population growth rate attracts more attention, perhaps President Macapagal-Arroyo will change her tune and finally give the women of the Philippines the same tools she had as a young mother.

Clockwise from top left: A health worker in Calatagan calls names of children for weighing; Noraida and her daughter, holding her mother's birth control pills; Expensive homes in Tagaytay development; A mother and her two daughters sleep on sidewalk in Manila; Little girl being placed in scale; A man collects seaweed for sale in his overfished region.



World population in billions

1965 **3.3**

1970 **3.7**

1975 **4.1**

1980 **4.5**

1985 **4.9**

1970

First Earth Day

Life Magazine featured ZPG

1973

Roe v. Wade made abortion legal in United States and Helms amendment banned use of federal funding for abortion

1974

World Population Conference, Bucharest

1984

International Conference on Population, Mexico City

1994

International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo

1967

U.S. Population reached 200 million

1968

ZPG founded by Paul Ehrlich, Charles Remington, and Richard Bowers, following publishing of Ehrlich's best-selling book, *The Population Bomb*

1975

Population Education Program created at ZPG

1987

Population Education Trainers Network initiated

1988

ZPG testified in support of HR 2212, The Global Resources Environment and Population Act of 1987

Act would have established population stabilization as national policy

1990

Paul Ehrlich published *The Population Explosion*, follow-up to *The Population Bomb*

1991

World Population "dot" video won Best Ecology Video at Casa de las Ciencias, Spain

1993

President Clinton rescinded Global Gag Rule and restored funding to UNFPA

Programme of Action focused on individual rights and quality of life, abandoning demographic targets

1994

www.zpg.org launched

World fertility rate

1965 **4.98**

1970 **4.90**

1975 **4.47**

1980 **3.92**

1985 **3.58**

1990 **5.3**

1995 **5.7**

2000 **6.1**

2005 **6.5**

2010 **6.9**

1995
U.S. international family planning assistance peaked at \$585 million

1999
ICPD+5 General Assembly 21st special session, New York

Participants reviewed Programme of Action, assessed challenges and accomplishments of past five years

2000
UN Millennium Development Goals adopted

Population and family planning originally left out, later added as afterthought at urging of UK Parliamentary Committee

2001
President Bush reimposed Global Gag Rule on first business day in office

2002
U.S. denied funding for UN family planning programs for the first of seven consecutive years

2003
President Bush created PEPFAR, pledging \$15 billion to fight HIV in developing countries; 1/3 of money must be spent on abstinence-only programs

2006
U.S. population reached 300 million

1997
First Capitol Hill Days lobby event brought in over 100 participants

1999
ZPG created internet radio station Zero24-7, dedicated to progressive music and issues

2001
First Kid-Friendly Cities Report Card released by ZPG

2002
ZPG changed name to Population Connection

2004
Second Kid-Friendly Cities Report Card released by Population Connection

2007
Population Education trained a record 13,000 teachers nationwide

2008
Population Connection launched "Double the Money" campaign

1990 **3.38**

1995 **3.05**

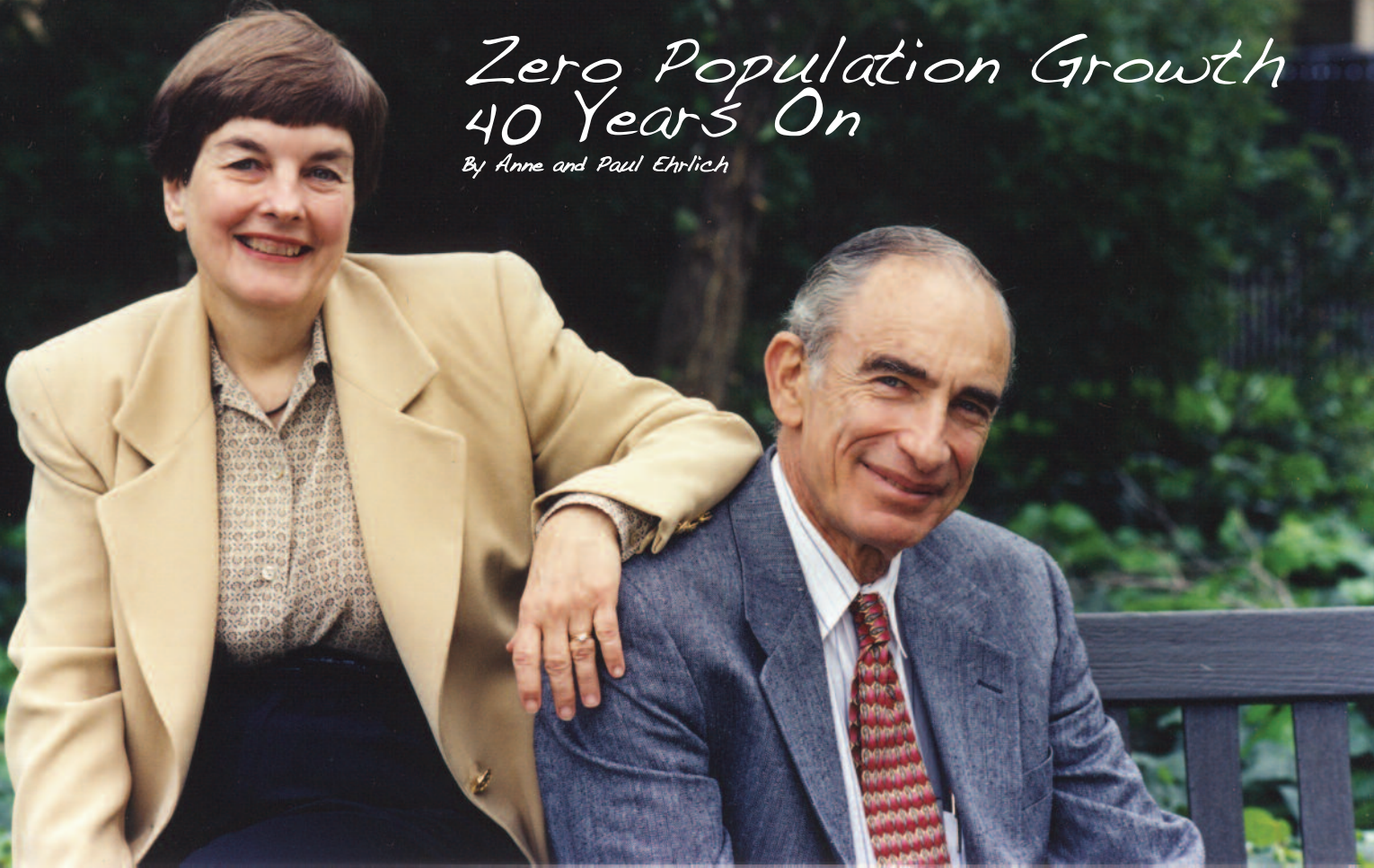
2000 **2.80**

2005 **2.65**

2010 **2.55**

Zero Population Growth 40 Years On

By Anne and Paul Ehrlich



When ZPG was founded in 1968, the world population was about 3.5 billion people and growing by some 2 percent per year. If that rate had continued unchanged, the population would have doubled to 7 billion in 35 years—by 2003. Such rapid growth was arousing concern about the ability to feed and support so many people in coming decades, and that concern led to the founding of ZPG. Fortunately, that doubling didn't happen, but the population is still growing far too fast and most likely will pass the 7 billion mark around 2012. Recent United Nations projections indicate that it may reach 9.3 billion by mid-century and continue growing after that.

The United States population in 1968 was just over 200 million; today it tops 300 million. Among industrialized nations, most of which are approaching ZPG or have

reached negative growth, the U.S. stands out with its annual population growth rate of 1 percent, the result of a combination of a relatively high birthrate and a high immigration rate. Assuming that these rates persist, the population will soar to about 420 million by 2050.

Population projections, however, are not destiny, as comparisons of projections made in the 1960s with actual trends make clear. In the early 1970s, already relatively low birthrates in industrialized countries (including the U.S.) began falling further, slowing growth and in some cases ending or reversing it by the 1990s. Many factors seem to have been involved, including the feminist movement and increasing participation of women in the labor force, as well as heightened awareness of the population problem—something to which ZPG as an organization contributed mightily.

At the same time, family planning programs were being

*Paul and Anne Ehrlich
meet with their editor,
Bill Kaufmann, in 1970.*



adopted in developing nations and, as many countries modernized and their living conditions improved, birthrates began to fall. Some once-poor nations now have become industrial powerhouses themselves, with educated, prosperous populations—and fertility below replacement level. These too, like Japan and many European countries, are headed toward ZPG or even NPG (negative population growth). But for that success, there would be easily half a billion more people in the world now.

Even so, populations in a large portion of developing countries have not significantly slowed their growth—especially those in the “least developed” nations of sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Latin America. With average family sizes ranging from three to seven or more children, population growth will not end soon in those countries, unless death rates rise substantially. Those populations will keep the “population explosion” going through much, perhaps most, of this century, unless a much greater effort is made to reduce their birthrates.

ZPG was founded at a time of concern about population growth; at our early insistence its focus has always been primarily on U.S. population policies, which included family planning assistance to developing nations. But after the U.S. birthrate fell below replacement in the early 1970s, many Americans concluded that the “crisis” was over. The issue fell off the political agenda, and the public lost interest. More than a generation later, most Americans are unaware that population growth is still a critical issue—or in the case of many young people, that it ever was. Since 1980, there has been little change in the American birthrate, which soon crept back toward replacement, while the rate of immigration continued rising.

Nor was there any change in domestic population policies, while after 1980 the commitment to assist population programs in developing countries lagged and fell victim to anxieties over abortion. U.S. funding was sharply reduced under the Reagan and both Bush administrations. Following the UN conferences on population and development in the early 1990s, family planning assistance per se was de-emphasized in favor of programs to educate girls and increase women’s economic participation. While both are

important motivating forces toward smaller families (as well as being indispensable for successful development), providing the means of birth control is also essential. Accordingly, some of the momentum of earlier decades toward lower birthrates has been lost.

The burgeoning U.S. population, champion consumers on an increasingly overburdened planet, is a major contributor to global resource depletion and environmental degradation, including climate change and losses of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Meanwhile, many rapidly modernizing societies are competing more and more for resources and generating their own environmental impacts, rivaling those of long-industrialized countries.

Consequently today, the twin crises of high food prices and acute shortages and the escalating costs of most forms of energy are rather suddenly shining a spotlight on the human predicament. Indeed, the intimate connection between energy use and modern food production, long overlooked or taken for granted, has been illuminated by the controversy over biofuels: poor people go hungry so the rich can feed their SUVs.

Inevitably, this has reawakened interest in the roles of population size and growth in generating and deepening the human predicament. Each additional person in the population puts disproportionate stress on our life support systems simply because we have already used the richest and most accessible resources and occupied and exploited the best land. Most responsible studies indicate that the human population has already substantially exceeded Earth’s carrying capacity for human life; we’re subsisting on our capital, not income. And Americans have the heaviest resource and environmental “footprints” of all.

In short, ZPG’s 1968 message that the population of the United States, as well as the global population, must stop growing is now more urgent than ever.

Anne and Paul Ehrlich are in the Department of Biology and Center for Conservation Biology, Stanford University. Their new book, The Dominant Animal: Human Evolution and the Environment (Island Press, 2008) deals with the population-related complex of the human predicament.

Renowned Economist Jeffrey Sachs

On Population and Family Planning

Jeffrey Sachs is director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University. He is also Special Advisor to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon on the Millennium Development Goals. His new book, *Common Wealth*, explores the issues discussed in this interview, in the context of global poverty.



MS. REHM: You talk about the four risks that the world faces, and at the top of that list you put human pressures on the earth's ecosystem and the climate, this notion that the world's population is growing at a faster rate than the earth itself can sustain.

MR. SACHS: Not only do we have a lot of people on the planet now—6.7 billion people—but on average they are about 10 to 15 times more productive, and using more resources than was true at the start of our modern industrial age, and so the population has gone up about 10 times, and the use of resources at least 10 times. We're more than 100 times bearing a stress on the earth's environment. It's unprecedented, what's happening.

This goes to the climate change. It goes to the fisheries that are being depleted in the oceans. It goes to the tropical forests that are being cleared. It goes to the endangered species that are losing their habitat or being hunted to extinction.

And it is in my view malevolence, it's not even greed. It's just absentmindedness in a way, because this has come upon us so fast as a human society. We tend to think of our lives, and our families, and our communities, maybe our countries of course, but now we're a world species all interconnected taking so much of the earth's resources as never before. And, really, we're not yet appreciating the implications of that.

MS. REHM: How do we talk about population without talking about politics?

MR. SACHS: Well, we have to talk about politics for sure, because these are decisions that societies make. And let me say a word about population. Most of the world has

reduced fertility rates now, pretty significantly, so that they are close to a level where the population in the world could stabilize but the poorest places have not. That's the irony. That it's the places that can least afford the population increases, that have the least prospect of creating good gainful employment, that have the least ability to raise healthy children with proper nutrition where the fertility rates remains highest, places in central Asia or in part of Africa and in other very poor regions.

That paradox is a typical finding that when places do get wealthier there is more family planning, there is more access to health services, there is more access to contraception, women's time is worth more, women are more empowered, and they choose to have fewer numbers of children.

What I argue in the book is that we've learned so much about how this voluntary fertility reduction has occurred in so many places that we can actively help those places still with massive rates of population growth to get their populations under control for their own benefit and for the world's stability.

Excerpted with permission from American University Radio WAMU 88.5 FM The Diane Rehm Show March 20, 2008

Photo of Jeffrey D. Sachs by Bruce Gilbert

Book cover image courtesy of Penguin Group

MS. REHM: Give me an example of where the U.S. has acted positively in that direction.

MR. SACHS: Well, it's fascinating that in the 1960s and 1970s the U.S. actually led the effort to expand family planning. We used to talk about things like contraceptive availability and family planning, and we said that this is a choice for people.

With President Reagan in the 1980s it became politics, and it became a political football where a constituency here said, "We don't even want to hear the words 'condom', or 'contraception' or those things." We pretended this wasn't a problem.

The Bush Administration, this one, similarly cutoff all funding for the United Nations Population Fund. They say they are protecting our security, but we know from extensive evidence, commonsense, lots of data that it's places with the population bulging of unemployed young men that are the most dangerous in terms of spilling over into violence.

So we don't even have a coherent approach in terms of national security to this. If we did, we would be continuing a long national tradition in this country broken by President Bush, unfortunately, and by President Reagan. We would continue a national tradition to help other countries achieve a voluntary reduction of fertility. We would support things like the United Nations Population Fund.

MS. REHM: Here is an e-mail from Daniel in Provo, Utah who says, "I come from a family of nine children. I get worried about the rhetoric of some that families should have fewer children. I consider being able to have as many children as one pleases to be a basic human right. The problem being described can be resolved using other means such as more development in green industries, micro lending *et cetera*."

www.popconnect.org

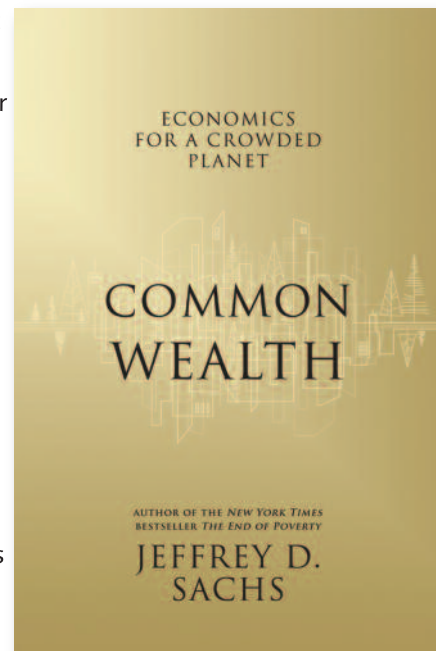
MR. SACHS: Well, Daniel as one of nine children I can understand your sentiment. And I also believe that this is a right, but not necessarily a choice that people should be making to have such large families. Suppose that everybody had nine children we would have a population that is probably roughly tripling every 20 to 25 years you'd end—the world couldn't bear it, the water, the ecosystems, the life support systems, the energy, we couldn't do it actually. So it's not a generalizable situation. It's one that I can understand from your perspective as a member of what I'm sure is a happy and large family. But it's not something that the world can do.

MS. REHM: Do you believe—you've said that all the countries of the world are prepared to move forward collectively in making some contribution to the changes that must be made. But it does seem that population is at the center of this whole issue when you think about the consumption of resources and the ongoing problems with the atmosphere. Do you believe we are ready to move forward?

MR. SACHS: I've discussed this with a number of African leaders recently who have put population at the center of their development strategy. So, yes, I think we could find a lot of common ground on that, on climate change, on sustainable energy, on protecting the oceans. Let's find the common ground. We're going to find a much safer world if we do so.

"We need to address the more fundamental issues of extreme poverty, of global population, of climate change, of a sustainable energy system, of managing water resources, of protecting the habitat of other species if our children are going to live in a safe and secure world."

—Jeffrey Sachs, 3/20/08





Historic Hearing on Failure of Abstinence-Only Programs

By **Stacie Murphy**
Policy Associate

In April, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, chaired by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-30th/CA), held the first ever hearing assessing the evidence on federally funded abstinence-only programs. Members heard testimony from medical experts in the fields of adolescent medicine and reproductive health. The committee also heard from Rep. Lois Capps (D-23rd/CA), a supporter of comprehensive sex education, and Sen. Sam Brownback (R-KS), a proponent of abstinence-only programming, as well as two young advocates.

The hearing clearly showed the folly of abstinence-only programs. Supporters and advocates of these programs wore expressions ranging from glum to outraged as expert after expert testified that abstinence-only programs are ineffective, inaccurate, and dangerous to teens.

Abstinence-only programs funded by the federal government must meet strict criteria in order to qualify for funding, and often talk about contraception only in terms of (vastly inflated) failure rates. Rep. Chris Shays (R-4th/CT) expressed frustration with this approach, stating that “the bottom line is I don't understand why you wouldn't make sure that young people had all the information to counteract all the information they are getting every day [in the media].” Rep. Waxman expressed concern that “There are [comprehensive] programs that appear to have real success, but they are being excluded from federal funding because they

don't meet this strict ideological test.”

In the end, even the pro-abstinence-only witnesses were forced to concede that programs should be more flexible and meet standards of medical accuracy. Read the full transcript of the hearing online at <http://oversight.house.gov/documents/20080515131336.pdf>.

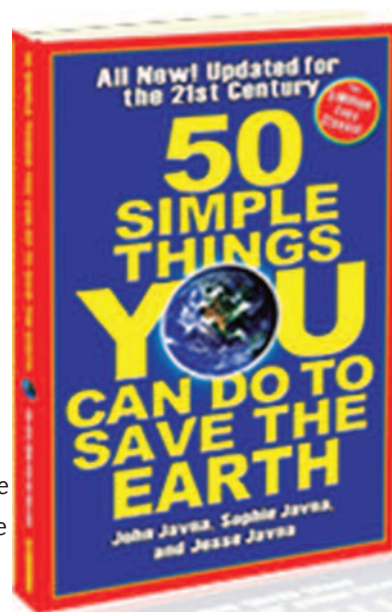
GROWING MOMENTUM IN INTERNATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING

On the international front, we are having enormous success with our effort to increase funding for international family planning. Our “Double the Money” campaign has gained tremendous support from members of Congress and our coalition partners.

In support of our billion dollar request, Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-28th/NY) spearheaded a sign-on letter to the chair and ranking Republican on the State Department/Foreign Operations Subcommittee pointing out the many advantages of a real investment in family planning and urging that they provide \$1 billion in funding. The letter garnered 91 signatures, making it one of the most widely supported requests in the House this session. Such a strong showing of support should merit serious consideration from appropriations committee leadership.

We will keep you up to date on any action that Congress takes on these and other important issues. If you would like to get timely email updates on the issues you care about, please join our Email Action Network at <http://capwiz.com/zpg/mlm/signup/>.

Helping People Help the Earth



By Krista Hozyash, Stanback
Communications Intern

Each person can take small actions that make a positive impact on the environment. With enough people doing these small things, we can save the Earth from pollution, poverty, and resource depletion. That is the message that John Javna and his two teenagers, Sophie and Jesse, have delivered in their completely revised edition of *50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth*.

John Javna wrote the original book in 1990, which sold more than five million copies and remained on the *New York Times* bestseller list for several weeks. After becoming cynical that the actions suggested weren't big enough, John took the book out of print in 1995. A couple years ago, at the urging of his daughter, he decided to update the revolutionary text to include larger actions that people can take and partner environmental organizations that readers can contact for more detailed information on each topic.


We were thrilled to be chosen as the grassroots organization to represent issue #47 "When, Where, and How Many?" You can find our section of the book's website at <http://50simplethings.com/population/index.html>.

The book outlines fifty issues to which an individual can become something akin to one of Captain Planet's modern-day empowered Planeteers. Advice from respected environ-

mental organizations ranges from simple to quite involved.

From demanding that pharmacies fill prescriptions for birth control and stock emergency contraception to speaking out against ineffective abstinence-only sex education programs in schools, one person can protect the planet through population stabilization by acting at the local level. For those readers who want to become more involved, there are larger advocacy actions to take such as calling and writing to lawmakers about important legislation.

Taken individually these endeavors may seem unlikely to result in any observable effects. However, the actions of one person are never ineffectual when they are supported and undertaken by inspired others. As Margaret Mead once so wisely stated, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."



We Can't
Grow on
Like This

Field & Outreach

Making the Connection: Population Growth in a Warming World

By Rebecca Harrington

National Field Coordinator

"For most contemporary environmental issues, it's when you consider both sustainability and equity that the linkage with population emerges most clearly. This is especially true of climate change. When you have roughly equal individual emissions and you've identified a sustainable global emissions level, population, in fact, becomes the key determinant for how constrained the individual emissions will need to be." Therein lies the undeniable relationship between population and climate change, according to Robert Engelman, Vice President of Programs at the Worldwatch Institute.

Engelman was a featured speaker at our annual conference, held on June 6-7 in Washington, DC. Drawing a diverse group of seventy people, the forum was focused on making the connection between population, in all its complexity, and global warming.

Following a Friday evening screening of *No Vacancy*, a documentary film about family planning efforts around the world, Saturday began with a pair of climate experts. Karen Wayland, Legislative Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council, spoke about climate change legislation, and specifically, her work on the Lieberman-Warner bill, which was debated in the Senate the week prior to the conference.

Next, Robert Engelman discussed the global disparity in emissions relative to population. In his view, social justice requires that all people give off a basic level of emissions. Only then, once everyone is guaranteed a

decent quality of life, can we determine the level of population the planet can sustain. Everyone received a complimentary (and autographed!) copy of his new book, *More: Population, Nature, and What Women Want* (see page 5).

The afternoon program began with a lunchtime discussion with our board member, Bob Musil. He reminded us that population growth is not only an international problem, but is also very much an issue in the United States, due to a high rate of unintended pregnancy (specifically, teen pregnancy), and a general lack of access to and education about birth control.

Brian Dixon, Vice President for Media and Government Relations, presented our "Double the Money" campaign for \$1 billion for international family planning programs for FY 2009. He also discussed the need to fund UNFPA and repeal the Global Gag Rule.

The final session was an interactive workshop on how to effectively communicate population issues with the media, legislators, and the general public. Marian Starkey, Stacie Murphy, and Rebecca Harrington linked population to various other concerns people have such as global public health, women's rights, and national security. Participants were asked to take the information they learned and meet with their elected officials, write to their local papers, and engage their families, friends and colleagues in the effort to make the connection between population growth and climate change.



Clockwise from top left: Karen Wayland of NRDC; Participants from all over the United States; Longtime supporter and conference attendee, Regina Holt; Bob Musil speaking during lunch; Robert Engelman making the link between population and climate; Organizer Bernadette Donahue and volunteer, Jen Wireman, listen to Gary Thompson ask a question; Participants were eager to ask questions.

Pop. Ed. Meets Nation's Science Teachers in Beantown

By Pamela Wasserman

Vice President for Education

The clouds gathered and the wind howled off Boston Harbor at the end of March as some 15,000 science educators from across the country gathered at the annual National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) Convention. They didn't let the wet, chilly weather dampen their spirits. After all, these teachers weren't in town to walk the Freedom Trail or feed ducks at Boston Common. No, they descended on Boston to hone their craft, attend workshops, and collect timely classroom materials. Population Connection's Education Program was there to deliver.

Science teachers are a key target audience of the curriculum developed by the Popula-

tion Education (Pop. Ed.) Program. From helping elementary students to understand the basics of carrying capacity and connections in nature to broadening awareness of population pressures in high school Advanced Placement (AP) Environmental Science classes, the program's curricula can be an integral part of classroom science lessons for K-12.

This year, staff came equipped with a new, eye-catching exhibit, consisting of three banners rising eight feet from the floor and highlighting Pop. Ed.'s relevance to the sciences and social sciences for all grades levels. Teachers were drawn to the display, espe-





Left opposite: Pamela Wasserman shows off the World Population "dot" video,

Right: Carol Bliese talks with an interested educator.

cially to the clicking sound of the "wheel of fortune" and the chance to test out the various curriculum items on CDs and DVDs. Over 700 signed up to receive the program newsletter, *The Population Educator*, and to find ways to integrate the materials into their lesson plans.

Over the course of three days of exhibiting, Pop. Ed. staff distributed hundreds of lesson plans, posters, and electronic media. On hand to help were several of the program's star volunteers—teacher trainers who are leaders in the field of science education. These included Dr. Gary Schechter, Math and Science Education Coordinator at Adelphi University in New York; Eloise Farmer, a science education consultant and retired high school teacher from Connecticut; and Khaleisheia Jones, a California science teacher and new Pop. Ed. trainer.

For many conventioners, attending a Pop. Ed. workshop was a highlight of their Boston visit. They packed the room for the timely middle/secondary workshop, "Can We Grow on Like This? Exploring Popula-

tion, Consumption and Carrying Capacity." Pamela Wasserman, Vice President for Education, led the group in a series of activities that highlighted population connections to climate change, food production, and global wealth disparity.

Later at the convention, Carol Bliese, Pop. Ed.'s Teacher Training Manager, facilitated hands-on activities for "Our Very Popular Planet," specifically geared toward elementary teachers. Carol rounded out her week in the Boston area with workshops for future teachers studying at Lasell College, Boston College and Fitchburg State College. She returned home with many invitations to visit Massachusetts' campuses again in the fall.

From now until next spring's NSTA National Convention in New Orleans, our trainers will present workshops for science teachers at over 20 of NSTA's state affiliate conventions from Maine to California and at regional NSTA Conventions in Cincinnati, Charlotte, and Portland, OR. A list of upcoming conference workshops can be found at www.populationeducation.org.

"After all, these teachers weren't in town to walk the Freedom Trail or feed ducks at Boston Common. No, they descended on Boston to hone their craft, attend workshops and collect timely classroom materials. Population Connection's Education Program was there to deliver."

Remark



In Niger the chance of survival for children and their mothers is often bleak. One child in four never sees a fifth birthday. Only about a third of mothers in the west-central African country have trained medical assistance when they deliver babies. Lack of such assistance adds to the risk of death for mothers and children. Only about 4 percent of women use contraception to space their children. In the face of food shortages in the poorest countries, U.S. aid—in the form of food, contraceptives, and training for health-care workers—will become increasingly important to maintain and improve the lives of women and children.

—Editorial, *The Kansas City Star*, May 10, 2008

The latest bombshell from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention should set to rest any belief that abstinence-only sex education is enough to protect our children. For years the Bush administration has supported abstinence-only education. Clearly, it's not enough. The abstinence argument must remain a key component for any sex ed program. Young people should be reminded that abstinence truly is the only sure way to avoid STDs, unplanned pregnancy, unwed motherhood and, at the very least, the serious emotional turmoil that all too often accompanies early sexual encounters. But the CDC statistics clearly show that many teens do not remain abstinent. The United States must focus new attention on school sex education programs, which should take an age-appropriate, comprehensive approach that includes information, counseling and contraception. As this newspaper has said before, when it comes to sex, ignorance is not bliss.

—Editorial, *Pocono Record*, April 1, 2008

If the findings of a national study released this week of sexually transmitted diseases are accurate, the failed legacy of the government-promoted "abstinence only" sex education program has come home to roost. Perhaps now it will be obvious that existing government policy and parents who object to comprehensive sex education programs are not doing children any favors but are actually harming them by promoting programs in which the only guideline for sexual health and safety is to abstain from sexual activity. The "just say no" concept is an embarrassing failure, and programs where teenagers vow to remain celibate, while well-meaning, have been shown to be largely ineffective. It seems patently obvious that a major hang-up to providing teens—and for that matter, pre-teens—accurate and useful information about sexual activity are parents whose mantra is "this doesn't apply to my child" and a government policy that continues to exist only by wearing reality blinders. If we need a reason to take the blinders off, this survey provides it.

—Editorial, *The Macon Telegraph*, March 12, 2008

Prices have gone so high that the World Food Program, which aims to feed 73 million people this year, said it might have to reduce rations or the number of people it will help. The world has faced periodic bouts when it looked as if population growth would outstrip the food supply. Each time, food production has grown to meet demand. This time it might not be so easy. Population growth and economic progress are part of the problem.

—Editorial, *The New York Times*, March 3, 2008



One Way To Change The World

We hope you'll consider Population Connection as you plan your estate. Your bequest gift will help change the future for people and for our planet.

You can also participate in other forms of planned giving. Charitable Gift Annuities provide guaranteed life income along with significant tax advantages. If you or your financial advisor have any questions, please feel free to contact Shelley R. Davis, Director of Membership and Development at 800-767-1956 or 202-332-2200.

*If you've already included Zero Population Growth (ZPG)
in your estate plans, there is no need to change any language.
We proudly maintain the name and the mission.*

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