

INTRODUCTION

All the United Nations international population conferences held since 1974 have emphasized the need to monitor the implementation of their goals and recommendations. Thus, the International Conference on Population and Development held at Cairo in 1994 recommended that actions be taken “to measure, assess, monitor and evaluate progress towards meeting the goals” of its Programme of Action.¹

The overriding goal of the Programme of Action, which is to improve human welfare and promote sustainable development, is fully consistent with the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) contained in the Millennium Declaration of 2000.² Some goals in the Programme of Action are identical to the MDGs, for instance, those pertaining to the reduction of child mortality, the improvement of maternal health and ensuring universal access to primary education (United Nations, 2005a).

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through its Population Division, is responsible for the global monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, as it was for the Plan of Action of the 1974 World Population Conference. The task of monitoring implementation is guided by the principles of objectivity and neutrality. Reports have been descriptive and concise, focusing on analytical comparisons among countries and regions over time.

This report is part of the effort of the Population Division to disseminate the information resulting from its monitoring activities. It provides an overview of population policies and dynamics for 195 countries for which

data are available around the middle of the decade for the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s—that is, near the time of the convening of the United Nations population conferences at Bucharest, Mexico City and Cairo—as well as for 2007.

The core information included in the monitoring of population policies encompasses three basic components. They are listed below followed by the types of questions asked to elicit the views of Governments.

Government views on population size and growth, population age structure and spatial distribution, and on the demographic components—fertility, mortality and migration—that affect them: For each variable, is the level or trend viewed as a significant policy issue? Is the prevailing level or rate of change considered too high, too low, acceptable or satisfactory in relation to other social and economic conditions?

Government objectives with respect to each variable: Is the objective of the Government to raise or to lower the level of the variable or to maintain its current level?

Government policies concerning interventions to influence each variable: Does the Government consider intervention to alter levels and trends as a legitimate exercise of its authority? Has the Government actively intervened to influence the variable?

In order to compile the requisite information for monitoring the implementation of the Plan of Action and later the Programme of Action, the Population Division established the Population Policy Data Bank. The major sources of information contained in the databank may be classified into four broad types (see box 1). The first type of information comprises official government responses to the *United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development*, of which there have been nine separate rounds since 1963. The first and second rounds were conducted prior to the 1974 World Population Conference. The eighth round, the first

¹ *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex, para. 13.6.

² General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/55/2.

directed towards the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, was initiated in 1997. The Ninth Inquiry was forwarded to Governments in 2003. The Tenth Inquiry will be forwarded to Governments in 2008. Each round of the *Inquiry* has consisted of a detailed request for information sent to all Member States and non-member States of the United Nations. The second type of information consists of publications, documents, statements and other materials issued by Governments, including development plans, laws, regulations and proclamations. These materials are a particularly important source of data as they reflect the official positions taken by countries. The third category of information consists of materials provided by international organizations, such as regional commissions, funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as other regional intergovernmental organizations. Because countries collectively are the source of these materials, an official status may be attached to them. The fourth type of information consists of non-governmental materials, including clippings from the world press, articles in academic journals, proceedings of conferences and seminars, reports and studies prepared by research centres and non-governmental organizations, as well as correspondence and personal communications with experts.

The successive monitoring reports have pointed to significant changes since 1974 in government views on population issues as well as in population policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. The monitoring exercise itself contributes to this evolution by increasing worldwide awareness of population and development issues and the need for appropriate and timely policy responses.

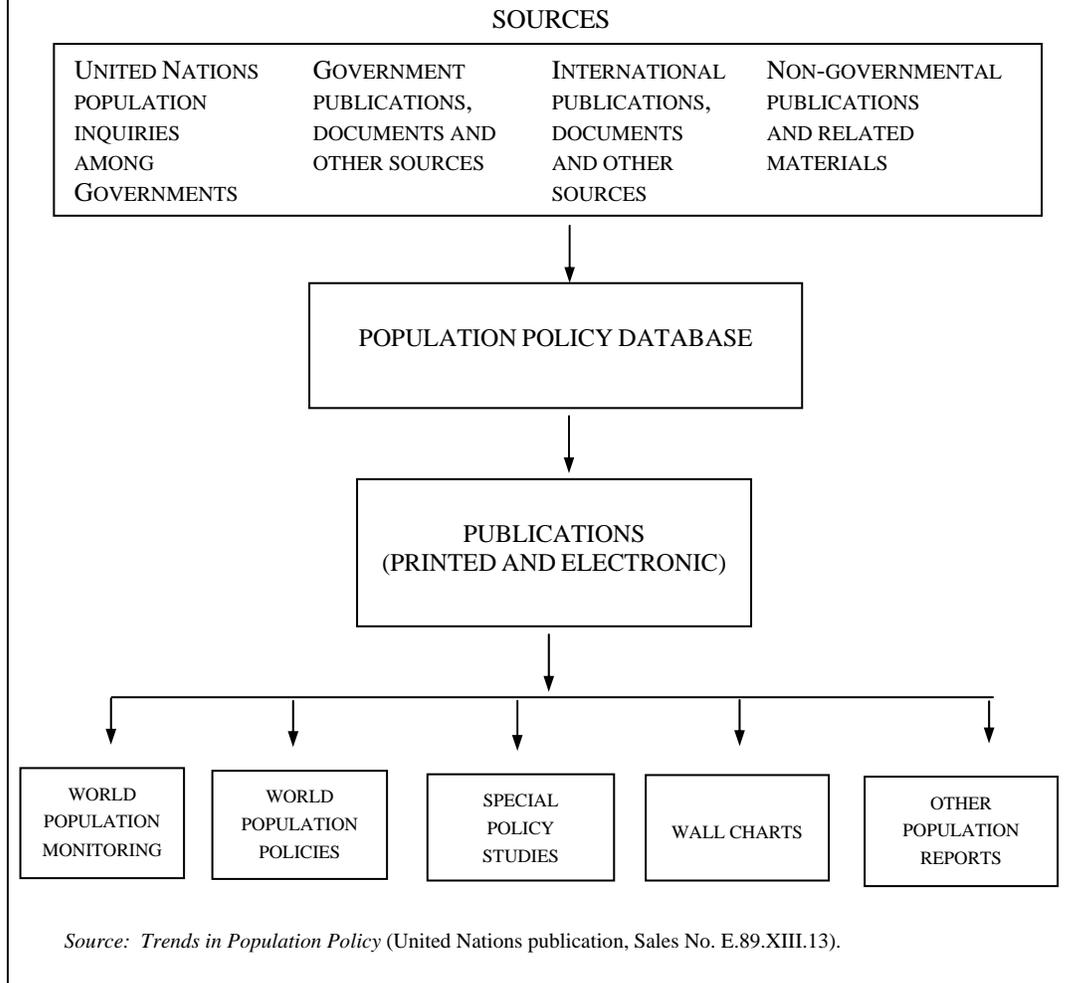
This report describes the views and policies of Governments on population and is divided into two parts. Part One provides a global perspective on the evolution of selected aspects of population policies between 1976 and 2007 with respect to each of the major population variables and is based on six major topics. The first topic is government views and policies on population size

and population growth. The second topic consists of the views and policies of Governments on the changing age distribution of population. The third topic is government views and policies on fertility and family planning and adolescent fertility. Government views and policies on health and mortality, including life expectancy at birth, under-five and maternal mortality and the HIV/AIDS epidemic comprise the fourth topic. The grounds on which induced abortion is permitted are also examined under the fourth topic. The fifth topic is government views and policies on the spatial distribution of population and internal migration. Spatial distribution and internal migration were given a more complete and comprehensive treatment in the current publication because of the importance of urbanization issues and the fact that in 2008 the share of the urban population crossed the 50 per cent mark for the first time in history. In addition, the special theme for the forty-first session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development in 2008 will be "Population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development". The sixth and final topic is government views and policies on international migration, including the areas of permanent and temporary migration, family reunification and skilled migration. The views and policies of Governments on emigration and the return migration of citizens are also examined.

Part Two presents, on a country-by-country basis, the evolution of government views and policies from 1976 to 2007 with respect to population size and growth, population age structure, fertility and family planning, health and mortality, spatial distribution and internal migration, and international migration, within the context of demographic, social and economic change. Country profiles are included for 195 Member States and non-member States of the United Nations. The material is presented in the form of data sheets, containing population policy data for each country around the dates 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2007, and population indicators for the corresponding years.

The data included in this report were based on information available as of 30 September 2007.

BOX 1. SOURCES FOR MONITORING GOVERNMENT VIEWS AND POLICIES ON POPULATION



Part One

GOVERNMENT VIEWS AND POLICIES

GOVERNMENT VIEWS AND POLICIES

A majority of Governments view the HIV/AIDS epidemic as the most significant demographic issue facing them: 93 per cent of developing countries and 81 per cent of developed countries (box 2). Among developing countries, high mortality in childhood and high maternal mortality are the second and third most important issues. In developed countries, in addition to HIV/AIDS, major population concerns are low fertility, population ageing, and the relatively

small or declining numbers of persons of working age. Governments of developing countries are also concerned about their population of working age but mainly because they need to create sufficient jobs for their rapidly growing labour forces. In contrast, Governments of developed countries are concerned about the potential shortage of workers as continued low fertility and population ageing lead to a decrease in the numbers of people of working age.

I. POPULATION SIZE AND GROWTH

Many Governments continue to be concerned about the consequences of excessive population growth for economic growth and sustainable development. High population growth remains a salient concern in the developing world. Half of the developing countries viewed their population growth as too high in 2007 (table 1) although rates of population growth in developing countries continue to decline, from an average annual rate of 2.4 per cent in 1970-1975 to 1.4 per cent in 2000-2005 (United Nations, 2007a). Among the 50 least developed countries, the percentage of countries that viewed population growth as too high rose from 50 per cent in 1986 to 78 per cent in 2007. Many developing countries have realized the importance of reducing high rates of population growth in order to ease mounting pressure on renewable and non-renewable resources, combat climate change, prevent food insufficiency and provide decent employment and basic social services to all their people.

Africa is the region with the highest percentage of countries viewing population growth as too high: 66 per cent of countries did so in 2007, up from 35 per cent in 1976 (table 1). In Asia, which has experienced substantial declines in fertility, 45 per cent of countries viewed population growth as too high. Latin America and the Caribbean was the only region where the percentage of Governments that viewed population growth as too high has continuously

decreased, from 48 per cent in 1986 to 24 per cent in 2007.

To a great extent, concerns about the detrimental consequences of high population growth have been translated into policy interventions. In 2007, 47 per cent of developing countries and 70 per cent of the least developed countries had policies aimed at reducing their population growth rate (table 2). One of the most significant policy developments in the second half of the 1990s was the continued rise in the number of Governments in Africa that reported having policies aimed at reducing the rapid growth of their respective populations: 64 per cent in 2007, up from 60 per cent in 1996, 39 per cent in 1986 and 25 per cent in 1976.

Conversely, the percentage of Governments in Africa that did not intervene to influence population growth continued to decline, from 60 per cent in 1976 to only 21 per cent in 2007. Many Governments in Africa have realized that effective implementation of population policy requires the creation of an institutional framework that ensures the integration of population variables into development planning with adequate mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. In contrast to Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean has a rising percentage of Governments that do not intervene to influence the population growth rate: 52 per cent in 1996 and 61 per cent in 2007.

BOX 2. MAJOR POPULATION CONCERNS OF GOVERNMENTS IN 2007	
ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE TO AT LEAST ONE HALF OF GOVERNMENTS IN 2007, BY LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT	
<i>Region and Issues</i>	<i>Percentage of Governments reporting it is significant</i>
World	
HIV/AIDS	90
Infant and child mortality	73
Maternal mortality	70
Size of the population of working age	66
Adolescent fertility	58
Low life expectancy at birth	57
Population ageing	55
Pattern of spatial distribution	51
More developed regions	
HIV/AIDS	81
Population ageing	81
Low fertility	61
Size of the population of working age	61
Less developed regions	
HIV/AIDS	93
Infant and child mortality	86
Maternal mortality	83
Size of the population of working age	69
Adolescent fertility	65
Low life expectancy at birth	64
Pattern of spatial distribution	56
High fertility	54
High rates of population growth	50

In response to the persistence of low population growth, a growing number of countries, particularly developed countries, have expressed concern about the consequences of low or negative population growth, resulting mostly from very low fertility but, in some cases, also from higher mortality or substantial out-migration. Forty-five per cent of developed countries considered their population growth to be too low, up from one third in 1976 (table 1). Consequently, the percentage of developed countries with policies aimed at raising the growth of their

population climbed from 23 per cent in 1996 to 37 per cent in 2007 (table 2). Twenty-one of the 22 developed countries that viewed their population growth as too low are in Europe. The percentage of Governments in Europe that did not have policies to modify their population growth rate decreased from 72 per cent in 1976 to 41 per cent in 2007.

The changes in government views and policies described above have been matched by a slowdown in population growth in many

countries. Whereas in 1970-1975, 36 countries had population growth rates of 3 per cent or more and 76 countries had growth rates between 2 per cent and 3 per cent, corresponding figures for 2000-2005 were 10 and 23, respectively. Nevertheless, 11 countries with population growth rates below 1 per cent in 2000-2005 still considered their growth rates as too high. Eight

countries which considered the rate of growth as too high did not intervene to influence it and six countries which viewed population growth as too low also did not intervene. Of the 19 countries with negative population growth in 2000-2005, 18 countries felt that the growth rate was too low and 17 have implemented policies to raise it.

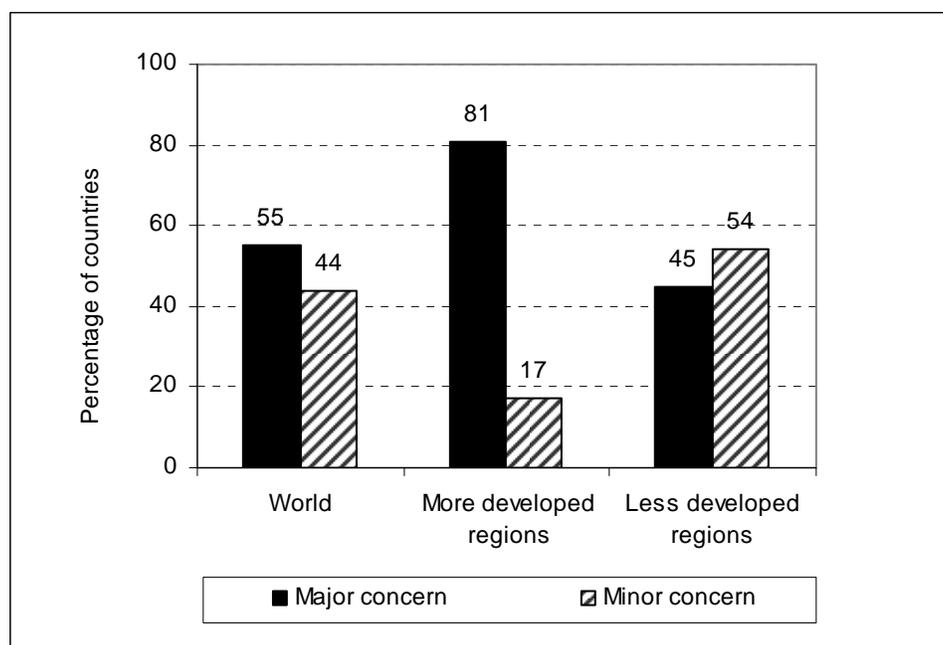
II. POPULATION AGE STRUCTURE

One of the inevitable consequences of the unprecedented transformation brought about by the transition from a regime of high mortality and high fertility to one of low mortality and low fertility has been the ageing of the world population. Many societies, particularly those in developed countries, have attained older population age structures than have ever been seen in the past. In developed countries, 20 per cent of the population was aged 60 or over in 2007 and in 2050 one in three persons will be aged 60 or over (United Nations, 2007a). The number of older persons in the more developed regions is already larger than the number of children under age 15, and in 2050, there will likely be two older persons for every child. Developing countries in the midst of the demographic transition have experienced rapid shifts in the relative numbers of children, the working age population (15-59 years) and the population of older persons. In developing countries, the population of older persons is expected to climb from 8 per cent in 2007 to 20 per cent in 2050.

In 2007, more than half of reporting countries described population ageing as a major concern (table 3, figure I). Developed countries identified population ageing as the second most critical demographic issue, after the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Four fifths of them considered population ageing to be a major concern. Among developing countries, 45 per cent had a similar assessment of population ageing, while 70 per cent of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean considered population ageing as a major concern.

In addition, two thirds of all reporting Governments expressed concern about the size of the working-age population (table 4). However, whereas developed countries were worried because their working age populations were small and growing slowly, if at all, developing countries were concerned about their large and rapidly growing labour forces and the challenge of providing decent employment for all.

Figure I. Government concern about population ageing, 2007



Concerned by population ageing and the unsustainability of pension programmes, many Governments are modifying the parameters of those programmes, introducing mandatory fully-funded schemes, increasing the statutory retirement age, eliminating incentives for early retirement, reducing benefits and encouraging more women to enter the workforce. For example, between 2002 and 2006, 41 countries out of 164 having a statutory retirement age increased that age. As a result, men were eligible for full pension benefits at age 65 or over in 60 per cent of developed countries, while in 40 per cent of developed countries women were eligible for the same benefits at age 65 or over. In 25 developed countries, the statutory retirement age was higher for men than for women, although women are expected to live longer than men. In the European Union, half of men retired before age 61 and half of women before age 60 (EUROSTAT, 2007). The situation is similar in the United States of America, where more than half of men and women opted for early retirement at an average age of 62 (Turner, 2007).

In addition, low fertility countries have adopted family-friendly measures that support parents in combining work and parental roles. Countries with slowly growing labour forces have also shown increasing willingness to rely on international migration, often of a temporary nature to address unmet short-term labour demand.

Developing countries with high fertility are grappling with the challenge of providing decent work for their growing labour forces. In 2006 there were nearly 200 million unemployed persons, an increase of 18 per cent since 1995 (ILO, 2007). The highest rates of unemployment and underemployment are found in the poorest countries. There is a general recognition that employment generation in developing countries requires employment-intensive economic growth combined with a coherent set of employment and human development policies.

III. FERTILITY AND FAMILY PLANNING

The wealth of information collected on fertility trends provides ample evidence of the decline in fertility in most parts of the world. From 1975 to 2005, the number of countries with total fertility greater than four children per woman decreased from 129 to 56. As a consequence, global total fertility declined from 4.5 children per woman in 1970-1975 to 2.6 children in 2005-2010 (United Nations, 2007a). In 2005-2010, fertility remains above 5 children per woman in 27 of the 150 developing countries. In contrast, fertility has reached below-replacement level in 28 developing countries.

Governments' views and policies concerning fertility contributed to the fertility decline in developing countries. In 1976, 37 per cent of Governments viewed their fertility as too high

(table 5). This figure rose to 45 per cent in 1996 and then decreased slightly to 41 per cent in 2007. In the past, Governments that considered fertility to be too high did not necessarily adopt policies to influence fertility. In 2007, almost all Governments that viewed fertility as too high, intervened to lower it. In 1976, more than half of the Governments did not intervene to modify the level of fertility. In 2007, the percentage of countries lacking policies to influence fertility had fallen to less than a quarter. As a consequence, the percentage of developing countries with policies to lower fertility rose from 34 per cent in 1976 to 56 per cent in 1996 but declined slightly to 51 per cent in 2007 (table 6, figure II). In 2007, fertility was viewed as too high in over half of developing countries, including most parts of Africa, South-central Asia and South-eastern Asia.

Figure II. Government policies on the level of fertility, 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2007

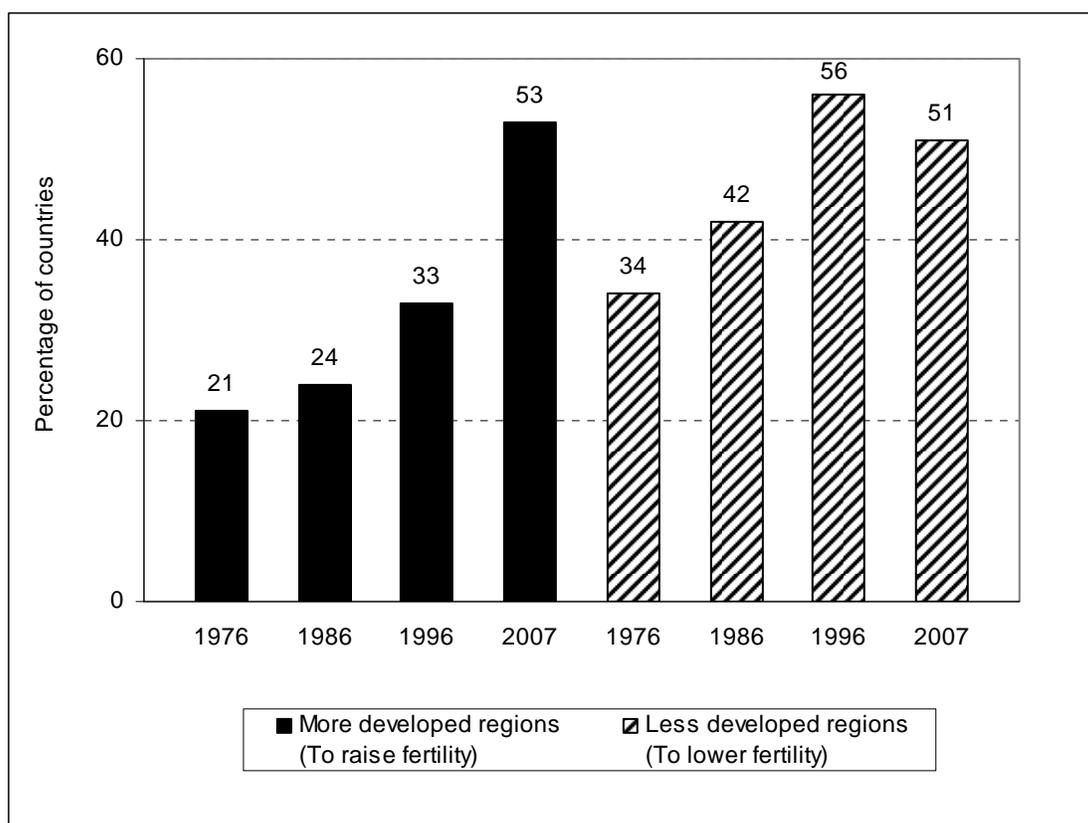
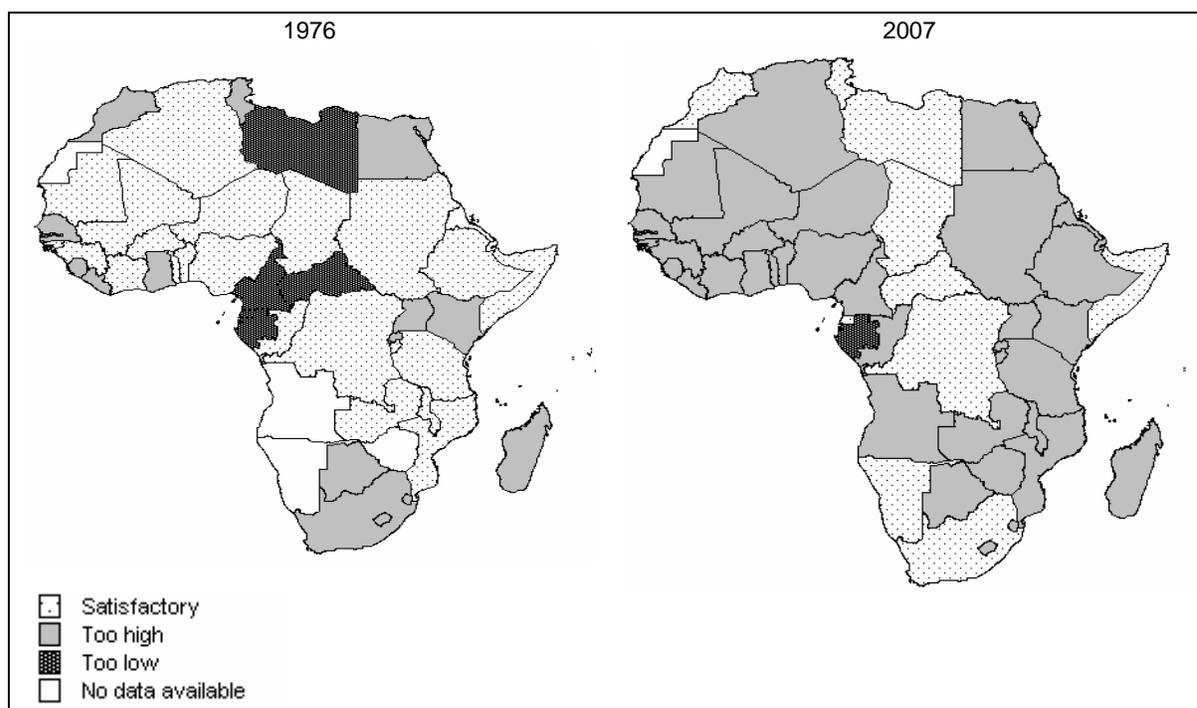


Figure III. Government views on the level of fertility, Africa, 1976 and 2007

Fifty-four per cent of developing countries considered their fertility to be too high in 2007. Ninety per cent of the least developed countries held that view. The evolution of government views on fertility in Africa is seen in figure III. In 1976, more than one-third of African countries viewed fertility as too high. In 2007, three-quarters of Governments in Africa held this view.

One of the most significant population policy developments in the wake of the International Conference on Population and Development was the increase in the number of Governments in Africa that reported policies to reduce their fertility. In 1976, 25 per cent of Governments in Africa had policies aimed at lowering their fertility. By 2007, 72 per cent of Governments in the continent pursued lower fertility.

Governments implemented a variety of measures to reduce fertility levels either directly or indirectly. These measures included the integration of family planning and safe motherhood programmes into primary health care systems, providing access to reproductive health services, promoting the responsibility of men in

sexual and reproductive health, raising the minimum legal age at marriage, improving female education and employment opportunities, discouraging son preference, and providing low cost, safe and effective contraception.

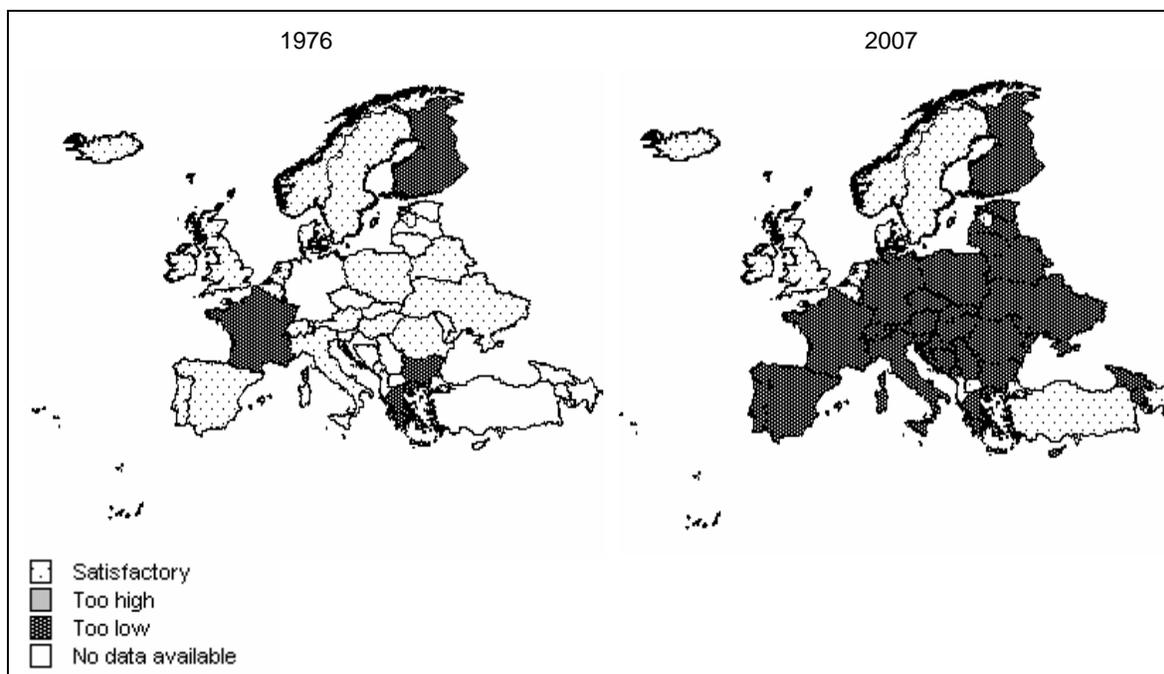
The persistence of low fertility was a concern for many countries. Fertility in developed countries fell well below replacement level to 1.6 children per woman in 2005-2010. Whereas in 1976 one quarter of Governments in Europe felt that fertility was too low, about three fifths held this view in 2007 (figure IV). By 1967, 67 countries had already introduced family allowances generally tied to the number of children, although it is not clear in how many of these countries the objective was to raise fertility (United Nations, 1972). Of the 47 countries in the world that viewed fertility as too low in 2007, more than four fifths had policies to increase fertility. To raise fertility, Governments have used a number of measures, such as baby bonuses, family allowances, maternal and paternal leave, subsidized child care, tax incentives, subsidized housing, flexible work schedules, and promoting the sharing of parenting and household work

between spouses. While 27 countries in Europe experienced a modest increase in fertility between 2000-2005 and 2005-2010, it is not clear whether the measures adopted had an impact. A public opinion poll conducted by the European Union's Eurobarometer in 2004 revealed that 84 per cent of the men surveyed either had not taken parental leave or did not intend to do so, even when informed of their rights (European Union, 2005). Furthermore, a more recent Eurobarometer survey in 2006 confirmed that women still undertook most household chores.

In Eastern Europe, profound economic and political changes were accompanied by a sharp decline in fertility, resulting in some of the lowest fertility in the world. Factors to account for this trend include: "fear of the future" induced by political instability, resulting in a reluctance to have children; declining per capita income and living standards; and major transformations in family formation and dissolution (Economic Commission for Europe, 2002).

Government policies regarding access to modern contraceptive methods have been an important determinant of reproductive behaviour, as well as of maternal and child health. Direct support entails the provision of family planning services through Government-run facilities, such as hospitals, clinics, health posts and health centres and through government fieldworkers. Government support for increased access to methods of contraception has steadily increased. In 2007, 92 per cent of countries supported contraceptive provision, either directly (74 per cent) or indirectly (18 per cent) by supporting non-governmental activities, such as those operated by family planning associations (table 7). Despite widespread government support for increasing access to contraceptives, demand is believed to outstrip supply. It is estimated that more than 100 million women lack ready access to safe and effective means of contraception (Sedgh and others, 2007a).

Figure IV. Government views on the level of fertility, Europe, 1976 and 2007



During the last three decades, most developing countries have strengthened their support for increasing access to contraceptive methods (figures V and VI). Even previously pronatalist Governments, which in the past had wanted to maintain or even increase population growth, have gradually modified their stance and accepted family planning and contraception as integral components of maternal and child health programmes. Such countries include Cameroon, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. However, other countries, particularly in Europe, have weakened their support for subsidized or free access to modern contraceptive methods. They include Austria, Denmark, France, Italy and Switzerland. Such a change may be a response to low fertility levels or an acknowledgement that the private sector can meet demands for contraception, so that additional government subsidies are not required.

Adolescent fertility (births to women under age 20) was a concern for many countries. Very early childbearing (before age 18) entails an increased risk of maternal death or physical

impairment and children born to young mothers have higher levels of morbidity and mortality. Of the 185 Governments whose view regarding fertility among adolescents was known, 168 (91 per cent) expressed concern about the level (table 8). They included virtually all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and most countries in Africa. While slightly more than one third of developed countries viewed the level of adolescent fertility as a major concern, two thirds of developing countries did so.

Of the 183 countries with information available, 80 per cent reported policies and programmes to address adolescent fertility (table 9). These programmes usually focused on providing assistance to public facilities and non-governmental organizations in order to provide in-school and out-of school youth with life skills and ensure they get appropriate reproductive health and sex education. Innovative educational approaches, including peer counseling for youth and orientation for parents, have also been promoted. Population education in non-formal educational settings, vocational training institutes or youth clubs has also been strengthened.

Figure V. Governments providing direct support to facilitate access to modern contraceptive methods, 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2007

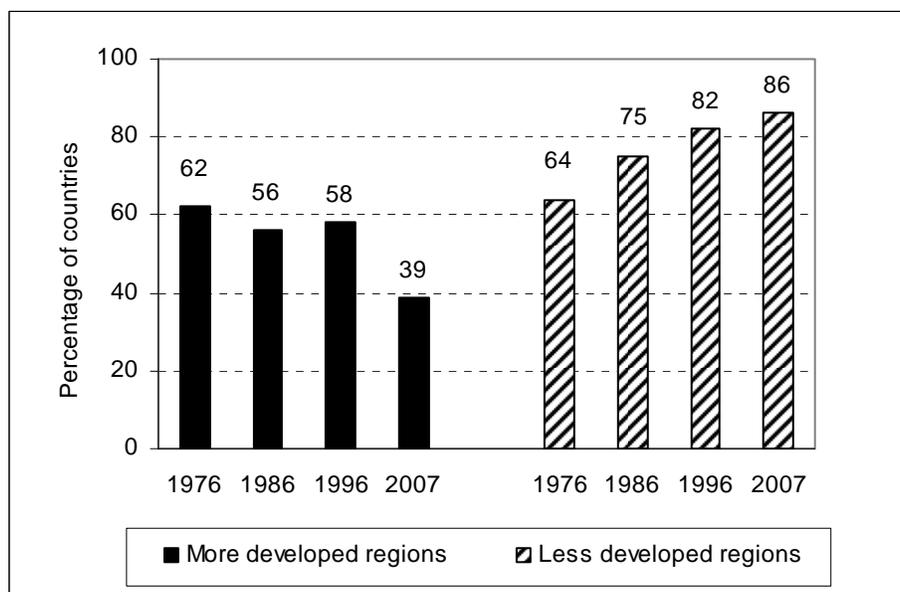
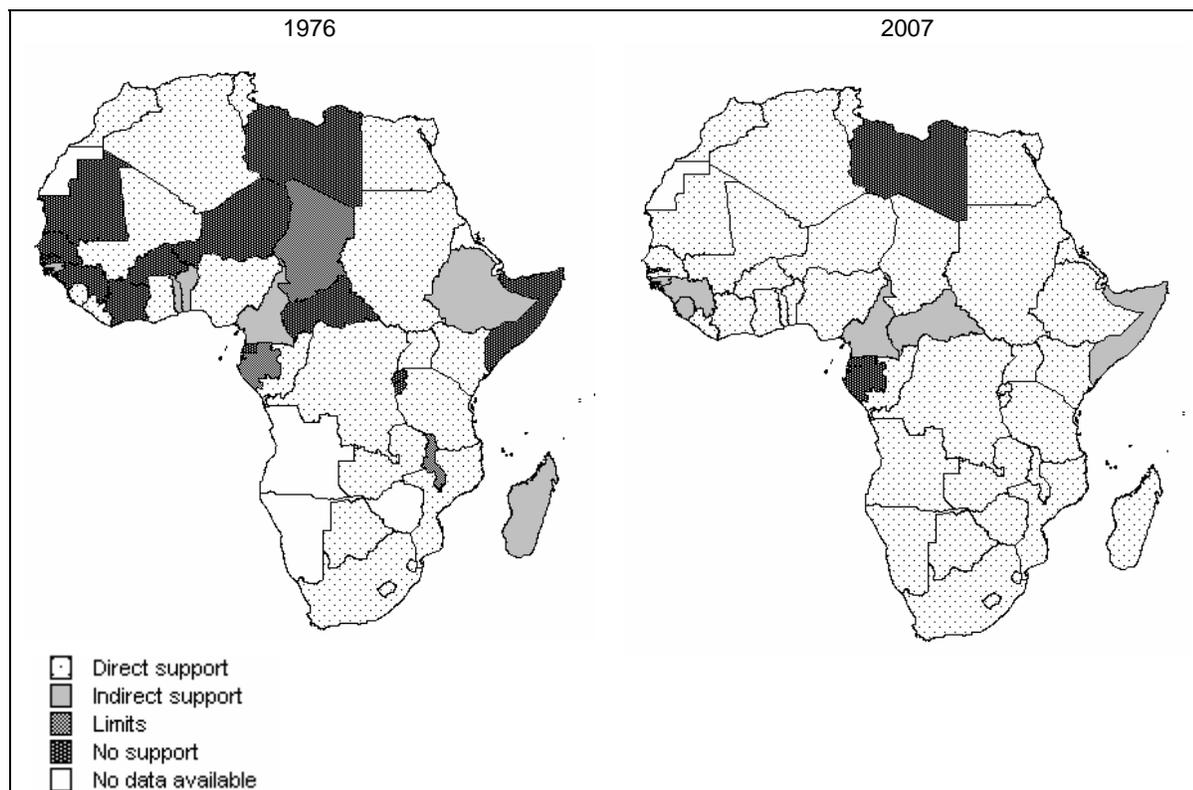


Figure VI. Government policies on providing access to contraceptive methods, Africa, 1976 and 2007



VI. HEALTH AND MORTALITY

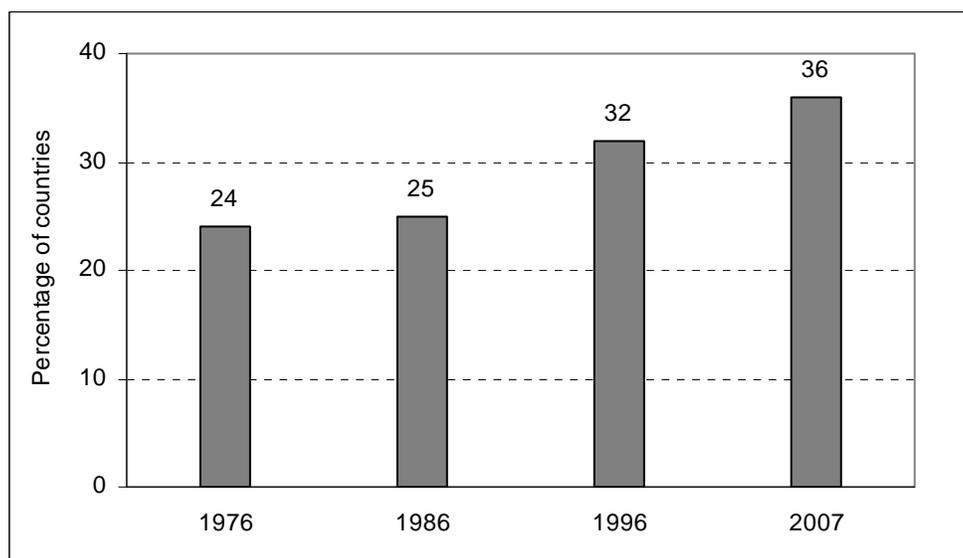
Life expectancy at birth

The pursuit of health and longevity is not only a basic human desire but also one of the fundamental pillars of development. In most of the world, life expectancy at birth has increased markedly in the last decades, particularly as focussed health interventions have led to significant reductions in infant and child mortality. Correspondingly, the percentage of Governments in developing countries that viewed their mortality level as acceptable increased from 24 per cent to 36 per cent between 1976 and 2007 (table 10, figure VII). However, there were still wide gaps between developed and developing countries. During 2000-2005, life expectancy at birth was 76 years in developed countries and 64 years in developing countries. In the least developed countries, life expectancy at birth was only 53 years (United Nations, 2007a). Owing mainly to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the transition to low mortality stagnated or even reversed in a number of countries, mostly located in Africa. It was therefore not surprising that Governments' views of mortality levels differ according to development level. In 2007, almost two thirds of

developed countries considered the level of life expectancy at birth to be acceptable, whereas only slightly more than one third of developing countries did so. Not a single least developed country felt that its mortality level was acceptable.

While 105 countries, representing 50 per cent of the world's population, met the ICPD Programme of Action's goal of reaching a life expectancy at birth higher than 70 years in 2000-2005, 90 countries had a life expectancy at birth below 70 years. Of these countries, 48 (14 per cent of world population), mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, fell far short of that benchmark (United Nations, 2007a). Life expectancy at birth in those countries was below 60 years. A number of factors contributed to slow down, if not reverse, gains in life expectancy, including military and political conflict, economic crises, socio-economic restructuring, unhealthy lifestyles, the re-emergence of certain infectious diseases, such as malaria, tuberculosis and cholera, and the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Low levels of health expenditure per capita are a major cause of the inadequate coverage of basic health services in developing countries. In 2004, health expenditures

Figure VII. Developing countries that view their mortality level as acceptable, 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2007



per capita averaged US\$ 91 among developing countries and US\$ 15 in the least developed countries (World Bank, 2007). In many developing countries, the situation was aggravated by the inability to absorb additional resources and the shortages of health care workers exacerbated by inadequate salaries, poor working conditions and emigration.

Under-five mortality and maternal mortality

At the world level, infant and child mortality and maternal mortality ranked as the second and third principal concerns of Governments after the HIV/AIDS epidemic. More than four fifths of developing countries cited under-five mortality as unacceptable and one third of developed countries did so. Dissatisfaction with the level of infant and child mortality decreased since 1996 in the developed countries, when just over half of the Governments of developed countries considered its level unacceptable. In contrast, concern over the level of infant and child mortality remained essentially unchanged in developing countries (table 11). This stability in government views reflected the fact that rapid reductions in child mortality before 1990 gave way to near stagnation during the 1990s in many developing countries. While child mortality rates have declined globally, the pace of progress has been uneven across regions and countries. Often lack of basic sanitation, safe water and food accounted for an important part of the high death toll among children. In the Millennium Development Goals, the target is to reduce child mortality by two thirds by 2015. Estimates of under-five mortality for 2006 indicated that, for the first time, the number of children dying before the age of five had fallen below 10 million per year. Half the deaths were from preventable diseases, such as acute respiratory infection, diarrhoea, measles and malaria (UNICEF, 2007).

Maternal mortality was a major concern in developing countries. The inclusion of maternal mortality in the Millennium Development Goals heightened the awareness of Governments to the need to provide appropriate reproductive health services. Of 193 countries, 135 (70 per cent) considered the level of maternal mortality as

unacceptable (table 12). Eighty-three per cent of all developing countries and 98 per cent of the least developed countries were dissatisfied with the level of maternal mortality. An estimated half a million women die each year during pregnancy or childbirth, almost all of them in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia (United Nations, 2007b). The Millennium Development Goals set a target of reducing maternal mortality by three quarters between 1990 and 2015.

In contrast, among developed countries, health concerns included: the prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases (cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, respiratory disorders and Alzheimer's disease); unhealthy life styles (drug and tobacco use, alcohol abuse, obesity); increasing efficiency in hospital care; cost-effective provision of primary care; the prevalence of disability; the cost of providing health and long-term care for older persons; communicable diseases; and inadequate health systems in the countries with economies in transition (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2004).

HIV/AIDS

The HIV/AIDS epidemic remains one of the greatest challenges confronting the international community. HIV/AIDS was the most often cited demographic concern by both developed and developing countries: 81 per cent of developed and 93 per cent of developing countries viewed it as a major concern (table 13). With more than 25 million deaths since the disease was first diagnosed in 1981 and over 33 million people living with HIV in 2007 (UNAIDS and WHO, 2007), the epidemic has erased decades of socio-economic progress and has had a devastating impact on population in terms of increased morbidity and mortality. Furthermore, the epidemic has undermined households and families, firms, agriculture, the education and health sectors, and national economies in the most affected countries. Although many Governments began formulating policies to address the spread of HIV and its consequences in the mid-1980s, these policies were often fragmented and had a narrow health focus. More recently, the epidemic has spawned an unprecedented array of global,

regional and national responses. Governments have pursued a multi-pronged strategy to combat HIV/AIDS by focusing on prevention, care and treatment, protection from discrimination and stigmatization, development of multisectoral strategies, the creation of HIV/AIDS coordination bodies and the building of partnerships with civil society, including groups of people living with HIV/AIDS, community-based groups, non-governmental organizations and the private sector (United Nations, 2004c).

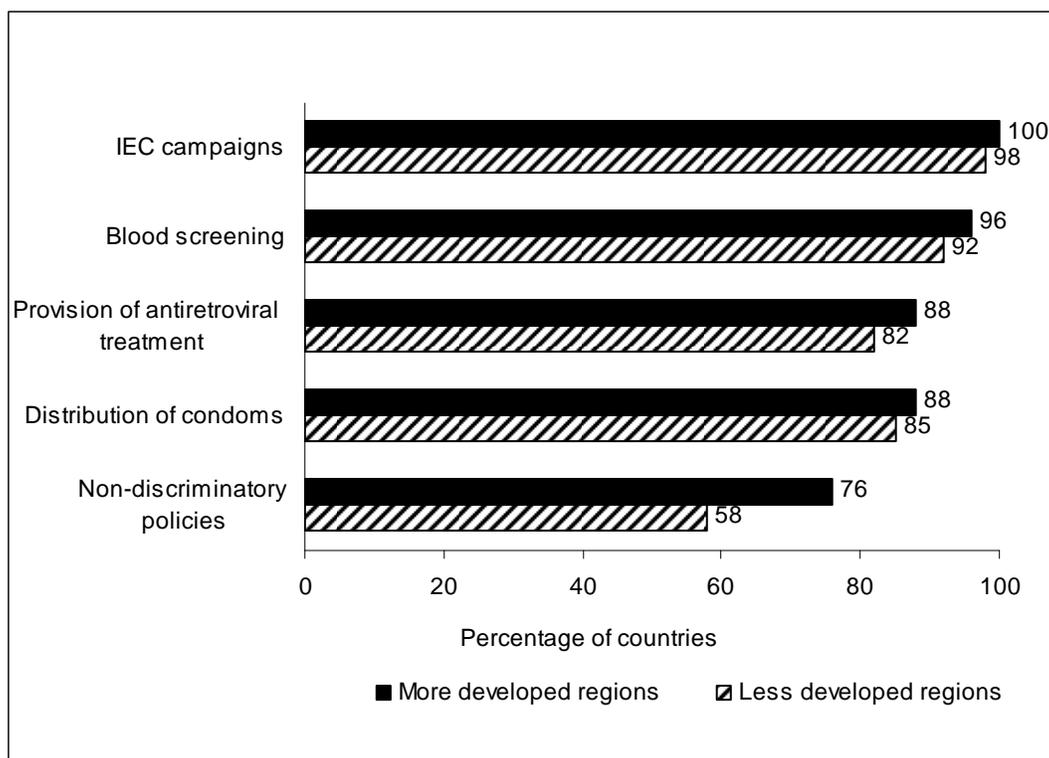
Prevention is the foundation of measures to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and most countries have introduced prevention strategies, as well as care, support and treatment programmes. Governments have raised public awareness by promoting information, education and communication (IEC) programmes through print media, theatre, radio, television and other public messages. The participation of non-governmental organizations, people living with HIV/AIDS, religious institutions, and international and

bilateral donors has been critical to the success of these efforts. However, much remains to be done to improve the effectiveness of government strategies to promote a reduction in risky sexual behaviour in the most affected countries.

Condom distribution is widespread: 86 per cent of Governments promote their use to protect against sexual transmission of HIV. In Africa, 87 per cent of Governments do so. Oceania is the region where condom distribution is the lowest (69 per cent). While programmes to distribute condoms are common, supply shortages and poor quality are concerns. The global supply of condoms is less than half of what is needed to ensure adequate condom coverage (UNFPA, 2005; UNAIDS, 2006).

In 2007, 182 of 195 countries reported screening national blood supplies for the HIV virus (table 14, figure VIII). Among developing countries, 135 (92 per cent) reported that they had implemented blood screening measures. An

Figure VIII. Distribution of countries according to the implementation of measures to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, 2007



increasing number of countries in Africa have implemented such measures, bringing to 49 countries (92 per cent) the number that screened the blood supply. In Oceania, blood screening for HIV was the lowest, with only two thirds of Governments reporting that they screened blood and blood products.

Antiretroviral treatment (ART) can significantly prolong life and alleviate suffering among people living with HIV. However, while 85 per cent of countries had programmes to provide ART in 2007, coverage remained extremely low. Despite concerted international and national efforts to reduce the price of ART, only around 2 million of the estimated 7.1 million people in developing countries in need of treatment received it by the end of 2006 (WHO, UNAIDS AND UNICEF, 2007).

Governments have increasingly enacted laws to protect people living with HIV. In 2007, 63 per cent of reporting countries had adopted legal measures to prohibit AIDS-related discrimination,

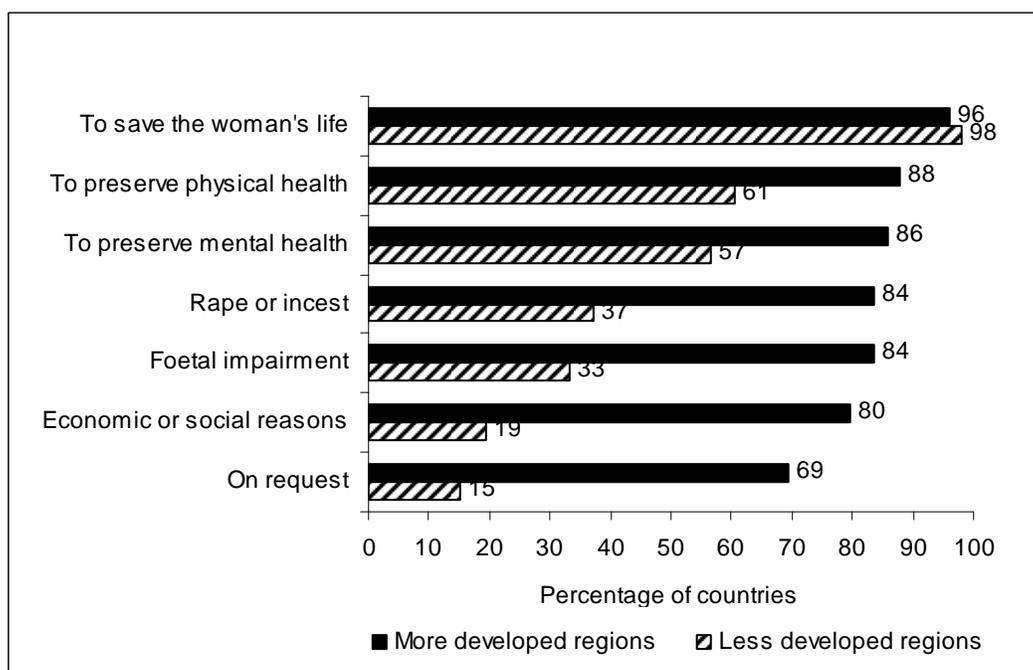
up from 59 per cent in 2005. Three quarters of developed countries had implemented such policies, whereas only 58 per cent of developing countries had done so. In Africa, where the epidemic is most widespread, half the countries have such laws.

At the 2006 United Nations High Level Meeting on AIDS, Member States of the United Nations adopted a Political Declaration which focused on how to attain universal access to comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support programmes by 2010.

Induced abortion

Some 42 million abortions were induced in 2003, almost half of which were unsafe (Sedgh and others, 2007b). In 2007, almost all countries, 96 per cent of developed countries and 98 per cent of developing countries, permitted abortion to save the woman's life (figure IX). Chile, El Salvador, the Holy See, Malta and Nicaragua did not permit abortion under any circumstances. In

Figure IX. Grounds on which abortion is permitted by level of development, 2007



the last quarter century, there has been a global trend towards expanding the grounds on which abortion is permitted. Between 1980 and 2007, the percentage of countries permitting abortion to save a woman's life increased from 86 per cent to 97 per cent and from 25 per cent to 49 per cent on grounds of rape or incest. The percentage of countries permitting abortion on request more than doubled, from 11 per cent to 29 per cent. The set of conditions under which abortion may legally be performed varied widely.

Abortion laws and policies are significantly more restrictive in developing countries. In 80 per cent of developed countries, abortion is permitted for economic or social reasons and in 69 per cent it is permitted on request. In contrast, 19 per cent of developing countries permit abortion for economic or social reasons, while 15 per cent allow abortion on request. Between 2005 and 2007, Bhutan, Colombia, Guinea, Nicaragua, Panama, Portugal and Togo modified the grounds for permitting abortion. Six of those seven countries expanded the grounds for permitting an abortion.

V. SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION AND INTERNAL MIGRATION

Urbanization has been a major transforming force, particularly during the 20th century. Between 1950 and 2005, the world's urban population more than quadrupled, growing from 732 million to 3.2 billion (United Nations, 2006). Whereas approximately one in every three people in the world lived in an urban area in the 1950s, this ratio is today one in two. This change has been especially pronounced in the developing countries, where the share of the urban population has more than doubled over the past 60 years. The United Nations Population Division estimates that this trend is likely to continue in the future. In 2008, the number of people living in urban areas will surpass for the first time the number living in rural areas. By 2020, many countries that have long remained mostly rural such as China, Guatemala and Nigeria, will have become predominantly urban.

The change in the patterns of spatial distribution which has taken place over the past 60 years has coincided with unprecedented global economic growth. The so-called green revolution and the mechanization of agriculture have increased farm productivity, while at the same time creating a labour surplus in rural areas. The clustering of businesses and people in cities has generated economies of scale, which in turn have favoured the accumulation of capital and the increase of productivity and fostered trade and the exchange of ideas. In both the more developed and less developed regions, countries with higher levels of urbanization have tended to have higher per capita incomes, more stable economies and stronger political institutions (OECD, 2007; UN-HABITAT, 2006). Because of these factors, urbanization is increasingly recognized as a process concomitant with economic development that can play a positive role in promoting development.

Changes in the pattern of spatial distribution, however, have also given rise to or accentuated existing concerns. In many countries, the process of urbanization has concentrated wealth and infrastructure in large cities, draining rural areas of resources, including the population of working

age. According to the most recent estimates available, approximately 75 per cent of the world's poor resided in rural areas in 2002 (Ravallion, Chen and Sangraula, 2007). In many countries, rural areas have lagged behind urban areas in the achievement of the various internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

In many countries, the rapid growth of the urban population has also been accompanied by the expansion of slums, which are characterized by precarious housing, inadequate sanitation and overcrowding. It is estimated that one third of the urban dwellers in developing countries lives in a slum (United Nations, 2007b). While urban dwellers often fare better than their rural counterparts, there is growing evidence that living conditions in slums are sometimes as difficult as in some of the poorest rural areas (UN-HABITAT, 2006). Furthermore, the urban population in developing countries continues to grow at a fast pace while the growth of the rural population stabilizes. An outcome of this trend has been an increasing concentration of poverty in urban centres. Thus, between 1993 and 2002 it is estimated that the number of urban poor increased by 50 million, while the number of rural poor declined by 150 million (Ravallion, Chen and Sangraula, 2007).

In many developing countries, urban growth has taken place in the non-contiguous transitional zones between the countryside and already established cities in what are referred to as "peri-urban areas" (UNFPA, 2007). These areas often bear the brunt of rapid urban growth, in the form of rising levels of poverty, natural resource depletion and growing pollution. A recent study of São Paulo, Brazil, the largest urban agglomeration in Latin America, found that the city-centre was losing population, while the poorest areas located on the outskirts of the city were growing rapidly. The areas experiencing the most rapid population growth were generally those with high levels of deforestation, informal land use and inadequate infrastructure (Torres, Alves and De Oliveira, 2007).

Faced with the opportunities and challenges that growing urbanization brings, an increasing number of policymakers have focused on the population's spatial distribution. In 2007, 85 per cent of Governments expressed concern about their pattern of population distribution, a percentage comparable to those recorded in the 1970s and 1980s. Developing countries appear to be particularly concerned, with 56 per cent calling for a major change and 32 per cent calling for a minor change in the spatial distribution of their populations. In developed countries, the percentage of Governments dissatisfied with the spatial distribution of the population was lower, with 37 per cent and 39 per cent of Governments calling for a major or minor change, respectively.

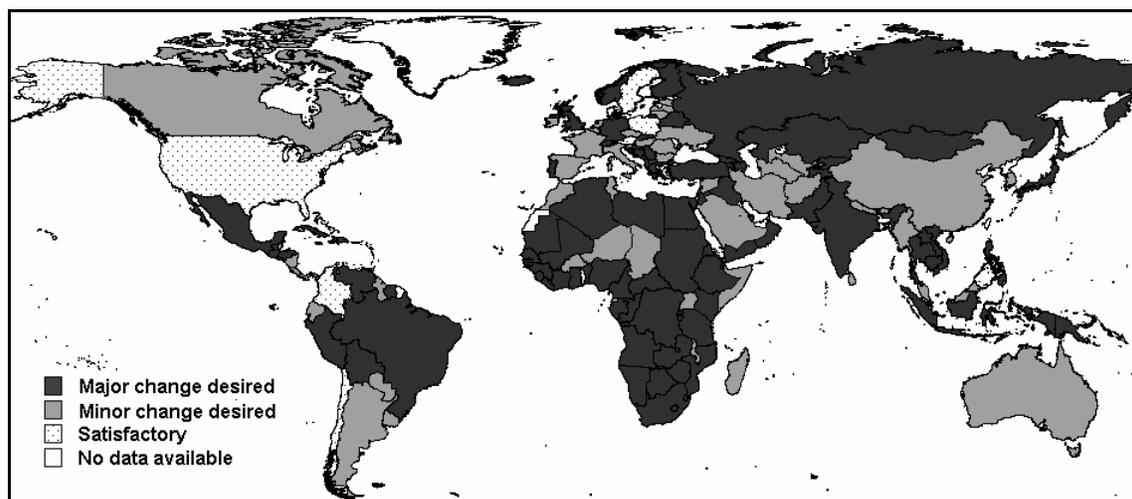
While concern over the spatial distribution of population was widespread, there were considerable regional differences in the levels of concern reported. Dissatisfaction regarding patterns of population distribution was highest in Africa and Asia, where 74 per cent and 51 per cent, respectively, of Governments desired major changes in their population distribution (table 15). This outcome is not surprising given that the most rapid urban population growth has occurred in those two regions: 3.3 per cent per year in Africa and 2.6 per cent annually in Asia during 2000-2005 (United Nations, 2006). In Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania and Europe, where

urban growth has been lower, around 40 per cent of Governments perceived that major changes in spatial distribution were desirable (figure X).

In general, natural increase has accounted for over half of the population growth in urban areas. However, net migration from rural to urban areas and the transformation of rural settlements into urban places are also important components of urban growth. It is anticipated that between 250 million and 310 million people in developing countries will become urban dwellers between 2005 and 2015 due to internal migration or re-classification of rural areas into urban areas (United Nations, 2006). As of 2007, the majority of Governments had implemented measures to address the opportunities offered and challenges posed by internal migration.

Reducing or even reversing the flow of migrants from rural areas to cities has been the most common type of policy intervention pursued by Governments. Rural to urban migration can erode traditional lifestyles and accelerate the ageing of rural communities as younger people migrate to cities in search of employment. Historically, Governments have adopted different strategies in order to retain population in rural areas including: establishing internal migration controls, undertaking land re-distribution and creating regional development zones. In recent

Figure X. Government views on the spatial distribution of their population, 2007



years, a new rural paradigm has emerged in developed countries, based on the recognition of the interdependence between rural and urban areas. This approach has led to the promotion of rural diversification and competitiveness, the mobilization of investment instead of subsidies, greater coherence and effectiveness of public expenditure, and improvements in the lives of rural dwellers (OECD, 2006a). In more than one third of OECD countries, rural areas experienced the highest rate of employment creation.

At the global level, 70 per cent of the countries with data available in 2007 had implemented policies to reduce out-migration from rural to urban areas (table 16). Developing countries have been particularly prone to embrace such policies, with 73 per cent devising policies to counter the depopulation of rural areas compared to 62 per cent of developed countries doing so. Again, Africa had the highest percentage of countries (83 per cent) seeking to stem migration from rural to urban areas followed by Asia (73 per cent) and Oceania (73 per cent).

The second most common type of policy has been to reduce the flow of internal migrants into large urban agglomerations. In many countries, especially those in the less developed regions, the inflow of large numbers of migrants to large cities has strained local Governments' ability to provide basic services such as clean water, sanitation and public transportation. Between 1970 and 2005, the number of cities with more than 10 million inhabitants climbed from 3 to 20 (United Nations, 2006). While the majority of the world's urban population still lives in small and medium-sized cities, the percentage of the urban population living in mega-cities has been increasing. Since the 1970s, a growing share of developing countries has implemented policies aimed at reducing internal migration into large urban agglomerations (table 18). The percentage of developed countries seeking to reduce flows into urban agglomerations declined between 1976 and 2003, but has risen considerably since then. In 2007, 65 per cent of Governments worldwide had implemented policies to reduce the inflow of migrants to large urban agglomerations. Seventy-four per cent of developing countries had adopted

such policies, compared to 39 per cent of developed countries. The region with the highest percentage of Governments seeking to stem migration to urban agglomerations was Oceania (83 per cent), followed by Africa (78 per cent) and Asia (71 per cent).

Other types of policies used to shape the spatial distribution of the population have had fewer adherents. As of 2007, less than 40 per cent of Governments, for example, had adopted policies to promote out-migration from cities and large urban agglomerations into rural areas. These policies were intended to relieve population pressure on city infrastructure as well as reduce urban unemployment, encouraging the return of migrants to their communities of origin. As with measures aimed at reducing migration into large urban agglomerations, policies to promote urban to rural migration were more common in developing countries (44 per cent) than in developed countries (19 per cent). The regions with the highest percentage of countries that promoted urban to rural migration were Africa and Asia, with 55 per cent and 64 per cent of countries, respectively, pursuing such policies.

A relatively small percentage of countries, 14 per cent, implemented policies to encourage urban to urban migration (table 17). Such policies usually centred on promoting movements from large urban agglomerations to small and medium-sized cities or to new settlements. The rationale for such interventions is that, while large urban agglomerations can foster innovation and entrepreneurship by attracting highly-skilled workers and generating economies of scale, cities beyond a certain size become less efficient and productive (OECD, 2006b). The policy of encouraging urban dwellers to move from large urban settlements to smaller cities has been particularly common in countries where a large percentage of the urban population is concentrated in one or two large urban agglomerations. In 2007, the region with the highest percentage of Governments promoting urban to urban migration was Latin America and the Caribbean (21 per cent), followed by Oceania (20 per cent), Africa (17 per cent) and Asia (16 per cent). In addition to promoting urban to urban migration, a number of

countries have also attempted to foster internal migration by building new cities or relocating the capital.

A few developed countries have implemented measures to stem out-migration from cities and large urban agglomerations to rural areas. These types of interventions have tended to focus on urban sprawl and the environmental costs associated with it. Concerns about pollution, traffic congestion and commuting times have been issues that Governments frequently consider when devising measures to limit the encroachment of urban settlements into the rural areas bordering large cities. Europe was the region with the highest percentage of countries (15 per cent) that have implemented policies to reduce out-migration from urban to rural areas, followed by Asia (4 per cent).

In addition to policies aimed at influencing patterns of internal migration, Governments have also undertaken initiatives to improve the quality of life and the sustainability of cities. These policies are generally of two main types: regulatory and positivist (World Bank, 2005). Regulatory policies consist of urban growth controls, zoning and land subdivision regulations, and building codes and standards. Positivist policies focus on public land acquisition and allocation, investment in public infrastructure and facilities, and public-private partnerships in urban development projects. Most cities manage their development with various combinations of regulatory and positivist policies. A recent example of a combined policy is presented in *PlaNYC: A Greener, Greater New York* (City of New York, 2007). The plan for New York City proposes ambitious goals which include creating housing for an additional million people, increasing access to parklands, updating the water network, modernizing power plants, and reducing water pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. The plan also includes a proposal to introduce congestion pricing, so as to reduce traffic in the central business district. This strategy is based on a successful pricing scheme introduced in London in 2003. The cities of Bergen, Malta, Oslo, Singapore, Stockholm and Trondheim have also established congestion pricing zones.

In developing countries, where city dwellers often lack access to adequate infrastructure, including water and sanitation, transport, solid waste collection and disposal, safe housing and other basic services, many Governments have undertaken initiatives to improve the quality of life in poor urban areas. In India, for example, the Ministry of Urban Development and the Ministry of Housing and Poverty Alleviation designed a new programme for the provision of services to the urban poor. Launched in 2005, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission provided from 35 per cent to 90 per cent of the costs associated with specific projects to improve infrastructure and governance or increase access to basic services for the urban poor in several Indian cities. Similarly, with financial assistance from the French Agency for Development, the Government of Burkina Faso has undertaken initiatives to improve roadways and access to water and sanitation for the nearly one million inhabitants of Ouagadougou, capital of Burkina Faso, a third of whom lived in peri-urban shantytowns.

For the urban poor, access to secure land tenure is particularly relevant. With the costs of land and housing rising rapidly in many cities of the developing world, a growing proportion of people are forced to live in marginalized areas where lack of secure land tenure provides residents with little incentive to improve their housing. The threat of eviction and lack of public services results in the poor physical conditions of such settlements, and contribute to accelerated environmental degradation of the lands available to the poor.

Public authorities are often reluctant to recognize the residents of informal urban settlements as legal occupants of the land. Lack of legal tenure often prevents the provision of basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity and waste collection. Moreover, without a formal title to occupy urban land, the poor are unable to use the property as collateral against bank loans which could be used to develop income-generating activities. In addition, lacking secure tenure and a right of ownership, the poor do not benefit from rising property prices as middle-class or rich urban dwellers often do.

VI. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

National and international issues related to migration, including labour migration, the brain drain, remittances, transnational communities, asylum, trafficking and irregular migration have intersected with national concerns regarding low fertility and population ageing, unemployment, human rights, social integration, xenophobia, and national security. These concerns have led to considerable attention being paid to international migration policies and the ways to ensure that the potential benefits of international migration accrue.

Many Governments and intergovernmental organizations have called for greater coherence in international migration policies and between those policies and development plans. However, international migration policies often lack clear objectives and are not effectively implemented. Coherence is difficult to achieve when policymakers are confronted with competing priorities regarding employment, trade, development and national security. By undertaking a systematic and forthright examination of international migration policies and their outcomes, Governments may gain a better understanding of the policy options open to them.

High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and beyond

Over the past two years, there have been several important developments in this regard. In September 2006, the General Assembly of the United Nations conducted for the first time in its history a High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. During the Dialogue, high-level officials representing 127 Governments made statements and participated in round tables. The Dialogue concluded that, supported by the right set of policies, international migration could make an important contribution to development in both countries of origin and countries of destination. Participants stressed that respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of all migrants was essential to reap the benefits of international migration. Special measures were

called for to protect migrant women and children from violence, discrimination, trafficking, exploitation and abuse. There was a call to reduce irregular migration and find ways of facilitating legal migration. Remittances were recognized as useful in improving the lives of millions of migrant families and there was agreement that measures should be taken to reduce transfer costs. In no circumstances should remittances be considered as a substitute for official development assistance. There was considerable attention paid to the contributions that migrant communities abroad could make to their countries of origin. Concern was expressed about the emigration of skilled workers from poor countries whose health and education services were already understaffed. Participants in the Dialogue stressed the need to strengthen international cooperation on international migration and development, bilaterally, regionally and globally.

At the Dialogue, nearly all participating Member States supported the view that intergovernmental dialogue on international migration and development should continue. Many embraced the Secretary-General's proposal of establishing a Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) and the offer made by the Government of Belgium to host the first meeting of that Forum in 2007. On 20 December 2006, the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution A/RES/61/208 on International Migration and Development that noted with interest the offer of the Government of Belgium to convene a state-led initiative, the Global Forum on Migration and Development, in 2007. It also welcomed the heightened awareness achieved by the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and decided to consider, at its sixty-third session in 2008, possible options for appropriate follow-up to the High-level Dialogue.

In July 2007, the first meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development took place in Brussels, Belgium. Organized by the Government of Belgium, it gathered over 800 delegates representing 156 Member States and

more than 20 international organizations. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his opening statement: “At this early stage of international cooperation on migration and development, we are trying to build trust among States. So we should focus on those policy actions that stand to benefit all the actors in the migration system.” Accordingly, the first meeting of the Forum focused on three key themes: (a) human capital development and labour mobility, (b) remittances and other diaspora resources, and (c) policy and institutional coherence. Over 50 recommendations on concrete steps to improve international migration’s outcomes emerged from the Forum’s meeting.

The Global Forum has successfully maintained and built on the momentum generated by the High-level Dialogue by embracing a new approach to international migration that has placed development at the centre of the debate and considers legal migration as an opportunity for countries of destination and origin, rather than as a threat. An important achievement of the Forum process has been the establishment of an international network of national focal points on international migration and development. By identifying national focal points and assigning them the task of coordinating national positions on international migration and development in relation to the Forum, Governments have initiated national processes of dialogue and coordination leading to greater coherence in relation to international migration policies.

The second meeting of the Global Forum will be hosted by the Government of the Philippines and is scheduled to take place in Manila, the Philippines, in October 2008. Building on the success of the Brussels meeting of the Forum, the Government of the Philippines has proposed three themes for the second meeting of the Forum: (a) migrant rights and development; (b) promoting safer, legal migration, and (c) policy and institutional coherence. A key objective of the Manila meeting will be to assess the implementation of the outcomes of the Brussels meeting.

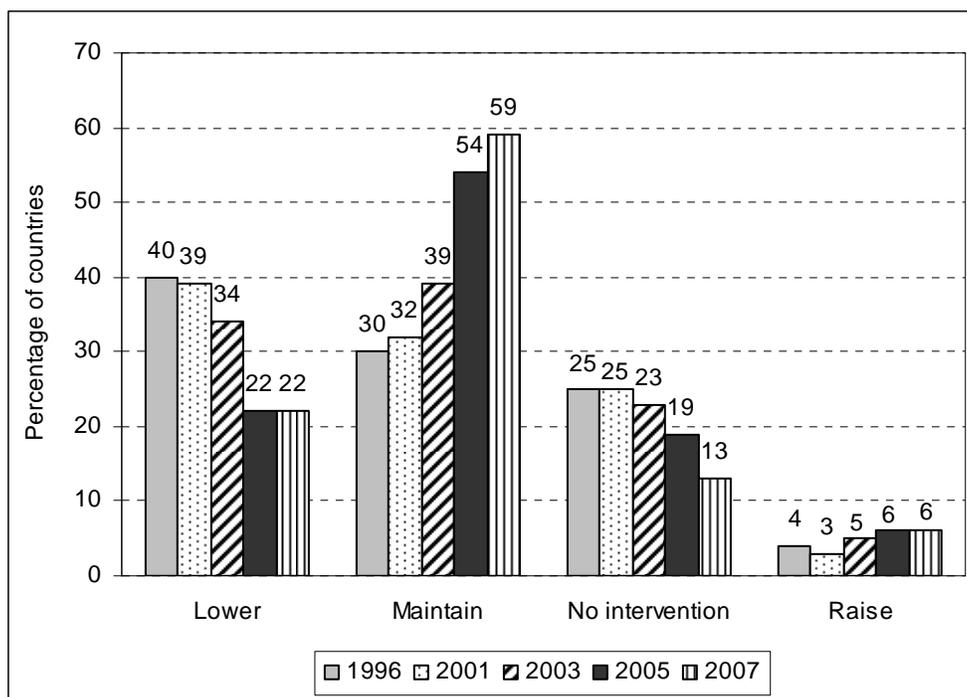
Immigration

Since the mid-1990s, major changes have occurred in the views of Governments regarding international migration. Today Governments are more likely than they once were to wish to maintain the current levels of immigration and less inclined to reduce them. In 2007, 19 per cent of countries wanted to lower immigration, down from 40 per cent in 1996 (table 20, figure XI). At the same time, there was an upturn in the share of countries seeking to maintain or not to intervene in changing the level of immigration: from 55 per cent in 1996 to 74 per cent in 2007. For the most part, countries wishing to maintain current levels of immigration were countries in Africa having negative migration balances and borders that are difficult to supervise. The percentage of countries aiming to raise immigration levels rose only slightly, from 4 per cent in 1996 to 6 per cent.

The shift towards somewhat less restrictive immigration policies can be attributed to a number of factors, including an improved understanding of the consequences of international migration; the growing recognition by Governments of the need to manage international migration better, rather than limit it; the persistence of labour shortages in certain sectors of the economies of rich countries; an expanding global economy, and long-term trends in population ageing.

The trend toward less restrictive immigration was especially pronounced in developed countries, where the percentage of countries with policies to lower immigration fell from 60 per cent in 1996 to 8 per cent in 2007. Only four developed countries want to reduce overall immigration today: Denmark, Estonia, France and the Netherlands. Furthermore, three of these countries—Denmark, France and the Netherlands—are trying to increase the immigration of highly-skilled workers. Five developed countries—Australia, Canada, Finland, New Zealand and the Russian Federation—wish to increase overall immigration in line with labour demand.

Figure XI. Government policies on immigration, 1996, 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007

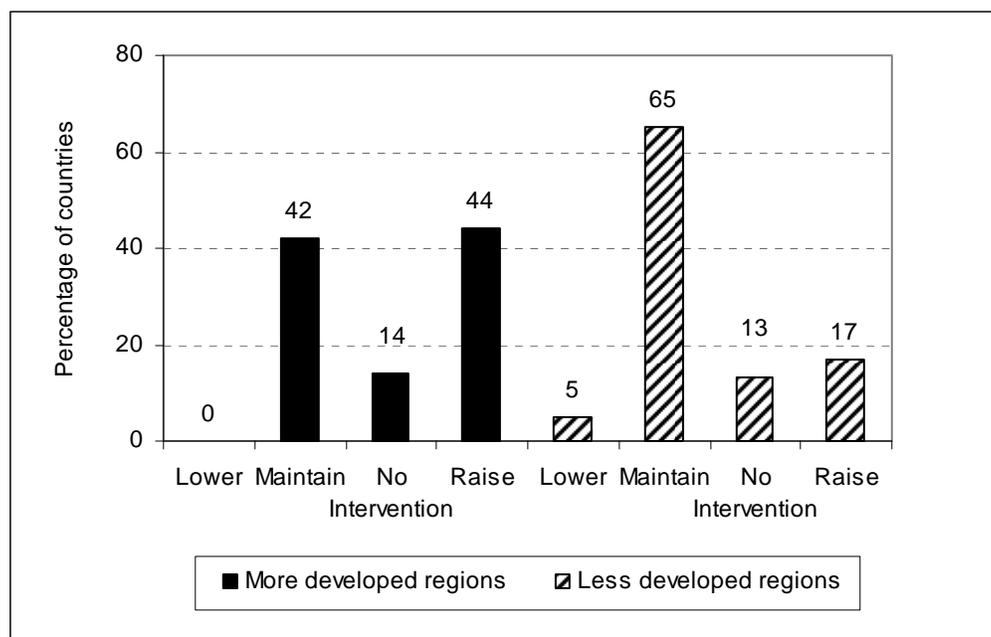


With the advent of less costly and more rapid forms of transport, countries have become more diverse with respect to immigration policies and, in particular, to the length of stay of migrants. At the world level, around three fifths of the 157 reporting countries desired to maintain the current level of admissions of permanent settlers, while nearly one quarter of countries wanted to lower it (table 21). In developed countries, three quarters of countries aimed at maintaining the level of settler migration and 15 per cent had policies to lower it.

Migration policy in countries of destination reflected an evolution towards greater selectivity, favouring the admission of migrants who meet specific labour needs, such as those in science and technology or those with skills considered in short supply. In 2007, 36 out of 144 countries reported promoting the admission of highly skilled

workers. While more than 40 per cent of developed countries aimed to increase the number of admissions of the highly skilled, only 17 per cent of developing countries pursued such a strategy (table 22, figure XII).

Labour migration has become increasingly selective with the skills that migrants possess to a large extent determining the likelihood of their being admitted into countries of destination. Many countries amended their legislation in the late 1990s to facilitate the entry of skilled migrants and launched specific recruitment programmes to attract them. In 2007, only five countries (Bhutan, Botswana, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) reported that they wished to reduce the number of admissions of highly skilled migrants so as to improve the employment prospects of their citizens.

Figure XII. Government policies on the migration of highly skilled workers, 2007

Although countries of destination have emphasized the need to attract highly skilled migrants, population ageing and rising job expectations have also produced labour shortages in low-skilled sectors of the economy, sectors such as agriculture, construction and domestic services. Demand for low-skilled labour has generally been filled by having recourse to temporary migrant workers. Several destination countries have established annual quotas and signed bilateral agreements with countries of origin. These bilateral agreements usually cover seasonal workers, contract and project-linked workers, guest workers and cross-border workers. Many of these workers migrate on the basis of temporary contracts and are generally admitted for a fixed period without an expectation of ever obtaining permanent resident status.

Most countries of destination allow migration for family reunification under specific conditions. However, family reunification is not universally accepted as a right. Many contract labour arrangements preclude the admission of family members. In a number of labour-importing countries, debate has focused on the cost of providing migrants' dependants with health, education and welfare benefits.

Since the 1980s, family reunification has been the major basis for immigration in many countries, particularly in Europe. A majority of legal migrants to Canada, Denmark, France, Norway, Sweden and the United States have been admitted on family reunification grounds. High levels of immigration for family reunification have been a contentious issue in a number of European countries. In recent years, several European countries have sought to limit admissions of family members, including Denmark, France, Ireland and Italy. While family reunification ensures the integrity of the family unit, it is a form of migration that is open to potential abuse through sham marriages or adoption. Such abuses have led some countries to tighten requirements for the immigration of spouses, for instance, by raising the minimum age required for spouses or granting permanent status to the migrant spouse only after a specified period and proof of successful integration. Of the 140 countries with information on migration for family reunification in 2007, 9 per cent aimed to lower immigration for this purpose, 68 per cent to maintain it, and 6 per cent had implemented policies to raise it (table 24).

The successful integration of migrants is a major concern for most countries of destination. The number of countries that reported programmes to integrate foreigners increased from 52 in 1996 to 79 in 2007 (table 25). Developed countries are increasingly recognizing and promoting the benefits of diversity. Many countries have adopted non-discrimination provisions to protect religious freedom and the use of other languages in addition to those of host countries. Developed countries have undertaken initiatives to make it easier for migrants to become a part of society, in particular through language training and by providing courses to inform immigrants about the life and culture of the host country. The aim is to offer support during the integration process, while instituting stricter requirements for admission. The integration process has not always been smooth, particularly in countries where foreigners experience higher unemployment than citizens and are thus more dependent on welfare. To improve migrants' access to labour markets, many countries have expanded and improved education and employment training programmes for migrants.

In most countries, foreigners do not enjoy the same rights as citizens, especially with regard to political representation. Many countries have historically not regarded themselves as countries of immigration and thus have not encouraged foreigners to obtain permanent residence and naturalization. In some countries, citizenship laws may disadvantage migrant women or women marrying foreigners (United Nations, 2004a). A growing number of countries—both of destination and origin—allow dual citizenship. By allowing naturalized citizens to maintain their original nationality, links with the country of origin are more likely to be maintained.

Emigration

Despite the significant increase in the number of emigrants, the share of developing countries aiming to lower emigration has remained at about one quarter since the 1980s (table 27).

Nevertheless, a number of developed and developing countries are concerned about the level of emigration, especially of highly skilled workers. In addition, 13 countries, 10 of which are in Asia, have policies to increase emigration. These are countries with young populations, high unemployment, particularly among young people, and a tradition of emigration. Several countries—the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam—have established government units to manage emigration flows or entered into bilateral agreements with receiving States to protect the rights of their citizens while abroad.

The sharp rise in the emigration of skilled workers has prompted many countries to address the challenges posed by the brain drain, particularly through initiatives to encourage the return of skilled citizens living abroad. In 2007, 79 countries had policies and programmes to encourage their citizens to return, up from 59 countries in 1996 (table 28).

Emigration has created both opportunities and difficulties for developing countries. Concerns have often been raised about the loss of highly skilled workers whose absence may hinder the development process. The provision of medical care in Africa has been particularly affected by the emigration of significant numbers of health care providers. On the positive side, in many countries of origin, remittances play an important role in sustaining national and local economies. A number of Governments have undertaken initiatives to facilitate remittance transfers, as well as to maximize the positive impact of remittances on development. Communication technologies and modern transportation have facilitated frequent contact between emigrants and their families in countries of origin. The potential positive impact of emigration on the home country through the transfer of knowledge and technology, as well as through investment and trade, has been recognized. Governments, therefore, increasingly encourage transnational communities to invest in the countries of origin and to participate in transnational knowledge networks.

VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

World Population Policies 2007 tracks the evolution of Governments' views and policies on population and development that has taken place since the convening of the World Population Conference in 1974. The major conclusion of this study is that Governments have become increasingly concerned with the consequences of population trends. Furthermore, Governments are more inclined to view population as a legitimate area of government action and to act upon these concerns by formulating and implementing policies which address these issues.

Population policies and programmes in many countries have been reoriented towards implementation of the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action adopted by the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, and the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (General Assembly resolution, S-21/2 of July 1999), adopted at the twenty-first special session of the Assembly. For example, in the area of family planning, policies focusing on women of reproductive age have given way to a life-cycle oriented reproductive health approach encompassing both sexes. Targets to reduce the unmet need for family planning have replaced fertility reduction and contraceptive-use targets. Improving the availability, accessibility and method choice of contraception and the quality of care have also become priorities.

The overriding goal of the Programme of Action to improve human welfare and promote sustainable development is fully consistent with the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The ICPD Programme of Action recognizes and makes explicit the synergies existing among the various development goals, so that they are mutually reinforcing. Implementing the ICPD Programme of Action will contribute significantly to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2005a).

At the global level, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has been the most significant demographic issue in the world for at least a decade. In developing countries, high infant and child mortality and maternal mortality are the second and third most pressing population and development issues. In addition to HIV/AIDS, the demographic issues of greatest concern to developed countries are those related to population ageing, the persistence of low fertility and the stagnating size of the working age population.

In developing countries, and especially in Africa, an increasing number of Governments consider that both population growth and fertility are too high and have implemented measures to lower them. The HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to spread. Despite the advances made in treating people infected with HIV and in controlling the spread of the epidemic, its impact in terms of morbidity, mortality and slower population growth continues to be evident in many countries. The future course of the epidemic depends on achieving a major increase in the proportion of AIDS patients who receive antiretroviral therapy to treat the disease and on the success of efforts to prevent the further spread of HIV.

In the more developed regions, below-replacement fertility prevails and is expected to continue to 2050. Concern about the consequences of population ageing is increasing among Governments. Policies have focused on ensuring the long-term sustainability of pension systems and on promoting a holistic approach to population ageing by mobilizing the full potential of people at all ages. Measures to balance work and family life and those that promote gender equality in all spheres of life are part of this approach.

Despite the wide array of measures Governments have used to shape internal migration and urban growth, especially in developing countries, policies have generally failed to meet their stated objectives of reducing

or slowing urban growth. A more realistic approach would entail focussing on the consequences of population distribution and urbanization and taking measures to adapt to them.

As regards international migration, countries of destination increasingly recognize that international migration has beneficial outcomes and have adopted policies and measures to tailor international migration to national needs. Fewer countries wish to lower immigration, while a growing number of countries of destination are promoting the admission of skilled workers. In the longer term, immigration is likely to grow, in view of the persistence of low fertility and population ageing, even if in the short term, reversals in immigration policies may occur in response to immediate political considerations. Despite the increased volume of migration, the percentage of countries seeking to lower emigration has remained at about one in four since the mid-1980s. Countries have become more inclined to encourage the return of their citizens abroad, to create links with their transnational communities, to facilitate the flow of remittances, and to harness the positive impact of migration on

poverty reduction in the countries of origin. As the migration and development discourse gains momentum, policies concerning emigration will be an important issue for countries of origin.

Since the adoption of the ICPD Programme of Action, there has been growing recognition that international migration and development are inexorably linked and are of key relevance to the global agenda. To reap the benefits and minimize the adverse consequences of international migration, greater international cooperation and policy coherence are considered essential.

Adopting a population policy, however, is only the initial step in ensuring the achievement of population and development objectives. Other essential elements include the implementation of appropriate programmes, sufficient political commitment and adequate financial resources. Respect for cultural values, partnerships with non-governmental organizations, civil society, the business community and international donors, good governance and the maintenance of peace and security are also crucial. Lastly, a process to evaluate population policies on a regular basis is also important.

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