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**POPULATION DIVISION  
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preparations for the International Conference  
on Population and Development



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## NOTE

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## PREFACE

The purpose of the *Population Bulletin of the United Nations*, as stipulated by the Population Commission, is to publish population studies carried out by the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other organizations with a view to promoting scientific understanding of population questions. The studies are expected to provide a global perspective of demographic issues and to weigh the direct and indirect implications of population policy. The *Bulletin* is intended to be useful to Governments, international organizations, research and training institutions and other bodies that deal with questions relating to population and development.

The *Bulletin* is prepared by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis\* of the United Nations Secretariat and published semi-annually in three languages—English, French and Spanish. Copies are distributed widely to users in all States Members of the United Nations.

Although the primary source of the material appearing in the *Bulletin* is the research carried out by the United Nations Secretariat, officials of governmental and non-governmental organizations and individual scholars are occasionally invited to contribute articles.

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\*Formerly the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.

## Explanatory notes

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Reference to "dollars" (\$) indicates United States dollars, unless otherwise stated.

The term "billion" signifies a thousand million.

Annual rates of growth or change refer to annual compound rates, unless otherwise stated.

A hyphen between years (e.g., 1984-1985) indicates the full period involved, including the beginning and end years; a slash (e.g., 1984/85) indicates a financial year, school year or crop year.

A point (.) is used to indicate decimals.

The following symbols have been used in the tables:

Two dots (..) indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported.

A dash (—) indicates that the amount is nil or negligible.

A hyphen (-) indicates that the item is not applicable.

A minus sign (-) before a number indicates a deficit or decrease, except as indicated.

Details and percentages in tables do not necessarily add to totals because of rounding.



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## INTRODUCTION

The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1991/93 of 26 July 1991, decided to convene an International Conference on Population and Development under the auspices of the United Nations and decided that the overall theme of the Conference would be population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development. The Council authorized the Secretary-General of the Conference to convene six expert group meetings as part of the substantive preparations for the Conference.

The six expert group meetings were organized by the Population Division, in consultation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), to discuss various population and development issues which had been identified by the Economic and Social Council as requiring the greatest attention during the forthcoming decade. The meetings addressed the following clusters of issues:

(a) Population growth, changes in demographic structure, including ageing of the population, and the regional diversity of such changes, with particular emphasis on the interaction between demographic variables and socio-economic development;

(b) Population policies and programmes, with emphasis on the mobilization of resources for developing countries, at the international and national levels;

(c) The interrelationships between population, development, environment and related matters;

(d) Changes in the distribution of population, including socio-economic determinants of internal migration and the consequences for urban and rural development, and determinants and consequences of all types of international migration;

(e) Linkages between enhancing the roles and socio-economic status of women and population dynamics, including adolescent motherhood, maternal and child health, education and employment, with particular reference to the access of women to resources and provision of services;

(f) Family planning programmes, health and family well-being.

The present issue of the *Population Bulletin* is devoted to a review of the six expert group meetings. It includes a synthesis of the meetings and their reports and recommendations. The synthesis gives a brief description of the organizational aspects of the meetings, a summary of their recommendations and an overview of issues of overriding importance which were examined at more than one meeting. The order in which the reports are presented follows the order in which the meetings were held.



## **SYNTHESIS OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEETINGS CONVENED AS PART OF THE SUBSTANTIVE PREP- ARATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONFER- ENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS**

The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1991/93, authorized the Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development to convene six expert group meetings, corresponding to the six clusters of issues identified by the Council as those requiring the greatest attention during the forthcoming decade. Those clusters of issues (not listed in any order of priority, as the Council expressly indicated) are the following:

(a) Population growth, changes in demographic structure, including ageing of the population, and the regional diversity of such changes, with particular emphasis on the interaction between demographic variables and socio-economic development;

(b) Population policies and programmes, with emphasis on the mobilization of resources for developing countries, at the international and national levels by each country according to its capacity;

(c) The interrelationships between population, development, environment and related matters;

(d) Changes in the distribution of population, including socio-economic determinants of internal migration and the consequences for urban and rural development, and determinants and consequences of all types of international migration;

(e) Linkages between enhancing the roles and socio-economic status of women and population dynamics, including adolescent motherhood, maternal and child health, education and employment, with particular reference to the access of women to resources and the provision of services;

(f) Family planning programmes, health and family well-being.

The Expert Group Meetings were organized by the Population Division of the then Department of Economic and Social Development of the United Nations Secretariat, in consultation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Each Expert Group included 15 experts, invited in their personal capacities, along with representatives of relevant units, bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and selected intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Efforts were made to have a full range of relevant scientific disciplines and geographical regions represented. Each Expert Group Meeting lasted five days. The standard documentation for each

Meeting included a substantive background paper prepared by the Population Division in consultation with UNFPA, technical papers prepared by each of the experts and technical contributions provided by the participating United Nations regional commissions, specialized agencies and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. At the conclusion of each Meeting, a set of recommendations was adopted, to be submitted to the Preparatory Committee of the Conference at its second session, in May 1993. The number of recommendations in each set varied between 18 and 37, adding up to a total of 162 recommendations.<sup>1</sup>

The first Expert Group Meeting, on population, environment and development, was held at United Nations Headquarters from 20 to 24 January 1992. The second, on population policies and programmes, was hosted by the Government of Egypt in Cairo, from 12 to 16 April 1992. The third, on population and women, was hosted by the Government of Botswana in Gaborone, from 22 to 26 June 1992 and financed by a contribution from the Government of the Netherlands. The fourth, on family planning, health and family well-being, was hosted by the Government of India in Bangalore, from 26 to 29 October 1992. The fifth, on population growth and demographic structure, was hosted by the Government of France in Paris, from 16 to 20 November 1992. The sixth, on population distribution and migration, was hosted by the Government of Bolivia in Santa Cruz, from 18 to 23 January 1993.

#### SUMMARY OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEETINGS

The Expert Group Meeting on Population, Environment and Development appraised current trends in population and environment, focusing on their implications for sustained economic growth and sustainable development. The discussions concentrated on those areas where population growth and distribution had adverse impacts on the availability and use of key natural resources, such as freshwater, soils and forests, and on the interactions of demographic factors, consumption and production patterns in global issues of increasing international concern, such as climate change and loss of biological diversity. The deliberations had as an essential perspective the goals of the World Population Plan of Action and specific policy measures that would promote the achievement of those goals.<sup>2</sup>

The Meeting, having reviewed available methodological approaches as well as the findings of empirical research and their policy and operational implications, concluded that, in many contexts, detrimental impacts on the environment would best be reduced by a combined strategy of slowing population growth, rationalizing population distribution, alleviating poverty, lessening environmentally dangerous consumption patterns and promoting the application of appropriate technologies and management regimes. In that context, the Meeting stressed the need to develop and promote the application of technologies that would make it possible to achieve sustained economic growth as well as sustainable development, in particular by replacing fossil

fuels with renewable energy sources and providing a more productive use of the increasingly scarce water resources.

Since rapid population growth, persistence of poverty and environmental degradation were intrinsically interlinked, development policies should aim at tapping the beneficial potential of that synergism. Thus, economic activities stimulated by environmental objectives, such as agro-forestry, reforestation, contour-levelling, terracing, small-scale irrigation or improvements in sanitation infrastructure, should be able to generate significant employment opportunities for poor people. Targeted social safety nets would make it less compelling for the poor to overexploit natural resources during periods of crisis. Equitable economic growth, coupled with education and health services, would enable the poor to make environmental investments that were in their own long-term interest. And the improvement of the livelihood base of the poor would also contribute to accelerating the demographic transition, since wealthier and better-educated couples would be likely to have fewer children.

Since rapid population growth particularly affected environmental conditions in certain critical ecological zones, such as arid lands, tropical forests, watersheds and coastal areas, Governments were urged to identify regions subject to acute population pressures and to institute policies that would alleviate the pressure on the environment. Concurrently, it was observed that the continuing establishment of new human settlements and the extension of natural resource exploitation in areas of high vulnerability to natural disasters called for the promotion of emergency prevention and preparedness, while durable solutions should be found to problems related to environmentally displaced persons.

The Meeting found that although demographic, economic and ecological processes were inextricably interrelated, the magnitude of their reciprocal impacts in different sociocultural and ecological settings had not been sufficiently documented. Thus, in order to promote sustainable development, the Meeting emphasized the urgent need to strengthen data-collection and research efforts in that domain and to test the efficacy of proposed policies and strategies in concrete settings. International organizations should increase their assistance to countries in the fields of population, sustainable development and environment, especially with respect to training, research, policy formulation and the integration of population and environment-related factors in national planning.

The Meeting underscored that community participation was essential to the success of development, population and environment programmes. Therefore, great emphasis should be put on popular education and participation, especially of women. Governments should improve women's educational levels, health status, employment opportunities, environmental sensitivity and participation in decision-making.

The Expert Group Meeting on Population Policies and Programmes observed that since 1984 the issue of population growth had become less politically divisive. Over the past decade, there had been a growing convergence of views at the national level, with many more countries currently in favour of acting to modify population growth. Whereas there was continuing

debate over how to achieve it, the stabilization of global population within the shortest period possible had become an internationally recognized goal.

The Meeting agreed that achieving that goal would require sustained political commitment in a climate in which population issues and related development issues would be considered central to public policy. In particular, development programmes should be formulated with a long-term perspective, with due attention to developmental sustainability and emerging demographic issues, and population considerations should be taken into account at all levels of decision-making and in all sectors of development policy. Governments should set clear population objectives and devote appropriate resources to population activities and to social and economic development programmes that supported those activities. Development programmes, including structural adjustment programmes, should also be assessed and evaluated in the light of their demographic impacts, in order to ensure a policy framework promoting balanced and sustainable development.

The Meeting defined as a high-priority developmental goal the adoption of policies sensitive to gender concerns that would respond to the diverse family planning and health needs of both women and men and urged Governments to build on women's established rights to ensure that they would play a key role in policy-making and implementation processes.

The Meeting found that, although the formulation of a population policy was a necessary condition for ensuring sustainable development, it was not by itself a sufficient condition. The design of an effective action plan for implementing policy measures was equally important, as were dynamic and committed leadership, local political support, interested private organizations and institutions, emphasis on service quality, a receptive audience and availability of resources. However, evidence from 25 years of experience in organized family planning programmes showed that high-quality services, backed by consistent political and administrative support and innovative public education efforts, could produce rapid changes in reproductive behaviour in a wide variety of economic, political, social, cultural and religious settings.

The Meeting found ample evidence that the implementation of population programmes could be impaired by over-reliance on the governmental sector and that bottlenecks were likely to occur without the support of community organizations and other grass-roots, non-governmental institutions. The Meeting therefore recommended that Governments and international organizations should evolve a close partnership with the non-governmental sector; in particular, Governments should facilitate assistance to local non-governmental organizations on the part of international organizations, and community participation should be actively encouraged and supported at every stage of the formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policies and programmes.

The Meeting was informed that the population field faced a major challenge in the last decade of the twentieth century: the success of population programmes had itself engendered a growing scarcity of resources, as the demands for population assistance had begun to outstrip the supply of popu-

lation assistance funds, which threatened to place a severe damper on the momentum of the population programmes just as they were reaching maximum effectiveness. While donors were called upon to strive to double their 1990 contributions to population programmes by the year 2000, developing countries were also urged to make all possible efforts to generate domestic resources through selective use of user fees and other forms of cost recovery and mobilization of local resources (without forsaking the needs of those least able to pay or lowering the quality of services). The Meeting also noted the fundamental importance of research for policy and programme formulation and emphasized that the mobilization of resources for research in population should be considered an integral part of strategies for coping with population problems.

In the context of increasing resource scarcity in relation to needs, donors were asked to strengthen their capacity to respond more effectively to requests for assistance through, *inter alia*, increased coordination and increased attention to the issue of cost effectiveness, in order to ensure that funds were used to maximum advantage. Nevertheless, it was recognized that the primary responsibility for donor coordination rested with the recipient countries themselves.

The objective of the Expert Group Meeting on Population and Women was to identify practical steps that Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, donors and the private sector could take which would help empower women, have desirable effects on health, the process of family formation and other population trends, and also promote development. The Meeting agreed that sensitization to gender issues should be a priority, that gender-based analysis should become an essential instrument in the design and implementation of all development activities and that development policies and strategies should be assessed from the perspective of their impact on women's social, economic and health status.

A major theme of the Meeting was the need for women to be represented in much greater numbers in the policy-making arena and at all levels of planning, managing and executing population and development and environmental programmes, both for reasons of equity and to ensure the success of policies. Donors, Governments and non-governmental organizations were urged to seek culturally appropriate modalities for both the delivery of services and the integration of women in population and development initiatives. The participants also emphasized that any development, population and health programmes that solicited the involvement of or attempted to deliver benefits to communities should be based on the direct participation of women. In particular, they should not assume that information exchanged with or resources delivered to men would necessarily reach women.

Given the important and far-reaching implications of women's education for their status, their fertility and the chances of survival of their children, the Meeting urged Governments and non-governmental organizations to make special efforts to promote the access of women and girls to both formal and non-formal education, and to devise innovative strategies to surmount the



socio-economic and familial constraints responsible for gender inequalities in school enrolment.

The Meeting also discussed women's economic activity and its relationship to fertility and child health and welfare. In view of the interaction between extreme poverty and demographic trends, and recognizing that increased economic productivity of women was vital both for their own interests and for national development, the Meeting urged Governments to strengthen women's access to productive employment, to protect women from economic discrimination and to remove all remaining legal and social barriers to their economic independence, including discrimination that restricts women's access to the benefits of social security and health-care systems on the basis of marital status.

The Meeting paid considerable attention to the roles of men, recommending that Governments should strengthen efforts to promote and encourage the active involvement of men in all areas of family responsibility, including family planning, child-rearing and housework. The Meeting pointed out that children were entitled to the material and emotional support of both fathers and mothers, who should provide for all their children of both sexes on an equitable basis. Governments and private-sector employers were urged to take steps to enable parents to harmonize their economic and parental responsibilities and to ensure that both women and men should be able to exercise their rights to employment without being the subject of discrimination because of family responsibilities.

The Meeting endorsed reproductive choice as a basic right whose realization could open up a range of other choices for women, and it urged that women and men as individuals should be assured confidential access to safe methods of fertility regulation within the framework of an adequate health system. The Meeting adopted various recommendations on measures to promote the health of women and girls, with a major focus on the various aspects of reproductive health, which encompassed not only safe childbirth and infant health but also the ability to bear children that were wanted, to regulate fertility without risks to one's health and to protect oneself from sexually transmitted diseases, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). In that respect, the Meeting agreed that Governments and non-governmental organizations must promote safer sex, including the use of condoms, and must provide adequate medical services for sexually transmitted diseases. Having identified unsafe abortion as a major cause of maternal mortality, the Meeting recommended that a woman wishing to terminate her pregnancy should have ready access to reliable information, sympathetic counselling and safe abortion services. The Meeting also urged Governments to act vigorously to stop the practice of genital mutilation and to protect the right of women and girls to be free from such unnecessary and dangerous procedures.

The Meeting paid particular attention to the needs of adolescents. Governments were urged to enforce laws pertaining to minimum age at marriage so as to ensure young women's right to health and the rights of young people of both sexes to education and employment. In addition, with a view

to promoting and protecting adolescent reproductive health, Governments were asked to adopt such measures as the teaching of family life education with a realistic sex education component and the provision of appropriate counselling and services to girls and boys, drawing on the experience of non-governmental organizations in that area.

The Meeting agreed on a research and data-collection agenda covering various critical areas relevant to gender analysis in which information was considered to be seriously deficient, such as structure and dynamics of the family; roles and use of time of women, men and children; men's attitudes and behaviour regarding reproduction; child-care arrangements; unplanned pregnancy and abortion; and sexual abuse and domestic violence.

The Expert Group Meeting on Family Planning, Health and Family Well-being reviewed a large number of policy-oriented issues emerging from the extensive experience of family planning programmes throughout the world, particularly the role of those programmes in socio-economic development and ways to make them more effective and efficient while contributing to the improvement of the status of women and the promotion of the health and well-being of families. The Meeting observed that family planning programmes could have an independent effect on fertility and that their effectiveness was greatly enhanced when socio-economic development occurred simultaneously. Among the programme characteristics identified as crucial for the success of family planning programmes, the Meeting considered political commitment fundamental and called upon political leaders to play a strong, sustained and highly visible role in promoting and legitimizing the voluntary adoption of family planning.

The Meeting agreed that family planning programmes should be regarded as a cost-effective component of a broader development strategy and pointed out that demographic goals were legitimately the subject of government policies and programmes to achieve sustainable development. Nevertheless, the Meeting emphasized that family planning services should be framed in the context of the needs of individuals, especially women, with respect for the privacy and the dignity of clients and with the aim of helping them achieve their reproductive goals based on voluntary, free and informed choice. The Meeting urged governmental and non-governmental organizations to improve the quality of family planning services by incorporating the users' perspective and ensuring that clients were given the widest possible choice of contraceptive methods, thorough and accurate information, systematic follow-up and counselling, technically competent service providers, and readily available and accessible services.

The Meeting urged Governments to support the family through public policies and programmes, taking into consideration changes in family forms, size and structure, as well as the need to provide women with opportunities for personal development and greater autonomy within both the family and society at large. The Meeting also saw the need for Governments, donors and non-governmental organizations to encourage greater involvement in and responsibility for family planning on the part of men through, *inter alia*, strategies to encourage responsible fatherhood.

The Meeting identified abortion as a major public health concern and one of the most neglected problems affecting women's lives. It recommended that women everywhere should have access to sensitive counselling and safe abortion services. In view of the high prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases, including the AIDS pandemic, the Meeting emphasized the need for family planning programmes to include sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS education and prevention within the scope of their reproductive health-care activities. The Meeting was of the opinion that reproductive health care should be provided as an integrated package of services that were mutually strengthening, cost-effective and convenient for users.

The Meeting also urged Governments to recognize the special needs of adolescents, calling for special efforts to be made to reach young people with information and education and to provide adolescent men and women with confidential services without regard to marital status or age. Population and family-life education programmes, designed to help children and young adults make informed decisions regarding their sexual behaviour, responsible parenthood and family planning should be strengthened at all levels of formal education and literacy programmes.

The Meeting devoted considerable attention to the role of non-governmental organizations in family planning, recognizing their comparative advantage in public advocacy and in dealing innovatively with such issues as the reproductive health of adolescents, women's empowerment, community participation, broader reproductive health services, quality of care and outreach to marginalized groups. It was therefore recommended that partnerships between the public sector and non-governmental organizations be developed to test the effectiveness and acceptability of new approaches and to expand access to family planning services.

The Meeting viewed with concern the increasing magnitude of contraceptive requirements and logistical management needs of family planning programmes, noting that in order to reach the medium-variant projections of the United Nations, the cost of contraceptive commodities alone had been estimated at \$US 627 million in the year 2000; the associated logistics, management and service-delivery costs were likely to increase that figure tenfold. While urging all Governments and other donors to increase significantly their levels of development assistance for family planning, the Meeting also emphasized the need to pay more attention to issues of cost effectiveness, efficiency, cost recovery, community resource mobilization and local production of contraceptives, where appropriate, in order to ensure the optimum use of available resources.

The Expert Group Meeting on Population Growth and Demographic Structure reviewed past trends and future prospects of population growth and age structure and their consequences for long-term sustainability at the global level. A major concern was the inevitability of persistent growth well into the twenty-first century due to the momentum built into the age structure of most developing countries. Population projections showed that the world population was expected to reach between 7.9 billion and 9.1 billion in 2025, a crucial determinant of the actual figure being the rapidity of the decline in fertility in

developing countries in the coming years. In view of those trends and their consequences for long-term sustainability at the global and national levels, the Meeting stressed the urgency of increasing political commitment to human resource development and population programmes that had impacts on population trends and characteristics.

The Meeting singled out widespread poverty as a critical factor exacerbating the consequences of rapid population growth and a major obstacle to fertility and mortality decline. Consequently, besides advising that Governments adopt comprehensive, consistent economic and social strategies to alleviate poverty and reduce social inequality, the Meeting urged the international community to increase assistance to development and population programmes in the least developed countries.

The Meeting considered educational levels to be a major factor in reducing mortality and fertility and in increasing individual earnings, especially in the light of the importance of a skilled labour force in an increasingly competitive world. Noting the continuing increase in school-age population in most developing countries, it urged Governments to give high priority to educational programmes benefiting all children, irrespective of gender.

The role and status of women was seen as critical in effecting the demographic transition. Improvements in the health and education of women had proved to be strongly instrumental in leading to declines in fertility and household mortality. In addition, the participation of women in the formal labour force and the adoption of measures to ensure women's economic independence were important not only from a demographic standpoint but also for achieving sustainable development in general. The Meeting therefore recommended that high priority be given to investments and expenditures that would increase women's access to education, training, credit and opportunities to participate in the formal labour force.

The Meeting stressed that the provision of social and health services, particularly comprehensive reproductive health-care programmes, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility, was an essential component of efforts to improve health, reduce mortality and lower fertility. Such services were often unevenly distributed, calling for greater spatial, social, age and gender equity in the allocation of resources. Furthermore, since morbidity profiles were changing as a result of rapid demographic and epidemiological transition, health-sector priorities should be reassessed to adapt to those new situations and ensure the selection of the most cost-effective and efficient means of providing health care for all.

The Meeting also examined the AIDS pandemic and its demographic and socio-economic consequences, which were found to be potentially devastating. The Meeting therefore recommended that Governments should give high priority to devising appropriate responses to the crisis, including increased public awareness, preventive efforts and ways to mitigate the socio-economic problems that were likely to arise. International and national health-care strategies should be developed for preventing and curing sexually transmitted diseases with a view to minimizing HIV infection.

The Meeting devoted considerable attention to population ageing and emphasized that the elderly, a heterogeneous and active group, were first and foremost an important human resource for development. Nevertheless, in the face of the very rapid process of population ageing occurring in many areas, the Meeting recommended that research efforts and policy analysis should be undertaken on the most equitable and appropriate modalities of allocating public, private and family resources to accommodate the growing number of elderly persons. In those countries where pension and social security programmes for the elderly were inadequate, the Meeting recommended that high priority should be given to establishing a safety net for the elderly. The Meeting also pointed out that in many societies, the very old were the fastest growing segment of the population, while changes in family structure were likely to result in an increased proportion of the elderly living alone. Special efforts should be made to enable the very old to remain in their own homes and community by ensuring that adequate support was available.

The Meeting emphasized the importance of long-term planning to anticipate the changing needs over time of the young, elderly and working-age populations, in order to ensure that adequate resources were available when and where they were needed, keeping in mind the changing role and status of the family in the process of development. The Meeting identified several areas of population structure in need of increased research and data-collection efforts, with particular reference to policy-relevant, social, cultural, age-specific, ethnic-specific and gender-specific subnational data.

The Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution and Migration appraised current trends in population distribution and migration and their interrelations with development. It concluded that migration was a rational response by individuals and families to spatial differences in opportunities. It recognized that population mobility was an option to improve the life chances of a wide section of the world population and that improvements in transportation and communications, growing mobility of capital and expanding social networks were all contributing to an increase in permanent and temporary migration.

Urbanization was viewed as an intrinsic part of development, thus necessitating the integration of population distribution policies into national development strategies. The Meeting noted that, at the same time, it was important to keep in mind that rural and urban development were two sides of the same coin and that strategies that emphasized one at the expense of the other were doomed to failure. Since in many developing countries the rural population was expected to continue growing, the Meeting agreed that it was urgent to improve rural economic opportunities and productivity, while ensuring sustainability. Strengthening economic interactions between urban and rural areas and improving rural infrastructure were recommended. The establishment of credit and production cooperatives in rural areas to enhance local control over resources was also endorsed. Governments were urged to recognize and safeguard the traditional rights of rural communities over common lands and water resources. The Meeting

concluded that a key task of Governments was to address the social and economic needs of their populations and alleviate poverty in both rural and urban areas.

The Meeting observed that the continued growth of urban populations posed major challenges for development but also opened new opportunities. In particular, the emergence of complex urban agglomerations, in which several cities interacted as nodes of a system linked to the world economy by the exchange of goods, information, financial flows and people, had provided an impetus for development. The management of urban centres in the developing countries could be improved by strengthening the capacity, competence and accountability of city and municipal authorities, by decentralizing expenditure responsibility and the right to raise revenues and by adopting equitable cost-recovery schemes to allow the expansion of infrastructure and services. It was recognized that to gain control of urban growth, particularly in countries where general population growth was high, policies aimed at reducing natural increase would have to be considered.

With regard to international migration, the processes leading to increasing migration pressures were reviewed and it was recommended that trade barriers be reduced and investment in countries of origin be increased to reduce those pressures. In formulating general economic, trade and development cooperation policies, Governments were urged to consider how those policies affected migration. In addition, Governments were called upon to protect the rights of migrants and to ensure that national legislation and regulations did not discriminate against female migrants. It was recommended that Governments of receiving countries permit family reunification, facilitate the naturalization of long-term foreign residents and second-generation migrants, take measures to combat xenophobia and racism and adopt effective sanctions against those who organized illegal migration and those who knowingly employed undocumented migrants. Governments of countries of origin were urged to cooperate in protecting their migrant workers abroad and in facilitating the transfer and use of remittances by providing banking facilities and adopting sound exchange-rate and monetary policies. Governments of both countries of origin and destination were called upon to promote and support migrant associations, particularly those that assisted migrants in vulnerable situations.

Special attention was given to the challenges posed by the growing number of refugees and asylum-seekers. Governments, the international community and non-governmental organizations were urged to address the underlying causes of refugee movements and to take appropriate measures regarding conflict resolution, the promotion of peace, the respect of human rights, poverty alleviation, democratization, good governance and the prevention of environmental degradation. Governments were called upon to support the international protection and assistance of refugees, to promote the search for durable solutions to their plight, to strengthen regional and international mechanisms that would enhance their capacity to share equitably those protection and assistance needs, and to protect the right of asylum by respecting the principle of "non-refoulement". Recognizing that, to be successful,

repatriation programmes had to be linked to long-term reconstruction and development plans, the Meeting urged the international community to facilitate those linkages. It further called on the international community to address the specific needs of female refugees and to assist long-standing refugee populations in achieving self-sufficiency. Governments of countries of asylum were asked to consider facilitating the naturalization of long-term refugees.

The Meeting recognized that policy formulation regarding population distribution and migration was being hampered by the lack of adequate data on migration and urbanization and the paucity of research on those topics. To combat those deficiencies, it was recommended that national statistical offices should collect, tabulate, publish and disseminate demographic data for small geographical areas; migration surveys should be carried out in countries hosting large numbers of international migrants; data on international migration by selected demographic characteristics should be published and disseminated; methods should be developed to register and monitor refugee populations, and a systematic effort should be made to gather data on internally displaced persons. In addition, the Meeting felt that there was a need to review existing standard definitions and classifications of urban and rural populations and international migrants.

#### COMMON ISSUES

As the preceding section suggests, certain themes and issues were common to all or nearly all of the Expert Group Meetings and were thus discussed from widely different perspectives. In this section an attempt has been made to summarize the common themes which emerge when the recommendations are viewed collectively.

##### *Sustainable development and sustained economic growth*

The Expert Group Meetings took the perspective of integrating population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development. At the same time, the participants realized that adopting concrete population policy measures in order to ensure sustainable development was difficult because such measures were often situation-specific. Moreover, they appeared to be a matter of political appreciation and decision, which could only emerge from the context of national policy-making processes. It was also recognized that those issues might involve conflicting goals between nations, regions and groups. Therefore, the approach followed by the Expert Group Meetings was to recognize certain general principles, such as the importance of linkages between population, development and environment, and to recommend indirect courses of action, such as research, education, awareness raising, training and institutional arrangements for the integration of population and development planning, which would in turn assist the policy-making process. As was suggested at one of the Meetings, those efforts should include the identification and open analysis of the conflicting goals mentioned above, in order to make fruitful negotiation possible.

Poverty was recognized as being closely related to both undesirable demographic trends and environmental degradation; together with social inequality it was seen as exacerbating the consequences of rapid population growth. Governments were therefore urged to alleviate poverty and reduce social inequality. The Meetings viewed sustained economic growth pragmatically, suggesting that it was reconcilable with sustainable development, provided that appropriate technologies were developed, promoted and made accessible to those who needed them most and also that appropriate policies and planning approaches were followed to stimulate conservation and avoid environmental deterioration. That pragmatism was also apparent with respect to urbanization and migration, which were seen as part and parcel of the development process.

Considerable emphasis was placed on the fundamental role of health and education in the development process. The Meetings approached that question not only from a macrosocial perspective (for instance, reaffirming the need to safeguard the priority of health and education in the allocation of development resources) but also from a practical, microsocal point of view (calling, for example, for the promotion of service outreach and for steps to identify and overcome the socio-economic and familial constraints behind high dropout rates and inequalities in school enrolment).

#### *Relevance of past experience*

The work of the Expert Group Meetings had been greatly facilitated by and made ample reference to the international experience accumulated in the field of population during the past two decades, both through the process of intergovernmental negotiations and through the process of formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policies and programmes. The previous intergovernmental conferences on population in Bucharest (1974) and Mexico City (1984) had emphasized the need to consider population issues in the context of development and had established a methodology, a scientific basis and a tradition for doing so in the framework of intergovernmental negotiations. More recently, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had brought to the fore of the political agenda the concept of sustainable development, defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".<sup>3</sup> That concept, because of its inherent intergenerational perspective, had provided a useful focus for discussions on population and development issues. The Meetings also drew extensively on the large body of experience currently available from around the world in all aspects of population programme implementation but particularly with respect to reproductive health programmes, including family planning.

#### *Human rights*

The Expert Group Meetings were mindful of the human rights dimension of population programmes, emphasizing not only the necessity for such programmes to respect human rights but also the positive contribution that population programmes could make towards facilitating the realization of



those rights. Moreover, the Meetings noted that the human rights dimension was relevant to the entire range of population phenomena, including migration, ageing and family formation.

### *Status of women*

The Meetings reiterated the central role that women played in development and recognized that development efforts would be accelerated with the active involvement and full participation of women. Moreover, the whole body of recommendations showed that gender issues permeated the deliberations of all the Meetings. Three complementary perspectives were used: improvement of the situation of women, re-evaluation of their traditional roles, and creation of new roles for them and their male partners. The emergence of new roles for women was seen as being, to a large extent, predicated on women's economic independence and freedom from discrimination in access to resources.

It was also suggested that the re-evaluation of the roles of women might necessitate a redistribution of the social roles and responsibilities of women and men. For instance, men were called upon to share responsibilities most commonly assumed by women, in such areas as contraception and family responsibilities. Governments were urged to encourage the process through appropriate legislative, educational and motivational measures, including programmes to promote acceptance among men and women of equal rights in sexual relationships.

### *The family*

The Expert Group Meetings recognized the vital importance of the family, in its various forms, as a cornerstone of society. In the process of development and demographic transition, the family was seen as an important institution to ensure nurturing, support, stability and socialization. The Meetings recognized that the family remained an essential institution in all societies. The Meetings urged Governments to support the family, in particular by providing public policies and programmes, bearing in mind changing family forms, size and structure.

### *Accessibility and quality of services*

The Meetings recognized the critical importance of the accessibility of services, particularly in the area of reproductive health, for promoting social equality and accelerating development efforts.

The issue of quality of services delivered by population programmes emerged in various contexts in all the Expert Group Meetings, essentially from two different perspectives. One was that service quality was an important parameter for programme success and should therefore be a paramount managerial concern. In that context, policy makers were warned that excessive emphasis on quotas and other quantitative goals, to the extent that it detracted from service quality, could well be a self-defeating management tool. The other perspective was that people in general, but particularly the less empow-

ered groups in society, had a basic right to health and family planning services of the highest possible quality, both humane and respectful of their clients' dignity and privacy.

### *Special needs of subpopulations*

The Meetings generally paid considerable attention to the rights and special needs of subpopulations such as children, adolescents, the elderly and the very old, women and migrants, depending on the theme of each Meeting. Regarding adolescents and young people, particular emphasis was given to meeting their reproductive health needs in the context of population programmes, including family life education, counselling and contraceptive services.

### *Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome*

Several of the Meetings addressed issues raised by the AIDS pandemic. Family planning programmes were viewed as being able to play an important role in the prevention of HIV infection through, *inter alia*, information activities, promotion of safer sex, including the use of condoms; and services for prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.

### *The role of Governments, non-governmental organizations and community participation*

Most recommendations were addressed to Governments, since the Meetings took place in the context of preparations for an intergovernmental conference. However, many of the recommendations were co-addressed to non-governmental organizations and the private sector or emphasized the need for community participation. The basic thrust of the recommendations was that a partnership of Government and private sector agencies in the area of population was both desirable and critical, given the need to increase the cost effectiveness of programmes through improved outreach, enhanced quality of service delivery, innovative strategies and popular participation.

The activities of non-governmental organizations were seen as supportive and complementary to governmental activities. The comparative advantages of the non-governmental organizations in certain areas, such as advocacy on behalf of the poor and other underserved and marginalized groups, were clearly recognized. It was recommended that donor resources should be made available to national non-governmental organizations for their population activities.

Repeated reference was made to the importance of community participation, and many specific areas were identified in which such participation was considered desirable or even crucial to the success of actions being recommended. Within the public sector, decentralization and delegation of power and responsibilities to local authorities was advocated as consistent with a more open and responsive style of governance.

### *Research and data collection*

The Meetings emphasized the fundamental importance of research for policy and programme formulation, and all of them identified themes in their respective subject areas which appeared to require more research and data-collection efforts. The Meetings also emphasized that there should be an explicit orientation of research towards meeting the needs of policy-making and programme implementation. Some of the research and data-collection needs resulted from the emergence of relatively recent political agendas, such as the issue of sustainable development, good governance, or gender equality in the domestic sphere. In other cases, the need for research emerged from the continued lack of data on topics traditionally avoided because of their sensitivity, such as the determinants and consequences of induced abortion, or sexual abuse and domestic violence.

### *International cooperation*

All of the Meetings adopted numerous recommendations involving the international donor community in partnership with Governments and non-governmental organizations of recipient countries. Noting the growing need for resources for population activities, the Meetings recognized the need to increase the mobilization of domestic resources, and specific approaches to that end were discussed at the Meetings. The Meetings also considered that international cooperation in various forms, including technical assistance, was essential for progress in the area of population. Indeed, to meet the growing needs of international cooperation, it was indicated that current resource flows would need to be approximately doubled in the course of the current decade.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>See E/CONF.84/PC/4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

<sup>2</sup>See *Report of the United Nations World Population Conference, Bucharest, 19-30 August 1974* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3), chap. I; and *Report of the International Conference on Population, Mexico City, 6-14 August 1984* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.XIII.8), chap. I, sect. B.

<sup>3</sup>"Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development" (A/42/427), annex, chap. 2, para. 1.

## **EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON POPULATION, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Expert Group Meeting on Population, Environment and Development was held at United Nations Headquarters from 20 to 24 January 1992. The participants, representing different geographical regions, scientific disciplines and institutions, included 16 experts invited by the Secretary-General of the Conference in their personal capacities, representatives of the World Food Programme (WFP), the five United Nations regional commissions, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED); representatives of the following governmental organizations: Ministry of State for Population and Environment, Indonesia; Ministry of Planning, Morocco; and Swedish Council for Planning and Coordination of Research; and representatives of the following non-governmental organizations: the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, the National Audubon Society, the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, and the Royal Swedish Academy. There were two observers.

Fifteen experts had prepared papers on the main agenda items in order to provide a framework for discussion. The Department of Economic and Social Development had prepared a background document for the meeting, entitled "Population, development and the environment: an overview". Discussion notes were provided by the Department of Economic and Social Development, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Habitat, ILO, FAO, WHO, IPPF, the Population Council and the National Research Council.

### **OPENING STATEMENTS**

The Meeting was opened by Dr. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development. She stressed the importance of population issues in achieving sustainable development and said that it was particularly appropriate for critical linkages between population, environment and development to be examined in light of disturbing demographic trends. Mr. Shunichi Inoue, Deputy Secretary-General of the

Conference, reviewed the approaches to an environment/population nexus over the previous two decades and called for special attention to its policy implications.

The central task of the Expert Group was to examine demographic, socio-economic and environmental trends, their critical linkages, and relevant high-priority issues—in particular, the triad of rapid population growth, increasing environmental degradation and pervasive poverty, and, on that basis, to make recommendations for action by Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental agencies which would enhance compliance with the World Population Plan of Action and increase its effectiveness. The views expressed by the experts at the Meeting were made in their personal capacities and did not represent the views of the Governments of their countries.

## SUMMARY OF THE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION

### *The population dimension*

The discussions of the Expert Group were profoundly influenced by an awareness that the world population was growing on average by 1.7 per cent per annum. By the turn of the century, the current world population of 5.4 billion people would be 6.25 billion. The Expert Group noted that the momentum of population growth ensured that at least another 3 billion would be added to the global total between 1985 and 2025. Over 90 per cent of that growth was taking place in the developing world, those countries least able to cope with the resource and environmental consequences of growing populations. Over the course of the 1990s, the population of the developing world would swell by over 900 million, while the population of the industrialized countries would grow by a mere 56 million.

In the early 1980s, it had seemed that the rate of population growth was slowing everywhere except in Africa and parts of South Asia. The world population seemed set to stabilize at about 10 billion towards the end of the next century. In 1992, the situation looked less promising, with stabilization likely to occur at a level 1.5 billion higher and about half a century later.

Although international migration involved only a small fraction of the world's population, it was large in absolute numbers, especially since migrants were unevenly distributed among countries. For some nations, international migration was a source of major demographic change and an important economic factor. The 1980s had witnessed the resurgence of international migration as a worldwide phenomenon, with widening gaps between countries in demographic growth and economic progress.

In that context the Expert Group considered two development issues: the deepening poverty of individuals and nations, and the crisis in the social sector. Globally, more than 1 billion people were living in absolute poverty, and the total international debt of developing countries—although declining as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) was \$1.2 trillion and growing. The social sector—including health, family planning, housing and educa-

tion—continued to be underemphasized in national and international development programmes. At the national level, developing countries had struggled to keep pace with the needs of their populations, which in many cases had doubled in the past 30 years. Yet, demands for health care, education, food security, housing and jobs were still increasing and would continue to increase through the next decade and beyond.

The Expert Group noted that the world was in the middle of an urban revolution, fuelled in part by massive population shifts from rural to urban areas. Since 1950, the number of people living in cities had more than tripled; in 1990 it had reached 2.4 billion. Although the urban population in the developed world had nearly doubled, in the developing world it had swelled five times, from 286 million to 1,515 million. In 1950, 29 per cent of the world population had been urbanized. By the year 2000, over half of humanity would live in urban areas.

Although urban populations levelled off in the developed world—growing by only 0.8 per cent per annum, if at all—they were increasing in the developing countries. The United Nations projections indicated that in the year 2000, 77 per cent of Latin America's population, 41 per cent of Africa's and 35 per cent of Asia's would be urbanized.

The Expert Group noted that certain cities were reaching gigantic proportions. The rise of the mega-cities fostered the concentration of labour and industrial production in a few "primate" cities. An estimated 44 per cent of Mexico's gross domestic product, 52 per cent of its industrial output, and 54 per cent of its services were concentrated in Mexico City. Similarly, more than 60 per cent of all manufacturing output in the Philippines originated in Manila.

Given the rapid and largely unplanned urbanization, the Expert Group was particularly concerned that in the developing world, the ability of municipalities to keep ahead of the demand for infrastructure and services had been outpaced. In many cities of developing countries, housing, roads, health care, educational facilities and the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation had not kept up with the rising tide of urban dwellers.

The Expert Group paid attention to the large pool of unemployed, underemployed, unskilled and semi-skilled labour which was one consequence of the swelling urban population. Many of those marginal people ended up in slums and squatter settlements, unemployed, uneducated, undernourished and chronically sick. In some cities, such as Lagos, Delhi, Dar-es-Salaam, Cairo, Bombay and Addis Ababa, more than 50 per cent of the people lived in substandard housing in slums, shanty towns and squatter settlements. Tens of thousands more ended their days on the streets where they found shelter in makeshift shacks fashioned from discarded wood, canvas and cardboard.

Furthermore, studies had shown that many of those poor people became permanently marginalized, caught up in a vicious cycle of poverty. Surveys of squatter settlements revealed that many of the residents had lived in them for a decade or more. There was no upward or outward mobility. They began

poor and ended poor, living their lives on the margins of survival. It should be recognized that the same situation often prevailed in rural areas, where most of the world's poor were concentrated.

Another result of rapid urbanization was the alarming loss of prime agricultural land. The urban area of Delhi, for example, had grown nearly 13-fold since 1900, eating into surrounding cropland and absorbing more than 100 villages. According to FAO estimates, about 1.4 billion hectares of arable land would have been taken out of agricultural production because of urban sprawl between 1980 and the turn of the century.

### *Interaction of population and resources*

Although population growth was but one of many factors that undermined the environmental resource base upon which sustainable development ultimately depended, it was an exceptionally significant factor. Indeed, in many countries there was a pronounced imbalance between the growth of population, on the one hand, and the natural resource base needed to support it, on the other.

### *Impact of population growth on the environment*

The Expert Group noted that although there was wide acceptance of the view that various links exist between economic, environmental and population phenomena, the nature and strength of the reciprocal impacts were subject to a heated debate. Whereas some studies asserted that population growth was not an obstacle to economic growth, others supported the conclusion that population growth had a strong negative impact on the environment. Part of the controversy could be resolved by introducing feedback from environment to economic performance. As population growth added to the number of consumers who put additional claims to natural resources and produced pollution, it damaged the environment; conversely, deterioration of the environment damaged the economy. Unfortunately, in the formulation of policy, environmental impacts were not properly accounted for in economic measurements.

Sustainable development, in the view of the World Commission on Environment and Development, would meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Moreover, that view was compatible with attempts to put into operation the concept of sustainable development. If income was defined as the maximum amount that a person or community could consume over a certain time period and still be as well off at the end of the period as at the beginning, sustainability became either weak or strong, depending on whether man-made capital was assumed to be perfectly substitutable for natural capital or complementary to it. In the latter case, which encompassed the predominant views of biologists, the goal was to maintain man-made and natural capital intact separately.

The Expert Group was aware that there were several linkages at work between population and the environment. The interaction of population,

consumption (or production) patterns and technology in producing environmental impacts or pollution was often encapsulated in the equation:

$$I = PAT$$

where I is environmental impact, P is population, A is per capita consumption, and T is a measure of environmental damage done by technology employed in supplying each unit of consumption. In fact, the equation may be interpreted as conveying the notion that consumption and production patterns were proximate factors of environmental deterioration, channelling the underlying impacts of ultimate causes, which were the number of consumers (or producers) and their effective demand for goods and services.

The equation illustrates why developing countries with large populations but limited economic advancement could have a vast impact on the environment. Likewise, it makes clear that developed countries had an impact on population since the A and T multipliers for each person were exceptionally large.

During the discussion some objections were raised to the  $I = PAT$  equation, suggesting that the real relationships between population and the environment were more complex than the postulated linear interactions. For instance, the equation did not take into account the possible detrimental impact of population growth on per capita consumption. Furthermore, institutions were a key variable in determining whether societies would be successful in equilibrating population levels with the availability of resources and economic growth while ensuring sound environmental management. Reciprocity of obligations in the case of populations-induced environmental degradation was contingent upon cultural nuances of social expectations. Similarly, whereas technologies differed in their capacity for environmental damage and repair, social attitudes and systems helped to determine the costs of environmental preservation or degradation and hence the type of technology employed.

A technology-driven explanation was offered to show how population, coupled to the level of a given society's technological development, interacted to produce economic development and/or environmental degradation. By that analysis, development and degradation were linked in relative fashion. The level of development was determined to a large extent by the level of technology, which in turn affected lifestyles and consumption patterns and determined environmental impact. In that case, population was seen as a peripheral factor, not a central part of the equation and technology became the more important multiplier. That analysis had been applied largely to the developed world, where most countries had already gone through the demographic transition to low rates of population growth.

Another way to look at the interrelationships between population and natural resources was discussed. According to that approach, the main variables—number of people, growth rates, dependence on natural resources, consumption levels and technological capacities—had an impact on the resilience of natural resources, which in turn determined the remaining quantity and quality of natural resource stocks. In global terms, the rate of



natural resource consumption depended of course on the first five variables. The resilience of nature—or lack thereof—would determine the final results of human impact on natural resources.

The Expert Group noted that there was, however, an intermediate complication, because the physical availability of natural resources did not necessarily guarantee that those resources were entirely, or even partially, accessible or that they were equally accessible to all population groups. Some hydrologists, for example, had repeatedly drawn attention to the difference between water availability and accessibility. That distinction was fundamental for the understanding of people's interactions with nature. It obliged one to look beyond natural resources as purely biological and geo-physical factors and to analyse technological, managerial, economic and sociological factors.

### *Carrying capacity*

The Expert Group paid particular attention to the concept of carrying capacity or—more appropriately—population-supporting capacity. The carrying capacity could be defined as the number of people that the planet could support without irreversibly reducing its capacity to support people in the future. While that was a global-level definition, it applied at the national level too, albeit with many qualifications as concerned international terms of trade, investment etc. In its wide sense it was a highly complex concept, reflecting food and energy supplies, ecosystem services, human capital, people's lifestyles, cultural constraints, social institutions, political structures, and above all, public policies, among many other factors, all of which interacted with each other.

It was noted that two points were particularly important—first, that carrying capacity was ultimately determined by the component that yielded the lowest carrying capacity; and secondly, that human communities must learn to live off the “interest” of environmental resources rather than off their “principal”.

The Expert Group was concerned about the evidence that human numbers, with their consumption of resources and the technologies deployed to supply that consumption, were often already exceeding carrying capacity. In many parts of the world, the three principal and essential stocks of renewable resources—forests, grasslands and fisheries—were being utilized faster than their rate of natural replenishment.

Preliminary research had shed some new light on the degree to which a given country was dependent on natural resources for development. Three variables had been shown to be important indicators:

- (a) The importance of agricultural production to gross domestic product;
- (b) GNP per capita (using the World Bank classification of low-, lower middle-, upper middle- and high-income countries);
- (c) The level of population growth, assuming that high levels put pressures on key resources.

Data analysis showed that in each case there was a strong connection between low per capita incomes, high population growth rates and a dependence on agricultural production. Although still preliminary, the analysis tended to indicate that where those three factors combined, countries were heavily dependent on natural resource stocks to promote economic development. It also indicated that the solutions must be integrated, tackling a number of problems simultaneously.

### *Environmental discontinuities and uncertainties*

The Expert Group concentrated on the issues of discontinuities and uncertainties in current ecological trends. It was possible for the resource base to collapse abruptly. That could precipitate a downturn in the capacity of environmental resources to sustain human communities at current levels of well-being. Furthermore, it would amount to a macrolevel change. Designated by ecologists as a "jump effect" of environmental discontinuity, or a threshold effect of irreversible injury, such a change occurred when ecosystems absorbed stresses over long periods without much outward sign of damage. Eventually the ecosystem reached a disruption level at which the cumulative consequences of stress finally revealed themselves in critical proportions. The effects of acid rain on freshwater ecosystems and the widespread dieback of conifers seen across Europe and eastern North America were examples of environmental discontinuities.

Of special concern to the Expert Group was the problem of agricultural land shortages which was becoming widespread in many developing countries, especially in those where land provided the livelihood for more than 50 per cent of the population. During the 1970s, arable areas were expanding at roughly 0.5 per cent a year. But during the 1980s the rate dropped to only half as much. Primarily because of rapid population growth and unequal distribution, the amount of per capita arable land declined by 1.9 per cent per annum. For example, in Costa Rica, where the agricultural frontier closed in the 1980s, for the first time in 400 years, people had no ready access to new land. With an annual population growth rate of 2.5 per cent, their predominantly agrarian society was having to adjust to a sudden change from land abundance to land scarcity.

Another issue of concern was the fuelwood crisis. Most people in the developing world depended on fuelwood and charcoal for their daily energy needs. As long as the number of wood collectors did not exceed the capacity of the tree stock to replenish itself through regrowth, the local community could exploit the resource indefinitely. But when the number of collectors grew until they exceeded the self-renewing capacity of the trees, perhaps exceeding it by only a small amount, quite suddenly a point was reached where the tree stock started to decline. Indeed, fuelwood shortages currently affected around 1 billion poor people in the developing countries.

Many environmental changes currently under way had not been experienced in the past, and a number of their components could not be fully anticipated until they actually occurred, at which time it might be too late to counteract them. Hence, it would be a challenging task to choose an appro-

priate long-term strategy when standard short-term solutions such as market forces might not be able to provide sufficient insurance against the risks that were associated with crossing ecological thresholds (such as climate change or depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer). Moreover, critical uncertainties concerned the regional timing and magnitude of environmental change and thus further complicated the assignment of strategic priorities.

### *Environmental degradation*

Of particular concern were four population factors which had a significant impact on resource depletion and environmental quality. Those factors persisted for long periods, although their effects varied from country to country. The first was population size and rate of growth. The second was the population's age structure. The third factor related to the growing incidence of poverty. And the fourth factor was the concentration of populations in critical ecological zones, such as tropical forests and coastal zones.

### *Loss of agricultural land*

It was noted that every year about 70,000 square kilometres of farmland were abandoned because the soils were too worn out and degraded for crop production; another 200,000 square kilometres suffered from reduced productivity. Furthermore, soil erosion, the chief form of land degradation, claimed 24 billion tons of topsoil a year. Between 1985 and 2010, soil erosion alone could precipitate a 19-29 per cent decline in food production from rainfed croplands.

The problem, as many participants pointed out, was due to several factors apart from population growth—most notably, poverty. Impoverished people could not afford the conservation measures needed to protect soil cover. But population growth and concentration served to induce farmers to overuse and even exhaust the soil. Thus it often happened that agricultural yields were expanded to meet population growth's demand in the short term, at a cost to soil cover and fertility that eventually led to a decline in cropland productivity.

Overall, land degradation of various sorts was estimated to be causing an annual loss of 12 million tons of grain output. That translated into almost half of all the gains in grain output each year. Not only had the 1980s seen little expansion of cropland, but there appeared to be less scope than formerly for intensification of food production by bringing more land under irrigation.

Of special concern to the Expert Group was the fact that the current problems of land degradation would be compounded by the impact of population growth, which would add 1 billion people to the planet every 11 years: 900 million over the decade of the 1990s. Thus the coming decade could see a combination of mounting grain deficits, surging grain prices, and spreading hunger among ever larger numbers of people.

## *Destruction of tropical forests*

The Expert Group recalled the FAO and the World Bank estimations on forest destruction. In 1980, FAO estimated tropical forest loss at about 11 million hectares a year, an area the size of Austria. However, more recent estimates by FAO, based on satellite imagery, suggested a much higher rate of about 17 million hectares a year. Recent World Bank estimates put the figure at between 17 million and 20 million hectares a year. Such estimates suggest a current rate of deforestation in developing countries of about 1-1.5 per cent per year. The greatest volume of forest lost was in Latin America, which—at 8.4 million hectares—accounted for about half of the world's total. However, the fastest rate of forest depletion was found in Asia.

There appeared to be three main causes of tropical forest loss: encroachment by landless slash-and-burn cultivators; large-scale logging operations; and conversion to grazing land and large plantations. By far the major overall proximate cause of tropical forest destruction was the expansion of agriculture onto new lands, or agricultural "extensification". Of that, small-scale forest farmers were thought to be responsible for well over half of all deforestation, largely because logging operations and cattle ranches had made it possible for those farmers to penetrate tropical forests which otherwise would be virtually inaccessible to them. The major underlying driving forces of cropland expansion into tropical forests were rural poverty and population growth.

The general pattern of forest degradation and rising population was observed in 15 Asian countries. Countries with an annual population growth rate of 2 per cent or more had experienced deforestation rates of more than 2 per cent per annum over the course of the 1980s (with the exception of Sri Lanka). Although those trends did not establish a causal link, they indicated broad patterns of demographic stress across countries with different population growth rates.

A more direct measure could be made at the country level, relating the increase in migrant populations and rates of forest conversion to agriculture. Two case-studies were presented, for the Philippines and Indonesia. In the Philippines, conversion of forests to croplands began much earlier (through government resettlement), while in Indonesia, cropland expansion into forest areas began on a large scale in the mid-1970s.

Migrant populations in forested areas in both countries increased rapidly during the period 1980-1985, the period of worldwide economic crisis. In the Philippines, the rate of cropland expansion into forests was over 7.5 per cent a year, while the migrant population grew by nearly 4 per cent a year.

The causes of migration into forested areas were remarkably similar for most countries in Asia. In the first place, there were increasing numbers of people living on an increasingly circumscribed agricultural land base. In addition, competition for arable land worsened because of inequitable land distribution. Most existing croplands were already in the most fertile areas, so that the costs of expanding cultivation had increased.

It was noted that the rural labour force continued to expand in most developing countries, despite declining population growth rates. Because

employment opportunities were often limited in urban centres as well as on long-settled croplands, important migration flows were being directed towards ecologically fragile frontier zones.

Furthermore, it was observed that population density continued to increase in more accessible areas, such as those close to roads and along coastlines. As population densities rose, there was greater pressure to intensify cultivation, increase harvests of forest products, and expand settlements to remote and steeper locations. Forest resources were then depleted faster than they were replaced, reducing their productivity and undermining growth.

There were serious off-site consequences when forests were permanently converted to farms. As shown in the watershed sites studied in the Philippines, intensive upland cultivation led to severe flooding and siltation of downstream areas.

It was also noted that population movements were induced by inappropriate government policies. Many settlement schemes opened up forests to migrants. Poor enforcement of post-logging conditions encouraged migration into logged-over sites. In addition, many government development programmes discriminated against the agricultural sector and reduced its growth and labour-absorbing potential. Although the impact of those policies varied by country, the role of population growth and other demographic factors remained constant in that they exacerbated the "push" conditions of movements into critical environments.

#### *Fresh-water resources*

The Expert Group noted basically three sets of problems related to freshwater. First, water was becoming increasingly scarce. Although water was a finite resource, population was growing rapidly in many water-short countries. Secondly, water pollution was a growing problem in both developed and developing countries. Degraded water quality affected human health and welfare directly, while indirectly contributing to slower rates of development. Thirdly, water-related land degradation threatened the sustainable use of resources, especially in the South. That was a particular problem in areas dependent on irrigated agriculture, where salinization, waterlogging and alkalization were slashing yields and turning once-productive cropland into wasteland. Furthermore, salts released from irrigated soils were now polluting surface waters.

Furthermore, the Expert Group observed basically four types of water scarcity: the first two types were due to hydro-climatic factors; the other two, to human activities. In the first type of scarcity water evaporated rapidly before it could recharge aquifers or rivers. That was characteristic of deserts and arid areas and produced a short growing season. The second type was due to large interannual fluctuations in areas with limited rainfall to begin with. That resulted in recurrent droughts, with attendant loss of soil productivity. The third type of water scarcity was due to the desiccation of the landscape, a result of large-scale deforestation, destruction of watersheds and overgrazing of grasslands. Such activities stripped away vegetation cover, exposing soils to torrential rains. Not only did massive soil erosion occur, but water ran

off before it could recharge rivers and aquifers or be captured for other uses (e.g., irrigated agriculture). The fourth type of water scarcity was due principally to two factors: increasing demand because of rapidly growing populations, and/or gross inefficiencies of use.

Of special concern to the Expert Group was the fact that water scarcity was one of the ultimate threats to sustainable development and livelihood security. In the short-to-medium term, the combination of land degradation and intermittent droughts increased the risk for crop failures and famine. In the long term, rapid population growth aggravated the problem of water scarcity since there was less water per capita to support human life, improve health and food security, and increase market-oriented activities such as cash crop and industrial production.

It was noted that water scarcity already affected 88 developing countries, with 40 per cent of the world population. By the end of the decade, all five countries in North Africa and six out of seven in East Africa would experience severe water shortages. All but one, Ethiopia, had population growth rates of 2.5-3.8 per cent per annum.

It was agreed that there was a critical need for Governments to devise integrated strategies for managing both water and land resources. Without a broader view of water, one that was not bound by traditional hydrological engineering concepts of the North, the water crisis was likely to become severe in many areas of the world, presenting a real threat to further industrial development and expansion of agriculture.

### *Loss of biological diversity*

As tropical forests continued to disappear, so too did a wealth of fauna and flora, genetic resources of inestimable value to human welfare. Science had identified only around 1.7 million species of plants and animals, but 10 million or even 30 million might exist. Clearing the forest could consign several million or more unknown species to oblivion by the turn of the century.

Although tropical forests contained most of the world's wild species, seven "mega-diversity" countries had a disproportionately large share of the world's genetic heritage. Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Zaire, Madagascar, Indonesia and Australia, together, contained over 54 per cent of the earth's known species. From the point of view of conservation, it seemed perfectly sensible to select those countries for priority action.

But there was another reason why those countries deserved priority attention: in all but one, population growth exceeded by far the average growth rate of the world population for the period 1950-1980. Furthermore, human populations were expected to continue expanding rapidly during the two decades from 1980 to 2000.

Although there was no one-to-one relationship in the population/environment equation, it must be expected that, while the proportion of the world's population in the mega-diversity countries increased, the proportion of the world's species found there might decrease. The number of people added in

those countries in recent decades plus expected future population increases would, if trends continued, inevitably lead to the clearance of more forests, degradation of water resources and marginalization of over-cultivated land, thereby extinguishing a certain number of species.

Even if the natural resources of the mega-diversity countries could eventually accommodate with ease their growing populations, the speed of population growth would make it difficult for them to expand the sustainable use of natural resources sufficiently and rapidly enough to cater to people's needs.

### *Climate change*

The Expert Group was particularly concerned with the climate changes caused by emissions of greenhouse gases. Recent reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change confirmed the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, a build-up almost certain to result in global climate change. Worldwide emissions of carbon dioxide, the gas that caused half the greenhouse effect, had risen from 2.4 billion tons of carbon in 1950 to 6.8 billion in 1985, an average increase of 3.1 per cent per annum. (The figures were actually underestimations, since they took inadequate account of the carbon dioxide releases from the destruction of tropical forests.) During the same period, world population grew, on average, by 1.9 per cent per annum. The rest of the increase, 1.2 per cent per person per annum on average, was derived from higher per capita consumption of goods that involved the production of carbon, growth in energy demand, and changes in technology. According to that reckoning, population growth was responsible for almost two thirds of the increase in carbon dioxide emissions.

That analysis, despite its limitations, was helpful to the Expert Group when it considered the future. If carbon dioxide emissions in developing countries continued to grow at the rate of the past 40 years, they would more than double from the 1985 per capita level of 0.8 tons to 1.7 tons by 2025. By that time, too, developing countries' populations were projected to nearly double, from 3.7 billion in 1985 to 7.1 billion by 2025. The population increase would produce an additional 5.78 billion tons of carbon dioxide.

The Expert Group noted that the problem of future population growth and rising carbon dioxide emissions could be exemplified by India. With a current per capita income of only \$330 per annum, India's electricity capacity was 55,000 MW, about twice that of New York State. Although the country possessed meagre coal reserves, it was exploiting them so fast that it currently ranked as the world's fourth largest coal burner. In 1950, the amount of coal used was only 33 million tons; by 1989 it had soared to 191 million tons. Furthermore, the Government had plans to supply electricity to half the houses in the country. That goal alone would require the production of an additional 80,000 MW of power. It was anticipated that that measure, together with other development plans, would double India's carbon dioxide emissions.

However, such analyses said nothing about the energy savings that could be achieved through greater efficiencies of scale and by switching from polluting fossil fuels to renewable sources of energy such as solar, wind,

geothermal, hydro etc. Clearly, the industrialized countries needed to lower carbon dioxide emissions by burning fuel more efficiently and by developing alternative sources of energy.

The Group considered an alternative analysis of the links between population and climate change which produced a different set of conclusions. According to that analysis, there were two principal mechanisms by which population growth in developing countries contributed to the potential for global warming. The first was through population growth and higher per capita energy consumption levels because of increased demand for energy for power, industry and transport. The second mechanism was the effect of population growth and expanding production on deforestation, with its associated emissions of carbon dioxide. Cutting down trees also reduced the major land-based sink for carbon dioxide.

Over the past 30 years, the total contribution of the developing world to carbon dioxide emissions due to the burning of fossil fuels was about 20 per cent. The implications of those data were clear. Although the developing world currently contributed relatively little to emissions, especially given their larger share of the global population, it was likely that they would become a major source of a substantial part of future growth in fossil fuel demand, for the same reasons that caused their share in total emissions to rise in the past several decades. Their per capita carbon dioxide emissions were still low but were likely to rise with increasing income. Their emissions per dollar of GNP were relatively high; and they had and would continue to have higher rates of population growth.

According to that analysis, given that the bulk of carbon dioxide emissions originated in the North, population factors had a relatively small impact on emissions. The main reason for increasing amounts of greenhouse gases was the world's continued dependence on fossil fuels for energy. As the South increased its industrial base, fossil fuel use would inevitably increase and with it carbon emissions.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

The problems associated with and flowing from patterns of development, environmental degradation and population growth and distribution were in many parts of the world reaching critical proportions. The need to address those problems was, therefore, urgent.

Environmental systems were capable of accommodating the human use of natural resources only to a certain extent. When those limits were reached, discontinuities in environmental processes arose, often with acutely adverse consequences. Furthermore, population growth often outpaced the ability of societies to generate and adopt adequate technological and institutional changes. Detrimental impacts on the environment would, in many contexts, be best reduced by a combined strategy of slowing population growth, rationalizing population distribution, alleviating poverty, lessening environmentally dangerous consumption patterns and introducing appropriate tech-



nologies and management regimes. Sound development policies would integrate the strategies adopted to achieve all those goals.

Although demographic, economic and ecological processes were inextricably interrelated, the magnitude of the reciprocal impacts in different socio-cultural and ecological settings was not sufficiently documented. Thus, to promote sustainable development, there was urgent need to strengthen data collection and research efforts in that domain and to test the efficacy of proposed policies and strategies in concrete settings.

The Expert Group, having reviewed the available methodological approaches, empirical research and its policy and operational implications, proposed the following recommendations. The implementation of the recommendations would require considerable additional financial and technical resources, particularly for the developing world. The international community was urged to contribute and mobilize the urgently required additional resources on a sustained basis.

*Recommendation 1.* Because there are strong linkages between population, development and the environment, Governments are urged to establish or strengthen mechanisms to coordinate policies and programmes and give unified direction for integrating environmental and population concerns into development policy-making and planning. In particular, Governments are urged, when formulating their social and economic policies, plans and programmes in any sector, to take fully into account the implications of projected demographic trends and of patterns of production and consumption, for the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources. Governments should incorporate these population concerns into national conservation strategies.

*Recommendation 2.* Governments should support the development of new technologies and the use of currently available technologies designed to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development while maintaining a balance between population and resources, with particular attention to replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources, and should create incentives for promoting their application. Developed countries should make these technologies available to developing countries at reasonable cost.

*Recommendation 3.* To avoid further environmental degradation and, where possible, to improve environmental conditions, Governments are urged to identify areas subject to acute population pressures, such as arid lands, tropical forests, watersheds, coasts and coastal waters, and to institute policies, such as integrated population and development policies, that will alleviate pressure on the environment.

*Recommendation 4.* Governments should encourage the implementation of ecologically beneficial labour-intensive projects such as reforestation, contour-levelling, terracing and small-scale irrigation and drainage for their environmental benefits and to assist in job creation.

*Recommendation 5.* Community-based population and environment programmes should emphasize the participation of women as environmental managers, including the employment of women in governmental conservation

programmes such as reforestation, social forestry schemes, parks and protected areas. Therefore, Governments should improve women's educational levels, health status, employment opportunities, environmental sensitivity and participation in national and local decision-making.

*Recommendation 6.* Given the increasing scarcity of water, especially under conditions of rapid population growth and urbanization, Governments should develop the best uses of the water available, maximize the productivity of biomass and other products per unit of water, find options for water-saving industrial production of goods, improve scientific and planning capacity, and develop an integrated approach to land and water management.

*Recommendation 7.* Because poverty is closely related to continued high fertility and rural and urban environmental degradation, Governments are encouraged to enhance the access of the rural and urban poor to employment opportunities, credit, and social services such as education, health and family planning. To achieve these ends, Governments should promote community participation in improving the delivery of these services.

*Recommendation 8.* Since many of the changes required involve radical alterations in human behaviour in order to improve and conserve local environments and promote the small, healthy family, great emphasis should be put on popular education and participation—especially those of women.

*Recommendation 9.* National Governments should provide additional resources to local authorities for the management of cities, particularly those that are experiencing rapid population growth; and adequate training should be provided in municipal management, including the provision of environmental services.

*Recommendation 10.* Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations are urged to find durable solutions to problems related to environmentally displaced persons, including the provision of support and assistance to receiving regions and countries and to work towards the elimination of the root causes of these problems.

*Recommendation 11.* Since increasing population pressure is leading to the establishment of new human settlements and an extension of the exploitation of natural resources into areas highly vulnerable to natural disasters, Governments and international agencies are urged to minimize the ensuing hazards to the environment and human health and safety by such means as urban land-use planning and the promotion of emergency prevention and preparedness.

*Recommendation 12.* International governmental and non-governmental organizations are urged to intensify and increase their efforts in promoting an understanding of the severe impacts on health of environmental degradation and in transferring appropriate technologies for monitoring and minimizing such impacts to countries in need of them.

*Recommendation 13.* International organizations should increase their assistance to countries in the fields of population, sustainable development and environment, especially in training, research, policy formulation and the

integration of population and environment-related factors in national planning.

*Recommendation 14.* International organizations, Governments and non-governmental organizations should increase their efforts to create greater awareness of the interrelated issues of population, environment and development. This should be done through the formal education system, existing demographic training institutions and collaborative training and educational programmes of non-governmental organizations.

*Recommendation 15.* In order to address the relationships between population, environment, economic growth and sustainable development issues, databases should be strengthened and developed so as to promote an understanding of these issues and to make them available and accessible to policy makers and programme managers.

*Recommendation 16.* Policy-oriented research should be undertaken to identify critically endangered areas beset by population pressures, destruction of the ecosystem and degradation of resources and to determine how these factors interact.

*Recommendation 17.* In devising strategies for sustainable development, special attention should be given to improving the plight of indigenous populations. Their accumulated knowledge and methods for sustainable exploitation should be taken into account.

*Recommendation 18.* In order to implement these recommendations, Governments and international organizations should identify and openly analyse the conflicting goals between countries, regions and groups so as to make fruitful negotiation possible and to create solutions with mutual gains.

## **EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON POPULATION POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES**

The Expert Group Meeting on Population Policies and Programmes was held at Cairo from 12 to 16 April 1992. The Government of Egypt was the host. The participants, representing different geographical regions, scientific disciplines and institutions, included 15 experts invited by the Secretary-General of the Conference in their personal capacity and representatives of the five regional commissions, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank. Also represented were the following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations: the League of Arab States; the Organization of African Unity (OAU); the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP); and the Population Council.

As a basis for discussion, the 15 experts had prepared papers on the agenda items. The views expressed by the experts are their own and do not necessarily represent the views of their Governments or organizations. In addition to the expert papers, brief discussion notes had been prepared by a number of the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Ambassador Yossry Rizk, Director of International Conferences of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Dr. Maher Mahran, Secretary-General of the National Population Council of Egypt; and Abdel Salam El Banna served as the organizing committee for the host Government.

### **OPENING STATEMENTS**

Opening statements were made by Dr. Ragheb Doweidar, the Minister of Health, representing the Prime Minister of Egypt; and by Dr. Mahran. Statements were also made by Dr. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development, and by Mr. Shunichi Inoue, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference.

In her opening statement, the Secretary-General of the Conference took note that it was very appropriate that the Meeting should be held in Egypt, where a population policy had long been in place and where the fruits of many years of programme development could be seen. Indeed, the Meeting was informed that the most recent estimates from the PAPCHILD survey for Egypt indicated continuing declines in infant and child mortality and a recent increase in contraceptive prevalence, with a corresponding reduction in the total fertility rate. The Secretary-General emphasized that the framers and

executors of the population policy of Egypt were to be congratulated on that clear evidence of their success.

The Secretary-General stated that the successes and failures of over 20 years of experience in population policy implementation and programme activity had taught many lessons. Successive evaluations had documented continuing progress in policy and programme development, including a significant increase in the outreach and effectiveness of population programmes throughout the world and real, measurable progress in regions that had traditionally lagged behind.

The evaluations had confirmed what was required for population policies and programmes to be truly effective: political commitment, manifested in the allocation of human and financial resources in support of population activities; mobilization of individual and community support and active local participation in defining and implementing programmes; involvement of women at all stages of the planning and execution of programmes; development of an institutional framework for delivering services; training of service delivery personnel; and development of networks of distribution points.

Despite the difficulties of the 1980s, the Meeting was informed that the flow of national and international resources for population programmes had been maintained. Moreover, developing countries themselves had begun to invest more in population activities. But even in countries with more available resources and longer histories of programme development, it had been found that international assistance could play a catalytic role, encouraging the exploration of new approaches, generating and maintaining institutional dynamism and addressing new needs.

## SUMMARY OF THE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION

### *Population policy*

The Population Division, in a paper entitled "Evolution of population policy since 1984: a global perspective", reported that since 1984, when the International Conference on Population had been held at Mexico City, the issue of population growth had become less politically divisive. Over the past decade, there had been a growing convergence of views at the national level, with many more countries currently in favour of modifying population growth.

Whereas there was continuing debate over how to achieve it, the ultimate, internationally accepted goal, as enunciated at Mexico City, was the stabilization of global population within the shortest period possible. The participants agreed that meeting the targets would involve assigning a higher priority to population in development programmes and extending family planning information and services to perhaps 2 billion people.

With regard to fertility levels and trends, the participants concurred that there were a number of hopeful signs. For the first time, fertility was declining in all major areas of the world, as increasing numbers of Governments adopted policies to regulate fertility. The participants agreed that evidence from 25

years of experience in organized family planning programmes showed that good-quality service, with consistent political and administrative support and innovative public education efforts, could produce very rapid voluntary changes in reproductive behaviour in a wide variety of economic, political, social and religious settings.

The Expert Group was in agreement that, for the developing world as a whole, the past 25 years had been a period of unprecedented progress in regard to reducing mortality and improving health. That impressive overall performance, however, concealed an extremely uneven pattern of progress. Concerning the major directions in health-care policy, it was mentioned that since the landmark conference at Alma-Ata in 1978, there had been a marked shift throughout the developing world from a curative, hospital-based health-care approach to one that was focused on preventive, primary health-care strategies. It was reported that an emerging health concern in both the developed and developing countries was the spread of the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). Recently, the epidemic had expanded its geographical scope, reaching countries and regions previously unaffected or only slightly affected by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

The participants were informed that although international migration had occasionally had significant demographic impacts, few Governments had adopted international migration policies for demographic reasons. Moreover, until fairly recently, the area of international migration had been considered somewhat peripheral to the mainstream of population policy.

The participants were also informed that despite Governments' concerns over the past two decades with their population distribution patterns, policies concerning population distribution had become somewhat discredited, mainly because there had been many more failures than successes. Frequently, the goals of population distribution policies had been unrealistic and had led to disenchantment and eventual abandonment. A further problem had been a lack of continuity in the implementation of such policies in many developing countries.

Some of the participants took note that although many developing countries were overwhelmed by external indebtedness, weakening economies and poor management, unabated population growth remained one of the major threats to progress. In many developing countries, over the past two decades, a mix of national and international complacency in regard to the urgency of population issues had resulted in millions of unwanted births, which threatened the hope of achieving sustainable development and alleviating poverty.

The discussion that followed focused on the context in which population processes and policies had taken place. It was mentioned that the globalization of the world economy had led to a larger gap in levels of living between developed and developing countries, to more social inequality and to higher proportions of the population of the latter countries living in absolute poverty. However, it had also led to a globalization of a culture of modernity expressed, among other things, in changing patterns of consumption and aspirations and in new family patterns and gender roles.

At the political level, attempts in most countries to redefine the role of the State by the shrinkage of State bureaucracies, the transfer of government-owned enterprises to the private sector and the decentralization of decisions to the local level were contextual factors that would continue to affect both population trends and the success of population policies and programmes.

Given those changes, the Meeting questioned whether there were any means by which population growth rates could be significantly reduced. One option would be to continue applying the same prescription—namely, to rely upon the market economy to rescue the poorest countries quickly from the abyss of underdevelopment. A second option—to establish an obligatory maximum limit for the number of children per family—was politically unviable and clearly violated the World Population Plan of Action. A third option, sometimes referred to as “equitable development”, involved raising Governments’ policies with respect to education, public health, housing, employment and social security from their current secondary status and placing them on at least equal footing with policies directed first and foremost at achieving economic growth. The participants were in agreement that action along those lines seemed to offer the best chance of achieving the goal of alleviating the consequences of rapid population growth and inappropriate spatial distribution.

In the discussion on population policies in sub-Saharan Africa, it was stated that at the time of the World Population Conference in 1974, many Governments in Africa had considered their fertility levels to be satisfactory. Since that time, demographic and health justifications for a small-family norm had evolved, and more than half of all the countries in Africa had formulated explicit policies to reduce fertility.

The Group was informed that about 90 per cent of the Governments in Africa gave direct or indirect support to family planning programmes to influence fertility and/or to improve maternal and child health (MCH). However, about two fifths of all the countries in Africa either had no intervention programme or had adopted family planning programmes for health reasons only. Among the countries that had adopted family planning programmes intended to lower fertility and population growth, a few (notably Botswana, Zimbabwe and, more recently, Kenya) had been successful in realizing programme objectives.

The participants acknowledged that in Africa many Governments had not progressed beyond the rhetoric of family planning. The example of programmes that had succeeded in lowering fertility levels underscored the importance of political commitment, manifested not only by consistent and substantial financial support but also by regular pronouncements by high-level policy makers concerning the need for adoption of the small-family norm.

The participants recommended that Governments in Africa should show greater commitment to implementing existing family planning programmes; that governmental actions to influence fertility should be coordinated with actions in other sectors and that, conversely, the impact of development efforts on fertility should also be monitored; that, in view of the demonstrated

effect of female education and participation on the development process, schooling for all girls should be a top priority in social development; and that among a still largely illiterate population, new and imaginative information, education and communication (IEC) campaigns needed to be devised to encourage attitudinal change in favour of the small-family norm.

In the discussion that followed, note was taken that although there had been an overall shift in Governments' perceptions of population problems, there was an obvious inconsistency between the proportion of countries in Africa that were concerned with those various aspects of their population trends and the proportion that had taken action to formulate policies. In other words, the Expert Group questioned the extent to which reported perceptions reflected reality and/or to what extent they more or less constituted a "façade".

The Group further agreed that although the formulation of a population policy was a necessary condition for inducing a reduction in fertility and hence ensuring sustainable development, it was not a sufficient condition. The design of an effective action plan for implementing the policy measures was equally important, as were dynamic and committed leadership, local political support, interested private organizations and institutions, a receptive audience and availability of resources. Moreover, it was stated that, overall, implementation of population policies and programmes depended greatly upon the priority assigned by the Government to population issues. In countries where population issues remained sensitive matters, with considerable opposition from various interest groups, it had been difficult for population planning agencies to compete for scarce government resources to implement their programmes.

In the discussion of population policies in the countries of North Africa and Western Asia, the Meeting took note that the regional populations shared common social, cultural and linguistic features. Demographically, most countries of the two regions were similar in having relatively high population growth; young population structure; high rates of marriage, especially at the younger ages; high fertility and large family-size norms; declining mortality and morbidity; and high rates of urbanization. Only four countries—Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia—had explicit population policies with specified targets and implementation mechanisms.

In commenting upon the fact that only four Arab countries had formulated explicit population policies, a discussant took note that population policy was still a vague concept. Despite the population policy database maintained at United Nations Headquarters, it was suggested that the manner in which population policies were assessed in the Arab countries was perhaps inadequate. Rather than relying upon the United Nations Population Inquiries among Governments, perhaps the only way to assess such policies was through in-depth field surveys.

In the discussion on population policies in Asia, it was stated that because Asia was the most populous area of the world, the population policies of the Asian countries were very important. Actual performance in the implementation of those policies had a strong impact on global population trends. The



Meeting agreed that most Asian countries had excellent records with regard to the formal adoption of population policies, although dissemination of information about those policies was not always done effectively.

Given the fact that countries in Asia had in general been successful in implementing their population policies, a number of recommendations were identified to assist countries in other major areas and regions in achieving their population goals. Although population limitation objectives were best made explicit and operationally defined in terms of quantitative targets, the participants considered that it might be preferable, in some instances, to integrate such goals into broader social and economic development strategies. Policies that complemented population limitation measures should be included in explicit population policies. Those policies might include such interventions as raising the minimum legal age at marriage, introducing literacy and educational programmes for women, encouraging young girls to stay in school longer, mobilizing non-governmental organizations for family planning campaigns, encouraging the private and commercial sector to play a more active role in population matters and so forth. The availability of contraceptive methods was considered to be a crucial element in a comprehensive population policy. When appropriate, local production of contraceptives should be fully supported.

The Group also emphasized that gender considerations should be explicitly included in national population policies. The phenomenon of ageing ought to be studied more closely, and the implications of the ageing process for comprehensive population and development policies should be emphasized. Although most countries considered their population distribution to be an important problem and studies had been made of efforts to correct the maldistribution of population, specific reasons for the success or failure of those interventions were poorly understood. It was considered that more intensive country case-studies, carried out in a comparative perspective, should be conducted.

The Expert Group was in agreement that international migration in Asia, as in other parts of the world, promised to be one of the most important aspects of population policy. International migration, however, was often not included in explicit population policies. In particular, the demographic effects and impact of international migration had been poorly analysed. The performance of specific measures, such as training people who might wish to emigrate, maximizing the benefits from income remittances of migrants to countries of origin and so forth, had not been adequately evaluated. Those and other similar measures should be included in the population policy of each country.

In the discussion, it was stated that the population policies that had been adopted by most Asian countries were justified by their impact—namely, improvement of the quality of life. When those policies were translated into action, however, they became population control policies with well-defined quantitative targets, with little or no attention to quality. The situation, however, was changing, particularly in countries where demographic goals either had been achieved or were close to being achieved. The participants

stated that many Asian countries were striving to adopt innovative strategies and new programme directions in order to sustain the successful achievement of demographic goals, for example, by paying serious attention to improved service delivery systems, the training of service providers, contraceptive technologies and choices, and family support systems.

In the discussion on population policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Group was informed that in many countries in the region, the favourable demographic results had been achieved in the absence of a population policy.

During the 1980s, three concerns had marked the decision-making framework for policy initiatives within Latin America: the economic crisis and its deteriorating effects on the social and physical environment; the debate on a new role for the State; and the integration of women into development.

The Group took note that the health sector in many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean had already been experiencing serious deficiencies by the beginning of the economic crisis. It was estimated that 130 million persons in the region had no regular access to health-care services. Estimated population growth would place an additional 110 million persons in need of health care. It was mentioned that the most revealing indicator of the deterioration in living conditions was the presence of cholera in the area. Also, the increase in the level and intensity of poverty throughout the 1980s had had a special impact on women. The "feminization of poverty" and the increases in the percentages of women as the head of household in poor and indigent families had been well documented.

In the discussion that followed, the participants took note that there was a clear trend in Latin America and the Caribbean to increase the recognition of population as a valid field for public policy. Within that framework, there was an increase in the number of Governments that had reported either that they definitely wanted lower rates of population growth or that they would support individual decisions to lower fertility through family planning programmes. The Group acknowledged that whereas there had been an increase in the number of population policies approved as such and of population policy statements, that increase did not necessarily imply effective implementation. It did, however, define a positive trend and, most importantly, gave greater social legitimacy to services that were already being offered by non-governmental organizations, the private commercial sector and even the public-health sector, but whose development ran against the former negative attitudes of many Governments.

In the overview on population policies in the developed countries, the Meeting took note that it was surprising that, after several decades of population policy research and debate, there was still no clear definition of population policy in many of those countries. Addressing population policy issues in the developed countries was sometimes controversial, because the demographic problems were usually not as pressing as in the developing countries. Moreover, the well-known, general pattern of sustained low or declining fertility, slow, zero or negative population growth, and the associated progressive ageing of the population were processes and phenomena to

which the developed countries had had a relatively long time to adjust. Whereas population-related policies existed in all of the developed countries, many countries did not consider the sets of measures that were implemented for social or welfare reasons to be population policies. Nevertheless, those policies did have certain demographic impacts, even if they were unintended.

The participants commented that the effectiveness of fertility policies which were typically pro-natalist had varied and had depended largely upon whether the measures had sought to modify the desired family size or had been directed to assisting couples in fulfilling their desired family size. Most policies and measures had had short-term effects in raising the number of births, but seldom in increasing cohort fertility. The Group also observed that, along with policies responsive to the ageing process, socio-economic differentials in morbidity and mortality and in access to adequate health care were issues in the developed countries that called for policy action.

Concerning international migration policies in the developed countries, the Meeting questioned whether the potentially shrinking labour forces of most European countries should be expanded by immigrant labour, particularly from Eastern Europe. It was concluded that the demographic situation in Eastern Europe was similar to that of Western Europe; hence, the ageing and the decline of the potential labour force in the Eastern countries were occurring at more or less the same pace and with the same timing.

#### *Population programmes*

In the paper on its experience with population programmes over a 20-year period, UNFPA stated that data generation and policy analysis had shown that the population issues currently needing attention and the nature of the issues that would endure until nearly the end of the twenty-first century were more numerous and of greater scale than had been anticipated. The importance of the 1990s arose from three issues. First, near-term targets were needed to guide planning and to serve as criteria for programme impact. Secondly, there was need to check a significant part of the momentum of population growth in the decade so that population stabilization would occur at acceptable levels. Thirdly, near-term estimates challenged the participating countries to examine their levels of commitment.

The Meeting noted that UNFPA had been a principal advocate for developing the needed capacity for policy analysis and had included support for such activities in its annual work plan. Bilateral contributions and analytic efforts by scientists working for international non-governmental organizations concerned with population had been very important. Among the results had been an increase in the number of countries with population policies and programmes and with units established to monitor those policies and programmes.

The participants observed that an equally important policy development over that period had been the growing emphasis on the status of women. Their

special involvement in population change and the necessity of removing the personal and societal costs of long-standing inequities were now universally recognized.

The Group was informed that a number of lessons had been learned from the major review and assessment exercise recently concluded by UNFPA. One problem was to incorporate knowledge into programme design and implementation specific to the wide variety of very distinct sociocultural and behavioural factors seen throughout the world. Another problem was that population programmes seldom fit neatly with overall development objectives and other social policies and received low priority and small financial outlays. Still another constraint was over-reliance upon the governmental sector. It was observed that bottlenecks were likely without the support of community organizations and other grass-roots, non-governmental institutions.

The participants also identified a number of important challenges that lay ahead. In the field of maternal and child health and family planning (MCH/FP), the major challenges included making services more accessible, improving their quality and reaching previously underserved populations, in part by means of strategic planning. Such strategic planning, in reference to IEC and other population-related activities, involved a number of factors, including adoption of a long-term time-horizon, selection of critical points for intervention, coordination of programme efforts and careful programme design and planning. Factors of critical importance to the success of programmes had been found to be the quality of family planning services, culturally sensitive IEC activities, improvements in the role and status of women and effective policy planning units that were coordinated with other development planning efforts. The Group was informed that the review had led UNFPA to adopt a strategic approach to programming by instituting the programme review and strategy development methodology.

In regard to financial and material resources to the year 2000, it was reported that if global population stabilization was to occur during the twenty-first century, it was essential for the proportions of couples in developing countries using contraception to rise during the 1990s from the initial level of about 50 per cent to slightly over 64 per cent by the year 2000. It was estimated that such an enhanced programme for the year 2000 would cost about \$8 billion in public funds (in constant 1990 dollars).

In conclusion, it was noted that in the Amsterdam Declaration on a Better Life for Future Generations,<sup>1</sup> adopted in 1989 at the International Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century, the United Nations medium-variant population projection was accepted as a baseline by which to plan efforts to achieve balanced and sustainable growth. When combined with estimates of the use and cost of contraception, it was possible to project major components of future resource needs. UNFPA was ready to supply much of the needed leadership to assemble the resources required for expanding population programmes to meet those targets. Survey data indicated that current unmet demand was of sufficient magnitude that the targets of the Amsterdam Declaration could be reached with expanded programmes. The challenge facing Governments and the international donor community was to mobilize

the funds, the human resources, the institutional capacity and the political will to do so.

The Expert Group Meeting was in agreement that the past decade had seen a considerable consolidation of knowledge and experience in the design and implementation of population activities in developing countries. Moreover, over the past two or three years some interesting changes in direction had emerged. First, increasing attention had been given to the processes for broad population programme strategy development as a precursor to the formulation of detailed project activities. At the same time, there had been a resurgence of interest in reassessing population as a development activity. Several factors lay behind that development: there was a growing emphasis on individual rights, welfare and needs; measures to improve the role and status of women were commanding increasing attention; environmental concerns had come more to the fore; and the progress and prospects for economic and social development had not been as positive as had been hoped. The last-named factor had increased pressure to ensure that the limited resources available for social service provision should be well spent.

The participants noted that considerable experience had been built up over the past decade in the design and implementation of population activities. Family planning programmes in particular could be formulated with increased confidence, so that they would achieve worthwhile impact and effectiveness. None the less, on some key aspects of population programme development there remained disparate views and considerable uncertainties. They raised questions as to which activities should be featured in a national population programme, alongside family planning provision and population information and education measures as core components; what prioritization was appropriate between population activities in the light of resource constraints; and what approaches should be pursued to establish a more coherent population dimension for labour, social security and environmental policies.

The Group suggested that further refinement in the process used for population programme needs assessment should be sought, through a more precise articulation of broad programme strategies (i.e., the issues that had to be tackled if the programme was to achieve its short- and medium-term goals) and greater attention to institutional analysis (i.e., the respective roles and capacities of institutions with responsibility for policy formulation and dialogue, regulation and standard-setting, programme planning, programme management, service delivery, programme monitoring and evaluation, and research and training). Also, action research was needed to establish and demonstrate the effectiveness of new approaches, particularly in regard to issues of women's reproductive health.

In the paper concerning population programmes in Rwanda, the Meeting was informed that the social and economic situation in Rwanda was such that emergency steps had to be taken to solve the population problem. The population policy was intended to make the population more aware of socio-demographic problems by information, training and education in family well-being and to spread the use of all contraceptive methods allowed by the

authorities in all public-health units in the country. The Meeting was informed that currently more than 85 per cent of the Rwandan population were believed to be aware of the socio-demographic problems. The population policy of Rwanda had the ambitious goal of reducing population growth to 3.6 per cent in 1990 and to 2.0 per cent by the year 2000, by applying family planning methods, so as to lower the number of births per woman from 8.5 in 1990 to 4.0 by 2000. That goal would necessitate an increase in the level of contraceptive prevalence from 12 to 48.4 per cent in less than 20 years.

In the second country case-study, on Indonesia, the Meeting was informed that the gradual slowing of the Indonesian population growth rate had been the direct result of the concentrated, steadfast and visionary approach that the Indonesian Government had taken towards population control. Since 1970, the fertility rate had fallen by 46 per cent. The population growth rate had been reduced from a potentially insupportable level of over 2.3 per cent per annum in the mid-1960s to 1.97 per cent per annum in the mid-1980s, making Indonesia one of the middle-income developing countries with the lowest population growth rates. That accomplishment would be even more impressive if Indonesia achieved its planned growth rate of 1.6 per cent by 1995.

The 21-year-old family planning programme in Indonesia attributed its successful performance to institutional development, the wide availability of contraceptives, village-level health care and information, education and motivational campaigns. The programme enjoyed active, broad-based support at every level, from local community leaders to the President of Indonesia. The Ministry of Information had been an integral partner from the outset, using modern methods of mass communication to make family planning as a concept and its technical details common knowledge. Talk of family planning had actively been removed from the realm of private unspoken behaviour and placed squarely in the public domain.

The participants were informed that when the Indonesian family planning activities had just begun, during the late 1960s and early 1970s, some of the Indonesian family planning workers had visited a number of other countries to learn from their family planning programmes. They had observed and discussed other programme successes and failures. Programmes had been adopted through the adaptation of certain elements and their modification to fit the Indonesian cultural context.

The Group took note that many observers had concluded that community participation was a major reason for the success of the Indonesian programme. In some areas, community members had been willing to receive and distribute the monthly resupply of contraceptives to each participating household for a small stipend. That group had rapidly evolved to become a fully volunteer, unpaid network of suppliers throughout Java and Bali, where indigenous community organizations had seized the opportunity to provide a useful and desired community service and had established community-based family planning clubs.

Another reason for the success of the Indonesian family planning programme was that all motivation was based on a simple concept: the promotion

of the "small, happy and prosperous family". Although contraceptive methods were explained by medical personnel, the primary responsibility of volunteers was to facilitate the acceptance of family planning and of the norm of the small, happy and prosperous family by relating them to the sociological and economic situation of their particular areas in ways that were easily understood and accepted by their neighbours.

### *Mobilization of resources*

In the paper on public, private and non-governmental mobilization of resources, the Meeting was informed that during the 1980s, many developing countries had adopted stabilization and structural adjustment policies, defined as a set of economic policies put in place to restore the economy to a sustainable growth path. During the stabilization phase, the prices of imported goods had typically increased as a result of devaluation and price liberalization, which had resulted in a shortage of supplies. One of the immediate responses to the situation had been the implementation of user charges which had not only aimed at promoting greater cost efficiency in the use of diminished resources but also represented a new source of revenue. Taking note that user charges had been introduced in the health and/or education sector in many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America over the past decade, the participants cautioned that such charges could constitute a significant barrier to social services and the attainment of global population goals unless they were accompanied by an increase in family income levels and/or the establishment of a mechanism for subsidizing the poor. The participants stated that the viability of cost-recovery schemes, the goal of which was sustainability through the establishment of a revolving fund, obviously operated under the same constraints as user charges.

In regard to cost-sharing, the Expert Group took note that the experiences of various countries had shown that communities were willing to share the costs of national development with Governments in addition to paying for their recurrent costs. The participants emphasized that involving the private sector was a variant on the cost-recovery strategy, in that sections of a community that could afford to pay the full price for their services were encouraged to do so, thereby permitting government funding to be directed to the neediest group within the community.

The participants emphasized that the active involvement of the private sector and non-governmental organizations necessitated adequate management support systems. Accountability to the community was probably the single most important requirement for success in cost-recovery and cost-sharing systems. By keeping revenues generated from cost-recovery/cost-sharing schemes at the local level, accountability could be monitored by the revenue collected, as well as by improvement in the quality of care. The participants took note that it was not surprising that as many government leaders in the developing countries grappled with the need for increased domestic resources, "accountability" and "decentralization" were becoming keywords.

In the paper on the special problems of the least developed countries, the Expert Group was informed that the reality in the population sector was

characterized by population control programmes that were donor-dependent and donor-shaped. The dominant model of administrative organization for population control programmes throughout much of the developing world, with its decentralized, top-down bureaucracy for essentially transferring contraceptive technology, had been responsible for the absence of local initiatives with regard to the formulation of a self-sustaining and viable programme. The existing model was non-viable in the long run and could not be sustained in the impoverished settings of the least developed countries.

The participants agreed that the crucial problem of resource mobilization for the implementation of a pragmatic and contextually appropriate population programme in a least developed country consisted of initiating and sustaining a capability to self-finance programmes indigenously, at the local level and from within the community. The identification of internal resource mobilization as the strategy for long-term programme viability was rationalized on the grounds of the need both for a greater national role in comparison to donor roles and for greater community and local government roles in comparison to the role of the national Government. The Group discussed the barriers to the process of effective devolution of decision-making authority and financial autonomy. It also identified the formidable constraints faced by local governments in mobilizing community support and in generating sufficient local revenue for development programmes, including those in the population sector.

The Meeting was informed that the population field faced a major dilemma in the last decade of the twentieth century: the very success of population programmes had engendered a growing scarcity of resources which threatened to place a severe damper on the momentum of the programmes just as they were reaching maximum effectiveness.

From roughly 1980 onward, the demands for population assistance had begun to outstrip the supply of population assistance funds. Since 1974 it had been learned that success in family planning programmes required sustained donor commitment over a number of years. The challenge for the population donor agencies was to ensure that the commitment of resources should be sustained until the final chapter of the success story was complete. In that endeavour, the multilateral organizations had to be key players.

The participants agreed that it was incumbent on the multilateral donors to examine seriously the issue of cost efficiency and to ensure that their funds should be used to maximum advantage. That effort entailed, among other things, increasing coordination with other donors and non-governmental organizations not only at the headquarters level but, more importantly, at the country level.

It was pointed out that as donors and multilateral agencies planned their responses to the increased demand for financial assistance to population programmes, it would be important for them to think strategically at the country level. Countries with strong programme effort and high demand for family planning services would be able to absorb larger amounts of funding. They were in a position to make effective use of the typically large loans provided by the World Bank. At the same time, some of those countries might



be reaching a point where rising incomes would make it possible for more of the cost of services to be assumed by users and more of the programme effort to be provided by the private sector. Countries with weak programme effort and/or less fully articulated demand for services would require a different strategy.

Considering that UNFPA was the principal United Nations organization in the field of assistance to population programmes, the Meeting agreed that UNFPA was in a position to take a more assertive role in donor coordination, both globally and locally. The participants took note, however, that the UNFPA project development process had resulted in the "atomization" of resources into many small projects. It was argued that it was perhaps difficult to achieve measurable impacts with so many very small, dispersed projects.

The Group was informed that the World Bank typically lent for large projects which ultimately promised large economic returns. The Bank often found it difficult to finance the relatively small investment needs and the recurrent costs, such as contraceptives and salaries, that were the principal requirements of population programmes. Also, countries often did not wish to borrow for population projects, even at concessional international development assistance rates, because of a reluctance to borrow for social sector programmes.

The participants were informed that the Amsterdam Declaration called for a doubling of support to the population sector by the year 2000. Since those endorsements, the funding environment had changed. The AIDS crisis had continued to present ever-growing needs, while Eastern Europe and the environment represented "new", competing needs. In addition, the economic situation of donor countries themselves had not improved. It was therefore not a foregone conclusion that funding levels for population activities would increase.

Concerning the profile of bilateral donor support, the Group took note that no donor had the delivery capacity of the United States of America. At the end of the 1980s, there was intensive bilateral donor activity in a few other countries. Only a handful of countries were receiving the support of many bilateral donors: Bangladesh received support from 10 donors; Kenya, 9; the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, 5 each. Four other countries received support from four donors; and eight were given assistance by three donors. Twenty-one countries had only two donors and 22 others had single donors acting bilaterally in the sector. If only those activities which had received over \$1 million were counted, donor presence had been reduced considerably in most instances.

The participants agreed that the donor profile became critical in the light of the increased importance of the bilateral channel in United States assistance and recently proposed changes to that assistance. A new United States initiative, Priority Country Strategy,<sup>2</sup> would focus bilateral population assistance on 17 strategic countries while phasing down and/or halting funding in other countries, at least in terms of bilateral assistance.

To maintain current levels of contraceptive prevalence in an expanding

population, it had been estimated that donor funding levels would have to double by the year 2000. To meet that basic-needs scenario, against the background of a changing United States assistance profile, donors would have to expand their activities in the sector considerably.

The participants in the Meeting took note that experience and expertise in technical cooperation and the provision of population assistance were limited to a few donor countries. Many donor countries had, nevertheless, some experience in a limited number of population activities, such as data collection and analysis, academic training and research or population policies, principally related to immigration.

Since a few donor countries had a considerable head start on the other donors in the field of population assistance, the Meeting concluded that such expertise should be shared with other interested donor countries, particularly in the light of the challenges and increasing needs for such assistance in the coming decades.

The participants discussed the relationships between population policies and other social and economic policies and concluded that although population policies were adopted courses of action intended to affect population variables, the adoption of such goals and objectives found their justification in the improvement of individual and collective well-being. In that sense, population policies were to be conceived as components of socio-economic policies and not as their substitute, as had been affirmed in the World Population Plan of Action. The Meeting recognized that more attention should be given to the design of social and economic policies and strategies that would respond to future changes in the size, composition and distribution of the population. In that respect, it was noted that, in some cases, a special emphasis had been placed on the reduction of fertility as an offset to environmental damage, without taking sufficient note of the fact that the adult population, whose decisions and activities had the greatest effect on the environment, would increase by 90 per cent or more over two decades in many developing countries, whatever the trend in fertility.

The participants had an opportunity to discuss the Matlab project in Bangladesh as an example of a comprehensive population policy. The substantial progress in reducing fertility and expanding the use of contraception in a poor, rural, conservative population in the absence of substantial improvements in economic well-being provided a model for programmes in other countries in which fertility remained high and the population was impoverished, not well educated and mostly rural. To replicate the model would require experimentation in seeking a feasible mechanism in the local administrative and cultural setting to create outreach to individual households involving trained local personnel and to create the necessary network of administrators, clinical facilities and the like. Such a strategy should be made part of the agenda of international efforts to assist the developing countries in making effective contraception available and enabling couples to make a free and informed choice concerning their family size.

In regard to the set of socio-economic policies designed to respond to future population characteristics, the participants observed that such policies

had not received the priority required in many developing countries. In some instances, population policies directed to the reduction of fertility had been conceived as the best remedy to combat poverty and backwardness, without taking into account that their impact would be limited if they were not accompanied by other socio-economic policies. Such limited approaches ignored, for example, that the size and the growth of the adult population of a given area were not affected by family planning decisions until after 15 or 20 years. In Eastern and Western Africa, for example, population projections showed an increase in the total population of about 80 per cent from 1990 to 2010; that increase might be diminished by a more rapid introduction of family planning. However, the population aged 15 years or over would increase by 90 per cent between 1990 and 2010, and that increase would not be tangibly affected by family planning programmes yet to be introduced or augmented.

The participants were informed that organizational research was the neglected stepchild of family planning programmes. Despite enormous support given to finding ways to limit fertility, there had been a neglect of research on the organizations that carried out family planning programmes.

Concerning the achievements and limitations of various family planning programmes throughout the world, the participants observed that in those countries where such activities had been under way for several decades, with rather limited results, the major handicap was related to their organizational characteristics.

The Meeting took note that it was reasonable to ask why research on family planning organizations had been neglected, compared with research on other components of family planning and fertility, such as breast-feeding and operations research. The participants concluded that the answer to the question was that research on the organization of family planning programmes was regarded as "too sensitive" by funding agencies and family planning organizations.

There was also the issue of administrative overload in many family planning programmes. Every programme was faced with a problem of internal management, field and client relations, relations with other sectors of government and management of the delicate political and diplomatic linkages with international and foreign agencies. Although all government agencies confronted a similar array of problems and demands, family planning was different in that it was attempting to provide a service that the would-be beneficiaries might not be demanding. The complexity and difficulty of a family planning programme justified the assertion that, qualitatively, family planning was not just another government programme.

Because family planning activities had received high priority from the donor community, such programmes had led to the creation of units responsible for external and donor relations. That was no modest task; indeed, the domestic system often became overburdened with the need to provide reports, field trips and detailed accounting of funds and materials received. Adding to the burden, in many instances, field operations of foreign or international

agencies typically had not formally coordinated their activities with one another, resulting in overlap, repetition and redundancy.

The Group stated that there was need to conduct research on family planning organizations. More attention should be given to programme leadership and to interorganizational relations as a discrete area of inquiry in population policy research.

In regard to research on population policies, the participants concluded that a number of questions remained to be answered before rational and effective policies could be formulated—for example, in what specific socio-economic and political circumstances would development strategies alone be more effective than family planning programmes in achieving a reduction in fertility and when would the opposite be true; in what way could policy makers identify empirically the two types of situations; and what type or structure of development would be most effective in reducing fertility.

The Meeting was informed that answers to those questions could not be effectively reached through comparative research alone but required the development of a causal theoretical framework that would take into account the different characteristics and modalities of the demographic transition.

A number of policy implications could be derived from such analysis. For population groups at the early stages of the demographic transition, where the desired number of children exceeded the maximum achievable number, a policy of fertility reduction was not likely to have immediate effects. A family planning programme would have little or no impact on fertility levels. All that should be done in those circumstances would be to create the socio-economic environment that would lead to a modification of family-size preferences.

The participants were informed that reducing the demand for children should be a major policy aim of any fertility reduction policy at all stages of demographic development. Socio-economic policies directed to reducing the demand for children fell into two categories: policies intended to affect the relationship between incomes and levels of living; and those intended to affect the utility and disutility of children. Incentive and disincentive schemes were examples of the former category, and encouraging the employment of women was an example of the latter.

One socio-economic policy that appeared to have considerable effect on fertility was that of promoting education, particularly among women and beyond a certain level (in general, about six or seven years). The reason was that education operated in the required direction on most of the determinants of fertility. It decreased the utility of children by creating interests that competed with family requirements; it increased the cost of children directly and through the extension of the period of support; and it raised the standards of living by opening up the couple's horizons to better standards of life elsewhere and by making education part of those standards.

The Meeting recognized that any population policy to reduce fertility had to utilize measures that were common to other economic and social policies and therefore ran the risk of making contradictory or competing demands. For example, promotion of the education of women beyond a certain level would

make specific demands on the educational system that might compete with demands made on the system by other development objectives. In that manner, each policy would attempt to influence the structure of development towards its goals, leaving it to the decision-making processes to determine, through trade-offs arrived at rationally and explicitly or otherwise, the dynamic structure that would prevail. It would therefore be essential for population policy-making to be substantially integrated into overall policy-making and for an appropriate institutional arrangement to be developed to ensure that integration.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

The World Population Plan of Action affirms that the major goal of human development is to ensure the achievement of a more equitable distribution of resources and the improvement of levels of living and the quality of life of all people, in accordance with the upholding of human rights, as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Plan also affirms the right of women to be completely integrated into the development process, the rights of the child and basic respect for the sovereign right of nations to choose population policies that reflect national objectives and conditions. The Plan also recognizes that population policies should be comprehensive, including all components of population.

Global experience in the formulation and implementation of population policies and programmes since the adoption of the Plan of Action in 1974 reveals strong linkages between population trends, socio-economic development and the environment. These findings were highlighted at the International Conference on Population, held in 1984, in the quinquennial Review and Appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action, and at the International Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century, held at Amsterdam in 1989. Population problems (rapid population growth, ageing, AIDS, reproductive rights of women, refugees and other migration issues, urbanization and spatial distribution), and their complex interactions with such factors as poverty, unemployment and underemployment and environmental degradation, and the effective implementation of national population policies will merit special attention in 1994 at the International Conference on Population and Development. In examining these problems, the needs and requirements of the least developed countries deserve to be given special attention.

Achieving the goals of human development, as adopted in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, requires concerted action in all major socio-economic fields, including population, at the international, regional, national and community levels. As stated in the World Population Plan of Action, policies designed to affect population trends are not substitutes for socio-economic development but should be integrated into those policies to promote development.

Population policies and programmes should respond to specific national conditions. More attention should be given to sustaining ongoing efforts and to integrating population concerns into health, education and employment,

and environment activities into socio-economic development. In most of the countries that have formulated population programmes, there is need to strengthen policy formulation and programming mechanisms, to improve service delivery systems and to adopt innovative management of multisectoral programmes.

The need for political commitment remains. Moreover, sufficient resources are required, particularly in the least developed countries, for the strengthening of country institutions that adopt, implement and monitor population and development policy and permit programmes to become more effective and ultimately sustained by domestic resources.

The Expert Group on Population Policies and Programmes, recognizing the ongoing socio-economic and political changes that will mark the next decade, having reviewed the experience gained in applying the World Population Plan of Action and being aware of the key issues in the area of population policies and programmes, adopted the following recommendations.

*Recommendation 1.* In accordance with the spirit of the World Population Plan of Action, Governments should assess and evaluate their national development policies and programmes in the light of their demographic impacts, in order to ensure a consistent policy framework that promotes balanced and sustainable development. Given the relevance of population in aspects of societal development, population considerations should be taken into account at all levels of decision-making and in resource allocation in all sectoral agencies and in those pertaining to education, health, labour, industry, agriculture and environment.

*Recommendation 2.* Governments should adopt a long-term perspective in socio-economic planning activities to ensure that due attention should be accorded to developmental sustainability and emerging demographic issues.

*Recommendation 3.* Governments are called upon to review their current institutional structures and arrangements for formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating population policies. Governments are urged to designate and support financially an independent expert body to consider regularly the range of population issues that may demand attention either immediately or in the near future. That body should convey its findings to the Government and to the public in periodic reports.

*Recommendation 4.* Governments should ensure that all institutions, public and private, governmental and non-governmental, that are responsible for the implementation of population policies are fully aware of the content of those policies and are committed to their effective implementation.

*Recommendation 5.* Governments are called upon to decentralize the delivery of services designed to serve population policy objectives. The participation of local communities, informal groups, and non-governmental and private organizations should be promoted and supported in that process, since the efficacy and responsiveness of programmes greatly depends upon personal and community-based interactions.

*Recommendation 6.* Although the quantitative aspects of programme delivery remain important, the quality of services, especially of family plan-

ning services, should be given due attention in order to ensure acceptance of, and participation in, the programmes.

*Recommendation 7.* Governments are urged to build on the partial gains achieved in women's established right to play an equal role in social, economic, cultural and political life. To that end, a high-priority developmental goal is to adopt policies sensitive to gender concerns in the areas of education, economic participation, reproductive choice and health. The key role of women in the policy-making and implementation process should be ensured.

*Recommendation 8.* In pursuing policies sensitive to gender, Governments should respond to the diverse family planning and health needs of women and men at all stages of their life cycle, emphasize the quality of family planning care, expand contraceptive choice and institute appropriate personnel development policies and actions.

*Recommendation 9.* The formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policies and programmes should incorporate community participation at every stage. Non-governmental and grass-roots organizations working in population-related areas should be actively encouraged and supported by Governments.

*Recommendation 10.* Governments and international organizations should evolve a close partnership with the non-governmental sector. This relationship should reconcile the autonomy of non-governmental organizations with accountability. Complementarity within the sector of non-governmental organizations needs to be furthered through development of its technical, managerial and financial capabilities.

*Recommendation 11.* Governments should support and encourage community-based development programmes, including those in the population sector. Those programmes should have a particular focus on the poorest groups, with a priority of promoting their well-being and participation, so as to ensure ownership of programmes within local communities.

*Recommendation 12.* Governments should, in particular, facilitate assistance by international organizations to local non-governmental organizations with respect to the exchange of information and experience and the provision of innovative, cost-effective and quality service delivery, including efforts to create demand.

*Recommendation 13.* In order to meet the existing need and rapidly growing demand for family planning services and to respond to the growing requests for assistance in the population field from Governments and non-governmental organizations, multilateral and bilateral donors should strive at least to double their 1990 contributions to population programmes by the year 2000, as was endorsed in the Amsterdam Declaration on a Better Life for Future Generations.

*Recommendation 14.* Developing countries should make all possible efforts to generate domestic resources to support service-delivery programmes and the provision of contraceptives, including, *inter alia*, the selective use of user fees and other forms of cost-recovery, cost-sharing, social marketing, and gaining access to local sources of philanthropy. In doing so,

they should take all necessary measures to ensure the availability of the highest possible quality of services to all groups and to take special care to protect the interests and meet the needs of those least able to pay.

*Recommendation 15.* Multilateral and bilateral donor agencies should strengthen their capacity to respond more effectively to requests for assistance and to assist in the implementation of population policies and programmes. That effort will require an increase in the number of professional staff devoted to population activities, a significant proportion of whom should be posted in the developing countries.

*Recommendation 16.* Donors should ensure effective coordination of their assistance, both at the headquarters and country levels. Recognizing that recipient countries have primary responsibility for donor coordination, UNFPA should play a leading role in assisting Governments to ensure that resources are allocated in the most cost-effective and efficient way.

*Recommendation 17.* Governments should set clear population objectives and should ensure that adequate resources in their development plans and annual budgets are devoted to family planning services, information, education and communications and other population activities and to the social and economic development programmes that support those population objectives.

*Recommendation 18.* Governments pursuing structural adjustment programmes should monitor and undertake studies on the impact of such measures on population policies and programmes, with reference to the quality of life in general, and the conditions of women, children and other affected groups.

*Recommendation 19.* Governments are encouraged to continue to strengthen the systematic flow of information on population trends in order to be able to monitor demographic change and to adopt policies and implementation strategies to meet their desired goals.

*Recommendation 20.* Research is fundamental for policy and programme formulation and implementation. Mobilization of resources for research in population must be considered an integral part of national and international strategies for coping with population problems. To promote reproductive health and safe motherhood, Governments and funding agencies are encouraged to support, in particular, research into the determinants and consequences of induced abortion, including its effects on subsequent reproductive health, fertility and contraceptive practice.

*Recommendation 21.* Governments are urged to take the necessary action to create sustained political commitment and a climate in which population and related development issues are considered to be central to public policy.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>See A/C.2/44/6, annex.

<sup>2</sup>Formerly called Bigger Impact Globally.



## **EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON POPULATION AND WOMEN**

The Expert Group Meeting on Population and Women was held at Gaborone, Botswana, from 22 to 26 June 1992. The Government of Botswana was the host and the Government of the Netherlands provided financial support. The participants, representing different geographical regions, scientific disciplines and institutions, included 14 experts invited by the Secretary-General of the Conference in their personal capacities; representatives of four of the five regional commissions (Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)); representatives of United Nations offices and specialized agencies, including the United Nations Office at Vienna, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Development Programme for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO); and representatives of the following non-governmental organizations: Center for Development and Population Activities, Institute for Resource Development, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature/World Conservation Union. Two additional non-governmental organizations were represented by experts who were also invited in their personal capacities: the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population and the Population Council. There were also 19 observers.

As a basis for discussion, the experts had prepared papers on the main agenda items. The Department of Economic and Social Development had prepared a background paper entitled "Population and women: a review of issues and trends". Discussion notes were provided by the Department of Economic and Social Development, ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, the United Nations Office at Vienna, UNICEF, the ILO, FAO, WHO, the Center for Development and Population Activities, the Institute for Resource Development, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature/World Conservation Union, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and a member of the Australia International Development Assistance Bureau.

## OPENING STATEMENTS

Opening statements were given by Dr. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the Conference, by the Honourable Festus Mogae, Vice-President and Minister of Finance and Planning of the Government of Botswana, and by Mr. Shunichi Inoue, Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference and Director of the Population Division.

After welcoming remarks by Dr. Josephine Namboze, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Botswana, *ad interim*, Dr. Sadik noted that Botswana provided an especially fitting venue for the meeting, citing the host country's history of attention to women's issues and concerns at the ministerial level. Botswana was also one of the few countries in which educational attainment of women equalled or exceeded that of men. Mr. Mogae affirmed his Government's conviction that gender was an essential and critical factor in development, that women made major contributions to the wealth of nations, and that empowering women by enhancing their productive activities, income and education and, more generally, their right to make decisions in all spheres of their lives would bring important benefits to society as a whole. Mr. Inoue also stressed the long-standing and increasing attention by the international community to women's roles and status as an important factor for understanding demographic change and as a vital feature of social and economic development.

Dr. Sadik's remarks introduced many of the themes that were discussed at the week-long meeting. She urged the participants, in considering population and development issues, to focus on practical actions that recognize women's rights and autonomy and that enhance women's participation in the development process. She stressed particularly that women's reproductive rights were central to the realization of women's potential in economic production and community life. The ability to exercise free and informed choice regarding the number and spacing of their children was the first step in enabling women to make choices in other areas. Dr. Sadik noted that in many societies, young women were trapped within a web of tradition that assigned a high value to their reproductive role, taking little note of any other role they could play, and that for too long, inequity between women and men had been tolerated and, indeed, excused because of so-called "customs" and "traditions". She noted further that there were practical steps that could be taken to promote equality between women and men. Among them were the removal of remaining legal barriers to women's full equality; policies to improve the education of girls; and programmes to provide reliable information about reproductive rights and reproductive health; high-quality family planning services; and whatever health-care services were needed to combat disease and promote healthy childbirth. In discussing reproductive health, she pointed out the high rates of adolescent pregnancy in both developed and developing countries, noting particularly the elevated risks to life and health of early childbirth and the fact that all too frequently early motherhood foreclosed a girl's prospects for education, employment and self-realization. Men's involvement was, of course, essential if women's overall situation was

to be improved and their effective role as agents of socio-economic development recognized. At the same time, it was also necessary to pursue initiatives that would put qualified women in positions of power and decision-making.

#### SUMMARY OF THE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION

In addition to a more general exchange of views and evidence on women's roles and status in the course of development and on the interrelations between development and population programmes and women's status, the Meeting devoted particular attention to the following areas: women's health, especially reproductive health, and women's roles and status in relation to the health of children and other family members; adolescent fertility, marriage and reproductive health; a gender perspective on family planning needs and programmes; education of girls and women, and the relationship of education to fertility and to child health and welfare; women's economic activity and its relationship to fertility and to child health and welfare; and women's role as environmental managers, and environmental issues in relation to women's health and reproductive and productive roles. The situations of both developed and developing countries were considered, although the main emphasis was on the latter.

In drawing up recommendations, the Group sought to identify practical steps that could be taken to promote equality between women and men, that would help empower women and that would also have desirable economic and demographic effects. The Group also reviewed the state of knowledge on the topics mentioned above and made recommendations regarding needs for research and data collection.

Gender issues have been the focus of increasing international attention in a variety of contexts, including human rights and equity and women's integration into processes of social and economic development. There is now an impressive array of international declarations and agreements concerning women's rights to equal status in many aspects of life. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and agreements on equal pay for work of equal value (1953), equal political rights (1954), maternity protection (1955), equality in employment (1960), equality in education (1962) and equal marriage rights (1964). Other international agreements dealing with women's roles and status and population include the World Population Plan of Action (1974) and the Recommendations for Further Implementation of the Plan (1984), the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (1985), the Safe Motherhood Initiative (1987), and the Amsterdam Declaration on a Better Life for Future Generations (1989). The Expert Group noted that international declarations and agreements provided sound guidelines, but that much remained to be done in terms of implementing them.

#### *General issues of gender equality, population and development*

Participants noted that recommendations adopted at intergovernmental meetings often spoke of rights and responsibilities of families or couples,

ignoring the practical reality of unequal authority and power in gender relations. One need identified at the Meeting was for more attention to be directed to men's roles in the family.

Paradoxically, although policy makers recognized that women's status remained inferior and their roles restricted in many ways, women acting on behalf of the family were seen as agents of change in all aspects of population policy whether it be the adoption of family planning, the provision of health care for children or the acquisition of independent economic livelihoods. Yet women could not bring about the demographic transition alone. Men would have to play their part and, before that could be accomplished, much more must be understood about men's reproductive and familial roles and about how the costs and benefits of children were distributed.

Population and development programmes made many assumptions—often implicit ones—about interrelations and changes within families which resulted in aggregate changes in fertility and mortality rates. Assumptions about the roles women and men played within the family and the intra-family distribution of resources were implicit in the linkage typically drawn between rising costs of children and declining demand for children:

(a) That improvements in women's individual livelihoods outside the family provided them with greater individual economic mobility and thus less reliance on children and other family members for future economic support;

(b) That fathers shared with mothers joint responsibility for their children's maintenance and upbringing;

(c) That parents supported each of their children to the same extent.

Those assumptions structured the collection and analysis of demographic data and the design of population policy, and some were not justified in certain settings. Researchers and policy makers thus needed to make a more careful and critical examination of particular social and cultural conditions if they were to design policies that would truly benefit women and those who depended upon them and would also have the expected demographic effects. That would also require gathering some types of information from men which were currently usually obtained only from women surveyed on fertility, family planning and child health.

On the basic question of whether development tended to improve women's status, the Group saw no simple answer, since women had many roles and the various aspects of women's status did not change in unison or in response to the same forces. The Group agreed, though, that improving women's status would advance development.

It was noted that in areas such as health and education, sooner or later, the economic gains did flow on to women. But in other areas such as legal rights, equal pay and treatment in the labour force and women's political decision-making power, where there was no necessary or clear relationship between the status of women and the level of development, equality for women depended not on the level of development or the economic resources available but on the political will of Governments and on the cultural setting in which women had to live. Equality was not attained in a zero sum game in

which gains for women could only result from losses to men. Instead, because equality for women promoted economic growth through more effective utilization of existing resources, by opting for equity (through equal legal rights and access to economic resources), poor countries could speed up the pace of development.

One recurrent theme of the discussions was the need for women to be represented in much greater numbers at all levels of planning, managing and executing population, health and development programmes—both for reasons of equity and as a precondition for success. Women's concerns could not be promoted effectively through a single ministry alone. The Group noted that those needs were currently widely recognized in a variety of international agreements and in statements of goals and policies issued by many international groups. However, there remained a great divide between stated goals for involving women in programmes and current reality.

Another theme was the need to devise programmes that would help women living in poverty. Access to remunerative employment and effective control over the resources they needed to make a living would help poor women solve other problems, including poor access to health care for themselves and their children. Poor women also generally had higher fertility, including higher levels of both desired and unwanted fertility, than the rest of the population.

Gender analysis—a process of explicitly and systematically examining gender balance among those in decision-making roles, those involved in executing programmes, and those who receive the benefits of programmes—was seen as a useful means of directing attention towards the extent to which development, health and other policies and programmes actually involved women and met their needs.

### *Health*

The Group agreed that the speed with which modern health services had been embraced by populations of developing countries was worth noting, since it represented a break with traditions that were resistant to change in other ways. Equally notable, though, was the extent to which access to and use of health services was allocated according to status determined along the traditional lines of sex, age and familial role. In some societies that meant that women and girl children were often denied the benefits of modern health care. Despite their inferior position, women were commonly seen as the custodians of family health; yet their poor education and limited authority undermined their ability to protect their own health and that of their families. Recommended policy responses to the situation included both actions aimed at improving women's access to health care and information and efforts to inform and involve other family members.

The Group noted that reproductive and sexual health implied much more than preventing maternal death. Health was defined in the Constitution of the World Health Organization (WHO) as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. That

implied that people had the ability to reproduce, that women could go through pregnancy and childbirth safely, and that reproduction was carried to a successful outcome—i.e., infants survived and grew up healthy. It implied further that people were able to regulate their fertility without risks to their health and that they were safe in having sex. It was agreed that achieving positive reproductive health required policies and programmes that included but also looked beyond prevention of maternal death. However, given the paucity of statistical information about many aspects of reproductive health, attention had tended to focus on maternal mortality as an index of reproductive health conditions more generally.

WHO estimated that approximately 500,000 women died each year of causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, of which 99 per cent took place in developing countries. Most of those deaths were preventable. A major fraction of them—estimates ranged from about 100,000 to over 200,000 deaths annually—were the consequence of unsafe abortions. Africa remained the region where the risk of maternal death was highest, averaging an estimated 630 per 100,000 births; one in 20 African women could expect to die for pregnancy-related reasons, at prevailing levels of maternal mortality and fertility. Major contributors to maternal and infant mortality were poor nutritional status among pregnant women (WHO estimated that 50 per cent of pregnant women worldwide suffered from nutritional anaemia) and the continuing lack of prenatal care and adequately trained birth attendants in many areas. Births at the extremes of the reproductive ages and closely spaced births also involved increased risks to mother and child. Since many of such high-risk births occurred to women who did not want any more children or who would have preferred a delay, improved access to effective family planning methods could also reduce risks of maternal mortality. Better access to effective contraceptives could also greatly reduce unsafe abortion, although it would not eliminate it.

Another aspect of sexual and reproductive health that received attention at the Meeting was the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. The spread of such diseases was regarded as one of the major disappointments in public health in the past two decades. Sexually transmitted diseases had important, and often hidden, health consequences for women. They were a major cause of infertility, for instance, and they increased the risk of life-threatening ectopic pregnancy. Some affected the developing foetus or were transmitted around the time of birth, often with devastating consequences for newborns. Those that produced genital ulcerations also heightened the risk of transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which caused acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). The risk of transmission of sexually transmitted diseases was generally much greater from man to woman than the reverse, and the health consequences of many of the diseases were also much more serious for women.

Although until the Meeting AIDS had been more common globally among men than women, from the beginning of the AIDS epidemic the disease had affected African men and women in roughly equal numbers, and WHO estimated that by the year 2000 the number of AIDS cases would be

equal in men and women worldwide. Infected women transmitted the infection to 30-40 per cent of their children.

Even though there had been a great deal of medical research into the diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and the assessment of their prevalence in selected populations, the state of knowledge remained very poor regarding the underlying behavioural risk patterns in different population groups; knowledge and beliefs among the general population regarding sexually transmitted diseases and their treatment; how often sexual partners of those infected were, in practice, informed of their risk; and other social barriers to combating the spread of such diseases. The AIDS epidemic had given new urgency to those questions, and results of social science research undertaken in response to the AIDS crisis were beginning to appear. The Group had before it a paper summarizing results of a number of research projects carried out in sub-Saharan Africa under the auspices of the WHO Global Programme on AIDS.

Women were usually more at risk of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS, because of the behaviour of their male partners than through their own sexual activity. Societies with a strong double standard regarding sexual behaviour—such that men had numerous sexual partners before and after marriage, while women's behaviour was strictly controlled and limited to marriage—were likely to place women at a particularly high risk, greater even than in societies where it was common for both men and women to be sexually active outside of marriage but where the number of different partners tended to be small.

A key factor to consider in programmes to combat the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases was whether women had the power to refuse sex or to insist that their partner use a condom. Cultural values regarding sexual abstinence, which predated modern concerns about disease transmission, differed among societies and by gender. Women's ability to negotiate aspects of sexual relations was likely to be tied to other aspects of their status, including their financial independence. Research into that aspect of women's autonomy was only beginning. Scattered research results pointed to marked differences between societies in women's degree of control over sexual relations but in some cases had failed to confirm common preconceptions of women's powerlessness in that regard.

The Expert Group agreed that combating reproductive health problems required more vigorous action than had so far been forthcoming from Governments and non-governmental organizations. Research was still needed to establish basic facts about sexual behaviour and risks and to improve the medical and pharmaceutical means available to combat risks. There was a pressing need for public education about reproductive and sexual health, including sexually transmitted diseases and their prevention. In order to reach more of those at risk, educational channels beyond the formal health system, including schools and mass media, should be employed.

Family planning services were viewed as vital for improving reproductive and sexual health, and the Group recommended that Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should assure women

and men as individuals confidential access to safe methods of fertility regulation within the framework of a health-care system that could provide adequate support services and information to users of contraception. The Group also recommended that women who wished to terminate their pregnancies should have ready access to reliable information, sympathetic counselling and safe abortion services. Governments and non-governmental organizations were urged actively to promote safer sex, including the use of condoms, and to provide preventive, diagnostic and curative treatment to inhibit the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. A potential was seen for family planning and other health programmes to become more actively involved in relevant screening, counselling, referral and treatment. That would both increase physical access to services for those with sexually transmitted diseases and help break down social barriers to seeking treatment. Even for those with access to services, the risk of social stigmatization might discourage persons needing treatment from seeking it, and women were especially likely to be deterred. It was noted that providers of family planning and other specialized health services had sometimes resisted offering such services (and other types of service), out of concern about jeopardizing their core programmes. The representative of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the leading international non-governmental organization of family planning providers, strongly endorsed the need for family planning programmes to promote reproductive and sexual health more broadly, as did representatives of the United Nations Office at Vienna, UNFPA, and WHO, among many others.

Reproductive health also implied the ability to bear children that were wanted. Although the number of women and men desiring large families had declined in all regions, children remained universally valued and desired. Even in societies where women's social standing was not heavily dependent on reproduction, the large majority of women wished to become mothers. It was stated in one paper that in societies where women's status remained closely tied to motherhood, childlessness often represented a personal disaster, and the repudiated wife with no children, or none surviving, might be able to support herself only by prostitution.

Domestic violence, incest and rape were extreme consequences of women's powerlessness. Children were also frequently victims of abuse. Too often the most basic information regarding the extent, frequency and severity of those problems was lacking. That contributed to a failure to confront those issues through public debate, programmes to help and protect victims of abuse, enforcement of social and legal sanctions, and efforts to provide women with the resources that would render them less vulnerable.

The Group strongly condemned the traditional practice of female genital mutilation, or female circumcision. The practice entailed serious health risks not only at the time of the surgery, which was often done under unsterile conditions, but also later in life, when consequences could include painful and difficult intercourse, repeated surgery before and after each childbirth, and obstructed labour which could lead to stillbirth and maternal death.



Women often encountered health-threatening conditions in the workplace, ranging from difficulties in continuing to breast-feed infants to sexual harassment to exposure to toxic substances, from which pregnant women and developing foetuses often faced an elevated risk. There were many practical actions that employers and Governments could take to improve conditions for women in the workplace. The paper contributed by the ILO representative summarized relevant international agreements and recommendations.

### *Adolescents*

Young women and men received particular attention in the Group's discussions, because actions taken in adolescence were crucial for later life. For young women, especially, early marriage or early motherhood could foreclose educational and employment opportunities. Very young mothers typically faced risks of maternal death much above the average, and their children also fared less well.

Child-bearing was only one aspect of teenage reproductive health. Adolescents were, in many countries, increasingly at high risk of contracting and transmitting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and they were often poorly informed about how to protect themselves. Young women were especially vulnerable because of their subordinate social position due jointly to their youth and their gender. The Group strongly urged Governments to promote education and provision of employment opportunities, particularly for girls, and advised Governments and non-governmental organizations to promote adolescent reproductive health, including provision of family-life education with a realistic sex education component, family planning and reproductive health services, and enforcement of laws regarding minimum age at marriage.

In considering adolescent motherhood and marriage, it was important to consider what choices were actually open to adolescents of all social and economic classes. Poor teenage girls might correctly conclude that attempting an alternative role would entail facing and overcoming enormous obstacles. They would therefore drop out of school, not because they were already pregnant or were being pressured into marriage, but because education was not seen as particularly useful. Even where educational or employment opportunities existed, adolescents might be poorly informed about them, and they frequently faced conflicting pressures. Governments and non-governmental organizations were urged to adopt policies and programmes that would provide young women of all social classes with real alternatives to early marriage and child-bearing.

Substantial declines in teenage marriage and fertility from traditionally high levels had occurred recently in some regions—notably, Northern Africa, South-eastern and Western Asia—and levels were also quite low in Western and Northern Europe and East Asia. However, in South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, the level of teenage union formation and child-bearing was still quite high. Even moderate levels of teenage fertility implied that substantial fractions of women became mothers before the age of 20. For instance, in countries where the annual fertility rate

for women aged 15-19 years was about 80 per 1,000, roughly one third of women were mothers by age 20; teenage fertility rates that greatly exceeded that level were found in most countries of sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia, and most Latin American and Caribbean countries had rates of 80-140 per 1,000. Especially in areas of the world where a large proportion of teenaged mothers were unmarried, such child-bearing was seen to be undesirable for both the individuals concerned and the society as a whole.

### *Family planning*

The Group endorsed reproductive choice as a basic right and, as such, a component of the status of women. Family planning services were also recognized as a means of improving reproductive health which deserved support. Gaining control over their fertility had the potential to open up to women a range of new choices.

There had been notable progress in extending at least minimal family planning services in developing countries. Since 1974 there had been a "revolution" in birth control law and in administrative procedures which had in the main served to improve access to family planning services. Legal or administrative requirements still limited access to a wide range of family planning methods in some countries, and in some places women were required to obtain permission from husbands or parents before they could obtain services. However, shortages of well-trained staff, logistical problems and limited funds, rather than legal or administrative obstacles, were often the current reasons for poor access to family planning services. Recent surveys in the primarily African and Latin American countries covered so far through the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) programme indicated that fertility would fall by about one quarter in sub-Saharan Africa and by one third in Latin America if the current unmet need for family planning were fully met. Part of the reason that the unmet need remained high was that the number of children women desired had been declining in all regions. The number of persons in the reproductive ages was, however, growing rapidly. Thus, the need for more and better services had grown and had, in some countries, outpaced the growth in services provided.

Some participants strongly criticized existing family planning programmes for their tendency, in practice, to ignore the justifiable concerns of women—and men—about side-effects and other problems with contraceptive methods, for their failure to provide complete and accurate information to clients, for their tendency to dictate which method women should use instead of offering a real choice and, in general, for their concern with achieving quantitative programme targets for numbers of "acceptors" rather than with meeting the needs of individual women and men. There was agreement that family planning programmes needed to improve quality of care and to adopt the "user's perspective" in evaluating programme services. In order to do that effectively, it was seen as necessary that programmes involved women—who usually made up the large majority of clients—much more heavily in all levels of programme policy-making, management and service delivery, but especially at the highest levels. Recognizing that women and men needed methods

that were both safe and effective, and that all existing methods had drawbacks that made them unsuitable for some people, the Group also emphasized the need for development of improved methods, including a re-examination of traditional methods, and the need for programmes to pay more attention to attracting men as clients.

*Education and its relationship to fertility  
and child health and welfare*

The Group took note of the facts that literacy and enrolment rates were increasing globally and the difference between male and female school enrolment rates had narrowed somewhat. In 1990, UNESCO data indicated that just over half of the world's youth aged 6-23 years were enrolled in school—56 per cent for males, but only 48 per cent for females. In the major developing regions, 1990 enrolment ratios for females aged 6-23 years ranged from 32 per cent in Africa (excluding Arab States), to 42-46 per cent in Asia and the Arab States, to 63 per cent in Latin America; in the developed regions the ratio was 72. The enrolment ratios for both sexes had risen considerably since 1960, with most of the improvement taking place during the first half of the 30-year period.

There was a disturbing sign, however, in the recent declines in enrolment rates for both sexes in several African countries. The Group voiced concern that programmes for structural adjustment of poorly performing economies could produce underinvestment or disinvestment in education and training as well as health. The Group urged international organizations and donors as well as Governments to recognize them as productive sectors of the economy, vital for the formation of a new generation of workers.

The overall educational gains between 1960 and 1990 were larger for females than for males, and the gender disparity had declined by over one third. In the developed countries the gender disparity in primary and secondary school enrolment rates, which was sizeable in 1960, had essentially disappeared by 1990. The female disadvantage hardly existed in Latin America, but it remained large in Africa and Asia. In relative terms, the gender disparity in enrolment rates had been and remained largest at the upper educational levels.

Despite recent gains, in Latin America over 20 per cent of women aged 25 or over remained illiterate, over 40 per cent in Eastern and South-eastern Asia, and as many as 70 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern and Western Asia. Thus, there had been notable progress in combating illiteracy, but poorly educated women would comprise the majority in much of the developing world for many years to come.

Recent research had confirmed the strong and far-reaching demographic effects of education on both fertility and child survival and had given some insight into the behavioural changes that were responsible for those demographic effects. Much less progress had been made in answering questions such as: Does the type of education, or its amount, have consequences for fertility and child health? How does the prevailing cultural setting limit or

channel the demographic effects of women's education? There, several participants noted that although education might indeed give women more autonomy in some areas of household life, educated women might remain very restricted in other ways, depending on the cultural setting. Education might, for instance, make women better able to obtain health care for their children but leave them with no say over major household expenditures or the spending of their own income. There was some evidence that in cultures where sons had traditionally been strongly preferred, educated women generally retained those preferences undiminished, which had implications for fertility and child health.

Although education had an important effect on child survival and fertility, it was also true that if fertility and child mortality were to continue to decline rapidly at the national level, the declines must be spread broadly through the population and not be confined to the highly educated. Indeed, the recent declines in both fertility and child mortality had usually occurred across the educational spectrum, although so far without in general diminishing the often very wide differences between the more and the less educated in mortality risks or in the level of fertility. While some populations showed a degree of convergence, in others the demographic differences between education groups had only become wider over time. Even in developed countries education differences in fertility and child survival persisted.

Developing-country women with secondary or higher education almost invariably had much lower fertility than less educated women, but in countries where the general level of development was low or where the general level of fertility had so far shown little decline, the impact of primary education on fertility was not uniformly the inverse. In almost all settings, and particularly where fertility differences between educational groups were large, the level of unmet need for family planning and the level of unwanted fertility were highest among the least educated. Recent research had helped clarify the effects of education on several important proximate fertility determinants, which also helped explain why the relationship between education and fertility is not always strictly negative: while education led to later marriage and to increased use of contraceptive use, both of which reduced fertility, it also led to lesser observance of traditional means of birth-spacing (extended breast-feeding and, in some populations, an extended period of post-natal sexual abstinence), which tended to raise fertility.

Research on education and fertility or child survival had usually concentrated only on the amount of formal education. The possible effects of non-formal education on demographic factors had rarely been considered in empirical studies, and the Group noted that there was need to assess the demographic and other impacts of such education.

Other areas needing more research attention included the connection between the child's education and parental efforts to limit family size, and the reverse relationship—namely, the impact of the number of siblings on children's education. Explanations of reasons that more affluent and better-educated parents usually desired and had smaller families tended to focus on the trade-off between greater numbers of children and, in economists' terms,

higher "child quality", which involved greater investment in the upbringing of each child. Direct and indirect costs of child schooling were a major aspect of such investment. Better educated parents tended to want educated children, and that might be an important factor leading to lower fertility among the better educated. At the same time, public policies that made it easier for even uneducated parents to send their children to school might have a wide-reaching effect on the parents' evaluation of the relative merits and feasibility of having more children or a smaller number of educated children. Such educational policies could in theory have a quicker effect on fertility than the parents' own education, since the latter could operate only after the educated children matured and made choices about their own child-bearing.

New research also confirmed the strong effects of mother's education on child survival, and there had been some progress in understanding how education produced that beneficial effect. Education had some effect on the prevalence—but more especially, on the treatment—of childhood diseases. The children of educated mothers were more likely to be immunized against disease, and they were much more apt to receive modern medical care when ill. Educated women were themselves more likely to have a medically trained birth attendant and to have received prenatal care and immunizations, which benefited both mother and child. Educated women were also less likely to be extremely young or old when they gave birth or to have a large number of births, all factors that had been associated with both maternal and child death. Children of more educated women were also better nourished, on average. Although better educated women also tended to be married to husbands of higher status and to live in households that were better off in material terms, the mother's education tended to be more important than those other social factors in improving child health and survival.

The effects of women's education on their own health benefited children as well, although those effects had not been as well measured as had the relationship between maternal education and child survival. As a consequence of their greater likelihood of using health services, of avoiding high risk pregnancies and of experiencing fewer pregnancies, they were considerably less likely to die in childbirth and thereby orphan their children.

Even a few years of maternal education usually had a significant effect on child survival. Results for 25 developing countries surveyed as part of the Demographic and Health Surveys programme showed that the odds of a child dying before age 2 if the mother had 1-3, 4-6 or at least seven years of schooling were, respectively, 15, 35 and 58 per cent lower than those of a child whose mother had no education. Even after statistical controls for a variety of other social factors, including the father's education and occupation, children whose mothers had seven or more years of schooling had only about half the risk of dying faced by the children of the uneducated. However, the latest research also showed that the relationship between education and child survival was weaker in most sub-Saharan African countries than in other regions. The reasons for that remained to be determined.

Especially in developing countries, much less was known about the effect of maternal education on broader aspects of child development and

welfare, including mental and emotional development, than about education's effect on child survival. Positive concern for child health—beyond mere survival—was seen as one area to which researchers should devote increased attention. Doing so would require small-scale and intensive types of investigation to supplement the large sample surveys which had been the basis for most of the research linking education and other social variables to child survival. However, there was still much that could be learned through large surveys, as had been shown in recent years by the expansion of survey content, particularly in the Demographic and Health Surveys programme, into health and related areas.

### *Women's economic activity and demographic factors*

Although women's economic contribution was greatly understated in currently available statistics, the Group noted that even the available data indicated that in all parts of the world women made up substantial proportions of the population employed in the formal economy. Statistics compiled by the ILO showed that, in 1985, 37 per cent of the labour force worldwide was female: 42 per cent in developed, and 35 per cent in the developing regions. In Africa, 35 per cent of the recorded labour force was composed of women; in Asia (exclusive of China), 28 per cent; in China, 43 per cent; and in Latin America, 27 per cent.

Increased opportunities in the paid labour force were generally agreed to encourage lower fertility, although the reverse was also true: lower fertility made it possible for women to participate in the labour force. However, the types of work most commonly done by women in many developing countries were not uniformly associated with lower fertility. On the contrary, poor women with large families might be driven to seek work in order to provide basic subsistence.

Incompatibility between modern-sector work and child care was commonly regarded as a fundamental reason for expecting working women to have fewer children. The types of work open to poor, uneducated women—such as agricultural labour, small-scale trading and domestic labour—could often be combined with child care to some degree, and it was primarily among those engaged in paid work in the modern sector that lower fertility was observed.

There were a number of complicating factors that made it problematic to assign the work/fertility relationship to any single factor such as time conflicts between work and child care. For instance, in developing countries, alternative, affordable child care was readily available to well-educated, higher status women, who were typically the ones with access to well-paying jobs in the modern sector. In such settings, incompatibility between work and child care did not occur, or at least was greatly lessened. Yet, it was precisely employment in the modern sector that had most consistently been associated with lower fertility, in developing as well as developed countries. Other factors that might be involved included less tangible aspects of work, particularly when employment provided a separate source of social esteem and personal fulfilment that offered women an alternative to social status based

mainly on their roles as wife and mother. It was also difficult in practice to separate effects of employment from other personal, social and cultural characteristics that might jointly influence fertility and the propensity for women to join the labour force. Characteristics such as education, which strongly affected a woman's access to good jobs, might be more important than employment itself in producing a relationship between employment and fertility.

Plainly not all jobs provided an attractive alternative to a home-centred life. Access to jobs offering good pay and enhanced status often depended on an individual woman's education and other qualifications.

However, access to good jobs also depended on the broader social and economic setting. Discriminatory practices that led to large gaps in the wages that women and men could earn served as an incentive for women—at least those who were in stable marriages—to “specialize” in domestic work and for the husband to specialize in earning income, with little of his time and energy devoted to the domestic sphere. In some societies, prevailing cultural views regarding acceptable roles for women severely constrained the job choices of even the well-educated. In such societies small numbers of high-status women and some women who would otherwise be destitute might work outside the home—the latter in menial jobs which conferred low status in exchange for a meagre livelihood.

Although some observers had pointed to women's increased participation in the labour force as a key factor in producing the extremely low levels of fertility (total fertility rates in some cases below 1.5 children per woman) that were seen in some industrialized countries, the evidence was not straightforward, and it remained indeterminate how important growing participation in the labour force was, as compared to other forces in producing low fertility. Although over the longer run rising rates of women's participation in the labour force in developed countries had been accompanied by fertility declines, a more detailed examination showed that trends in such participation did not correspond well with the timing of fertility increases and decreases. In addition, the countries where women were most likely to be formally employed were not necessarily those with the lowest fertility.

It was beyond dispute that, in both developed and developing countries, many parents experienced stress over the competing demands of jobs and children. That was particularly true for women who continued to do most child care and housework, whether or not they also had other work. It was the total burden of those conflicting demands on women's time, as well as the contributions of men—not simply the level of participation in the labour force, or economic conditions in general—that must be the focus of attention in order to comprehend the reasons for exceptionally low fertility. One expert observed that some Scandinavian countries, which had taken the lead in public policies to harmonize work and family responsibilities and where men were more likely to assume some of the burden of child care and housework, currently had substantially higher fertility than countries such as Japan, Spain and Italy, where economic opportunities had been opening to women but where there was not much change in the traditional division of labour within

households or much commitment through policies and programmes to easing the conflicts between formal employment, child care and housework.

It was also noted that employment opportunities might in some cases have less effect on child-bearing within marriage than on women's decisions about when, or even whether, to marry. Japan was an example of a society where increased employment of women during recent decades appeared to have had a greater effect on timing of marriage than on fertility within marriage. Whereas a woman's job might induce a male to feel that he could "afford" to marry, it could also encourage a woman to feel that she could "afford" *not* to marry.

There was little firm evidence regarding the possible relationships between women's economic activity and child welfare, particularly in developing countries. On the one hand, paid work benefited children by improving the family's economic standing. There was also evidence from several settings that more of women's income than men's income was spent on child-oriented expenses such as food, clothing and education, and less on entertainment, tobacco and alcoholic beverages. However, there was not enough evidence to tell how generally the latter findings held. In some settings women had no control over the spending of their earnings.

A mother's involvement in market work might affect children negatively through a reduction in the time she spent caring for children and their exposure to alternative care which, for poor women in many developing countries, was likely to consist of no care or care from siblings. Yet, there was very little evidence on the point. In fact, the literature suggested several mechanisms that attenuated the superficially obvious relationship. In many developing countries women engaged in work such as small-scale trading and agriculture which allowed them to take children along to the workplace. Women might also reduce their leisure time to meet the demands of children and work. Additionally, the image of a homemaker as able to provide a warm, nurturing environment, which her employed counterpart could not, underestimated the demands of domestic work on women in rural areas of many developing countries. Time lost to arduous, time-consuming tasks of household maintenance such as gathering fuel and carrying water was not counted as time spent in employment and indeed was nowhere reflected in commonly available statistics. Such tasks might require poor women to leave young children untended for long periods or tended by a slightly older child. There was evidence that children's health suffered under such arrangements, and there was the additional problem in the latter case that children (frequently girls) were kept away from school in order to care for younger siblings.

Actual child-care arrangements, the effects on children of different types of child care, and the relationships of women's market and domestic work to child care and child welfare were seen as areas needing more research, particularly in developing countries. In considering those issues, researchers and policy makers needed to pay attention to the total burden on women's time and not restrict attention to employment as reflected in current statistical systems.

The possibility that work away from home might impede women's



ability to breast-feed young children had prompted studies in a number of developing countries. These studies generally found that working women were no less likely to initiate breast-feeding than those who were not employed, but some studies found that employed women introduced supplementary foods earlier. Where supplements were prepared under unsanitary conditions, early supplementation could pose a risk to child health. Nevertheless, it was not clear from available evidence whether the health of working women's children was affected by work-induced changes in breast-feeding patterns. For one thing, as a growing number of studies examined infant-feeding patterns in more detail, it became clear that in many societies, supplements such as water or fruit juice were traditionally given to infants starting at a very young age, during the period that less-detailed investigations were likely to classify simply as "full" breast-feeding. Thus, the risks posed by breast-milk supplements might be quite widespread, with the mother's employment status being at most a minor factor. However, at a more general level the benefits of breast-feeding for child health and nutrition were very well documented, and efforts should continue to encourage workplace conditions that would make it possible for women to continue breast-feeding.

The Group noted that home-based and part-time employment was in some circumstances the only available way for women to earn an income and as such was a practical necessity for many poor women. However, the Group also noted that work under those conditions often involved low earnings and little or no increase in autonomy, that the equipment and substances involved in home production were sometimes hazardous, and that such labour conditions often resulted in exploitation by employers.

Recognizing that increased economic productivity for women was vital for their own interests and for national development, the recommendations adopted at the meeting referred to a variety of actions that Governments and employers could and should take in order to increase the access of women to productive and remunerative employment and to protect the rights of women and men at the workplace. Policies and programmes should include measures aimed at enabling parents to harmonize the demands of work and caring for children, elderly parents and other dependants, and at encouraging fathers in particular to assume more responsibility for child care and household maintenance. Such policies should not be aimed at women employees only but should rather be framed and applied in a gender-neutral manner.

Related to those concerns was the need for better data collection about women's economic activities. Undercounting of women's employment was common, particularly for women in rural areas and those who helped run family enterprises. More generally, there was a need for development that paid greater heed to the value of a poor woman's time. Labour-saving devices were quickly developed for men and for the better-off population as a whole. The poor working woman, on the other hand, did an unenviable double shift of work, for all practical purposes, so that it was often the home maintenance tasks rather than the demands of her job that took the most time and attention away from the child.

## *Women, population and the environment*

It was agreed by the Group that environmental issues were linked to population factors in a variety of ways. While environmental issues concerned men and women alike, some environmental problems had a disproportionate impact on women. For example, certain substances employed in manufacturing or in agriculture posed heightened risks to pregnant women and to foetal development. Women's exposure to environmental toxins might also differ from men's because the type and location of daily activities differed by sex. Frequently, women had been the first to notice environmental hazards and the first to protest publicly about them.

The Group focused particular attention on environmental problems in rural areas of developing countries and the need to involve women fully in programmes to solve those problems and to achieve sustainable development. While population growth was by no means the only cause of environmental degradation in such areas, it was inevitably a contributing factor. As population had increased, areas suitable for agriculture had become crowded, marginal lands had often been brought into production, and water resources had been depleted. Soil erosion and deforestation had resulted, and traditional ways of living in harmony with the environment had been disrupted.

Those problems could not be solved without providing means for people in those areas to escape from poverty. Nor could they be solved without a correct understanding of women's roles as *de facto* environmental managers, and without ensuring that women were involved at all levels of planning and execution of programmes in those areas. Particularly in poor rural areas women's work as mothers and guardians of family health were not clearly separated in time and place from their other work, and, as noted above, statistical indicators often failed to reflect their economic contribution at all. Women's statistical invisibility in labour force data for poor rural areas, coupled with a failure to study and understand local, culturally specific gender divisions of labour, social life and rights to assets, had often led to programmes of rural development which failed to help women and sometimes undermined their traditional livelihoods. It was pointed out that women must be regarded more seriously as producers and be given appropriate training and skills so that they could become more productive and thus contribute more effectively to the alleviation of family poverty—that of rural families, in particular. The object was not to remove them from the family or create independent women's power. Rather, it was to enhance their productivity, in ways that added to their capacity and value within the community, giving them more "bargaining" power for fairer treatment by officials and family members.

### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations have increasingly accorded high priority to women's roles and status. It has been widely accepted that women's advancement, health, education and family planning are mutually reinforcing and should be pursued simulta-

neously and in a holistic manner. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without the full participation of both women and men in all aspects of productive and reproductive life, including care and nurturing of children and maintenance of the household. It is critical to recognize that gender roles are diverse and changing. National economic and demographic goals cannot be attained unless the needs of women as citizens, workers, wives and mothers are met.

The equality between men and women is proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The interrelationships between women and population are affirmed in the World Population Plan of Action (1974) and in the Recommendations for its Further Implementation (1984), the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (1985), the Safe Motherhood Initiative (1987) and the Amsterdam Declaration on a Better Life for Future Generations (1989).

While acknowledging that some progress has been made, the Expert Group Meeting on Population and Women recognizes that there are numerous issues concerning women and population that still need to be addressed both at the international and national levels. The Meeting notes that, at the international level, there are several adequate instruments and guidelines, but they need to be fully implemented at the national level.

Reaffirming the provisions of internationally adopted instruments that relate to the linkage between women and population and recognizing the importance of devising practical measures that will help to empower women, the Expert Group Meeting on Population and Women adopts the following recommendations:

*Recommendation 1.* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are urged in the implementation of stabilization, structural adjustment and economic recovery programmes to recognize health and education as productive sectors which are particularly critical for women. These sectors play a fundamental role in human capital development and in the formation of future generations of workers.

*Recommendation 2.* Gender-based analysis should become an essential instrument in the design, implementation and evaluation of all development activities, including economic planning and population and development policy formulation. Sensitization to gender issues should be a priority in all activities, including population. Programme managers are urged to develop and utilize training materials and implement courses of training in gender issues. Governments, donors and the private sector, including non-governmental organizations and for-profit corporations, should assist with and support development of such training materials and courses.

*Recommendation 3.* Governments should ensure that development policies and strategies are assessed for their impact on women's social, economic and health status throughout the life-span.

*Recommendation 4.* Donors, Governments and non-governmental organizations are urged to seek culturally appropriate modalities for the delivery of services and the integration of women into population and development initiatives. They are urged to provide widespread access to information and

services responsive to women's concerns and needs and to stress women's participation.

*Recommendation 5.* Efforts are needed to balance the representation of women and men in all areas of population and development, particularly at the management and policy-making levels, in both the governmental and the private sectors.

*Recommendation 6.* Governments and non-governmental organizations should promote responsible parenthood. Children are entitled to the material and emotional support of both fathers and mothers, who should provide for all their children of both sexes on an equitable basis. Governments should adopt specific measures to facilitate the realization of these rights.

*Recommendation 7.* Governments should strengthen efforts to promote and encourage, by means of information, education, communication and employment legislation and institutional support, where appropriate, the active involvement of men in all areas of family responsibility, including family planning, child-rearing and housework, so that family responsibilities can be fully shared by both partners.

*Recommendation 8.* Women who wish to terminate their pregnancies should have ready access to reliable information, sympathetic counselling and safe abortion services.

*Recommendation 9.* Governments should adopt measures to promote and protect adolescent reproductive health, including the teaching of family-life education with a realistic sex education component, appropriate counselling and services to girls and boys. Governments are urged to work with adolescents themselves and to draw upon non-governmental organizations that have experience in this area.

*Recommendation 10.* So as to ensure the rights of young women to health and of young women and men to education and employment opportunities, Governments are urged to enforce laws pertaining to minimum age at marriage and raise awareness of the importance of this issue through appropriate communication strategies.

*Recommendation 11.* Family planning programmes, in their efforts to reach both women and men, should be consonant with the cultural setting and sensitive to local constraints on women and should provide all aspects of quality care and services, including counselling, reliable information on contraceptive methods, informed consent and access to a wide range of contraceptives. Family planning programmes should also address infertility concerns and provide information on sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

*Recommendation 12.* Sexually transmitted diseases have important, and often hidden, health consequences for women, increasing the incidence of reproductive tract infections with consequent risks of life-threatening ectopic pregnancy. Reproductive tract infections, and genital ulcer diseases also heighten the risk of transmission of HIV/AIDS, with potentially fatal consequences for mothers and their children. Therefore, Governments and non-governmental organizations must promote safer sex, including the use of

condoms, and must provide preventive, diagnostic and curative treatment to inhibit the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases.

*Recommendation 13.* Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector are urged to give priority to the adoption of measures to promote the health of women and girls. These measures should encompass the nutrition and health needs of young girls and women, women's reproductive health and the implementation of the Safe Motherhood Initiative. Priority should also be given to monitoring the impact of these measures.

*Recommendation 14.* Various forms of female genital mutilation are widespread in many parts of the world and cause great and continued suffering, impaired fecundity and death. Governments should vigorously act to stop this practice and to protect the rights of women and girls to be free from such unnecessary and dangerous procedures.

*Recommendation 15.* Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should assure women and men as individuals of confidential access to safe methods of fertility regulation within the framework of an adequate health-care system.

*Recommendation 16.* Governments and non-governmental organizations are urged to make special efforts to improve and equalize the school enrolment and attendance of girls and boys at all levels of education. Recognizing the difficulty of some families in permitting their daughters or sons to attend school, innovative strategies need to be devised which respond to existing socio-economic and familial constraints. There is also need for increased sensitivity to young women's reasons for dropping out of formal education, whether as a result of early marriage, pregnancy or economic need. Policies and programmes must be adopted which will enable them to continue their education.

*Recommendation 17.* Governments and non-governmental organizations should make efforts to ensure that women of all ages who have little or no formal schooling are provided with special non-formal education which would assist them to gain access to remunerative employment, knowledge of their legal rights, information on family and child health, nutrition and fertility regulation and information on services for which they are eligible. This should complement—rather than substitute for—formal schooling.

*Recommendation 18.* Governments and non-governmental organizations should develop culturally sensitive health education to increase the awareness of health rights of all members of the family. Efforts should also be made to achieve equal rights of access to appropriate preventive and curative health care, regardless of age, gender or family position. Issues such as rape, incest, child abuse, domestic violence and exploitation based on age and gender require special attention. Programmes that promote acceptance among men and women of equal rights in sexual relationships are required.

*Recommendation 19.* Taking cognizance of the interaction between extreme poverty and demographic trends, Governments are urged to strengthen women's access to productive and remunerative employment.

*Recommendation 20.* Governments, non-governmental organizations

and the private sector are urged to develop and enforce explicit policies and practices to ensure the protection and freedom of women from gender discrimination, including economic discrimination and harassment, especially in the workplace.

*Recommendation 21.* Governments and private-sector employers are urged to take measures to enable parents to harmonize their economic and parental responsibilities, including parental leave, child care, provisions to enable working women to breast-feed children, and to ensure that women and men can exercise their right to employment without being subject to discrimination because of family responsibilities.

*Recommendation 22.* Governments should seek to remove all remaining legal, administrative and social barriers to women's rights and economic independence, such as limitations on the right to acquire, hold and sell property, to obtain credit and to negotiate contracts in their own name and on their own behalf.

*Recommendation 23.* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are urged to promote awareness of the crucial role women play in environmental and natural resource management and to provide information and training to women on how they can promote sustainable development. Community-based population and environment programmes should be implemented. They should involve women's participation at all levels and seek to reduce or alleviate women's workloads.

*Recommendation 24.* Governments are called upon to take measures to prevent the use of and exposure to hazardous substances by women. Governments and employers are urged to ensure that women doing work that is hazardous to foetal development are offered alternative employment upon request, without penalty.

*Recommendation 25.* In many countries, women take care of their husbands, children and older relatives, often at the same time. Moreover, as a result of population ageing in both developed and developing countries, increasing numbers of women will be living alone, under poor conditions, or with their sons and daughters. Governments should develop adequate social security and medical care systems for all women, regardless of marital status.

*Recommendation 26.* Violence against women and children is widespread. Governments are required to protect women and children from all forms of violence, including rape, incest, child abuse, domestic violence and exploitation based on age and gender. Women refugees and those in circumstances of war and wherever civil rights are threatened or suspended are in special need of protection and of reproductive health care and family planning services.

*Recommendation 27.* Governments, international organizations, the pharmaceutical industry, the medical professions and non-governmental organizations should give urgent priority to the development and production of improved and safe contraceptives for fertility regulation and effective pharmaceutical products for protection against sexually transmitted diseases. Renewed emphasis should be placed on the development of male methods of contraception. Contraceptive research and trials of new methods should be

governed by accepted ethical principles and internationally recognized standards. In particular, new methods should be tested on a range of individuals in developed and developing countries who have full information and have freely agreed to participate in the testing.

*Recommendation 28.* While continuing data collection in existing areas, Governments and funding agencies are urged to give priority to the collection of data in areas where information is currently seriously deficient. Both large-scale surveys and more qualitative approaches are seen as valuable and complementary. Among these critical areas are:

- (a) Structure and dynamics of the family;
- (b) Women's, men's and children's diverse economic, domestic and resource management roles, and use of time to fulfil those roles;
- (c) Men's attitudes and behaviour regarding reproduction and other topics for which data are currently obtained mainly from women;
- (d) Child care arrangements;
- (e) Unplanned pregnancy and abortion;
- (f) Sexual abuse;
- (g) Domestic and other forms of violence;
- (h) Various aspects of reproductive health, including incidence of sexually transmitted diseases.

*Recommendation 29.* Governments, funding agencies and research organizations are urged to give priority to research on the linkages between women's roles and status and demographic processes. Among the vital areas for research are changing family systems and the interaction between women's, men's and children's diverse roles, including their use of time, access to and control over resources, decision-making and associated norms, laws, values and beliefs. Of particular concern is the impact of gender inequalities on these interactions and the associated economic and demographic outcomes.

*Recommendation 30.* Governments are urged to ensure that the full diversity of women's economic activities is properly represented in statistical systems and national accounts.

*Recommendation 31.* Government statistical offices are encouraged to publish a broad range of social, health and economic statistics and indicators on a gender-disaggregated basis, and Governments are urged to take those statistics into account in policy and planning.

*Recommendation 32.* International agencies and donors are urged to increase allocation of resources for publication and dissemination of relevant documents in order to promote expanded access of national research organizations, including women's organizations, to policy-related research findings and conceptual and methodological developments.

## **EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON FAMILY PLANNING, HEALTH AND FAMILY WELL-BEING**

The Expert Group Meeting on Family Planning, Health and Family Well-being was held in Bangalore, India, from 26 to 30 October 1992. The Government of India was the host. The participants, representing different geographical regions, scientific disciplines and institutions, included 18 experts invited by the Secretary-General of the Conference in their personal capacities and representatives of the United Nations Office at Vienna, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the five United Nations regional commissions, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank. Also represented were the following non-governmental organizations: the International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (IIRI); International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP); Population Council; Center for Development and Population Activities; Population Institute; Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH); Association for Voluntary Surgical Contraception (AVSC); Family Health International (FHI); Institute of Resource Development (IRD)/Macro Systems; Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP); Pathfinder International; Population Crisis Committee; and Rockefeller Foundation.

As a basis for discussion, 16 experts had prepared papers on the agenda items. The views expressed by the experts were their own and did not necessarily represent the policies of their Governments or organizations. The Department of Economic and Social Development prepared a background paper entitled "Key issues in family planning, health and family well-being in the 1990s and beyond". UNFPA contributed a paper on future contraceptive requirements and logistics management needs. Discussion notes were provided by the United Nations Office at Vienna, the regional commissions and a number of specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations.

### **OPENING STATEMENTS**

Opening statements were made by Ms. Smt. D. K. Thara Devi Siddartha, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare of the Government of India; Dr. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development; and Mr. Shunichi Inoue, Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference.

In her opening remarks, Dr. Sadik noted that India provided an ideal setting for the Meeting because India was the first developing country in the world to have a national population programme and had continued its com-



mitment to planned population growth and voluntary family planning since 1951. She also commended the efforts of the Government of India in placing family planning in the wider context of health and family welfare and agreed with the national strategy which emphasized the development of human resources rather than controlling human numbers. Ms. Thara Devi Siddartha reaffirmed the position of the Government of India that, for the future well-being of India, the highest priority had been accorded to population stabilization efforts. In this regard, she noted that fertility behaviour could not be understood in isolation without reference to the sociocultural context, nor could family planning policies be pursued successfully without promoting conducive socio-economic conditions such as female literacy, the general quality of life, reproductive health and family well-being. She further noted that there was a need to shift the emphasis from quantitative to qualitative assessment of the population, which would require a holistic approach to population control. Women's total health must become the central concern of planning. When a woman was given the opportunity of choosing her time of conception, the size of her family and the time period between births, very large benefits were likely to accrue.

Dr. Sadik emphasized the need to place family planning in a wider context of quality of life of women and children, health and family welfare. She also stressed the need to enhance the status of women, which was crucial for achieving sustainable development. To realize this goal, women must have equal access to education and equal participation in social, economic, cultural and political life. These considerations implied the need for universal access to a wide range of safe, affordable and effective contraceptive alternatives to meet the vast unmet demand for family planning. Considering the growing problem of adolescent fertility, she stressed the necessity of preventing teenage pregnancy and removing the widespread ignorance among young people of the risks of unprotected sexual activity. She emphasized the need to involve men in family planning and to provide them with necessary information, education and encouragement to take greater responsibility in contraceptive practice and responsible parenthood. She noted that family planning programmes could contribute substantially to the reduction of maternal mortality and the improvement of the reproductive health of women. She hoped that strategies for the prevention of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) could be found within the framework of family planning and the Safe Motherhood Initiative, with particular focus on the needs of women and adolescents. She stressed the importance of a high quality of services for expanding the levels of acceptance and continuation of contraceptive practices. She noted that special efforts were needed to bring high-quality family planning services to vulnerable and/or under-served sections of the population, including people in minority communities, rural areas and urban slums. To improve the quality of care, clients must be given a wide choice of contraceptive methods and must be treated with dignity and respect by well-trained service providers. She stressed that more research, development and training were necessary to widen the range and improve the quality of available contraceptive methods. It was also necessary to ensure that

contraceptive supplies were available at the right time and place and in the right quantity. She underscored the necessity of directly involving local communities to ascertain the family planning needs of communities with widely different backgrounds and suggested that such a "people-centred approach" might encourage clients to share the cost of services. She observed that the pool of international resources for development was not growing as fast as the demand for resources. It was therefore essential to increase coordination and collaboration between national family planning programmes, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and international organizations.

Mr. Inoue, while enumerating the notable progress made in family planning practice in the past decade, noted that the current level of fertility and the rate of population growth in many developing countries were still too high and incompatible with the goal of achieving sound social and economic development. He stressed the importance of women's choice on the number of children or family size and matching of individual fertility goals to national goals. He suggested that family planning should be seen as a means to improve the health and well-being of the family.

#### SUMMARY OF THE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION

In addition to a more general exchange of views regarding the key issues in family planning, health and family well-being in the 1990s and beyond, and the linkages between family planning, health and family well-being, the Expert Group devoted particular attention to the following areas: society and family planning; review of existing family planning programmes and lessons learned; issues relating to the implementation of family planning programmes (quality of services and human resources development, unreached population groups, adolescent fertility, diffusion of innovative activities, community-based distribution systems and social marketing of contraceptives, and future contraceptive requirements and logistics management needs); family planning and health (safe motherhood and child survival: the interdependence of services; family planning, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS); family planning and family well-being (family size, structure and child development; fertility decline and family support system); people's involvement in family planning programmes (community participation in family planning; cost of contraceptive supplies and services and cost-sharing; contraceptive research and development; reexamination of the roles of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in family planning). Both the developed and the developing country situations were considered, although the latter dominated the discussion.

In formulating recommendations, the Expert Group focused on identifying practical measures that could be taken to broaden the scope of family planning programmes in order to make them more effective and efficient, that would help to meet the unmet reproductive health needs of women, and that would also have desirable effects on the status of women and health and well-being of the family. The Expert Group also reviewed the state of

knowledge about the topics mentioned above and made recommendations regarding the need for research and data collection.

The contributions of family planning towards improving the quality of life of the population, particularly the health and well-being of the family, have been the focus of increasing international attention in a variety of contexts, including human rights and equity and participation of women in the process of social and economic development. There is currently an array of international declarations and agreements concerning the roles of family planning in improving the status of women, the health of mothers and children, and the environment. These include the World Population Plan of Action (1974) and the recommendations for its further implementation (1984), the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (1985), the Safe Motherhood Initiative (1987) and the Amsterdam Declaration on a Better Life for Future Generations (1989). The Expert Group noted that international declarations and agreements provided necessary support and sound guidelines for charting the future course of action and urged that necessary action be taken in implementing them.

### *Society and family planning*

The Meeting considered the general issues of fertility transition, women's status and sociocultural milieu and how women's status had affected the practice of family planning. The status of women needed to be examined in relation to the social organizations and cultural contexts, which vary from society to society; hence, it had remained an elusive concept, further complicated by varied definitions of status such as prestige, power, autonomy and rights. It was suggested that the identification of factors underlying gender inequality might help in understanding fertility behaviour, because fertility goals were likely to depend on the extent to which women rely on their male kin and sons for status and security. It was recommended that removal of gender inequalities would enhance the status of women, which, in turn, would have a positive impact on family planning. The Meeting further considered the reverse side of the relationship, namely, the effect of reduced fertility on women's status. The reduction of time spent in reproduction and child care allowed women to expand their participation in the public sphere. It followed that family planning, by providing women with greater control over reproductive decisions, was a major way to empower women and improve their status. Those independent effects of family planning at microstructural levels needed to be emphasized.

The Meeting also considered issues relating to fertility transition and socio-economic development, including the status of women and associated policy questions on investments in social sectors. More specifically, the questions raised were: What social sector investments are likely to strengthen the impact of family planning and reproductive health services? and how can the design of services be better tailored to the socio-economic structure in which they all expected to be effective? The Meeting was of the view that social development might be contributing more to fertility decline than to economic development. The Meeting emphasized, however, that there was no

point in presenting socio-economic development and family planning programmes as competitive or alternative approaches. Changes in fertility behaviour, stemming from socio-economic development and increased acceptance of family planning, should be seen as a gradual process with synergistic effects. It would, therefore, be productive to identify the linkages between social change, family planning programme effort and reproductive behaviour. One such linkage was established through research on "proximate" determinants of fertility, where effects of socio-economic factors on fertility were usually seen to be mediated through proximate factors such as use of contraception and rising age at marriage.

A second line of inquiry that had helped to clarify the understanding of synergies between socio-economic forces and programmatic variables in accelerating fertility decline was the series of cross-national studies. The studies showed that fertility declined most rapidly in countries with high scores on both sets of indicators. Those synergies were also found in country-level studies of fertility transitions currently occurring in many developing countries, particularly in Asia and Latin America. The studies illustrated that, even in ostensibly unfavourable conditions, fertility decline could be accelerated by programme efforts that were sensitive to local conditions, responsive to community needs and designed to encourage social change. For instance, in Bangladesh, the recruitment of female outreach workers had contributed to changes in the status of women. In the light of recent empirical evidence, the Meeting made the important assertion that the progress of family planning programmes was not dependent upon levels of socio-economic development, because programmes were more than the mere supply of contraceptives; they had evolved to respond to the particular needs of a particular society. Thus, two decades of programme experience had shown that the linkages between programme effort and socio-economic setting involved a variety of synergies that needed to be better understood and strengthened in order to guide social sector investments in health and family planning, female education and other factors that improved the status of women.

#### *Review of existing family planning programmes and lessons learned*

A comprehensive overview of the family planning situations in various regions of the developing world was presented at the Meeting. The overview highlighted the process of socio-economic changes affecting different parts of the world in terms of gross national product (GNP) per capita, literacy, primary and secondary school enrolment, percentage of men in the non-agricultural labour force, life expectancy, total fertility rate and infant mortality rate. Particular attention was paid to the current situation in the least developed countries. In most regions, there had been socio-economic progress, notably in East and South-East Asia, with simultaneous progress in the development of family planning programme efforts. It was apparent that, in general, programme improvements had not matched the progress in socio-economic development. Nevertheless, there was a positive relationship between improvement in socio-economic conditions and programme strength. There were also exceptions to those relationships, where there had not been

much socio-economic improvement but programmes had become stronger and where fertility decline was in progress (for example, Bangladesh and Botswana). On the other hand, notable changes had taken place in socio-economic conditions among the Arab States; yet fertility decline had not been observed, owing, in part, to the absence of organized family planning programmes, with the exceptions of Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. There is a third set of countries (sub-Saharan Africa) where socio-economic conditions had not changed to any appreciable extent nor had programme efforts gained much strength. In most of the region fertility levels remained high and contraceptive practice very low. The primary impetus to the adoption of policies to reduce fertility in Latin America had come from the medical profession, which was greatly concerned about the large number of septic abortions. Governments were slow to react; hence, the private sector and non-governmental organizations had played a very important role in supporting the cause of family planning and also in the provision of services. Latin America, in general, with better socio-economic conditions compared to the developing countries in other regions, showed a relatively high contraceptive prevalence throughout most of the region.

The general conclusions drawn from the above broad assessment were that family planning programmes could have an independent effect on fertility rates and their effectiveness was greatly enhanced when socio-economic development occurred simultaneously. Organized family planning programmes and socio-economic development together produced synergistic effects on fertility. In the overview, several important programme characteristics were identified as crucial for the success of family planning programmes. A selected few of them drew the attention of the Meeting more than the others. They were: political commitment and strong leadership, the adoption of a client's perspective, contraceptive availability/accessibility, quality of services, wide choice of methods, modes of delivery of services and information, education and communication campaigns. It was said that political commitment was fundamental to the success of the programmes, but its importance diminished as socio-economic conditions improved. In high socio-economic settings favourable to low fertility, political commitment was necessary only to remove barriers to family planning programmes. It was also noted that political commitment in the developed countries was necessary to ensure sufficient international financial aid. Concern was expressed at the Meeting that the current design and ethos of many family planning programmes emphasized quantitative aspects of achievement at the cost of quality of care and clients' needs and preferences, and therefore women's reproductive health needs were neglected. To raise contraceptive prevalence further, it would be necessary to increase the participation of women in the decision-making process for programme design and implementation. Furthermore, women should be given the choice of meeting their reproductive goals. It was noted that, since abortion played an important role in maternal mortality and fertility decline, the question of abortion could not be put aside.

### *Issues related to the implementation of family planning programmes*

The Meeting again stressed the need to improve the quality of services at all stages of programme development. The success of family planning programmes had been usually evaluated on the basis of their quantitative impact on fertility. Under those circumstances, there had been overwhelming concern for quantitative achievements: number of clients, births averted and so on. The issue of quality of services had become all the more important, because it had been recognized that improvement in the quality of services would result in an increase of contraceptive use and a subsequent reduction in fertility. The Meeting, therefore, emphasized that a shift to quality services had emerged as an important area of programme development in the 1990s. It was often claimed that calls for greater quality of services could not be met owing to a lack of resources, but the Meeting observed that the critical bottleneck with respect to quality was not resources but a lack of commitment on the part of the top management. A significant part of that lack of commitment could be traced to the difficulties in defining the quality of services and the absence of readily measurable indicators of quality. The Expert Group then considered various elements of quality of service: choice of contraceptive methods; information given to clients; technical competence; client/provider relations; mechanisms to encourage continuity; and appropriate constellation of services. Those six elements were regarded as fundamental, but their relative importance and precise form should be adjusted according to specific country situations. A first, important step in the right direction would be to shift the focus from demographic targets to individual needs. With regard to measures for improvement of quality of services, the Expert Group also emphasized the necessity of human resources development, with provision for continuous supervision and a management style that emphasized enhancement of skills rather than punitive measures. Quality of care and human resources development were generally linked.

The Expert Group noted that, although levels of contraceptive use had increased substantially throughout the developing countries in the past decade, there remained many sectors of the population, such as minorities, remote rural areas or adolescents, that had not been reached by programmes because of resource constraints and other factors. More importantly, men represented the "forgotten 50 per cent" of family planning clientele. The critical constraint in reaching men was the providers, not men themselves. Men had not received the attention they deserved. Empirical evidence suggested that men had played a major role both as facilitators and as inhibitors for female contraceptive use. The role of men in family planning was becoming increasingly important in the context of raising contraceptive prevalence and further reduction of the level of fertility. Men, when approached, were often willing to support family planning practice, either by practising themselves or helping their wives to practise. Therefore, men should be approached with more assertive motivational campaigns which stressed the sharing of contraceptive responsibility, choices of contraceptive methods and parenthood responsibilities. That new direction implied more research on male methods of contraception and male attitudes.

A growing concern was expressed in the Meeting about the necessity of reaching the minority populations with family planning services. The Meeting recognized that the strategies that had succeeded in increasing contraceptive use in the majority population might not have much effect on those special groups. Family planning providers needed to understand better the barriers to family planning acceptance in those communities before undertaking vigorous promotional activities. Community and religious leaders and husbands might be helpful in overcoming the barriers to contraceptive use in those communities.

Another important group that had not been reached sufficiently was the people in remote areas. Neglect had given rise to pronounced regional differences in contraceptive use. The Expert Group noted that every effort should be made to reach people in those areas in order to remove regional disparities. The Group also recognized the special unmet need of young couples, within or outside marriage, to have access to family planning services. Despite Governments' declared intentions, access to appropriate services by that particular group remained problematic. Furthermore, the need for family planning counselling services (for birth postponement or spacing) for that group could not be overemphasized.

The Expert Group expressed concern about adolescent pregnancies. Precocious child-bearing continued to be a major impediment to improvement in the status of women. The social cost of adolescent fertility was high: it hindered possibilities for educational attainment and self-fulfilment and led to greater health risks. It was observed that the percentage of women under 20 giving birth was quite high in many developing countries. The actual number of teenage pregnancies was unknown because of the lack of statistics on abortion and miscarriages, but it was undoubtedly very high. There was ample evidence, including high rates of unsafe abortion among adolescent women, showing that much of the early child-bearing—whether within or outside marriage—was unwanted. Adolescents were, in many countries, increasingly at high risk of contracting and transmitting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and they were often poorly informed about how to protect themselves. It was observed that many adolescents were sexually active and family planning programmes should be sensitive to their needs because they were the future users. The Group, therefore, emphasized the importance of involving youth in identifying their special needs and urged Governments to make provision for sex education, family life education and HIV/AIDS education, and to ensure easy access to reproductive health services, including family planning services. Non-governmental organizations might play important partnership roles with Governments in developing innovative programmes for that segment of the population. The Group encouraged further research for better understanding of those adolescent concerns. In considering adolescent issues, the Group also focused on the related issue of abortion.

With regard to the issue of diffusion of innovative behaviour and information, education and communication (IEC) activities, the Expert Group noted that there was a substantial amount of unmet need for family planning;

many women who wanted no more children and were exposed to the risk of pregnancy were not practising family planning. The intervention most suited to transforming the high levels of need into effective demand was information, education and communication activities. The Meeting also noted that two important aspects of IEC activities—research on the development of IEC material, and management and evaluation of the dissemination process—often were neglected. There was much concern that IEC materials were designed on the basis of feelings rather than on research. It was also noted that IEC activities needed to be better managed, taking into consideration the existing IEC infrastructure, relevance of different IEC strategies, and the mixing of messages in appropriate media formats. Another important aspect that drew the attention of the Group was IEC activities targeted towards providers, policy makers and informal leaders. For the purpose of institutionalizing family planning in society, IEC programmes must identify the motivational needs of health-care providers, policy makers and informal leaders and must meet those needs. Their support was essential for the effective implementation of programmes.

The Expert Group noted that community-based distribution (CBD) of contraceptives had played an important role in making contraceptives available to people living in areas not covered by commercial networks or institutional services. In a related area, social marketing of contraceptives (SMC) to low-income groups in the developing countries had met with mixed results. The impact of social marketing of contraceptives in terms of increased contraceptive prevalence or fertility decline was still very uncertain, but undoubtedly it constituted a way to complement other supply channels. Both of those modes of delivery of supplies (CBD and SMC) had great potential which needed to be properly evaluated in order to determine their cost-effectiveness, the scope of their contribution and extent to which subsidies were necessary. The question of combining the two approaches to reduce cost needed to be examined.

The future contraceptive requirements and logistic management needs of family planning programmes were considered at the Meeting. To achieve the United Nations medium-variant population projection by the year 2000, contraceptive prevalence in the developing countries must rise from 51 per cent in 1990 to 59 per cent in 2000. That meant that an estimated 567 million couples must be using some form of contraception at the end of the century. According to the projection, the following would be needed in the developing countries by the decade 1991-2000: 151 million surgical procedures for female and male sterilization; 8.76 billion cycles of oral pills; 663 million doses of injectables; 310 million IUDs; and 44 billion condoms.

If the contraceptives required for the period 1991-2000 were purchased in the market, they would cost about \$5 billion. From an annual cost of \$399 million in 1990, the cost for contraceptives would rise to \$627 million by the year 2000. It should be noted that the total did not include the much larger cost of delivery of services. The total cost would vary according to the method-mix; for example, wider use of the Norplant implant would increase costs considerably. It was projected that by the year 2000, Governments' share



of the cost would be reduced from 60 per cent in 1990 to 52 per cent; the private sector's share would remain the same, at 17 per cent, and international donors' share would rise to 31 per cent from 22 in 1990. Large though those sums were, the costs of contraceptive supplies constituted only about one fifteenth, or 7 per cent, of the total required by the year 2000 for supporting population activities, which was set at \$9 billion by the Amsterdam Declaration on a Better Life for Future Generations, adopted by the International Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century.

Contraceptives were currently being manufactured locally in at least 23 developing countries and local production was under consideration in four or more countries. It was encouraging to note that in four large countries (Brazil, China, India and Indonesia), at least three methods (pills, condoms and IUDs) were produced locally with capacity approaching or exceeding their respective estimated commodity requirements. External assistance agencies had been active in supporting the local production of contraceptives.

### *Family planning and health*

The Expert Group observed that the issue of safe motherhood should not be discussed in the context of health only, because motherhood was an important social function and not a disease. Rather, it should be considered in the wider context of the role and status of women. Women who wanted to avoid unwanted pregnancies should be provided with family planning services, including access to safe abortion, in order to protect their health and well-being. Since family planning contributed substantially towards child survival and reduction of maternal mortality, the relevance of family planning in any strategy for safe motherhood and child survival was undeniable. Another essential component of a safe motherhood strategy was good maternal care, which was not complete without preconception and post-partum care, in which birth planning was a basic component. It was observed that progress towards safe motherhood should be measured in terms of lifetime risk of maternal death and not in terms of the commonly used maternal mortality rate, which measured only obstetric risk. Equally important was the question of child survival, which was considered a desirable social goal in itself. Research evidence showed that family planning contributed substantially towards child survival. Women seeking preventive and promotive care for their children should have easy access to family planning care. The Group was of the opinion that reproductive health care should be provided as an integrated package of services that were mutually strengthening, cost-effective and convenient to users. Users should be the ones to determine the type of integration that was most suitable for their needs.

The Expert Group focused on the linkages between family planning, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS. Family planning was practised by sexually active men and women of child-bearing age. They were at risk of coming into contact with sexually transmitted diseases and heterosexually transmitted HIV infection. The practice of family planning should play a crucial role in the prevention of vertical transmission of HIV from mother to child, by preventing pregnancy among HIV-infected women. Another impor-

tant linkage between family planning and sexually transmitted diseases/AIDS was that some of the contraceptive methods had a protective effect against those infections. Those important linkages implied the need to widen the scope of family planning programmes to encompass reproductive health care, including sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS control. Efforts to control those diseases could be enhanced by utilization of the widespread network of family planning clinics, especially in the rural areas of the developing countries. The facilities offered unparalleled opportunities to reach women of child-bearing age when the risk of exposure to sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS was greatest. Integration of the services would permit optimal use of the limited resources available in the developing countries for the control of those infections as well as for family planning.

The obvious disadvantage of integration was that services might not reach men directly. That was an area requiring reorientation of the family planning approach, which had hitherto relied mainly on contact with women, to permit more interaction with men. For the purpose of integration, there was a need to initiate training activities for the personnel involved in family planning and sexually transmitted diseases/AIDS control services, aimed at making them realize the interrelationship between the services they offered and thereby promoting closer working relationships. The Meeting, however, cautioned about possible dangers of hasty integration. It could be an error to integrate sexually transmitted disease-control programmes into existing family planning structures without making sure that current facilities could provide quality services and that adequate staff were present and had the necessary training and orientation. It was also necessary to encourage research in sexual behaviour in different cultural settings to provide information that could be used in intervention programmes. Finally, future research in contraceptive technology development should focus on methods that might have additional benefit in the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases/AIDS, and especially on those methods that were women-controlled.

### *Family planning and family well-being*

Under the theme of family planning and family well-being, the Expert Group considered two important issues: changes in family size and structure; and fertility decline and family welfare systems. The Meeting recognized the importance of the family as a fundamental unit of society. The characteristics of the basic family types found in the East and in the West were discussed and compared. The families in the East were characterized by a "feedback model" of intergenerational relations, in which the older generation initially fostered the younger generation but was then cared for by the younger generation. The Western model was described as a "continued linear model", in which there was usually no feedback from the younger to the older generation. Consequently, the typical family pattern of Western society was the so-called nuclear family, consisting of husband, wife and unmarried children. In many Eastern societies, married children did not necessarily leave their parental home to form nuclear families and thus three-generation fami-

lies were common in the East. The family size was, therefore, relatively larger than that of the West.

As elsewhere in East Asia, the traditional Chinese family had undergone substantial transformations in the past half century. Both family size and family structure had been affected by the process of modernization and by the profound structural changes experienced by Chinese society. The average family size was 5.3 until the 1950s. It declined to 4.43 by the 1982 census and decreased further to 3.97 by the 1990 census. The decline in family size during the 1950s and the 1960s was mainly associated with social structural changes, such as land reform. By contrast, family-size reduction in the 1970s and the 1980s could primarily be attributed to fertility decline, although other factors such as improved housing supply and census underenumeration had also played a role. A process parallel to the decline in family size had been the trend towards family nuclearization. However, although the proportion of extended families had been decreasing substantially for the past five decades, the three-generation family still comprised about 20 per cent of Chinese families, and it was not certain that it would experience further reduction in the near future. Although there was no officially stated policy that promoted the three-generation family, that family form had been viewed as beneficial for old-age care. However, the rapid reduction in fertility would undoubtedly affect family structure in the coming years. When the children born under the current low-fertility regime reached the age of family formation, some elderly parents would not be able to live with their married children if they had only one married daughter, assuming that current cultural practices persisted. It was also noted that the policy, with respect to number of children a couple could have, led to large differences in fertility levels and family sizes between rural and urban areas, and between minorities and the Han majority. The Chinese case-study served as an illustration of how government policies, along with changing socio-economic conditions, affected the size and structure of the family. The attention of the Meeting was drawn to some undesirable consequences of the rapid fertility reduction experienced in the Chinese society: one child was sometimes raised as a "little emperor", with yet unknown consequences for the child's development, and a strict one-child policy might lead to sex-selective abortion practices. The impact of a rapid decline in fertility on child development was not yet fully known.

Lower fertility levels, resulting in smaller families, were thought to benefit both parents and their children directly. That view assumed that decisions about family size and family welfare were made simultaneously at the start of child-bearing. In recent years, that conventional wisdom had been increasingly challenged. The Meeting, therefore, examined the linkages between reduced family size and family welfare systems, including the economic well-being of the family, welfare of the children, wife's employment opportunities, and parental old-age security. Whether the number of children was positively or negatively correlated with the economic well-being of the family would vary with the life-cycle stage of both the parents and the children as well as the existing social setting. A study in a village in Bangladesh found that male children became net producers at age 12, and could compensate for

their cumulative consumption by age 15. Similar results were found in northern Ghana. Other studies had shown that in a peasant society, at the aggregate level, the net worth of children was negative. A large family gained economic benefits from its size only at certain stages of the family life cycle. The studies, however, did not show the cumulative effect of actual family size on the economic well-being of the family. In a recent study in Thailand, where rapid socio-economic development was taking place, an assessment of the impact of a reduced number of children on family economic well-being was carried out by comparing couples whose reproductive years corresponded with the period of decline of fertility in Thailand but who had small and large families. The study found reduced family size to have positive effects on a couple's ability to accumulate wealth, participate in new forms of consumption and thus have more material possessions and houses of better quality. In terms of the welfare of the children, empirical evidence from both the developed and the developing countries showed a negative link between the educational attainment of the children and the size of the family. That relationship was also found to be true in Thailand. It was important to remember that, in the process of development, Thailand was experiencing rising costs of living and costs of raising children. Thai parents also had high aspirations for their children in terms of educational attainment. It could be said, therefore, that economic benefits were not the only guiding factors in family-size decisions. The nature of the linkages between fertility and women's employment varied according to a number of factors. Role incompatibility between reproduction and production was found to be stronger in urban areas than in rural areas. A recent study on parental care in Thailand showed that fertility decline did not significantly reduce the proportion of the elderly who would co-reside with an adult child. It was generally felt that there was a serious scarcity of research to explore the linkages between fertility decline and family welfare systems and that it was an important area for future research.

#### *Future directions: people's involvement in family planning programmes*

In the 1960s, most of the public-sector family planning programmes were centrally organized with a vertical delivery system and quantitative demographic targets rather than welfare goals. During the past 15 years, there had been an appreciable shift away from target-oriented vertical programmes. In its place, a growing concern has arisen that family planning services should be tailored to meet the needs and preferences of the clients who use them. The concept of "user's perspective" gradually came into prominence, with an attendant emphasis on community participation. In the early 1980s, community participation had received strong endorsement as a cornerstone of family planning programmes. At the Meeting, recurrent themes of discussion included such issues as community participation, individual needs and preferences, quality of care (rather than quantity), and the welfare aspect of programmes. All of the themes had direct or indirect bearing on community participation. The essential ingredient of the community participation concept was empowerment—the notion that communities should have a degree of

control over the nature of development goals and implementation of activities. The participation of the community in planning, decision-making and programme implementation was its underlying and fundamental feature. The application of the concept in family planning had led to various forms of participation. Contributory participation, where communities assisted pre-set programmes by means of labour (volunteers), cash or provision of other resources, such as land, was relatively common. The second most common form found was organizational participation, where formal or informal structures existed to facilitate contributions by the community. The limited empirical evidence suggested that genuine community participation in family planning in terms of "empowerment" was still extremely limited. The following reasons were discussed: family planning was perceived to be a need of a small fraction of the community; inflexibility of centralized programmes did not allow for local variations; family planning might lack a ready appeal to community élites, typically older men whose wives had passed beyond the reproductive age span; and family planning as an innovation might create antagonism based on religious beliefs, moral issues etc. Participatory programmes were often found in the private sector and they had met with relatively greater success, because non-governmental organizations tended to be more adaptable and accommodating to community wishes than were government departments. It was interesting to observe that, in the non-governmental organization programmes, integration was a common characteristic of community participation projects that involved family planning. It seemed reasonable to conclude that an integrated package of services with a decentralized programme development mechanism and the use of local institutions would ensure greater participation of the community in family planning and related activities and would make family planning services more responsive to people's needs. However, the Group observed that it was also necessary to make serious objective evaluations of those activities, particularly in terms of cost/benefit analysis.

With regard to the cost of contraceptive supplies and services and cost-sharing, the evidence presented at the Meeting pointed to some important conclusions. First, the reproductive age cohort was increasing rapidly even as overall population growth declined. Simultaneously, donor resources were not expected to increase as rapidly as the increase of women/couples in the reproductive ages. Secondly, more work needed to be done to measure accurately the extent of the unmet need for contraceptives in the developing countries since available data were inadequate and measures were yet to be perfected. As a result, projections of unmet needs must be viewed as orders of magnitude. Thirdly, cost data were also troublesome because of the assumptions underlying them and the inaccuracy built into equating costs and expenditures. Determination of financial needs in the future, therefore, was complicated by the data limitations just mentioned. However, under the assumption that resources would be constrained in the future, efforts should be made to assess alternative financing arrangements and to improve resource allocation and efficiency of service delivery. Available evidence suggested that in the countries that charged for family planning, fees were a small

proportion of per capita GNP. Moreover, studies showed that upward adjustments to modest fees had little effect on utilization, indicating possible scope for establishing or raising fees for family planning. In addition, third-party payers for health care (e.g., insurance companies) represented another potential financier to share costs with Governments and users. The Meeting had observed that cost and unmet need data deserved more consideration and more careful interpretation to guide decision-making processes to promote efficiency and appropriate targeting for subsidies. To promote cost-sharing, Governments must have better information on price sensitivity of consumers. By removing impediments to private investment in family planning, Governments should encourage the private sectors to expand their share of service delivery. Innovations in modes of delivery of family planning services were essential.

In the agenda item on contraceptive research and development, the Group reviewed the most important existing contraceptive methods with respect to safety and efficiency, emphasizing their effects on women's reproductive health. The Meeting noted that women in their different life-cycle stages had different needs for different types of contraceptive methods. The current research agenda on contraceptive methods included the relation between hormonal methods and neoplasia, barrier methods for protection against sexually transmitted diseases/HIV, breast-feeding and contraceptive methods, and the use of modern intra-uterine devices with high efficiency and few side-effects. Through the collaboration between national and international agencies and non-governmental organizations, promising research was continuing on anti-fertility vaccines, methods for the regulation of male fertility and antiprogestins for early pregnancy termination. Research needs were identified which would be critical in the future. In the light of the review and discussion, a few conclusions were reached at the Meeting. First, there had been a general decline in expenditures on research in fundamental reproductive physiology, new contraceptive methods and safety evaluation. Secondly, there had been a large reduction in the involvement of pharmaceutical companies in contraceptive research for various reasons: belief that the market was already "mature"; the long time required to develop a new method and the even longer period before there was any return on investment; and the regulatory problems imposed by drug administrations and the legal liabilities. To encourage future research in new contraceptive methods, those barriers needed to be removed. Thirdly, non-governmental organizations had an important role to play in contraceptive research by creating a global partnership of scientists who would work together in the development of new methods, thus filling the gap left by the Governments and the commercial sector. Fourthly, there should be an emphasis in research on new methods for men.

In re-examining the role of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in family planning, the Meeting observed that, despite recent progress in family planning, there were still many challenges, including a growing demand for services. Governments must at least sustain, or increase, support for family planning and try to remove legal and other

barriers to expanding services. They should aim to be flexible, recognizing the needs of adolescents, and replicate successful models of service delivery. The existing role of non-governmental organizations in innovative service delivery should be extended to offer appropriate reproductive and sexual health services to those most in need, to improve the quality of care and community involvement, to demonstrate cost-effectiveness and to address women's concerns. Non-governmental organizations still had an advocacy role, particularly to reduce unsafe abortions and to increase services for young people. The private sector must cooperate with Governments and non-governmental organizations, price contraceptives for retail distribution on the basis of price sensitivity of consumers, and participate in community-based distribution and social marketing.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

The World Population Plan of Action, adopted by consensus at the World Population Conference, held at Bucharest in 1974, affirms that all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so. This right should be assured in all countries, irrespective of their demographic objectives.

The use of safe and appropriate fertility regulation methods has immediate benefits for the health, well-being and autonomy of women. Family planning also promotes the health and welfare of children, adolescents and men, and the well-being of the family as a unit. Finally, family planning contributes to the achievement of other societal goals such as the advancement of women, improvements in overall health status, the stabilization of population growth, preservation of the environment, sustainable economic and social development, and the overall quality of life. Indeed, as stated in the report of the United Nations Children's Fund, *State of the World's Children, 1992*, the responsible planning of births is one of the most effective and least expensive ways of improving the quality of life on earth, both at present and in the future, and one of the greatest mistakes of the times is the failure to realize this potential.

Empirical evidence reaffirms strong linkages between socio-economic development and fertility trends. Family planning programmes tend to be most successful where social and economic conditions encourage the adoption of small family norms. Recent experience, however, has demonstrated that even in poor socio-economic conditions, considerable desire to regulate family size exists and fertility has fallen in countries with well-organized programmes. Individuals in all settings should not be denied access to the information and means to regulate their fertility and improve the quality of their lives.

In the past two decades, a reproductive revolution has occurred. Countries have made dramatic progress in expanding the availability of family planning services, increasing the use of contraception and accelerating the pace of fertility decline beyond that which would have occurred in the absence

of services. Based on data for women of reproductive age, 53 per cent of couples are currently estimated to be using contraception; however, there are enormous disparities in levels of contraceptive use between regions. The availability of family planning services has itself contributed to a dramatic downward adjustment of desired family size in many countries. In the less developed regions, where fertility has been the highest, total fertility rates have declined from approximately 6.1 in the 1950s to close to 3.7 currently.

Despite this progress, major challenges remain. As a consequence of earlier high fertility in the developing countries, more and more men and women are entering their reproductive years, and the need for family planning services in these countries will therefore continue to increase rapidly. During the decade of the 1990s, just to maintain current levels of contraceptive use, approximately 100 million more couples will need family planning services. If fertility declines according to the medium variant of the United Nations population projections, then a further 75 million couples will need access to family planning information and services by the year 2000.

In addition, large disparities remain both within and among countries in the practice of family planning. Sociocultural, economic and other institutional constraints often prevent couples and individuals from making informed decisions concerning child-bearing. Millions of men and women of reproductive age in both the developed and the less developed regions still do not have access to safe and effective methods of fertility regulation or information on how to use them. In many countries, these conditions are reflected in high abortion rates.

The adoption of family planning has contributed to safe motherhood and child survival. However, the death and suffering of women in fulfilling their child-bearing responsibilities continues to be a major scandal. Each year more than 500,000 women lose their lives for causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. There has been very little progress towards the goal of reducing maternal mortality by one half by the year 2000. Avoiding unwanted pregnancies and proper planning of births lowers maternal mortality. However, safe motherhood will be achieved only through concerted national and international efforts to make quality maternal health services, including safe abortion, readily accessible to all women. This should be a high priority for the next decade.

The quality of family planning services is also uneven. A major challenge in the coming decade will be to expand currently available contraceptive choices for individuals in many countries and to improve the interpersonal skills and technical competence of family planning providers. There is also an urgent need to develop new and improved contraceptive methods.

The revolution in contraceptive technology has stalled because of the inadequate allocation of resources and the retrenchment of the pharmaceutical industry. Concerted efforts are needed to launch a second revolution in contraceptive technology in order to provide a new generation of contraceptives for the twenty-first century.

One of the most serious problems of the coming decade is the spread of



the AIDS pandemic, which jeopardizes the well-being of mankind. Family planning programmes have an important role to play in the prevention of HIV.

The Expert Group Meeting on Family Planning, Health and Family Well-being, having reviewed the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action, adopted the following recommendations which are intended to reaffirm as well as extend or update previous recommendations adopted by Governments in various international forums. They seek to identify actions that Governments can take to support couples and individuals in making informed and voluntary choices about the timing, number and spacing of children, through family planning programmes and other social policies. Because these issues are of global concern, the recommendations are also addressed to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and to the donor community.

*Recommendation 1.* Governments are invited to note the growing evidence that all individuals and couples, regardless of their socio-economic status, value the opportunity to space and limit their families, and that family planning can be promoted successfully where levels of socio-economic development are low, provided that the design of services takes into account the sociocultural setting. Family planning programmes should be regarded as a cost-effective component of a broader development strategy, one that has significant independent effects on family well-being and individual and social welfare, particularly that of women.

*Recommendation 2.* Governments should strive to develop social and political institutions and norms that are oriented towards providing women opportunities, through formal and informal education, for personal development and greater autonomy, both within the family and in society as a whole. Governments should support the involvement of women at all levels of the public policy process, especially in the design, management, implementation and evaluation of social welfare, health and family planning programmes.

*Recommendation 3.* Recognizing the fundamental role of the family in reproduction and in the socialization of future generations, Governments are urged to support the family through public policies and programmes, taking into consideration changes in family forms, size and structure. Governments should promote family life education for responsible parenthood for both men and women, high quality child-care arrangements to enable individuals to combine their dual roles as parents and workers, and adequate support for the children of single parents.

*Recommendation 4.* To save the lives of mothers, children and adolescents and to improve their general health, Governments and the international community are urged to increase their investment in family planning and reproductive and maternal and child health (MCH) services. Governments are also urged to monitor the progress in safer motherhood and child survival and to take the necessary actions to enhance the effectiveness of the interventions.

*Recommendation 5.* Governments and donors are urged to increase their support to the social sectors, foremost among them health and education, to a level where basic human rights in these areas can be satisfied.

*Recommendation 6.* Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are urged to recognize that abortion is a major public health concern and one of the most neglected problems affecting women's lives. Women everywhere should have access to sensitive counselling and safe abortion services.

*Recommendation 7.* Given the high prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases and the AIDS pandemic, which threatens the well-being of men, women and children, family planning programmes need to widen their scope to include reproductive health care, including sexually transmitted diseases/HIV education and prevention.

*Recommendation 8.* Political leaders at all levels should play a strong, sustained and highly visible role in promoting and legitimizing the voluntary adoption of family planning, and in ensuring a legal and regulatory climate that is favourable for the expansion of family planning services of high quality. National and local leaders should translate their commitment to family planning into the allocation of substantially increased budgetary, human and administrative resources required to meet the increasing demand for services.

*Recommendation 9.* Family planning programmes at both the national and the local level should seek to increase awareness of the importance of family planning and commitment to the expansion of good family planning services on the part of key influence groups, including the media, women's and voluntary organizations, local and religious leaders, and the private business community. The involvement of non-governmental groups in these advocacy efforts, wherever feasible, may greatly facilitate the process of consensus and coalition-building in support of family planning efforts.

*Recommendation 10.* Family planning programmes should aim to help individuals to achieve their reproductive goals, and should be based on voluntary, free and informed choice.

*Recommendation 11.* Governments should establish family planning goals on the basis of the unmet demand and need for information and services. Demographic goals, while legitimately the subject of government policies and programmes to achieve sustainable development, should not be imposed on family planning providers in the form of targets or quotas for recruitment of clients. Family planning services should be framed in the context of the needs of individuals, especially women. Over the long term, meeting unmet needs appears to be the best strategy for achieving national demographic goals.

*Recommendation 12.* At the national level, the major institutions involved in family planning should periodically undertake a systematic examination of the strengths and weaknesses of family planning efforts, including the competence of national and regional managers. This process should include an assessment of how major programme elements are contributing cost-effectively to overall goals and result in the development and implementation of coordinated strategies for programme improvement.

*Recommendation 13.* Family planning programme managers should consult with and encourage the participation of local community groups in

the design, financing and delivery of family planning services, wherever feasible. Promising strategies for increasing community participation include the following: increased involvement of social organizations such as men's, women's and youth groups, cooperatives and religious organizations and the use of local volunteers; greater decentralization of decision-making to local administrative structures that are better placed to respond to community needs; and increased pluralism of institutions in the delivery of services.

*Recommendation 14.* Governments and non-governmental organizations are urged to improve the quality of family planning services by incorporating the user's perspective and respect for the dignity and privacy of the client. Programmes should provide the broadest possible range of contraceptive methods; thorough and accurate information to enable clients to make informed choices; systematic follow-up; easy availability of and accessibility to services; and technically competent service providers who receive proper training and supervision, with additional emphasis on communication and counselling skills. Unnecessary medical and regulatory barriers restricting access to services should be removed. Strategies should be carefully designed and tailored according to local conditions, and the cost of services and contraceptives should be subsidized for people who cannot afford the full cost.

*Recommendation 15.* Governments, donors and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to increase the provision of family planning services through multiple channels to unserved and underserved populations, such as adolescent, minority, migrant and refugee groups. Effective outreach approaches include promotional activities, community-based strategies, and local health and commercial networks.

*Recommendation 16.* Governments are urged to recognize the special needs of the young and adolescent population and to strengthen programmes to minimize the incidence of high-risk and unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases/HIV infection. Special efforts need to be made to reach this target population with information, education and motivational campaigns through formal and informal channels, including the involvement of young people themselves. In view of the fact that adolescents tend to avoid or underutilize MCH/family planning and sexually transmitted disease services, often with disastrous consequences, it is important that service providers be trained to be more receptive to adolescents, and that legislation not inhibit the use of services by adolescents. Programmes should provide confidential services to adolescent men and women without regard to marital status or age. Young people should be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes designed to serve them in order for services to be sensitive to their needs.

*Recommendation 17.* Governments, donors and non-governmental organizations are called upon to provide resources for social marketing of contraception in order to create demand for family planning services, especially in underserved areas and among traditional communities and population groups where demand is low or non-existent. Emphasis should be placed on using consumer-oriented approaches such as careful targeting and segmentation of unserved populations, proper design of education and communication

strategies based on research, and an appropriate mix of media and interpersonal communications.

*Recommendation 18.* Governments, donors and non-governmental organizations should encourage greater involvement in and responsibility for family planning on the part of men, through research on male attitudes and motivation, messages specifically tailored for men, strategies to encourage responsible fatherhood, sharing of responsibilities between men and women, research on male methods of contraception, and innovative clinical services adapted to the needs of men.

*Recommendation 19.* Governments and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to support information, education and communication activities in order to increase awareness of the benefits of family planning for both individuals and the larger community, through comprehensive education efforts utilizing a wide variety of communications channels. Such programmes have played a crucial role in bringing about the transformation of traditional attitudes and social behaviour necessary for the adoption of modern contraception. Public education programmes should develop a clear communications strategy based on empirical research on social values and reproductive behaviour.

*Recommendation 20.* Governments and education administrators are called upon to expand and strengthen population and family life education at all levels of formal schooling and in literacy programmes. Such education should be designed to help children and youth to make informed decisions regarding their sexual behaviour, responsible parenthood and family planning. Special emphasis should be placed on training teachers and developing relevant communication methodologies.

*Recommendation 21.* Governments and international organizations are urged to increase their support to non-governmental organizations working in family planning, particularly in two ways. First, by facilitating the development of public/non-governmental organization partnerships aimed at expanding access to family planning services. Secondly, by helping these organizations to address in innovative ways such important issues as the reproductive health of adolescents, women's empowerment, community participation, broader reproductive health services, quality of care and outreach to marginalized groups. Once shown to be effective and acceptable, new approaches can then be integrated into wider national family planning programmes.

*Recommendation 22.* Non-governmental organizations are encouraged to coordinate their activities at the national and international levels and to continue to emphasize their areas of comparative advantage, including voicing to policy makers the real concerns and needs of women and local communities regarding sexual and reproductive health.

*Recommendation 23.* Governments should identify and remove the legal and regulatory barriers that impede private-sector involvement in family planning, including regulations that constrain contraceptive options, tax and importation policies, advertising and promotion restrictions, patent and trade

mark laws, pricing policies, and restrictions on fees charged by non-profit organizations.

*Recommendation 24.* Governments and non-governmental organizations should support public/private partnerships aimed at expanding access to family planning services. Such arrangements include financing private services through insurance or other third-party mechanisms and facilitating commercial enterprises to provide family planning as part of the health benefit plans provided to employees. Public-sector programmes should seek to complement the existing family planning activities of the private non-profit and commercial sectors, including private health-care providers.

*Recommendation 25.* Governments, non-governmental organizations and donors are urged to improve forecasting of contraceptive requirements based not only on current use but also on plans for future programme directions and priorities. Increased efforts must be directed at coordinating planning for contraceptive needs, putting systems in place that minimize the need for emergency responses, and helping countries to reduce their reliance on donors.

*Recommendation 26.* In meeting future contraceptive requirements, the partnership between the public and commercial sectors should be strengthened. The role of the commercial sector should be expanded in producing, procuring and delivering contraceptives.

*Recommendation 27.* National Governments and international and non-governmental organizations are called upon to provide additional resources for family planning in order to satisfy the rapidly increasing demand for services. With a view to reaching the United Nations medium-variant population projections, the cost of contraceptive commodities alone is estimated to be \$627 million in the year 2000. The associated logistics, management and service delivery costs are likely to increase this figure as much as tenfold.

*Recommendation 28.* In order to better address the quantity of resources required, further work is needed to estimate all the component costs of family planning programmes. At the same time, more attention must be paid to cost-effectiveness, efficiency, cost-recovery, cost-subsidization, community-resource mobilization, local production of contraceptives, where appropriate, and other mechanisms in order to ensure the optimum use of existing resources, thereby lowering costs, targeting subsidies and promoting financial solvency.

*Recommendation 29.* Governments of the developed and the developing countries and intergovernmental organizations are thus urged to increase significantly their proportions of development assistance for family planning to meet resource requirements. In so doing, it should be noted that costs of programmes and sources of financing will vary by such factors as the social and economic setting, programme maturity, programme coverage, and delivery modes, including the extent of the involvement of the private and non-governmental sectors.

*Recommendation 30.* Governments and donors are urged to increase support for research on improving existing contraceptive technology and

developing new technology that will be affordable in the developing countries, focusing on methods that may have additional benefits in the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases/AIDS, male methods to increase men's involvement in family planning, and methods appropriate for breast-feeding women. Efforts should be made to remove constraints hindering progress in this area, including inappropriate litigation practices and unjustified regulatory requirements, and to enhance the involvement of private industry in this effort.

*Recommendation 31.* Governments and donors are encouraged to support social science research on human sexuality and sexual behaviour in different cultural settings so as to provide information useful in intervention programmes to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases/HIV infections.

*Recommendation 32.* In order to improve the efficiency of the limited resources available for family planning programmes, Governments and donors are urged to support field studies at the subnational level in different cultural settings to ascertain the relative cost-effectiveness of various approaches.

*Recommendation 33.* Governments, non-governmental organizations and donors are urged to support ongoing applied research efforts in family planning. Special emphasis should be given to definitions, standards and indicators of quality of services appropriate to the country/programme setting and to including quality of service in the description, monitoring and evaluation of family planning programmes.

*Recommendation 34.* In view of the importance attached to the role of family planning programmes in enabling individuals to achieve their reproductive goals, Governments and donors should support research efforts to develop indicators of programme performance to capture this crucial dimension.

*Recommendation 35.* Governments are urged to attach higher priority to the utilization of available data and information for programme planning and implementation; to the collection of timely and reliable data and information, especially on cost; and to the strengthening of human resources in various countries in order to facilitate data collection, analysis and utilization for programme planning and implementation.

## **EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON POPULATION GROWTH AND DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE**

The Expert Group Meeting on Population Growth and Demographic Structure was held in Paris from 16 to 20 November 1992. The Government of France was the host. The participants, representing different geographical regions, scientific disciplines and institutions, included 15 experts invited by the Secretary-General of the Conference in their personal capacities and representatives of the United Nations Office at Vienna, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations University (UNU), the five United Nations regional commissions, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank. Also represented were the following inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations: Commission of the European Communities, Council of Europe, League of Arab States, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Organization of African Unity (OAU), International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP) and Population Council. The International Institute on Aging (INIA) and the San Diego State University International Conference on Population Ageing were also represented.

As a basis for discussion, 14 of the experts had prepared papers on the agenda items. The Population Division of the then Department of Economic and Social Development had prepared a background paper for the Meeting, entitled "Population growth and changes in the demographic structure: trends and diversity". Discussion notes were provided by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Office at Vienna, the International Institute on Aging, and the Secretary-General of the San Diego University International Conference on Population Ageing.

### **OPENING STATEMENTS**

Opening statements were made by Mr. Gérard Moreau, Director of the Directorate of Population and Migration of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration, on behalf of the Government of France; Dr. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development; and Mr. Shunichi Inoue, Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference.

countries (particularly China), and, to a lesser extent, in Latin America, and mortality decline had slowed down. Since the late 1970s, the growth rate of the world population had remained relatively constant (about 1.7 per cent per annum), while diverging regional trends had been observed. In Latin America, the rate of population growth had continued to decline. In Asia, it had remained constant and in Africa it had increased.

The slow-down in the growth of the world population had not yet been translated into declining absolute numbers. According to the medium variant of the 1990 revision of the United Nations population estimates and projections, the annual increment to the world population, which had grown from an average of 47 million between 1950 and 1955 to an average of 88 million between 1985 and 1990, was expected to continue to increase until it reached a high of 98 million between 1995 and 2000. The annual increment was not expected to start to decline until after 2000; it would reach an average of 83 million between 2020 and 2025, which was about the level that existed in 1985.

The total population of the world had increased from 2.5 billion in 1950 to 5.3 billion in 1990. According to the medium variant of the 1990 revision of the United Nations population estimates and projections, the world population was projected to reach 6.3 billion in 2000 and 8.5 billion in 2025. It must be recognized that the medium variant was a plausible but not a certain course of future population growth. An appraisal of the range of prospects for future growth was indicated by the high- and low-variant projections. In the high variant, which assumed a slower fertility decline, the average annual growth rate would increase to 1.9 per cent per annum in 1990-1995 and then decline slowly to 1.4 per cent in 2020-2025, resulting in a world population of 9.4 billion in 2025. In the low variant, which assumed a faster fertility decline, the average annual growth rate would resume its decline and reach 0.6 per cent in 2020-2025, resulting in a world population of 7.6 billion in 2025. Those projections clearly showed that the patterns of fertility and mortality decline in the coming decades would be crucial determinants of the size of the world population.

The Expert Group Meeting was also informed that during the four decades 1950-1990, age distribution became younger in countries where fertility had not yet started to fall (pre-initiation countries). Population ageing had started in countries that had experienced a significant decline in fertility (late-initiation countries) and proceeded further in low-fertility countries (early-initiation countries). Between 1990 and 2025, ageing would be very limited in pre-initiation countries, marked in late-initiation countries and rapid in early-initiation countries. A rapid growth of the elderly was also projected in all countries of the less developed regions. Both rapid ageing in early-initiation countries and rapid growth of the elderly in pre- and late-initiation countries were expected to reach unparalleled levels between 2010 and 2020.

The participants were informed that the estimates of future populations prepared by the Population Division were not to be viewed as targets but as projected populations and that a review of past projections by a group of



Mr. Moreau recalled that at the time of the 1974 World Population Conference much of the debate revolved around the question of whether economic development was a prerequisite for successful population policies or whether the reverse was the case. He noted that, at the present time, that debate had become irrelevant in so far as both views operated in unison. Mr. Moreau proposed that family planning policies not be considered in isolation but should be a part of a broad approach, particularly with regard to the health of women and children. Mr. Moreau noted that international migration was of major concern to both the developed and the developing countries and suggested that migration should become an instrument of economic development and not be viewed simply as the result of population growth and lack of development.

In her opening statement, Dr. Sadik introduced many of the themes that were discussed at the Meeting. She emphasized the importance of social development considering that the process of demographic transition was part of a global process of social and economic change. Reference was made to the experience of countries that had given high priority to education, health and family planning, promoted women's status and encouraged community participation, and had seen a rapid fertility decline, even in the absence of significant economic growth. Dr. Sadik stressed that improving the status of women had proved to be critical for successful family planning programmes. In concluding, Dr. Sadik stated that beyond universal access to quality family planning services, social development, poverty eradication and suppression of gender-related discrimination were required in order to achieve the long-term global population goals set by the Amsterdam Declaration on a Better Life for Future Generations.

Mr. Inoue noted that the recommendations of the world population conferences held in 1974 and 1984 had played an important role in policy formulation at the national and international levels, but it was time to go beyond those recommendations because they were too general and difficult to translate into concrete actions. He believed that this was particularly relevant because during the past two decades, population policies had been brought closer to the mainstream of Governments' policy-making and the political atmosphere had improved in favour of promoting family planning.

#### SUMMARY OF THE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION

The paper entitled "Population growth and changes in the demographic structure: trends and diversity", prepared by the Population Division, provided the demographic background for the discussions of the Meeting. The participants were informed that three phases could be delineated in the growth of the world population between 1950 and 1990. First, between 1950 and 1970, the rate of growth of the world population had risen (from 1.8 per cent per annum in 1950-1965 to 2.1 per cent in 1965-1970), because mortality had declined rapidly in all parts of the less developed regions while fertility had remained relatively constant. Secondly, in the 1970s, the world population growth rate had fallen because fertility had declined fast in several Asian

independent experts had shown that the medium- and long-term accuracy of those projections had been relatively good. The participants noted that, in view of the critical role of mortality in the ageing process, it would be useful to consider alternative mortality assumptions.

### *Population growth and socio-economic development*

The Meeting devoted its first session to a general exchange of views on the interrelationships between population growth and economic growth. The participants were in agreement that although the findings of recent research on the consequences of rapid population growth for the process of economic development were mixed, they supported the conclusion that a slower population growth would be beneficial to economic development for most developing countries.

The participants also noted that a strongly negative correlation between the growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and population growth had clearly emerged in the 1980s. On the other hand, empirical studies carried out in the 1960s and 1970s had consistently found the absence of any significant correlation. The interpretation of that reversal had raised difficulties of both a theoretical and a statistical nature, and the demo-economic literature did not provide any clue for explaining it. Neo-Malthusian authors had long maintained that such correlations were meaningless, while according to the models favoured by anti-Malthusians, the correlation between population growth and economic growth should have been negative at first and then positive—namely, the reverse of what had been observed. It was suggested that the reversal observed in the 1980s might be related to the deterioration of the international economic environment. Certain countries might have succeeded in adjusting to their rapid population growth in the past through external factors such as aid, indebtedness or export earnings. At the present time, that adaptative margin had disappeared. In addition, when economic growth slackened, the priority given to satisfying immediate demographic needs negatively affected current levels of saving and investment and, consequently, future output. Similarly, increasing returns might have been achieved in the short run at the price of a certain tapping of natural resources whose negative effects made themselves felt in the long run. Some participants were of the opinion that the negative impact of population growth in recent years was primarily the result of institutional and market failures.

Another main difficulty in interpreting the reversal observed arose from the fact that the value of the regression coefficient implied that increasing the economically active population would reduce total output. In the short run, the capital available and the quantity and quality of natural resources remained virtually fixed factors, and the marginal productivity of labour could not be negative. Results of a simulation exercise were presented to the participants which showed that observed correlation coefficients were biased by the complex interactions between population growth and economic growth and that changes in the face value of coefficients might occur even under the assumption of a constant causal effect of population growth on the growth of the per capita output.

Some participants argued that the use of income-on-population regressions had little policy relevance and created a false polarization between neo-Malthusian and anti-Malthusian interpretations. Those participants observed that there was no doubt that population growth was not the dominant factor affecting development but that did not mean that such growth played no role in the development process. Other participants, however, noted that, at least implicitly, one was either Malthusian or anti-Malthusian. Therefore, regression analyses of population growth effects on developmental progress were needed because they enabled those respective points of view to be weighed.

### *Confronting poverty in the developing countries*

The Group agreed that one of the major challenges of development existed in the predominantly rural countries of South Asia and Africa. Widespread poverty exacerbated the negative effects of population pressure on land use and was a major obstacle to fertility and mortality decline in rural areas. The participants agreed that the occurrence of the demographic transition in predominantly rural countries in the coming decades, as assumed by the United Nations population projections, was conditioned on poverty alleviation.

A comparison of development trends in East Asia, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa showed that poverty trends were a reflection of macro-economic performances. The experience of East Asian countries clearly illustrated that it took vigorous growth in both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors to obtain downward poverty trends and to absorb a rapidly growing labour force. In South Asia, technological change in the agricultural sector had brought the rate of growth of food production above the rate of growth of population. Yet, because of insufficient growth of employment in the other sectors, it had increased the incidence of poverty among the majority of the landless, who were pervasive in that region, as well as among many smallholders. In sub-Saharan Africa, the deterioration of the agricultural production base, which had paralleled the general economic decline during the 1980s, had resulted in a dramatic increase in the incidence of poverty among subsistence farmers.

Evidence was presented showing that the association between poverty and high fertility was strongly related to the low economic and social status of women. One participant stressed that where women had little access to productive resources and little control over family income, they depended on children for social status and income security. The Group agreed that creating mainstream development programmes that would improve the status of women was central to poverty alleviation policies and fertility decline.

Evidence was also presented indicating that women's low levels of education and access to health and family planning services were intermediate variables in the correlation between poverty, on the one side, and child mortality and fertility, on the other. That was best illustrated by the experience of Sri Lanka and the state of Kerala in India, where investments in the health

and education sectors had resulted in sharp reductions in both child mortality and fertility, despite low levels of per capita income.

The Group observed that predominantly rural countries tended to lack the physical, institutional and human resources necessary to provide the public services that were critical in promoting female education and family health and welfare. The Group also observed that inadequate infrastructure combined with population dispersion made service delivery very expensive in rural areas. In addition, the participants drew attention to a recent study of government expenditures which concluded that, in many low-income countries, health expenditures were severely constrained by servicing the foreign debt.

The Group noted that in sub-Saharan Africa, economic incentives to bear children, in addition to other cultural and social factors, were strong. Women's high fertility was typically associated with high labour-force participation in food production and related activities. The labour requirements of households were much higher in rural Africa than in rural Asia, because water was much less easily accessible and fuelwood was much more extensively used. Undercapitalization had also resulted in highly labour-intensive/low-productivity agriculture. In addition, low population densities, fragmented labour markets and acute seasonality of rain-fed agriculture had caused recurrent labour shortages.

Some participants argued that there was no guarantee that population growth and increased densities would automatically stimulate intensification of agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa. Rather, improving African agriculture required sound and committed public policies. They also noted that prospects for economic growth and for rapid increases in food production in Africa in the coming decades were generally believed to be limited; therefore it was all the more important and yet all the more difficult to reduce the rates of population growth in a situation of growing poverty.

The Group agreed that increasing labour productivity—especially that of women, who were primarily responsible for food production—by improving the access of women to training and credit and enhancing their legal rights was critical to increasing agricultural productivity and family income. That would also lead to fertility reduction in sub-Saharan Africa.

#### *Demographic impacts of development patterns*

The participants noted that it was now well-established that demographic transition was always triggered by a rapid decline in mortality. In the developing countries, mortality decline primarily resulted from public health and sanitation programmes. The Group observed that mortality decline initially had a positive effect on fertility, thus causing a rapid population growth in the developing countries. Mortality decline tended to raise fertility as the life-span of couples and child survivorship increased, while maternal morbidity and sterility decreased. In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, the positive effect of mortality decline on fertility did not lead to rapid population growth, because mortality declined gradually while marriage was progres-

sively delayed to a later age and singlehood (as well as out-migration) increased. In contrast, in the developing countries, the pace of mortality decline was incomparably quicker, while economic and social development did not immediately bring about late nuptiality. In fact, quite the opposite occurred. For example, in several Latin American countries that experienced rapid economic growth in the 1950s and the 1960s (Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela), rapid urbanization, employment opportunities in industries and services, and social mobility led to a marriage boom. Higher nuptiality, together with reduced maternal morbidity and mortality, caused an increase in marital fertility.

The Group observed that it was not until modern contraceptive methods (e.g., the pill, intra-uterine devices (IUDs) and sterilization) were widely made available in the mid-1960s that fertility began to decline in the developing countries. The Group agreed that there was a positive correlation between the rapidity by which fertility declined and the dissemination of contraceptive methods. The Group further agreed that fertility trends in countries such as Costa Rica and Sri Lanka or in the state of Kerala in India showed that fertility might decline even in the absence of significant economic growth, with social development. On the other hand, there was ample evidence that fertility remained high in countries that had experienced low economic growth and limited social development.

Declines in birth rates had recently been observed among the least educated and poorest social groups, including in those rural areas, in countries such as Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Brazil and, possibly, Indonesia. Those declines had not been primarily associated with improvements in the welfare of households but rather by worsening living conditions. In that context of poverty, resort to contraception—often, to sterilization—was chosen by older women who wished to cease reproduction even though the first part of their reproductive life had followed a traditional pattern: early nuptiality and closely spaced and uncontrolled births. The Group agreed that that fertility transition was driven by the large supply of free contraceptive means that were made available to the poorest groups under health and family planning programmes. Some participants suggested that mass media, particularly radio and television, contributed to fertility decline by diffusing among the poorest social groups the consumption patterns and family models of the urban middle class and that rapid urbanization had disrupted the traditional social structure, of which the poor were a part. In addition, it was noted that such fertility decline was only observed in those countries that had adequate medical and administrative infrastructures and enjoyed minimum civil order. The Group was of the opinion that, although a reduction in fertility among the poor indicated that birth control had found wide social acceptance in several countries of Asia and Latin America, a durable reduction in fertility required improved standards of living of the poorest social groups.

The Meeting was informed that the demographic transition in Latin America occurred in a context of rapid urbanization. There was some evidence of patterns of urbanization and of internal migration influencing the magnitude and timing of demographic changes.

With the exception of Argentina and Uruguay, which followed the European pattern of demographic transition, fertility declined first in two countries that had experienced early urbanization and had relatively well-developed social security programmes: Chile and Cuba. Subsequently, fertility fell among the urban populations of countries that had large urban concentrations such as Brazil, Colombia and Mexico. Later on, fertility started to decrease among the rural populations of those countries and in the urban areas of other Latin American countries. A comparison of patterns of fertility decline in Latin America also suggested that countries having an interlinked network of modern cities, such as Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, would tend to go through the demographic transition much more quickly than countries having only one mega-city and still more quickly than those that had only small and traditional towns.

Studies on demographic changes in Brazil showed that large flows of high-fertility migrants from the north-eastern region initially resulted in a slow-down of fertility decline in the metropolitan areas of the more advanced southern and south-eastern regions. Similarly, migrants to the new agricultural areas of frontier regions had higher fertility than the native populations in the regions of both origin and destination. However, there was also evidence of rapidly falling fertility among migrants moving from poorer regions to urban areas, after their arrival, thereby contributing to the overall fertility decline. It was further suggested that return migration might have been influential in changing values and attitudes towards fertility in the places of origin.

#### *Demographic and health transitions*

The participants observed that, during the demographic transition, the decline in mortality was associated with a shift from a high prevalence of deaths owing to infectious and acute diseases at a young age to morbidity and mortality dominated by chronic and degenerative diseases of older adults. In a paper entitled "Demographic and epidemiological trends affecting health policy in the developing countries", the participants were informed that the pattern of epidemiological change associated with the demographic transition varied greatly among and within the developing countries.

On a regional basis, the "epidemiological transition" was most advanced in Latin America and the Caribbean. Cardiovascular diseases had become the principal cause of death in a majority of Latin American countries. In Africa, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, health improvements had lagged behind those of other major regions of the world. However, there were indications of increasing prevalence of cardiovascular disease, respiratory tuberculosis, accidents and violence in many African countries. Epidemiological change had been most rapid—albeit diverse—in those countries of East and South-East Asia that had experienced a swift demographic transition (e.g., China and the Republic of Korea).

The Group noted that, in the midst of the health transition, the developing countries faced a complex epidemiological situation that put additional stress on their health systems. While chronic and degenerative diseases had emerged

as a serious problem among urban upper- and middle-class adults, the prevalence of infectious and parasitic diseases remained high among the rural and poor sectors of society. Studies had shown that there was a striking overlap of stages in the epidemiological transition in some of the Latin American countries which were characterized by large social and economic inequality. Marked differences in morbidity and mortality had sometimes also been observed between ethnic groups. In some cases, there was also evidence of increasing morbidity associated with pre-transition diseases—for example, malaria, dengue fever and cholera—which had resurfaced after an initial period of control.

The Group observed that while the epidemiological transition resulted in an overall decline in most age- and cause-specific mortality rates, the development process often brought about an increase in deaths owing to accidents and violence. Changes in the number and proportion of the different age groups of the population also altered the morbidity profile of the developing countries. As large cohorts reached adulthood, maternal mortality tended to increase, often as a result of induced abortions. In addition, there was some evidence of sexually transmitted diseases spreading with the growth of the sexually active population. Furthermore, as population aged, the rate of disability was likely to increase. For example, the application of currently observed gross disability rates to the projected population of the Philippines showed that the projected increases in the number of disabled persons were of concern in terms of future service and care requirements. Still, it was unclear whether rates of disability would increase as societies modernized in the developing world, as they had in the developed countries.

The Group agreed that a major challenge for health policy in the developing countries arose from the coexistence of problems associated with all stages of the epidemiological transition. The participants noted that studies on the cost-effectiveness of alternative strategies of disease intervention strategies pointed to the comparative advantage of prevention of chronic diseases in the developing countries. The participants further noted that the implementation of preventive measures was often hampered by scepticism about the efficacy of educational programmes, political preference for short-term demonstrable results and the fact that it required interventions beyond the control of health ministries.

The Group agreed that a new challenge for health policy had recently emerged with the spread of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection in many countries of Asia and Africa. The Group observed that it was estimated that two thirds of the total number of HIV-infected individuals in the world—that is, some 7 million to 8 million individuals—lived in sub-Saharan Africa. While most of the HIV-positive individuals in Africa currently lived in relatively low population countries of East Africa, there was evidence of rising numbers of HIV cases in West Africa, particularly in Nigeria, whose population accounted for one fourth of the total sub-Saharan population.

In a paper entitled "Demographic and development consequences of the AIDS epidemic in Africa", the participants were informed that the epidemi-

ology of the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) in Africa was characterized by a male-to-female ratio of infection of approximately 1.1 in most countries and by high prevalence rates among adults aged 20-40 and children under five years of age. There was also evidence that the major risk factors associated with the spread of the disease were multiple sexual partners, sex with commercial sex workers and a history of sexually transmitted diseases. Studies had also shown that extra-marital sexual activities, which were commonplace in much of sub-Saharan Africa and which had been, in the past, mostly accommodated within the extended family, had increasingly been directed to prostitutes. In addition, it had been suggested that economic difficulties experienced in most sub-Saharan African countries had had a significantly negative impact on sexual behaviour. For example, an increasing number of young women, many of whom were migrants to urban areas, had turned to offering sex for payment. The Group was in agreement that, in the absence of a cure for HIV/AIDS, change in sexual behaviour was the only way to prevent the transmission of HIV. The Group was further in agreement that, in the African context, changes in sexual behaviour required vigorous action to promote and improve women's control over their sexuality.

The Group observed that the AIDS epidemic was likely to have dramatic implications for the African family system. The participants noted that there was evidence of the HIV epidemic challenging the universality of marriage in African societies. In Uganda and Zambia, it was estimated that one third of the victims were unmarried, and increasing divorce rates were reported among the seropositive. The participants further noted that the HIV epidemic was also disrupting the intergenerational transfers and support system. For example, in Uganda, it was estimated that 13 per cent of the population under age 18 had been orphaned by AIDS. Furthermore, in the communities worst hit by the epidemic, the majority of survivors were elderly people and young children and an increasing number of families were headed either by the eldest child or by an elderly member. The Group was concerned that, as a result of the AIDS epidemic, the responsibility for caring for an increasing number of children and elderly would be transferred from the family to society at large in countries that already lacked the most basic social and economic resources.

### *Population growth and employment*

The participants were in agreement that a major challenge faced by the economies of the developing countries was the creation of sufficient employment opportunities in the modern sector to absorb their rapidly growing labour force. The participants observed that the labour force had grown rapidly during the 1980s in most developing countries and would continue to grow rapidly during the 1990s. That included many countries that had experienced a decline in the growth rate of their population because of the existence of a 10- to 25-year lag between a slow-down in population growth and its effect on the supply of labour. The participants further observed that the increase in labour supply was particularly dramatic in urban areas because of the high level of rural-urban migration.



The Group was in agreement that the policies necessary to generate employment operated on the demand side of the labour market. A paper entitled "Population growth, employment expansion and industrialization: lessons from the NIEs and Latin American countries", provided the participants with a comparative analysis of demographic and employment trends, and discussed the extent to which the macroeconomic policies that had been implemented over the past 30 years in Latin America and East Asia had been successful and consistent in meeting the needs of a rapidly growing labour force.

The participants noted that full employment and steady growth of the proportion of wage workers employed in the modern sectors had increasingly characterized the labour market in the newly industrialized countries of East Asia since the 1960s. In contrast, in most Latin American countries, job-creation had slowed down considerably in the manufacturing sectors during the 1970s and 1980s, leading to an increase in employment in the informal sector and to growing numbers of self-employed, underemployed and unemployed workers.

The participants were in agreement that, to a large extent, the contrasting performances of labour markets in East Asia and Latin America were a reflection of the respective macroeconomic policies adopted in the 1960s. The industrialization strategies followed by the newly industrialized countries—that is, outward economic orientation and preference given to labour-intensive technologies in industries and in agriculture—had resulted in a gradual sectoral shift in output which had greatly contributed to the absorption and sectoral reallocation of the growing labour force. On the other hand, the preference given to capital-intensive technologies during the stage of import-substitution and the extension of that import-substitution strategy to the production of durable and capital goods had eventually limited the growth of employment in both the rural and the manufacturing sectors to below that of the labour force in Latin America. The limited impact of the structural adjustment policies adopted in the 1980s on the wage and sectoral composition of the Latin American labour markets also pointed to institutional rigidities slowing down the shift in the output mix from non-tradable to tradable sectors and generating informal employment.

#### *Social change and the elderly in the developing countries*

The Group noted that in the developing countries the family was the traditional caregiver and was expected to provide care for the elderly. In considering the support roles of the family, the participants underscored the necessity of taking into consideration the demographic, social and economic factors that influenced the size and structure of families and the relationships between generations.

The shift from family enterprise to wage employment that resulted from industrialization was singled out as one of the most fundamental economic changes that might affect intergenerational relationships. It was observed that the authority that the family elderly traditionally held over young family members through control of key productive resources became less important

when alternative means of employment were available. The participants noted that industrialization, urbanization and increasing education also provided expanding opportunities for women to be engaged in wage employment outside the home. Consequently, women tended to be less available to care for the young and the old in the household. In fact, development of the formal sector was likely to reduce opportunities for the elderly to be engaged in productive work, while resources tended to shift from the hands of the parents to the younger generation.

The Group noted that concern with the implications of those changes for the burdens of younger people and the quality of support and care given to the elderly had been expressed in many countries. However, the participants noted that in Japan many elements of traditional family life were retained despite the advanced urban economy and the existence of public income-support programmes for the elderly. The participants also observed that there was evidence in all cultural settings of the elderly looking for autonomy and independence and that relying solely on family support might be counterproductive.

The participants noted that the availability of direct family support for the elderly was strongly reduced, at least temporarily, when rural-to-urban or international migration physically separated the generations. The Group also noted that, in many developing countries, large numbers of families that lived in poverty and did not have adequate housing could not provide the care and support for their elderly that they were expected to give. The elderly who currently lacked the most basic support and care were those whose families lived in shanty towns next to large urban agglomerations, who belonged to single-parent families and were destitute in rural South Asia.

One recurrent theme of the discussion was the need to address ageing issues from a gender perspective because of the large proportion of females in the elderly population and the existence of significant differences in the social and economic status between elderly males and elderly females.

In a paper entitled "Role and status of adult women and social and economic conditions of elderly women: a cohort approach", the participants were informed that significant changes in educational attainment and marital, employment and health histories of the successive cohorts entering old age were expected.

The participants observed that the elderly were both providers and receivers of care and agreed that increased literacy and education among the elderly, while enhancing the contributions of the elderly to development, would also generate new needs and put additional demands on society.

The Group noted that, although the proportion of elderly was still low in most developing countries, the number of elderly was increasing rapidly. The Group further noted that the process of ageing would be very rapid in the developing countries as compared to the developed countries, because fertility decline was faster in the developing countries than in the developed countries.

The Group observed that the Governments of many developing countries were not aware of ageing issues in their countries or of the fact that the elderly

represented important human resources that could be tapped for development. The Group noted that issues arising from population ageing could be anticipated well ahead of time. Therefore, it encouraged the Governments of the developing countries to incorporate an ageing component into their long-term planning which would allow the timely development of appropriate societal responses to the changing needs of the elderly.

### *Social development and ageing in the developed countries*

The participants noted that, while ageing was usually defined as an increase in the proportion of the elderly, most of the economic consequences of ageing and related policy implications required reference to absolute numbers of the aged. Studies on the economic implications of ageing had mainly focused on impacts on consumption, the labour market and public expenditures. There was ample evidence from the literature that ageing had a limited effect on overall consumption. Whereas it had often been argued that ageing might have significant effects on certain individual consumption sectors (e.g., medical goods), some participants noted that intersectoral transfers owing to population ageing were small in comparison with transfers driven by income growth and that there was no need for policy intervention, because adjustments were made through market mechanisms.

The participants observed that labour market responses to the ageing of the labour force had been markedly inadequate because of individual preferences and institutional rigidities. The decline in the labour force participation rate of the population aged 65 or over in the developed countries between 1950 and 1990 was estimated at two thirds for males and three fourths for females, on average, while in the age group 60-64, corresponding figures were approximately two fifths and one third. No reversal in trends was to be expected during the last decade of the twentieth century, and the decline was expected to continue, albeit at a slower pace. One participant noted that current and prospective retirement preferences in the developed countries were on a collision course with the lack of supplies of labour-intensive inputs that would be required to provide needed upper-age health care and institutional, social and home-care services in the forthcoming decades.

The Group agreed that the decline in economic activity at older age would compound the stress that population ageing put on the financing of social expenditures by further increasing the ratio of inactive to active populations. The Group was also in agreement that, while reforms of national pension and health systems were made necessary by population ageing and behavioural changes in all the developed countries, the adequacy of providing care for the elderly would eventually be determined by the rate of economic growth in the coming decades.

The participants observed that the recent dramatic decline in mortality at older age had resulted in a rapid growth of the very old in both absolute and relative terms in the developed countries. The participants further observed that there were major background and behavioural differences between the younger and the older elderly members. Numerous studies had shown that the proportions of women and of persons living alone or institutionalized were

higher among the very old than in any other age category and that the very old exhibited lower levels of education and income and higher levels of disability. The Group recognized that, although the older segment of the aged population comprised numerous examples of successful ageing, the very old were often in need of assistance in their activities of daily living because of increasing impairments associated with their declining health status.

The Group noted that there was wide evidence that the vast majority of frail elderly was currently receiving assistance from informal family helpers—for example, spouse or daughters. Studies also suggested that the elderly and their family only turned to formal care as a last resort and that formal care usually did not completely substitute for informal care but rather tended to supplement it increasing the total level of care. The Group was concerned that the availability of informal care was declining as a result of increasing geographical mobility, employment of women, singlehood and divorce as well as by decreasing fertility and the rising complexity and changing nature of family relationships. The Group recommended that research efforts and policy analysis be undertaken on the physical and human resources needed to accommodate the growing number of very old people and on the appropriate combination of social and family support.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

The World Population Plan of Action, adopted at Bucharest in 1974, and the International Conference on Population, held at Mexico City in 1984, noted that demographic inertia leads to an increasing population for many decades to come. In the 1990s, the issues of population size, growth and distribution remain major challenges to the revitalization of economic growth and social development in the developing countries and to the preservation of the environment.

In the coming decades, patterns of fertility and mortality decline will be crucial determinants of the size of the world population and will affect the balance between human numbers, use of resources and pace of development. Thus, a slowly declining pattern of fertility could more than double the size of the world population in the long run as compared to a more rapid decline. As affirmed by the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, such doubling will exacerbate the strains on the social situation, economic growth, the environment and the use of natural resources. The speed of fertility decline will depend on the extent to which economic and social development goals are achieved, particularly in the relatively less developed countries. Recent experience also shows that fertility may decline with social development.

The World Population Plan of Action also noted the importance of population ageing and drew particular attention to the acceleration in the ageing of the populations of the developing regions. In addition, the International Plan of Action on Ageing (1982) stressed the centrality of population ageing in social and economic development. Not only are the numbers and proportions of the elderly increasing rapidly in many of the developing

countries but the social and economic conditions facing the elderly are undergoing a profound transition. The demographic transition is bringing about substantial changes in the family, notably its composition and intergenerational relationships, and in society, particularly in the age structure and the intergenerational solidarity between older and younger age categories.

The Expert Group Meeting on Population Growth and Demographic Structure, having reviewed the available research and discussed various policy and operational implications, proposes the following recommendations.

*Recommendation 1.* Noting that the size, growth and age composition of the population may play an important role in achieving sustained economic growth in the developing countries and recognizing the efforts and progress made to date in many developing countries, the Expert Group urges the Governments of all the developing countries to increase their political commitment to human resources development and population programmes that have impacts on population trends and characteristics, such as population growth, morbidity and mortality, reproduction, population distribution, internal and international migration and population structure, while respecting the freedom of choice of individuals, and to adopt integrated approaches to social and economic development which include population considerations at all levels of decision-making and in resource allocation.

*Recommendation 2.* Noting that mortality and fertility rates in the least developed countries are among the highest in the world and that the economies of those countries are the weakest, the Expert Group urges the international community to increase its assistance to population and development programmes in those countries.

*Recommendation 3.* Noting that, in addition to the least developed countries, other developing countries and regions within those countries are also experiencing rapid population growth, the Expert Group urges the international community to extend assistance to population and development programmes to those countries.

*Recommendation 4.* Noting that widespread poverty and social inequality exacerbate the consequences of rapid population growth, the Expert Group urges Governments to adopt comprehensive and consistent economic and social strategies to alleviate poverty and reduce social inequality in both rural and urban settings.

*Recommendation 5.* Although rapid progress in the provision of social and health services has occurred in many regions of the world, the services are unevenly distributed among urban and rural areas, within cities and among socio-economic groups. Accordingly, Governments are urged to give high policy priority to spatial, social, age and gender equity in the allocation of resources and in access to services that are likely to result in reduced mortality and low levels of fertility.

*Recommendation 6.* The Expert Group recognizes that the population momentum will ensure a continued increase in the school-age population in many developing countries into the twenty-first century and that higher

educational levels are a major factor in reducing mortality and fertility and in increasing individual earnings. In the light of the importance of a skilled labour force in an increasingly competitive world, the Expert Group urges Governments to give high policy priority to education programmes benefiting all children, irrespective of gender, by increasing enrolment rates and reducing drop-out rates, through the assurance of resources to those programmes that would increase teaching quality and the provision of educational materials and facilities.

*Recommendation 7.* Recognizing that persistently low levels of female education and female participation in the formal labour force and low wages paid to women severely hamper the demographic transition, the Expert Group recommends that high priority be given to investments and expenditures aimed at increasing women's access to education, training and credit and to economic policies that increase their opportunity to participate in the formal labour force.

*Recommendation 8.\** In recognizing the rights of couples and individuals to choose the number and spacing of their children, the Expert Group urges Governments and the international community to give high priority to increasing the quantity and quality of comprehensive reproductive health-care programmes (including, for example, family planning, maternal and child health care and the prevention and treatment of infertility in an integrated manner), which constitute an essential component of efforts to improve health and reduce fertility.

*Recommendation 9.* Recognizing that the economic contribution of women is undervalued and that the key role it can play in demographic change is rarely recognized, the Expert Group urges Governments to take measures to remove barriers that limit women's social, economic, legal and political rights and to undertake steps to ensure their economic independence.

*Recommendation 10.* Since the rapid demographic and epidemiological transition under way in both the developed and the developing countries is producing great changes in their morbidity profiles, the Expert Group recommends that health-sector priorities be reassessed to adapt to the new situations in order to ensure the selection of the most cost-effective and efficient means of providing health care to all.

*Recommendation 11.* The Expert Group urges Governments to increase public awareness of the potential demographic and socio-economic consequences of AIDS, to integrate these potential consequences into the national planning process and to devise appropriate responses for addressing the threat of AIDS and to mitigate the socio-economic problems that are likely to arise. Governments should also be encouraged to develop comprehensive health-care strategies for preventing and curing sexually transmitted diseases, with a view to minimizing the effects of HIV infection and the spread of AIDS.

*Recommendation 12.* Recognizing that in many countries, pension and

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\*Three participants expressed regret that they were unable to associate themselves with the adoption of this recommendation.

social security programmes for the elderly are inadequate, have low coverage or do not exist at all, the Expert Group recommends that high priority be given to establishing a "safety net" for the elderly in such countries. Long-term planning to anticipate the changing needs over time of the young, elderly and working-age populations should be encouraged so as to ensure that adequate resources are available when and where they are needed.

*Recommendation 13.* The elderly, a heterogeneous and active group, are first and foremost an important human resource for development. Recognizing that the interrelationships between social, cultural, political, economic and demographic patterns have a profound impact on family, kinship and household structure, which, in turn, are crucial determinants of the well-being of the elderly, the Expert Group recommends that Governments keep these factors in mind when formulating long-term development policies.

*Recommendation 14.* Recognizing that rapid demographic change, including population ageing, is occurring in many areas, the Expert Group recommends that research efforts and policy analysis be undertaken on intergenerational equity in the allocation of both public and private resources, on the appropriate combination of public, community-based and family support of the elderly, and on the physical and human resources needed to accommodate the growing numbers of elderly persons.

*Recommendation 15.* Recognizing the heterogeneity of the elderly population and the changing needs of individuals as they age, the Expert Group urges Governments to address the particular requirements of the very old, who in many societies are the fastest growing segment of the total population. Special efforts should be made to enable very old people to remain in their own homes and community, by ensuring that adequate support is available.

*Recommendation 16.* In planning for economic and social development, Governments are urged to monitor population characteristics and trends as accurately and comprehensively and regularly as possible, in order to anticipate likely changes in the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of various population subgroups. The collection of data to enable cohort and longitudinal analyses is especially encouraged.

*Recommendation 17.* Valuable lessons could be learned from studying the interrelationships between demographic, social, economic and environmental changes in a comparative perspective that encompasses countries experiencing varying rates of economic development. The Expert Group urges international organizations to cooperate and avoid duplication in their efforts to gather and share comparable data relevant for comparative analysis.

*Recommendation 18.* Recognizing that summary measures of population growth and demographic structure are important and meaningful indicators of the general demographic conditions of national, regional and world population aggregates, the Expert Group recommends that policy-relevant, social, cultural, age-specific, ethnic- and gender-specific subnational data be more systematically collected, analysed and disseminated during the next decade in order to capture the vast demographic heterogeneity masked by aggregate statistics.

*Recommendation 19.* Recognizing the diversity of demographic issues and the need for trained professionals to deal with them and related issues, the Expert Group urges Governments and the international community to support and strengthen high-level training courses in demography and related fields in the developing countries.



## **EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND MIGRATION**

The Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution and Migration was held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, from 18 to 22 January 1993. The Government of Bolivia was the host. The participants, representing different geographical regions, scientific disciplines and institutions, included 16 experts invited by the Secretary-General of the Conference in their personal capacities and representatives of the five United Nations regional commissions, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Also represented were the following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations: the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), the Center for Migration Studies, the Population Crisis Committee and the World Council of Churches.

As a basis for discussion, the 16 experts had prepared papers on the main agenda items in order to provide a framework for discussion. The views expressed by the experts were their own and did not necessarily represent the views of their Governments or organizations. The Population Division of the (then) Department of Economic and Social Development had prepared a background document for the meeting, entitled "Population distribution and migration: the emerging issues". Discussion notes were provided by the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), WHO, UNHCR, FAO, ILO, the United Nations Office in Vienna, HABITAT, IOM and the Population Institute.

### **OPENING STATEMENTS**

Opening statements were made by the Minister of Planning of the Government of Bolivia; Dr. Nafis Sadik, the Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development; Mr. Shunichi Inoue, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference; the Director of the Centro Iberoamericano de Formación para el Desarrollo; and the Vice-President of the Republic of Bolivia.

All the speakers emphasized the importance of migration in the modern world and particularly its contribution to urbanization. The Secretary-General

of the Conference noted that urbanization was an integral part of the development process, but that there were considerable differences between the urbanization process being experienced by the developing countries during the second half of the twentieth century and that experienced by the developed world a century before. In particular, the cities of the developing countries had to absorb greater numbers of migrants and had generally smaller productive bases than their counterparts in the developed world had had in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, most developing countries were characterized by having high proportions of their urban populations concentrated in a single city. Evidence suggesting that in recent years the small and medium-sized cities of some developing countries were growing more rapidly than large urban agglomerations was considered a positive sign, indicating a more balanced development process within countries.

The Secretary-General of the Conference further noted that rural-urban migration was only one of the forms of internal migration that were related to development. Rural-rural movements were sizeable in many countries, and their interrelations with the environment were of growing importance, particularly where resettlement in frontier areas rich in biodiversity was involved.

With respect to international migration, the Secretary-General of the Conference remarked that, historically, it had generally been perceived as a positive process enabling the development of many of the current industrialized countries and opening new possibilities for millions of people. During the past decade, however, the changes taking place in Eastern Europe and the growing economic and demographic disparities between the developed and the developing countries had considerably increased the perceived potential for international migration, causing concern in the main receiving countries, particularly those in Europe. International migration was characterized as a sensitive political issue whose discussion was often hampered by the lack of information on both the size and nature of migration flows. Mention was made, in particular, of refugees and undocumented migrants, involving two types of flows whose magnitude was frequently the subject of speculation.

The Secretary-General stressed that, despite the concerns raised by South/North migration, most international migrants found themselves in the developing world. Migration between the developing countries involved all types of flows, but those of refugees and migrant workers were singled out. Among the latter, the increasing participation of women and the need to ensure that they were protected against abuse were underscored. It was noted that migrants' remittances were a major source of foreign exchange earnings for several countries whose policies often favoured the export of workers.

Noting that the developed countries experiencing low fertility were facing the prospects of a smaller labour force, whereas the developing countries were having difficulty coping with the continued growth of their labour force, the Secretary-General of the Conference suggested that there might be a convergence of interests if only immigration were not such a contentious issue. Given the increasing pool of potential migrants and the forces leading to globalization, migration pressures were judged to be on the increase. Trade

liberalization, especially in agricultural products and those with a high labour content, was cited as a more effective means of reducing those pressures than current levels of international assistance for the developing countries.

The Secretary-General of the Conference concluded by underscoring the need to collect, analyse and exchange data on all types of international migration. She recognized migration as a major issue for the 1990s and stressed the need to establish how migrants and their families could best contribute to development, how their integration into host societies could be enhanced, and how ignorance and prejudice jeopardizing their welfare could be overcome.

## SUMMARY OF THE PAPERS AND DISCUSSION

### *Overview of the main issues*

The presentation of the paper entitled "Population distribution and migration: the emerging issues", prepared by the Population Division, highlighted the huge scale of internal and international migration. For the world as a whole, net internal migration of all types (urban-rural, rural-urban, rural-rural and urban-urban) was estimated to have involved between 750 million and 1 billion persons during the period 1975-1985. Although rural-urban migration continued to be the focus of most research and policy concern, rural-rural flows were significantly higher in countries that were still mostly rural, such as India, Thailand and most of Africa, and urban-urban migration was the dominant form in highly urbanized countries, such as most of those in the Americas and Europe. International migration, although involving a smaller number of persons, was also significant. Census data, referring mostly to the 1970s and early 1980s, indicated that some 77 million persons were enumerated outside their country of birth or citizenship, a figure that represented a lower bound for the stock of international migrants worldwide.

To set migration issues in context, a review was made of the economic trends experienced by the main world regions during the 1980s. Among the industrialized countries, the consolidation of Japan's position as an economic power was noted, as well as the move towards further economic unification by the European Community. The positive performance of the newly industrializing countries of Asia was contrasted with that of the rest of the developing world. In particular, the low growth experienced by most of Latin America and Africa was highlighted. The growing tendency of Governments to adopt "global" market strategies to promote economic growth was considered to have important implications for migration and population distribution. As enterprises became increasingly multiregional, their locational decisions affected both internal and international migration and, since those decisions were determined by the competitive advantages of different locations, they usually led to unbalanced regional growth and population distribution. The differential success of countries and regions within countries in becoming linked to the global market was increasing economic disparities and fuelling migration. As a consequence, urban primacy still characterized many coun-

tries, and the number of large urban agglomerations continued to grow, particularly in the developing countries.

It was noted that the strategy of moving capital to labour had not been entirely successful in stemming migration pressures. Thus, several of the Asian newly industrializing economies had experienced significant migrant outflows as they pursued export-led economic development. Their experience had confirmed that the nature of the development process was destabilizing and that it was likely to increase migration pressures in the short to medium term.

Changes in the nature and configuration of States were also identified as having important implications for migration. The drive towards greater unification among the member States of the European Community was contrasted with the disintegration of States occurring among former Eastern-bloc countries. Such changes were blurring the distinction between internal and international migration: citizens of member States of the European Community had gained greater freedom of movement and establishment within the Community, whereas Russians in the non-Russian successor States of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had become international migrants. Disintegration of States could lead to sizeable migration flows, particularly when conflict was involved, as in the case of former Yugoslavia. Indeed, involuntary migration, particularly that of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons, had increased during the 1980s and was likely to remain of major importance during the 1990s. Given the negative reactions that the growing number of asylum-seekers were eliciting in several world regions, it was important to ensure that the right to asylum was safeguarded.

With respect to rights of migrants, mention was made of the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1990. The Convention had extended basic human rights to all migrant workers, irrespective of their legal status, and had provided that documented migrant workers and members of their families should enjoy equality of treatment with nationals of the States of employment in a number of legal, economic, social and cultural areas.

The discussion stressed the need to consider different types of migration separately. Particular mention was made of return migration and of the differentiation between temporary and permanent movements, and between voluntary and forced movements within countries. In a growing number of countries, internal conflict was causing the displacement of sizeable populations and their plight demanded more attention. With respect to the category of "environmental refugees", caution was urged in the use of the term, since in most instances environmental factors were only one of a host of causes leading to migration. Moreover, many of the migrants thus labelled were not even outside their country of nationality and could not therefore be considered refugees. Since the definition of refugee contained in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees had not included environmental factors, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had no mandate for the protection of "environmental refugees".

Participants noted that, in contrast to previous assessments, migration was increasingly recognized as a logical strategy of individuals seeking to enhance their opportunities or assure their survival. Economic growth entailed both urbanization and the movement of labour. Although in many countries Governments were reducing their planning role, they nevertheless had to meet the needs and priorities of people and enterprises in the locations where they chose to establish themselves.

Lastly, although economic disparities were acknowledged as one of the major determinants of migration, the importance of growing demographic imbalances was also underscored. Because of high population growth, many developing countries, particularly those in Africa, were facing labour force increases that they would have difficulty absorbing. Such prospects suggested that migration pressures would increase.

### *Patterns of population distribution and development*

The paper entitled "Global urbanization: towards the twenty-first century" stressed that the process of urbanization was an intrinsic part of economic development. In comparing the experience of the developed and the developing countries, the difference in the magnitude of the urbanization process was highlighted. Thus, whereas the urban areas of the developed countries had absorbed about 100 million persons during the period 1815-1915, urban areas in the developing countries were expected to accommodate about 1.5 billion additional persons during the period 1990-2010. In addition, while the developed countries had generally had the means to build adequate infrastructure while urbanizing, most developing countries, particularly those in Africa and Asia, had serious unmet infrastructure needs. Two aspects of globalization were having important impacts on urbanization: the transactional revolution, involving more efficient flows of information and capital, and the new division of labour associated with the free movement of capital to maximize accumulation. Those processes had led to a greater centralization of the urban system and the emergence of transaction nodes facilitating the movement of people, information, capital and commodities. Successful nodes were often mega-urban regions that had carved a niche in the global market by providing certain goods and services.

Despite these important changes, policy was still coloured by a nineteenth century anti-urban perspective and was often geared to controlling the growth of large cities. Evidence to the contrary notwithstanding, it was widely assumed that the spatial separation of urban and rural activities would persist, and paradigms of the urban transition derived from the Western experience of the past century were still considered valid. There was a need to modify them and to take account of the diverging urbanization patterns that the uneven incorporation of the developing countries to the world economic system had brought about.

The discussion underscored that, in many countries, the economic and social differences between urban and rural areas were becoming less marked. A revision of the definitions of rural and urban areas seemed necessary if the needs of planners were to be met. There was a need to identify functional

regions, especially in the light of the increasing significance of rural-urban interactions. The livelihood of many households depended on both urban and rural activities. In certain rural villages of Malaysia, for instance, households derived less than half of their income from agriculture. The role of different types of migration in fostering rural-urban interactions was emphasized, but much remained to be known about the economic, social and environmental implications of such interactions.

Some participants suggested that the sheer size of cities involved "diseconomies", while others argued that the existence of such diseconomies had not been proven. The issue was further stated as: diseconomies for whom? While private capital benefited from economies of scale in large urban centres, the poor often had to bear the diseconomies associated with crowded housing, health hazards and lack of infrastructure. In Africa, in particular, where urbanization was often not driven by economic growth, cities faced severe problems. Furthermore, in most developing countries the informal sector was absorbing increasing numbers of urban workers, particularly women. There was a tendency towards that "casualization" of labour by, for instance, subcontracting piece-work. However, it was noted that the informal sector was very heterogeneous and that in certain of its subsectors earnings were higher than those in the formal sector.

The consideration of population distribution patterns in specific world regions followed. The paper entitled "Population distribution patterns in developed countries" noted that the increasing concentration of the urban population in large urban centres had been considered a normal concomitant of urbanization until data for the 1960s showed that in several developed countries large metropolitan areas had lost population, in relative terms, to smaller urban centres. That phenomenon, known as counter-urbanization, had been formally defined as the existence of a negative relationship between size of place and rate of population growth. The evidence showed that counter-urbanization had been fairly widespread in the developed world during the 1960s and 1970s: only Eastern European countries did not show it. But during the 1980s, that trend had changed in key countries. Thus, in the United States of America large metropolitan areas had again grown more rapidly during the 1980s than had non-metropolitan areas.

Five sets of factors were said to have explained the rise and fall of counter-urbanization since the 1960s. The first was related to the increasing mobility of capital, which led to the relocation of manufacturing from major urban centres to smaller cities and towns. The second, labelled "rural-resource development", involved the specialization of certain rural areas, in particular branches of rurally based economic activity. The third involved changing residential preferences, favouring smaller towns or rural areas over major urban centres. The fourth stemmed from the fact that residential preferences were specific to certain population subgroups and thus had led to overall changes in preferences as the composition of the total population evolved. Lastly, in various countries counter-urbanization was related to changes in the size, nature and distribution of housing stock. The evidence also suggested that government actions played an important role in promoting population

deconcentration and in phasing it out. However, it was difficult to predict how population distribution would evolve in the developed countries in the future. Cyclical changes had been judged possible, and it was suggested that the impact of international migration on population distribution might be especially significant if overall population growth continued to be low. Participants argued that the effect of international migration in all probability had already been significant in stopping counter-urbanization, since in some European cities international migrants constituted 10-20 per cent of the population.

The discussion centred on a few factors judged to be essential in assessing the possible evolution of population distribution in the developed countries. Shifts in the age structure stemming from sustained low population growth could have important implications for population distribution if different birth cohorts had different residential preferences. Non-spatial policies and sectoral priorities of Governments were considered to have greater influence on population distribution than their explicit spatial or territorial policies. For instance, the location of defence industries away from major population centres contributed to counter-urbanization. Changes in the distribution of power and resources between national, state and local governments also had important spatial implications.

The need to adopt more precise definitions for the study of population distribution in the developed countries was stressed. The use of functional urban regions seemed necessary, but it demanded suitable databases and concepts that facilitated international comparisons. The use of geographical information systems integrating population data seemed desirable, especially because the urban agglomerations of interest often consisted of several interacting cities.

The Expert Group proceeded to consider population distribution issues relative to the main developing regions. The paper entitled "Population distribution patterns and development in Africa" noted the diversity characterizing the continent in terms of population distribution, changes over time and the factors influencing internal migration. Although Africa was the least urbanized region of the developing world, most African countries were undergoing rapid urbanization. The high fertility characterizing African countries made major contributions to the growth of urban areas and rural-urban migration continued to be significant. African Governments were faced with the need to develop comprehensive population distribution policies. The quality of urban management had to be improved and an effective partnership had to be developed between central and local governments. It was urgent to devise methods to provide low-cost urban services and ways of recovering investment costs so that services could be expanded further, although it was recognized that subsidies might be needed to ensure that the poorest groups had access to needed services. Given the importance of the rural sector in African countries, the development of economic and institutional linkages between rural and urban areas was needed to foster synergistic interactions between rural and urban development in the region.

The paper entitled "Population distribution policies and development in Asia" noted that Asia's level of urbanization was still low, but that the

region's average concealed large variations among countries. Asia contained both the most populous countries in the world and a number of much smaller countries characterized by great economic dynamism. The countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) were likely to maintain a rapid rate of urbanization in conjunction with sustained economic growth. In the most populous countries, high rural population densities and changes in agricultural production had the potential of fuelling rapid urbanization and posed enormous challenges for the achievement of sustainable development.

Although most countries in Asia were characterized by a relatively high concentration of the urban population in a single city, in China, India and Indonesia the primacy of the largest city had been declining. The growth rate of several Asian mega-cities had declined somewhat, partly because of the redistribution of production and population outside the metropolitan area's boundaries to areas that were still functionally linked to the city. In a sense, therefore, the slow-down recorded was artificial. The diseconomies of scale in some mega-cities had encouraged investment to seek new locations. In addition, structural adjustment and government policies that removed incentives for the location of industries in mega-cities, increased prices for agricultural products and promoted exports had all contributed to reducing mega-city growth. Decentralization policies were also a factor encouraging the growth of medium-sized cities at the expense of larger ones.

The paper entitled "Population distribution and development in Latin America" noted that Latin America was the most urbanized region of the developing world, having experienced rapid urbanization during the twentieth century which had led to the concentration of both people and economic activities in a few large cities. During the period 1925-1975, the total population of the region had tripled, while the urban population had increased eightfold. In the 1990s, the number of people living in poverty in urban areas surpassed that in rural areas. As in other developing regions, there was considerable diversity in the population distribution of the various Latin American countries, arising from historical and structural differences. With regard to primacy and the growth of the largest cities within each country, over half of the countries of the region were expected to show some reversal of population concentration in the largest cities. Recent evidence indicated that the primacy of Buenos Aires was declining, and during the 1980s Mexico's three largest cities had experienced lower growth rates than expected. Such trends were probably related to the economic changes experienced by the region, as structural adjustment led to lower industrialization, the casualization of employment and a reduction in the attractiveness of large cities for migrants. Such structural changes had also given rise to new forms of territorial mobility, particularly those of a temporary nature which did not necessarily lead to population redistribution in the traditional sense. Yet, temporary migrants had an impact on the economic and social functioning of the areas they linked. Policy makers, planners and researchers had to consider all types of movements in devising social and economic policies aimed at achieving sustainable development.



The report entitled "Migration to the city of Santa Cruz, Bolivia" highlighted many of the social, economic and political issues raised in the regional papers. The population of Santa Cruz had grown very rapidly, especially during the period 1976-1992. Despite an annual growth rate of 6.7 per cent, certain social indicators improved: there was a reduction in the proportion illiterate and a decline in infant mortality. However, city and regional authorities had experienced considerable difficulties in ensuring that the provision of basic infrastructure and services kept pace with population growth and the outskirts of the city were still characterized by poor housing and high infant mortality.

The discussion stressed that urbanization was an inevitable part of development and, consequently, that it was futile for Governments to insist on stopping rural-urban migration. Instances were cited of successful rural development projects which, although they improved agricultural production, did not slow migration to urban areas and may have even accelerated it by improving the economic status of rural dwellers and increasing their aspirations.

It was emphasized that there was a need to integrate population distribution policies, including urbanization policies, into national development strategies. In so doing, it was important to keep in mind that rural and urban development were two sides of the same coin. Strategies that emphasized one at the expense of the other were doomed to failure. In many developing countries, the rural population was expected to continue growing, and the need to improve rural economic opportunities was urgent. Measures to strengthen urban-rural economic interactions and to improve rural infrastructure so as to increase productivity were considered desirable.

Participants stressed the need for developing country Governments to strengthen the capacity, competence and accountability of city and municipal authorities. It was judged that a key task of Governments was to address the social and economic needs of their populations, whether in rural or urban areas. It was particularly important to work towards the alleviation of poverty, which was growing in both rural areas and cities. The practice of withholding investment in city infrastructure so as not to attract the rural poor was criticized. Decentralization policies that involved the relocation of manufacturing industries from large to medium-sized cities were said to have contributed to growing unemployment in the former since the service sector was not capable of absorbing as many workers. The provision of adequate services in cities demanded the removal of general subsidies, the adoption of progressive taxing schemes and the true pricing of urban services coupled with subsidies for the poor. Given the potential for rapid urbanization, especially in regions where the rural population was still growing rapidly, there was an urgent need to improve urban infrastructure and to provide access to services for all population subgroups, particularly the poor. To gain control of urban growth, particularly in regions where general population growth was high, attention had to be paid to policies aimed at reducing natural increase.

The discussion addressed the question of political will and how it could be developed and maintained to implement policies consistently. In particular,

although the role of community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations was widely regarded as important and in need of support from Governments and international organizations, little was known regarding their role in influencing political will.

In considering issues related to large urban centres, participants noted the emergence of complex forms of urban agglomerations that fell outside the conventional definitions used to study them. An example was the development of urban or quasi-urban settlements along the main roads or highways linking major cities. Another was the polygonal configuration of cities surrounding a major metropolitan area and linked to it by a variety of economic and social interactions, as was the case of Mexico City and its surrounding medium-sized cities.

In ascertaining the impact of development on population distribution, note was taken of how its effects might change over time. In Latin America, for example, when economic growth was based on import substitution, industrialization had been the engine of growth of most large cities. With the adoption of export-oriented policies in the 1970s and 1980s, the centres of economic activity had changed and population growth had accelerated in urban centres located near ports, borders or export-producing areas (mining centres, for instance). Thus, the recent growth of certain medium-sized cities in countries such as Chile or Mexico was closely related to the new mode of economic development espoused by the Government.

Mention was made of population distribution issues within urban agglomerations. In some agglomerations, the population at the core was ageing while the mean age of the population in suburban areas was declining. In others, important socio-economic differences existed between the different subregions within an agglomeration. Measures such as the eviction of poor groups from inner-city tenements or from illegal or informal settlements were not judged to be effective in controlling city growth.

In a number of countries, internal strife had led to increased migration. Although that migration often took the form of rural-rural movements, forced migration between urban areas and from rural to urban areas was also common. The population that was thus internally displaced was often in need of protection and assistance, but there was no internationally established mechanism to provide such protection. A related problem had been the capacity of war-torn countries to ensure the safety of repatriating refugees and provide them with adequate infrastructure and services.

#### *Policies affecting internal migration and population distribution*

The paper entitled "The social and environmental problems associated with rapid urbanization" highlighted four issues: the main environmental problems and their causes; who was most vulnerable to the problems; the extent to which migrants as compared to non-migrants were vulnerable; and the key policy issues involved in addressing environmental problems. The large scale and wide range of environmental problems evident in the cities of the developing countries were reviewed in conjunction with their serious

health impacts. Biological pathogens (mainly excreta-related, insect-borne, airborne or food-borne) and the lack of access to safe and sufficient water were generally the most serious threats to health, although exposure to chemical pollutants and physical hazards because of housing deficiencies also contributed significantly to psychosocial disorders in many cities.

Migrants were not necessarily the group most vulnerable to such hazards, since vulnerability was influenced, among other things, by age, health status, socially determined roles and lack of means to avoid a certain hazard or to cope with the impact of illness or injury. In most cities, the single most important factor determining vulnerability was income, although certain age and occupational groups among the low-income population were especially vulnerable. Because of gender differentiation regarding work undertaken, access to services, income sources and access to shelter, women were particularly vulnerable to certain environmental hazards.

Participants noted that the underlying cause of most of the problems mentioned was not so much rapid urbanization itself but the incapacity of Governments to cope with the rapid economic, social and demographic changes that accompanied such urbanization. Thus, some of the most rapidly growing cities did not have serious environmental problems, whereas urban centres that were growing more slowly often had quite serious problems. In addition, poorer groups in cities, including poor migrants, often bore a disproportionate share of the costs of environmental problems. It was stressed that developing the capacity and competence of city and municipal authorities to manage urban development, control pollution and ensure sufficient investment in infrastructure and services was the main strategy to reduce the impact of environmental problems on the health of urban dwellers.

Under certain circumstances, migrant groups could be particularly vulnerable. For example, migrants were especially susceptible to diseases that were endemic in the area of destination to which they had not been exposed in the area of origin. To the extent that certain types of migrants were more likely to join the ranks of the urban poor than others, they were also particularly vulnerable to the health hazards posed by environmental problems. Nevertheless, the main policy issue was considered to be the reduction of poverty and the vulnerability of all urban dwellers to environmental hazards, whether they were migrants or not.

Several measures for improving the plight of the urban poor were suggested, including facilitating their access to credit, providing them with technical assistance to improve their housing and promoting the creation of partnerships between neighbourhood groups and non-governmental organizations so that strategies to gain access to water, sanitation or garbage collection could be devised collectively. Such measures had a greater probability of being successful if local or municipal governments were strengthened by being allowed to collect taxes, granted greater responsibility for the welfare of local communities and at the same time made accountable to the governed. It was recognized that the urban poor often had difficulties in securing adequate land sites to establish themselves. In many cities, the poor, although numerous, occupied only small proportions of the city's territory.

Community organization and effective leadership were judged necessary to improve the plight of squatters, particularly if they had to fight for land rights.

The paper entitled "Population distribution policies and their impact on development" contrasted the spatial implications of two of the most common development strategies. The first was that adopted by many developing countries between 1930 and the early 1970s. Based on Keynesian theories of economic development, that strategy had involved substantial governmental intervention to promote industrialization for import substitution and to direct population redistribution. Such a strategy, termed "peripheral Fordism", had been widely applied throughout Latin America, where it had led to unbalanced capital accumulation, which in turn had given rise to unbalanced population distribution by reinforcing the primacy of the largest cities, among other things. To combat the inequitable effects of capital accumulation, Governments had adopted territorial policies that had sought to promote growth in peripheral regions but those policies had rarely had much impact, partly because they had seldom been accorded priority.

The second strategy, which had already been widely implemented in the developing countries by 1990, had greatly reduced the role of the State and had ascribed a larger role to market forces for both production and population redistribution. Economically, it had involved an outward orientation, with priority given to exports. While, in the previous strategy, the combination of State support and national capital had been seen as the main source of productive investment, in the new strategy, international investment had been sought and encouraged. The State, with a reduced role, had concentrated its efforts on maintaining fiscal austerity and balanced budgets. The key goal had been the competitive incorporation of countries into the new international division of labour. The new strategy had had important spatial implications, since, within each national economy, rapid urbanization had tended to occur in those locations that had served as growth poles with respect to production, the transport of goods for export and associated services. Concomitantly, the centres where import substitution industries had been concentrated had sometimes declined in importance. The integration of an economy with the world market usually served as a cleansing mechanism that inexorably excluded those activities that could not be modernized or that could not compete in external markets or with imported products. Such changes had had important spatial implications. Within countries, certain social groups and particular locations had benefited, while others had lost ground. The structure of employment was becoming increasingly polarized, with a few earning high salaries and the majority earning low salaries. The number of women among the low-paid had tended to increase. In countries undergoing such changes, the rate of population growth of the main urban agglomeration had often declined.

Participants noted the contradiction inherent in the adoption of the new strategy by Governments that also claimed to have ambitious goals regarding spatial distribution policies. The more economies became export-oriented, the greater the influence of global forces on the spatial distribution of production and, consequently, on the spatial distribution of population. Increasingly,

mega-urban regions around the world were being shaped by global as well as national forces. In addition, a reduction of regional inequalities in per capita income did not necessarily imply greater social equality, since poorer groups in peripheral regions often received few benefits from new investments. Governments were often too ready to import, uncritically, strategies conceived elsewhere to foster economic development and direct territorial planning.

### *Internal migration and its implications for development*

The paper entitled "Migration as a survival strategy: the family dimensions of migration" noted that, despite the deficiencies of available information on migration, both internal and international, the evidence pointed to the fact that migration had increased considerably in both scale and complexity during the 1980s. Movement away from the place of origin, of either a permanent or a temporary nature, had become an option to improve the life chances of a wider spectrum of the population of the developing countries. The changing economic, social and political context of the developing countries had contributed to the increase in the scale of population mobility. However, to understand the evolution of mobility, it was important to supplement macro-level explanations with an understanding of how micro-level processes were determining who migrated and how. There was growing evidence that migration resulted from decisions made by families rather than individuals and that migration was often a family strategy to ensure survival and minimize risks. Through migration, a family could diversify its sources of income, in terms of both location and type of work. In some societies, migration decisions within the family were taken mostly by men (the patriarch, for instance) and they often involved the temporary migration of unmarried offspring whose earnings were to supplement family income. In some contexts, single women were increasingly selected for migration since their income-earning opportunities, particularly in export-oriented industries, had been growing.

Understanding the role of families and kin groups in the migration process was important for understanding how migration networks developed. It was noted that networks facilitating migration involved not only family members and kin but also a variety of agents, recruiters, lawyers or other middlemen, who actively encouraged and sustained migration. Networks were thus becoming increasingly institutionalized and commercialized. Networks were known to sustain population flows even when the economic conditions giving rise to them had changed. Their operation was also fairly resilient to government action. The importance of improving the understanding of how networks got established and evolved was stressed.

The discussion underscored the need to gather better data and develop methods that would permit a more accurate assessment of the scale of population mobility and its growing complexity. More attention had to be devoted to the social and economic dimensions of migration, including those at the family level and those shaping migration networks. With regard to international migration, networks both depended on and contributed to the

emergence of transnational groups that could straddle several countries. The existence of such groups fostered the further exchange of information, capital and people. Participants stressed the positive aspects of network operation and warned against the tendency to criminalize their informal elements.

Because of the lack of appropriate information, the extent of temporary migration and its implications for development could not be established with certainty. Temporary movements were said to be more common than those leading to permanent relocation, but it was recognized that what started as temporary might become permanent. In international migration in particular, temporariness could be a function of whether or not migrants were allowed to stay. When migration was part of a family survival strategy, temporary movements were more likely to be preferred since they were more conducive to maintaining the links between migrant and family members left behind. That was particularly the case when women migrated on their own. Indeed, the increasing participation of women in autonomous migration, whether internal or international, had the potential of changing gender relations within the family.

#### *Economic aspects of international migration*

The paper entitled "Growing economic interdependence and its implications for international migration" noted that in the past four decades, increased volumes of international trade and investment had generally not proven to be substitutes for the movement of labour. In a world characterized by growing interdependence, there were competing tendencies towards globalization and regionalization, both of which impinged on migration pressures. Growing economic interdependence among States fostered and was fostered by international migration, but migration was both an opportunity and a source of vulnerability for the interdependent States. In cases where barriers had been raised against economic integration or where poor countries had been involuntarily delinked from the more advanced countries, unauthorized migration had been an increasingly significant form of adjustment.

Two main explanations were offered for the fundamental paradox that the economic integration of countries would initially increase rather than reduce migration pressures. First, modalities of socio-economic development associated with rising interdependence among countries were essentially disruptive and dislocating, often leading to considerable internal movements and in some instances precipitating increases in international migration. Secondly, international trade and foreign investment created bridges between trading and investing partners which activated the flows of labour, both legal and illegal. Once activated, networks based on family, community or employment relations would sustain migration flows.

The implications of economic interdependence for international migration had to be examined within a dynamic systems framework which took into account that migration movements had been initiated and sustained by various dynamic processes, including trade, foreign direct investment, foreign aid and flows of technology, the direction and extent of which were determined within a global framework of historical, cultural, economic and political ties.

Geopolitical realignments and new economic arrangements were configuring the world into regional blocs that combined an outward and an inward orientation, sometimes translated as free movement of persons within, combined with barriers to movement from without. Economically, the world had been moving along a three-speed path, with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries and the newly industrializing economies of Asia moving forward; low-income countries, especially those in Africa, sliding backwards; and a third group of countries, including most of Latin America, China and India, having somewhat better prospects as long as they could maintain strong linkages with the world economy. Thus, the economic differentials, both among the developing countries and between most of the developing and the developed world, were expected to increase. Demographic imbalances were also large and were expected to remain so. Such disparities were expected to lead to increasing migration pressures. To the extent that barriers to legal, authorized migration continued to grow, such pressures would give rise to unauthorized migration, particularly between countries already linked by social networks or to those where the casualization of labour made possible the creation of labour market niches for undocumented migrants.

The paper entitled "The economic implications of migration" focused on the economic responses to the creation of a common market and the role played by migration. Given that the common market arrangements envisaged for States in South America did not involve mechanisms to effect transfers and subsidies between member States, such arrangements would be of more benefit to the richer nations than the poorer ones. In particular, the former would be better able to attract the skilled personnel needed to foster investment and development. Poorer countries, such as Bolivia, therefore, had an interest in going beyond mere common market agreements establishing free trade zones. A more complete economic union was necessary to enhance development prospects.

In discussing the economic aspects of migration, it was important to distinguish between short-term and long-term effects. Thus, it was possible for increased trade and foreign direct investment not to influence migration pressures in the short term but to have a strong influence on them in the long term. Increasingly, trade liberalization was being seen as a means of fostering development and thus of contributing, in the long term, to a reduction in migration. The cases of Mexico, Turkey and North Africa, for instance, deserved closer scrutiny so as to ascertain the impact of trade and foreign direct investment on both internal and international migration flows.

It was noted that trade liberalization, *per se*, did not guarantee that all the developing countries would participate equitably in the world economy. Delinking would continue to occur, with some countries remaining relatively marginalized. Migration pressures were, consequently, unlikely to disappear even if complete trade liberalization were achieved. A complex set of strategies was needed if migration flows were to be reduced significantly.

Participants underscored the importance of taking account of political issues when discussing the economic aspects of migration, since there were

often tensions between the economic and political interests of States. Attempts to convert human beings into labour that could be exchanged with minimal social consequences had largely failed. Given their low population growth, industrialized countries were facing the prospects of a declining labour force but insisted that they would not resort again to foreign labour. Yet, they could not entirely close their borders, if only because tourism and business travel kept increasing. Unauthorized migration was likely to continue, especially if unmet labour needs continued to exist at the low end of the scale in the better-off countries.

### *International migration in a changing world*

The paper entitled "The integration and disintegration of States and their implications for migration" noted that, historically, national boundaries had been temporary and that border changes had often resulted from armed conflict and had entailed population movements. Situations in which forced population movements were likely to arise generally involved groups such as colonizing populations stranded as minorities in new States; trading or administrative intermediaries in new States; and the classical "national minorities" in new States. Russians in the Baltic States and the newly independent States of Central Asia would belong to the first category, but their forced resettlement, although potential, had hardly begun. A review of other cases where population "unmixing" had occurred indicated that it had traditionally been approved by the international community. In some instances, the forceful relocation of population groups might be inevitable; the issue was whether it could happen without violence.

At the other end of the spectrum, the movement of several groups of countries towards integration raised the issue of the relativization of the State. Thus, the economic integration being pursued by the European Community implied that the State would lose control over certain key economic and social matters. Interestingly, the question of controlling population flows had emerged as an important obstacle to the further political and economic integration of the Community. By the time of the meeting, the application of the provisions of the Single European Act had been formally postponed, and ratification of the Maastricht Treaty was by no means certain. Concerns about ensuring an adequate control of the external Community borders were contributing to those developments. For integration to proceed, effective border control and stringent restrictions on external migration seemed to be necessary.

The discussion noted that the disintegration of States could lead to the emergence of "new" minorities as the basis for demographic accounting changed. The case of Hungarians in Slovenia was mentioned. When the latter was part of Yugoslavia, Hungarians constituted a small proportion of the total population of the country. However, in independent Slovenia, Hungarians constituted almost one tenth of the total population. Such change could give rise to inter-ethnic tensions.

The paper entitled "The process of integration of migrant communities" noted that integration was the general term used to refer to the process by which migrants became incorporated into the host society. Four types of



migrant incorporation were distinguished: assimilation, integration, exclusion, and multiculturalism. Assimilation was the one-sided process of adaptation of migrants to the local community by which migrants became indistinguishable from the majority of the population. It was consistent with policies of "benign neglect" whereby the State left matters largely to market forces. Integration involved a process of mutual accommodation between migrants and the host society. It generally involved the removal of barriers to individual participation through equal-opportunity and affirmative-action legislation. Exclusion involved the incorporation of migrants only into selected areas of society. Migrants were denied access to other areas, mainly through legal mechanisms. Multiculturalism involved the transformation of immigrant populations into ethnic communities that remained distinguishable from the host population but were granted equal rights in most spheres of life. Both exclusion and multiculturalism had led to the creation and maintenance of ethnic communities. Multiculturalism had been judged as the best model for incorporation, although it needed to be adapted to each set of circumstances.

Integration was the incorporation model most commonly followed by immigrant-receiving societies, and it sometimes included multicultural elements. In the 1980s, more clearly multicultural models had been adopted by Australia, Canada and Sweden. Countries such as Germany and Switzerland still favoured exclusionary models. Government policies and historical factors influenced the relative success of the models followed, but in most receiving countries ethnic group formation was taking place. An important element influencing incorporation and ethnic group formation was the transformation of temporary migrants into long-term or permanent settlers. Governments that had insisted on making the migration of labour strictly temporary were less likely to facilitate the full incorporation of the migrants who had remained. The position of the latter was particularly vulnerable, being subject to hostility, discrimination and residential segregation.

Cross-national comparisons indicated that in all countries there were major groups that had not yet become integrated. The process of ethnic group formation was largely determined by the actions of the State during the early stages of migration. The best chances for successful integration lay in policies that facilitated permanent settlement, family reunion and access to citizenship. Ethnic group formation benefited from support for migrant associations, social networks, the use of the migrants' language and the maintenance of cultural values. Successful integration depended on active State policies, especially in the areas of housing, employment, education and language training, access to health and social services. Special measures were needed for female migrants, who were more likely to be isolated and marginalized, and it was essential to adopt and implement legislation to combat all forms of racism and violence against migrants.

The discussion underscored the importance of time in assessing the success or failure of any incorporation model. In many instances, successful incorporation became evident only with the second generation. In terms of timing, three stages of incorporation could be distinguished: first, in the economic or labour-market areas; followed by integration in terms of access

to social services, education and housing; and, finally, full social and cultural incorporation, in the long term. Access to citizenship was felt to be essential in achieving the third stage.

It was recognized that the issues regarding the integration of migrant populations varied from region to region. In Western Asia, the enclave development strategy followed by the oil-rich countries had resulted in the segregation of most migrants, an effort had been made to enforce the rotation of foreign labour, and there was no intention to incorporate long-term foreign residents into society. In Israel, the integration of large numbers of Soviet Jews conflicted with the interests of the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza. In Europe, Islam was increasingly seen as a marker for differentiation rather than integration, and the trend towards European integration was having largely negative effects on the incorporation prospects of most migrants from outside the region. European Governments argued that the prospects for migrant integration in the region depended on effective border control and the limitation of future migration inflows. In Africa, long-standing refugee populations included a significant number of second- and third-generation refugees, but few countries of asylum had taken steps to grant them citizenship.

The paper entitled "The future of South-to-North migration" noted that migration from the developing to the developed countries had been increasing and was expected to surpass migration between the developed countries in every region, even though, particularly in Europe, migration from former Eastern-bloc countries was still an important component of migration flows. East-to-West migration, however, was expected to abate in the future. Migration from the developing countries was already a major component of the flows directed to the main countries of permanent resettlement, and even Japan, the archetypal closed society, was experiencing significant inflows of migrants from the developing countries.

With reference to the report of the United States Commission for the Study of International Migration and Cooperative Economic Development (1990), it was argued that the development process had led to greater migration pressures, at least in the short to medium term. To the extent that those pressures resulted in South-to-North migration and that the developed countries had continued to raise barriers against those flows, unauthorized migration was likely to increase.

In Europe, the migration of asylum-seekers constituted an important type of unwanted migration. Their numbers, which had fluctuated considerably during the 1980s, included large proportions of persons from the developing countries. The increasing number of both asylum-seekers and undocumented migrants in certain European countries indicated that policies aimed at maintaining a zero net migration balance had failed. However, given the political and economic realities of the world as a whole, such policies had been unrealistic. Since migrant inflows could not be totally avoided, making allowance for them seemed imperative. The adoption of explicit quotas for the admission of migrants had been cited as a possible strategy to enhance control over such flows.

The discussion noted the difficulties in making assumptions about South-to-North migration in the future. Although its volume was expected to increase, actual outcomes depended on future labour-market needs in the developed countries, the potential for chain-migration through family reunion, the effectiveness of restrictive admission policies in the receiving countries, the occurrence of destabilizing events in the developing countries, prospects for economic development in the main countries of origin and the possibility of increasing linkages between the developed world and the developing countries that remained marginalized. Differentials in population growth, although clearly affecting the potential for migration, had been judged to have relatively weak linkages with actual migration flows.

No firm conclusion could be reached regarding the future labour needs of the developed countries, particularly those of Western Europe. It was argued that, through greater productivity, increases in the retirement age and the incorporation of women into the labour force, those countries could supply their labour needs even if population size declined. On the other hand, it was recognized that there were certain jobs that natives were increasingly unwilling to perform. Yet, even if there was a need for foreign labour, European demand was limited, while the potential supply from the developing countries was very large. European countries were consequently reluctant to open their doors formally to workers from the developing countries for fear of attracting too many.

The need to devise strategies that would reduce migration pressures in the developing world was underscored. Cooperation between specific sending and receiving countries was cited as a possibility, and the agreement reached between Albania and Italy to reduce outflows from Albania was given as an example. However, it was recognized that such agreements could jeopardize the situation of bona fide refugees who might be deprived of the possibility of seeking asylum.

#### *International migration between the developing countries*

The paper entitled "Migration between Asian countries and its likely future" indicated that migration within the Asian region was predominantly directed towards the oil-producing countries of Western Asia, Japan and the newly industrializing economies of East and South-East Asia. Data on such movements, however, were rare and often inconsistent. According to different sources, for instance, the number of foreign workers in Saudi Arabia was 1.3 million in 1984 and 3.5 million in 1985, a discrepancy that could hardly be attributed to changes over time. In view of such problems, conclusions could only be tentative.

Migration to Western Asia, which had started long before the oil-price hike of the early 1970s, had increased considerably after that and had undergone a shift in composition from Arab to Asian sources. In addition, Asian sources had been further diversified during the late 1970s to include increasing numbers of workers from East and South-East Asia, as opposed to those originating in Southern Asia (India and Pakistan). In 1988, it was estimated

that a quarter of the migrant workers to Western Asia originated in the Philippines.

During the 1980s, growing labour-force needs associated with rapid economic growth transformed certain countries and areas in East and South-East Asia into destinations for migrant labour. Thus Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan Province of China were reported to be receiving sizeable numbers of largely undocumented migrants. Hong Kong and Singapore had a longer history of importing foreign labour—Hong Kong mostly from China, and Singapore from Malaysia.

In Asia, the migration policies of receiving countries generally had three goals: to limit migration, eliminate illegal migration and reinforce migration regulations meant to ensure the quality of migrant workers. Countries of origin, on the other hand, aimed at increasing the number of migrant workers abroad, protecting the rights of migrant workers and regulating migration so as to prevent the exploitation of migrants by recruiting agents. An important concern of countries of origin was to protect the increasing number of women who engaged in temporary worker migration, mostly as domestic servants. The lower cost involved in female migration, as compared to male migration, was seen as a cause of the increase in female labour migration. Although some countries had attempted to restrict female migration, the restrictions imposed had had more of a symbolic than a real impact.

In 1989, Asia had received more than 7 million refugees, a majority of whom had originated in Afghanistan. The second largest refugee population in Asia consisted of the more than 2 million Palestinian refugees under the protection of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). In contrast, during the period 1975-1988 an estimated 1.5 million Indo-Chinese from South-East Asia had been resettled outside the region, particularly in the United States of America.

Regarding future prospects, continued and increasing migration within Asia was expected, mostly because the high population growth rates experienced by many countries had produced considerable labour surpluses, there was already an efficient recruitment industry that fostered migration, and both individuals and Governments of countries of origin benefited from migration. Furthermore, continued economic growth in low-fertility countries was expected to produce labour shortages during the next decade. However, if those countries continued to limit legal migration, the undocumented type would increase.

The paper entitled "Migration between the developing countries in the African and Latin American regions and its likely future" highlighted the limited availability and poor quality of migration data in sub-Saharan Africa. On the basis of data on the foreign-born gathered by censuses, it was estimated that during the late 1970s about 8 per cent of the population (or 35 million people) of sub-Saharan Africa had consisted of persons born outside the country in which they had been enumerated. In addition, UNHCR statistics showed that in 1991 there had been over 5 million refugees in the region.

Using similar data for Latin America, it was estimated that in about 1980 less than 2 per cent of the region's population had been foreign-born, although only 41 per cent of the foreign-born had originated in the region. In contrast to migration in the African region, a country outside the region—namely, the United States of America—was the major destination of Latin American migrants, most of whom originated in Mexico.

There were important differences within each region. In sub-Saharan Africa, Western Africa showed the highest concentration of migrants, most of whom had moved for economic reasons. Eastern Africa, in contrast, had received large refugee populations. In Southern Africa, migration flows involved the highly organized migration of labour to South Africa plus growing refugee populations in the subregion. In Middle Africa, migration had been characterized by being largely male and temporary, but there was considerable diversity between countries. Although the data available did not permit an adequate assessment of trends, it was known that some countries, such as Ghana and Nigeria, had become migrant-sending countries during different periods, after having been important countries of destination. In Latin America, only a few countries—Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela—were receiving large numbers of migrants. Central America was the subregion receiving the largest number of refugees, although their numbers had been decreasing. However, the internally displaced population in that subregion was said to have grown, mostly because of internal strife. Despite the weaknesses of the data available, the evidence suggested that there had been an increase in intraregional mobility in both sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.

Both growing economic differentials and political instability had contributed to the increase of intraregional flows, political instability being more likely to continue fuelling migration in sub-Saharan Africa than in Latin America. But to the extent that development accelerated more in certain countries than others, especially in Latin America, it was likely to induce further migration. Most intraregional migration in Africa and Latin America had occurred at the margin of government policies. That situation was not expected to change, since African and Latin American Governments were thought to be less likely than those of other world regions to intervene in controlling or impeding migration. Indeed, few had explicit policies regarding international migration, and Latin American countries, in particular, considered their immigration levels to be too low and wished to increase them. As in the case of intra-Asian migration, experts expected that migration within Africa or Latin America would increase as the opportunities to migrate to the developed countries became increasingly restricted.

The migration of the highly skilled was considered in the African and Latin American contexts. Its effects were not necessarily negative when there was an adequate supply of such personnel, but development could be hindered if the scale of emigration of the highly skilled was large and critical sectors of the economy were affected. The same was true, however, of the emigration of less skilled workers when such workers were in short supply. In Latin America, especially, the migration of the highly skilled was increasingly

being viewed in the context of regional development, and the need to formulate policies for the training, development and use of human resources was recognized.

It was difficult to assess the effects of regional trade accords, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) or the Andean Pact, on migration. In both cases, economic factors would have been likely to induce migration, even in the absence of agreements allowing the free movement of people. In addition, the type of free movement that was actually allowed involved in most instances severe restrictions on the right of establishment or the right to exercise an economic activity. Thus, existing or planned trading blocs still had a long way to go before the free movement of labour became a reality within their borders.

The discussion stressed the significance of migration flows between the developing countries and the variety characterizing such flows. The paucity of data regarding migration to the developing countries was considered a serious drawback, particularly because important changes in trends were likely to go undetected for long periods. Mention was made, for instance, of countries in Latin America, such as Argentina or Venezuela, which seemed to have ceased being attraction poles for migrants during the 1980s. It was also suggested that the scale of temporary international migration was growing in the region. There was, however, little solid evidence to validate those claims. Similarly, regarding the movement of skilled personnel, Australian statistics indicated that Australian professionals were increasingly going to work in the developing countries, such as Malaysia and Singapore. Lack of data from the receiving countries precluded a better assessment of those trends.

The evolution of international migration in Asia was considered an important example of the effects of development. Thus, labour migration from the Republic of Korea had abated as development had proceeded. The same thing was probably happening in Malaysia, and the question was raised whether it would happen in more populated countries, such as India or Pakistan. In addition, important economic interactions likely to fuel both migration and development were taking hold of various sets of countries. The triad constituted by Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore provided one example, as did Hong Kong and China or Thailand and the Indo-Chinese countries.

In Western Asia, the oil-producing countries continued to demand foreign labour, although in some countries demand had shifted from blue-collar to service-sector workers. The impact of migration on the development prospects of both the oil-producing countries and the countries of origin of the migrant workers was likely to vary from case to case, particularly because of competition among the latter. According to some participants, the prospects for effective cooperation among the sending countries to protect the rights of their expatriate workers did not seem promising.

There was considerable variation in the policy responses of the developing countries to migration. For instance, among receiving countries, those in Western Asia and Singapore controlled international migration strictly, whereas most countries in Africa or Latin America had fairly lax migration

controls. Among countries of origin, a variety of policies and strategies had been used to foster worker migration, prevent the migration of those with needed skills or facilitate the return and reintegration of migrant workers. Of those aims, the return and reintegration of migrant workers was judged to have the greatest implications for development, particularly when it was prompted by deteriorating circumstances in the receiving countries, such as those brought about by the invasion of Kuwait or by the economic difficulties experienced by Venezuela.

With regard to forced migration, the end of the cold war was judged to hold positive prospects for the resolution of long-standing conflicts in Latin America and to reduce the influence of the super-Powers in the region. Such developments would facilitate the return of refugees to their countries of origin and reduce the possibilities of future refugee outflows. The prospects for Africa, however, were less promising. States that were artificially sustained by cold war enmities were likely to collapse and produce significant refugee outflows. Such developments would generally stem from both the economic and political disintegration of existing States, often exacerbated by environmental problems (which, however, would rarely be the sole cause of forced migration and, as stated earlier, would not warrant the use of terms such as "environmental refugee").

To conclude the discussion on migration between the developing countries, a paper entitled "International migration policies in Bolivia" was presented. It indicated that Bolivia was undertaking a regularization drive for undocumented migrants and that draft legislation regarding migration was being considered by its Congress. Bolivia favoured the admission of international migrants who would help the people of the country and contribute to its development and to the rational use of natural resources.

### *Refugees and asylum-seekers*

The paper entitled "Safeguarding the right to asylum" made a distinction between the right to seek and the right to enjoy asylum. The 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees had not established an individual's right to seek asylum but rather the right of States to grant asylum. In addition, the Convention had failed to provide adequate protection for victims of war or generalized violence. At the regional level, however, the Organization of African Unity 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa and the 1984 Cartagena Declaration had both widened the definition of refugee to include those categories.

The refugee regime that had been established in 1951 had experienced a period of expansion in terms of whom it covered until the late 1970s. Although demand had expanded, so had the institution of asylum. Most of the expansion had taken place in Africa. In the developed world, refugee flows were largely equated with East-to-West flows or outflows from Communist countries that had been acceptable as part of the cold war. During the 1980s, however, as the number of refugees and asylum-seekers had continued to grow, the expanding demand for asylum had been met with an increasingly restrictive response, particularly from the developed countries. Faced with potentially

large numbers of persons who could make a reasonable claim for asylum under prevailing international instruments, receiving countries were currently adopting a series of measures to restrict access to asylum. Furthermore, in the cases of Iraq and former Yugoslavia, refugee outflows had been prevented by internalizing asylum and keeping would-be refugees in "safe" zones within their own countries.

Several policy implications of the current crisis of the asylum regime were identified, including the need to maintain the right to asylum; to consider ways of integrating refugee and immigration policy; to deal with large refugee outflows through the institution of temporary safe havens; to establish regional regimes that would strengthen burden-sharing with respect to the protection and assistance of refugees; and to devise new ways of dealing with the underlying causes of refugee flows.

The paper entitled "Changing solutions to refugee migrations" focused mostly on Africa to discuss the prospects and challenges faced by those seeking solutions to the growing number of refugees on the continent. It was noted that the situation of refugees in Africa was changing: countries of asylum that in earlier decades had been fairly generous in admitting and assisting refugees were becoming less generous. In Khartoum, for instance, refugees were being blamed for falling wages and rising rents. In rural areas, as the number and length of stay of refugees increased, their competition with the local population grew, giving rise to antagonism. Given those developments, it was urgent to find innovative ways to foster the settlement of long-term refugees in countries of asylum, particularly by regularizing their status. Assistance should aim at making refugees self-sufficient and at minimizing their competition with the local population. It was also necessary to channel assistance both to refugees in rural areas and to the increasing number living in urban areas. Although in some countries refugees were forcefully kept in rural areas or returned there if found in urban areas, increasing numbers were settling spontaneously in cities and were in need of assistance.

Repatriation was described as the preferred solution for the plight of refugees. Participants alluded to the many successful repatriation drives that had already taken place. Since resettlement opportunities in third countries of asylum were diminishing and access to asylum in the developed countries was becoming increasingly difficult, repatriation was seen as the most viable solution in the future. Nevertheless, repatriation had its drawbacks. Cases in which repatriation had been less than voluntary were cited. In addition, in some countries repatriation had taken place even when the conflicts leading to refugee outflows were still far from over. Other crucial issues regarding repatriation remained to be resolved. UNHCR was usually in charge of aiding in the repatriation, but it had no mandate to provide assistance for the long-term reintegration of returning refugees. There was need to establish at what point the needs of repatriates became developmental rather than humanitarian and to provide them with the necessary support. In doing so, it was important to balance the needs of repatriates with those of the local population. The issue of whether returning refugees would choose or be able to return to their areas of origin rather than to different destinations in their country



was raised, as was that of the difficult choices facing second-generation refugees who might have very weak ties to the country of origin.

The discussion reviewed the evolution of the refugee regime in relation to the general immigration policies favoured by the developed countries, especially during the cold war period, and noted that one of the best ways of controlling migration was by instituting visas and controlling access to means of transportation and so on at the point of origin. Such methods were increasingly used to restrict access to asylum. In addition, in Europe there was a strong movement favouring the harmonization of asylum policies. The question was whether such harmonization would institute a minimum or a maximum common denominator. The move towards harmonization had some positive aspects, such as that it was likely to introduce greater predictability in the adjudication procedure. To maintain the integrity of the asylum system, it was argued that countries had to adopt consistent treatments for those asylum-seekers who were not granted refugee status. When 80 per cent of those rejected nevertheless stayed in the receiving country, control was lost and there was little incentive to maintain a costly adjudication system.

Concern about the increasing number of internally displaced persons in need of protection was raised. International law provided a very weak basis for their protection, since it again involved a conflict between human rights and State rights—specifically, a State's sovereignty. Nevertheless, it was agreed that the plight of the internally displaced deserved more attention from the international community, particularly after internal safe havens had been used to protect would-be refugees, as in the case of Iraqi Kurds.

Mention was made of the debate underlying the decision to internalize asylum. When refugee flows arose as part of ethnic cleansing, the international community was reluctant to validate such a strategy by providing external safe havens for the population being expelled. However, by maintaining would-be refugees within their countries or immediate areas of origin, the international community had less incentive to combat the root causes of the conflict. Furthermore, it seemed unethical to put the burden of stopping ethnic cleansing on the plight of expelled persons or those fleeing persecution.

The possibility of instituting adequate burden-sharing mechanisms at the regional level was considered. The model established by the Comprehensive Plan of Action regarding Vietnamese refugees was judged to be a successful example of such burden-sharing. In Central America, however, it had proved more difficult to share responsibility and decision-making. Some participants were sceptical about the possibilities of burden-sharing among European countries. It was nevertheless stressed that if viable strategies were to be found to combat the root causes of refugee movements, more countries would have to integrate their refugee policy with other foreign-policy issues and elicit greater international cooperation.

Lastly, it was noted that statistical information on refugees was very weak. The estimates provided by Governments were often unrealistic and lacked a scientifically acceptable basis. Although it was recognized that accurate statistical accounting was difficult when refugee flows occurred rapidly and involved large numbers of people, better methods had to be

devised to gather refugee statistics, particularly regarding long-standing refugee populations. Better statistics on repatriation were also urgently needed. It was important to sensitize those involved in refugee assistance about the importance of statistics and to enlist their cooperation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

### *Population distribution and internal migration*

The World Population Plan of Action, adopted in 1974, and the recommendations on its further implementation, adopted in 1984, underscored the need to integrate population distribution policies into overall development planning with the aim of promoting a more equitable regional development. Among the strategies proposed were the use of incentives to reduce undesired migration; the reduction of rural/urban inequalities; the avoidance of "urban biases" stemming from economic or social policies that favour urban areas; the adoption of rural development programmes aimed at increasing rural production, efficiency and incomes; and the provision of assistance to migrant women. Many of the Plan's recommendations and those made for its further implementation remain valid, but new developments and a better understanding of the linkages between migration and development have indicated additional avenues for action.

Population mobility provides an opportunity to improve the life chances of a wide section of the world population. Improvements in transportation and communications, the increasing mobility of capital, the speed of transactions and widening social networks are all contributing to an increase in permanent and non-permanent migration. It is now recognized that such flows are rational responses on the part of individuals and families to interregional differences in opportunities and to the need to ensure and widen the sources of family support. Moreover, an increasing number of persons are compelled to migrate in order to ensure their very survival.

Recognizing that the free movement of people and the process of urbanization are essential elements of a productive economy, the priority is not to transform population distribution and population mobility patterns radically. Rather, it is to facilitate trends that result in improved life chances for a wide spectrum of the population and to meet the needs of people and enterprises in the locations where they establish themselves. However, it is recognized that in many parts of the world rapid urbanization and the development of very large cities present enormous challenges to Governments in terms of providing urban management and services without neglecting the important needs of rural populations. The recommendations that follow outline strategies to address these issues.

*Recommendation 1.* Population distribution policies should be an integral part of development policies. In trying to achieve a better spatial distribution of production, employment and population, Governments should adopt multipronged strategies, such as encouraging the growth of small and medium-sized urban centres and promoting the sustainable development of

rural areas, while at the same time improving employment and living conditions in large urban centres. In so doing, principles of good governance with respect to accountability and responsiveness should be adhered to.

*Recommendation 2.* All government policies and expenditures have some influence on the spatial distribution of population and migration flows, with many of the strongest influences deriving not from specific urban and regional policies or spatial planning but from macroeconomic and pricing policies, sectoral priorities, infrastructure investment and the distribution of power and resources between central, provincial and local governments. Governments should evaluate the extent to which both their spatial policies and the spatial impacts of non-spatial policies contribute to their social and economic goals.

*Recommendation 3.* With regard to urban areas, the main priority must be to increase the capacity and competence of city and municipal authorities to manage urban development; to respond to the needs of their citizens, especially the poor, for basic infrastructure and services; and to provide poor groups with alternatives to living in areas vulnerable to natural and technological disasters. To finance such infrastructure and services, Governments should consider instituting equitable cost-recovery schemes and increasing revenues by broadening the tax base.

*Recommendation 4.* In order to increase administrative efficiency and improve services, Governments should decentralize expenditure responsibility and the right to raise revenue to regional, district and municipal authorities. Partnerships for rural and urban development should be fostered between residents, community-based organizations, local authorities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

*Recommendation 5.* Governments should make efforts to develop economic and institutional links between urban centres and their surrounding rural areas by, among other things, improving infrastructure (roads, electricity, water supply and telecommunications); expanding education and health services; and providing technical assistance for the marketing and commercialization of rural products.

*Recommendation 6.* In order to help create alternatives to out-migration from rural areas, Governments should not only enhance rural productivity and improve rural infrastructure and social services but should also facilitate the establishment of credit and production cooperatives and other grass-roots organizations that give people control over resources and improve their welfare. Governments should recognize and safeguard traditional rights over common lands and water resources. In addition, Governments and the private sector should collaborate in promoting vocational training and off-farm employment opportunities in rural areas, ensuring equal access for men and women.

*Recommendation 7.* Given that a substantial number of migrants engage in economic activities within the informal sector of the economy, efforts should be made to improve the income-earning capacities of those migrants by facilitating their access to such services as credit; vocational training; a

place to ply their trade; transportation; and health services, including family planning. It is important to ensure that women and men have equal access to such services.

*Recommendation 8.* Governments and non-governmental organizations should encourage and support group mobilization and organization by and for persons affected by migration, such as women left behind, domestic servants, workers in the informal sector and urban squatters. Organizations formed in this way can foster community participation in development and self-help programmes; mobilize savings and credit; organize for production; provide counselling and other social protection and legal services; and identify problems and make them known to decision makers.

*Recommendation 9.* Given that in many countries high population growth in rural areas is a result of natural increase, which also makes major contributions to the growth of urban populations, Governments wishing to reduce urban growth should implement population policies and programmes that ensure adequate access to health services and family planning.

*Recommendation 10.* Given the increase in migration triggered by environmental degradation, natural disasters and armed conflict, there is a need to address the underlying causes of such phenomena and to develop mechanisms to protect and aid victims, whether or not they are in their own country. International and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and Governments are urged to cooperate in addressing such causes and in developing such mechanisms.

### *International migration*

The World Population Plan of Action and the recommendations for its further implementation established that international migration policies must respect the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In addition, the Plan called for Governments of receiving countries to grant documented migrant workers in a regular situation and accompanying members of their families equal treatment to that accorded to their own nationals in terms of working conditions, social security, participation in trade unions and access to health, education and other social services.

With respect to undocumented migrants (defined as persons who have not fulfilled the legal requirements of the State in which they find themselves for admission, stay or exercise of economic activity), the Plan emphasized that all measures designed to curb their numbers must respect their basic human rights. It was further suggested that the International Labour Organisation Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers, 1975, be used to provide guidelines for the formulation of policies aimed at controlling undocumented migration.

In recent years, growing demographic and labour-market imbalances,

increasing disparities in economic growth and development among countries and regions and major changes in world political and economic systems have contributed to intensify migration pressures. These growing migration pressures in the developing countries and in former Eastern-bloc countries have heightened concern among the main receiving countries, prompted, at least in part, by the negative attitudes of their nationals towards migrants. As in the case of internal migration, voluntary international migration is a rational response to interregional economic differences.

The recommendations presented below take account of developments since 1984, including the adoption of the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which established a new set of standards regarding the rights of all migrant workers.

*Recommendation 11.* In formulating general economic, trade and development cooperation policies, Governments of both sending and receiving countries should take account of the possible effects of such policies on international migration flows. Where trade barriers contribute to growing migration pressures in the developing countries, Governments of the developed countries are urged to remove them, and to promote investment in countries of origin and channel development assistance to job-creating projects.

*Recommendation 12.* Governments of countries of origin are urged to recognize and act upon their common interests by cooperating with one another in their negotiations with labour-importing countries to adopt standardized work contracts, establish adequate working conditions and social protection measures for their migrant workers, and control illegal recruitment agents. Governments of countries of origin should appoint labour attachés in receiving countries to ensure that work contracts are honoured and to look after the welfare of their migrant workers. Advocacy organizations should also have a recognized role in protecting migrant workers' rights.

*Recommendation 13.* Governments of countries of origin wishing to foster the inflow of remittances and their productive use for development should adopt sound exchange-rate, monetary and economic policies, facilitate the provision of banking facilities that enable the safe and timely transfer of migrants' funds and promote the conditions necessary to increase domestic savings and channel them into productive investment.

*Recommendation 14.* Governments of receiving countries should protect the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families by conforming to the guidelines established by the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and other relevant international instruments. It is particularly important that Governments of receiving countries ensure that all migrant workers, irrespective of whether their status is regular or irregular, be protected from being exploited by unscrupulous intermediaries, agents or employers.

*Recommendation 15.* Taking account of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and of the Convention on the Elimination

nation of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Governments of sending and receiving countries are encouraged to review and, where necessary, amend their international migration legislation and regulations so as to avoid discriminatory practices against female migrants. In addition, Governments are urged to take appropriate steps to protect the rights and safety of migrant women facing specific problems, such as those in domestic service, those engaging in "out-work", those who are victims of trafficking and involuntary prostitution and any others in potentially exploitable circumstances.

*Recommendation 16.* As recommended in the World Population Plan of Action, Governments of receiving countries that have not already done so are urged to consider adopting measures to promote the normalization of the family life of documented migrants in the receiving country through family reunion. Demographic and other considerations should not prevent Governments in the receiving country from taking such measures.

*Recommendation 17.* Governments of receiving countries are urged to promote good community relations between migrants and the rest of society and to take measures to combat all forms of racism and xenophobia by, for instance, adopting legislation against racism, establishing and supporting special agencies to combat racism and xenophobia, taking appropriate educational measures and using the mass media.

*Recommendation 18.* Governments should guarantee equal economic and social rights to long-term foreign residents and facilitate their naturalization.

*Recommendation 19.* Governments of countries within regions where rights of free movement of their respective citizens exist should extend these rights to their long-term foreign residents from third countries.

*Recommendation 20.* Governments should provide information to potential migrants on the legal conditions for entry, stay and employment in receiving countries.

*Recommendation 21.* Governments of receiving countries should increase their efforts to enhance the integration of the children of migrants (second-generation migrants) by providing them with educational and training opportunities equal to those of nationals, allowing them to exercise an economic activity and facilitating the naturalization of those who have been raised in the receiving country.

*Recommendation 22.* Governments of both countries of origin and countries of destination are urged to promote and support migrant associations that provide information and social services and enable migrants and returning migrants, especially female migrants in vulnerable situations, to help themselves.

*Recommendation 23.* Governments of receiving countries should consider adopting effective sanctions against those who organize illegal migration as well as against those who knowingly employ undocumented migrants. Where the activities of agents or other intermediaries in the migration process are legal, Governments should introduce regulations to prevent abuses.

## Refugees

The World Population Plan of Action and the recommendations for its further implementation emphasized the need to find durable solutions to the problems related to refugees and refugee movements, especially in terms of voluntary repatriation or resettlement in third countries. When neither of the two was possible, the Plan advocated the provision of assistance to first-asylum countries to help them meet the needs of refugees. It also called for Governments to accede to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

The world refugee population continues to increase and, while there are prospects for durable solutions through voluntary repatriation, the growing number of persons seeking asylum is straining the asylum system. The recommendations that follow emphasize the need to preserve international protection principles, particularly the right to asylum, and the need to adopt appropriate strategies relating to returnee programmes and the assistance of vulnerable groups.

*Recommendation 24.* Governments, the international community and non-governmental organizations are urged to address the underlying causes of refugee movements and to take appropriate measures regarding conflict resolution; promotion of peace; respect for human rights, including those of minorities; alleviation of poverty; democratization; good governance; and the prevention of environmental degradation. Governments should refrain from policies or practices that lead to forced migration or population movements of an involuntary nature.

*Recommendation 25.* Governments are urged to continue facilitating and supporting international protection and assistance activities on behalf of refugees and to promote the search for durable solutions to their plight.

*Recommendation 26.* Governments are encouraged to strengthen regional and international mechanisms that enhance their capacity to share responsibility in an equitable fashion for the protection and assistance needs of refugees.

*Recommendation 27.* Governments are urged to protect the right to asylum by respecting the principle of *non-refoulement*, granting asylum-seekers access to a fair hearing and providing temporary safe haven when appropriate.

*Recommendation 28.* Governments, international organizations, community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations are urged to contribute to and participate in repatriation programmes that ensure that initial rehabilitation assistance is linked to long-term reconstruction and development plans.

*Recommendation 29.* Given that many refugee populations in countries of first asylum have been in exile for extended periods, Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations are urged to assist these long-standing refugee populations to achieve self-sufficiency. Governments of first-asylum countries are invited to take steps to regularize the

situation of long-standing refugees with little prospect of repatriation by facilitating their naturalization.

*Recommendation 30.* The international community, through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and appropriate relief organizations, should address the specific needs of refugee women. In particular, Governments of countries of asylum should ensure the right of female refugees to physical safety and facilitate their access to counselling, health services, material assistance, education and economic activity. Governments should ensure that female refugees have resettlement opportunities equal to those of male refugees.

*Data and research needs regarding population distribution and migration*

The World Population Plan of Action and the recommendations for its further implementation recognized that the field of migration and urban statistics was the least developed area of population statistics and recommended that Governments improve it by using their national population censuses, sample surveys and administrative record systems to obtain information on internal migration, urbanization and international migration. However, despite some advances, many deficiencies still remain. Furthermore, understanding of migration processes has not advanced as much as understanding of fertility and mortality. The recommendations below indicate areas that should be given priority in data gathering and research.

*Recommendation 31.* The United Nations system and other appropriate organizations should support and promote research on population distribution, internal and international migration and urbanization aimed at providing a sounder basis for the formulation of environmental, development and population distribution policies.

*Recommendation 32.* National statistical offices are urged to collect, tabulate, publish and disseminate demographic data by relevant geographical areas on vital events, migration, and population size and characteristics, so as to facilitate a better understanding of population-change processes and their policy implications at the local, regional and national levels. The dissemination of detailed census data coded for microregions in machine-readable form should be given priority. The United Nations is urged to foster these activities.

*Recommendation 33.* Recognizing the major changes which have occurred in the structure and functioning of urban systems, the United Nations and national statistical offices are urged to review the existing standard definitions and classifications of rural and urban populations.

*Recommendation 34.* The United Nations and appropriate national and international agencies are invited to review the adequacy of existing definitions and classifications of international migration and should also address the problems of incorporating them into efficient data-collection systems. The development of methods allowing the estimation of undocumented migration and, where relevant, statistics on remittances should also be supported. Efforts should be made to conduct in-depth migration surveys in countries receiving



sizeable migrant populations. Governments are urged to produce and disseminate statistics on international migrants, classified by place of birth, country of citizenship, occupation, sex and age.

*Recommendation 35.* Given the deficiencies in refugee statistics and their relevance for planning refugee assistance and for understanding the consequences of refugee movements, measures to improve them should be given priority. Governments of countries of asylum and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with refugees are urged to cooperate with the United Nations in devising and implementing procedures to register and monitor refugee populations.

*Recommendation 36.* Given the lack of systematic data on displaced persons, Governments are urged to cooperate with the United Nations and non-governmental organizations to facilitate data collection on displaced populations and their needs.

*Recommendation 37.* The United Nations should promote an exchange of information on the trends and policies of international migration by creating working groups of national experts whose task would be to prepare periodic reports on international migration developments in each of their countries, following the Continuous Reporting System on Migration model of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Regional summaries of such reports should be produced and disseminated by the United Nations.

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