

Second Study on International Cooperation for Population and Development

New Insights from the Japanese Experience



November 2003

Institute for International Cooperation
Japan International Cooperation Agency

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This report is a summary of the views of the study group (Chairperson: Dr. Makoto Atoh, Director-General of the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research) and does not necessarily reflect the official views of the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

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Foreword

The population of the world was approximately 2.5 billion in 1950 and has now surpassed 6 billion. The 2002 United Nations population forecast estimates that the world population will reach 8.9 billion people in 2050. In an effort to work toward the stabilization of this kind of drastic population growth, the United Nations (UN) has held global international conferences on population issues once every decade to the present. The concepts of Reproductive health/rights (RH/R) appeared for the first time at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo. The introduction of these concepts resulted in a shift in the focus of population policy from the macro level (country level) to the micro level (individual level), and vastly changed the approach taken on population issues.

Japan's contributions to solving population issues in developing countries have been through technical assistance on a bilateral basis as well as through contributions to international organizations. Since 1994, Japan has provided more than 3 billion dollars of assistance to population and AIDS programs based on the Global Issues Initiative (GII). In 1992, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) organized a Study Group on Development Assistance for Population and Development, and has made recommendations regarding assistance in the field of population.

Despite these efforts, however, population issues are still a major challenge for humankind, especially for people in developing countries, and are directly related to the environment, to our food supply, and to development. These issues continue to become increasingly complex and serious. In the light of this situation, JICA organized a Second Study Group on Development Assistance for Population and Development in August 2001 to formulate a new direction for assistance based on the major changes in the trends seen at the Cairo Conference and other recent population conferences.

This study group comprised nine committee members and advisors with Dr. Makoto Atoh (Director General of the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research) as its chairperson, along with a taskforce of six members, and held a total of 13 study meetings. It also enlisted the cooperation of 28 experts from both within and outside of Japan to participate in the study meetings and preparatory meetings as well as to write reports. The present report is a summary of the fruits of all these efforts, and we hope it will be useful not only for government agencies in order to guide their future cooperation in the field of population, but also for all related agencies and organizations.

I am exceedingly grateful for the efforts of Chairperson Dr. Makoto Atoh and all of the committee members, advisors, and members of the taskforce, and would like to express my deep appreciation to all those who participated in the discussions of this study group.

January 2003

Takao Kawakami, President
Japan International Cooperation Agency

Preface by the Chairperson

This report is a compilation of the results of the study conducted from August 2001 through October 2002 by the Second Study Group on Development Assistance for Population and Development organized by JICA.

The First Study Group on Development Assistance for Population and Development was organized in 1992 and its final reports were published in the same year. Ten years have already passed since then, and during that time there have been major changes in the status of the world's population as well as in international population assistance strategies. This study group aimed to accurately assess the new trends of the 1990s while taking the results of the First Study Group into consideration, and to reconsider the future population development assistance strategies that are expected to be taken by the government and by JICA.

Some of the new trends in the world's population that arose in the 1990s are: (1) an overall decline in fertility rates and population growth rates, but the emergence of Sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia as hotspots for population issues, (2) the shortened life expectancy in a number of countries due to HIV/AIDS, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, (3) a decline in the birthrate and a lack of improvement in life expectancy in Eastern European countries following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and (4) the beginning of the aging of the population in some developing countries following a transition in fertility trends.

The most striking new trend in international population assistance strategy was the reproductive health/rights (RH/R) approach that was developed at the Cairo Conference.

This new approach, characterized by the Program of Action of this conference, is a population strategy that indirectly promotes a demographic transition through efforts aimed at achieving reproductive health, including family planning, and is based on a foundation of respect for people's (especially women's) human rights and reproductive rights. It is a powerful antithesis to the population strategy agreed upon at the 1974 Bucharest conference, which asserted the need to popularize family planning in order to achieve population control for the promotion of economic development (World Population Plan of Action). The adoption of the new approach has been called a paradigm shift to a human rights approach.

The reproductive health/rights (RH/R) approach started to take hold internationally through the activities of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). However, there is still considerable disagreement regarding the development of a population strategy. This study group has made recommendations that are based on continuing observation of the actual conditions in developing countries and in the field of assistance. With an accurate awareness of the significance of population issues – the macro-level phenomenon of population dynamics and the effects it has on economy, society, and environment – the group is committed to the value of the reproductive health/rights (RH/R) approach in solving population issues through concrete measures, in particular with regard to the popularization of family planning. A catch

phrase to describe the recommendations would be “Think globally, and act respecting individuals.”

The initial plan of the study group was to bring to light Japan’s historical experience in population development and examine whether they could be utilized in Japan’s population development assistance strategies. The group conducted interviews to obtain information concerning Japan’s fertility transition, improved maternal and child health, family planning dissemination, livelihood improvement activities, and the activities of NGO’s immediately following World War II, and has derived several useful recommendations based on the information obtained from these interviews. Needless to say, since Japan achieved its demographic transition without any organized national programs or international cooperation in population or family planning, it may be difficult for developing countries in the world today to utilize Japan’s experiences as their model. Nevertheless, if we look back at Japan’s experience, we find that the new approach in today’s population activities and population assistance was in fact utilized previously in Japan under a different name. For example, there were many instances of the use of a community-based approach (CBA) and partnerships between the government and NGOs. There are also other programs from Japan’s own experience that, to a considerable extent, can be utilized in today’s population assistance activities, such as the utilization of maternity and child handbooks, the retraining of traditional midwives to promote family planning, and the integrated approach used by Japan’s international NGOs.

We endeavored to explore the possibility of highlighting Japan’s originality and ingenuity in its population assistance activities, so that, while being based on international population strategy trends, they would not be simply emulating them. It is imperative that we do not stop at the recommendations of this report, but continue learning valuable lessons from the population assistance activities of JICA and Japanese NGOs, and continue to make efforts to turn the lessons learned into programs that can be easily understood by everyone.

The recommendations of this report are diverse, but focus on reproductive health activities including family planning, and suggest a “shift from a sector-wide approach to a multi-sectoral approach.” Until now, international cooperation in this field was handled by JICA as a part of health cooperation activities within the single sector of medical cooperation. It is true that it is difficult to cooperate in areas of the health field without including medical or healthcare specialists since this field is related to human reproduction, such as sexuality, contraception, abortion, childbirth, and pre- and post-natal care. However, as seen from Japan’s own historical experience as well as the experience of Japanese NGOs, and in fact, as is also seen in the Program of Action from the Cairo Conference, the diffusion of family planning goes beyond the field of healthcare. Rather, it is very deeply involved with women’s education, influence, and decision-making along with the economic power behind it, and is also closely tied to efforts to improve the living conditions (village development, public health standards, etc.) of the whole community. JICA, being aware of this fact, is already carrying out experimental projects for the dissemination of family planning concepts in combination with several developmental elements, but this type of comprehensive approach should become the mainstream in future.

This study group comprised nine committee members, advisors, and a JICA taskforce, as well as secretarial staff. Active discussions were conducted on a nearly monthly basis through meetings, attended throughout by the Director of the Institute for International Cooperation, the former vice president of JICA, and various outside experts. The committee members were international population researchers, experienced persons from international population assistance organizations and international NGOs, current leaders of Japanese international population assistance NGOs, those in charge who are active at the front lines of JICA's population cooperation, and an ex-journalist specializing in the population field. They represent a wide variety of perspectives and were, therefore, able to study the problem from different angles, including theory and practice in assistance for population development, macro-level and micro-level perspectives, domestic and international perspectives, and program implementation as well as education and public relations activities.

The field of population and development is different from the fields in which JICA typically provides assistance. As the theme of population and development itself is very broad, the nine committee members along with many domestic and overseas experts spent the first few months of the study conducting interviews and gathering information in each specific field. They also made use of the study reports of visiting researchers and had the opportunity to go to the field and observe assistance programs in population and family planning in Bangladesh and Thailand. These interviews, visiting researcher reports, and observations have been utilized in various aspects of this report. Furthermore, in formulating recommendations, we asked a few outside experts to contribute to the report in areas that could not be sufficiently covered by the members of the study group. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the domestic and overseas experts, visiting researchers, and those working on the Bangladesh and Thailand projects who willingly took time out of their busy schedules to work with this study group.

I hope that this report will contribute to the efforts of all of those working diligently in planning and implementing assistance activities in the field of population and development in Japan. It is my wish that a qualitative improvement in Japan's assistance activities will contribute, even in some small way, to improvement in the welfare of each and every citizen of the developing countries.

January 2003

Second Study on Development Assistance for Population and Development
Makoto Atoh, Chairperson

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Acronyms and Initials

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BCC	Behavior Change Communication
BHN	Basic Human Needs
CBA	Community Based Approach
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CHC	Commune Health Center
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ECOSOC)
EU	European Union
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FPAB	Family Planning Association of Bangladesh
GHQ	Allied Forces General Headquarters
GII	Global Issues Initiative on Population and AIDS
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Country
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPSP	Health and Population Sector Program
ICOMP	International Council on the Management of Population Programmes
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDA	International Development Association
IDE-JETRO	Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization
IDGs	International Development Goals
IDI	Okinawa Infectious Diseases Initiative

IDU	Injecting Drug Users
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
IP	Integration Project
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
IUD	Intra-Uterus Contraceptive Device
IUSSP	International Union for the Scientific Study of Population
JFPA	Japan Family Planning Association
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JOCV	Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
JOICFP	Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning
JSDF	Japan Social Development Fund
LANA	Learning and Action Network on AIDS
LCG	local consulting group
LLDCs	Least among Less Developed Countries
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MSM	Men who have sex with other men
NDHS	National Demographic and Health Survey
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NIEs	Newly Industrializing Economies
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OISCA	Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OTCA	Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency
PHC	Primary Health Care

PHRD	Population and Human Resources Development Fund
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PRSTF	Poverty Reduction Strategy Trust Fund
PTC	Project-Type Technical Cooperation
QOL	Quality of Life
RH/R	Reproductive Health/Right(s)
SIAP	United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
SWAPs	Sector Wide Approaches
TB	Tuberculosis
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
TICAD	Tokyo International Conference on African Development
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Development Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	Women in Development

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