




ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY



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FOREWORD

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) upholds the global view that population is an important factor of development as, indeed, man remains at the centre of development. It also recognizes that the ultimate goal of any development plan should be the improvement of the quality of life. In the light of the above, the OAU has been endeavouring to encourage Member States to formulate and implement appropriate national population policies, taking into account global and regional population and development frameworks. Recently, the OAU has facilitated the establishment of the African Population Commission, which as a permanent institution, is responsible for coordinating population activities in the region as well as raising population issues on the agenda of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government and the Council of Ministers. To this, one might add that population constitutes an important chapter in the Treaty establishing the African Economic community.

The OAU Population Newsletter is published every six months. It is a forum for new ideas and exchange of views on population and development matters. I therefore welcome contributions, comments and suggestions from Member States, population institutions and individuals. Popular participation is our motto for the success of the Newsletter!

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OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ADOPTS A RESOLUTION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE ICPD

The OAU Council of Ministers has once more pronounced itself on population and development in Africa. The latest pronouncement was made during its 61st session that took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 23 to 27 January 1995, by adopting a document code-named CM/Res.2 (LXI) Resolution of the 61st Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers on the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

The OAU Council of Ministers adopted the resolution after considering the report of the Secretary General on population and development activities, particularly on the ICPD. The full text of the resolution is presented below:

RESOLUTION OF THE SIXTY FIRST ORDINARY SESSION OF THE OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (ICPD)

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of the African Unity, meeting in its sixty-first Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 23 to 27 January, 1995,

Having considered the report of the OAU Secretary-General on "The Activities of the Secretariat in the Field of Population and Development" Document CM/1868 (LXI);

Bearing in mind that the factors of population, health, education, poverty, pattern of production and consumption, empowerment of women, environmental conditions, quality of life, peace and stability are closely inter-related and should be considered through an integrated approach;

Noting that there are still many African countries which have not yet adopted appropriate national population policies;

Mindful of the fact that the implementation of the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action for African Population and Self-reliant Development; the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development; and the subsequent national population policies formulated and adopted in the Member States, has been hampered partly by the lack of adequate financial resources and the necessary expertise;

Considering the interest of the OAU in the field of population and development as evidenced by the establishment of the African Population Commission; and the active participation of the African Group at the International Conference on Population Development (ICPD), Cairo;

Recognizing the importance of the Programme of Action of the ICPD as a global framework for national action and international cooperation, aimed at improving the quality of life for each and every member of the human family;

1. **URGES** Member States to further strengthen their political commitment to population and development policies and take concrete actions in order to promote and implement the Programme of Action of the ICPD and the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development, taking into account national laws, religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and in conformity with the universally recognized international human rights;
2. **FURTHER URGES** Member States to put in place institutional infrastructures responsible for policy guidance, coordination and monitoring as regards population activities;

3. **APPEALS** to Member States to allocate adequate budget for population programme and intensify sensitization activities through follow-up meetings, publications and audio-visual aids, print and electronic media;
4. **CALLS UPON** the international community to provide African countries and the OAU Secretariat, both bilaterally and multilaterally, with adequate and substantial financial assistance for population and development activities, including through UNFPA and other organs of the UN System and Specialized Agencies;
5. **FURTHER REQUESTS** non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donor agencies and governments to reinforce their partnership with national and regional population institutions in initiating and implementing population programmes in Africa in a more organized and coordinated way;
6. **ENCOURAGES** the Secretary-General of the OAU to seek extra budgetary resources for population related activities of the Secretariat;
7. **URGES** the OAU, UN-ECA and ADB to work jointly in the field of population and development; and
8. **REQUESTS** the Secretary-General of the OAU, to co-ordinate and monitor population activities in Africa in collaboration with other institutions dealing with population matters and report regularly to the Council of Ministers and to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

UNFPA APPRECIATES PERFORMANCE OF OAU IN POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The United Nations Fund for Population (UNFPA) has appreciated the increasing interest and performance of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in the field of population and development in Africa.

During her June 1995 visit to Addis Ababa, seat of the OAU Headquarters, Mme M.

Angelique Savane, Director of Africa Division, UNFPA, commended the role of OAU in promoting, encouraging and coordinating population activities in Africa, particularly its sensitization and advocacy undertakings that embraced both the OAU Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government as well. She however, pointed out that OAU should make further endeavours towards the implementation of the Cairo ICPD Programme of Action, aimed at attaining sustainable development and improving the quality of life of the human family.



According to Mme Savane, some of the most important priority areas for UNFPA after Cairo, are reproductive rights and reproductive health; gender equality, equity and empowerment of women; and advocacy, the implementation of which requires a strengthened OAU/UNFPA partnership.

Mme Savane paid a courtesy call on H.E. Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, OAU Secretary General, following a joint meeting with representatives of EDECO and ESCAS departments in the OAU General Secretariat. During the meetings, Mme Savane stressed the need for integrating the interests of the various

departments in the General Secretariat in preparing the necessary document for the successor programme of the OAU/UNFPA Population Project code-named Project RAF/91/P11.

Mme Savane was appointed to run Africa Division at the UNFPA Headquarters a year ago. She was formerly Director of UNFPA Country Support Team based in Dakar, Senegal. Earlier, she held various posts in UNHCR, Society of International Development, Foundation of Women's World Summit, South Commission and African Women for Research and Development.

AFRICA REFUGEE DAY OBSERVED

"Our continent is going through transitions in the political field and the economic field; in the political field through a process of democratization, in the economic field through economic reform, structural adjustment, basically a continent on the march", declared Dr. Salim A. Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, on the occasion of African Refugee Day, June 20, 1995.

Dr. Salim stressed that it was absolutely vital for the African people "to consolidate the culture of tolerance", to create conditions whereby the process of democratization would flourish, "without animosity, antagonism, religious or racial antagonism ... without any artificial antagonism".

Only when this was done should favorable conditions be created for "the ultimate resolution of the scourge of refugees in Africa", stated Dr. Salim.

"Africa Refugee Day is a time when we must take stock of the refugee problems and challenges facing Africa", said Mr. Lambo, UNHCR Regional Liaison Representative, in his introductory statement on the occasion.

Africa Refugee Day is being celebrated annually on June 20 as the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugees in Africa which was signed in Addis Ababa in 1969, came into force on June 20, 1974.

This celebration takes place "under the sign of hope", stated the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs. Sadako Ogata. The hope that

"the evils which have, throughout the continent, forced millions of people to flee their country and find refuge elsewhere, can be made to retreat - perhaps to disappear", said she.

"In 1995, hope bears an African name: Mozambique. In that country, until recently ravaged by civil war, UNHCR's objectives have become reality," added Mrs. Ogata. Now that the weapons of war have been silenced, 1.7 million refugees have returned home voluntarily to their country of origin.

When the OAU Convention was signed in 1969, there were less than one million refugees on the continent. Today this figure has grown seven-fold with an additional 15 million people internally displaced within their own borders in refugee like situations, living in precarious conditions despite the assistance provided by asylum countries and the huge sacrifices made to alleviate their suffering. This is an enormous burden on a continent whose colossal economic and social difficulties are well-known.

The sacrifices made by the countries of asylum "are a living testimony of the spirit of brotherhood and of the deep sense of solidarity among African brothers" declared H.E. President Zein el Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia and outgoing Chairman of the Organization of African Unity. Moreover, the President of Tunisia, in his Africa Refugee Day statement, exhorted the international community to put Africa "on top of their agenda and to provide Africa the much needed assistance and the necessary support so that the continent would be able to create conducive conditions to promote the return of the refugees to their homes and provide them with the basic conditions for a decent living which will guarantee their effective reintegration into their societies.

POPULATION WORKSHOP IDENTIFIES PROBLEMS AND MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS

A regional consultation workshop on the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the Programme of Action of the ICPD, that took place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire from 6 to 9 June 1995, made a noteworthy attempt to

identify some of the major obstacles of population activities in Africa, followed by specific recommendations to reverse the situation.

According to the consensus reached during the workshop, the main impediments to the implementation of the continental and global population and development frameworks include:

- a) Poor public awareness on the intrinsic relationships that exist between population and development;*
- b) Lack of putting population at the centre of development plans in some African countries;*
- c) Failure to identify priority areas and establish well-defined targets taking into account local conditions;*
- d) Absence of comprehensive and well-defined implementation plans;*
- e) Weak institutional arrangements and particularly failure to establish coordination bureaux at the highest level;*
- f) Lack of adequately trained manpower in population aggravated by a high staff mobility and brain drainages;*
- g) Little or no decentralization of the management of population activities;*
- h) Low participation of NGOs in both the formulation and implementation of population policies;*
- i) Failure to introduce and institutionalize accountability in the implementing agencies;*
- j) Inadequate budgetary allocations;*
- k) Economic crisis brought about by the Structural Adjustment Programme and the declining commodity prices;*
- l) Lack of in-built monitoring and evaluation frameworks.*

After considering the various presentations and views, the workshop finally made some but basic recommendations, aimed at accelerating the implementation the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the Programme of Action of the ICPD as highlighted below:

- a) Policy makers, legislators and planners should be consistently sensitized in such a way that they have a working understanding of the nature of the relationships between population and development. They should also be able to understand the methodology criteria and principles of developing the national population programme;*
- b) Governments should be encouraged and assisted to design long term and comprehensive development plans that take into account the centrality of population. On their part, Governments should show greater political will and commitment to implement the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the Programme of Action of the ICPD.*
- c) National population policies should have well-defined and prioritized targets with a clear set of national objectives per sector. Progress indicators, aimed at facilitating the monitoring and evaluation of the national population policies should also be defined;*
- d) National population policies should be accompanied by comprehensive implementation plans, including monitoring and evaluation mechanisms;*
- e) The promulgation of national population policies should be preceded by putting in place highly powered and operational institutional arrangements. The terms of reference of the implementing institutions and mode and mechanism of collaboration between them would be defined clearly. In this connection, the trend towards decentralizing the implementation of the national population policy should be systematic and gradual;*
- f) Existing and ongoing training programmes in population and development planning should*

BUREAU OF THE AFRICAN POPULATION COMMISSION HOLDS SECOND MEETING

be reviewed and reoriented consistent with the emerging new development paradigm. NGOs should be involved in such training schemes;

- g) Governments should ensure the creation of a conducive working atmosphere to absorb and maintain skilled manpower in population and development;*
- h) Accountability should be introduced in the implementation programme, particularly in the monitoring and evaluation mechanism;*
- i) Governments should make adequate budgetary allocations for the implementation of their national population policies;*
- j) Population IEC activities should be intensified and expanded for increased awareness and population participation;*
- k) NGOs should be encouraged to participate in population and development activities, right from the formulation to the implementation of national population policies;*
- l) The African Population Commission should encourage and support national population commissions in their population activities;*
- m) The Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat of the African Population Commission should promote and facilitate exchange of experiences and information pertaining to the development of national population programmes. In order to make a realistic evaluation of the progress of national programmes and their impacts, governments should ensure that they complete questionnaires sent out by the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat, on behalf of the African Population Commission and return them accordingly; and*
- n) UNFPA should continue encouraging and assisting population programmes in Africa.*

The workshop was organized and serviced by the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat.

The Bureau of the African Population Commission held its second meeting in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire on 8th June 1995.

The meeting was presided over by H.E. Col. Chris Ugokwe (Rtd), Chairman of the National Population Commission of Nigeria and the African Population Commission. It was attended by representatives of Ethiopia, Cameroon and Tunisia which are members of the Bureau in their capacity as 1st Vice Chairman, 2nd Vice Chairman and Rapporteur respectively. Lesotho which is the 3rd Vice Chairman could not attend the meeting due to some technical problems in communication. The African Development Bank and the African Economic Commission were not also represented as they were preoccupied with the workshop on the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action, that took place in Abidjan simultaneously.

The meeting reviewed progress report on the various activities undertaken by the Joint Secretariat of the African Population Commission since May 1994. In addition, it considered the draft workplan for the period 1995-1996.

Submitting the report, Dr. B.H. Abdellatif, Chief of Population and Development Section of the OAU, pointed out that the major achievements comprised the inclusion of population issues in the agenda of the 60th and 61st sessions of the OAU Council of Ministers and the 30th Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and the subsequent endorsement of two resolutions and a declaration on population and development; organizing and back stopping the African Group attending the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD); organizing and participating in various population related meetings; undertaking sensitization activities through symposia and publications; and production of seven desk-top papers on some aspects of population.

The workplan of the Joint Secretariat encompasses various activities, the major ones

of which, are compiling information on national population commissions and population units; reviewing the implementation of national population policies; updating the state of population and development in Africa; ensuring the dissemination of population related information; and conducting workshops on the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action. Others include encouraging and assisting Member States in the formulation and implementation of national population policies; encouraging the partnership of NGOs in population and development programmes; intensifying IEC activities; assisting and promoting research development; and organizing the second General Assembly of African Population Commission.

After a lengthy discussion the meeting adopted both the report and the workplan by commending the Joint Secretariat for its endeavours. It, however, recommended that the African Population Commission should maintain close working relations with national population commissions; strengthen its sensitization activities at the highest level to generate the necessary political will for population programmes; and mobilize financial and technical assistance from donor agencies for population programmes in Africa. With regard to the second Assembly of the African Population Commission in May 1996, it was also recommended that adequate preparations should be made well ahead of time, to be reviewed by the third meeting of the Bureau due to take place just before the Assembly.

JOINT SECRETARIAT OF THE AFRICAN POPULATION COMMISSION (APC) BEGINS FAMILIARIZATION TOURS

The Joint Secretariat of the African Population Commission (APC) has started a familiarization tour programme, designed to cover six African countries, namely Senegal, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Mauritius, Cameroon and Egypt.

The programme has been launched with a visit to Dakar, Senegal from 10th to 19th June 1995. The objectives of the programme include

exchanging information and experiences with officials of the national population commissions and/or analogous institutions, population research centres, UNFPA country offices and subregional UNFPA technical support teams as well as local NGOs, on population and development activities. Others include sensitizing and encouraging Member States to strengthen their national population activities; exploring areas of cooperation with various institutions interested in population and development matters; and identifying priority areas for research and manpower development programmes.

The delegation of the Joint Secretariat to Dakar consisted of H.E. Col. Chris Ugokwe, Chairman of the National Population Commission of Nigeria and the current Chairman of the APC, and representatives of the OAU and UN-ECA. The African Development Bank could not take part in the familiarization tour programme, due to internal preoccupations.

The list of institutions covered by the visit included the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning; Directorate of Population and Human Resources; Ministry of Environment and Conservation of Nature; Ministry of Women, Children and Family; National Statistical Bureau; Senegalese Association for Family Planning (ASBEF); Union of African Population Studies (UAPS); UNFPA Country Office; UNFPA Country Support Team II; Institute of Development and Economic Planning (IDEP); and the UNFPA Training Programme Coordination Bureau.



With regard to the national population activities it was reported that the national population policy of Senegal was launched in 1988 with the aim of improving the quality of life for all through integrating population factors into development strategies, mainly by reducing the prevailing high population growth rate; correcting the spatial distribution of population; expanding basic education and reproductive health services; and enhancing the role and priority areas of the population policy include maternal and child health; fertility and birth spacing; empowerment of women; development and enhancement of the youth; protection of the family; expansion and improvement of education; migration and urbanization; conservation of environment; population studies and research; and population information, education and communication (IEC).

The national institutional arrangement for the formulation and implementation of the national population policy consists of the National Council for Population and Human Resources; the National Commission of Population and Human Resources Committees; the Network of Journalists; and the Directorate of Population and Human Resources.

The composition and responsibilities of these institutions vary according to their nature. The National Council embodies all ministries, and is presided over by the Head of State, with the overall responsibility of providing policy guidelines.

On the other hand, the National Population and Human Resources Commission is composed of the representatives of the Ministries of Economy, Finance and Planning; Women, Children and Family; Social Works; Youth and Sports; Regional Administration; Urbanization and Habitat; Environment and Conservation of Nature and Rural Development. Also included in the list are national universities and religious institutions. The Commission, chaired by the Vice-Minister in charge of Population and Human Resources in the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning, is mandated to assist and advise the government in elaborating and defining priority areas and policy measures. It is serviced by the Directorate of Population and Human Resources, which is the central coordinating

unit for all population and human resources activities.

The National Population and Human Resources Commission is represented at regional levels by Regional Committees, consisting of representatives of branch offices of appropriate ministries and institutions, and are charged with the overall responsibility of coordinating population activities at regional level. According to available information, such committees have been set up in six regions so far.

The most interesting part of the institutional arrangement of the national population policy is the creation of the Network of Journalists, the responsibility of which is to serve as an advisory body in IEC matters.

Nonetheless, the implementation of the national population policy has been slow. The main impediment to the implementation of the population policy is low political commitment on the part of the government as evidenced by the failure to activate the National Council and the National Commission. Other factors include lack of quantifiable specific goals; failure to decentralize the management of population activities and lack of institutional accountability and monitoring mechanisms.

These problems have now been realized by the Government. Accordingly, it has started taking the necessary measures to revise and define the goals of the national population policy within the framework of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action; strengthen the National of Population and Human Resources Commission and organize the first meeting of the National Council, which is a supreme population organ. A special task force, chaired by the Prime Minister, has been organized to that effect. It should also be understood that the creation of the Directorate of Population and Human Resources as a population unit, is an integral part of the strengthening endeavours.

Discussions with representatives of NGOs, UNFPA Country Office, UNFPA Country support Team and Institute of Development and Economic Planning focused on exchange of experiences and bilateral cooperation in the field of population and human resources, particularly in exchange of information and publications, advocacy for human centered

development strategy, training of cadres in the formulation and implementation of population policies. Accordingly, both the NGOs and UN institutions proposed that an organ should be created within the African Population Commission, where they would be represented for closer working relationships.

In conclusion, it could be remarked that the visit to Dakar provided the Joint Secretariat of the African Population Commission with a golden opportunity to familiarize itself with the state of population activities in that country and explain the objectives of the African Population Commission as well as to strengthen close working relations with various institutions that are interested in population matters. Observations during the visit reaffirmed that in order for a national population policy to be successful, it should have, among other things few but well defined goals; adequate and highly powered institutional arrangements; highly skilled manpower; high political commitments; decentralization of implementation endeavours; strong IEC activities; institutional accountability; and in-built monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It was also observed that the African Population Commission should continue influencing African governments through the OAU Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, in favour of population programmes.

WORLD POPULATION DAY OBSERVED

The OAU joined the international community and its partners in commemorating the 1995 World Population Day with enthusiasm and increased commitment.

The commemoration programme consisted of publishing and releasing a special poster, issuing a press release and making an active participation in a population symposium, organized by the National Population Office of Ethiopia and attended by representatives of various government institutions and UN agencies.

In his opening statement, Mr. A.M.A. Dirar, Director of the Economic Development and Cooperation (EDECO) Department, called upon

Member States and donor agencies to make increased efforts to assist the implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD, in order to improve the quality of life in Africa (see full text).

OPENING STATEMENT BY MR. A.M.A. DIRAR

*"Your Excellencies, the Ministers,
Distinguished invited guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

The Organization of African Unity wishes to join the international community and its partners particularly the National Population Commission of Ethiopia, in observing the World Population Day, which is an important occasion to review the paths traversed and the achievements scored so far, with a view to devising a new strategy for our future undertakings in the field of population and development. Indeed, the World Population Day provides a golden opportunity to renew our commitments to population and development endeavours in general and the implementation of the Dakar/NGOR Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development as well as the Programme of Action of the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in particular.

More than two-thirds of all African countries, including Ethiopia, have been classified as least developed countries (LDCs) by the UN and the World Bank. During the period 1990-1994 alone, per capita income in sub-Saharan Africa was in the neighborhood of US\$ 500, with great disparities among countries. Taking population factor into consideration, per capita income in the continent has been declining steadily at 1.6 percent per annum. Agriculture, which is the main economic activity of the majority of African people, is at a subsistence level. To make the situation worse, it is affected by recurrent droughts. Indeed, the number of countries seriously affected each year by drought, has increased from 12 in 1974 to 27 in 1979 and 35 in 1984, resulting in an exacerbated deficiency in food production. Currently, Africa has to import about one-third

of its food requirement.

The situation on the social front is even worse. Although, much has been done in the field of health, the numbers of the total population that have access to safe water and health services, constitute about 42 percent and 56 percent respectively. The number of births attended by trained health personnel also accounts for 38 per cent, aggravating the already high maternal mortality rate which is 616 per 100,000 deliveries. About 50 percent of the adult population is still illiterate. The issues and problems of unemployment and under-employment have increasingly become matters of serious concern in the continent. Open employment rose from 7.7% in 1978 to 22.8% in 1990 and is projected to rise to 30% by the year 2000. At present, Africa has yet to create over 11 million new jobs, just to absorb the natural increase in the labour force. By the year 2000, the requirement is expected to rise to 16 million and 25 million by the year 2025.

As has been repeatedly explained, high demographic trends, particularly a high natural increase, an uneven spatial distribution of population and a rapid urbanization have considerable bearings on the pace of socio-economic development. Our continent Africa is characterized by extremely high demographic trends. According to the latest UN estimates, Africa records the highest population growth rate of 3.0 percent among the region of the world in comparison with an average of 1.7 percent of the world, 1.9 percent of Asia and 2.1 percent of Latin America. In terms of absolute number, the population of Africa has increased nearly three fold from 224 million in 1950 to 648 in 1990 and it is expected to be 1.6 billion in 2025, an increase by 2.5 times in a span of 35 years.

Although the size of urban population in Africa constitute 32 per cent of the total population currently, it is expanding rapidly at the rate of about 6.5 percent annually. In 1960, there were only two cities in the continent with high population exceeding 500,000. In 1993, however, there were 19 cities in the region which had more than one million each. This unfavorable trend has created high pressures on the available socio-economic resources in cities.

*Your Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

Although, population is the main asset of a nation. However, a population that is increasing too fast can become a negative factor in development. It is not viable, neither environmentally nor economically. The present high rates of population growth have already caused serious stresses to socio-economic development endeavours in many African countries. This nature of the interactions between population dynamics and sustainable development, has been realized in Africa, as demonstrated by the adoption of two development frameworks, namely the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action for African Population and Self-Reliant Development (1984) and the Dakar/NGOR Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development (1992) as well as by the establishment of the African Population Commission in May 1994. This was followed by the Tunis Declaration on Population and Development in Africa, endorsed by the 30th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in June 1994. The Declaration recognizes population as an important component of national planning and urges Member States to formulate and implement explicit population policies that take into account the questions of women and youth.

The multi-directional development frameworks collectively adopted by African countries, have now been subsumed in the Programme of Action of the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Cairo 1994. This collective development strategy represents a fully integrated approach to population, development and environment. Ultimately, it aims at improving the quality of life for each and every member of the human family. The implementation of the Programme of Action, will however, depend on the level of awareness and political will and commitment of governments as well as on the availability of adequate funds. Thus, the Organization of African Unity would like to take this opportunity to call upon Member States and

donor agencies to make increased efforts for the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, the ultimate goal of which is the improvement of the quality of life.

In this connection, it would be appropriate to express our observation about population activities in Ethiopia. The General Secretariat of the African Unity highly appreciates the comprehensiveness of the National Population Policy of Ethiopia, its institutional arrangements, the intensity of population education and the efforts being made to broaden partnership in national population activities. To the list, one might add the fact that as a First Vice-Chairman of the recently established African Population Commission, Ethiopia has been playing a vital role in promoting population and development endeavours in Africa; and such a role is expected to be enhanced and strengthened in view of the fact that Ethiopia is the current Chairman of the OAU. The OAU General Secretariat, therefore, avails itself of this opportunity to congratulate the Transitional Government of Ethiopia for its highest political commitment to population issues and to wish it sustainable achievements in its population and development endeavours.

Thank you".

AFRICA ASKED TO CHECK ITS POPULATION GROWTH

Africa needs to stem its population growth so as not to jeopardise the living standards of its people, the Chairman of the African Population Commission (APC), Chris Ugokwe warned in Lagos in August, 1995.

He told a press conference to mark APC's first anniversary that unless the demographic growth is slowed down, Africa's population, currently estimated at 682 million could exceed one billion in the next couple of decades.

Ugokwe, who is also Chairman of National Population Commission of Nigeria said that Africa's annual population growth rate of 3.04 per cent was above its gross domestic production growth rate of 1.5 per cent.

He said 32 out of 47 least developed countries in the world were in Africa, a continent burdened with "stagnant or negative

economic growth, huge foreign debt of about 300 billion U.S. dollars and food shortages."

The APC Chairman said Africa also had a high fertility and declining mortality rates.

According to him, infant mortality is about 94 per 1,000 live births with 25 per cent of children born in Africa dying before their fifth birthday.

"In recent times, there has been an increased pressure of population on the available natural resources, namely cultivable land, water, forests and social infrastructures, and African countries are realizing that their resources cannot sustain the rapidly expanding population," Ugokwe said.

He said in spite of the appalling situation, African countries had low population perception which leads to inaction and lack of concerted efforts to curb the population pressure.

"There are only 24 countries which have explicit population policies and there are only about 30 countries which have introduced population education into their school curricula," APC Chairman said.

He said this grim picture makes APC, "indispensable".

The Commission was set up by the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 1994 to among other things, provide policy support and leadership to the OAU and its relevant agencies in the field of population and development, and co-ordinate national population commissions on the continent.

Ugokwe was elected as the first Chairman of the Commission at the inaugural meeting.

NIGERIA'S POPULATION NOW 98 MILLION

Nigeria's population put at 88.5 million by a national census conducted in 1991, has now risen to 98 million, the National Population Commission (NPC) said in August 1995.

The NPC Chairman, Chris Ugokwe, who also heads the African Population Commission, told a press conference that the figure represents a growth rate 2.83 per cent between 1991 and 1995.

He dismissed a World Bank figure of 120 million as Nigeria's population.

"The World Bank does not conduct census for any country..." Ugokwe added:

Nigeria's Constitutional Conference, which ended in June had recommended that the 1991 figure be annulled because of objections raised in part of the country.

But Ugokwe said that this was not peculiar to Nigeria. He cited instances in the United States, Britain and Germany where, he said, disputes over census figures had to be resolved at the supreme court.

He said the NPC had received requests from a number of countries on the method it used for the 1991 census.

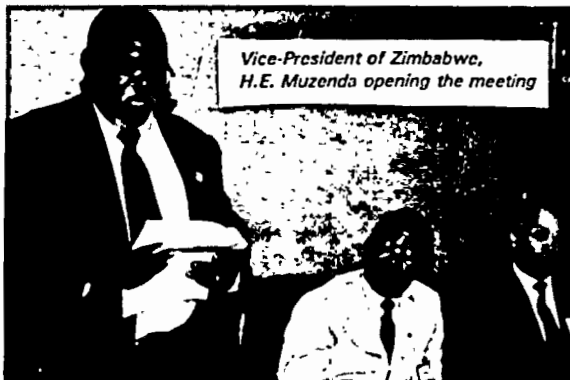
According to him, preparations for Nigeria's next census in 2001 will commence next year.

OAU OUTLINES POPULATION TASKS TO MEMBER STATES

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) has outlined what it expects its member countries in pursuance of the declaration of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

The Chief of Population and Development Section of OAU, Dr. B.H. Abdellatif told the meeting of the Steering Committee of the African and Middle East Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (ICPD), 10-14 November 1995, Harare that population factors should be integrated into national development strategies.

Dr. Abdellatif stressed that the main activities to be undertaken at national level should include: restoring good governance, peace and stability, adopting appropriate population policies where they do not exist and strengthening existing ones.



He said individual countries needed to build strong political support for population and development as well as allocate financial resources.

"There should also be accountability by all national mechanisms dealing with population and development and monitoring and reporting of progress in the implementation of the programmes", he said.

Africa's population is increasing at 3.04 per cent each year, yet economic growth rate was sluggish at 1.5 per cent.

In conclusion, Dr. Abdellatif said that there was also need for collective action in implementing the Platform for Action of the Fourth International Conference on Women, Beijing, China.

WORKSHOP ADOPTS PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

The African Workshop on Strategies for accelerating the Implementation of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems, that took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 5-9 December 1994, adopted a plan of action that would take Africa to the year 2000 and beyond.

The Plan of Action highlights that African countries should raise their birth and health registration coverage to levels between 50 and 80 per cent each, depending on their current status. The Plan of Action also stresses that agencies responsible for vital statistics should disseminate vital statistics on regular and timely basis.

In order to attain the established goals, the workshop called upon African Governments to accord high priority and provide adequate budgetary support to the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics. To this end, the workshop recommended some strategies, including setting up an interministerial steering committee; making civil registration comprehensive, compulsory and effective nationwide and free of charge; transforming civil registration system from a passive to active system through providing periodical

training and career development opportunities to local registrars and statistics personnel; and strengthening and intensifying sensitization activities. Others include putting in place an efficient logistic support; creating close coordination and effective cooperation among all agencies involved in civil registration and vital statistics activities; and building an effective mechanism for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the exercise.

The purposes of the workshop were:

- (a) to discuss ways and means of promoting the national vital statistics and civil registration system in each participating country;*
- (b) to assess the adequacy of national registration and vital statistics processes, coverage and reliability; and*
- (c) to suggest strategies for the improvement of vital statistics and civil registration systems in the participating countries. It was organized jointly by the United Nations Statistical Division and the Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA) with the financial support of UNFPA.*

The workshop was attended by 31 high level officials from 15 English speaking African countries, including representatives of the governments of Finland, Norway, Sweden and USA. OAU, UNFPA and the International Institute for Vital Registration and Statistics (IIVRS) were also represented.

AFRICAN CONFERENCE OF HEALTH MINISTERS PRONOUNCES ITSELF ON HEALTH HAZARDS IN THE REGION

A call for a concerted effort to address the enormous health challenges facing the African continent was made at the conclusion of a meeting of Health Ministers held in Cairo, Egypt towards the end of April 1995.

The 5th session of the Conference of African Ministers of Health was attended by 41 Member States, international and regional organizations and NGOs. The two day

Conference which had been preceded by a four-day meeting of experts, adopted a declaration concerning the position of women in Africa within the context of family health, and over ten resolutions on other health matters.

Concern was raised during the meeting that 40% of the world's total of AIDS sufferers are in Africa (ie 17 million) and that 171 million Africans have tuberculosis. It was also noted that 90% of the world's malaria occurs in Africa. A special Health Fund had been established five years ago but it had failed to reach the targeted budget of \$200 million.

The Conference decided that its Bureau (chaired by Egypt and comprising Uganda, Malawi, Burundi and Mali) should meet on an annual basis until the next session of the Conference scheduled in 1999, to ensure that decisions are implemented and followed up.

The chairman of the conference, Egypt's Minister of Health, Dr. Ali Abdel Fattah, and the OAU Assistant Secretary General, Mr. Pascal Gayama, emphasized the need for enhanced scientific research in Africa and to ensure that health problems do not impede development and economic integration.

AFRICA MUST SECURE CHILDREN'S NEEDS

A seminar on the plight of African children has stressed the need for parents to put in more efforts to safeguard the health and education needs of children.

The call is contained in a communique released on 24 July 1995 in Accra at the end of a Seminar on the Health of School Age Children.

The communique noted that in Africa, poor health takes a serious form on children, depriving them of physical and intellectual growth and educational opportunities.

The seminar was attended by some 40 participants from 10 African countries including Ghana, Kenya and Zimbabwe. It was aimed at reviewing current knowledge about the Health of School Age Children on the continent.

"While we need to ensure that what works is applied as soon as possible, comprehensive framework for considering research an

intervention priorities in school age has to be established," the communique said.

JURIST URGES REVIEW OF NIGERIAN ABORTION LAW

Nigeria's abortion law is outdated and should be amended to bring it in line with reality, renowned jurist Akinola Aguda remarked in Lagos.

Speaking at a symposium in August 1995, he said "People with problems should be allowed to meet qualified medical doctors in matters concerning abortion in a way to save life".

Aguda, a retired Nigerian judge, who also served as Botswana's chief justice, said abortion should not be free for all affair and that the review must spell out clearly who should carry out an abortion.

Also speaking at the symposium whose theme was "so that our daughters do not die from abortion", a former president of the Nigerian Bar Association Priscilla Kuye said illegal abortion remains a crime under the country's criminal code.

She blamed unwanted pregnancies on "curiosity, lack of sex education and the influence of peer group or bad companions."

The symposium was organized by the non-governmental organization "campaign against unwanted pregnancy".

The organization works in collaboration with the Nigerian Medical Association which supplies advice and medical personnel.

In another development, a special parliamentary committee recommended that abortion on demand be granted to all South African women, including girls under 16, according to media reports in Johannesburg.

The Johannesburg Star said the selected committee on abortion and sterilization had also proposed that a wide range of health personnel be trained and authorized to perform abortions.

The proposal are likely to spark a heated political and religious debate in South Africa, where abortions are outlawed except in the direst of circumstances.

Under the proposals, a doctor or health worker will be permitted to perform an abortion on a child without parental consent.

The committee was set up in September last year and received 452 written submissions from concerned organisations, the majority of them from Christian and Hindu pro-life groups.

The committee, however, rejected arguments that life began at conception and was protected by the right to life clause enshrined in the South African constitution and rejected the pro-life arguments in favour of submissions from pro-choice groups.

It said abortion should be available on demand to any women up to 14 weeks gestational age, between 14 and 24 weeks under certain broadly specified conditions.

It also recommended that counselling be available to all women wanting abortions and added that the consent of the woman's partner or husband should not be necessary.

AFRICAN LEADERS ADOPT FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME

African leaders adopted a 10 year multi-sectoral programme of action to achieve food and nutritional security, at the end of a two day forum in the Uganda Capital, Kampala.

President Ketumile Masire of Botswana, Burundi's Prime Minister Antoine Nduwayo, Malawi's President Bakili Muluzi, Mozambique's Joachim Chissano, Presidents Pasteur Bizimungu of Rwanda, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, attended the third Presidential Forum on the Management of Science and technology in Africa, from 21 to 22nd August 1995.

In a communique issued at the end of the forum, the leaders appealed to African policy organs to translate policies in pragmatic actions to promote the sectors that support food production.

They cited seed industry, recapitalization of African soils through phosphate fertilisation, environmentally friendly pest and disease management, and the fostering of a robust intra-African network of food markets.

The leaders said basic food and nutritional security has become the priority of priorities in Africa. "It is not only a question of Africa's self-worth and political prudence, it is now a question of Africa's very survival".

The communique said "food and nutritional

security is a major roadblock that has to be completely cleared in order to give way to other pressing priorities for Africa's economic growth and social development."

It observed that 30 years ago, Africa was self-sufficient and a net exporter of food. Africa has lost that capacity to feed itself and more of our people go hungry.

The African leaders said unless the production trends of decline are altered, Africa will be producing less than 75 per cent of its food requirements by the year 2000.

"Mass-starvation in Africa will be averted when Africa begins once again to give due emphasis to the traditional food staples of millet, sorghum, peas, roots and tubers by enhanced technologies for production, processing, and distribution".

The presidents attributed food and nutritional crisis on the continent to lack of commitment to implement realistic visions and policies to guide the agricultural and food sector.

They urged African governments to pay attention to and begin acting on the advice of their own private sector, research and development experts, policy analysts, technology practitioners and the traditional community leaders, who know a great deal about strategies for community-based food security.

At the end of the forum, the leaders endorsed the establishment of the African Foundation for Research and Development (AFRAND).

The fund, to be based in Malawi, will be charged with the task of mobilizing African scientific talents to contribute to human capital for the continent's economic and social progress.

In January 1995 the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned in a report that although food supplies in Africa had greatly improved, many areas devastated by drought and war still relied on foreign handouts.

The FAO said some 28 African countries would require food aid of up to 2.3 million tones in 1995 - 20 percent below last year's total, thanks to improved harvests.

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SOME 23 MILLION AFRICANS FACE FOOD SHORTAGES

Drought, civil strife and insecurity are wreaking havoc on farming in Sub-Saharan Africa where some 23 million people face food shortages, a U.N. report said in July 1995.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in a quarterly report said the shortages meant more food aid would decline 20 per cent from last year.

"Widespread drought has seriously undermined production in Southern Africa, while persistent civil strifes and security problems in some countries continue to limit farming and distribution activities," said FAO Head Jacques Diouf.

"Sub-Saharan Africa's food requirement would increase significantly in 1995/96 at a time when global aid is forecast to fall by more than 20 per cent from last year," he added.

The largest concentration of vulnerable populations is in Southern Africa where some 10 million will be affected, as well as nine million in Eastern Africa, up to three million in West African and another million in Central Africa, the report said.

Cereal output in 11 southern African nations is down from last year's harvest and 20 per cent below normal, it added.

"Widespread drought in Angola and Mozambique, was compounded by massive displacement of farming families, landmines and shortages of seeds, fertilizers and tools," FAO said.

It said cereal output in the region, except for

Malawi and Mozambique, was below normal this year while Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana and South Africa experienced sharp reductions.

The FAO appealed for extra relief to drought-affected countries in Southern Africa, as well as those facing exceptional food shortage in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

The report was issued two days after African leaders met in Uganda on 21-22nd August 1995, and agreed on a plan supposed to ensure the world's poorest continent has enough to eat by the year 2005.

Documents from that meeting said up to 200 million of Africa's 700 million people face starvation and up to 70 per cent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa is malnourished.

FAO report said food supply also remained difficult in the Horn of Africa, in Burundi and Rwanda, and among the two million refugees in Central Africa.

"While food production is gradually recovering in Rwanda and Burundi, the food situation remains precarious for the displaced both inside and outside the countries, returnees and other victims of the civil strife," the report said.

AFRICAN SCHOLARS DISCUSS POPULATION RESEARCH PROBLEMS

Population related research undertakings in Africa are suffering from numerous inhibiting problems as a result of which national development strategies fail to identify priority areas for appropriate actions.

The remark was made by renowned African scholars who attended the ECA sponsored Seminar for Representatives of the Population Research Centres in Africa, that took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 6 to 8 December, 1994, with the aim of exchanging information in the field of population and development.

It was reported that very few population research centres are autonomous. Most of them were created with the UNFPA financial and technical assistance and exist as departments of national universities and national statistical offices. It was also reported the most of the population centres in Africa

suffer from financial constraints. To make the situation worse, their finance is administered by the parent organizations.

With the exception of the Population Studies and Research Centre of the University of Nairobi, the Department of Sociology of the University of Witwatersrand in the Republic of South Africa, the Department of Population Studies of Makerere University in Uganda and the National Population Office of Rwanda, all other centres lack qualified and enough size of manpower. In Francophone countries, there are ten staff per centre, while it is seven in Anglophone countries.

As regards the major preoccupations, most of the centres that are integral bodies of national universities, provide training programmes ranging from short term to graduate ones on the basis of their implementation status, physical layout, manpower and financial resources. In addition, these centres conduct some researches on population-related issues, mostly on fertility determinants, family planning: Gender issues and the question of empowering women, adolescent fertility, HIV/AIDS, reproductive and family health, migration, urbanization, aging population, environment, population and the structural adjustment programme, refugees and population and poverty, socio-economic dimension of refugees, drought and desertification, population education and population policy have been identified as neglected areas.

According to the reports on national experiences, areas and themes of researches are in most cases determined and dictated by funding agencies, ranging from NGOs to multilateral institutions, to which progress reports have to be submitted from time to time to ensure that there is no any deviation in the works.

The other unfortunate aspect of research works in Africa is that very few of them are published distributed. Most of the works remain in the form of monographs.

At the end of the seminar the scholars made some recommendations as follows:

- a) African governments should try to generate the right attitude among skilled Africans and encourage them to return home;

- b) *Governments should recognize the use of population research centres and allocate adequate budgets for their activities;*
- c) *Population research centres should exchange experiences through visits, publications and regular workshops;*
- d) *Population research centres should initiate income generating schemes;*
- e) *Population research centres should create close working relations with governments and NGOs by regularly inviting them to their workshops and by widely disseminating their publications;*
- f) *Research centres should ensure that their publications reach the general public;*
- g) *Information media people should be familiarized with the activities of population research centres in Africa. In particular, the Commission should call upon African Governments to increase funds for research activities.*

The Seminar was attended by representatives of 28 population research centres, the OAU, UN-ECA, Union of African Population Studies (UAPS) and the Committee for International Cooperation in National Research in Demography (CICRED), France.

MALNUTRITION

*By Melesse Gebrie
Population and Health Officer*

"Whatsoever was the father of a disease, an ill diet was the mother." George Herbert, 1660.

Literally, malnutrition connotes bad diet or bad nutrition. It actually implies shortage or lack of the necessary nutrients or food substance for the normal growth and development of the human body.

Malnutrition is a clinical condition and therefore a disease entity very rampant in Africa. It is often seen on infants, children and lactating mothers. Elderly people and sometimes adults could also suffer from malnutrition.

Malnutrition is usually associated with lack of protein during infancy and childhood in which case it is called "Kwashiorkor". When the deficiency is a combination of protein and calorie (energy food) it is called marasmus or protein calorie/energy malnutrition (PCM).

Insufficient food intake is not the only cause of malnutrition. It is also caused by infections, parasitic infestations, anaemia and other various chronic diseases. There are four major forms of malnutrition in the developing world including Africa. These are:

- *protein calorie/energy malnutrition;*
- *iron deficiency anaemia;*
- *vitamin A deficiency; and*
- *iodine deficiency disorders (IDD).*

Food and nutrition are essential for the promotion of health and prevention of diseases. An adequate and balanced diet contains sufficient amount of protein, fat, carbohydrate, water and the numerous essential mineral and vitamins. The amount of range of nutrient required for normal health are as follows:

NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

NUTRIENT	AMOUNTS NEEDED		
	<i>For Sedentary</i>	<i>For Moderately Active</i>	<i>For Very Active</i>
<i>Calories</i>	<i>1,800 - 2,000</i>	<i>2,200 - 3,200</i>	<i>3,200 - 5,000</i>
<i>Protein (gm)</i>	<i>50 - 100</i>	<i>50 - 100</i>	<i>50 - 100</i>
<i>Calcium (gm)</i>	<i>0.4 - 0.8</i>	<i>0.4 - 0.8</i>	<i>0.4 - 0.8</i>
<i>Iron (mgm)</i>	<i>12 - 15</i>	<i>12 - 15</i>	<i>12 - 15</i>
<i>Sodium (gm)</i>	<i>1 - 5</i>	<i>1 - 5</i>	<i>1 - 5</i>
<i>Vitamin A (I.U)</i>	<i>3,000 - 5,000</i>	<i>3,000 - 5,000</i>	<i>3,000 - 5,000</i>
<i>Thiamine/Vit. B (mgm)</i>	<i>1 - 2</i>	<i>1 - 2</i>	<i>1 - 2</i>
<i>Ribo flavus/Vit. B2 (mgm)</i>	<i>2 - 3</i>	<i>2 - 3</i>	<i>2 - 3</i>
<i>Niacin (mgm)</i>	<i>10 - 20</i>	<i>10 - 20</i>	<i>10 - 20</i>
<i>Vitamin C (mgm)</i>	<i>40 - 75</i>	<i>40 - 75</i>	<i>40 - 75</i>

Source: *George W. Hunter, William W. Frye and J. Clyde Swartzwelder, A Manual of Tropical Medicine, Source Edition, 1967.*

The above nutrients are found in the normal food one is consuming daily. However, some of the nutrients can easily be lost in the process of preparing the food through boiling, cooking or drying. It is also possible that the amount of food one takes is not enough, and therefore the amount of nutrients fall short of the normal amount needed by the body.

In addition, most of the carbohydrate foods have low content of vitamins, minerals and protein. Vegetable proteins are also incomplete since they lack sufficient amount of the essential amino acids, particularly lysine.

The proteins of legumes, grain and nuts are more complete. These foods are also better sources of vitamins and minerals. Therefore, it is important to have essential knowledge of basic foods and it is possible to improve the nutrient level by either adding supplements in the case of carbohydrate foods or one can enrich such food like vegetable protein by adding lysine.

Animal foods such as meat, fish, eggs, milk and milk products provide complete protein and are generally excellent sources of minerals and vitamins.

Lack or poor quality of protein intake along with inadequate calorie is probably the single greatest cause of nutritional ill health in Africa. There were nearly 20 million under-weight children in Africa in 1975. This number grew to more than 27 million by 1990 and is expected to increase to 36 million by the year 2005.

Hunger and malnutrition remain the most devastating problem facing our continent today. Forty-five of the 78 countries worldwide which are suffering from food shortage and malnutrition are found in Africa.

The consequences of malnutrition for the well-being of human beings and for socio-economic development are varied and far-reaching. In infants and young children, malnutrition leads to reduced physical activity, impaired resistance to infection, impairment of intellectual development and abilities, and increased morbidity and mortality. In women, poor nutritional status is associated with increased prevalence of anaemia, pregnancy and delivery problems and increased rate of foetal growth retardation, low birth weight and

perinatal mortality.

In adults, malnutrition leads to poor health and productivity through impaired physical and intellectual performances and can constrain community and national developments.

Food security both at the household and at the national levels and agricultural development is the only way out to solve the lack or insufficient food Africa is faced with. It is therefore important for governments in Africa to focus on rural development and on the support and assistance given to farmers so as to tackle the food shortage we are faced with today.

AIDS IS DEADLY. LEARN HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE

Reproduced from UN-ECA Medical Information Paper No. 2

The HIV AIDS epidemic is among the most deadly and destructive diseases the world has known. As of mid-1993, over 13 million adults and one million or more children have been infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) worldwide. Africa is by far the most seriously affected continent. Close to nine million adults and children have been infected. Fourteen million or more may be infected by the late nineties. One million two hundred thousand Africans have already died of AIDS and these figures are considered to be far below the reality due to under reporting.

What is AIDS?

AIDS stands for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome caused by infection with a virus called HIV, the human immunodeficiency virus. AIDS is the late stage of HIV infection.

What is HIV antibody?

Antibodies are produced by the body to help "fight off" infection. Different antibodies are produced for each type of infection, such as influenza, measles and mumps. If someone is infected with the AIDS virus (HIV), the body makes antibodies to HIV. Unfortunately, these

antibodies do not kill all the AIDS virus in the body.

What does a Positive Antibody Test Mean?

The presence of antibodies to HIV indicates infection with the AIDS virus at some time in the past.

How does One get AIDS?

The HIV virus can only be spread in three ways: during sexual intercourse, through infected blood including transfusions and use of unsterilized needles and other skin-piercing instruments (tattooing, circumcision and scarification can be a means of infection if instruments are used for more than one person without being properly sterilized each time), and from mother to foetus or infant (perinatal transmission) during or shortly after birth.

The vast majority of HIV infections in African have been due to unprotected heterosexual intercourse.

How is AIDS not spread?

The HIV virus is NOT spread by social contact at work or school, by hand shake, touching, hugging, and sitting next to an infected person. It is NOT spread through food or water, by sharing cups or glasses, by sneezing, coughing or by insect bites, swimming pools or toilets. Knowing how the HIV virus is NOT spread helps people understand that there is no danger of becoming infected from casual contact.

How can AIDS be prevented?

The most effective means of controlling the spread of the AIDS virus is to prevent infection through its principal modes of transmission, i.e. sex, blood and perinatal.

How can a Person tell if he/she has been infected with HIV virus?

At first, people infected with HIV may feel perfectly healthy, but they are infected for life and can spread infection to others. After some

months or years, the HIV virus becomes active and multiplies, spreading rapidly through the body, disabling or destroying certain white blood cells which are vital elements of the immune system, thus making the body vulnerable to a number of illnesses, including infectious diseases and cancers. After 10 to 13 years, 60% of HIV infected people develop AIDS. A person with AIDS will probably have at least two of the major and one of the minor symptoms described below as well as an HIV positive blood test result.

Major Symptoms

- . Weight loss - more than 10% of body weight.
- . Prolonged fever for more than one month.
- . Chronic diarrhoea for more than one month.

Minor Symptoms

- . Generalized lymphadenopathy - enlargement of glands at neck, armpit and groin.
- . Persistent cough for more than one month.
- . Skin rashes.
- . Tuberculosis (Pulmonary and/or disseminated).
- . Recurrent herpes zoster - (Shingles) painful unilateral (one-side of the body only) vesicles filled with colorless fluid.
- . Generalized pruritic dermatitis - itching skin rash.
- . Oropharyngeal candidiasis - thrush - milky white lesions on the lips, mouth and throat.
- . Pneumonia.
- . Chronic herpes simplex - bilateral vesiculas around mouth, nose or genitals.
- . CNS derangement - Mental confusion.
- . Night sweats and generalized body weakness.
- . Loss of appetite.
- . Kaposi's sarcoma - ulcerating, necrotic skin ulcers (purplish lesions mainly on the neck and face).
- . If one has at least two major symptoms and one minor, he/she should be tested for the AIDS virus. Knowing that one is infected will allow him/her to seek professional, life extending and symptom relieving treatment and help him/her prevent the spread of the virus to others.

DISTRIBUTION OF AIDS AS OF 31 DECEMBER 1994

COUNTRY	NO. OF CASES	COUNTRY	NO. OF CASES
1. Algeria	196	28. Madagascar	9
2. Angola	766	29. Malawi	34,167
3. Benin	742	30. Mali	2,191
4. Botswana	1,415	31. Mauritania	59
5. Burkina Faso	4,193	32. Mauritius	21
6. Burundi	7,562	33. Morocco	202
7. Cameroon	3,072	34. Mozambique	826
8. Cape Verde	143	35. Namibia	5,101
9. Central African Rep.	3,730	36. Niger	921
10. Chad	2,341	37. Nigeria	1,148
11. Comoros	5	38. Réunion	65
12. Congo	6,393	39. Rwanda	10,706
13. Côte d'Ivoire	18,670	40. Sao Tomé & Prin.	24
14. Djibouti	532	41. Senegal	1,297
15. Egypt	110	42. Seychelles	2
16. Equatorial Guinea	52	43. Sierra Leone	95
17. Eritrea	1,193	44. Somalia	13
18. Ethiopia	14,074	45. South Africa	3,849
19. Gabon	472	46. Sudan	1,015
20. Gambia	277	47. Swaziland	413
21. Ghana	12,303	48. Togo	3,472
22. Guinea	976	49. Tunisia	190
23. Guinea Bissau	380	50. Uganda	43,875
24. Kenya	30,126	51. Tanzania	38,719
25. Lesotho	479	52. Zaire	26,131
26. Liberia	191	53. Zambia	29,734
27. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	12	54. Zimbabwe	33,063

AFRICA : 347,713
 AMERICA : 526,682
 ASIA : 17,057
 EUROPE : 127,886
 OCEANIA : 5,735

 WORLD TOTAL 1,025,073

Source: World health Organization
 Weekly Epidemiological Record
 13 January 1995.

THE ROLE OF THE AFRICAN POPULATION COMMISSION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DAKAR/NGOR DECLARATION AND THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION

By

*Wole Gurnu, Population
IEC Officer, OAU*

BACKGROUND

It is now a well-established fact that population and socio-economic development are closely interrelated. Indeed, population, through its dual role as an agent of production and consumption, influences the pace of socio-economic development. It affects investment priorities and the quality of life. On the other hand, the level and trend of socio-economic development has a considerable bearing on demographic variables, namely fertility, mortality and growth rates as well as the age composition, spatial distribution and urbanization.

In the case of Africa, population growth rate (3.04%) has already exceeded the economic growth rate, and the gap is expanding at an increasing rate. Currently, GDP per capita income in Sub-Saharan Africa, stands at US\$ 320.00 (Exceeding Nigeria and South Africa) and grows at the rate of 1.5% per annum, half the growth rate of population, resulting in a negative economic growth rate.

In view of the complex relationships between population and development on one hand, and the deterioration of socio-economic situations in Africa on the other, the Organization of African Unity has had keen interests in population matters, within the context of its Charter, which stipulates that freedom, equality, justice and dignity are essential objectives for the achievement of the legitimate aspirations of the African peoples and that all African States should unite for the welfare and well-being of their peoples through harnessing the natural and human resources of the Continent. The interest and involvement of the OAU in population was further strengthened by the various international and regional population conferences where representatives of African Governments spoke

more openly in support of the need for population policies. Subsequently, the Organization designed and launched in 1984 what is now referred to as the OAU Population and Development Policy Programme, with a view to equipping itself with the necessary legislative authority and strategic mechanism to play an advocacy and catalytic role in promoting population and development policy formulation and implementation in Member States.

The other important turning point in the history of the increased involvement of the OAU in population matters was when the 21st Assembly of Heads of State and Government, in the African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) in 1985, enjoined the Secretary General to establish the OAU/African Population Commission, followed by the 46th Session of the Council of Ministers in 1987 which adopted Resolution CM/Res. 1122: On the Activities of the OAU General Secretariat in the Field of Population and Development Planning, requesting the Secretary General, among other things, to convene the first meeting of the Commission.

Other continental resolutions, declarations, treaties and plan of actions also acted directly and indirectly, as an impetus for the creation of the African Population Commission. These included:

- a) The Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and its Final Act, 1980;*
- b) The Kilimanjaro Programme for the African Population and Self-Reliant Development (KPA), 1984;*
- c) The Addis Ababa Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of 11 July 1990;*
- d) The Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, June 1991; and*

- e) *The Dakar/NGOR Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development, December 1992.*

Accordingly, the long awaited African Population Commission was established in May 1994 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at an inaugural meeting which was attended by representatives of 48 Member States.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The African Population Commission is accountable to the OAU Council of Ministers. Basically, it is composed of the highest possible officials of the OAU Member States' national population commissions and/or analogous institutions dealing with population and development issues. It has three organs, namely:

- a) *The Assembly of Representatives of the OAU Member States*
- b) *The Bureau; and*
- c) *The Secretariat.*

The Assembly of the highest officials of the Member States, in charge of population matters, is the highest organ of the Commission. For the time being it convenes every two years to receive report from its Secretariat on the activities of the previous period as well as to consider and approve its future programme. After the completion of the necessary ground works and the accumulation of adequate experiences however, the Commission shall meet in ordinary session in accordance with the schedule established by the OAU/AEC Secretariat for the subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC to be established soon.

The second highest organ of the Commission is the Bureau, composed of a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur each from one of the OAU sub-regions. The Bureau is charged with the responsibility of preparing the meeting of the Commission and implementing its decisions. Its terms of office shall terminate at the commencement of the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

The Secretariat of the Commission is the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat. However, the OAU/AEC Secretariat is the lead organization and the coordinator of the Commission. In that capacity, the OAU works in close collaboration with other regional and international organizations in servicing the meetings of the Commission, providing technical assistance and advice. Furthermore, the OAU serves as the custodian of all documents of the Commission and performs any other duties and functions consistent with the aims and objectives of the Commission. It should also be noted that the Secretariat of the Commission submits periodic reports and recommendations for the consideration of both the OAU Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE AFRICAN POPULATION COMMISSION

The African Population Commission is a continental population institution that has come into being as a result of the increasing need for a central body to initiate population and development issues for adoption by the Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government for subsequent implementation in the respective Member States as appropriate. Thus the general objectives of the organization include:

- (a) *Providing policy support and leadership to the Organization of African Unity/African Economic Community (OAU/AEC), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and African Development Bank (ADB) Secretariats in the field of population and development with a view to promoting the necessary environment to enable the organizations to play a catalytic role in this field;*
- (b) *Coordinating the activities of National Population Commissions, and/or analogous national institutions and organizations;*
- (c) *Bringing about, developing and promoting cooperation among African*

countries in the field of population and development;

- (d) Ensuring the mobilization of the necessary resources for the support of population activities in Africa.*
- (e) Promoting a common African position in population and development matters at international population conferences, UN organizations and other inter-regional fora;*
- (f) Enhancing the level of awareness on and commitment to population and development issues among Member States and assisting them formulating and implementing population policies and programmes;*
- (g) Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the resolutions and declarations collectively adopted by African countries with a view to charting new strategies to deal with current and pressing population issues in Africa;*
- (h) Encouraging an effective partnership between governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in carrying out activities in population and development matters;*
- (i) Carrying out any other activities that may be assigned to it by Member States, the Permanent Steering Committee, the OAU Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC), the Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Governments.*

ROLE OF THE COMMISSION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DAKAR/NGOR DECLARATION AND THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION

As indicated earlier, the responsibility of the African Population Commission is higher and wider. It is entrusted with the task of ensuring the inclusion of population in the agenda of the OAU Council of Ministers and the Assembly of

Heads of State and Government for appropriate policy guidelines. On the other hand, the Commission is charged with the responsibility of promoting, assisting, coordinating and monitoring population activities in the OAU Member States. In view of this, the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat, in its capacity as the Secretariat of the Commission, has been undertaking a number of activities with a view to assisting population and development endeavours in the continent. In this regard, the promotion and implementation of the Dakar/NGOR Declaration and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), has in particular remained a priority area, as can be seen in what follows:

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES: *Since effective information, education and communication are pre-requisites for the implementation of any programme, the Joint Secretariat of the Commission publishes and disseminates what is known as the OAU Population Newsletter on a quarterly basis. Moreover, calendars, posters, wall charts, flyers and brochures, carrying some messages on population and development, are produced periodically and distributed to national population commissions, analogous population institutions and even population bureaus at grassroots levels as well as to the UN bodies, NGOs and population research centres. With regard to the Dakar/NGOR Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action, which are under consideration, the Joint Secretariat of the Commission has been highlighting their objectives and implementation mechanisms in these publications in one way or the other. The whole essence is to keep Member States abreast of latest development and related obligations or expectations.*

Seminars, workshops, symposia and conferences constitute an important means of sensitization. With this in mind, the Secretariat of the Commission organizes the necessary fora for different target groups, such as the Diplomatic Community in Addis Ababa, media people, national population experts, planners and representatives of NGOs. Accordingly, it organized a symposium for the Diplomatic Community in Addis Ababa and the staff of the

OAU in connection with the commemoration of the 1994 World Population Day. A similar one is for 1995. It should also be noted that this workshop is part of the overall strategy of the Commission to promote the programmes under question.

Other promotion and advocacy activities consist of making missions to Member States to encourage them to adopt appropriate population policies, to review their population programmes and to give them the necessary political support. Participation in regional conferences dealing with population and socio-economic development is equally important. Thus the Secretariat of the Commission made an active participation at the Fourth African Regional Conference of Women in Africa that took place in Dakar, Senegal in November 1994. Moreover, it produced appropriate papers for an active participation in the Eighteenth Session of the OAU Labour Commission in Tripoli in April 1995 and the aborted Pan-African Youth Conference that was supposed to meet in Tunis in March 1995.

ORGANIZING AND ASSISTING THE AFRICAN GROUP AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES:

Pursuant to its terms of reference, the African Population Commission has the responsibility of playing a critical and pivotal role in organizing and assisting the African Delegations at international conferences so that they could promote and defend their common interests. Suffice to say, this was translated into action during the ICPD. Indeed, the Secretariat of the Commission organized three meetings of the African Group to define Africa's interests and defend them. One of these meetings took place at a Ministerial level, which issued a joint memorandum regretting that a number of crucial issues were not being addressed adequately by the Conference and consequently requesting the Conference to pay special attention mainly to external debt reduction, the impact of the SAP, armed conflicts and political stability; resource mobilization, the right of international migrants to family reunification and a special international conference on migration to study more thoroughly the problems involved and the ways and means of dealing with them. In this connection, it should be noted that the Joint

Secretariat of the Commission produced three briefing papers that were distributed to the African Delegations at the Conference.

GENERATING POLITICAL SUPPORT: The implementation and success of both the Dakar/NGOR Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action will greatly depend on the commitment of political leaders, policy makers and planners to translate them into action. With this in mind, the Secretariat of the African Population Commission has successfully helped both the OAU Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government pronounce themselves on the implementation of the programmes in the Member States. For instance, after considering the report of the OAU the Secretary-General on population and development in Africa and recalling the recommendations of the Dakar/NGOR Declaration, the 60th Session of the OAU Council of Ministers that took place in Tunis, June 1994, urged Member States in its Resolution CM/Res. 1551(LX), to establish national population commissions, where they do not exist, and to strengthen technical cooperation relations with African regional and sub-regional organizations dealing with population and development problems. Earlier, the Council was addressed by the Chairman of the African Population Commission. In a similar move, the same organ of the OAU, in its 61st Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 23 to 27 January 1995, noting the interest of the OAU in the field of population and development as evidenced by the establishment of African Population Commission; the active participation of the African Group at the ICPD and recognizing the importance of the Programme of Action of the ICPD as a global framework for national action and international cooperation, aimed at improving the quality of life for each and every member of the human family, adopted a resolution, entitled "Resolution on the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD", in which it urged Member States to further strengthen their political commitment to population and development policies and take concrete actions in order to promote and implement the Programme of Action of the ICPD and the Dakar/NGOR Declaration. The

Council also appealed to Member States to put in place institutional infrastructures responsible for policy guidance, coordination and monitoring as regards population activities. It further urged Member States to allocate adequate budget for population programmes and intensify sensitization activities.

It is also important to mention here that population was included in the Report of the OAU Secretary-General to the 17th Extraordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, that took place in Cairo, Egypt from 27-28 March 1995, underlining the importance of integrating population into the overall national socio-economic development strategies.

On the other hand, the 30th Assembly of Heads of State and Government that convened in Tunis, Tunisia from 13 to 15 June 1994, pronounced itself on the Dakar/NGOR Declaration and the ICPD after endorsing the establishment of the African Population Commission. In particular, the OAU Summit endorsed the Dakar/NGOR Declaration and affirmed that it is an indispensable population and development strategy that will take Africa to the end of this century and beyond. Consequently, the Council stressed the need for a sustained effort in order to implement the Dakar/NGOR Declaration. It also urged the international community to provide African countries with the necessary assistance for the implementation of the regional population and development strategy. Similarly, the OAU Summit encouraged Member States to make an active participation at the ICPD in order to defend their interests and gain the maximum out of it. What now remains to be done by the African Population Commission is the implementation of these declarations.

UNDERTAKING RESEARCHES: As is known, research works are essential for policy options aimed at implementing both the Dakar/NGOR Declaration, the ICPD Programme of Action by taking into account local religious, cultural and legal systems. Africa is a region which needs more research works on the complex relationships between population and development. The Secretariat of the Commission has worked out a plan to carry out studies on population and conflicts; the impact

of AIDS pandemic on population; population, environment and sustainable development; population, migration and urbanization; social environment and population programmes in Africa; adolescent pregnancy and fertility and the state of women and their empowerment by involving population research centres in the region. Such studies would also generate reports that would serve as background papers for seminars, workshops and conferences leading to some recommendations for the considerations of the OAU Council of Ministers as well as the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

REVIEWING POPULATION POLICIES: One of the priority areas of the Secretariat of the Commission is reviewing population policies in Member States and producing a synthesis for making proposals for themes which need further investigation and proposing areas where policy decisions should be taken. Accordingly, national population reports have been collected from Member States and the framework for compiling the necessary information has been designed. The work on this project would be completed before the end of 1995. The findings of the review will help to sensitize planners and policy makers.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: Population data in Africa need further improvements and thorough analysis as pointed out the Dakar/NGOR Declaration. In view of this, the African Population Commission will continue encouraging Member States to improve the collection, tabulation and analysis of their population data through workshops, seminars and training programmes. This in turn will be used for the production of "Tableau du Bord".

MOBILIZING RESOURCES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMMES: As elaborated in the ICPD Programme of Action, population related programmes play an important role in enabling, facilitating and accelerating progress in sustainable human development programmes, especially by contributing to the empowerment of women, improving the health of the people, slowing the growth rate of demand for social services,

mobilizing community action and stressing the long-term importance of social sector investments. However, the effectiveness of population programme is partly determined by the availability of resources. In the case of Africa, experiences have already shown that the poor performance of population programmes is partly due to serious financial constraints. And now the ICPD Programme of Action requires that two-thirds of the finances required for its implementation particularly for the expansion of family planning and reproductive health service including the expansion of the use of contraceptives, should be mobilized from internal sources while the remaining one-third to be raised from external partners. In absolute terms, the aggregate financial requirements for the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action until the year 2015, is estimated at around US\$ 18 billion. In view of this, the African Population Commission has the responsibility of ensuring the mobilization of the necessary resources for the support of population activities, aimed at implementing the Dakar/NGOR Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action. To this effect, the Secretariat of Commission assisted the 30th OAU Summit as well as the 60th and 61st Session of the Council of Ministers to appeal to African Governments and external donors for the necessary resource mobilization, in their resolutions and declaration. Apart from this, the Secretariat of the Commission assisted the African Group at the Cairo Conference to negotiate in unison for more financial contributions from abroad. The involvement of the NGOs in the Abidjan Workshop is also an integral part of the overall endeavours for resource mobilization.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Dakar/NGOR Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action requires concerted and coordinated follow-up at the national, regional and international levels. On its part, the African Population Commission will endeavour to assist, coordinate and monitor population activities in the region. What is more important however, is the action that should be taken at national level. Thus the main activities to be undertaken at the national

level should include:

- a) Restoring good governance, peace and stability;*
- b) Adopting appropriate national population policies where they do not exist and strengthening the existing ones;*
- c) Building a strong political support at all levels for population and development activities;*
- d) Creating the necessary institutional network at all levels;*
- e) Allocating appropriate financial resources;*
- f) Institutionalizing coordination and centralization of efforts at national level;*
- g) Introducing accountability by all national mechanisms dealing with population and development; and*
- h) Monitoring and reporting of progress in the implementation of the programmes.*

Population matters form an integral part of socio-economic development processes. There cannot be any sustainable development without giving priority to population programmes and integrating population factors into national development strategies. Both the Dakar/NGOR Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action provide essential frameworks and guidance for a sustainable development. Their implementation however needs collective efforts. Thus African countries should join hands for sustainable implementation efforts in order to create a better future for humanity in the region. In this connection, UNFPA should be highly appreciated for generously assisting the OAU Secretariat and Member States in their population programmes. In fact, the establishment of the African Population Commission and the activities that followed would have been impossible without the UNFPA financial assistance to the OAU Secretariat. It is believed beyond any doubt that the partnership of UNFPA in population activities in Africa, will grow further and that other donors will follow suit in line with the increasing needs of the region.

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