

Workshop One

Population, Development, and Policy: The Economic Payoffs of Population Change

The twentieth century was a period of unprecedented demographic change. Because of a dramatic reduction in mortality, global population increased nearly fourfold, the fastest rate of growth in human history. The international response to rapid population growth was also unprecedented. Motivated by concerns about the environmental and economic effects of population growth and, in recent years, by women's rights to enjoy reproductive health, the United Nations, bilateral foreign aid agencies, multilateral institutions, and private foundations invested billions of dollars in health and family planning programs. Many developing-country governments, especially in Asia, vigorously pursued policies aimed at reducing fertility as well as mortality.

The countries of East Asia were among the first and most active proponents of slowing population growth. Beginning in the 1960s, many East-Asian developing countries identified population stabilization as a national development objective and adopted comprehensive programs intended to slow population growth. At first glance, the East-Asian experience appears to provide strong support for the value of reproductive health and family planning programs. Childbearing and population growth rates dropped more rapidly there than in any other region of the developing or industrialized world. During the same period, the countries of East Asia achieved unparalleled economic success. In a mere three decades, 1960–1990, these countries were transformed from an economic backwater to the most dynamic region in the world economy. Countries that were impoverished in 1960 joined the ranks and, in some cases, surpassed the high-income countries of the West.

In addition to slowing population growth, rapid fertility decline changes a population's age structure. It reduces the number of dependent children relative to the number of adults, while, during the early stages, the number of elderly remains small. This change in age structure is often referred to as the *demographic dividend*, because the large working-age population and small numbers of dependent children and elderly hold the potential for increased earnings, savings, and investments, which can fuel economic growth.

Existing evidence supports the view that many East-Asian countries were able to convert favorable age structures caused by fertility and mortality decline into economic growth. Many other countries were not, however. Hence, an important question—still to be answered—is which policies are most likely to translate a favorable age structure into economic development. Other research questions in need of further study include: how long the demographic dividend is likely to last; through which channels does population change affects economic growth, including changes in the roles of women and men; what happens once the favorable age structure disappears as the population ages; and does the evidence for the dividend at the individual and household levels match the evidence at the macroeconomic level.

This workshop and a follow-on workshop to be offered in 2008 are designed to facilitate participants' research on the demographic dividend in their own coun-

tries. The 2007 workshop will review existing knowledge about the demographic dividend, including what is known about the contribution of gender roles as a channel of influence from population change to economic growth, will review research methodologies for studying the demographic dividend, and will help participants develop and apply research protocols for studying questions about the demographic dividend and the links between population and economic change more broadly in their own countries.

The 2008 workshop will focus on the research findings generated by participants in the intervening year. The workshops are thus designed to enable a new generation of researchers to investigate demographic-economic linkages and identify the policy changes in their countries that will maximize the development payoffs of demographic change.

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■ Workshop Objectives

During the first workshop, participants will:

- Define the demographic dividend
- Gain a thorough knowledge of existing research on the demographic dividend and the theoretical frameworks used to study demographic-economic linkages
- Learn how societies organize economic and social life according to gender and the potential effect on the demographic dividend of changes in gender roles
- Review the major research methodologies and data requirements used to study the demographic dividend

- Apply their understanding of substance and methods to develop a research protocol for the study of the demographic dividend in their own countries

- Complete a preliminary analysis of income and expenditure survey data and estimates of the demographic dividend for their countries

■ Who Should Attend?

This workshop is primarily designed for active social-science researchers working in institutions that are able and willing to support their research on the demographic dividend. Participants need to have a good understanding of basic economic principles and methodologies. Some understanding of population studies is also desirable.

The workshop will include hands-on analysis of income and expenditure survey data, and participants will be expected to have access to such data during the workshop. The workshop is also open to policymakers concerned with how to optimize the development benefits of population change in their countries and other scholars, policymakers, and journalists with a strong interest in the topic.

■ Coordinators

Andrew Mason (Ph.D. University of Michigan) is a Senior Fellow in Population and Health Studies at the East-West Center and a Professor of Economics at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He has studied the economic effects of population change for more than two decades and currently is co-principal investigator of an international project on the demographic dividend involving scholars from more than 15 countries. Dr. Mason developed some of

the major methodologies used to study the demographic dividend.

Karen Oppenheim Mason (Ph.D. University of Chicago) is an Adjunct Senior Fellow in Population and Health Studies at the East-West Center and an Affiliated Graduate Faculty member in Population Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. A sociologist by training, Dr. Mason is an internationally recognized expert on population and gender issues and has written widely on gender and family change in Asia.

■ Resource Persons

David Bloom (Ph.D. Princeton University) is Clarence James Gamble Professor of Economics and Demography and Chair of the Department of Population and International Health at Harvard University. Professor Bloom has conducted seminal work on the demographic dividend, labor economics, health, demography, and the environment. He has been honored with a number of distinctions, including an Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship and the Galbraith Award for quality teaching in economics. He was a Fulbright Scholar in India and a scholar in residence at the Russell Sage Foundation.

Sang-Hyop Lee (Ph.D. Michigan State University) is Associate Professor of Economics and an Affiliate Faculty member of the Population Studies Program and the Center for Korean Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and an Adjunct Fellow in Population and Health Studies at the East-West Center. His work on labor markets, health, and population has been published in numerous journals, as well as in prestigious handbook series and edited books.