

Outline for Rotary Zone Institute Discussion Table Population & Development

Discussion leader: _____

1. What exactly is the global population problem?

Facts on Population

- Global population, now 6.5 billion, is still growing rapidly – currently by 76 million a year.
- By 2050, the United Nations projects that we will add some 2.5 billion people, a number equal to the world's total population in 1950.
- Growth has slowed since it peaked in the mid-1990's at around 82 million annually. Some countries (Germany, Italy, Russia to name a few) currently have negative population growth.
- Average family size has declined from six children per woman in 1960 to around three today (family planning has become more accessible and widely used).
- The number of adolescents, entering their reproductive years (aged 10-19) is at an all-time high of 1.2 billion.
- 96% of the projected growth is in developing countries.
- The question with any population segment is whether or not there are enough resources to support the population.

Population & Health

- One billion people (1/6 of the world population) lack access to any form of health care.
- At least 220 million people in the developing world lack clean drinking water, 600 million do not have adequate shelter, 840 million

are malnourished and 1.1 billion are subject to high levels of air pollution.

- At least five million children die each year from waterborne diarrheal diseases due to a lack of proper sanitation and clean water.

Women & Child Health

- Three hundred and fifty million women did not plan their last pregnancy, do not want to become pregnant again or want more spacing between each childbirth. But lack either the information or the means to obtain adequate voluntary family planning.
- More than 40 percent of all pregnancies each year are unwanted, and 60 percent of all unwanted pregnancies end in abortion.
- More than 600,000 women die every year – at least one woman every minute – because of complications from pregnancy and abortion; 99 percent of those deaths are in developing countries.
- Eight million infants die every year before reaching the age of one, many die due to malnutrition or preventable diseases.
- An estimated 333 million cases of sexually transmitted diseases are spread each year. Worldwide, the disease burden in women is more than 5 times that of men.

Global Poverty

- Nearly three billion people - half of the world's population - subsist on less than \$2 per day. The number and proportion are rising.
- Worldwide, unemployment affects one billion people – nearly one-third of the global workforce.
- The number of rural women living in poverty in developing countries has increased by almost 50 percent over the last 20 years, to 565 million.

Environmental Issues

- 600,000 square miles of forest were cut down in the last decade.
- 26 billion tons of arable topsoil vanishes from the world's cropland every year.
- In less than 50 years, population growth will contribute to a near doubling of global food requirements.
- Global warming has increased by 25 percent since World War II.
- As many as 2.7 billion people, almost one-half of the world's population, will live in regions facing severe water scarcity by 2025.

2. How does population work fit into Rotary's work in International Service and the work of The Rotary Foundation?

- Rotarians care about the quality of life for all, from the youngest to the oldest, and have sponsored immunization and health programs that have helped to increase longevity. But falling global child mortality rates and climbing life spans have prompted a new concern: that population growth may outpace Earth's ability to sustain development.
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- The mission of The Rotary Foundation is to support the efforts of Rotary International in the fulfillment of the Object of Rotary, Rotary's mission, and the achievement of world understanding and peace through local, national, and international humanitarian, educational, and cultural programs.
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- The Rotary Foundation sponsors The Humanitarian Grants Program. The Rotary Foundation provides grants to Rotary clubs and districts to implement humanitarian projects. There are several grant types that address different service needs and funding options, such as District Simplified Grants, Health, Hunger and Humanity (3-H) Grants, Individual Grants, Matching Grants, and Immunization Grants.
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- Demonstrate your commitment to Population concerns by developing a project in your community. There are several ideas for community and international projects your club may want to consider.
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- Further information can be found on www.rotary.org.

3. What is Rotary's official position on Population Concerns, and what do our leaders think and do about it?

- In 1999, the RI Board adopted a *Position Statement on Population Growth and Sustainable Development*, which reads in part: "Rotary International encourages Rotary clubs and districts, working as appropriate with government agencies, nongovernmental organizations and local leadership, to increase awareness and undertake even more projects that directly impact population growth and sustainable development. Projects would include those that promote education on the issue of population, access to family health care, adequate nutrition, and enable individuals to make informed and responsible decisions about issues such as child spacing in a way that is in keeping with their personal values and cultural and religious considerations."

4. What are types of projects that Rotarians can take up that will affect the population issue? Are there project guidelines to keep us on the right track?

Types of Projects

- Family Planning
- Child Spacing
- Reproductive Health
- HIV/AIDS Awareness
- Literacy
- Vocational Training for Women and Girls
- Micro credit
- There are project guidelines established by The Rotary Foundation.

Yes, there are guidelines set by The Rotary Foundation.

- Terms and conditions apply that include matching grant criteria, Rotarian involvement, sponsor contributions, funding and payments, stewardship of TRF funds, reporting and auditing requirements, implementation, timing and cooperating organizations.
- The terms and conditions are in your packet, along with Frequently Asked Questions (both taken from TRF's website).
- Information and applications on the Matching Grants Program can be found at:
<http://www.rotary.org/foundation/grants/index.html>

5. Are there cultural and religious sensitivities surrounding the population issue that could create risks for Rotary – it being apolitical and multi-religious?

Yes, there are concerns from Rotarians on the Rotary's Population work. They are:

- **Abortion**: Any population program necessarily includes contraceptives; eventually get to direct involvement in abortion programs or affiliations with other organizations that promote abortion. **Response**: In RI's Position Statement on Population, it is stated clearly that RI is not involved in any programs that include abortion. RFPD does not condone abortion in its population work. Note: TRF Trustees adopted a policy to not provide grants to provide contraceptives, although projects can include contraceptives funded by other sources (clubs, districts, third parties). The Board of Directors, in its Code of Policies, acknowledges that contraceptives are an integral part of how population challenges are addressed.
- **United Nations and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**: The United Nations is a sloppily run, liberal organization that Rotary should not affiliate with. UNFPA is involved in abortions (this one is a very sensitive political

issue). **Response:** RI has been involved with the UN since its inception in 1945, and for past years, has had an RI Representative to the UN, and has participated in RI-UN day each year. As a member of the community of global humanitarian organizations, Rotary has always maintained a strong link with the UN. Rotary's current Polio Eradication effort is integrally tied to other UN agencies: the UN Foundation and UNICEF. The UN does not promote abortion as a means of family planning, nor does it support coercive family planning policies. UNFPA is the leading agency in the world addressing the population issue. There are no good answers for those who, given this information, still object to RI's existing relation with the UN.

- **Politics of Population:** Since Rotary is apolitical, we are all obligated to respect the differing political opinions of our fellow Rotarians, and to carefully select and support projects and programs that we feel appropriately address the needs of those who suffer without violating national laws. Those who object to what other Rotarians do in their population projects are encouraged to do other humanitarian work that they feel is appropriate. **Response:** Population is an issue of significant global concern, and should not be politicized. It should stand on its own merits and be addressed appropriately.

- **There is no population problem:** Some argue that the population issue is an over-dramatized story and that the facts used in the arguments are exaggerated or fabricated. They say there is no food shortage problem; that instead it is a distribution problem that has more to do with corrupt governments and supply systems than quantities available. **Response:** when there are too many people for the resources that they have access to, people suffer, from poverty, hunger, disease and war. They suffer in ways that make it very difficult to change their position. Three billion of the world's population lives below the poverty line of \$2/day, and 800 million are not able to maintain health due to inadequate nutrition. Those who work in these arenas report falling amounts of grain available per person globally, declining outputs of the fisheries around the world and loss of arable land

mass. The objective is to put people in balance with their available resources. Non-renewable resources, when used, are gone. Renewable resources, which are not used in sustainable ways, dwindle and are gone. The most flexible variable in the balance between population numbers is giving people the ability to choose the numbers of children they will have, i.e., making reproductive health services available. Given the ability to choose, families will have fewer children, and they will be likely to care for and educate.

6. What is RFPD (The Rotarian Action Group for Population & Development) and what does it do?

- RFPD's mission is to work to address the population crisis around the world. We do this through educating and motivating the 1.2 million Rotarians, like you, to develop and implement projects that directly address the population problem.
- Has over 20,000 members world wide, with organized committees in 70 countries. It is the largest of Rotary's 75 Fellowships/Rotarian Action Groups.
- Has given 1,000's of Rotary club, district, and zone and RI-level programs around the world on Population.
- Promoted and helped gain approval of the Population Resolution at the 1998 Council on Legislation.
- Helped organized and fund Past RI President Frank Devlyn's three Population Conferences.
- Provide Leadership and expertise for Frank Devlyn's Population Committee.
- Educated the RI Board for the approval of the RI-UNFPA Memorandum of Cooperation.
- Secured \$1.7 million in private grants to support Rotary's involvement in Population work.
- Established a Population Project Database and assists in finding project needs and project sponsors, and in processing projects through TRF.

7. What other organizations deal with population concerns and how do they do it?

▪ UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is the world's largest international source of funding for population and reproductive health programs. Since we began operations in 1969, the Fund has provided nearly \$6 billion in assistance to developing countries.

UNFPA works with governments and non-governmental organizations in over 140 countries, at their request, and with the support of the international community. We support programs that help women, men and young people:

- plan their families and avoid unwanted pregnancies
- undergo pregnancy and childbirth safely
- avoid sexually transmitted infections(STIs) - including HIV/AIDS
- combat violence against women.

Together, these elements promote reproductive health—a state of complete physical, mental and social well being in all matters related to the reproductive system. Reproductive health is recognized as a human right, part of the right to health.

UNFPA also helps governments in the world's poorest countries, and in other countries in need, to formulate population policies and strategies in support of sustainable development. All UNFPA-funded programs promote women's equality.

UNFPA works to raise awareness of these needs among people everywhere. We advocate for close attention to population problems and help to mobilize resources to solve them.

UNFPA assistance works. Since 1969, access to voluntary family planning programs in developing countries has increased and fertility has fallen by half, from six children per woman to three. Nearly 60 per cent of married women in developing

countries have chosen to practice contraception, compared with 10-15 per cent when we started our work.

- **The Population Institute**

Is an international, educational, non-profit organization that seeks to reduce excessive [population growth](#). We strive to achieve a world population in balance with a healthy [global environment and resource base](#). Established in 1969, the Institute, with members in 172 countries is headquartered on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.

The Mission of the Population Institute is “to provide essential leadership to increase awareness of the social, economic, and environmental consequences of rapid population growth. PI recruits and trains tomorrow’s population activists, and national membership networks to address population issues. Our programs advance education and activism. The Institute promotes international and U.S. support for [voluntary family planning programs](#).”

- **The Population Council**

The Population Council is a not-for-profit public health and social science research organization.

The Council seeks to improve the well-being and reproductive health of current and future generations around the world.

Current research topics include: HIV/AIDS, Child Marriage, Schooling and Aging.

- **Global Health Action**

For 32 years, GHA has served the health needs of individuals, communities and countries through five programmatic initiatives: Leadership and Management Training, HIV/AIDS, Women's Health and Reproductive Health, Primary Health Care and Second Generation Organizations. To date, GHA has

trained more than 6,000 health and community leaders in the United States and 87 countries worldwide.

GHA Mission is to “create healthier communities around the globe through education and training in leadership, management and health promotion.”

▪ **CARE**

CARE works with poor communities in more than 70 countries around the world to find lasting solutions to poverty. We look at the big picture of poverty, and go beyond the symptoms to confront underlying causes. With a broad range of programs based on empowerment, equity and sustainability, CARE seeks to tap human potential and leverage the power of individuals and communities to unleash a vast force for progress.

CARE’s Mission is “to serve individuals and families in the poorest communities in the world. Drawing strength from our global diversity, resources and experience, we promote innovative solutions and are advocates for global responsibility. We facilitate lasting change by:

- Strengthening capacity for self-help
- Providing economic opportunity
- Delivering relief in emergencies
- Influencing policy decisions at all levels
- Addressing discrimination in all its forms

Guided by the aspirations of local communities, we pursue our mission with both excellence and compassion because the people whom we serve deserve nothing less.”

Collateral:

RI Brochure on Population and Development

RFPD Brochure

Fragile Earth (RFPD’s quarterly newsletter)

RI Board Statement

Council on Legislation’s Population Resolution, 1998

Introduction to UNFPA’s State of the World

